The Western presence in the Byzantine Empire during the reigns of Alexios I and John II Komnenos (1081-1143)

Rodriguez Suarez, Alex

Awarding institution:
King's College London

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Alex Rodriguez Suarez
King's College London

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ABSTRACT

This PhD thesis looks at the Western presence in the Byzantine Empire during the reigns of Alexios I (1081-1118) and his son and successor John II (1118-1143). Contacts between Byzantium and the West increased during this period, which witnessed significant events like the First Crusade and the expansion of the Italian trading communities. The aim of the thesis is to explore the extent and the significance of the cultural exchanges between Westerners and Byzantines. The sources analyzed for this research are texts (mostly in Greek and Latin) and material culture (objects and monuments).

The point of departure of the thesis is the exploration of the Western presence in Byzantium before Alexios' accession, a period which is mainly limited to the eleventh century. It includes a section on Southern Italy but mainly focuses on mercenaries, merchants and diplomatic brides. The research then moves on to analyzing the different spheres where Westerners played some role in the Byzantine Empire during the period under study. It looks at the army (Varangians and Normans), trade (commercial privileges and Italian merchants), administration and the court (diplomatic brides). After having looked at the presence of Westerners, three case studies of material culture (stained glass, bells and the kite shield) are presented in order to examine the Western influence in Byzantine society. Finally, the thesis investigates customs and habits. It addresses several topics to identify possible change (hairstyles) and innovation (tournaments, duels and handshake) in Byzantine society and culture as a result of the Western presence. At the end the results of this project are evaluated in relation to Manuel I's reign (1143-1180), the so-called latinophile emperor and John's son and successor.

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INTRODUCTION

This thesis is inspired by my MA dissertation entitled 'What were the reasons behind Manuel I Komnenos' Latinophilia?' (RHUL, 2008). Manuel's latinophilia,[1] or phillatinism, as it has recently been called,[2] is a well known feature that is usually referred to in the secondary bibliography. His fondness for Westerners and Western practices is usually stated and repeated without seriously trying to understand the reasons behind these tendencies. In my dissertation I tried to discover which were these reasons and, more importantly, to place them in context. The evidence for Manuel's pro-Western attitudes not only provides us with information about his personality and interests, but also about the period in which he grew up and lived. The results of my dissertation hinted at a process of cultural exchange that culminated during Manuel's reign (1143-1180). However, this process had already started before Manuel became emperor in 1143. Therefore, he was a product of a period in which the contacts between Byzantines and Westerners grew to an unprecedented level.[3] For this reason, the study of the Western presence before Manuel's reign is crucial and worth investigating. Thus, I was encouraged to explore the beginning of this process and its development since the accession of the Komnenian dynasty in 1081. This is the reason why this thesis looks at the Western presence in Byzantium during the reigns of the emperors Alexios I Komnenos (1081-1118) and his son John II (1118-1143), leaving Manuel aside. However, it must be noted that the reigns of Alexios and John also constituted an interesting period in their own right.

During this period the Byzantine Empire survived the serious crisis which took place in the 1070s. This crisis was marked by political instability and military threat. In a few years the throne was occupied successively by Romanos IV Diogenes (1068-1071),

[1] Magdalino (1993), pp. 106-108.

[2] Page (2008), p. 36.

[3] Lamma (1957), p. 327.

Michael VII Doukas (1071-1078) and Nikephoros III Botaneiates (1078-1081). During their reigns the empire had to face the increasing Norman and Turkish menace in Southern Italy and Asia Minor respectively. The period was also characterized by a number of Byzantine generals who attempted to ascend the throne (Nikephoros Bryennios, Nikephoros Basilakes and Nikephoros Melissenos). Thus, Byzantine armies fought against each other instead of focusing on the defence of the empire's provinces. The reigns of Alexios and John halted this period. Both emperors went on to reconquer lost territories and the empire overcame serious invasions and flourished economically and artistically, setting the basis for Manuel's reign. The period witnessed major events for the history of Byzantium, among them the two Norman invasions, the First Crusade, the rise of the Italian trading communities and the creation of the Crusader States in the Levant. All these events had Westerners as protagonists, a common factor which demonstrates the growing power of Western Europe and its increasing dynamism in military and economic affairs in the eastern Mediterranean. It is widely acknowledged that these historical events show a turning point in the relations between Byzantium and the West. Guiscard's invasion and the First Crusade temporarily threatened the Byzantine Empire, but they also led to an increase of the Western presence in and around Byzantine territory. This presence possibly influenced key aspects of Byzantine society during the Komnenian period. While some Westerners were established permanently in Byzantium, others lived there briefly or just passed through Byzantine territory on their way to another place, for example the Holy Land. Those who had stayed in the Empire were engaged in different activities, most of them as merchants and mercenaries. Moreover, Westerners could also be found in other roles. At court several figures with a Western background reached significant positions. This could be the case of a Norman soldier, an Italian interpreter or a Hungarian princess. We have details regarding their lives, but they were a much smaller group compared to a great number of anonymous individuals. Thus, this increasing Western presence was characterized by its diversity.

The Western presence in Byzantium during this period has not been the object of any major scholar research. Deno John Geanakoplos' book entitled *Interaction of the "Sibling" Byzantine and Western Cultures in the Middle Ages and the Italian Renaissance (330-1600)* mainly focuses on the contacts between Westerners and Byzantines during the Late Byzantine period.[4] Krijnie Ciggaar's study entitled *Western Travellers to Constantinople: The West and Byzantium, 962-1204* looks at the presence of Westerners in Byzantium, but she mainly uses it to explore and trace the Byzantine influence on Western Europe.[5] Although the period under discussion witnessed an increase of interaction between the Byzantine Empire and the West, scholars have mainly focused their attention on political events. The main case are the Crusades, a topic closely related to the history of Byzantium, which has been the focus of studies by Ralph-Johannes Lilie,[6] Jonathan Harris,[7] and Peter Frankopan.[8] The Norman conquest of Southern Italy is the other main event which has attracted scholarly interest. Ferdinand Chalandon's work is an early example,[9] but in recent times there have been further studies by Graham A. Loud[10] and Alexios G. C. Savvides.[11] Besides political events, the commercial activities of the Italian merchants in the Byzantine Empire have received a good deal of scholarly attention. The literature dedicated to the presence of Amalfitans, Venetians, Pisans and Genoese in the Byzantine Empire is extensive. In many cases scholars have devoted articles exclusively to each community; for instance, Vera von Falkenhausen and David Jacoby have looked at the Amalfitans and the Venetians respectively. Moreover, Lilie's *Handel und Politik* provided a general view of

[4] Geanakoplos (1976).

[5] Ciggaar (1996).

[6] Lilie (1993a).

[7] Harris (2003).

[8] Frankopan (2012).

[9] Chalandon (1907).

[10] Loud (2000).

[11] Savvides (2007).

the subject for the period of the Komnenian and Angeloi dynasties.[12] The case of Venetian merchants has been particularly well researched as a result of the wealth of the surviving archival material. Silvano Borsari's study provides a good picture of the Venetian trading activities throughout the empire.[13] Furthermore, the study of the privileges offered to the Italian communities continues to attract much interest.[14] On the other hand, scholarly research concerning the Western impact on the Byzantine material culture has been very limited. In fact, Alicia Walker's study on exotic elements in the imperial power during the Middle Byzantine period only provides examples of the contacts between Byzantium and the East.[15] Thus, the discussion on the Western impact has focused on very few cases, the most controversial probably being the fragments of stained glass from the Pantokrator and Chora monasteries. While a series of articles have dealt with these remains, recent chemical analyses are changing our understanding of this Western artistic technique in Byzantium. Finally, the study of Western habits and customs in Byzantium is the aspect that has received least attention. For the period under study it has been limited mainly to the oaths that the Crusader leaders swore to Alexios.[16] Therefore, it is possible to say that the study of the Western presence in Byzantium deserves a more detailed view beyond political events and commercial activities that emphasizes other aspects of the interaction between Westerners and Byzantines.

For this reason, the current research aims at evaluating the features of the Western presence in Byzantium from different perspectives. It is innovative because it draws together the evidence and studies produced so far, which have only focused on partial aspects of this presence. Its goal is to provide an integrated view of the life of

[12] Lilie (1984).

[13] Borsari (1988).

[14] Penna (2012).

[15] Walker (2012).

[16] Ferluga (1961), pp. 106-112.

Westerners in Byzantium and their possible effects on Byzantine society. Firstly, it looks at the reasons behind this presence in the Byzantine Empire: What lured Westerners to travel eastwards? Which activities did they undertake there? Secondly, since Westerners were already present in the Byzantine Empire before 1081, it examines the development of this presence throughout time: Did the Western presence change during the period under study? And if so, what were these changes? And finally, it addresses the question of the interaction between the Westerners and the Byzantine population, and more importantly, the possible outcomes of these contacts. Did the Western presence have any impact or influence on Byzantine society? Were Byzantine customs altered? Did the Byzantines adopt Western practices or instances of material culture? Therefore, this research does not focus on political events that took place between Western powers and Byzantium. Although such events indeed played a major role in the development of the Western presence in Byzantium, they only frame this investigation and will be treated only to the extent that will be helpful in order to contextualize their implications and consequences. The final objective of this study is to have a more accurate understanding of the cultural and social dynamics that played out in the encounters between the Westerners and the Byzantines in Byzantium.

The charting of such complex dynamics as influence and exchange is an interesting but also difficult task. It requires a theoretical framework that takes into account the historical particularities of the period under investigation. For the study of the relationships between different cultures modern scholars have employed the concept of acculturation, for which they have designed a model based on two cultures, the dominant or donor and the dominated or receiver.[17] This model used to be applied by anthropologists and historians, for example Geanakoplos used it in his study on the interaction between Western and Byzantine cultures.[18] However, the model of acculturation does not fully describe the complexity of these contacts. Westerners

[17] Beals (1953).

[18] Geanakoplos (1976), pp. 3-6.

travelled to Byzantium where they were a heterogeneous minority among the many other minorities (Jews, Georgians, Arabs and others) living in the empire. Nevertheless, it is possible that when they had contacts, both Westerners and the local population acted as both donors and receivers on different levels, namely a process of cultural exchange or transfer.[19] The idea that Byzantine culture was the dominant one is oversimplified; a more appropriate concept to understand its position is that of hegemonic culture. From this point of view, the crucial question is to establish if Byzantine culture remained the hegemonic one throughout the process of cultural exchange during this period.

The notion of Western presence can seem quite vague as it possibly suggests individuals from a wide range of geographic backgrounds stemming from the European continent. Who are these Westerners? In this study the definition of Westerner is based on three elements: geography, religion and language. Thus, geography remains an important factor, but other characteristics concerning culture and religion will also constitute central factors in my exploration of this question. Westerners mainly used Latin for education and official documents. More importantly, they shared the Latin rite and in many cases a system of legal and military customs. Therefore, being a Westerner does not only imply having geographic origins in what we currently call Western Europe. For example, Hungary and Croatia, states considered as part of Eastern Europe, are considered Western as their population was not Orthodox and the official language of the state and the church was Latin. In addition, the Scandinavian countries are also considered Western. The Byzantines would have referred to the populations of Norway, Sweden, Denmark, and Iceland as Varangians; however, their population also followed the Latin rite. Thus, in this study the adjective Latin is not the only synonym for Western. On the other hand, Kievan Rus' is not included because like Bulgaria and Serbia, it belonged to what has been termed the Byzantine Commonwealth, a collection of states that espoused the Orthodox creed and which looked at Constantinople as their model in their state formation. Certain regions are not as easy to define when it comes to

[19] Burke (2009); Lipphardt and Ludwig (2011).

the particular viewpoint I have adopted. While the southern half of the Iberian Peninsula is excluded because it was under Muslim rule, the Christian kingdoms in the north are also considered as part of the West. During this period Southern Italy had a mixed population of both Greeks and Latins. Sicily also included Muslims as well. Nevertheless, the establishment of Norman rule finally placed the area in the sphere of the West. Outremer is another special case as the region was outside Europe. The creation of the Crusader States placed parts of the eastern Mediterranean under Western rule. The Crusaders coexisted with the local population in many cases, but they reproduced the social and political context they had back home. Therefore, all these people are considered Westerners in the thesis, even when in the Byzantine sources they are referred to with different names. For this reason, the use of the adjective 'Western' is very frequent throughout the thesis and needs to be read as an umbrella-term for the names often employed by the Byzantines in order to identify people from the West, for example Latin, Frankish and Varangian.[20] It is important to bear in mind that the inclusion of all these populations under the term Western does not mean that they all shared the same identity. Although they shared the common traits mentioned above, it is clear that there was not such a thing as a Western identity. For instance, a Venetian merchant and a Varangian from Scandinavia would not have recognised themselves as belonging to the same group.

The material employed in order to carry out this investigation is eclectic. The main sources are texts (mainly Greek and Latin) and material culture (artefacts and monuments). While the use of the former is more extensive, the latter's role is equally important. The combination of texts and material culture is not a new approach; recent scholarship in Byzantine studies has already made use of both types of evidence.[21] However, this has not been done for the study of the Western presence in Byzantium

[20] Kazhdan (2001), pp. 84-91.

[21] For example, Parani (2003); Grotowski (2010).

during the reigns of Alexios and John, probably due to the scarcity of material evidence. So far scholars have mainly focused on the study of the written sources.

The Byzantine textual sources include a wide range of works. During the period under study the histories of John Zonaras and Nikephoros Bryennios were written. However, the main texts are the *Alexiad* by Anna Komnene and the works by John Kinnamos and Niketas Choniates, all of which are dated to the period after 1143. The *Alexiad*, written during the first years of Manuel's reign,[22] is the most important source of information for Alexios' life and reign. Throughout the work Anna complains about the circumstances under which she is writing, for instance she claims that she is not allowed to receive any visits. After Anna's failed attempt to take the throne, her brother John forced her into the Kecharitomene monastery. As a result, her dislike towards her brother is clearly reflected in the *Alexiad*; John is only mentioned on very few occasions, giving the impression that he played no role whatsoever during Alexios' reign. Moreover, some of the events narrated in the *Alexiad* are in fact veiled references to the political situation of the Byzantine Empire at the time when Anna was writing, that is during Manuel's reign.[23] Thus, Anna's literary agenda contains mid-twelfth-century reflections which she used in order to picture a more positive image of her father's policies. This background cannot be underestimated when reading the *Alexiad* as a source for the reign of Alexios I. Kinnamos and Choniates wrote their respective histories much later and so they were not eyewitnesses of the period under study. Kinnamos composed his work during the brief reign of Manuel's son Alexios II (1180-1183)[24] and Choniates both before and after 1204, starting in the reign of Alexios III (1195-1203) and writing and revising his work until the end of his life, c. 1215-1217.[25] However, in the absence of an 'official' historian for John's reign, the

[22] Anna Komnene (2009), p. ix.

[23] Stephenson (2003).

[24] Kinnamos (1976), pp. 2-5.

[25] Simpson (2006), pp. 200-201, 220; Simpson (2013).

works of Kinnamos and Choniates become the only source of information for this period. Further Greek sources are also employed; they include, among others, typika (Kecharitomene and Pantokrator monasteries), letters (Theophylact of Ohrid), commentaries of canons (John Zonaras), poems (Nicholas Kallikles and Theodore Prodromos), panegyrics (Nikephoros Basilakes and Michael Italikos) and monastic inventories (Xylourgou monastery). The Latin sources also show a wide variety; they include chronicles, letters, commercial documents, trading privileges and hagiography. The chronicles of the First Crusade, written in the years after the arrival of the Crusaders to the Holy Land, are an outstanding source of information and complement Anna's narration by offering the Western version of the event. The main chronicles employed in his study, the works of Albert of Aachen, Ralph of Caen and Raymond D'Aguilers, also had a very specific aim, that is to glorify the Crusade and its protagonists (Duke Godfrey, Tancred and Count Raymond respectively). Moreover, the disagreement between the Crusader leaders and the Byzantine emperor concerning the fate of Antioch after the former had conquered the Syrian city poisoned the relations between the two parties. As a result, the image of Alexios I presented in some of these works is a rather negative one.[26] The chronicles' agenda is to advocate the Crusader actions while the Byzantine Empire's claims are undermined. Thus, the information from these works cannot be taken for granted. Commercial documents are also significant as we have no such evidence from the Byzantine Empire. Other non-Greek sources have also been included. The Norse sagas stand out among this group of textual sources.[27] These are mainly Scandinavian tales which narrate historical events and other stories; some of them relate the activities of Scandinavians who travelled to the Byzantine Empire and provide details about their activities there. Most sagas were written down a long time after the events took place, existing previously as oral traditions. For example, *Heimskringla* was written in the first half of the thirteenth century by the Icelandic poet

[26] Frankopan (2012), pp. 197-198.

[27] For example, Sturluson, Snorri (1964); *Morkinskinna* (2000).

Snorri Sturluson (c.1179-1241). Finally, there also are a few references from Russian, Arabic and Armenian works.

Most of these sources date from the eleventh and twelfth centuries and cover a period longer than the reigns of Alexios and John. The evidence employed is not limited to this period for different reasons. Information about the period before 1081 has mainly been used in order to provide a view of the Western presence in Byzantium before the arrival of the Komnenian dynasty. It includes the works of John Skylitzes (and his continuation), Michael Attaleiates, Michael Psellos and Kekaumenos. Nevertheless, earlier evidence has also been consulted as it provided significant information for certain aspects. For instance, this is the case of the Venetian privileges granted during the joint reign of Basil II and Constantine VIII or the writings by Liudprand of Cremona. The latter are mentioned often because their author provides a Western point of view and also some unique information. Moreover, post-1143 textual sources are also discussed because in some cases they provide crucial information for this study. One significant case is the typikon of the Kosmosoteira monastery, dated to 1152.

My analysis of the textual sources began by looking at the works narrating the period before 1081. The aim was to understand the extent of the Western presence in Byzantium before Alexios ascended the throne. Then I focused on the works by Anna Komnene, Kinnamos and Choniates. These have been used to gather general information about the Western presence in Byzantium, for example the roles that Westerners played in the Byzantine Empire. They also provided a Byzantine picture of the Westerners, their look, character and customs. This portrait highlights the differences between Westerners and Byzantines. Finally, these works also indicate cases of interaction between the two groups and, in very few instances, the result of these contacts. This first stage of investigation produced a list of aspects, which deserved further research and became case studies. Some of them required familiarity with Western culture and society, and so it was necessary to look at the secondary

bibliography on specific subjects (duels, hairstyles). Also, it is important to note that a great deal of evidence analyzed in this study deals with the Western presence in the Byzantine capital. The prominence of Constantinople within the empire meant that Westerners mainly travelled and settled there. This, added to the scarcity of information about Westerners in other urban centres or the provinces, has resulted in a very Constantinopolitan picture. Moreover, most of the Byzantine textual sources explored in this research were written by authors who were also established in the Byzantine capital and thus provide us with a Constantinopolitan point of view which cannot always be extrapolated to other locations of the empire.

The material culture analyzed is also diverse. Most of the artefacts discussed were produced for the elite in the twelfth century; there are manuscripts, enamels and icons. Two unique manuscripts stand out: the so-called Madrid Skylitzes, an illuminated version of the chronicle of John Skylitzes. This manuscript, today in the Biblioteca Nacional in Madrid, is controversial because it was produced in Sicily during the second half of the twelfth century and thus it is not clear if it was illuminated following a Byzantine model.[28] The other manuscript is the so-called Eisiterioi or Epithalamion, today preserved in the Vatican Library. Its dating is disputed, but perhaps it was produced for Agnes-Anna of France, the daughter of King Louis VII (1137-1180) and the bride of Manuel's son and successor Alexios II (1180-1183). Among the monuments discussed are mainly churches with mosaic or fresco decoration. While most of the examples are Byzantine monuments, as in the case of the churches of the Kosmosoteira and Nerezi monasteries, buildings outside the Byzantine world are also discussed. This is the case of the Nativity Church in Bethlehem, a sixth-century monument decorated with both mosaic and paintings from the Crusader period.

Material culture has been examined for several reasons. First, some artefacts could be the result of the Western presence in Byzantium. While there are not many examples, the

[28] Ševčenko (1984), pp. 124-125.

stained glass fragments from the Pantokrator and Chora monasteries suggest that this might have been the case. Second, objects and monuments provide details about Byzantine society. For instance, we can visualize how Byzantines looked like, their hairstyle, clothing and the weapons they used. Iconographic representations could be misleading because the evidence which they provide may follow older models and thus it does not show the actual contemporary reality. However, details found in portraits of certain individuals, for instance emperors and donors, can be considered as real depictions. Moreover, iconographic representations can help us to trace changes, namely, the introduction of new elements, that took place during this period and which may have been conveyed by the Western presence. These new elements, for instance a new weapon or hairstyle, can be compared to Western models in order to speculate about the impact of the Western presence in Byzantium. These iconographic elements may complement or contradict the information from the written sources. The latter outcome demonstrates that the reality is far more complex, suggesting that the veracity of the sources should not be taken for granted. Generally scholars seem to have privileged textual sources over material evidence, while the current project aims at providing a much more integrated evaluation of the two. The discovery of contradictions and ambiguities in the evidence should not be viewed as a methodological weakness; on the contrary it demonstrates how complex it is to chart the processes of influence and exchange.

The thesis is divided into four chapters. The first is dedicated to the Westerners in the Empire before Alexios ascended the throne. As it has been mentioned above, it is necessary to know the circumstances and status of the Westerners present in Byzantium before 1081 in order to understand the possible changes that happened during the reigns of Alexios I and John II. The main focus of the chapter is on the eleventh century. However, there are also a few references from the tenth century, as they provide us with significant information regarding our subject. The purpose of the chapter is to appreciate the Western presence in Byzantium before the establishment of the Komnenian dynasty:

What were their interests? Did they interact, and to what extent, with the Byzantine population? The chapter is divided in four sections. While three are dedicated to people, the first one is a case apart which deals with a geographic region: Southern Italy. This region is examined because it was part of the Byzantine Empire until the Norman conquest albeit with a majority of Western population. This section covers a wide range of topics, from political events to individual figures and their contacts with Constantinople. The following two sections are dedicated to the activities that Westerners mainly undertook in Byzantium, thus creating two broad categories: mercenaries and merchants. For this reason, Westerners of different geographic origins are discussed together, though some ethnic groups require a lengthier treatment. Their analysis may yield, among others, patterns of infiltration and potential influence. The last section of the chapter deals with the diplomatic marriages negotiated by the Byzantine court with Western powers. Although material culture and habits play a major role in the thesis, in this first chapter their role is less important due to lack of information. Nevertheless, a few pieces of evidence are briefly mentioned. Each one belongs to a larger theme and therefore they are treated in depth in their respective chapters with further references. The only exception is the famous brass doors from Italy.[29] Four of the surviving examples date to before 1081. This chronology makes their production an interesting episode preceding the Komnenian dynasty.

The first chapter sets the tone for the rest of the study and it also becomes the departing point for the second chapter. This deals with the Westerners in the Byzantine Empire during the reigns of Alexios I and John II. The chapter is divided in four sections; each section is a category representing the different spheres in which Westerners played a significant role: army, trade, administration and court. The army category focuses on Western mercenaries fighting in the Byzantine army, which is mainly the cases of Varangians and Normans. The trade category investigates the privileges and activities of Italian merchants; these are mainly Venetians and Pisans, who stand out among the other

[29] Frazer (1973); *Le porte del paradiso* (2009).

merchants because they received commercial privileges from the Byzantine emperor. The administration category discusses five individuals attested in Constantinople during this period and whose position seems to have a number of important similar traits: they were at the service of the Byzantine emperor or had linguistic skills that were sought after at court. And finally, the court category focuses on two diplomatic brides, Piroska and Bertha of Sulzbach, Western women that married into the emperor's family and became Byzantine empresses. The study of all these people and their activities provides us with information about their interaction with the Byzantine population. Thus, these categories not only help us to understand the development of the Western presence in Byzantium but also its possible results. In sum, chapters one and two have established the different groups of Westerners in Byzantium and also their activities in different periods. On the other hand, chapters three and four analyse their possible impact in Byzantine society.

Chapter three is dedicated to material culture. It explores the possibility that the Western presence in Byzantium had some impact on Byzantine material culture. This aspect of the relations between Byzantium and the West in this early period is certainly not well known and remains underestimated as a result of the scarcity of evidence. This scarcity has led scholars to believe that Byzantium did not adopt Western elements before 1204.[30] For the period under study, the opposite development is usually emphasised, that is the superior Byzantine culture crossing the borders of the empire to exert influence over a culturally poorer/inferior West. Nevertheless, there are a few cases that can show the effects of Western material culture in Byzantium, three of which are explored in this chapter: the introduction of the kite shield, the use of large bells and the stained glass from the Pantokrator and Chora monasteries. The three case studies look at different instances of material culture, but only in the case of the stained glass do we have physical remains left. The other two are mainly examined through visual and textual sources. The reason for their selection is the fact that for a long time they have been at

[30] The Western impact is usually associated with the conquests of the Fourth Crusade in 1204. Konstatios (2007), p. 157.

the heart of the controversy concerning the possible Western influence in Byzantium and further evidence presented here offers new ideas which may help settle the argument concerning their origins in Byzantium. While there may be other instances of Western influence on Byzantine material culture, as in clothing and pottery, the present cases are the most obvious examples of interaction between the West and Byzantium and the ones that can be fruitfully investigated because there is relevant evidence. The existing evidence for these cases clearly points out that the exchanges resulted in innovations within the Byzantine Empire, at least to a certain degree and within certain milieux (imperial/aristocratic, military). Moreover, the limited length of this study does not allow a longer focus on this topic. The three selected cases are independent and, unlike chapters one and two, they cannot be organised in chronological order. The first case study deals with the mysterious remains of stained glass from two imperial monasteries built in Constantinople during the reign of John II. These fragments of stained glass, today partly on display at the Istanbul Archaeological Museum, so far remain unique examples of this practice in the Byzantine Empire. The use of stained glass is associated with the decoration of churches in Western Europe, and thus these fragments potentially are the most obvious example of Western contribution to the artistic production of Byzantium. Their discovery implies that a Western practice was at least tried in Constantinople under the sponsorship of the imperial family during this period. The second case study is the use of large bells in Byzantine churches and monasteries. The bells have been included because, first of all, their use in the religious sphere originated in the West, and secondly, a number of references to large bells are recorded in Byzantine sources of the eleventh and twelfth centuries. The fact that the Western presence in Byzantium also increased during these two centuries may not be a coincidence. More importantly, until this period the Byzantines had only used semantra, and so the appearance of bells in the written sources suggests the introduction of a new practice in Byzantium. The third and last case study of material culture is the so-called kite shield. This type of shield was an eleventh-century innovation, but its origins have not been established with certainty. The visual evidence (illuminated manuscripts,

steatite icons) shows that the new shield was not unknown in Byzantium. On the other hand, it has been associated with the presence of Western mercenaries in Byzantium, who are known to have fought in the Byzantine army with their own weapons and military techniques. These three case studies provide us with a glimpse of different scenarios in which the Western presence in Byzantium flourished: Westerners at court (stained glass), the establishment of Western churches and monasteries in the empire (large bells) and the service of Western mercenaries in the army (kite shield). For this reason, although the three cases may not look connected, they actually complement each other as they show the Western impact in different spheres.

The fourth and last chapter of the thesis is dedicated to a number of Western habits and customs that may have been introduced in Byzantium as a result of the Western presence in the empire. The chapter discusses the possibility that the interaction between Westerners and the Byzantine population resulted in some of these customs being adopted by the latter. The chapter is organised in three sections dealing with different customs, each one organised chronologically. The first section looks at tournaments and duels, two military practices which were part of the Western knight culture. The Western mercenaries in the Byzantine army and the passage of the First Crusade through Constantinople suggest that Byzantines knew these practices, but did they adopt them? The investigation about these practices complements our discussion concerning the Western contribution to the military affairs of the Byzantine Empire. The second section focuses on hairstyles, both female and male. The chapter considers that certain changes and innovations in the hairstyle fashion of the Byzantines could have been the result of the Western presence. In the case of men the beard is also discussed. The third and last section looks at a specific hand gesture that is mentioned in the textual sources. This gesture has already been discussed regarding the oaths that the Crusaders took while in Constantinople. Nonetheless, the inclusion of neglected evidence and a fresh approach present results that challenge the current scholarly views on this topic.

In sum, the distinct chapters of this thesis aim at presenting a broad picture of the Western presence in Byzantium and its possible consequences on Byzantine society. The study of different milieus (military, trade, imperial court) together with the use of contrasting evidence (textual and visual sources) and the investigation of aspects of material culture and social practices result in a more balanced image of the reality behind the Westerners in Byzantium.

CHAPTER 1: THE WESTERN PRESENCE BEFORE 1081

Although the presence of Westerners in Byzantium intensified from Alexios' reign, a number of Westerners could already be found in the empire long before that. This chapter focuses on the presence of these Westerners in the Byzantine Empire before Alexios ascended the throne. It is divided in four sections. The first looks at Southern Italy, a territory that was ruled by the Byzantine emperors during most of the eleventh century. The second and third sections deal with the Western mercenaries serving in the Byzantine army and the Western merchants trading in Byzantine territory respectively. The last section is dedicated to the diplomatic brides exchanged between the West and Byzantium during the eleventh century until 1081.

SOUTHERN ITALY

Until 1071 the Byzantine Empire held territories in Southern Italy. This significant area constituted the western border of the Byzantine Empire and it was used to extend Byzantine rule into nearby regions. The eleventh century was a key period for the history of Byzantine Italy. Byzantine rule witnessed a territorial expansion in the Italian peninsula, but this domination eventually came to an end, and more importantly, it was replaced by Norman rule.[31] This political change resulted in a migration of people from north to south, and also from west to east. As a result, during this period Southern Italy passed from a border province often in turmoil to the seat of an aggressive power which frequently looked towards the east as its natural space for conquest. This is a crucial point in the history of the eleventh century which had many repercussions for the Byzantine Empire, the first being Robert Guiscard's invasion just months after Alexios I took Constantinople in April 1081.[32] The attack was one of the main consequences of the loss of the Italian possessions.

[31] Gay (1904); Chalandon (1907); Loud (2000).

[32] PBW Robert 61

The territory had a diverse population. While Calabria was mainly inhabited by a Greek speaking population, this was not the case of Apulia, where the Latin element was dominant. Religion also was an important difference in this territory. Even though Southern Italy was administered from Constantinople, part of the population followed the Western rite and spoke Italian. Thus, some Byzantine subjects from Southern Italy were Westerners according to the definition given earlier. They obviously maintained relations with the imperial administration at Constantinople, travelled to other Byzantine provinces and it is possible that a more permanently settled community resided in the capital. Some of these individuals served the local administration and were probably bilingual as Greek was the official language of the empire. They may even have worn clothes inspired by Byzantine fashion. Melus, one of the leaders of Bari, was described as dressing in the 'Greek fashion' when he met a group of Normans in Monte Gargano in 1016.[33] By that William of Apulia probably meant a costume produced in the Byzantine Empire or following the Byzantine fashion. On the other hand, some of these subjects frequently rebelled against Byzantine authority and aspired to govern themselves independently. Melus led one of these rebellions, and when he was defeated in 1019 he fled to the court of the German Emperor Henry II.[34] These leading figures of the local population suffered the consequences of their political intrigues and interests. From written sources we learn how some of them were taken to Constantinople, presumably to face charges for their own administration, rebellions or simply in order that they could not continue opposing the Byzantine government. Lupus Protospatharius mentions that in 1035, Bisantius, the Archbishop of Bari, died in Constantinople, where he was probably taken as a hostage. Bisantius is described as an adversary of the 'Greeks' (atque terribilis et sine metu contra omnes graecos).[35] It was not a new tradition to keep hostages in the capital; this way they could be employed to blackmail their relatives and community back home. Others collaborated or even changed sides

[33] William of Puglia, pp. 99-101, PBW Melus 10101

[34] *Antiche croniche*, pp. 31, 153; Amatus of Montecassino, p. 51.

[35] *Antiche cronache,* pp. 32, 68. PBW Bisantius 10101.

according to their interests. This is the case of Argyros, the son of the rebel Melus and, according to Paul Magdalino, the most important leader of 'the Italian party' in Constantinople.[36] After fighting Byzantine rule in Southern Italy, he entered the service of the Byzantine emperor. In 1045 or 1046 he travelled to Constantinople where he received great honours.[37] In 1047 he played a significant role during Tornikios' attempt to take the throne. According to a south Italian chronicle, Argyros led Frankish and Byzantine soldiers in an overnight attack against Tornikios' forces.[38] On the other hand, Skylitzes narrated that the magistros Argyros, the Italian, advised Constantine IX concerning the military preparations against Tornikios' troops.[39] Thus, Argyros was a close adviser of the Byzantine emperor. After some years in the Byzantine capital, in 1051 he was sent to Southern Italy as the governor of the Italian territories.[40] This appointment is significant because until then the Byzantine governors were not native of the Italian peninsula; Byzantine emperors sent the katepano from Constantinople in order to administer and defend these territories.[41] Argyros also played a major role in the events that led to the schism of 1054.[42] Patriarch Keroularios considered him one of his main opponents. This may have been the result of previous contacts between the two. Apparently in previous years, while he was in Constantinople, Argyros and Keroularios had discussed the azymes, that is the use of unleavened bread in the Latin eucharist.[43] Because of the Italian's views, Keroularios had refused him communion a number of times. This piece of information shows that Argyros, because of his close position to the emperor, had mingled with the leader of the Orthodox Church. Moreover, these contacts

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[36] Magdalino (1996a). PBW Argyros 10101

[37] *Antiche cronache*, pp. 70, 157; William of Apulia, p. 133.

[38] *Antiche cronache*, p. 158.

[39] John Skylizes, p. 440.

[40] *Antiche Cronache*, pp. 71, 159.

[41] Gay (1904), pp. 470-471.

[42] Loud (2000), p. 120.

[43] Smith (1978), pp. 123-124.

provide us with an early example of the clashes between Westerners and Byzantines concerning their religious differences during this period. It is clear that the high position of an azymite Italian at court had not pleased Keroularios. For the patriarch of Constantinople, the fact that an influential imperial officer defended the use of azymes was not acceptable. Nevertheless, it is possible to assume that the Byzantine administration found in Argyros a necessary and useful ally when the political situation in Italy was becoming dangerous for the Byzantine interests. Through him they could influence the Italian population and closely follow the affairs of the region.

Another important and famous figure of the Italian community was John Italos. Italos is noteworthy because he provides us with another example of an Italian that achieved a high position in the Byzantine court, this time within the intellectual milieu. The *Alexiad* contains the most information about him, the reason being the trial he faced soon after Alexios became emperor.[44] Anna states that John was from Italy[45] and calls him Latin.[46] His nickname also reveals that he was Italian, though his geographical origin does not state if he was of Lombard, Norman or of Greek stock. According to Anna, Italos' father joined a Sicilian rebellion against Byzantine rule. Anna also informs us that Italos migrated to Constantinople, when parts of Southern Italy were still under Byzantine rule.[47] Paul Magdalino has suggested that Italos may have arrived in the capital in the entourage of Argyros, when he defected to the Byzantine Empire.[48] Anna points out that although the Byzantine capital was a centre for education and literary studies, Italos received his literary education from rough men. Thus, if he was not acquainted with Byzantine culture before arriving in Constantinople, he became hellenised there. However, in her attempt to draw a pejorative picture of him, Anna criticizes Italos'

[44] Anna Komnene, pp. 161-167. PBW Ioannes 66

[45] Anna Komnene, p. 161.

[46] Ibid., pp. 164-165.

[47] Ibid., p. 162.

[48] Magdalino (1996a).

accent when speaking Greek.[49] While Greek may not have been his native language, this detail may suggest that Italos spoke with a local accent from Southern Italy. In Constantinople he became a pupil of Michael Psellos from whom he acquired his knowledge of philosophy and probably through him he became known at court. Nevertheless, Anna tells us that Italos was not able to grasp the truths of philosophy as a result of his barbaric temperament.[50] Anna also mentioned that Michael VII and his brothers were friends of Italos.[51] Moreover, Michael sent him to Dyrrachion, as an expert in Italian affairs, perhaps in order to deal with the Norman threat in the Balkans, since Bari had already fallen some months before Michael VII became emperor in 1071. He may have been entrusted with leading the negotiations with Robert Guiscard regarding the matrimonial alliance with the Doukas family. Being Italian may have been an advantage for such a task.[52] His teacher, Psellos, drafted two letters proposing the union in different moments before the betrothal finally took place.[53] The documents proposed the marriage of one of Guiscard's daughters and Michael's brother Konstantios and then his own son Constantine. Perhaps Italos was chosen to take the letters to Dyrrachion. The employment of an Italian for a diplomatic mission was a precedent for later cases in which Westerners were employed to approach Western potentates. Italos eventually succeeded Psellos as the Hypatos ton Philosophon (principal teacher of philosophy), but Anna tells us that he was not able to help his students much.[54] This was an important position in the literary circles of the capital and we may assume that by then he was an influential figure at court. It is remarkable that an Italian was appointed to this position. Like Argyros, Italos was associated with the ruling emperor. Thus, during this period Byzantine emperors employed Westerners at court. What is important

[49] Anna Komnene, p. 165.

[50] Ibid., pp. 162-163.

[51] Ibid., p. 163.

[52] Malamut (2007), p. 200.

[53] Sathas (1972), pp. 385-392, n. 143 and n. 144.

[54] Anna Komnene, p. 165.

to note is that Italos' position was within both the diplomatic and intellectual spheres. Due to his activities, Italos was accused of heresy but Emperor Michael VII protected him.[55] When Alexios ascended the throne the situation changed. Anna narrated that her father, seeing Italos everywhere causing problems, referred the case to his brother the Sebastokrator Isaac.[56] She also reported that Eustratios Garidas himself, the new patriarch of Constantinople, was close to becoming his disciple.[57] Although it is likely that this last information was an exaggeration, these references suggest the influence that Italos had over part of the elite and intellectual circles of the Byzantine capital. This could be one of the reasons why Alexios turned against him once he became emperor. Another reason was Italos' association with the previous dynasty.[58] The new regime of Alexios Komnenos renewed the heresy accusations against Italos and this time the trial found him guilty and Italos fell in disgrace. Regarding his fate, Paul Magdalino has suggested the possibility that after his fall, he may have become chartophylax of the church of Antioch, perhaps after the First Crusade.[59] The latest testimony of Italos' fame was his appearance in the twelfth-century literary satire *Timarion*.[60] It is interesting because it states that John was hated by the Byzantines (the Galileans, or Christians), ironically not for his Italian origin ('barbarian' according to Anna Komnene), but for his interest in philosophy. It seems that his figure and mainly his scholarly activities and teaching left a long lasting memory among his disciples and the intellectuals of Constantinople.

The cases of Argyros and Italos were unusual; during this period many Westerners travelling to Byzantium did so in order to serve as mercenaries. We now turn to their presence in the Byzantine Empire.

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[55] Clucas (1981), p. 11; Gouillard (1985), pp. 133-179.

[56] Anna Komnene, p. 166.

[57] Ibid., p. 167.

[58] Clucas (1981), p. 91.

[59] Magdalino (2003), pp. 50-51.

[60] Pseudo-Luciano, pp. 88-89.

MERCENARIES

During the eleventh century, after a period of conquest, the Byzantine army underwent a process of profound transformation. Its composition started to include an increasing number of foreign mercenaries. These contingents slowly replaced the previous Byzantine army, which had been organised in thematic units.[61] The main reasons for these changes may be found in the tenth-century expansion of the Byzantine Empire,[62] but they only became apparent during the eleventh century. Although mercenaries were not a novelty, their role and numbers seem to have become more significant and from this moment onwards the Byzantine army relied on such groups of mercenaries. Thus, by the time Alexios took the throne, his army was dependent on mercenaries, meaning that the Byzantine army was not only composed of 'Byzantine' soldiers. It was a multiethnic army where, among others, there were Armenians, Georgians, Slavs, Pechenegs and Normans. Most of these ethnic groups originated in the area of the Balkans and eastern Asia Minor, that is around the Byzantine Empire. The eleventh century witnessed the political annexation of some of them; this is the case of Bulgarians and Armenians. While their lands were annexed and their political independence disappeared, their own identity survived and promoted ethnic and religious diversity within the borders of the empire. On the other hand, smaller groups of mercenaries originated from further away, namely from Western Europe. Byzantine sources from the second half of the eleventh century usually mention 'Franks' or Westerners, giving the impression that they had become a predominant group in the Byzantine army.[63] By 'Franks' the Byzantines meant the people primarily from north of the Alps or in northern Italy in most cases.[64] Frank became one of the main nouns the Byzantines used to call Western Europeans, without going into detail. This broad concept makes the ethnic identification of some Western mercenaries very difficult. In

[61] Haldon (2008), pp. 110-111.

[62] Cheynet (1997), p. 112.

[63] Shepard (1993), pp. 275-305.

[64] Kazhdan (2001), pp. 89-91.

many cases it is not possible to ascertain if a Frank was actually French or Norman. Although we know that many Western mercenaries came from Normandy or were Normans from Southern Italy, Byzantine sources do not specify their particular origins. In fact, Anna Komnene is the only Byzantine author who actually mentions Normandy, as the origin of Robert Guiscard (Νορμανίας).[65] The term Norman (Νορμὰν) is also found in the Muses, the poem supposedly written by Alexios for his son and successor John.[66]

It has been argued that the main task of the Western mercenaries was the defence of the eastern borders.[67] While the Byzantine frontier in Asia Minor had moved eastwards with the annexation of the Armenian principalities, during the 1060s it came increasingly under pressure from Turkish attacks. At the same time, the Byzantine army started to become less effective. Its permanent presence along the eastern borders decreased as a result of different reasons. The recently conquered Armenian territories may have appeared as a barrier against new threats from the East. The imperial administration also diverted funds and some of the contingents based in the area were scrapped. Thus, an alternative solution to guard the borders was the enlistment of Western mercenaries. They were professional soldiers with no relation to the Byzantine Empire. In many cases they were grouped together in tagmata whose chiefs were fellow countrymen. They could fight in any locations and also be used in different circumstances. Finally, if they were no longer required, they could easily be disbanded. However, while they were efficient, they could also prove highly unreliable. The political crisis and civil wars during the 1070s offered these groups of mercenaries an opportunity from which they could benefit at the expense of the Empire.

The main groups of Western mercenaries in Byzantium during this period were Varangians and Normans. Although these were the most important ethnic groups, the

[65] Anna Komnene, p. 36; Hermans (1979), p. 86.

[66] Maas (1913), p. 361.

[67] Cheynet (2002b), p. 120; Cheynet (1997), pp. 118-119.

Byzantine army also recruited other Westerners as mercenaries. Before we look at these two groups we will investigate less known groups of Westerners that served in the Byzantine army. One case is that of the Nemitzoi. They were another group of Western mercenaries fighting in the Byzantine armies during this period. The etymology of Nemitzoi derives from a Slavic adjective which refers to Germans or Bavarians. Anna mentioned that they belonged to a barbarian race which had for a long time served in the Byzantine army.[68] A certain Peter recorded by Kekaumenos in his so-called *Strategikon* may be one of the earliest Germans to have served the Byzantine emperor.[69] According to him, Peter was a relative of the king of the Franks. He travelled to Byzantium in order to find employment during Basil II's reign. Kekaumenos used Peter's figure as an example of a foreigner at the service of the Byzantine emperor who was never granted high positions in order not to wrong other Byzantine officials. Nemitzoi were among the soldiers that took part in Romanos IV's expedition against the Turks in 1071.[70] The *Alexiad* and the chronicle of John Zonaras provide more information concerning their presence in Byzantium. In their description of the siege of Constantinople by Alexios I's army in 1081 we are told that a contingent of Nemitzoi guarded a section of the land walls of Constantinople.[71] According to Anna, another section was guarded by another group of foreign mercenaries, the Varangians. We will see below that Varangian contingents were present in the Byzantine capital. However, this piece of information suggests that other groups of Western mercenaries were also stationed in Constantinople, and did not only serve in the eastern borders. The presence of the Nemitzoi in the Byzantine capital could also be explained by the fact that Nikephoros Botaneiates may have called them from their own positions as soon as he realised the imminence of the Komnenian insurrection. Anna also recorded the name of the leader of

[68] Anna Komnene, p. 79.

[69] Kekaumenos (96.09-24); Todt (2007), pp. 648-650.

[70] Zonaras, p. 213; Skylitzes Continuatus, pp. 135, 143; Michael Attaleiates, p. 110.

[71] Anna Komnene, p. 79, John Zonaras, pp. 246-247.

the German contingent, a certain Gilpraktos.[72] Zonaras recorded that the Nemitzoi guarded the gate of Charisios.[73] It is through Gilpraktos' treason that the besieging troops entered into the Byzantine capital. What is interesting about Anna's narration concerning the entry of Alexios' troops into Constantinople is that while she did not praise the German defection, she blamed the foreign soldiers for the disorders caused in the city.[74] According to her the Byzantine soldiers that took part in the looting of the city followed the example of the barbarians.

The name of certain individuals may also betray their origins. One of the most interesting examples of Westerners serving in the Byzantine army is a certain Guzman mentioned in the chronicle of Matthew of Edessa.[75] The information about this individual is very scant; he seems to have led a contingent of Westerners in the eastern provinces in the late 1060s or early 1070s. He has been supposed to be either Catalan[76] or Spanish.[77] Guzmán is a Spanish name commonly used as a surname. It is indeed possible that his origins were in one of the Christian kingdoms of the Iberian Peninsula. Perhaps he was from the kingdom of Aragon. The explanation for Guzman's presence in Byzantium probably is his association with other mercenaries serving in the Byzantine army, in this case Franks. Frankish soldiers took part in the Reconquista. At the so-called Pre-Crusade of Barbastro (1064) led by the Aragonese King Sancho Ramírez, the contribution of Frankish soldiers was important. According to Amatus of Montecassino there were French, Burgundian and Norman knights.[78] Among them was Robert Crispin, the Krispinos of the Byzantine sources and possibly a Norman. Some years later Robert Crispin was at the service of the Byzantine Empire. Perhaps Guzman followed Robert

[72] Anna Komnene, pp. 80-81. PBW Gilpraktos 15001

[73] John Zonaras, pp. 246-247.

[74] Anna Komnene, p. 81.

[75] Matthew of Edessa, p. 108.

[76] Matthew of Edessa, p. 313, note 7.

[77] Cheynet (2002b), p. 118.

[78] Amatus of Montecassino, pp. 46-47. PBW Robert 101

Crispin to the East and joined the latter's *tagmata*.[79] What seems clear is that an important group of soldiers from Western Europe took the opportunity to increase their wealth and prestige by joining the different expeditions which were taking place in the Mediterranean areas. In the case of the Byzantine Empire, they were attracted by the new opportunities which the transformation of the Byzantine army offered. Moreover, the new and serious Turkish threat was an important factor; it provided mercenaries with career possibilities in Byzantium. Nevertheless, by the time of the Turkish threat on the eastern borders, the most prominent group of Western mercenaries in Byzantium had already been established for more than half a century. This is the case of the Varangian guard.

Varangians: The Varangian guard was a special group of soldiers, a kind of elite regiment that had the task of protecting the life of the Byzantine emperors. Their establishment as a privileged group dates from the reign of Basil II (976-1025), who had requested military support from Prince Vladimir of Kiev in order to crush the rebellion of Bardas Phokas.[80] The most famous feature of the Varangians was their weapon, the axe (ῥομφαίαν or πέλεκυς), which is frequently mentioned by the Byzantine sources and appears as their main attribute.[81] Their fame lies in their special role as imperial bodyguards (the 'Varangians of the City'). The runic inscriptions on the marble parapets of the southern gallery of the Hagia Sophia hint at their close contact with the emperor and his family.[82] Moreover, Varangians also took part in military expeditions in different locations of the Byzantine Empire, from Asia Minor to Southern Italy (the 'Varangians outside the City'). They fought in Sicily in the late 1030s, in the campaign led by

[79] He may not have been the first individual from the Iberian Peninsula attested in the sources before 1081. A certain monk called John, τὸν Ισπανὸν, was in Constantinople during the excommunication events of 1054. However, he is recorded as a translator, Will (1861), p. 161; Geanakoplos (1976), p. 99. PBW Ioannes 446

[80] Blöndal and Benedikz (1978), pp. 41-45; Benedikz (1969), p. 24.

[81] Michael Psellos, p. 253.

[82] Knirk (1999), pp. 26-27.

George Maniakes against the Muslims of the island. In the late 1040s Varangians were also present in Bari where they accompanied the katepano.[83] From Kekaumenos we know that they also were among the Byzantine contingents defending the city of Otranto from the Normans (Ρώσους καὶ Βαράγγους).[84] He also described them as soldiers and seamen. Moreover, there seems to have been a church (Santa Maria dei Guaranghi) near Taranto which suggests the presence of Varangians in the area.[85] Also, runic inscriptions on a marble lion from Piraeus, and currently in Venice, indicate Varangian activity in Greece.[86] Although the runes are not legible anymore, they have been dated to the 1070s.

One of the most illustrious members of the Varangian guard was Harald Hardrada.[87] This individual is very significant because he belonged to the royal family of Norway. His half-brother was St Olaf, King of Norway (1015-1028), and Harald eventually became King of Norway too (1046-1066). In the Byzantine Empire he served under several emperors in different expeditions, among them was the Sicilian campaign mentioned above. It has even been suggested that he was involved in the blinding of the Emperor Michael V.[88] He must also have been rather famous among the Byzantines, as he was mentioned by Kekaumenos.[89] He used Harald's figure in the section of advice to the emperor. Kekaumenos explained that foreigners should not be offered positions above the title of spatharokandidatos, a court dignity granted to individuals in the lower ties of the military hierarchy. He noted that if the emperor allowed this to happen, he would alienate Byzantine officials. Kekaumenos wrote that even though Harald (Ἀράλτης) was from a royal lineage, he never complained about the fact that he was not

[83] *Antiche croniche*, p. 158.

[84] Kekaumenos (30.03-06).

[85] Blöndal and Benedikz (1978), p. 111.

[86] Ibid., pp. 230-233.

[87] Snorri Sturluson, pp. 578-589; *Morkinskinna*, pp. 132-148.

[88] Snorri Sturluson, p. 588; Lönnroth (1998), pp. 37-49.

[89] Kekaumenos (97.01- 27).

given a better position than that of spatharokandidatos. This is the second reference in the work of Kekaumenos concerning the possibility that foreigners could be granted high positions by the Byzantine emperor. This piece of evidence could suggest that by the time that Kekaumenos was writing, during Michael VII's reign, certain foreigners had been elevated to significant positions and he was warning the emperor of the possible consequences.[90] It is possible to state that the native Byzantines saw these foreigners as their competition in the military sphere.

The ethnic composition of the Varangian guard throughout its history is a controversial topic. The guard was always composed of members from different ethnic groups and these also changed through the centuries. Even the origin of the name Varangian is much contested. A possible theory posits that the word could be a corruption of the word Frank, though it is not certain.[91] The Varangians were a mixed group of populations from northern Europe who travelled to and traded with the area of the Kievan Rus'. Thus, they were a mixed group of different peoples, among them Westerners. However, the ethnic groups can be reduced to two: Scandinavian and Slavonic. There is even evidence for the presence of these two groups in Byzantium before Basil II's reign. Cyril Mango has suggested that the father of Eudokia Ingerina, Basil I's wife, may have stemmed from northern Europe, perhaps from Scandinavia or northern Germany.[92] He has noted that his presence in Byzantium preceded the more famous and later contacts between the Northmen and Byzantium. Although we have no further evidence, this would constitute a very early example of the northern presence in the Byzantine Empire. Also, from Liudprand of Cremona we know that during Nikephoros II's reign there already were Russian ships serving in the Byzantine navy.[93] In other instances Liudprand used the term Normans or Norsemen (the men of the north) to refer to the

[90] His advice was also supposed to contain a reference to Englishmen in Byzantium (Vasiliev, 1937, p. 65; Shepard, 1973, p. 64; Nicol, 1974, p. 188), but this is not the case, Roueché (2000), pp. 209-210; Kekaumenos (95.07-09).

[91] Hermans (1979), p. 86.

[92] Mango (1973), pp. 17-27.

[93] Blöndal and Benedikz (1978), p. 40; Liudprand of Cremona, p. 256.

Russians.[94] The two Russian ships mentioned by Liudprand may well have been Varangian ships.

The ethnic composition of the Varangian guard was altered during the second half of the eleventh century. While its members had been Russian and Norse soldiers, towards the end of the century a new component, the Anglo-Saxons, had become prominent. This may be the reason why John Skylitzes, narrating Michael VI's reign (1056-1057), described the Varangians as Celtic people serving the Romans (γένος δὲ Κελτικὸν οἱ Βάραγγοι μισθοφοροῦντες Ῥωμαίοις).[95] This issue has received a lot of scholarly attention, attempting to discover when the change occurred. It is clear that the Norman invasion of England in 1066 was the main reason for the Anglo-Saxon emigration, though that does not provide us with a date. It has been suggested that even before 1066 there already were contacts between the Byzantine and Anglo-Saxon courts, including the presence of soldiers from England in Byzantium.[96] A Byzantine seal found in Winchester may demonstrate that in some point during the reigns of Romanos IV or Michael VII, the Byzantine Empire was trying to recruit Anglo-Saxon soldiers.[97] It has even been suggested that in London there was a Byzantine office for recruiting mercenaries.[98] However, it seems that the transformation of the Varangian guard took place through more than one wave of refugees and exiles which probably occurred years after 1066, when resistance against the Normans in England may have become futile. By 1081 English were already present in the Byzantine army; Geoffrey Malaterra mentioned them in the battle of Dyrrachion (1081).[99] The first direct reference to the

[94] Liudprand of Cremona, pp. 50, 179.

[95] John Skylitzes, p. 481; according to Jean Claude Cheynet, Skylitzes' definition may refer to the ethnic composition of the guard when he was writing, that is after the events. On the other hand, it may show that the change of the guard's ethnic composition had already taken place in the mid-eleventh century (John Skylitzes, 2012), p. 449, note 3.

[96] Head (1977), p. 187; Ciggaar (1981a), pp. 78-96.

[97] Laurent (1963), p. 95.

[98] Cheynet (2003), pp. 85-100.

[99] Geoffrey Malaterra, p. 157.

Varangian guard as an English contingent in the Byzantine sources is found in Kinnamos, who wrote in the second half of the twelfth century.[100] Narrating the battle of Beroia (1122), he described the axe-bearers (πελεκυφόροις), that is the Varangians, as the British nation (ἔθνος δέ ἐστι τοῦτο βρεταννικόν). Anna Komnene described the Varangians as coming from the island of Thule (Θούλης),[101] an island which according to her had previously been under Roman rule.[102] This last detail may well be a reference to Britain. The main change in the guard's composition probably took place during the reign of Alexios I, and so we will deal with these emigrations later on.[103] On the other hand, after the creation of the Varangian Guard and during most of the eleventh century, the main reason for Scandinavians to travel to Byzantium in order to pursue a military career was not only the wealth they could amass, but also the prestige it would bring them once they would go back home.[104] The wealth of Constantinople and the fact that many Scandinavians found employment in the service of the Byzantine emperor helped to produce a positive and mythical image of Byzantium in the Scandinavian sagas.

The role of the Varangians is usually seen from a military perspective. Our evidence for the Komnenian period provides us with more information about their contacts with the Byzantines. Nevertheless, in the eleventh century a few references offer us interesting details regarding their presence in Byzantium. For example, we know that a Varangian tried to rape a Byzantine woman in the Thrakesion theme in 1034, during the reign of Michael IV (1034-1041).[105] She killed him and the other Varangians of the contingent, following their customs, offered her his possessions. This is a curious case of the interaction between the Varangians and a Byzantine woman in a provincial setting. According to John Skylitzes, this group of Varangians had been dispersed in the area in

[100] Kinnamos, p. 8.

[101] Anna Komnene, pp. 79, 84.

[102] Ibid., p. 193.

[103] Godfrey (1978), p. 66.

[104] Ashley (2013), pp. 213-232.

[105] John Skylitzes, p. 394; Blöndal and Benedikz (1978), pp. 62-63. Anonyma 112 in PBW

order to spend the winter. This detail suggests that when the Varangian contingents were not engaged in military campaign, they possibly had a more frequent contact with the local population. The Varangian presence was not reduced to the capital or the locations in the borders. Skylitzes may have known about the event because he or his parents were from the Thrakesion theme;[106] however, at the beginning of the narration he points out that the event was worthy of note. The fact that a woman had killed a Varangian had certainly impressed him.

Varangians also played a significant role next to the emperor. Psellos mentioned the Varangians (Ταυροσκύθαι) around Isaac Komnenos when receiving the envoys from Michael VI (1056-1057).[107] Although they were protecting the emperor-to-be, it is clear that their role was also part of the imperial representation. From all this evidence it is possible to say that the Varangian guard was mainly confined to the battlefield and the palace. Their numbers must have been rather small. Thus, their interaction with the Byzantine population in general was surely rather limited. From the creation of the guard, Varangians were the closest group of Western mercenaries to the emperor. However, during this period other groups also became well-known and more numerous. This is the case of the Normans.

Normans: The contacts between Normans and Byzantines go back to the early eleventh century, possibly starting with the presence of Normans in Southern Italy. The Norman involvement in the military affairs of the local powers eventually led to important changes in the politics of the region. Some time later, the Byzantine Empire would have to face the consequences of the Norman presence in the Italian peninsula.

According to William of Apulia, in one attempt to free Apulia from Byzantine rule, the rebel Melus hired a group of Normans as mercenaries to fight against the Byzantine

[106] John Skylitzes (2012), p. IX.

[107] Michael Psellos, p. 199; Smythe (1992), pp. 307-309.

army in 1017.[108] This is one of the accounts and legends which explain the beginning of the Norman infiltration in Southern Italy.[109] As Graham Loud has pointed out, their arrival may be the result of different interventions.[110] In any case, groups of Normans started serving different powers in Southern Italy. They fought for the local Lombard princes but they also joined the Byzantine army, for instance in the expedition to Sicily in the late 1030s.[111] Eventually they conquered some lands for themselves, starting to pose a threat for the status quo of the area. The conquest continued and while the Byzantine army was able to check that for a while, the Norman expansion became a reality and the systematic conquest of the whole area a matter of time. Not only did it mean the eventual end of Byzantine rule in the Italian peninsula, but it also created a regular stream of Norman soldiers flowing towards the east. Thus, when referring to Normans, it may well be soldiers coming from either Normandy or Southern Italy. Some of them left Normandy and arrived in Byzantium after serving in Italy. Consequently, their presence in the Mediterranean was not limited to Southern Italy. For example, in the Chronique of Sainte-Barbe-en-Auge it is attested that two Norman brothers from the Stigand family travelled to Byzantium to serve the Byzantine emperors in the mid-eleventh century.[112] The source mentions that at least one of them, Odon II, received the title of protospatharios and became the leader of a contingent of mercenaries during the reigns of Isaac I Komnenos (1057-59) and Constantine X Doukas (1059-67). The other one, Robert, received a relic of St Barbara as a reward for his services. The Stigand brothers are an unusual example of the Norman presence in Byzantium. They served in Byzantium and seem to have returned home. In Southern Italy the situation was much

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[108] William of Apulia, pp. 99-101. According to Amatus of Montecassino, the Norman soldiers found Melus in Capua, where he had fled after his rebellion against Byzantine power. They decided to join him and together they went to Apulia to fight against the 'Greeks,' (p. 51).

[109] France (1991), pp. 185-205.

[110] Loud (2000), pp. 60-66.

[111] According to Amatus of Montecassino, the Byzantine authorities requested soldiers to Guaimar IV of Salerno. He sent a small band of Normans whose leader was William of Hauteville (p. 66); Geoffrey Malaterra informs us that the Byzantine general George Maniakes ordered Guaimar to send him soldiers (p. 55).

[112] Amsellem (1999), pp. 283-288.

different; the Normans fighting the Byzantines had decided to stay and create a new homeland. Most of them had left Normandy because their family lands were not sufficient for all the descendants or because they may have committed crimes and therefore had to exile themselves.[113] They were not expecting to come back, rather the opposite, they encouraged their relatives to join them and settle in the newly conquered land. They planned to become the new wealthy lords of the country. Thus, what characterised the Normans during this period were the different roles they adopted in relation to Byzantium. While Norman soldiers served the Byzantine emperor,[114] other Normans opposed Byzantine rule.

The Norman expansion in Southern Italy had other consequences. An interesting and not well known chapter of the relationship between the Normans and Byzantium is the involvement of the Byzantines in the Norman affairs of Southern Italy. First of all, at this stage the Norman rule in Italy was not under one sole figure. And second, the Norman lords frequently rebelled against their main leader, Robert Guiscard, Duke of Apulia. As a result, the Byzantines, not being able to stop the Norman expansion by military means, used the Norman internal affairs to divide and weaken their power. Amatus of Montecassino informs us that in 1067 Perenos, the doux of Dyrrachion, made an alliance with some of the Norman lords against Robert Guiscard. Among them were Joscelin of Molfetta, Roger Toutebove, the brothers Geoffrey Count of Conversano and Robert Count of Montescaglioso, and Abelard.[115] The last three were Robert Guiscard's nephews. The Byzantine authorities were supporting Guiscard's relatives to fight against him. Conditions of the treaty included hostages from the rebels to be kept under Perenos' supervision, probably in Dyrrachion. Although ultimately the Byzantines did not obtain the results they had expected, in later rebellions they probably continued taking advantage of the lack of unity among the Normans against Guiscard.[116]

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[113] Chibnall (2006), pp. 75-83; van Houts (2000), pp. 226-227; Loud (2000), pp. 84-87.

[114] Michael Psellos, p. 199. He calls them Ἰταλοί.

[115] Amatus of Montecassino, pp. 133-134; Loud (2000), pp. 237-239. PBW Anonymus 122

[116] Chalandon (1907), pp. 223, 252.

According to Amatus, Perenos sent the hostages to Constantinople after the failure of the rebellion.[117] What is more, Joscelin, whom Ferdinand Chalandon mentions as the leader of the rebels, went into exile to Constantinople.[118] Roger Toutebove seems to have gone with him too.[119] Joscelin was not a simple Norman soldier serving in the Byzantine army; he was a Norman lord with a noble title.[120] It is possible to assume that he was received with honours and promised help to return to his possessions. The association of Italo-Norman lords and the Byzantine Empire started during this period and, as we will see later, continued during Alexios I's reign. Robert Guiscard's invasion in 1081 also produced a migration of Normans into the Byzantine army. However, the circumstances and their reception were very different. Joscelin took the chance offered by the Norman siege of Bari to return to Italy.[121] Leading a Byzantine naval force he expected to relieve the city which was being besieged from both land and sea; however, he was captured. Thus, the Byzantines did not only support the Norman division, they also employed significant Norman figures in order to preserve the Byzantine rule in Southern Italy. As we have seen above, a few years before, the Byzantine court had employed Argyros with the same aim. By seeking Byzantine help in order to pursue their own interests, these figures also entered the service of Byzantium. With the Norman conquest of the last Byzantine possession in Italy, the empire gained a powerful enemy on its western front.

The flow of Norman nobles to Byzantium continued. For instance the aforementioned Abelard, after another failed attempt against his uncle, fled to 'the country of the Greeks' in 1080.[122] It is not possible to be certain if he then received support from the court. The current situation must have been rather tense as Nikephoros III had assumed

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[117] Amatus of Montecassino, p. 134.

[118] Ibid.

[119] Ibid.; William of Apulia only mentions Joscelin leaving for 'Greece,' (p. 157).

[120] PBW Joscelin 10101

[121] Amatus of Montecassino, p. 145; Geoffrey Malaterra, pp. 121-122; William of Apulia, pp. 163, 171; Antiche cronache, p. 163.

[122] William of Apulia, p. 201; *Antiche cronache*, p. 78.

the power in Constantinople (1078) and dissolved the betrothal between Constantine Doukas and Guiscard's daughter Olympias-Helena.[123] William of Apulia mentions that Alexios I treated Abelard honourably and gave him great gifts.[124] While it is possible that Robert Guiscard's imminent invasion must have pushed Alexios to protect the Norman exiles, it is clear that this trend did not start with his reign. Another Norman figure that defected to Byzantium was Raoul, who fled Southern Italy shortly before the Norman invasion of 1081.[125] Soon after he was followed by his brother Roger; both are treated in chapter two. These figures suggest that the Byzantine court continued to welcome Norman exiles after the last Byzantine territory in Italy, Bari, fell to Guiscard in 1071.

After 1071 the presence of Norman mercenaries in Asia Minor also had important repercussions. Byzantine sources note that certain figures rebelled against the Byzantine administration; they were Hervé Frankopoulos, the aforementioned Robert Crispin and Roussel of Bailleul, the Rouselios or Ourselios of the Byzantine sources.[126] These rebellions took place in the 1070s, during a period of instability, for different reasons. Hervé had been at the service of Byzantium since the mid-eleventh century and he was able to achieve significant positions in the Byzantine army.[127] From his surviving seal we learn that he had the titles of *magistros*, *vestes* and *stratelates* of the East. The latter was significant and reminds us of Kekaumenos' advice, which warned the emperor against offering high positions to foreigners of no royal lineage in their countries.[128] As we have seen above, Robert Crispin had fought against the Muslims in northern Spain (1064). Later he joined the Normans in Southern Italy and after 1066 he travelled to the Byzantine Empire, where he took part in the struggle between Michael VII and

[123] PBW Helena 101

[124] William of Apulia, pp. 201-202. Abelard seems to have died shortly after.

[125] Anna Komnene, p. 50.

[126] Simpson (2000), pp. 181-204.

[127] Ibid., pp. 184-188.

[128] Kekaumenos (95.04-10).

Romanos IV.[129] While both Hervé and Crispin rebelled against the Byzantine administration, the most threatening rebellion was the secession orchestrated by Roussel. Roussel of Bailleul was a prominent and ambitious Norman mercenary.[130] He had taken part in the battle of Cerami in 1063 with Robert Guiscard's brother, Roger, against the Arabs in Sicily.[131] Some time later Roussel was in the Byzantine Empire, enrolled in the tagmata of Robert Crispin.[132] We know that Roussel took part in Romanos IV's expedition against the Turks in 1071, though he had been sent to conquer Chliat, thus missing the crucial battle of Mantzikert.[133] After the Turkish victory and the struggle between Byzantine factions, Asia Minor was left unprotected against the increasing Turkish attacks. It is in this context of weakening of Byzantine military power that Roussel decided to rebel against imperial authority. Having had posts in the area, he was familiar with the region and, with the help of his Western soldiers, extended his authority over the Armeniakon theme.[134] Michael VII sent an army led by his uncle the Caesar John, in order to terminate his independent statelet.[135] The Byzantine army was defeated by Roussel at the battle of Zompos (1074) and John was captured.[136] It is at this moment that the figure of Roussel took a position which no Westerner had ever dared before. He decided to play his part in the political gambit of the empire. He approached Constantinople, menacing Michael VII.[137] The emperor attempted to negotiate by offering the post of kouropalates and sending him his wife and children.[138] Not being able to persuade Roussel, Michael hired Turkish soldiers to surprise him.

[129] Simpson (2000), pp. 188-192.

[130] Lebeniotes (2004). PBW Roussel 61

[131] Geoffrey Malaterra, p. 109.

[132] Nikephoros Bryennios, pp. 145-148.

[133] John Zonaras, pp. 212-213.

[134] Amatus of Montecassino, p. 49.

[135] John Zonaras, pp. 226-227.

[136] Nikephoros Bryennios, pp. 165-172.

[137] Amatus of Montecassino, p. 49.

[138] John Zonaras, pp. 227-228.

Roussel unexpectedly declared John, the brother of the deceased Constantine X Doukas, emperor, thus creating a dangerous situation for Michael VII.[139] Although sources mention that Roussel was able to gather a Western army of three thousand soldiers from Anatolia,[140] the Turks defeated and captured him.[141] He was ransomed by his wife and went to establish himself again in the Armeniakon theme. This time Michael VII sent the young general Alexios Komnenos against him.[142] This is one of the first episodes in the *Alexiad*, where Anna's father captured Roussel not by the use of military strength but by ruse.[143] He also counted on the help of the Turks, who by then were already an important party in Asia Minor. Therefore, Roussel was taken to Constantinople where he was guarded in prison.[144] It is interesting to see that Roussel, though having been a dangerous enemy who attempted to take part in politics, was not blinded. A possible explanation is that he was not a Byzantine. Another is the possibility that the court was afraid of the reaction of the Western mercenaries in the empire. An interesting detail found in Anna's narration can tell us more about the relations between the Norman and the Byzantines. When Alexios tried to convince the population of Amaseia to pay the amount of money the Turks requested for Roussel, some of them wanted to free him.[145] Moreover, on his way to Constantinople Alexios met his cousin Dokeianos. The latter thought that Alexios had blinded Roussel and rebuked him for having done so.[146] Dokeianos considered Roussel a noble man and a hero. These two pieces of evidence suggest that some of the Byzantine population with whom Roussel had interacted certainly respected and even admired him. It is possible that, while the Byzantine

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[139] Nikephoros Bryennios, pp. 175-176.

[140] Michael Attaleiates, p. 139.

[141] John Zonaras, pp. 228-229.

[142] Nikephoros Bryennios, pp. 181-182; John Zonaras, pp. 228-229.

[143] Anna Komnene, pp. 11-14.

[144] Nikephoros Bryennios, pp. 199-200; John Zonaras, pp. 228-229.

[145] Anna Komnene, p. 15. This is confirmed by Nikephoros Bryennios, pp. 189-190.

[146] Anna Komnene, p. 17.

authorities could not face the Turkish invasion, Roussel protected the native population.[147] What seems clear is that although he was a Westerner, that is a barbarian for the Byzantines, the local population of the Armeniakon theme seems to have trusted him.[148]

Two years later the political situation became worse and Michael VII had to face two simultaneous rebellions, one led by Nikephoros Botaneiates in Asia Minor and the other by Nikephoros Bryennios 'the Elder' in the Balkans. The situation became so frantic that Michael VII was forced to free Roussel and give him the joint command of the Byzantine army, next to Alexios.[149] This significant detail, not reported by Anna, suggests that Michael still trusted the martial skills of the Westerner. Perhaps he was liberated in order to lead the Westerners that were still serving in the Byzantine army and were loyal to the emperor. Actually, he tried to convince the Westerners in Bryennios' army to desert him. The fact that Western mercenaries served in the two armies confirms that by then they had become a usual component of the Byzantine armies. It also suggests the possibility that they were numerous. Finally, it is also likely that Emperor Michael simply felt compelled to use all the means at his disposal. Nikephoros' army, led by his brother John, was defeated at this point (1077). Soon afterwards, Roussel died in strange circumstances.[150]

Roussel's figure is characteristic of the period of decline of the Byzantine army and the political instability that characterised the empire during the 1070s. He benefited from both circumstances and aimed at the creation of his own rule in Asia Minor. By doing so, he tried to reproduce the Norman occupation in Southern Italy. In his case the main difference was the location. Roussel had served the Byzantine emperor in Asia Minor, which is why themes in the area became his territorial target. Although he did not

[147] Malamut (2007), pp. 45-46; Magdalino (1996a).

[148] Cheynet (1997), p. 127; Cheynet (2002b), p. 121.

[149] John Zonaras, pp. 234-235.

[150] Ibid., pp. 242-245.

succeed, he was still considered a worthy general. Roussel's career in Byzantium probably marks the culmination of Western involvement in Byzantine state affairs during the eleventh century up to Robert Guiscard's invasion in 1081. In fact, Roussel's attempt to become the lord of Byzantine territories was continued somehow by Guiscard. The fragile image of the empire must have encouraged the daring Duke of Calabria.

To conclude, the presence of Western mercenaries in Byzantium was the result of a combination of different factors. An important one was the existence of Westerners in search of fortune and adventure. The prospect for conquest and expansion in the Mediterranean area was also a significant lure, as in the case of the Iberian and Italian peninsulas. The weakness of the Byzantine Empire and its increasingly inefficient army possibly encouraged their territorial aspirations, as in the case of Guiscard and Roussel. Moreover, the Byzantine Empire provided a continuous and increasing recruitment of professional soldiers, either to join the Varangian guard or to defend the borders of Asia Minor. They received money and luxurious gifts. However, some evidence suggests that these were not the only possible payments. A donation document now kept in the Lavra Monastery (Mount Athos) mentions a Frank called Othon who had received lands near Thessaloniki from the emperor Nikephoros III Botaneiates.[151] It is possible to assume that he obtained them as a reward for his military services. Eventually Othon lost his lands as a punishment for revolting against Alexios I with someone who is named Pounteses, who may have been a Norman from Southern Italy.[152] Another Westerner who was granted estates was Hervé Frankopoulos.[153] His significant role in the Byzantine army was probably behind his landed property. Moreover, the estates were

[151] Lemerle (1970), pp. 244-247. PBW Othon 101

[152] PBW Pounteses 101

[153] Simpson (2000), pp. 185-186; John Skylitzes (2012), p. 452, note 16.

located in Dagarabe, in the Armeniakon theme.[154] This was an appropriate location near the eastern borders, where Hervé would usually have been deployed. There may be at least another case, this time making reference to a Varangian.[155] All this evidence is significant because it confirms that Western mercenaries became landowners in Byzantium. Mark Bartusis has demonstrated that from the 1070s grants of property and fiscal concessions were used as the main way to reward laymen.[156] In our case lands were the means to pay the services of some Western mercenaries serving in the Byzantine army. Thus, Westerners received the same treatment as the Byzantines did. Bartusis has also stated that this novelty was a change from previous times.[157] While this change was the result of the transformations taking place in the Byzantine Empire, the fact that Western mercenaries were granted properties is another indication of their role within the Byzantine army.

These mercenaries usually fought in their own *tagmata*, but the presence of these Westerners in the Byzantine army surely resulted in certain interactions with the Byzantine soldiers and population. These mercenaries may have brought with them their own weapons and customs. There are two cases that may show probable Western influence, even at this early stage. One is the depiction of the kite shield in Byzantine illumination, which happens for the first time during this period. The first dated example is from 1066 (Image 3.3.).[158] From this iconographic novelty can be assumed that this new shield was being used in Byzantium. However, it seems to have been more common in the West. Perhaps it was employed by the Western mercenaries serving in the Byzantine army and, as a result, the new shield was slowly adopted by the Byzantine soldiers. At least it caught the interest of the Byzantine illuminators. The kite shield is discussed in detail in chapter three. The second and more obvious piece of evidence is

[154] John Skylitzes, p. 485.

[155] Kaplan (1998), pp. 53-57.

[156] Bartusis (2012), pp. 123-131.

[157] Ibid., p. 611.

[158] Theodore psalter (British Library): Add MS 19352, f.12r.

found in the work of Nikephoros Bryennios.[159] According to him, during the battle of Kalavrye (1078), the Western mercenaries in Alexios' army went over to Nikephoros Bryennios and placed their hands in his. Nikephoros added that the hand gesture was their own custom. Nikephoros' wife, Anna Komnene, also narrated this hand gesture in the *Alexiad*.[160] This piece of evidence shows that before the First Crusade the Byzantines were being exposed to Western habits. This and other references about hand gestures are investigated in chapter four.

While Western mercenaries are frequently mentioned in the works of Byzantine historians, Western merchants barely receive any attention. Nevertheless, merchants were another important group of Westerners in Byzantium.

MERCHANTS

After the mercenaries, the most significant group of Westerners in Byzantium were the merchants. During this period Italians from Amalfi and Venice were the most active. This may have been in part the result of their political ties with the imperial court; however, as we will see below, their presence was already important during the tenth century.

Both Amalfi and Venice had been under Byzantine rule in previous centuries. In the eleventh century they still maintained close political and commercial ties with Constantinople, from which they benefited. Because of their geographical location, between Western Europe and Byzantium, they acted as a bridge between the two. For instance, in the tenth century Liudprand of Cremona already noted that Venetian and Amalfitan merchants exported Byzantine silks to Italy.[161] Moreover, by then the presence of Amalfitans and Venetians in Constantinople must have been evident. While

[159] Nikephoros Bryennios, p. 274.

[160] Anna Komnene, p. 24.

[161] Liudprand of Cremona, p. 272.

talking about the foreign soldiers at the service of the Byzantine Emperor Nikephoros II (963-969), Liudprand wondered teasingly what kind of soldiers the Amalfitans and Venetians would make.[162] Vera von Falkenhausen has suggested that the Italians were engaged in the naval transport of Byzantine troops.[163] While this is a reference to their role as sailors and not soldiers, it seems that Liudprand wanted to point out the close contacts between the Byzantine court and the Italians. This information may be the first piece of evidence concerning the Italian contribution to the military naval affairs of the Byzantine Empire. Although it is obvious that there were many foreign merchants in the Byzantine Empire, the discussion below mainly focuses on Amalfi and Venice, the two major trading communities from the West. While in the case of the latter the evidence about commercial activities is extensive, in the case of the former most of the information analyzed does not actually deal with trade but with other aspects of the Amalfitan presence in Byzantium.

Amalfitans: As we have seen above, the Amalfitan presence is attested in Byzantium since the tenth century. Moreover, they even seem to have intervened in the political events taking place in Constantinople. After the narration of the deposition of Romanos I (944) by his sons Constantine and Stephen, Liudprand relates that the Amalfitans, Romans and Gaetans were keen to support the future Constantine VII against the brothers.[164] The Westerners were assembled by Sigefred, who was the Bishop of Parma and acted as the envoy of King Hugh of Italy. He had accompanied Bertha, Hugh's daughter, to the Byzantine capital where she would marry the future Emperor Romanos II.[165] We do not know if these Amalfitans were part of a permanent community of

[162] Ibid., p. 266.

[163] von Falkenhausen (2010), pp. 19-20.

[164] Liudprand of Cremona, p. 185.

[165] Ibid., p. 183.

Westerners in Constantinople. However, this reference suggests that Westerners could get involved in political struggles under special circumstances.

Another example of the early Amalfitan presence in the Byzantine Empire was the creation of an Amalfitan Monastery dedicated to the Virgin Mary on Mount Athos.[166] The presence of a Western monastery in Mount Athos is quite significant. Built probably during the last years of the tenth century and observing the Benedictine rule, the religious community was rather prominent at the beginning of its existence. Proof of this are the close relations between the Amalfitans and Athanasios the Athonite, one of the most famous figures of Byzantine monasticism.[167] The presence of Athanasios in Mount Athos probably attracted the Amalfitans.[168] The life of the saint tells us that Amalfitan monks brought fish sauce to the aged Athanasios. This interesting reference provides us with an insight on the relations established between the Western monks and Athanasios, and the former's admiration for the figure of the Byzantine saint. Furthermore, through the typikon of Constantine IX, dated to 1045, we also know that the Amalfitan Monastery was granted special privileges, namely the possession and use of a merchant ship with which the monks could provide themselves with everything they needed.[169] As this privilege suggests, the Amalfitan community was rather influential at the imperial court during this period. There is further evidence of contacts between the Amalfitan and Byzantine monks. Rules of the Benedictine order have been found translated in Greek in an athonite manuscript preserved in the Koutloumous monastery.[170] Moreover, the *Hypotyposis* of the Great Lavra also contains three Benedictine rules.[171] One is at the end of the document and orders the reading of the regulations in community.[172] The

[166] Pertusi (1963), pp. 217-251. PBW locations: Athos: Amalphenon

[167] Pertusi (1963). p. 221.

[168] von Falkenhausen (2010), p. 25.

[169] Pertusi (1963), p. 228; von Falkenhausen (2010), p. 26.

[170] Mercati (1947), pp. 191-196.

[171] Beck (1951), pp. 21-24; Leroy (1953), pp. 108-122.

[172] Leroy (1953), p. 119.

Hypotyposis, written by Athanasios, was intended to regulate the life of the monks in the monastery which he had founded. Athanasios composed the *Hypotyposis* following the model of the Studite rule, which does not include any Benedictine rules. Thus, Athanasios is likely to have learnt these rules from the Amalfitan or other Western monks that visited him in the Holy Mountain. The existence of Benedictine rules in Mount Athos indicates that the Amalfitan monks contributed to the early history of monasticism in the holy mountain.[173] The fact that Athanasios included these rules in his *Hypotyposis* is significant evidence of the close contacts with the Amalfitans established on Mount Athos. Furthermore, the reference to a bell in the rules of the Lavra monastery is certainly unusual.[174] The use of bells in religious context was mainly a Western practice. Perhaps it was another result of the contacts between Athanasios and the Amalfitan monks. This detail will be discussed in chapter three.

During the eleventh century the contacts between Amalfi and the Byzantine Empire increased. The Amalfitan dukes and other powerful figures maintained close links with the Byzantine court. For example, the Amalfitan dukes Mason II and John I went to Constantinople when they were sent into exile in 1038 and 1039 respectively.[175] John I spent twelve years at the Byzantine court until he was able to return in 1052.[176] Thus, the relations between Amalfitans and Byzantines were not only based on the former's role in commercial affairs. However, the most important figure in the relationship between Amalfi and the Byzantium was the powerful merchant Pantaleone. His father Mauro had already received the Byzantine title of hypatos and he would obtain the title of dishypatos in 1070. The close relationship between Pantaleone and the Byzantine court can also be explained by the increasing Norman danger in Southern Italy, which resulted in an attempt to create an anti-Norman alliance between the German Emperor

[173] von Falkenhausen (2010), p. 27.

[174] Meyer (1965), p. 136.

[175] Balard (1976), p. 86.

[176] Magdalino (1996a).

Henry IV and Constantine X Doukas in 1062.[177] Amalfi, like the Byzantine emperors, saw the Norman infiltration in Southern Italy as a threat to their political interests. The independence of Amalfi was at stake. Eventually Amalfi fell under Norman rule in 1073, along with the rest of the south of the Italian peninsula. With the culmination of the Norman occupation, Amalfi not only lost its independence, but also ceased to be in the periphery of the Empire.

During this period the Amalfitans played a crucial role in the trade of the eastern Mediterranean. They were very active, their ships connecting Western Europe with Byzantium and the Muslim east.[178] They frequented important locations in the eastern Mediterranean. William of Apulia praised their wealth and reported their trading activities in Alexandria and Antioch.[179] Moreover, as a result of their connections in the Fatimid court, the Amalfitans founded a hospice for pilgrims in Jerusalem, where they also established the so-called monastery of the Latins.[180] Amatus of Montecassino attributes the foundation of Amalfitan hospices in Antioch and Jerusalem to Mauro, Pantaleone's father.[181] These foundations have been associated with the Amalfitan involvement in the traffic of pilgrims travelling to the Holy Land.[182]

The Amalfitan presence in Constantinople during the eleventh century must have been considerable. We know that Pantaleone and other Amalfitans resided in the city. Amatus of Montecassino mentions the existence of an Amalfitan monastery (St Mary of the Latins) in the Byzantine capital. He reports that the bishop of Palestrina Bernardo died in Constantinople and was buried in the monastery of the Amalfitans.[183] Paul Magdalino

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[177] von Falkenhausen (1998), p. 20; Sangermano (1993), pp. 229-230; von Falkenhausen (2010), pp. 34-35.

[178] Jacoby (2000b), pp. 47-48; Balard (1976), pp. 85-95.

[179] William of Apulia, p. 191.

[180] William of Tyre, vol. 2, pp. 242-243; Citarella (1967), pp. 310-311; Citarella (1968), pp.531-555.

[181] Amatus of Montecassino, p. 188.

[182] Luttrell, (2010), p. 107.

[183] Amatus of Montecassino, p. 124; Lentini (1959), p. 438; Janin (1946), pp. 164-165.

has argued that this should be identified with the Constantinopolitan monastery τοῦ Παναγίου.[184] In this monastery a monk called John translated the *Liber de Miraculis* into Latin. In the prologue of the translation he claimed that the work did not exist in Latin and dedicated it to Pantaleone, who perhaps promoted the translation.[185] This information suggests that some Amalfitans residing in Constantinople were bilingual.[186] Moreover, they also had literary interests and had access to Greek manuscripts in Constantinople; perhaps they acquired them or they found them in the libraries of the capital.

In addition, through the chrysobull granted by Alexios I to the Venetians in 1082, we discover the existence of Amalfitan workshops in the capital and other places in the Empire.[187] This brief reference confirms that the Amalfitan presence was rather significant and not limited to Constantinople. These workshops were surely associated with the Amalfitan commercial activity; they probably were warehouses and shops. However, it is possible that the Amalfitans were involved in other types of business apart from commerce. We know that Pantaleone commissioned some of the brass doors which were produced in Constantinople and can be found in several Italian locations, for instance, most notably at Amalfi.[188] Cyril Mango has suggested that Pantaleone operated the workshop which produced the bronze doors in Constantinople.[189] If this was the case, the manufacture of the famous doors, an important example of 'Byzantine' metal industry, was at least under the supervision of Amalfitans. At least their export to Italy seems to have been managed by the Amalfitan community in Constantinople.

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[184] Magdalino (1996b), pp. 97-98.

[185] Berschin (1994), p. 239; Schreiner (1995), p. 356; von Falkenhausen (2010), pp. 35-36.

[186] von Falkenhausen (2010), p. 37.

[187] Pozza and Ravegnani (1993), p. 32; Borsari (1969-1970), pp. 117; Anna Komnene, pp. 178-179.

[188] Frazer (1973), pp. 145-162.

[189] Mango (1978), pp. 249-251.

We do not know where these workshops were located, they could have been within the Amalfitan quarter. The evidence concerning the latter in Constantinople is very scant. It is assumed that the quarter was located around the above mentioned Amalfitan church.[190] Although we do not know if the quarter had clearly limited boundaries, the privileges granted to the Pisans in 1192 mention an Amalfitan area.[191] It is likely that it was located near the Golden Horn; as with the other Italian communities, the proximity to the harbour was crucial for their trading activities. However, David Jacoby has argued that the Amalfitans did not have a quarter similar to those held by the Venetians or Pisans.[192]

The Amalfitan community in Constantinople included the famous Pantaleone, who resided in the Byzantine capital during part of his life, like other members of his family.[193] Pantaleone probably conducted his business from Constantinople because the Byzantine capital was geographically well located in the middle of the Amalfitan commercial network, between Southern Italy and Egypt. Being near the court, he may also have acted as an envoy between Amalfi and the Byzantine emperors. Supporting this idea Amatus of Montecassino described that Pantaleone hosted the prince of Salerno, Gisulf II, during his stay in Constantinople in 1062.[194] Amatus also tells us that Pantaleone was Gisulf's counsellor. It is possible that Pantaleone may have brokered the negotiations between the Lombard ruler and the Byzantine court. As we have seen, Gisulf II came back laden with money to combat the Normans.

The Amalfitan community in Constantinople must have followed the events of 1054 closely. However, we do not know if the so-called schism had important consequences for the contacts between Byzantium and Amalfi. Humbert of Silva Candida claimed that

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[190] Citarella (1999), pp. 68, 73-74.

[191] von Falkenhausen (2010), p. 29.

[192] Jacoby (2000b), p. 47.

[193] Pertusi (1963), p. 236; von Falkenhausen (2010), p. 22.

[194] Amatus of Montecassino, p. 188.

the Patriarch of Constantinople Michael Keroularios had closed the Latin churches.[195] It is not possible to know if the Amalfitan monastery suffered such a fate; according to Tia Kolbaba Humbert's claim was anti-Byzantine slander.[196] A short memorial listing the events which led to the schism was written under the name of Pantaleone's son, probably after 1058. In this document Keroularios was blamed for the rupture while the emperor Constantine IX is exonerated of any culpability.[197] It is obvious that the important Amalfitan family was trying to save the political bonds with the Byzantine court. The family of Pantaleone may have had several reasons for this piece of propaganda, mainly to protect the position of the Amalfitan trade in the Byzantine Empire and keep its contacts with the court. The creation of a future anti-Norman alliance also was a priority for them.

Amalfitans were also found in other locations of the empire. Above we have seen the creation of a hospice in Antioch. Describing Robert Guiscard's invasion, Anna Komnene mentions the inhabitants of Dyrrachion, the first important stage of the incursion. This well-fortified city was the most important Byzantine port on the Western Balkan coast (at the end point of the Via Egnatia), and even more significant because it lay just opposite the Italian peninsula across the Adriatic. Anna described its inhabitants as being mostly emigrants from Amalfi and Venice.[198] The Amalfitan presence in the Balkan city must have preceeded the year 1081, when Alexios took the Byzantine throne. The position of Dyrrachion made it a strategic location between the Italian peninsula and Constantinople. From Attaleiates we know that under Michael VII a warehouse was created outside Rhaidestos with the aim to monolopolize the sale of grain under the supervision of imperial administrators.[199] Paul Magdalino has proposed the possibility that the merchants who acted as the privileged middlemen at this *phoundax* (φοῦνδαξ,

[195] Will (1861), p. 152.

[196] Kolbaba (2005), pp. 39-42.

[197] von Falkenhausen (1998), p. 20.

[198] Anna Komnene, p. 141.

[199] Michael Attaleiates, pp. 148-150.

an establishment where merchants stayed and stored their commodities) of Rhaidestos may have been Amalfitans.[200] If true, this would provide evidence that the Amalfitan role in the Byzantine economy was certainly prominent. This significant position over the rest of the trading communities would have been the result of their contacts with the Byzantine court.

From all this information we have a better picture of the Amalfitan presence in the Byzantine Empire. First, the Amalfitan activities within the empire were not limited to commerce. Their links with the Byzantine court were remarkable. It is possible that the Byzantine emperors also promoted close relationships with the Amalfitans in Byzantium, the most prominent acting as advisors on Western matters. Their contacts also took place within religious circles. Their presence in Mount Athos in a period of growing religious antagonism between Latins and Greeks is indeed significant. The Amalfitan trading and influence was slowly disrupted by the Norman conquest, the rise of Venice and the First Crusade. The former would achieve a major role from 1082, but until then its presence within Byzantium competed with the Amalfitan community.

Venetians: The Venetians were another Italian community that had many similarities with the Amalfitans. Nominally for a long time under Byzantine rule, Venice rose to be a naval power during the eleventh century. Together with the Amalfitans, the Venetians became the other important Western trading community within the eastern Mediterranean. Nevertheless, Venice differed from Amalfi in some important ways. Venice had a land base beyond the lagoon, unlike Amalfi, which was surrounded by mountainous territory. Furthermore, Venice was able to maintain its independence and moreover, extend its area of influence in Dalmatia, and slowly, within the Byzantine Empire and the Crusader States during the twelfth century. Although Venice would come to oppose the Norman expansion towards the east, its independence was never threatened as in the case of Amalfi. Its strategic position in the north of the Adriatic Sea

[200] Magdalino (1995), p. 44; Magdalino (1996a).

offered her a key position between both northern Italy and the German Empire and Byzantium. For example, Liudprand mentions that during his second stay in Constantinople he once planned to leave the Byzantine capital in a freight ship of the Venetians.[201] Liudprand's plan suggests that Venetian ships had already become the main means of transport between Constantinople and the Italian peninsula. Moreover, Venetians may have been employed to act as envoys between Byzantium and the West. Liudprand also reported that a certain Venetian called Dominicus acted as the messenger of Otto I (962-973).[202] This piece of information is significant because it demonstrates that the role of the Venetians in the relations between Byzantium and the West was not limited to that of merchants. The role of the Venetians as links between Byzantium and the West continued into the Komnenian period. During the reigns of Alexios and John, a Venetian called Cerbano was at the service of the Byzantine emperors in Constantinople, most likely as translator. He will be discussed later in chapter two.

Our sources regarding the relations between Venice and Byzantium during this period include a significant document containing the privileges granted by the Byzantine Emperors Basil II and Constantine VIII and which regulated Venetian commercial activities in Byzantium.[203] The document is dated to 992 and yields significant information to understand the relations between Venice and Byzantium before 1082. The document was the result of Doge Pietro II Orseolo's initiative. He complained to the Byzantine emperors about the unofficial increase of taxes which Venetian ships were paying. The Byzantine emperors agreed to remove the practice in exchange for military support in Italy. Venice had to transport Byzantine troops into the Italian peninsula in case they were required. Therefore, it is possible to note that by then, Venice already had a sizeable navy which was useful for the Byzantine emperors to move their troops to Italy, either against the Lombard princes or the Muslim attacks from Sicily. This piece of information seems to confirm the above reference by Liudprand on the role of

[201] Liudprand of Cremona, p. 248.

[202] Ibid., p. 257; Leyser (1973), p. 31.

[203] Pozza and Ravegnani (1993), pp. 16-17.

Amalfitans and Venetians in the naval affairs of Byzantium. The concession of privileges was the first one bestowed by the empire upon any Western city-state.[204] There is no evidence that such privileges were granted to the Amalfitan community.[205] This detail singles out Venice as a significant partner of the Byzantine emperors. The clause concerning the transport of troops was probably related to the efforts to keep Southern Italy under Byzantine rule. Although it did not imply direct military intervention, it could be seen as a precedent for later Byzantine requests of Venetian military support. It is important to note that as early as 992 the Byzantine emperors considered the employment of the Venetian fleet in order to pursue political interests. Thus, the Byzantine request resulted in better trading conditions for the Venetian commercial activity within the empire.

During the rule of the same doge, Pietro II Orseolo (991-1009), the contacts between Venice and the Byzantine court grew closer. Pietro's son was in Constantinople in 997.[206] Moreover, the Venetian fleet saved Bari in 1004 when it was under attack by the Arabs of Sicily. The expedition seems to have taken place without any request from Byzantium. In this occasion, as Donald Nicol has pointed out, Venice demonstrated its naval power as well as the doge's concern to maintain his link with Byzantium.[207] Basil II invited Pietro's son, Giovanni, to Constantinople. He travelled to the Byzantine capital with his brother Otto, and once there, Giovanni was married to the daughter of the patrikios Argyropoulos, probably the sister of the future emperor Romanos III Argyros.[208] He was invested with the title of patrikios and the newly married couple were given the relics of St Barbara. Some years later, Domenico Contarini (1043-1071) was the first Venetian doge to be honoured with different titles: patrikios, anthypatos and

[204] Jacoby (1994), pp. 139-143

[205] Citarella (1999), pp. 73-74.

[206] Nicol (1988), p. 43.

[207] Ibid., p. 45.

[208] Ibid., p. 45-46.

magistros.[209] By this period these courtly titles and offices were mainly honorary ranks. The next doge, Domenico Selvo (1071-1084), received the title of protoproedros and married a sister of the emperor Michael VII.[210] As in the case of the Amalfitan leaders, doges attempted to keep a close association with the Byzantine court, as they knew it could bring benefits for Venetian trade and personal privileges. The relations between Venice and Byzantium changed according to the political developments that were taking place in Constantinople or Venice.[211] After the last Byzantine possession in Italy was lost in 1071, the Venetian role of transferring Byzantine troops into Southern Italy may have become less useful at the time. However, ten years later, Robert Guiscard's invasion of the Balkans suddenly created a new role for the Adriatic port, namely the naval defence of the Byzantine Western provinces. Thus, the relations between Venetians and Byzantines developed under the pressure of political events brought by other powers.

Prior to 1081, the Venetian presence can be attested in several places within the Byzantine Empire. As has been mentioned above, Anna Komnene described the inhabitants of Dyrrachion as being mostly emigrants from Amalfi and Venice.[212] While this was clearly an exaggeration, it is possible that Western merchants frequented the port and had settled there.[213] For the Venetians, the geographical position of Dyrrachion, at the entrance of the Adriatic Sea, must have been a necessary call in their commercial routes. From Anna's reference it is possible to assume that the Venetians already were an important trading community in Dyrrachion. Further Venetian presence is reported in Thebes, which was one of the most important Byzantine centres of silk production from

[209] Ibid., p. 50.

[210] Ibid., p. 52-53; Pertusi (1965), p. 143.

[211] Antoniadis-Bibicou (1962), p. 166.

[212] Anna Komnene, p. 141.

[213] Ducellier (1998), p. 212.

the mid-eleventh century.[214] It is important to remember that Thebes is not a coastal town, so Venetian merchants had to travel overland to arrive there. It has been suggested that the reason for Venetian merchants to travel to Stives, the name with which they called Thebes, was the purchase of its famous silks.[215] This piece of evidence is significant because it suggests that Venetians, attracted by its textile industry, visited the provincial centre even before the concession of Alexios' chrysobull in 1082. It has also been suggested that Venetians were involved in the trade of Cretan cheese.[216] In 1022 Leone da Molin, a Venetian, travelled to Constantinople with a cargo of cheese (caseo) that he had acquired on his way to the capital, perhaps the island of Crete.[217]

In Constantinople there were Venetians too, since again in the *Alexiad* it is stated that during the Norman occupation of Dyrrachion, Alexios persuaded the Venetians residing in the capital to write to their fellow countrymen advising them to surrender the place.[218] What is not clear is which kind of residence they had and under which conditions they lived, since a permanent place of residence, the Venetian quarter, was only granted to them by Alexios in 1082. David Jacoby has recently stated that their residence was already permanent.[219]

Amalfitans and Venetians were the two most influential communities among the Western merchants in Byzantium before 1081. Their presence in the Empire had significant differences but both communities had close contacts with the court. Similarly, both carried out commercial activities in Egypt, where they acted as

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[214] Morozzo della Rocca and Lombardo (1940), pp. 11-12, n. 12 and n. 13; Louvi-Kizi (2002), pp. 631-638.

[215] Jacoby (1991-1992), pp. 494-496.

[216] Jacoby (2009), p. 377; Jacoby (1997a), pp. 521-522.

[217] Morozzo della Rocca and Lombardo (1940), p. 2, n. 2.

[218] Anna Komnene, p. 180.

[219] Jacoby (2009), pp. 389-390.

middlemen between Byzantium and the Fatimid Caliphate. Their trading activities not only meant the export of Byzantine goods and produce to Western Europe, but also their involvement in the Byzantine economy. Their activities took place beyond Constantinople. By frequenting provincial centres where they purchased certain commodities, for instance, silks from Thebes, the Venetians encouraged the local economy of the Empire. An example is that of the above mentioned Cretan cheese, which we know Venetian merchants purchased and brought to the markets of Constantinople in order to be sold. Thus, Amalfitans and Venetians were not only interested in luxurious commodities produced in the empire. Finally, Venetians and Amalfitans were not the only Western merchants trading in Byzantium. For example, Lombards from Southern Italy also conducted commercial activities in Byzantium. Lombards from Bari are mentioned in the privileges granted to Venice in 992.[220] The Venetians are prohibited from exporting goods belonging to other communities, among them Lombards from Bari and Amalfitans. This suggests that these communities from Southern Italy also transported the goods they had acquired in Constantinople in Venetian ships. As David Jacoby has noted, the document does not include Byzantines, which implies that they enjoyed an advantageous treatment.

The Norman conquest of Southern Italy altered the fortunes of these merchants. The Amalfitan position in Byzantium probably started to decline once the city was placed under Norman rule. However, the end of Byzantine rule in Southern Italy did not mean the end of the contacts between the local population and the Byzantine Empire. The theft of the relics of St Nicholas from Myra in 1087 demonstrates that merchants from Bari were still sailing in Byzantine waters after 1071.[221]

From all this evidence it is possible to conclude that the most important communities of Western merchants in Byzantium were from Italy. This fact surely was the result of several factors: the geographic proximity between the Italian peninsula and the

[220] Jacoby (1994), p. 141; Corsi (1993), pp. 93-94

[221] Corsi (1993), p. 102.

Byzantine Empire, the long period of Byzantine rule over parts of Italy and, more importantly, the economic dynamism of many Italian cities. After having discussed the activities of Western mercenaries and merchants in Byzantium, now we turn to the matrimonial alliances negotiated between Byzantium and the West.

DIPLOMATIC BRIDES

This section mainly looks at the three unions arranged between the Byzantine Empire and various Western states by Michael VII in the 1070s. These three unions preceded the marriages negotiated by Alexios I and John II. Emperor Michael Doukas faced a difficult situation in both internal and external affairs and thus the fact that he arranged three marriages with the West should not be surprising. Both the number of diplomatic marriages and the powers with which he negotiated them were unusual.

Before the unions arranged by Michael VII, almost no diplomatic marriages with the West took place during the eleventh century. Jonathan Shepard has related this lack of diplomatic alliances to a more powerful Byzantine Empire at the beginning of the eleventh century.[222] An exception was the aforementioned union between John, the son of Doge Pietro II, and the daughter of the patrikios Argyropoulos. The marriage took place in 1005 or 1006, and it is supposed to have been a reward for the Venetian intervention against the Muslims besieging Bari in 1004.[223] It has also been suggested that the marriage arranged by Basil II was an attempt to keep Venice under Byzantine influence after the German Emperor Otto III had strengthened his links with the Venetian doge.[224] Even one of the doge's children was renamed Otto in his honour. Thus, it is possible that the marriage between Michael's sister and the doge's son was

[222] Shepard (2003a), pp. 9, 32.

[223] Nicol (1988), p. 45-46.

[224] Leyser (1973), p. 31.

not so much a prize, but the result of the rivalry between the German and the Byzantine emperors.

After a parenthesis of more than half a century, diplomatic marriages with the West were resumed with Michael VII's ambitious policy of alliances with Western powers. The most important of them was the diplomatic marriage arranged with the Normans of Southern Italy. In fact, a diplomatic marriage had already been proposed before. Although the Byzantines had tried to assist Bari during the long Norman siege, it seems that Emperor Romanos IV Diogenes attempted an appeasement with the Norman leader Robert Guiscard.[225] Romanos proposed a marriage alliance between the two powers. Probably the main reason was that Romanos needed to focus on the Turkish threat in Asia Minor.[226] The proposal was not successful, but when Michael Doukas ascended the throne he continued this policy soon after. However, Guiscard had to be persuaded before an agreement between the two parties was reached.[227] The different marriage propositions are interesting because we can get some insights of the relations between both powers and confirm the significance that this match had for the Byzantine court. After the loss of Southern Italy, the relations between Byzantium and the Normans must have been tense and in a near state of war. In the first marriage proposition to Robert Guiscard, the Byzantine emperor made reference to some figures that were under his protection, and whom Robert, according to the proposal, should spare. Ferdinand Chalandon has rightly identified these as some of the rebel Norman lords who had fled to the Byzantine court.[228] Michael had important reasons to cajole Robert, since once Bari had been taken, the Norman expansion could continue on the other side of the Adriatic Sea. Even Amatus of Montecassino mentioned that the Byzantine Emperor

[225] Sathas (1972), pp. 385-392, n. 143 and n. 144.

[226] Charanis (1949), pp. 17-18.

[227] Amatus of Montecassino, p. 178.

[228] Chalandon (1907), pp. 261-263.

initiated the proposal upon the advice of his counsellors, perhaps John Italos or the Norman exiles, in order that he might not be driven from the lordship over the empire.[229]

The final Byzantine offer suggests that for the Byzantine court a diplomatic alliance with Guiscard was essential. Michael offered huge rewards. Robert, one of his sons, and other Norman lords from Southern Italy received important Byzantine titles with their respective significant pensions.[230] This is probably the annual tribute that Amatus of Montecassino mentioned that Michael had promised Robert.[231] It is revealing that one of the letters in fact states that the dignities were the result of the encounters between Michael and the Norman ambassadors, not simply dictated by the emperor.[232] While the Byzantine court wanted to solve the Norman conflict at any price, Guiscard seems to have stated the conditions. With the marriage, titles and pensions Michael bought Robert's threat off.[233] In addition, the letter also mentions that Robert should fight Byzantium's enemies. A Byzantine source seems to confirm that Michael VII intended to use the Normans against the Turks.[234] This has clearly been interpreted as military support against the Turks in Asia Minor.[235] Perhaps it meant that Robert would allow Norman soldiers from Southern Italy to enrol in the Byzantine army in Asia Minor. Robert never led an expedition in Asia Minor and it is doubtful that Michael would have allowed Robert's army to go through Byzantine territory. Thus, the profitable proposal was accepted and in 1076 Robert's daughter Olympias was sent to Constantinople in order to marry Michael's son and successor Constantine.[236] Following the Byzantine

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[229] Amatus of Montecassino, p. 178.

[230] Antoniadis-Bibicou (1959-1960), pp. 43-75.

[231] Amatus of Montecassino, p. 178.

[232] Antoniadis-Bibicou (1959-1960), p. 46.

[233] Ibid., pp. 74-75.

[234] Skylitzes Continuatus, p. 170.

[235] Charanis (1949), p. 18; Shepard (1988a), pp. 99-101.

[236] *Antiche cronache*, p. 76.

tradition, her name was changed to Helena.[237] We have no information about Olympias-Helena's stay in Constantinople, but it is possible to suggest that she did not exercise much influence as only two years later, in 1078, the betrothal was broken off.

In the past centuries there had been many plans for matrimonial alliances between the West and Byzantium at the highest level, although only one had seen the emperor's son finally married to a Western princess. It was the case of the betrothal between the future Romanos II and Bertha-Eudokia.[238] If we are to believe Liudprand of Cremona, the diplomatic marriage had been requested by the Byzantine Emperor Romanos I Lekapenos (920-944). Liudprand also noted that Bertha was the Italian king Hugh's daughter with a prostitute called Pezola.[239] This detail suggests that the Byzantine emperor was not meticulous on the background of the bride, a possible explanation is that she was going to marry Constantine VII's son. At the time Constantine was not the undisputed successor to the throne as Romanos had crowned his three children as co-emperors.

The betrothal of Romanos and Bertha and that of Michael's son and Guiscard's daughter had an important element in common, in that both diplomatic marriages established kinship between a ruling power in Italy and the Byzantine Empire. However, the difference was that the second union sealed the end of the Byzantine rule in Southern Italy. Another significant detail is the fact that the betrothal associated the Byzantine emperor with a newcomer. The Normans were one example of a group of new powers that appeared during the eleventh century. Ultimately, the union was the price that the Byzantine court had to pay in order to obtain peace from Robert Guiscard.

Michael VII married his sister Theodora to the doge of Venice, Domenico Selvo. Diplomatic marriages with Venice were not a novelty, as Basil II had married a Byzantine to the son of a previous doge at the beginning of the eleventh century.

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[237] John Zonaras, pp. 230-231; von Falkenhausen (1982), pp. 56-72.

[238] Liudprand of Cremona, pp. 178-179, 183-184.

[239] Ibid., p. 183.

However, the timing of Michael's negotiations may give us some clues concerning the reason behind the union. As Donald Nicol has suggested, this could have been a diplomatic attempt to incite the Venetians against the Normans.[240] At least it is possible that, after the loss of Southern Italy, the Byzantine court may have foreseen the possibility of a Norman invasion through the Balkans. This could have been opposed with Venice's support. Therefore, the marriage took place sometime after 1071, when Michael became emperor and the Normans took Bari, and possibly before 1074, when Michael VII finally signed a treaty with Robert Guiscard. The two marriages between the Byzantine Empire and Venice were significant because they show that the Byzantine emperors considered Venice as a worthy ally. Moreover, they surely promoted the exportation of Byzantine culture to the West. Peter Damian reported the extravagance which the doge's wife had brought with her to Venice.[241] If we are to believe his account, Theodora introduced eastern customs which were unheard to the Venetians, for example, the use of the fork.

The third matrimonial alliance negotiated by Michael VII is the marriage of a woman from the Synadenoi family and the king of Hungary, Géza I (1074-1077).[242] The union may have taken place c.1075. This alliance between Byzantium and Hungary is depicted on the crown of St Stephen of Hungary. The portrait of Géza, who is labelled Kral of the Turks, is represented next to the images of Michael VII and his son Constantine. However, it is possible that the crown was originally intended for the Byzantine bride rather than Géza.[243] This Synadene was a niece of the future Emperor Nikephoros III Botaneiates, who rebelled against Michael a few years after the marriage. Jean-Claude Cheynet has noted that her family had provided the empire with several military officials and her relationship with Nikephoros Botaneiates should not be overstressed.[244]

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[240] Nicol (1988), pp. 52-53.

[241] Ibid., pp. 46-47; Pertusi (1979), p. 12.

[242] Cheynet (2002a), pp. 7-12; Shepard (1999), pp. 75-80.

[243] Hilsdale (2008), pp. 602-631.

[244] Cheynet (2002a), pp. 10-11.

Moreover, as Jonathan Shepard has pointed out, Michael VII had married certain figures from aristocratic families to the ruling families of neighbouring powers.[245] For instance, he married Alexios' elder brother, Isaac Komnenos, to a Georgian woman, the cousin of Maria of Alania, the empress of both Michael VII and Nikephoros Botaneiates. Michael was not a soldier emperor and he may have felt threatened by his generals' potential ambitions for the throne. Perhaps he promoted these matrimonial alliances in order to check their ambitions. The diplomatic marriage with Géza was a novelty because Byzantine emperors had never negotiated such a union with the kingdom of Hungary. Perhaps this was the result of the recent Christianisation of Hungary, which was enforced during the reign of Stephen I (1000-1038). Moreover, after some unrest along the border, Michael must have been interested in keeping peaceful relations with the Hungarians, and thus securing the Balkans. Nevertheless, it is a coincidence that the second Norman invasion provoked the negotiations for the marriage between Alexios' son and another Hungarian princess. While Michael's negotiations with Hungary were a novelty, the Hungarian Kingdom was going to play a significant role in the sphere of diplomatic marriages during the twelfth century.

The marriage between Guiscard's daughter Olympias and Michael's son Constantine provides evidence of the necessity of the empire to neutralise the Norman threat. It is necessary to remember that Guiscard had rejected previous Byzantine offers with Michael's brother as the groom. However, marriages with Italian potentates were not completely new. For instance, the marriage of Romanos, Constantine VII's son, and Bertha (renamed Eudokia), daughter of the King of Italy Hugh, shows that the defence of Byzantine interests in the Italian peninsula were also pursued through diplomatic marriages.[246] If Bertha had not died in 949 she may well have become the first Byzantine empress of Western origin.

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[245] Shepard (1999), p. 80.

[246] Davids (1995), pp. 106-107.

OVERVIEW

The eleventh century was a key moment for relations between Byzantium and the West. As contacts between different groups of Westerners and the empire increased during this period, so did their presence within Byzantine territory. However, they were not the only ones; during this period other populations took part in this increasing interaction. Turks also became increasingly significant players in Byzantine affairs. On the other hand, this affirmation does not intend to portray a fully 'Byzantine' empire before the eleventh century. Basil II's integration of the Bulgarian Kingdom, the Byzantine rule in Southern Italy and the tenth-century expansion in northern Syria had created a heterogeneous empire with different populations under the rule of Constantinople. Other ethnic populations, Slavs and Armenians among them, had already been components of the Byzantine Empire since earlier times. Paul Magdalino has rightly pointed out that during the reign of the Doukas emperors, the Byzantine court employed all these groups (Norman mercenaries, Amalfitan entrepreneurs and Southern Italian individuals among the Westerners) in order to pursue its own political interests.[247] The period was a moment of transformation in many aspects and the Byzantine Empire experienced serious challenges. Migrations and new powers in the extremes of the empire probably pushed the Byzantine court to find a more inclusive system if they expected to prevail over the new threats.

The reasons for this increase of Western presence in the Byzantine Empire are to be found in both East and West. Western Europe was experiencing a demographic and economic boom which led to an expansion of Western interests beyond its own borders. The ongoing military conquest and colonisation of the Iberian peninsula and the Norman establishment in Southern Italy demonstrate the Western search for new lands and markets. This expansion led to migrations towards Southern Europe but also to the eastern Mediterranean, culminating with the First Crusade and the conquest of the Levant. The main activities which lured Westerners to Byzantium were pilgrimage,

[247] Magdalino (1996a).

commerce and military service; two are related to economic gains and provide us with most of the evidence we have for the Western presence in the empire. It is possible to say that Byzantium turned into an attractive crossroad and a source of wealth for many Westerners. The empire offered them a wide range of work and profit opportunities. In Byzantium Venetian and Amalfitan merchants purchased luxurious goods which then they sold back home. However, they also traded Byzantine commodities within the empire. The evidence concerning the Cretan cheese hightlights their role as middlemen between different Byzantine territories, mainly from provincial centres to the capital. Thus, their commercial activities were varied and contributed to the general Byzantine economy. Amafitan and Venetian merchants conducted businesses with Byzantines, mainly at the capital and some provincial centres where they purchased the commodities. The interaction between Western merchants and Byzantines was established as a partnership which benefited both parties. While the economic boom of the Byzantine Empire may also be a factor behind the increase of Western merchants in Byzantium, their commercial activities encouraged the production of Byzantine commodities.

Western mercenaries grew to be an essential part of the empire's defence system. The Varangian guard is the paramount case of Western presence within the Byzantine court. They did not only fight in the battlefield, they also played a significant part of the courtly ritual. The changes in the Byzantine army offered these mercenaries chances to find employ in the empire. During the eleventh century the trend of hiring foreign mercenaries became the rule and the Byzantine army was dependent on mercenaries, either Western or from any other ethnic group. This tendency of hiring foreign mercenaries is one of the main features of the Komnenian army. The number of Western mercenaries serving in the Byzantine army during this period is unknown, perhaps around several thousand. Nevertheless, their growing presence and frequent effectiveness provided them with fame and the admiration from the Byzantine authors. The military sphere is thus a field where their input was likely. As we will see in chapter three, they may have introduced a new kind of shield (the kite shield). Moreover, in

some cases they also practised their own customs while dealing with the Byzantine population. The incident which took place after a Varangian tried to rape a woman in Thrace is a telling example.

The number of pilgrims travelling to Constantinople and also going through the empire in order to reach the Holy Land surely was significant. However, their presence was temporary and hence their interaction with the Byzantines must have been rather limited. Only Western figures from the nobility and the church hierarchy were granted special honours and received gifts. In any case, these contacts provided the Byzantine administration with many details on the Western lifestyle and politics.

To conclude, it is obvious that the Western presence in the Byzantine Empire before 1081, though it was not as permanent and stable as in later periods, was more significant than it may have been assumed. Its development during the Komnenian dynasty already had its origins in the period prior to Alexios' accession to the throne. However, the effects of this presence only became clearly apparent after 1081.

CHAPTER 2: WESTERNERS IN BYZANTIUM (1081-1143)

This chapter deals with the Westerners in the Byzantine Empire during the period under study. The chapter has four sections; each section focuses on the different spheres in which Westerners played a significant role: army, trade, administration and court. The study of all these people and their activities provides us with information about their interaction with the Byzantine population.

ARMY

The first section of this second chapter is dedicated to the Westerners who travelled to Byzantium in order to serve in the emperor's army. Although we do not know how numerous they were, Western mercenaries are often attested in the Byzantine sources, usually in contingents of hundreds. Their contribution is obviously found in the military sphere. The empire's military strength was renewed and certain enemies were defeated with the support of Western mercenaries. The section is divided in two parts, the first dealing with Varangians and the second with Normans. The focus on these two groups will allow us to follow their career in Byzantium during this period and to evaluate the possible changes from previous times. While both Varangians and Normans were part of the mercenary forces of the Byzantine army, this division emphasises the differences between the two groups and it facilitates their study. However, it must not be forgotten that there were other Westerners fighting as mercenaries in Byzantium, for example French and Germans. The Varangians are treated first because of their long standing presence in Byzantium and their role as bodyguards of the Byzantine emperor.

Varangians: As we have seen in the previous chapter, the Varangian guard is one of the most significant elements of the study of the Western presence in Byzantium. During this period the guard was not only a special military unit that looked after the security of the emperor, they also seem to have protected the grounds of the imperial palace in

Constantinople.[248] For example, when Alexios was dying in the Mangana complex in August 1118, we are told that John attempted to gain entrance to the imperial palace but the Varangians did not allow him until he could prove that he was the new emperor.[249] According to Orderic Vitalis, Alexios set the English to guard the imperial palace and royal treasures.[250] Moreover, the Varangians continued to take part in campaigns outside of Constantinople and some contingents were stationed in the provinces. If we are to believe Orderic Vitalis, Alexios built a fort called Civetot for the English.[251] Although this detail has already been mentioned, it is worth reiterating that during the Komnenian period the composition of the Varangian guard changed. Several sources prove that it was certainly altered by the arrival of new groups. Nevertheless, Westerners (Scandinavians) had always been one of its components along with mercenaries from Kievan Rus'. Later English exiles became another prominent component after the Norman conquest of England (1066). Accordingly, during this period the Western members of the guard mainly originated in the countries of northern Europe: Iceland, Norway, Sweden, Denmark and England. It is likely that with the increase of the English, the Western element of the guard became more common, while the Russian element became less significant. Thus, the number of Westerners serving in the Byzantine army, as part of the Varangian guard and the other contingents, must have been considerable. It is possible to state that their contribution to the military affairs of the empire was decisive in the twelfth century. This section deals with the two main groups that supplied soldiers for the Varangian guard, the English and the Scandinavians. Regardless of the English presence, sources confirm that the Scandinavian element survived during this period and Byzantine emperors continued to encourage their recruitment. For this reason it is important to bear in mind that the

[248] Birkenmeier (2002), p. 232.

[249] John Zonaras, pp. 284-285.

[250] Orderic Vitalis, II, pp. 202-205.

[251] Ibid.; Ordetic Vitalis, V, pp. 38-39. Civetot, or Κιβωτός, was located on the Asian coast of the Sea of Marmara, near Nicomedia (Anna Komnene, pp. 323, 443, 462). The Western presence in Civetot is confirmed by the existence of a cluniac monastery there, perhaps built during the First Crusade (Constable, 1967, p. 292).

Varangian guard was not an ethnically homogeneous unit. The discussion below focuses on some aspects and details provided by the sources that give us an interesting insight on their presence in Byzantium.

Anglo-Saxons: As it has been noted above, exiles from England were already present in the Byzantine army by 1081. Geoffrey Malaterra recorded their presence in the battle of Dyrrachion.[252] Anna narrated how they were routed by Guiscard's forces after an initial success, although she does not mention their ethnic origins.[253] The unit present in the battle was completely annihilated, though their leader Nampites may have escaped.[254] This defeat did not mean the end of the Varangian guard. There must have been other units in Constantinople and other places of the empire. More importantly, sources narrating the migration of the English to Byzantium suggest that after 1066 there were several waves of migrations.[255] The Chronicon Universale Anonymi Laudunensis, a Latin chronicle preserved in two thirteenth-century manuscripts, and an Icelandic saga describe a band of English leaving their country.[256] These two sources narrate the same migration but contain different details. According to these two texts, at least another group of exiles may have reached the Byzantine Empire after 1081.[257] The narrations provide us with significant information on their arrival in Constantinople by sea. They surely assisted Alexios during a siege of the capital by Turks and Pechenegs, probably in 1091. However, we are told that most of them left as they wanted to rule their own land. Alexios suggested to them that they conquer a former Byzantine land to the north of the

[252] Geoffrey Malaterra, p. 157.

[253] Anna Komnene, p. 134.

[254]Ibid., p. 211. PBW Nampites 8101.

[255] Head (1977), p. 193.

[256] The two texts are included in Ciggaar (1974), the Latin chronicle at pp. 320-323, and the saga at pp. 340-342; Fell (1974), 179-196.

[257] Shepard (1973), p. 71.

capital. This territory is likely to have been Cherson, in Crimea.[258] Others enrolled in the service of the Byzantine emperor as part of the Varangian guard.

A Latin source yields significant information about the English presence in Byzantium. It is an account of the miracles of St Augustine of Canterbury. Its author was a Benedictine monk, Goscelin of Saint-Bertin, who lived in England at the end of the eleventh and beginning of the twelfth century.[259] Goscelin was a musician and hagiographer. According to him, one of these Englishmen, a certain 'vir honorificus' seems to have attained a high position at Alexios' court.[260] It is possible to assume that this Englishman was one of the leaders of the English band. The text regarding St Augustine's miracles tells us that he was married to a Byzantine woman. She is described as prominent and rich. This detail on intermarriage between a Byzantine and a Westerner is interesting. It is possible that the marriage was either encouraged or arranged by the emperor. As we will see in the case of some Normans from Southern Italy, Alexios associated certain Western figures to the court by means of marriage. He probably used this matrimonial policy as a way to guarantee the loyalty of the newcomers. They received positions and wives in order to keep them near the court circle. With the marriage of the 'vir honorificus' to a Byzantine woman Alexios possibly attempted to secure the allegiance of the English soldiers, who surely followed prominent figures in their group.

This piece of evidence seems to mark a change in the Byzantine approach to Varangians from previous times. Before Alexios' reign there is no evidence for any marriage between Varangians and Byzantine women. Alexios promoted mixed marriages in order to preserve significant military figures at his service. This change of mentality may also be explained by the social position of some of the Englishmen. Jonathan Shepard has suggested that of one the reasons why the English achieved such a significant role

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[258] Shepard (1974), pp. 18-39.

[259] *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*; Vasiliev (1937), pp. 60-62.

[260] 'Miracula Sancti Augustini episcopi Cantuariensis,' in *AASS*, May, VI, pp. 410.

around the emperor was the fact that some of them were 'thegns.' Thegn is an Old Norse and Old English term denoting a certain aristocratic level, that is, they were not simple soldiers.[261] Moreover, the Byzantine emperor was after all a soldier and must have realised the need for military leaders with their own contingents ready to serve the empire.

The miracles of St Augustine also informs us that the same 'vir honorificus' built a church next to his residence dedicated to St Nicholas and St Augustine of Canterbury in Constantinople.[262] Ciggaar has proposed that the Englishman was a certain Coleman who is mentioned in the Chronicon Universale. The chronicle reports that Coleman had a church (Coleman, hic vir sanctus Constatinopoli habet templum).[263] The building receives some attention, and it is interesting because we are told that in the south side there was a painted icon of St Augustine. Above it was an inscription: 'Agios Augustinus, Anglorum Apostolus.' While the text of the chronicle combines Greek and Latin for the inscription, it is possible that the original labelling was written in Greek. In this way the English saint was presented to the potential Byzantine visitors of the church. St Augustine is indeed considered the Apostle of the English, and it is obvious that the English must have especially venerated him. The text about the miracles of St Augustine also relates that the English patron included in the church some lights which were lit during the night and seem to have created a special atmosphere.[264] They are described as a convention from the founder's country, namely England. The arrival of the English introduced the cult of a new saint and other religious practices into the Byzantine capital. Although the figure of St Augustine may not have been totally unknown in Byzantium, its depiction in a church of Constantinople implies that the saint became more visible. If we are to believe the text by Goscelin, St Augustine performed a

[261] Shepard (1973), p. 87.

[262] 'Miracula Sancti Augustini,' p. 410; Janin (1969), p. 591; Dallegio (1924), p. 456.

[263] Ciggaar (1974), pp. 321, 328.

[264] 'Miracula Sancti Augustini,' p. 410.

miracle in which a Byzantine woman named 'Eudochia' was involved.[265] This woman visited the church and saw the image of St Augustine. Because the image had one eye damaged, she questioned the saint's powers. As a result of her insult, she lost her sight. She only gained it back after venerating St Augustine. From the narration of this miracle, we learn that Byzantines visited the church. By doing so, they may have learnt about the cult of St Augustine. After all, the construction of a church dedicated to St Augustine probably resulted in the announcement of the saint's veneration in Constantinople. It is possible to suggest that the more permanent Western presence, and its closer contacts with the ruling elite, provided the Byzantines with more information regarding Western veneration. We are even told that news regarding the miracle was reported throughout the Byzantine capital, even reaching the imperial palace.[266] We do not know if the whole story was actually true, but the purpose of the miracle's narration was to report the English about the power of the saint, who performed miracles in a foreign land and even gained new followers among those who had questioned his sanctity. Nevertheless, the cult of St Augustine did not become widespread in Byzantium. No Byzantine source provides evidence for the introduction of the cult of St Augustine in the empire.

The foundation of a 'national' English church surely had the aim of offering the English community of Constantinople a place where its members could worship together, but also to venerate their own saints, which were probably not to be found anywhere else. In the church they would have been free to follow their own liturgy. The two versions of the arrival of the English exiles agree that they went to Hungary to find or consecrate their own clergy, the reason being that they did not want to follow 'Paul's law' (Quod vero codicem Pauli, qui Constantinopoli in usu), that is the Orthodox rite.[267] Thus, it is likely that the church surely had had its own clergy. Robert de Clari tells us that in 1204, after the Byzantine elite had fled the capital, 'what did the priests and clerics in their

[265] Ibid., pp. 410-411.

[266] Ibid.

[267] Fell (1973), pp. 102-108; Ciggaar (1974), pp. 311, 337, 342.

robes, the English and the Danes and the people of other countries do, but come out to the camp of the Franks in procession, begging for mercy.'[268] It has been suggested that these priests were the clergy of the Varangians.[269] On the other hand, this reference to Paul's law contrasts with other Icelandic sources where there is no mention to the religious split between Rome and Constantinople.[270]

The chronicle on the English band immigrating to Byzantium also provides us with information on another Englishman that pursued a career in the Byzantine Empire. This is Hardigt, who eventually became a general in the Byzantine fleet (ducem navalis exercitus).[271] This piece of evidence may be related to the fact that at least one English band arrived in Byzantium by sea, and thus they may have had a naval force ready to deploy. Krijnie Ciggaar has suggested that this Hardigt may well have been the Hardinus de Anglia mentioned by Albert of Aachen.[272] In his chronicle of the First Crusade he reported that in 1102 a Christian fleet sailed into Ioppe (Jaffa) with the intention to worship in Jerusalem.[273] Albert listed the names of some figures leading the Christian fleet, which included a certain Hardinus de Anglia. If this was the case, he was not the first Varangian to visit the Holy Land. Harald Hardrada had already made the pilgrimage to Jerusalem while at the service of the Byzantine emperor.[274]

The information about Hardigt is significant because he is likely to have been the second Westerner with some command position in the Byzantine fleet. While Alexios had entrusted Venice with the naval protection against the Normans, it is possible that the employment of other Westerners may be the result of the decline of the Byzantine

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[268] Robert de Clari, pp. 96-97.

[269] Ciggaar (1996), p. 159; Nicol (1974), p. 189.

[270] Jakobsson (2008), pp. 173-188.

[271] Ciggaar (1974), p. 323; it has also been suggested that this figure may have been a later confusion with Harald Hardrada (Fell, 1974, pp. 186-187).

[272] Ciggaar (1974), pp. 338-339, note 69.

[273] Albert of Aachen, pp. 648-649.

[274] Snorri Sturluson, pp. 586-587; *Morkinskinna*, p. 144.

fleet.[275] Although the Byzantine fleet was certainly operative at certain moments during this period, it seems that Western naval power gradually grew and, with the creation of the Crusader States, became more present in the eastern Mediterranean. Byzantine emperors seem to have been more preoccupied with territorial conquest and their fleet only had a secondary role. Furthermore, the Italian naval power presented a serious threat. The attacks of the Pisans and the war between Venice and the empire suggest that Westerners had more advantage concerning naval matters.

The other Westerner in the Byzantine fleet, Landulf, came from Southern Italy.[276] Anna informs us that Alexios put him in charge of the Byzantine fleet when a Pisan expedition attacked Byzantine territory on its way to the Holy Land.[277] She also states that Landulf received the title of megas doux because his knowledge in naval warfare. Paul Magdalino has linked him with the homonymous figure (the protosebastos Landulfus Butromilis) that commissioned the bronze doors for the cathedral of Salerno in c. 1099.[278] This pair of doors is the last example of the group of brass doors that are found in Italy and were produced in Constantinople.[279] Landulph is also mentioned by Anna during the second Norman invasion led by Bohemond.[280] Anna narrated that he was in charge of the Byzantine fleet and again she emphasises his experience in naval warfare. His mission was to intercept the communications between Southern Italy and the Balkan Peninsula. More interesting is that in the *Alexiad* Anna did not omit to mention the fact that Landulph denounced Isaac Kontostephanos and others for neglecting the guard of the straits.[281] As a result, Alexios threatened to punish Isaac. It is plausible to believe that Landulph was certainly trustworthy in the eyes of the emperor. The use of

[275] Pryor and Jeffreys (2006), pp. 86-89, 109-112.

[276] PBW Landulf 20101.

[277] Anna Komnene, pp. 350-353.

[278] Magdalino (2003), pp. 51-53.

[279] Matthiae (1971), pp. 93-95; Frazer (1973), pp. 160-162; della Valle (2009), pp. 186-187.

[280] Anna Komnene, pp. 380-381.

[281] Ibid., p. 403.

Westerners in the Byzantine fleet, although not extensive, is certainly interesting as the Byzantine naval presence does not seem to have been significant during this period. Another possible explanation for their employment by the Byzantine emperor is that they may have been familiar with Western naval tactics and ships, and so they knew how to fight them better.

Other English are found at the service of the Byzantine emperor. For instance, a certain Ulfric, 'genere Anglus' and a native of Lincoln was sent to the court of Henry I and Mathilda by Alexios at some point between 1101 and 1116.[282] He may well have been another of the English exiles that found their way to Constantinople. The aim of the mission may have been to recruit soldiers. However, the important detail for our purposes is that Alexios employed an Englishman for a mission to England. His origins were probably the reason why Ulfric was employed as a Byzantine envoy. He surely had the necessary language skills and knew the country. Thus, the Byzantine employment of the English exiles was not limited to mercenaries, as members of the Varangian guard. Alexios was able to profit from the situation and also used them as tools for his diplomacy. Englishmen were also found in significant positions in the capital, especially in the imperial palace. A monk from Canterbury called Joseph who was returning from pilgrimage to Jerusalem called at Constantinople. There he met some 'amicos' at the service of the emperor, probably in his household.[283] As we have noted earlier, the Varangian guard probably had the task to guard the imperial palace. Because of the intervention of these friends, the monk was allowed to visit the imperial chapel where important relics were kept, surely the church of the Virgin of the Pharos. This is one example of how Westerners staying in Constantinople assisted friends, relatives and fellow countrymen who happened to arrive to the Byzantine capital; further cases are discussed later. Finally, it is worth mentioning that a figure like this monk from Canterbury is likely to have become the source for St Augustine's miracle in Constantinople. He seems to have stayed in the Byzantine capital at the end of the

[282] 'Chronicon Monasterii de Abingdon,' in Stevenson (1858), pp. 46-47; Shepard (1973), p. 78.

[283] Haskins (1910), pp. 293-295; Vasiliev (1937), pp. 62-64.

eleventh century, when Goscelin was in Canterbury and probably wrote the narration of the miracles.

Scandinavians: Sigfús Blöndal argued that the Scandinavian element did not diminish during this period, rather the opposite, it increased with the Crusades.[284] Evidence found in the Norse sagas indeed demonstrates that Scandinavian mercenaries continued to serve the Byzantine emperor as part of the Varangian guard. During their trip to the Holy Land, Scandinavian kings stayed in Constantinople. In 1103 Eric I of Denmark and his wife Bothilda were the first ones to arrive to the Byzantine capital.[285] According to Saxo Grammaticus, it seems that Alexios did not trust his intentions.[286] He was afraid of the possible connivance between the Danes at his service and the Danish king. Some of the Scandinavians at his service were from Denmark or the Danelaw. We are told that they asked Alexios to meet Eric, who was camped outside the walls. Alexios' fear that his mercenaries may have plotted with the Danish king may be explained by the fact that these mercenaries considered Eric as their king. Moreover, the Varangians' task as imperial bodyguards would have made the Byzantine emperor an easy prey. Eventually Alexios received the Danish king, who later died in Cyprus on his way to Jerusalem. It is possible that his tomb on the island may have become a visiting attraction, at least for Scandinavian pilgrims. Abbot Nikulás of Thvera, a pilgrim from Iceland, called in the Cypriot port of Paphos (Baffa) while on his way to Jerusalem.[287] He reported that King Eric had died there. His pilgrimage took place in about 1140, a few decades after Eric had died. Moreover, Nikulás explained that Paphos had a garrison of Varangians. It is obvious that he noted this because some of the Varangians must have been Scandinavians. It is possible that he met some while on the island. This piece of

[284] Blöndal and Benedikz (1978), p. 130.

[285] Ibid., pp. 131-132; Ciggaar (1996), p. 111.

[286] Saxo Grammaticus, p. 338.

[287] Wilkinson (1988), p. 216.

information provides evidence that Varangians were stationed in provincial centres of the empire during this period. With the arrival of the First Crusade, Cyprus became a highly strategic base between the Byzantine Empire and the new Crusader States. It is likely that the presence of the Varangians was related to the island's new role.

These Scandivanian pilgrimages to the Holy Land provided the Byzantine emperors with a continuous flow of mercenaries, as many soldiers stayed in Byzantium. However, there were more than men. The first European ruler to visit the Holy Land after the establishment of the Crusader States was Sigurd, King of Norway. His pilgrimage was indeed a Norwegian Crusade. We are told how on his way back in 1110, Sigurd gave the ships of his expedition to the Byzantine emperor.[288] Moreover, many of the men travelling with the Norwegian King decided to stay in Byzantium and became part of the Varangian guard.[289] It has been suggested that the new recruits manned the ships left by Sigurd. As we have seen above, the naval skills of Westerners seem to have been appreciated.

Scandinavian soldiers seem to have played a very significant role in the battle of Beroia against the Pechengs in 1122. The information for this encounter comes from both Byzantine sources (Kinnamos and Niketas Choniates) and northern sagas.[290] The latter are similar but contain different details; some have been discussed by R. M. Dawkins and others.[291] According to the Byzantine authors, after being defeated in a first encounter, the Pechenegs built a sort of fortress with their wagons in order to protect themselves from the Byzantine army. After attempts to break their defences had failed, John II seems to have become desperate. The sagas report that Byzantines and then

[288] Snorri Sturluson, p. 698; *Morkinskinna*, p. 325; Ciggaar (1996), p. 111-112.

[289] Blöndal and Benedikz (1978), pp. 139-140.

[290] As we have seen above, Kinnamos (p. 8) actually called them the British nation; Choniates, pp. 15-16; for the sagas, one account can be found in the saga of Hákon the Broadshouldered (Snorri Sturluson), pp. 787-788.

[291] Dawkins (1937), pp. 243-249; Blöndal and Benedikz (1978), pp. 148-149.

Flemings and Franks had been sent against the Pechenegs without success.[292] This piece of evidence is significant because it shows that the authors of the sagas were aware of the different ethnic groups of Western mercenaries present in the Byzantine army. The Byzantine emperor, who in the sagas is mentioned as Kirjalax, that is, (kyr) Alexios, was then told to send the Varangians.[293] Dawkins has pointed out that certain sagas refer to the Varangians with the term 'wineskins.'[294] This name would have been a reference to their tendency to drunkenness. However, another saga uses the term 'his friends.' While he believed this detail to be a slight sneer, it could in fact imply the special relationship between the Varangians and the emperor. This is confirmed by the fact that the emperor, who was in reality John II, replied that he was not going to waste his most precious troops. This detail may well be an exaggeration and a way to advertise that the Varangians were the most appreciated mercenary group by the Byzantine emperor. Perhaps there was some rivalry between the different ethnic regiments. The reason why the emperor did not want to send the Varangians was that they were few in number against the numerous Pechenegs. They apparently numbered around four hundred and fifty. Nevertheless, the Varangian leader, a certain Thórir Helsing (possibly of Swedish origin) offered to fight if that pleased the emperor.[295] To the surprise of the Byzantines, the daring Varangian attack was successful and the Pechenegs were finally defeated. Choniates reported that the victory was celebrated in a festival which commemorated the battle.[296] From this piece of evidence we also learn that the Varangians were not only organised in an independent contingent, they also seem to have fought on their own. Choniates also mentions that the soldiers of the Byzantine army were organised according to their nationality during the military operations to conquer Shaizar

[292] Snorri Sturluson, p. 787.

[293] According to Sigfus Blöndal in the sagas the name Kirjalax is also used to refer to later emperors (1939), p. 160.

[294] Dawkins (1937), p. 246.

[295] Snorri Sturluson, p. 788.

[296] Niketas Choniates, p. 16.

(1138).[297] He mentions Macedonians, Kelts and Scythians (Pechenegs?), and informs us that they fought with their different weapons. Thus, it is possible that the contacts between the Byzantine soldiers and the foreign mercenaries during military campaigns were not so frequent. The fact that they fought in this way reduced the chances of interaction between Byzantines and the Westerners.

The account of the sagas offers further evidence. We are told that when the Varangians offered John the possibility to attack the Pechenegs on their own; the Byzantine emperor is reported to have asked the Varangians to pray to St Olaf, their king, so that the saint would help them and give them the victory. The Scandinavians then vowed to build at their own expense a church in Constantinople if they were victorious. The church would be dedicated to the honour and glory of holy King Olaf. St Olaf had been a king of Norway who was killed in battle in 1030 and was made a saint by the Roman church. His veneration is also found in the Crusader Levant, where it would have been taken by Scandinavian pilgrims visiting the Holy Land.[298] Figures like the King Sigurd of Norway, who travelled to Jerusalem, may have exported the cult of St Olaf to the Holy Land. The Norse members of the Varangian guard may have introduced his cult into the Byzantine Empire. Regarding John's request, it is not possible to ascertain if the Byzantine emperor indeed asked the Varangians to pray for Olaf's intercession. Choniates narrated that the emperor prayed in tears in front of an icon of the Mother of God.[299] However, it is possible that John knew about their veneration for St Olaf. His close contact with the Varangians suggests that John was aware of Olaf's figure and the special veneration for him among Scandinavians.

Concerning the Varangian church in Constantinople, the sources mention two dedications, one to the Virgin Mary and another to St Olaf. Scholars do not agree on when the church was built and if there was actually one building or two. It has also been

[297] Ibid., pp. 29-30.

[298] Kühnel (1988), pp. 126-127.

[299] Niketas Choniates, p. 15.

suggested that there was only one, perhaps dedicated to the Virgin with a chapel in honour of St Olaf.[300] It is difficult to believe that in 1122, when the Varangians vowed to build one for St Olaf, they did not have any building for worship. As we have seen, the English already had theirs. Perhaps they built a chapel or a second church. While Sifgús Blöndal believed that the Varangian church was only built after the battle at Beroia,[301] Krijnie Ciggaar has proposed that the church of St Olaf in Constantinople was actually built by the saint's half brother, that is Harald Hardrada, after a Byzantine expedition against the Pechenegs in 1036.[302] In any case, the Varangians' vow to build a church dedicated to St Olaf is certainly significant, it could be seen as an attempt to introduce the cult of St Olaf in the Byzantine capital. A reference from the Late Byzantine period mentions a church dedicated to the Mother of God Βαραγγιωτίσσης, by then an Orthodox establishment, in the vicinity of Hagia Sophia.[303] Some scholars have opposed the possibility that a Latin church could have been so close to the main Byzantine temple.[304] Nevertheless, it is indeed possible as the Varangians had to be near the emperor. The proximity of Hagia Sophia to the imperial palace is an important detail to bear in mind. If the Varangians acted as the emperor's bodyguards and also as sentinels of the imperial palace, the location of their church nearby is entirely plausible.

Other Norse sources provide more information about the worship of the Norwegian king in Constantinople.[305] We are told that when Olaf was killed in the battle of Stiklestad, a soldier present in the battle took his sword called Hneitir (or Cutter). The sword eventually became the possession of a mercenary in the Byzantine army. Then after a certain miracle took place on repeated occasions, the Byzantine emperor, again

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[300] Dawkins (1937) pp. 248-249; Blöndal and Benedikz (1978), pp. 152-153; Ellis (1976), pp. 192, 205; Ciggaar (1996), p. 126.

[301] Blöndal and Benedikz (1978), pp. 185-186.

[302] Ciggaar (1980), pp. 385-401.

[303] Dallegio (1924), p. 458; Blöndal and Benedikz (1978), p. 186.

[304] van Arkel-De Leeuv van Weenen and Ciggaar (1979), pp. 445.

[305] For example, Snorri Sturluson, pp. 786-787.

mentioned as Kirjalax but perhaps John II, learnt about the story of the sword. The saga reports that the emperor acquired the sword for a large amount of money and donated it to the church of the Varangians. There the sword was venerated as a relic of the Norwegian king, and according to a Norse poem, the *Geisli*, the sword stood above a gold-encrusted altar.[306] This story is usually found after the narration of the victory over the Pechenegs mentioned above, and it is obvious that the Varangians are praised for their audacity and devotion. Although the miracle may be pure imagination and the sword may not have actually belonged to Olaf, the story confirms that the Byzantine emperor knew about the the Varangians' devotion for the saint. Moreover, the Byzantine emperor must have been grateful to the Varangians for their victory over the Pechenegs. Perhaps he decided to donate the sword as a reward and also as a sign of their loyalty and bravery. The fact that St Olaf's relic was a weapon is in tune with the Varangians' mission in Byzantium. Thus, although famous for their axes, the Varangians would have probably used the sword as a symbol of their military power and the saint's favour towards them. However, there may have been other reasons for placing such a relic in Constantinople.

During this period, Scandinavians travelled to the Holy Land via Constantinople. There they could admire the most important relics of Christendom. The Byzantine emperor must have been aware that Westerners had their own cults, and in particular those of the Varangians, who lived in Constantinople and with whom he must have spent long periods during military expeditions. By keeping the relic in the Varangian church he continued the tradition of placing the most important Christian relics in the Byzantine capital. There it was possible for all the Scandinavian pilgrims in Constantinople to admire and venerate the sword. The Byzantine emperor may also have been aware that Scandinavian relics allegedly were on display in churches of Antioch and Jerusalem.[307] He may have decided to use the sword to attract Scandinavian pilgrims. Also, this special relic could be seen as an indication of the emperor's personal esteem towards the

[306] Blöndal and Benedikz (1978), p. 186.

[307] Ciggaar (2013), pp. 329-330.

Scandinavian mercenaries. Olaf's sword provides evidence that under particular circumstances, certain Western religious elements could also be tolerated and positively encouraged. The fact that the source tells us that the emperor acquired the sword for a large amount of money implies that he cared about Varangian traditions and veneration. This story suggests that the relation between the Byzantine emperor and the Varangians was significant. It is obvious that as his bodyguards, he was interested in having their total confidence. By donating the sword, the emperor made sure that they knew he also was their patron.

There is further evidence for the introduction of other saints as objects of religious veneration in the Byzantine Empire. Although the next piece of evidence dates to around 1200 and is not a Western example, it still yields significant information about the diffusion of other Christian cults. Narrating his pilgrimage to Constantinople, Dobrinia Iadreikovich, or Anthony, the future archbishop of Novgorod, reported having seen an icon of the Kievan saints Boris and Gleb in Hagia Sophia.[308] Boris and Gleb were eleventh-century martyrs from Kievan Rus' that were closely related to the ruling dynasty of Kiev.[309] It is likely that the introduction of the brother saints was encouraged by certain Kievan figures that lived in Byzantium during the eleventh and twelfth centuries.[310] However, the fact that an icon of the Kievan saints was on display in Hagia Sophia shows that the cult of these two non-Byzantine brothers was present in the most important church of the Byzantine Empire. Although it should not be a major surprise as the Kievan church was part of the Orthodox Church,[311] this piece of information suggests that the Byzantines accepted foreign saints during this period. On the other hand, this does not seem to have been the case of the Western saints. No evidence indicates that Western saints were found in Byzantine churches. Therefore, the fact that

[308] Ehrhard (1932), p. 55; Arrignon (1987), p. 39.

[309] White (2013), pp. 132-151.

[310] Kinnamos mentions Russian potentates who fled to Byzantium as refugees during Manuel's reign, pp. 236-237; Kazhdan (1988/1989), pp. 414-415.

[311] Poppe (1981), pp. 29-53.

we found the cults of St Augustine and St Olaf in Constantinople was the direct result of the foreign communities living in the empire, but they do not prove the expansion of these saints' cult among the average Byzantine population. They simply were the side effects of the outsider presence in Byzantium and Constantinople in particular.

From the evidence and the discussion above it is possible to conclude that the Varangians played an important military role during the Komnenian dynasty. Most of the references to the Varangians are related to the English or Scandinavians. Both groups were part of the same guard at the service of the Byzantine emperors, but it is true that the English and Scandinavians differed in certain important aspects as Jonathan Shepard has demonstrated.[312] Probably the most important was that the English exiles had no country to go back to once they had finished their service in Byzantium. In any case, both ethnic groups excelled in critical situations for the Byzantine army and were successful in dealing with serious threats. For this reason they seem to have been greatly valued by Alexios I and John II. Sources seem to present a closer link between the former and the English, and perhaps the latter with Scandinavians, but it is obvious that both emperors relied on the guard in crucial moments of their reigns. As a result, the Varangians had a special relationship with the emperor from which they benefited. For instance, the erection of the 'Varangian' churches was a significant privilege. However, it is a clear sign that religious and cultural barriers separated the Varangians and the Byzantine population. These 'national' churches suggest that the Varangian guard was at the same level as the Italian communities. During this period, Venetians and Pisans had their own quarters with churches. The Varangians surely were, together with the rest of the Italians, the largest Western community in Constantinople and probably in the whole empire. Although the Varangians were a much smaller group, their proximity to the emperor placed them at the centre of the Byzantine military power.

[312] Shepard (1973), pp. 84-91.

Normans: The second section of chapter two is dedicated to the presence of Normans in the Byzantine Empire, and especially at the Byzantine court. The Normans of Southern Italy became the most powerful enemy of Byzantium to the west of the empire. Nonetheless, as we have seen above, before Alexios' accession the Normans already played a significant role in the military affairs of the empire. The evidence from Alexios' reign suggests that there was a change in the way they were approached by the Byzantine emperor. Three case studies will be discussed in this section, to show the new relations established between the Byzantine emperor and the Normans. They concern three soldiers: Constantine Humbertopoulos, Raoul and Roger.

When Alexios ascended the throne in April 1081, he already had long experience dealing with Westerners, and among them especially Normans. In Anatolia he and his brother Isaac had led Byzantine armies that included Western mercenaries. But he also had to fight their ambitions, as in the case of Roussel of Bailleul. Thus, Alexios' relations with Westerners had been diverse. He had learnt that the ally could become an enemy according to the circumstances. In any case, when Alexios became emperor in 1081, he had to face a full scale invasion of the empire by Robert Guiscard. This campaign was going to mark a change in the relations between the Norman mercenaries and the Byzantine court. Our first figure is a Norman mercenary that Alexios had met before he took the throne in April 1081.

Just before Alexios left Constantinople to prepare his revolt, Anna narrated that Alexios had secretly met Constantine Humbertopoulos and Gregorios Pakourianos.[313] The first one may have been Robert Guiscard's nephew.[314] Because of his surname he has been considered to be the son of Humbert, who was Guiscard's brother.[315] In the sources he usually appears as Humbertopoulos, but on his seals he is called Oumpertos.[316] Zonaras

[313] Anna Komnene, pp. 63-65.

[314] PBW Konstantinos 122

[315] Gautier (1971), p. 240; McQueen (1986), p. 437; Nicol (1979), pp. 116-117.

[316] Jordanov (2006), pp. 312-315, ns. 529-532.

describes Humbertopoulos as descendant of the Franks.[317] Humbertopoulos seems to have been already at the service of the Byzantine army during Nikephoros III's reign. It is worth noting that, according to Anna, Alexios only visited these two figures in the capital. This information shows that in 1081 two prominent military figures, or at least with significant armed forces, were of non-Greek origin: A Norman from Southern Italy and a Georgian. It is clear that Alexios realised he needed their help if he wanted to have some possibility of success. It is possible that having their support and having promised them rewards, he ensured that they did not take any part in the defence of the capital. Both figures played important roles in the first years of Alexios' reign. Pakourianos became megas domestikos of the West, a key post of the Byzantine army. Humbertopoulos took part in two of the most important battles of Alexios' reign: Dyrrachion (1081)[318] and Lebounion (1091).[319] In both he led a contingent of Western mercenaries. This detail could suggest that he had his own contingent of mercenaries. However, it is possible that being a Westerner he was simply appropriate for such a mission. After Lebounion, the *Alexiad* informs us that Humbertopoulos took part in a plot against Alexios with another military figure, the Armenian Ariebes.[320] We do not know what Humbertopoulos' reasons were, but it is possible that he did not agree with the compensation he had received for supporting Alexios. This may be the last case attested in the sources of a Western mercenary plotting against Alexios. The plot was discovered and both Humbertopoulos and Ariebes were punished with the loss of their properties and exile. Anna narrates that Alexios did not agree with this extreme penalty. Moreover, she mentions Humbertopoulos again later, during a battle against the Cumans, suggesting that he was pardoned.[321] It seems that Alexios trusted him or maybe, because of his Norman origin, Alexios thought it was better not to send him

[317] John Zonaras, pp. 260-261.

[318] Anna Komnene, p. 127.

[319] Ibid., p. 247.

[320] Ibid., p. 252.

[321] Ibid., p. 286.

away. Due to his blood connections with the Norman ruling dynasty, Southern Italy was likely the place where he could have found protection. This option would probably strengthen the Norman power. Alexios was very aware of this as his court comprised Normans who had defected to Byzantium. It is probable that he wanted to avoid Byzantines joining Norman forces, for the reason that they could reveal important information that may have been useful to Norman interests. Although we do not know where Humbertopoulos was born, his name Constantine suggests the possibility that he was renamed at some point after he established himself in Byzantium. However, it is not possible to say if that happened by having married a Byzantine woman or by joining the Orthodox faith. Both events may have actually been related. It is possible that he had become Orthodox as he took part in the Synod of Blachernae in 1094, where he is named with the title of sebastos.[322] This is not strong evidence, but may hint that he married a woman from the aristocracy. Perhaps that was the reason why his intrigues were forgiven. Humbertopoulos' figure shows that from the very beginning of his reign, Alexios had to court the Normans already present in the Byzantine Empire as they played a significant military role. Also, his case is significant because it provides us with an example of Western mercenary between the period before 1081 and Alexios' reign. The fact that he was elevated to sebastos confirms that Alexios' accession eventually marked a change in relation to the Normans. The reason behind this change was likely to have been Humbertopoulos' support in 1081. Although the next two figures also came from Southern Italy, their arrival in Byzantium was a consequence of Guiscard's invasion.

The first is Raoul.[323] He was a Norman that Robert Guiscard sent to the court of Nikephoros III Botaneiates in 1080.[324] His mission was to protest against Nikephoros' usurpation of the Byzantine throne. As we have seen in the first chapter, Robert Guiscard was related to the former emperor, Michael VII Doukas, whose son

[322] Gautier (1971), p. 217.

[323] Nicol (1979), pp. 127-128. PBW Raoul 15001

[324] Anna, Komnene, pp. 49-50; Fassoulakis (1973), pp. 9-11.

Constantine was betrothed to Guiscard's daughter, Olympias-Helena. Guiscard was determined to use the intrigues in the imperial capital to further his own interests, that is, to strive for territorial gains. For that reason he pretended that Michael had fled Constantinople and sought his support to regain the throne.[325] The *Alexiad* informs us that Robert sent gifts and letters promising friendship during Raoul's diplomatic mission.[326] It is possible to assume that Raoul tried to win over Alexios Komnenos, who at the time had one of the most important military positions in the empire, megas domestikos of the West. It is likely because Robert Guiscard eventually attacked the empire from the West, where he met Alexios leading the Byzantine army. Alexios must also have been famous by then for his military enterprises. However, Raoul's mission seems to have had the opposite result. Raoul eventually left Southern Italy in order to serve the Byzantine emperor. Through the *Alexiad* we learn the reason for Raoul's defection. Anna narrated that once Raoul was back in Italy, he contradicted Guiscard by saying that he had seen the real Michael VII as a monk in a monastery of the capital.[327] Moreover, by the time Raoul arrived in Italy, Alexios had ousted Nikephoros III and Constantine Doukas had been reinstated as co-emperor and successor. He did not believe that the invasion was fair, as Nikephoros III had been deposed. All these were bad news from Raoul's embassy and Robert was angry at him. Anna then reported that Raoul's brother, Roger,[328] defected to the Romans and provided them with details about the forthcoming invasion. As a result, Robert threatened to kill Raoul, who decided to leave and found refuge next to Bohemond, who had already disembarked on the Balkan coast. It is assumed that from there, at some point he joined his brother Roger in Byzantium. It is possible that during their meeting Alexios had made Raoul a counteroffer and promised him rewards if he joined the Byzantine forces. Whether this was the case or not, Raoul's defection suggests that even with his previous experience

[325] Anna Komnene, pp. 41-42; Geoffrey Malaterra, pp. 143-145; William of Apulia, p. 213; Antiche Chronache, p. 77.

[326] Anna Komnene, p. 49.

[327] Ibid.

[328] PBW Roger 15002

concerning Normans, Alexios was still interested in recruiting new Western figures. The desperate situation of the empire was probably the reason behind such attitude. Also, the brothers surely knew details about Robert's expedition. Any information was valuable to Alexios, who probably welcomed them at his service. It is also clear that Alexios was trying to divide the loyalties among the ranks of Guiscard's army. If the invasion was going to take place, it was better that the Norman army could be easily approached and divided before and during the conflict.

The arrival of Norman defectors in Byzantium was not a new occurrence; this had already happened during the collapse of Byzantine rule in Southern Italy. What was significant was what happened to them once they were established there. The presence of Norman soldiers in Alexios' court seems to have become a common feature. It is clear that in 1081, but also during his whole reign, the Byzantine army continually needed more mercenaries. The Byzantine army required new soldiers in order to face the incessant battles that took place during Alexios' reign. These military circumstances explain why Alexios always encouraged Westerners to join his army. The origins of the First Crusade are already well known.[329] The lack of soldiers and the difficult situation in Asia Minor were the reasons behind Alexios' request of Western mercenaries.[330] It has also been suggested that the Komnenian court admired the values and skills of the Norman soldiers.[331] This idea would explain their integration into the Byzantine court, which was surely promoted by Alexios. However, that may not have been the opinion of every Byzantine at court. Anna's view of the Normans as a group is rather negative.[332] Nevertheless, Alexios' own experience at dealing with Normans could indeed have convinced him of their military prowess.

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[329] Somerville (2011), pp. 15-16.

[330] Shepard (1988a), pp. 102-105; Frankopan (2012).

[331] McQueen (1986), pp. 468-469; Gallina (1999), p. 202; Malamut (2007), pp. 419-421.

[332] For example, she describes them as untrustworthy and greedy (p. 325).

Thus, Raoul and Roger joined the Byzantine forces. We have more details about their careers in Byzantium through Albert of Aachen. He narrated that Alexios sent 'Rudolfum Peel de Lan and Rotgerum, son of Dagobert,' in an embassy to one of the Crusader leaders, Godfrey of Bouillon.[333] The aim of their embassy was to ask the duke to stop his troops from plundering Byzantine territory. These two individuals are supposed to be Raoul and Roger, the brothers who had escaped Guiscard's wrath.[334] This piece of evidence shows that Alexios used the Western background of the two envoys in order to achieve a successful result. When dealing with Westerners, it was preferable to engage Westerners as well. The Western envoys were more likely to be received in a more sympathetic way than native Byzantines. It is likely that they looked more trustworthy. There were other advantages. Raoul and Roger may have spoken French, which would make communication much easier. Lastly, they also had the same cultural background and thus could easily persuade Godfrey of the Byzantine emperor's good intentions towards the Crusaders. Perhaps this practice is attested here for the first time, although it is not possible to assume that it was a totally new procedure. However, the use of foreign ambassadors seems to have increased during this period. As we have seen above, some years later Alexios sent a certain Ulfric as an envoy to the King of England. While this may have been the result of employing men from wider backgrounds, it is possible that the Komnenian emperors made more efforts regarding the image of their diplomatic personnel. The use of Western envoys became part of Byzantine diplomacy.

It is not known if Raoul and Roger married into Byzantine aristocratic families, but it is likely.[335] What is sure is that each one initiated lineages, which in the case of Raoul lasted into the Palaiologan period. It would be useful to know whether their arrival at the Byzantine court produced any reactions from the aristocracy. The fact that the Normans were soldiers was an important factor for their incorporation to the military aristocracy

[333] Albert of Aachen, pp. 74-75.

[334] Fassoulakis (1973), pp. 10-11.

[335] Ibid., p. 11.

of Byzantium. After all, the Byzantine court was run by a general. The presence of Westerners in Constantinople was not a novelty, but probably for the first time they were so close to the Byzantine emperor and were allowed to join aristocratic circles. They surely become advisors on Norman affairs. More evidence comes from the second Norman invasion led by Bohemond in 1107. Anna Komnene narrated that Alexios summoned Roger and Pierre d'Aulps,[336] men loyal to him, and asked for their advice on how to defeat Bohemond's invasion.[337] This Roger, a Frankish nobleman, was Raoul's brother. Moreover, during the negotiations which led to the cessation of hostilities, Bohemond asked for noble hostages to be given to him. Two of them were Marinos of Naples[338] and Roger. Anna described both as intelligent and well versed in the Latin customs.[339] Both were signatories of the treaty of Devol (1108).[340] Another was Oumpertos, that is Humbert, Raoul's son.[341] We do not know where his son was born, but it seems that he also enjoyed imperial favour. Many other Westerners were signatories, for example Pierre d'Aulps and Richard of the Principate.[342] Richard had started the campaign on Bohemond's side but seems to have defected to Alexios.[343] He was not the only one; William Claret, one of Bohemond's counts, also defected to Alexios when the Norman soldiers started dying from famine and plague.[344] He seems to have deserted with his soldiers, as Anna noted that he went to the emperor with fifty horses. Alexios welcomed him and William was granted the title of nobelissimos, gifts and favours.

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[336] PBW Petros 15002

[337] Anna Komnene, p. 395.

[338] PBW Marinos 101

[339] Anna Komnene, pp. 407-408.

[340] Ibid., p. 423.

[341] Fassoulakis (1973), pp. 11-12.

[342] PBW Richard 401

[343] Anna Komnene, pp. 396, 423.

[344] Ibid., pp. 406-407. PBW William 26107

All these defections confirm that one of the reasons for the large presence of Normans in the Byzantine court at the beginning of the Komnenian dynasty were the two Norman invasions, the first by Guiscard in 1081-85 and the second by Bohemond in 1107-1108. If the establishment of the Normans in Southern Italy had already had significant effects on the Byzantine Empire, the long and menacing invasions of the Hauteville family served as a bridge between the two lands, connecting them again after 1071. How the conflict facilitated an increase of Norman presence in the Byzantine court is explained by the way Alexios I partly defeated both Guiscard and Bohemond. Alexios always encouraged the Normans to join him by promising them rewards. For example, at some point during Guiscard's long campaign, Robert was not able to pay his soldiers. Alexios took the initiative to attract them with promises of salaries. According to Anna, Alexios promised them payments if they defected to him.[345] Thus, Alexios used their precarious situation and his promises to lure them into the Byzantine side.[346] The aim was to break Guiscard's army, but at the same time, more Western mercenaries joined the Byzantine army. For instance, Anna informs that after the Byzantine army recovered Kastoria from the Normans, some of Guiscard's soldiers joined Alexios' army.[347] Moreover, William of Apulia narrates that after the Norman defeat many Norman soldiers entered Byzantine service.[348]

Therefore, the two Norman invasions concluded with a significant group of Normans integrated into the Byzantine court. They became a new ethnic element in the military aristocracy. This was not the first time that Byzantium assimilated foreign individuals. The innovation lies in the group itself. This time they were not Armenians, Georgians or Bulgarians, but Latins. In order to survive the Norman invasions, Alexios had to convert some of his enemies into friends, opening his closer circles to Westerners. The Byzantine court was changing through the effect of external developments and threats.

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[345] Anna Komnene , pp. 160-161.

[346] Chalandon (1907), pp. 280-281.

[347] Anna Komnene, pp. 169-170, 183.

[348] William of Apulia, p. 257.

The next and last figure is another Norman soldier called Roger, who also arrived at the Byzantine Empire from Southern Italy. Marguerite Mathieu has argued that this Roger was not Raoul's brother, but the possibility remains open.[349] In this case there is evidence that he may have married a Byzantine lady, a Dalassene.[350] This is the first instance in which we have details about the Byzantine bride. The Dalassenoi were a significant family. Alexios' mother was a Dalassene. This marriage is another example that during Alexios' rule Normans married into aristocratic families present at court. It is unlikely that such a union would have been possible without imperial approval. This fact confirms that Alexios supported intermarriage between the newcomers and powerful Byzantine families that were close to his clan. This was a new step in the relations regarding the Westerners. While in previous centuries there had been cases of diplomatic marriages with Westerners, they had not taken place at this level, within the Byzantine aristocracy. The Byzantine court did not have a strong Western element before this period. With the Normans marrying into the Byzantine aristocratic families, the Byzantine court accepted a new ethnic element. These unions between Normans, and also other Westerners, with women of the Byzantine aristocracy were noteworthy. This was not foreign affair politics or diplomacy between two states. It is possible that the marriage followed some strategy. Alexios knew from his earlier experience that Western military leaders could be extremely independent minded and therefore they should be associated with the ruling power. Roussel of Bailleul had been one clear example of this. Marriage was the proper means to limit their autonomy and compel them to settle within the wider Byzantine structure of power. Perhaps Alexios extended the so-called 'Komnenian system' to the newcomers in order that they would not attempt to rebel. The marriage may have been the main tool for their assimilation. Alexios moved prominent soldiers from Southern Italy and inserted them into the Byzantine aristocracy. He associated them to his own rule in order to avoid their restless self-government

[349] Mathieu (1953), p. 139.

[350] Ibid., note 4.

tendency, a usual feature in feudal Southern Italy.[351] This intermarriage policy between Norman figures and Byzantine aristocratic families resulted in a new ethnic element within the Byzantine court. The Western element became stronger in the emperor's circle.

It is interesting to see that in some cases these figures seem to have received some positive response. Although the evidence for this is scant, nonetheless it suggests that certain Western figures were able to pursue a successful career in Byzantium. Nicholas Kallikles dedicated a funerary poem to Roger, or Rogerios.[352] The epigram mentions him as Sebastos, which means that he acquired one of those titles that Alexios created and distributed among his immediate family, either by blood or marriage. The poem informs the audience about Roger's origins, which were in Frankish land. Also how his mother raised him to be a warrior. We are told that he descended from a family of lions. He is even compared to military heroes of ancient Rome. However, despite these positive references, he is still called a foreigner. The poem then goes on to praise his former military career making reference to his deeds in Southern Italy. The poem lists the cities that were taken when he was there, conquests in which he is said to have taken part. Bari, Brindisi and Calabria are among the places mentioned. This is bizarre because those exploits, that is the conquest of former Byzantine provinces, seem to honour anti-imperial achievements. Furthermore, it is stated that when those undertakings were not enough, he boldly crossed the Adriatic and threatened the people of Illyria. It has been suggested that he was among Guiscard's soldiers during the 1081 attack.[353] The praise of such actions is unusual, but since Roger entered Byzantine service, they probably increased the prestige of the Byzantine court.[354] Moreover, these military deeds fit the martial values of the new ruling power in Byzantium, the military

[351] For example, we are told that when Duke Roger Borsa (Guiscard's son) fell ill in 1093, many took the opportunity to usurp what belonged to him. Geoffrey Malaterra, pp. 198-199; Chalandon (1907), pp. 299-300.

[352] Nicholas Kallikles, pp. 141-142, poem 19.

[353] Mathieu (1953), p. 138.

[354] For Nicol this was a poetic account of the process of integration (1979), p. 123.

aristocracy. This piece of evidence suggests that Rogerios may have attained a rather significant position at court. Otherwise, it is difficult to explain how such military exploits were used as material for the epigram.

Another interpretation of the poem is that the conqueror of Southern Italy had finally been subdued by Alexios' generosity. The last part of the epigram tells us about his defection to emperor Alexios and his new life in Byzantium. It does not give details about when or how it happened, but it states that Alexios forgave him. As a reward, he found a sea of gold, glory, title and position, a wife and golden children. This poem is further and firm evidence that Alexios promoted the reception of Western soldiers into the Byzantine court. He obviously attracted them with money, titles and a marriage, part of his strategy to defeat the Norman invasion. At the end of the epigram, Roger declares that now Byzantium's enemies, among them the Kelts, tell about his former exploits.

John Nesbitt and Andreas Gkoutzioukostas have argued that Rogerios was the Roger discussed above, Raoul's brother and the son of Dagobert.[355] However, as it has been mentioned above, Marguerite Mathieu proposed that these two men were not the same person.[356] In any case, the three authors agree that the Rogerios of the poem was the ancestor of the Byzantine family of Roger, members of which attained significant positions.[357] One of them, a certain Sebastos Constantine Roger, is found in the *typikon* of the Pantokrator monastery written by John II Komnenos (1136).[358] He appears in the section of the deceased individuals for whom the emperor ordained the monastic community to pray. Paul Gautier suggested that he was a close relative or a brother of the Caesar John Dalassenos Roger, who married John's daughter Maria.[359] Jean-Claude Cheynet and Jean-François Vannier instead proposed that Constantine Roger, that is the

[355] Nesbitt (2004), pp. 209-210; Gkoutzioukostas (2013), pp. 77-79.

[356] Mathieu (1953), p. 139.

[357] Stiernon (1964), pp. 184-198.

[358] Gautier (1969), p. 240.

[359] Ibid., p. 255, Barzos (1984), pp. 349-356.

Rogerios in the poem, was the father of the Caesar John.[360] On the other hand, Mathieu, Nesbitt and Gkoutzioukostas agree that Constantine Roger was the son of the Rogerios in the poem. Whoever Constantine was (Roger himself or his son), his title and inclusion among the figures to be remembered suggest that he had attained an important position and also was close to John. The descendants of Westerners who joined the Byzantine court played a significant role during the reigns of John and Manuel. Thus, the Sebastos Constantine Roger and John Dalassenos Roger may well have been Roger's children from his marriage to a Dalassene. Also, it is interesting that the name Constantine seems to have frequently been employed by Westerners joining the Byzantine court or by their children. As we have seen above, Humbertopoulos was called Constantine. Moreover, the name of the Hungarian prince Álmos was apparently changed to Constantine after he fled to Byzantium.[361] Finally, the son of the Hungarian pretender Boris was also named Constantine. He became governor of Cilicia during Manuel's reign. Constantine may well have been the male counterpart of Eirene, the most usual name given to foreign brides that joined the imperial family. Perhaps the name was used because, as Constantine VII had written in the *De administrando imperio*, marriages with Franks were acceptable because Constantine the Great had excluded them from the ban of foreigners marrying Byzantines.[362] And also because Emperor Constantine I himself drew his origin from those regions and the nobility of those tribes there.

These three examples of Western integration into the Byzantine court are evidence that Guiscard's invasion advanced the Norman presence at the heart of Byzantium. This process was somehow repeated by Bohemond's invasion. In order to face and divide Robert and Bohemonds's armies, Alexios was obliged to associate them with the Byzantine ruling class. Therefore, a significant consequence of these invasions was the introduction of the Norman element into the aristocratic circles and eventually the imperial family. There are further examples of Normans lured into Byzantium. For

[360] Cheynet and Vannier (1986), pp. 112-113.

[361] Urbansky (1968), p. 40; Makk (1989), pp. 22. PBW Almouzes 17001

[362] Constantine Porphyrogennitos, pp. 70-73.

example, there also is the lineage of the Petraliphas family, which stemmed from Petros Aliphas.[363] Pierre d'Aulps was a Norman who took part in Guiscard's invasion and the First Crusade.[364] However, later he appears at the service of Alexios and was one of the signatories of the peace treaty between the Byzantine emperor and Bohemond (the treaty of Devol, 1108).[365] Furthermore, the *Alexiad* tells us that Alexios offered Guiscard's son Guy a matrimonial proposition, honours and wealth.[366] The offer implied a Byzantine bride. The proposal may have been made in order to persuade him to defect. The offer was Alexios' way to show that his intentions towards him were sincere. It seems that Alexios tempted Guy, surely in order to divide the Norman enemy. Although during the First Crusade Guy was in the service of the Byzantine emperor, it is not likely that the marriage ever took place. It is interesting that Anna did not give her opinion on such proposals. From other instances, it is obvious that she did not seem to favour such unions with Westerners, but it is possible that she did not want to contradict her father's actions.[367] These matrimonial unions between Westerners and Byzantines were sanctioned and probably promoted by Alexios. It is not a coincidence that Anna did not mention any of them. It would have been difficult to present Alexios as opposed to such unions. Anna was probably not willing to report that her father had encouraged such a policy of integration. It could have implied a certain latinophile attitude. Alexios' grandson Manuel is usually accused of being fond of Westerners, however it is during Alexios' reign that the Byzantine court witnessed a massive integration of Normans.

There were further Western figures that were associated with the Byzantine court during this period, and not all were Normans from Southern Italy. Boris, the aforementioned claimant to the Hungarian throne, arrived in Byzantium c.1130. He was welcomed at

[363] Nicol (1979), pp. 131-132.

[364] Anna Komnene, pp. 135, 153, 161, 338. PBW Petros Aliphas 15002

[365] Anna Komnene, pp. 395, 423.

[366] Ibid., p. 176; Loud (1991), pp. 43-44; McQueen (1986), pp. 445-447; PBW Guy 4004

[367] Gallina (1999) pp. 204-205.

court and married a Byzantine woman from the imperial family.[368] It has been proposed that she was a certain Arete Doukaina, who styled herself kralaina, a reference to her husband's rights to the throne of Hungary.[369] Odo of Deuil reported that Boris had married the emperor's niece (gratia imperatoris Constantinopolitani, neptem cuius habebat).[370] By offering Boris a marriage with a Byzantine woman John secured his loyalty and the possibility to use him as a Byzantine agent in Hungarian relations.

The integration of foreigners within aristocratic circles was not limited to Westerners. It is also the case of the Turks.[371] For example, John II's childhood friend and companion was John Axouch, a Turkish boy that had been captured during the conquest of Nicaea in 1097.[372] Once John became emperor in 1118, Axouch was awarded the position of megas domestikos. Niketas Choniates even reported that his influence was such that when notable relatives of the emperor met him by chance, they dismounted from their horses and made obeisance to him. John Axouch's position and influence is another example of the integration that took place at the Byzantine court. Alexios and John incorporated new elements that had penetrated Byzantine society, Westerners and Turks, into the ruling elite. This process took place in two stages. Alexios' reign witnessed the integration of the newcomers into the Byzantine court. This could be considered the result of the military circumstances of his period. The completion of the assimilation process took place under John's reign, with the foreigners' children, a second generation, marrying into the imperial family. The Caesar John Dalassenos Roger may not have been the only child with Western origins to join the imperial family. A second case may have been that of the Sebastokratorissa Eirene.[373] It has been suggested that

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[368] Urbansky (1968), p. 47; Makk (1989), pp. 31-32. PBW Boris 17001

[369] Laurent (1972), pp. 35-39.

[370] Odo of Deuil, pp. 34-35.

[371] Brand (1989), pp. 1-25.

[372] Niketas Choniates, pp. 9-10.

[373] Barzos (1984), pp. 360-379; PBW Eirene 20115

the wife of John II's son Andronikos may also have had Western origins.[374] The fact that possibly two of John's children were married to descendants of Westerners suggests that the Western element was certainly significant and had gained the confidence of the Byzantine emperor. This detail may be further explained by the fact that the Komnenian dynasty was a clan of military aristocrats. The Westerners that joined the Byzantine court were mainly soldiers. Thus, the Byzantine emperors promoted ties with the newcomers in order to maintain their establishment in Byzantium. It is not possible to discern whether these unions were intended to displace other Byzantine aristocratic families. However, their integration into the emperor's closest circle could be interpreted as a way to break the so-called 'Komnenian system.' This system supposes that the rule of the Komnenian dynasty was a family matter, with significant positions given to relatives of the emperor. Peter Frankopan has contested the unity of Alexios' family.[375] He has suggested that the emperor's brother Adrian was involved in the Diogenes conspiracy.[376] John also experienced his relatives' opposition, as his own mother and sister attempted to prevent his accession and later Anna plotted to dethrone him. Perhaps with such unions John tried to encourage new factions that were less prominent and he considered to be trustworthy. Whatever the case was, it is important to note that the marriages arranged by John reflected the new Byzantine court.

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[374] Jeffreys, Elizabeth and Michael (1994), pp. 40-68; Jeffreys, E. (1984), pp. 206-207; *Iacobi Monachi Epistulae*, pp. XVII-XVIII, XXV-XXVI.

[375] Frankopan (2007), pp. 1-34.

[376] Anna Komnene, pp. 268-280.

TRADE

Along with mercenaries, Western merchants were another group that played a significant role in Byzantium during this period. Although there were merchants from many different places visiting the Empire, Westerners became a major partner in Byzantine trade during the twelfth century. Among these merchants were Amalfitans, Venetians, Pisans and Genoese. While Amalfitans and Venetians were already present before Alexios' reign, the Pisans became new competitors in the Byzantine trade. Thus, the main groups of Western merchants in Byzantium continued coming from the Italian peninsula. This section looking at trade is divided in two parts. The first is a brief overview of privileges that were granted to the Italian communities, namely Venice and Pisa, during the period under study. The privileges clearly separated them from the rest of the foreign and Byzantine merchants within Byzantium. The second part deals with different topics concerning the Italian presence in Byzantium: the commodities traded, the merchants' quarters in the Empire and their contacts with the Byzantine population. Their impact on Byzantine society and economy is also considered. These topics have already been the focus of many scholarly studies. As a result, while the first part is mainly an introduction, the second attempts to provide a new glimpse at the activities of the Western merchants and their encounters with Byzantines.

Privileges: Alexios' rise to the throne coincided with the Norman expedition against Dyrrachion. In order to face the invasion, we are told by Anna that Alexios sent envoys to several powers in order to convince them to fight against Robert Guiscard.[377] Venice was an important part of this diplomatic offensive.[378] Alexios knew that the Venetian fleet would be necessary to neutralise Guiscard's attack.[379] It is likely that the

[377] Anna Komnene, pp. 112-114.

[378] Ibid., pp. 122-123, Geoffrey Malaterra, p. 155, William of Apulia, p. 219.

[379] John Pryor has argued that the Byzantine navy had virtually disappeared by the time of Alexios' accession (2006, pp. 86-87).

imminence of the invasion forced Alexios to look for an ally with a fleet ready to be deployed. The geographic position of Venice in the Adriatic probably was another reason to be considered. Its proximity to Dyrrachion and political and commercial interests made Venice the perfect ally against Guiscard. If the document of 992 designated Venetian ships as carriers for the Byzantine troops into Southern Italy, now Alexios demanded their direct involvement against Guiscard. The participation of Venice in the war had a significant impact on its outcome. The Venetians opposed the Norman fleet in several naval battles.[380] The chronology of the events given by Anna in the *Alexiad* is sometimes wrong, but it is certain that the Venetian intervention had a significant role in the defeat of Guiscard's invasion. Nevertheless, the campaign had other long lasting consequences for the participants. Alexios granted Venice additional and unprecedented privileges.[381] Venice's military help was the reason for Alexios to grant extremely significant concessions which changed the status of the Venetians within Byzantium forever. Hence, a military threat coming from the West resulted in one of the most controversial chrysobulls ever issued by a Byzantine emperor.[382] The document is an imperial donation that lists a number of privileges granted to the Venetians. The doge and religious authorities received titles and pensions. However, the most important privileges were the donation of certain properties in Constantinople and the exemption from trading taxes within the Empire.[383] Among the properties were shops and three wharfs, infrastructures necessary for the Venetians to conduct their commercial activities. These donations must have been the result of negotiations between the emperor and Venice. The buildings granted in the Byzantine capital did not create a unified sector, but it is obvious that the spaces granted by the Golden Horn became the origin of the later Venetian quarter.[384] This development took place during

[380] Anna Komnene, pp. 123-125; 176-178.

[381] There now seems to be consensus around the dating of the year to 1082: Madden (2002), pp. 23-41; Anna Komnene, pp. 178-179.

[382] Borsari (1969-70), pp. 111-131.

[383] Pozza and Ravegnani (1993), pp. 31-33.

[384] Nicol (1988), p. 62.

the reigns of Alexios and John. The Venetians were also granted the church of St Andrew in Dyrrachion. The exemption from commercial taxes allowed the Venetian merchants to trade all over the Empire without paying taxes to the Byzantine treasury. The list of locations in the document of privileges was in no way restrictive, it probably presented the interests of Venetian merchants.[385] Although there were no locations on the Black Sea in the list, Venetians could trade there as the privileges did not mention any restriction in the empire.[386] The only exceptions were the islands of Crete and Cyprus, where they seem to have paid taxes.

Even though David Jacoby has suggested that some of the privileges were an official confirmation of previous practices rather than a novelty, it is clear that the document had significant implications for Venice and Byzantium.[387] From this moment Venetians strengthened their unique position among the Western merchants in the Empire, and their example would encourage the rest of Italian trading communities to achieve similar privileges. In the *Alexiad*, Anna stated that the Venetians had become free of Roman control.[388] This document was just the starting point for later donations, either to Venice or other Italian communities. The relations between these Italian merchants and the Byzantine authorities were entering a new historical phase.

The Norman invasion may also have had effects on other Western merchant communities. A clause in the 1082 document forced the Amalfitans trading in Constantinople or anywhere else in the Empire to pay annually 'nomismata yperpera tria' to the Basilica of San Marco in Venice.[389] This detail has usually been interpreted as a punishment for the possible participation of the Amalfitans in Guiscard's expedition.[390]

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[385] Jacoby (2007a), p. 684.

[386] Martin (1978a), pp. 111-122; Jacoby (2007a), pp. 677-685, 698.

[387] Jacoby (2009), pp. 389-390.

[388] Anna Komnene, p. 179.

[389] Pozza and Ravegnani (1993), pp. 38-39; Anna Komnene's account is slightly different: the Amalfitans who had workshops in Constantinople were to pay tribute to the church of St Mark (pp. 178-179).

[390] Borsari (1988), pp. 7-8; von Falkenhausen (1998), pp. 25-26.

Amalfi was by then under Norman rule, though we do not know if any Amalfitans actually took part in the campaign. What seems obvious from the written sources is that there must have been tension or antagonism between Venice and Amalfi, probably due to their similar commercial activities. While Venetian and Byzantine sources blame the Amalfitans for the fall of Dyrrachion to the Normans, south Italian sources blame a Venetian for the same event.[391] As we have seen in the previous chapter, according to Anna the city's population included individuals from both Amalfi and Venice.

The case of the Pisan privileges is different from the Venetians, the Pisan activities during and after the First Crusade created tension between the Pisans and the Byzantine Empire.[392] The journey of Pisan ships through the Empire's waters was not always peaceful. We have already seen the attack of the Pisan fleet during the First Crusade.[393] Anna Komnene also narrated the Pisan participation in a fleet that apparently included Genoese and Lombards and which attempted an attack on the Byzantine coasts in 1111.[394] However, Pryor has considered the former account improbable and the latter garbled.[395] It is likely that their involvement in the politics of the Levant provoked further developments in the relations between the Byzantine emperor and the Italian sea powers. The donation of privileges bestowed on Pisan merchants in 1111 has been seen as an attempt to gain Pisan neutrality regarding Byzantine interests in Mediterranean politics.[396] Therefore, the presence of the Italian trading communities in the eastern Mediterranean complicated the political situation resulting from the First Crusade. Alexios may have used the commercial privileges in order not only to gain military

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[391] Geoffrey Malaterra informs us that a Venetian called Domenico, entrusted with the defence of the main tower of Dyrrachion, was approached by Guiscard, who promised him his niece in marriage if he surrendered the city (pp. 158-159); on the other hand, William of Apulia narrates that Domenico, a Venetian noble, actually contacted Guiscard through a citizen from Bari. He promised to surrender the city if Guiscard offered him his niece in marriage (p. 229); Pertusi (1965), p. 137.

[392] Lilie (1993a), pp. 87-91.

[393] Anna Komnene, pp. 350-353.

[394] Ibid., pp. 434-435.

[395] Pryor (2006), pp. 110-111.

[396] Borsari (1991), p. 61.

support, but to further Byzantine political influence. Before Byzantine emperors had used titles, money and gifts, but now Alexios offered more. Better conditions for trading within the Empire were used as a diplomatic lure.

The privileges included in the chrysobull consisted of certain gifts and more importantly, a reduction of the taxes on imported goods.[397] Pisans were also allowed to trade anywhere in the empire but were forbidden to conduct commercial activities with Byzantium's enemies. Moreover, Pisa received properties and a wharf by the Golden Horn which developed into the Pisan quarter. The concessions given to the Pisans were not as wide-ranging as the privileges bestowed on the Venetians. Nevertheless, they promoted the expansion of the permanent presence of a Western population in the capital. The document of the privileges granted to Pisa required in return certain commitments. In order to receive the privileges, Pisa agreed not to harm Byzantine interests, either by action or advice. Moreover, the city was not allowed to make alliances with the Byzantine emperor's enemies from Dalmatia to Alexandria. This detail seems to define the empire's area of influence, and it is likely that it referred to the Crusader States. For example, after the treaty of Devol (1108) the Principality of Antioch still opposed Byzantine sovereignty. Pisa also agreed to defend the empire in case of attack. The question of the pilgrims is also discussed, a detail that confirms that Pisa also took part the transportation of pilgrims to the Holy Land. Byzantine authorities had the right to intervene against pilgrims that travelled to the Holy Land with anti-Byzantine goals. The location of the Italian quarters along the Golden Horn was probably due to practical reasons.

Alexios' reign saw the concession of trading privileges to Venetians and Pisans. After Alexios' death, his son and successor John II did not agree to renew the Venetian privileges in 1119.[398] Years later, Kinnamos reported that John's refusal was the result of

[397] Lilie (1984), pp. 69-76.

[398] Andrea Dandolo, p. 232; Nicol (1988), pp. 77-80; Pozza and Ravegnani (1993), pp. 48-49.

Venetian arrogance.[399] For example, Venetians had stolen the relics of St Stephen from a church in Constantinople and they took them to Venice, possibly in 1110.[400] If we are believe the text of the *Translatio*, the Venetian thief, a monk of San Giorgio Maggiore called Pietro, persuaded the Byzantine guardian to help him take the relics. He had apparently befriended the guardian for this purpose. If this detail is actually true, it would suggest that a local was the accomplice in the theft of the relics. This reference could be seen as evidence of interaction at day-to-day level between a Byzantine citizen and a Venetian monk in the capital. In addition, Venetians had reportedly stolen the relics of St Nicholas from Myra on their way to the Holy Land during the First Crusade, probably in 1099.[401]

The Venetians did not accept John's refusal. The fleet they sent to help the Crusaders also attacked the empire in order to change the emperor's mind. The conflict between the Byzantine Empire and Venice mainly involved Venetian assaults against the empire's islands and lasted until 1126.[402] On the other hand, John was negotiating with Hungary over Dalmatia, which threatened Venetian claims over the Adriatic coast. The fact that the former ally resorted to war suggests that Venice was not going to simply accept the new imperial policy. It is clear that the cancellation of the privileges hurt Venetian interests in the empire. In 1126 John II agreed to renew the privileges. Donald Nicol argued that the attacks had been a nuisance rather than a danger.[403] On the other hand, it has been suggested that John did not dispose of a suitable fleet to oppose the attacks.[404] It is likely that the military intervention against the empire had some serious effects, for example on the sea lanes, the Aegean islands and the emperor's prestige. While the Venetians had received privileges from Alexios as a result of their military support, John

[399] Kinnamos, p. 281.

[400] Veronese (2008), pp. 123-154.

[401] Pertusi (1990a) pp. 139-186; Nicol (1988), pp. 71-73.

[402] Andrea Dandolo, pp. 235-236; Devaney (2010), pp. 127-147; Lilie (1993a), pp. 96-100.

[403] Nicol (1988), p. 80.

[404] Pozza and Ravegnani (1993), p. 50.

was forced to renew them with a military campaign against Byzantine territory. As Thomas Devaney has argued, this episode established a new pattern in the relationship between Venice and Byzantium.[405]

The chrysobull was renewed without any new additions in 1126. However, the document included a passage intended to clarify that all the Byzantines doing business with Venetians (Grecis negotiantibus cum Veneticis) within the empire, either selling or buying, were also exempted from paying the kommerkion or other taxes.[406] This clarification was probably the result of the Byzantine authorities taxing the partners of the Venetians in commercial activities. This explanation in the document was surely a Venetian request, but it is obvious that Byzantines were going to benefit from this clause. Venetians could attract suppliers and partners with the guarantee of no taxes. This passage meant less income for the Byzantine treasury. The reason why John agreed to it is not known. Maybe the volume of commercial activity was assumed not to be important. The possibility that John represented the interests of the Byzantine aristocracy, who were interested in tax exemptions, is unlikely. Finally, perhaps after the attacks Venice was in a better position to negotiate the renewal of the privileges.

At some point during John's reign there was another novelty. Venetians were allowed also to trade free from customs in Cyprus and Crete. Although Venetian merchants traded in the two islands, apparently the tax exemption had not applied there.[407] We know about this new concession because it was added to the first chrysobull granted by Manuel I, which was a renewal of the Venetian privileges.[408] During John's reign Venice acquired more advantages regarding its commercial activities in the empire. In the end, rather than cancelling Venetian privileges, John ended up extending them. This extension suggests that the relationship between the empire and Venice, though not

[405] Devaney (2010), p. 147.

[406] Borsari (1988), pp. 104-105; Pozza and Ravegnani (1993), pp. 50, 55.

[407] Borsari (1988), pp. 19-20.

[408] Pozza and Ravegnani (1993), pp. 59, 64-65.

always peaceful, was progressing and becoming more intricate. John may have been aware of the importance of the Venetian alliance. Venice had become a significant ally both politically and economically.

The concessions to Venice were renewed and extended under the reign of John's youngest son and successor, Manuel I. The occasion of the renewal of further privileges to Venice was the Norman attack against the empire in 1147.[409] In March of the next year Manuel granted further privileges which Venice had requested.[410] Among the new concessions were new properties and another wharf in Constantinople. This piece of evidence suggests that the Venetian population had increased substantially since Alexios' reign.

To conclude, the commercial activities of Venetians and Pisans in Byzantium during this period were based on a series of concessions which the Komnenian emperors were encouraged to grant in order to face military threats coming from the West. In the case of Venice, it seems possible to state that the Komnenian dynasty, being mainly focused on the conquest of territories, had to resort to the new sea powers in certain moments of serious danger. In the case of Pisa it seems that the privileges were used to forge an alliance and appease Pisan ambitions. These privileges expanded the Italian commercial activities and increased the Italian population in the empire and its contacts with the locals.

Commercial activities, settlement and contacts: The privileges were a significant feature of the trading activities of the Italian merchants. Much less is known regarding how these commercial activities took place in the empire or what effect they had on Byzantine society and economy. Venetian documents provide useful information about some of the activities that Venetians carried out in Byzantium. They mention

[409] Ibid., pp. 58-65; Nicol (1988), pp. 85-86.

[410] Pozza and Ravegnani (1993), pp. 68-75; Nicol (1988), pp. 86, 88.

commodities, locations and partners. These details are important to understand the nature of the Italian trading activities during this period, how they evolved and the interactions established between Western merchants and the Byzantine population. This section deals with all these subjects mainly through the evidence provided by these documents. Other sources are also consulted.

As we have seen in the previous chapter, current research argues that the main role of the Western merchants in Byzantium was as middlemen between the provinces and the capital and between the empire and outsiders, for example Egypt.[411] By using their capital and ships they became key players in the Byzantine economy. For example, Venetian merchants acquired agricultural produce in the European provinces of the empire and took it to the capital. Among the products were oil, grain and cheese.[412] Among the main regions of production for these were the Peloponnese, Thessaly and Crete. The Peloponnese was the main region for the production of olive oil and its regional centre was Sparta. A document from 1135 signed in Corinth makes reference to two lots of oil given in Sparta (Lakedemonia) to a certain Dobramiro Stagnario.[413] The oil was destined for export to Egypt. Another document (1136) regarding the concession of an oratory dedicated to St Blasios at 'Cocini' (modern Kotsinos) in Lemnos to the Venetians informs us that the archbishop of the island was going to receive a certain amount of oil (oleum purum metra thalasia duo imminute) as part of the deal.[414] This piece of information suggests not only that Venetians exported this important agricultural produce to other minor centres of the empire; it could also be used as compensation for other non commercial activities. The oil request by ecclesiastic authorities of Lemnos implies that the island's clergy was aware that the Venetians were involved in the export of oil.

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[411] Jacoby (2007a), p. 696; Jacoby (2000b), p. 72.

[412] Jacoby (2007a), pp. 694-696.

[413] Morozzo della Rocca and Lombardo (1940), pp. 69, n. 65.

[414] Lanfranchi (1968), pp. 380-383, n. 181.

The empire's agricultural produce was thus one of the commodities traded by Italian merchants. Another product the Venetians traded was cheese.[415] Cheese was an important part of the diet. For instance, Vlach and Cretan cheese is mentioned in a letter of Michael Italikos dated to Manuel's reign.[416] As we have seen in chapter one, we know that Venetians traded cheese from before 1081. A document signed in Constantinople in 1121 shows that Venetian merchants continued to trade cheese.[417] This piece of evidence confirms that the trading activities of the Venetians did not change. Also, during Manuel's reign we are told that cheese could be found in the Venetian quarter of the capital (ἐπὶ τοὺς Βενετίκους / τὸ πῶς πωλιέται τὸ τυρίν).[418] The fact that this detail was reported suggests that the cheese, most likely from Crete and on sale in the Venetian quarter, attracted the Byzantine population. It is possible to assume that the inhabitants of Constantinople visited the quarter in order to purchase cheese from the Venetian merchants. This reference implies again that the Byzantine population was well aware that the Venetians acted as middlemen, importing some of the best products from the Byzantine Empire into urban centres. It is clear that this facilitated contacts between the Venetians and the Byzantines at two different levels. First, Venetians had contacts with the producers from whom they acquired the product in the provinces. The contacts continued in the cities where they sold the commodities. By acquiring the produce from Byzantine farmers and landowners, Italian merchants clearly contributed to the local economy of several Byzantine provinces, mainly the European provinces and the islands. Moreover, their privileges offered them the possibility to compete with other merchants, whether Byzantine or foreign. As they did not have to pay taxes, David Jacoby has argued that Venetians could afford to pay more for goods which then they sold cheaper than the other merchants.[419] The tax exemption they achieved for their

[415] Jacoby (1999), pp. 49-50.

[416] Michael Italikos, pp. 237-238.

[417] Morozzo della Rocca and Lombardo (1940), pp. 48-49, n. 46.

[418] Ptochoprodromos, p. 145; Jacoby (2009), p. 378.

[419] Jacoby (2000a), p. 139.

Byzantine partners probably resulted in a advantageous position.[420] Venetians also traded other agricultural products, for example almonds, raisins, cochineal, alum and possibly mastic as well.[421]

Westerners did not only supply Constantinople with agricultural produce from Byzantine provinces. They also imported products from markets outside the empire, for example spices which they acquired in Egypt.[422] The Byzantines also traded in Egypt from the tenth century. However, during this period Western merchants may slowly have taken over this commercial activity. One of the reasons for this is that they acquired commercial privileges in Egypt, and thus they could compete with Byzantine merchants under better conditions.[423]

The Italian cities were also involved in the transport of pilgrims and crusaders between Western Europe and the Holy Land. Pilgrimage to Jerusalem boomed after the establishment of the Crusader States. The Byzantine Empire was on the route of a growing flow of Western pilgrims travelling through the eastern Mediterranean. Westerners had to call in Byzantine harbours on their way to the Crusader States. The account of Saewulf, an English pilgrim who travelled to the Holy Land in 1102-1103, provides us with an excellent record of a journey from Southern Italy to Jerusalem.[424] Saewulf sailed for most of his journey, calling at different islands and ports of the Byzantine Empire, among them Corfu, Corinth, Andros, Rhodes and Cyprus. As John Pryor has noted, the indirect route reported by Saewulf suggests that the ship was not simply engaged in the transport of pilgrims, it would also have conducted business.[425]

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[420] Ibid. p, 140.

[421] Martin (1988), p. 212.

[422] Jacoby (2000b), pp. 56-59.

[423] Ibid., p. 75.

[424] Huygens (1994), pp. 59-61; Wilkinson (1988), pp. 94-116.

[425] Huygens (1994), p. 40.

Italian merchants were also involved in the trade of Byzantine manufactured goods, the most significant being silk. As we have seen in the previous chapter, in the tenth century Liudprand of Cremona had already reported the export to Italy of Byzantine silk by Amalfitan and Venetian merchants.[426] Documents provide evidence that Venetians continued to trade in Thebes. The Theban production was so important that when the city was attacked by the Normans in 1147, we are told that weavers from Thebes and Corinth were taken to Palermo in order to transfer their skills to Norman Sicily.[427] This piece of information shows that the production of Thebes was appreciated in the West. David Jacoby has also suggested that the samite of Roger's coronation mantle was imported from Thebes.[428] In Thebes, Venetians acquired silks that were not intended for imperial use and thus their export was not restricted or forbidden. Other centres of textile production in the Byzantine Empire were Corinth, Patras and the islands of Andros and Euboea.[429] During the second half of the twelfth century Genoese merchants were trading textiles in Andros. The island was famous for its production of samite and sendal.[430] The English pilgrim Saewulf called at the island, which he called Andria.[431] In the narration of his pilgrimage, he recorded that the island was a manufacture centre of expensive satin and samite and other fabrics produced with silk (preciosa scindalia et samitae et alia pallia serico contexta). He did not report if he had bought any, but it is possible that the captain of the ship in which he travelled conducted business on the island. A document signed in Corinth in 1136 shows that Venetians were also trading with linum, that is linen, another type of textile that presumably would have been produced in the empire.[432]

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[426] Liudprand of Cremona, p. 272.

[427] Niketas Choniates, p. 98.

[428] Jacoby (1991-1992), p. 464.

[429] Jacoby (1997b), pp. 61-62.

[430] Jacoby (1991-1992), pp. 461-462.

[431] Huygens (1994), p. 60; Wilkinson (1988), p. 95.

[432] Morozzo della Rocca and Lombardo (1940), pp. 71-72, n. 68.

A couple of Venetian documents yield further information about activities concerning textiles and the interaction between Venetians and Byzantines. The first one is a document signed in September 1111 in the Byzantine capital. It reports the agreement established between a Venetian and a Byzantine.[433] This document is significant because there are not many documents that provide us with details about the Byzantine partners of the Venetian merchants. In this case the Byzantine was a certain Kalopetrus Xantho, who is described as vestioprata et imperialis vestarcha constantinopolitanus. A βεστιοπράτης was a merchant of textiles, mainly silks and fine linen.[434] This piece of information is extremely interesting as it shows that, what could be considered an official, was dealing with a Venetian merchant in order to export Byzantine textiles to Alexandria. Kalopetros, a salesman, employed a Venetian merchant, Enrico Zusto di Ambrogio, as carrier for Byzantine textiles to be exported to Egypt. Enrico was the middleman between the Byzantine dealer and a final destination for the merchandise, in this case Egypt. A possible reason for employing Venetians was that business with them was cheaper as a result of Alexios' concessions. This could have encouraged Byzantines to use Venetian merchants as their partners for commercial activities. Nevertheless, as we have seen above, the tax exemption from which the Venetians benefited was not applied to Byzantines until 1126.

This document is also significant because it shows that the position of βεστιοπράτης still existed in the early twelfth century. Actually, the tenth-century *Book of the Eparch* banned βεστιοπράται from selling forbidden articles, certain purple stuffs for imperial use, to foreigners.[435] However, the document of 1111 only mentions palliis without any further details. Thus, we do not know what kind of silks Kalopetros was dealing with. It is also possible that the ban was by then not so strict. This piece of evidence is interesting because it shows that Kalopetros also had the function of imperial vestarches. The adjective of imperial is remarkable, as it shows that this well connected official was

[433] Lanfranchi (1955), pp. 23-24, n. 6.

[434] *ODB*, vestioprates.

[435] Dujcev (1970), pp. 27, 236.

also associated with Venetian merchants. Although by the twelfth century this title was devalued, Kalopetros probably had, as an imperial representative, access to the production of all kind of textiles manufactured in the capital. Thus, Venetians seem to have had business with a wide range of Byzantine individuals. Silvano Borsari has pointed out that among the signatories of the document there is a certain Vitalis Marcello et imperialis protonobilissimo.[436] Vitalis was probably a Venetian that received the title of protonobilissimos from the Byzantine emperor. Perhaps Vitalis was the contact between Kalopetros and Enrico in Constantinople. Another Venetian figure with the same title was Domenico Polani (Dominicus Polani imperialis protonobilissimus), who is mentioned in the document narrating the transportation of St Stephen's relics from Constantinople to Venice.[437] During the first decades of the twelfth century other Westerners seem to have received this title, among them Amalfitans. For example, Sergio, Mauro and Ruggero, relatives of the famous Pantaleone, are all attested with the title of imperialis protonobilissimus.[438] Vera von Falkenhausen has considered the possibility that the Byzantine title became a surname. It is indeed significant that figures from merchant communities in Italy received these titles. This may suggest that Byzantine emperors pursued closer links with Western merchants, possibly with the goal of promoting pro-byzantine policies in Italy.

The document from Lemnos that has been mentioned above provides significant information regarding the contacts between Venetians and the Orthodox Church in a provincial location of the Byzantine Empire.[439] The document records the donation of an oratory dedicated to St Blasius by the Archbishop of Lemnos. The recipient was the monastery of St Mark in Constantinople, which was subject to the monastery of San Giorgio Maggiore in Venice. The most interesting detail about this donation is the fact that Venetians received an oratory from the archbishop of the island. This detail suggests

[436] Borsari (1988), p. 106, note 173; Lanfranchi (1955) p. 24.

[437] Borsari (1988), p. 66, note 11, and 68.

[438] von Falkenhausen (1998), pp. 29-30.

[439] Lanfranchi (1968), pp. 380-383, n. 181.

friendly relations between the religious authorities of Lemnos and the Venetians, which is surprising if we bear in mind the growing religious mistrust between Westerners and Byzantines. However, in this case, the religious authorities of the island reached an agreement with the Venetians and provided them with an oratory for their own use. Thus, the Byzantine emperor was not the only figure to grant privileges and entitlements to the Venetian community within the Byzantine Empire. The document included the right to build a church in honour of St George, which implies that the oratory was small for the needs of the Venetian community on the island.

A last piece of evidence is a document sent from Venice (Rialto) in 1146. The sender was a certain Vivianus intinctor, and the recipient was Leonardo, the prior of the church of San Nicolò in Corinth.[440] San Nicolò was a Venetian church. Vivianus was a dyer, so he was involved in the textile industry. The document he sent was a donation of the goods of his son Pietro. Pietro, who is also described as a dyer (intinctor), had died and his goods had remained in deposit at San Nicolò. We do not know where Vivianus' son was living when he died, but perhaps Pietro was settled in the Byzantine city. Alternatively, it is also possible that he died there while on a business journey. Whatever the case was, his belongings, perhaps implements, were stored in the church of San Nicolò in Corinth. This was the reason why his father Vivianus sent the letter granting these to the church. Although the document dates from the beginning of Manuel's reign, the information provided by the document is certainly interesting. In fact, the most important detail is the occupation of the deceased Venetian. Pietro was a dyer like his father. This activity is not unusual in medieval times; dyeing was a key part of the process of textile manufacture. However, the curious detail is to find in Corinth a Westerner who was dedicated to this activity.

During the eleventh and twelfth centuries Corinth went through a period of economic and demographic growth.[441] The city was an important harbour and possibly a centre for

[440] Morozzo della Rocca and Lombardo (1940), p. 90, n. 88.

[441] Sanders (2002), pp. 651-654.

textile production, thus it is not surprising that Pietro stayed there. Corinth's position by the coast may have provided the city with the most important articles for the dying process, colorants. Molluscs were the source for certain dyes, for example, nearby Athens probably supplied murex purple to other manufacturing centres.[442] Another dye found in the Peloponnese was kermes, which was used for the red samite produced in Thebes. The kermes parasite was found in Euboea, Boeotia and the Peloponnese.[443] Therefore, the area had plenty of available colorants, which were necessary for the Byzantine textile industry. However, the colorants may also have attracted Westerners. The possibility of obtaining dying materials is likely to have been the reason why this Venetian dyer stayed in Corinth. Further evidence related to this piece of information comes from a tombstone from Corinth with an inscription in Hebrew.[444] The epitaph honours a Jewish dyer, Eliaqim, who died at the age of twenty-four. The tombstone belongs to the Middle Byzantine period, but the inscription cannot provide a more precise date. The presence of Jews in Corinth is confirmed through other sources. Benjamin of Tudela, who travelled through the Byzantine Empire in the 1160s, reported that Corinth had a Jewish population of three hundred, though he did not specify how they earned their living.[445] Eliaqim may well have been one of them. The presence of another dyer in Corinth suggests that there was significant dyeing activity in the city. We can only speculate what the Venetian Pietro was actually doing there. Perhaps he was working in a workshop located in Corinth. It is also possible that he had travelled there in order to learn the Byzantine dyeing techniques. Finally, he could also have been involved in the exportation of dyes to Venice or other Byzantine centres. Whatever his activity was, this piece of evidence suggests that not only merchants from Venice travelled to Byzantium in order to further their occupations.

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[442] Jacoby (1991-1992), pp. 483, 498; Kazanaki-Lappa (2002), pp. 643-645.

[443] Jacoby (1991-1992), p. 483.

[444] Starr (1935-36), pp. 42-49.

[445] Benjamin of Tudela, p. 10.

Western merchants are usually found in the European provinces and the islands. Among the places they visited were Corinth, Sparta, Thebes, Crete and Lemnos. The evidence concerning Sparta and Thebes shows that Venetian activity was not only limited to coastal areas. Below further evidence concerning inland locations is also discussed. Their presence on the islands was the result of two main factors. They were used as calling points, for example during the journeys between Venice and Constantinople or between Constantinople and Egypt or the Holy Land. Moreover, some islands also had a special lure for the Western merchants. We have already mentioned the textiles of Andros. Agricultural produce must have been the main factor to call in some islands. For instance, Crete seems to have been a major market for Venetian merchants. For example, a document of the year 1111 reports the acquisition of agrario, agricultural products.[446] On the mainland Corinth and Halmyros were the most visited locations by the Western merchants.[447] The case of Halmyros is quite remarkable as before the twelfth century this town does not seem to have been significant. For example, it is not included in the list of thirty two locations mentioned in the document of privileges granted by Alexios.[448] During the twelfth century it became a thriving market for agricultural produce from Thessaly. Benjamin of Tudela visited the town during his journey through the empire and has left us a brief but interesting description.[449] He reported that the place was inhabited by Venetians, Pisans and Genoese and other merchants who travelled there. This detail shows that the town developed into a major commercial centre where merchants from the different Italian communities gathered to conduct their business. Furthermore, he also described Halmyros as an extensive place. Since Halmyros had not previously been a prominent town, it is possible to state that the trade taking place there led to rapid urban growth. One of the reasons for this growth is likely to be the presence of Western merchants. The Western communities in Halmyros had

[446] Morozzo della Rocca and Lombardo (1940), pp. 35-36, n. 33.

[447] Martin (1988), p. 211.

[448] Pozza and Ravegnani, (1993) p. 33, note 15; Lilie (1984), p. 190.

[449] Benjamin of Tudela, p. 11.

their own churches. It is likely that the merchants inhabited the neighbourhood around these churches.

Another city with a Western sector was Thessaloniki. Although the quarter was only reported by its bishop Eustathios in relation to the Norman attack in 1185, it is obvious that it had already been established for some time.[450] Rhaidestos was another location with likely permanent Western presence. Not far from Constantinople, Rhaidestos (Rodosto or Rudisto) had an important harbour. A Venetian document from September 1145 mentions there a Venetian monastery dedicated to St George.[451] There was at least another church. It is mentioned in a document of 1157 and was dedicated to Santa Maria.[452] The document reports that it was found in the street of the Franks (in ruga Francigenorum), which was located outside the walls of the town (foras muros civitatis).[453] Such a street was apparently the place where Westerners inhabited. This reference to a street of the Franks suggests that the Western presence included more than Venetian merchants. The detail regarding its location outside the walls of Rhaidestos is further evidence that the Western immigration led to urban growth in Byzantine towns. In this case the Western sector was a street located outside the walls, not a part of the town itself as in Constantinople. Perhaps the street grew as a result of the Western population moving into the town. Another example was the Western quarter mentioned by Odo of Deuil outside the walls of Philippopolis, though it is unlikely that the inhabitants of this area were Italian merchants.[454] This piece of information shows that the creation of Western quarters was not only limited to coastal cities. However, there is less information about inland locations. Another example of an inland location with a Venetian presence was Adrianople. A document regarding the church in Rhaidestos

[450] Jacoby (2003), pp. 90-91.

[451] Lanfranchi (1968), pp. 437-439, n. 216; Borsari (1988), p. 40.

[452] Tafel and Thomas (1964), pp. 137-139, n. 58.

[453] Ibid., p. 138.

[454] Odo of Deuil, pp. 42-42.

mentions a monastery of Santa Maria in Adrianople.[455] Venetians must have had interests in the area as the location was included among the centres listed in Alexios' chrysobull.

The increase of Western merchants in the Byzantine Empire led to the creation of Western quarters or sectors in some towns. Sometimes they are not explicitly mentioned as such, but the presence of Western churches may indicate their existence; this could be the case in Halmyros and Corinth. In fact, it is likely that these Western quarters evolved around religious centres, which surely played a significant role in the life of the Western merchants. The case of the dyer and the church of San Nicolò in Corinth is worth mentioning. As we have seen in the document, the fact that Pietro stored his belongings in the church suggests that Western churches played a role beyond that of places for cult and veneration. Pietro probably considered San Nicolò a safe place, but he must also have trusted Leonardo, its prior. The clergy of these religious establishments may have acted as mediators between the Westerners living in Byzantium, Venice and the other Italian city states. The existence of these churchmen in Byzantium was another consequence of the trading activities of the Italian communities. Silvano Borsari suggested that the establishment of Venetian churches in different places of the Byzantine Empire attempted to create an overseas structure which helped to represent the interests of Venetians living in Byzantium and also linked to Venice.[456] He has also explained that other activities related to commerce also took place in churches. For example goods, weights and measures were stored there.[457] It has also been noted that the Venetian clergy played a significant role within the Venetian community established in the empire.[458] Thus, the churches certainly functioned as Venetian consulates. This could be explained by the fact that, while Constantinople had a Venetian quarter, in other towns Venetians shared a part of the city with other Westerners. Finally, in some cases

[455] Tafel and Thomas (1964), p. 138.

[456] Borsari (1988), p. 42.

[457] Ibid., pp. 54-56.

[458] Maltezou (1995), pp. 236-237.

the Western presence in Byzantine locations was reduced to the church or the monastery. This could be the case of the chapel donated to the Venetians in Lemnos. They also intended to build a church. This religious establishment was likely to play the role of the Venetian quarter on the island. Venetian merchants must have been frequent visitors to Lemnos, as the island is located on the way to Constantinople, near the Dardanelles.

Western merchants may have resided in these quarters temporarily, for example when they conducted business in that city or called there on their way to somewhere else. Others may have become permanent residents. In the documentary evidence these Westerners appear as habitatores.[459] The first cases already appear during John's reign, for example a certain Nicola Damiano is termed habitator in Halmyros in 1129.[460] These habitatores are found in several locations, but most of the cases make reference to Constantinople. Further information about the life of the Western merchants in Byzantium dates from Manuel's reign, when their presence in Byzantium continued to increase. According to Kinnamos, they married Byzantine women and lived outside their quarter like the Byzantine population.[461] This reference suggests intermarriage between Byzantine women and Western merchants and a certain degree of integration within Byzantine society. For our period there is not evidence concerning these marriages. Nevertheless, it is possible to assume that the more permanent presence of these merchants promoted such unions. Another consequence of the permanent establishment of Italian merchants was the acquisition of property apart from the one owned by their monasteries. For instance, it has been suggested that Venetians took part in the exploitation of agricultural resources in Cyprus by the second half of the 12th century.[462] This piece of information proves that Venetians were also investing in estates, and not only conducting trading activities. Thus, it would seem that some

[459] Borsari (1988), p. 52.

[460] Morozzo della Rocca and Lombardo (1940), p. 56, n. 54.

[461] Kinnamos, pp. 281-282.

[462] Papacostas (1999), pp. 497-499.

Venetians ventured to exploit agricultural resources, instead of merely buying produce from the local population.

To conclude, the reigns of Alexios and John witnessed the creation and expansion of the Italian communities in Byzantium. The impact of the Italian merchants on the Byzantine economy was noteworthy; it is currently considered to have been a positive factor in this expanding economic phase through the stimulation of growth especially in the European provinces, the islands and Constantinople.[463] For example, the Italian merchants exported Byzantine textiles to the West -where they were already well known- and in this way promoted their diffusion.[464] All this traffic resulted in the progressive increase of Western presence and the more permanent settlement in some centres of the empire. This increasing presence would eventually lead to problems and confrontations. The Venetians soon abused their privileged condition. The theft of St Stephen's relics shows that the Venetians had their own agenda and interests. While it is clear that they interacted with the Byzantine population on the economic side, the lack of evidence concerning the contacts on other levels restricts our conclusions. In any case, certain interaction with the Byzantine society, for example marriage, is likely to have led to a process of integration for the Western merchants who were permanently established in Byzantium. For example, it is possible that Western merchants may have had some knowledge of Greek as they had to communicate with the Byzantines. Language skills is one of the subjects dealt with in the next section.

[463] Harvey (1989), pp. 223; Jacoby (2000b) pp. 76-77.

[464] Jacoby (1997b), pp. 60-63.

ADMINISTRATION

Under this category I will examine a number of Western figures at the service of the emperor, as well as ambassadors and intellectuals that we know stayed in the Byzantine capital. It is an interesting and less known group which is frequently ignored, at least for the early stages of the Komnenian dynasty. This is due to the dearth of evidence, which is usually found in Western sources, and the emphasis of Byzantinists in looking mainly at political and historical developments, leaving other more obscure fields aside. This study explores Westerners that were employed by the imperial administration, both at the imperial palace and outside Constantinople. Many possessed language skills and also had literary interests. The section also includes one figure that was possibly sent as an envoy by Pisa. The discussion focuses on a number of well documented cases, although there may have been others. This small group of people may provide us with alternative details about the relations between Westerners and Byzantium, and about the Western presence within the empire. The aim of this text is to understand the role these people played and also the circumstances in which they lived.

Guillermus Ludovicus: Guillermus was a French monk who has only been rediscovered recently for the Byzantine scholarly world by Jonathan Shepard. He is attested in a source that relates the arrival of some relics to Cormery, in France. Guillermus, from a noble family, was the person who brought the relics to the monastery in Cormery.[465] He later became bishop of Salpi (or Salapia) in Southern Italy. The source is interesting as it gives evidence of Westerners at the service of the Byzantine Emperor Alexios I.

The text of how the relics arrived in Cormery provides the terminus ante quem for the chronology of the events. We are told that the relics arrived in Cormery in 1103.[466]

[465] Shepard (2005), p. 302.

[466] Ibid., p. 308.

Therefore, the events related in the text happened several years before. Shepard concluded that Guillermus left France around the time of Alexios' accession, at the earliest.[467] He calculated this estimation from information about his brother, whom he joined in Constantinople. His name was Goibertus (or Gausbertus) and he became a monk in the monastery of Marmoutier after returning from Byzantium in circa 1090.[468] The case of the Ludovicus brothers resembles the experience of the Stigand brothers in Constantinople, mentioned in the previous chapter.[469] However, the employment of Goibertus and Guillermus in Byzantium does not seem to have had a marked military aspect.

Guillermus, we are told, left France in order to escape from some enemies and took the opportunity to further his studies.[470] This detail on his intention to foster his studies could suggest that Constantinople was seen as a centre of education, or that he intended to learn Greek. The narration also mentions that after travelling around, he arrived in Constantinople where his brother was already established.[471] Although it is not clear if he was his natural brother, Shepard's study seems to confirm this.[472] In the Byzantine capital Goibertus had met and befriended the emperor and his courtiers.[473] If he ever achieved some post at court, we do not know what it was. However, it seems that he enjoyed Alexios' friendship and Guillermus profited from his brother's connections. Later he was entrusted with several tasks, among others that of restoring the city of Nicomedia, which probably had been recently conquered.[474] The relics Guillermus collected have some link with Nicomedia and they prove that he actually lived there as a

[467] Ibid., p. 310.

[468] Ibid., p. 317.

[469] Amsellem (1999), pp. 283-288.

[470] Shepard (2005), p. 302.

[471] Ibid., p. 304.

[472] Ibid., p. 311.

[473] Ibid., p. 302.

[474] Ibid., p. 304.

result of his mission.[475] His duty in the Bithynian city is rather surprising. The fact that Westerners took part in the overall reconstruction of the fortifications of the city can explain Guillermus' appointment. Western mercenaries were probably employed to conquer the city from the Turks.[476] Shepard has rightly suggested the possibility that Guillermus may have been related to the five hundred Flemish knights stationed by Alexios at Nicomedia.[477]

The source also informs us that he was entrusted with looking after the army as chaplain and priest.[478] The text does not provide details on the soldiers or their origins. However, it is possible to assume that if Western mercenaries took part in the mission, Guillermus acted as their priest. This part of his mission probably was the main reason for his service. Shepard has explained Alexios' good terms with the Western clergy visiting Constantinople as a way to advertise in the West the opportunities, mainly as mercenaries, which they could find in Byzantium.[479] The Turkish threat and the emperor's payments would have completed the announcement, which would have persuaded Westerners to leave for the East. However, the fact that Guillermus was sent to Nicomedia could have other more practical reasons. It is possible that his most essential skills were his non-Orthodox beliefs. His knowledge of French and Latin may also have played an important role.

Westerners employed by Alexios previously had expressed on at least one occasion the desire to have at their disposal clergy under the jurisdiction of Rome. As we have seen above, this was the case of the Anglo-Saxons that arrived at some point in the end of the eleventh century.[480] The establishment of Western communities within the Byzantine

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[475] Ibid., p. 323.

[476] Ibid., pp. 304, 328; Shepard (1997), pp. 116-117.

[477] Shepard (2005), p. 329; Anna Komnene, pp. 218, 221-222, 242.

[478] Shepard (2005), p. 304; Shepard (1997), p. 118.

[479] Shepard (1997), pp. 118-119.

[480] Ciggaar (1974), pp. 311, 323, 337, 342; Dasent (1894), pp. 425-428.

capital and other locations of the empire were usually accompanied by the foundation of their own churches. The Komnenian period witnessed the foundation of many Western churches in Constantinople and other locations of the empire. These churches were managed by Western priests and followed their own rites and habits. This fact makes us wonder about the ecclesiastical needs of all those Westerners living in the empire and working for the emperor. Those living in Constantinople or important urban centres frequented by Westerners probably had easy access to buildings and people of Western rites. It is possible to assume that the Western quarters of the capital may have attracted those Westerners who did not have their own 'national' church. However, the places located in the territories recently conquered from the Turks may have lacked such infrastructure. Before the First Crusade Alexios built Kibotos, a fortified site near the border of the Turkish-occupied Asia Minor. Kibotos was related to the necessity of having buildings for religious use by Westerners, as it was equipped with a Latin monastery.[481] Guillermus' task as the army's chaplain and priest may have been the result of the lack of Western clergy near the Turkish-occupied territory. Thus, Alexios seems to have looked after the religious needs of his Western mercenaries.

Nonetheless, there is a final possibility for Guillermus' employment. It is also possible that he led the military activities of Western mercenaries in Nicomedia. We know that Western religious figures also took part in military campaigns, a detail that shocked Anna Komnene.[482] Alexios may have had reasons to employ Guillermus as the leader of his Western mercenaries in Nicomedia. Guillermus would have been an alternative to the rebellious leaders that Byzantium had employed in the past. An example of these was Roussel of Bailleul, who had led his own troops and attempted to create a statelet in Asia Minor. Alexios may have been aware of the strong bonds between Roussel and his men. On the other hand, Guillermus was probably put in charge of Western mercenaries with whom he had no direct links or previous association; they only shared their Western background. Thus Guillermus had few opportunities to use the soldiers at his

[481] Shepard (1997), p. 120.

[482] Anna Komnene, pp. 306-308.

service in order to revolt and further his own interests. Also, Guillermus could simply have acted as the representative of the Western mercenaries and even helped them to communicate with the Byzantine population, but we do not know if he actually spoke Greek. On the other hand, the knowledge of Greek of the next individual was the reason behind his employment in the Byzantine court.

Cerbano Cerbani: Cerbano was a Venetian who wrote the *Translatio mirifici martyris Isidori a Chio insula in civitatem Venetam*,[483] preserved in a fourteenth-century manuscript.[484] It includes some biographical details about his life which provide most of what we know about his existence. This work narrates the story of the transportation of the remains of St Isidore from the island of Chios, where he was buried, to Venice. It is an extremely significant source, shedding light on details about the Venetian intervention in the Crusader States and the conflict between Venice and the Byzantine Empire in the mid 1120s, during the reign of John II. The work was dedicated to the bishop of Castello, Bonifacio Falier (1120-1133). The author probably belonged to the noble family of the Cerbani; another member of this family was Domenico, patriarch of Grado (1073-1084).

In the chronicle Cerbano defined himself as an ecclesiastic. He was the protagonist of some of the events that he narrated, for Cerbano played a major role in the transport of St Isidore's remains.[485] This took place between 1124 and 1125. We learn that he was in Constantinople, at the imperial court.[486] He stayed there for at least five or six years as he mentions that he had been there since the reign of Alexios. Brand suggests that he was at the service of the Byzantine emperors for at least ten or twelve years.[487]

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[483] *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, CERBANI, Cerbano; Brand (1998), pp. 217-221.

[484] *RHC* (1895), pp. 321-334; Angold (2007), pp. 69-70.

[485] *RHC* (1895), p. 324.

[486] Ibid.

[487] Brand (1998), p. 217.

Unfortunately Cerbano did not describe his situation there or what his duty was. Then he explains that in order to escape from the hatred and arrogance of Emperor John II, and wishing to make a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, he asked for permission to leave the court.[488] After repeatedly being denied, he decided to depart secretly. He only reached the island of Nicaria (Icaria, west of Samos), where the doux of Crete met him by chance, and finding that he did not have the document which allowed him to leave, took him back to Constantinople. There he was sentenced to be imprisoned in the palace. However, before that could happen, he was able to flee. Brand does not believe that his escape from the emperor's soldiers was a matter of chance, and he proposed that Venetian money was behind his successful flight.[489] For Brand Cerbano's miraculous escape is evidence of the Venetian influence in the Byzantine court. After having escaped, Cerbano reported that he changed his clothes and arrived in Chrysopolis. Brand was right to have identified the location as Chrysopolis in eastern Macedonia, near the mouth of the river Nestos, and not the city across the water from Constantinople.[490] The town was one of the locations in the list of the privileges granted to the Venetians by Alexios I (Chrysopolin).[491] Perhaps Cerbano had contacts there that could help him or maybe he simply tried to find a harbour where it was more difficult that someone would recognise him. This could have been the case, as Cerbano, pretending to be a Sicilian, embarked on a ship owned by a Byzantine.[492] The fact that he embarked on a Byzantine ship may suggest that the Venetian trade had already been disrupted by the war between Venice and John. If we are to believe a Venetian document from 1119, the doge had ordered all the Venetians within the empire to return to Venice.[493] While it is unlikely that all the Venetians obeyed the decree, perhaps the Venetian ships were carefully

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[488] *RHC* (1895), p. 324.

[489] Brand (1998), pp. 219-221.

[490] Ibid., p. 219.

[491] Borsari (1969-1970), p. 126; Pozza and Ravegnani (1993), p. 33, note 15.

[492] *RHC* (1895), p. 325.

[493] Lanfranchi (1955), p. 26, n. 8.

inspected by the Byzantine authorities. Cerbano may have been afraid that he would be discovered if he embarked in one. It is possible that some element could identify him as a Westerner or Venetian. This may well have been his accent. Although he spoke Greek, his pronunciation might have revealed his Western origins. The boat went through a tempest but arrived at Chios, where he prayed to St Isidore. Later he travelled to Rhodes.[494] There he met two Venetian galleys and eventually returned to Chios with the Venetian fleet, which was on its way back from the Holy Land. They spent the winter of 1124-1125 on the island, from where the Venetian expedition attacked other islands of the Aegean Sea. At Chios the remains of St Isidore were discovered in the crypt of a church, and it was decided to move them to Venice, where they arrived in April 1125.[495]

These are the main elements of his adventure in the chronicle. The analysis of these details yields interesting evidence about his life at the Byzantine court. We know that Cerbano's position at court started under Alexios' reign. Cerbano did not mention anything that can suggest which was his task in the 'aula imperatoris.' He was a Venetian cleric. As we have seen in Guillermus' case, other Western clerics travelled and stayed in Constantinople, where they were well received by Alexios. They were even employed at his service. The fact that Cerbano was a Venetian may well have something to do with his position. While the Venetian presence in Byzantium predated Alexios' reign, it is possible that closer contacts between Venice and the Byzantine emperor took place soon after Alexios' accession. It was then that Alexios requested Venice military support against the Norman invasion. The support was renewed during Bohemond's invasion in 1107. In the second chapter of his chronicle, Cerbano calls Alexios 'magnifici imperatoris.'[496] In contrast, his successor John is labelled 'tyrannum.' This attitude was certainly the result of John's decision in 1119 not to renew the privileges granted by his father.[497] His attitude can also be explained by his request to leave

[494] *RHC* (1895), p. 326.

[495] Ibid., p. 334.

[496] Ibid., p. 323.

[497] Nicol (1988), pp. 77-78.

Constantinople being rejected. Cerbano's position in the Byzantine court must have been significant if he was still employed during the period from the cancellation of the Venetian privileges to 1124, when he fled the Byzantine capital. Scholars who have dealt with his figure, based on his literary work and knowledge of Greek, have suggested that he could have been a translator of hagiographical literature or an interpreter at the imperial court.[498] Brand identified him almost certainly as an interpreter employed by the Byzantine administration.[499] If this interpretation is correct, Cerbano is the first Westerner attested to in the sources to have worked at court as translator or interpreter during the period under study.

Whatever his position was, the fact that Cerbano was not allowed to leave Constantinople suggests that the Byzantine government found this risky. The ongoing tension between Venice and Byzantium was surely a factor.[500] Cerbano could reveal important information to the Venetian authorities. However, it is possible that the Venetian attack on Corfu possibly triggered Cerbano's wish to leave the Byzantine capital. Nevertheless, he narrated that the main reason for the pilgrimage was his motivation to visit the Holy Sepulchre and the invitation of his relatives and fellow citizens, apart from the emperor's arrogance and jealousy.[501] It is probable that he was informed about the movements and plans of the Venetian fleet, and thus, he had foreseen the danger of staying in the capital.

The details about his capture in the island of Icaria provide us with information about the nature of position at court. Cerbano reported that when he was intercepted, he was arrested because the doux of Crete recognised him.[502] We must assume that the doux of Crete knew him because they had probably met in Constantinople. This information

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[498] Berschin (1988), p. 218; Pertusi (1990b), p. 205.

[499] Brand (1998), p. 218.

[500] Chalandon (1912), pp. 156-157; Devaney (2010), pp. 127-147.

[501] *RHC* (1895), p. 324; Brand (1998), pp. 217-218.

[502] *RHC* (1895), p. 324.

could suggest that Cerbano had contacts with high officials, or at least he was a well known figure. If Cerbano was an interpreter for the Byzantine court it is likely that the courtiers would have seen him at work, for example during the visits of Western envoys. During the twelfth century the provincial administrator of Crete held the identical titles of katepano or doux.[503] We do not know who Cerbano met, but we know that in 1118 the katepano was a certain John Elladas. According to Tsougarakis, the doux was usually directly dependent on the supreme military or naval commander in Constantinople, either the megas domestikos or the megas doux.[504] Thus, the doux was certainly aware of the hostilities with Venice and possibly suspected that Cerbano was trying to escape.

It is possible that as a result of Cerbano's position at court, he had to wear a uniform. For example, Otto Kresten and Werner Seibt have suggested that the seals of a certain Theophylaktos Exubitos belonged to a μέγας διερμηνευτής, that is chief interpreter, attested in Manuel's court.[505] They have argued that the figure's characteristic attire depicted on the seal may have intended to show details of his court uniform. This possibility could explain why Cerbano changed his clothes (mutatis postea indumentis) during his escape. If Byzantine soldiers were going after Cerbano, his uniform would have helped them to spot him. This piece of information could also suggest that he was wearing Venetian attire, and so he could be easily recognised as a foreigner. On the other hand, in the Byzantine capital there must have been many people wearing Western garments, which possibly made his hunt rather difficult.

After these adventurous events, it is not clear what happened to Cerbano. The chronicle does not provide more details concerning his life after the transportation of St Isidore's relics, when he arrived in Venice. A certain Cerbano has been traced in a monastery in Hungary some years later.[506] It has been suggested that he and our figure were the same

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[503] Tsougarakis (1988), pp. 181-182.

[504] Ibid., pp. 192-193.

[505] Kinnamos (pp. 208-209) informs us that Theophylaktos was Italian (Θεοφύλακτον ἄνδρα Ἰταλόν); Kresten and Seibt (2002), pp. 231-241; Gastgeber (2005), p. 106.

[506] Pertusi (1990b), pp. 205-206.

person. One of the reasons is his curious name; another is that he was translating Greek works there.[507] On his stay in Hungary, Pertusi suggested that Cerbano could have migrated, or been exiled from Venice. We do not know the reasons, but the fact that he went to Hungary, Venice's enemy over the Dalmatian coast, shows that he probably had political enemies back home.[508] His exile from Venice could be related to our last source on Cerbano's life. It is found on the mosaics of the chapel of St Isidore at the Basilica of San Marco.[509] This decoration belongs to the fourteenth century. One of the images shows Cerbano being reprimanded by the Doge Domenico Michiel (1117-1130) for having stolen the remains of St Isidore. This representation has been seen as the possible reason for his exile.[510] However, it is difficult to understand that the theft of relics could explain Cerbano's banishment. Relics were an important means of propaganda and Venice already had a tradition of 'furta sacra.' Shortly after Cerbano left Constantinople, a Venetian monk organised the theft of the relics of St Stephen from a church in the Byzantine capital.[511] Moreover, towards the end of the Veneto-Byzantine war, Venice had more remains of saints taken to the lagoon, for example St Donatos, bishop of Photiki in Epirus, whose relics had been stolen during the attack on Cephalonia in 1126.[512] If Cerbano was indeed exiled from Venice, the explanation could be found in his position and role in Constantinople. Although there is no evidence for such a suggestion, it is fair to assume that Cerbano, who possibly decided to leave Constantinople, may have disobeyed orders of the doge. Such orders could have been that he had to remain at court, thus being able to continue updating the Venetians on the emperor's movements and decisions triggered by the Venetian attacks on Byzantine territories.

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[507] Ibid., pp. 207-208.

[508] Ibid., pp. 206-207.

[509] Ibid., pp. 203-204.

[510] Ibid., pp. 205, 207.

[511] Devaney (2010), p. 130.

[512] Nicol (1988), p. 80.

Finally, the *Translatio mirifici martyris Isidori a Chio insula in civitatem Venetam* also provides further details on Cerbano's literary activities. In the second chapter he reports that he had also written two poems on the first stages of the Venetian campaign at the Dalmatian coast.[513] These works have not survived. After this announcement, Cerbano adds that he has left the narration of these events to a certain 'Jacobus Graecus', who had already started writing their history. Jacobus Graecus, or James of Venice, is the next figure to be discussed.

James of Venice: James was a mysterious figure about whom very few details are known yet worth discussing because he was part of a group of Western intellectuals in Byzantium.[514] This group also included figures such as Cerbano and Moses of Bergamo. James was a cleric and translator, and his work had a significant impact in the Western scholarly milieu of the period.[515] References about him are found in a number of works, the *Translatio mirifici martyris Isidori*, the *Dialogues* by Anselm of Haverlberg and in annotations written by other authors in his translations.[516] Due to their importance for the knowledge of the work of Aristotle, his translations have been the focus of research. However, his person has not received the same attention among Byzantine scholars, probably because his work is in Latin and also due to the limited information available about him. It is also interesting that other evidence about him comes from figures and events dealt with in this section.

In a letter sent in 1148 to the archbishop of Ravenna, Moses, James defined himself as 'Jacobus Veneticus Grecus, philosophus'.[517] These epithets have been interpreted in different ways and there is still some confusion about his origins. James mentioned that

[513] Pertusi (1990b), p. 201.

[514] *Dizionario biografico degli Italiani*, GIACOMO Veneto (da Venezia).

[515] Minio-Paluello (1952), p. 265.

[516] Ibid., pp. 266-268.

[517] Ibid., pp. 266, 268; Mosè del Brolo, p. 60.

he used to speak frequently with Greeks and only exceptionally with Latins. Minio-Paluello concluded that the language and style in his advice to the Archbishop of Ravenna suggests a man accustomed to writing or speaking Greek rather than one whose usual language was Latin.[518] However, he was among the Latins in the theological discussion that took place at Constantinople in 1136, where Anselm of Havelberg mentioned him in his *Dialogues*.[519] Due to these details, three scenarios have been proposed. James was a Byzantine born in Venice, a Venetian who had moved to Byzantium or he was raised and educated there.[520] It is likely that he may have been a Hellenized Westerner. From the information we have it is possible to suggest that his stay in Constantinople was possibly long. His translations of Aristotle's works show that he often worked or frequented libraries in the capital, and so he was used to a Greek milieu.

Anselm described him as 'Iacobus nomine Veneticus natione'.[521] Anselm also related that James knew both Greek and Latin, and was learned in literary matters. As we have seen above, another reference to James of Venice appears in Cerbano's *Translatio*.[522] Cerbano informs us that a certain 'Jacobus Graecus' was writing a historical work on a Venetian campaign in Dalmatia.[523] Pertusi maintained the theory that James was a Venetian because the topic of this work had a propagandistic aim, to praise the Venetian deed of subjecting the Dalmatian coast. We assume that this historical work was written in Latin. The only certain detail is the topic and that it was written in prose. Pertusi also proposed that the epithet 'Graecus' indicates his knowledge of the Greek language or a

[518] Minio-Paluello (1952), p. 269.

[519] Anselm of Havelberg, p. 86.

[520] Minio-Paluello (1952), p. 269.

[521] Anselm of Havelberg, p. 86.

[522] *RHC* (1895), p. 324.

[523] Pertusi (1990b), pp. 201, 208-209.

long stay in Constantinople. This adjective has also been interpreted by several scholars as a reference to the understanding of the Greek language by their recipients.[524]

The *Translatio* was written after the events, that is at some point after 1125. Although Pertusi suggested that James was in Venice when Cerbano arrived with the relics, it is possible that they had met in Constantinople before Cerbano fled. However, the only certain fact is that James was at Constantinople in 1136, and by then he was already learned in both Latin and Greek. Pertusi has also proposed that at some point they may have been working together at the Byzantine court.[525] If this was correct, James is the second Western intellectual at the service of the Komnenian emperors. While it is clear that Cerbano and James probably knew each other, we do not know if James had a position at the Byzantine court. James had also met Moses of Bergamo; both were at discussion in 1136.

Regarding James' translations, scholars have suggested that his interest in Aristotle may have developed in the atmosphere around the so-called University of Constantinople, where studies on philosophy were popular under John Italos.[526] It has also been suggested that James of Venice probably had contact[527] or formed part of the group of Aristotelian commentators whose work was encouraged by Anna Komnene, along with Michael of Ephesus and Eustratios of Nicaea.[528] Robert Browning suspected that Anna conceived the study and guided them in a cooperative scholarly undertaking. Although James may not have taken part in the circle, it is likely that James translated Aristotle's works under the influence of the Byzantine commentators, or it is possible that he rediscovered those works due to their research on the Greek philosopher.[529] This could

[524] For example, a reference to Moses of Bergamo also mentions him as "Moyses graecus or Moyses de Grecia", Cremaschi (1954), p. 51.

[525] Pertusi (1990b), p. 209.

[526] Berschin (1988), p. 218; Minio-Paluello (1952), p. 265.

[527] Browning (1962) pp. 6-8.

[528] Mullett (1984), p. 178.

[529] Sorabji (1990), pp. 22, 24; Ebbesen (1990), p. 450.

lead us to the possibility that James may have mingled with Byzantine scholars. Perhaps he studied with them. Michael of Ephesus worked at the University of Constantinople. Perhaps he instructed James, or helped him to find manuscripts. Moreover, Anna Komnene related in the *Alexiad* that the Orphanotropheion established by Alexios included a grammar school where children were taught the Greek language.[530] She mentioned that among them were Latins. Finally, the *Pilgrim's guide to Santiago de Compostela*, written before 1173, provides evidence for the existence of a 'scola grecorum' in the Byzantine capital.[531] The guide's anonymous French author gathered information about St Eutropios' passion. Perhaps James of Venice learnt or improved his knowledge of Greek in one of these institutions.

'Anna's circle' was active in the period when she was confined to the Kecharitomene Monastery, which sets the chronology for its activities after 1118. James was in Constantinople in 1136, but there is the possibility that he had already been there with Cerbano, before 1124. Anna's views about Latins tend not to be positive,[532] except when dealing with individuals that were at the service of her father, in which case they are to be praised. These cases were usually limited to soldiers. However, the fact that Anna may have employed or supported a Westerner should not come as a surprise; Venetians became a privileged Latin community in Byzantium during the reign of Anna's father. We also know that she had contact at least with another Latin. In the *Alexiad* she mentions that she received some information on Guiscard's attack in 1081 talking to a Latin.[533] He was the envoy of the bishop of Bari and had spent some time with Robert Guiscard shortly after the latter had arrived in the Balkans. Also, Anna must surely have seen or met many of the high-status Westerners calling at Constantinople on their way to the Holy Land. She must have met those at the service of Alexios, for example, it is possible that if Cerbano was an interpreter, she knew or had met him at some point.

[530] Anna Komnene, pp. 484-485.

[531] Vielliard (1938), pp. 64-65; Ciggaar (1996), p. 75.

[532] Anna Komnene, p. 297.

[533] Ibid., p. 119; Loud (1991), p. 46; Anna Komnene (2009), p. 108, note 44.

However, we do not know if James was associated with the court. If James was actually involved in Anna's Aristotelian circle it would imply that a Venetian contributed to the intellectual work commissioned by the Komnenian princess. Moreover, his involvement also shows that emperors and relatives had personal contact with Westerners for different reasons and in diverse situations.

Finally, James of Venice has inspired at least one more proposition. In his study of the mosaics of San Marco, Demus speculated who could have been the author of the Marian inscriptions that accompany some mosaics in the basilica.[534] He pointed out the possibility that this person may also have been the designer of the programme and distribution of the mosaics, which show a strong Byzantine element. He mentioned that someone like James of Venice was a possible candidate. However, Demus declared that James only indicates the category of person that would have created such work. This figure probably shared James' background: a member of the clergy, translator of Greek works and versed in Greek and Latin theology and literature. Demus' suggestion is plausible. Nevertheless, there were other figures with a similar background, for example Cerbano. He was a Venetian cleric, lived in Constantinople, was learned in Greek and Latin, and took part in the translation of St Isidore's remains to Venice. The present study shows that there existed many other individuals living between the West and Constantinople and sharing both cultures. Another of these was Moses of Bergamo, who is the next figure to be discussed.

Moses of Bergamo (d. after 1156/57): From the cases discussed in this section so far, Moses is the one about whom we have more information. Moses, also known as Mosè del Brolo due to his family's name, is a Western individual who has been the focus of wide research, however, he still remains fairly unknown to Byzantinists.[535] He was born at Bergamo, in northern Italy, and was a poet and translator. His more significant literary

[534] Demus (1984), p. 272.

[535] *ODB*, Moses of Bergamo.

work was the *Liber Pergaminus*, a long poem dedicated to his birth city.[536] Although it was written in Latin, the poem apparently was the result of John II's encouragement and it might have been influenced by the literary ambience of Constantinople.[537] If this was actually the case, the *Liber Pergaminus* could be considered an indirect product of John's patronage. This suggestion is exciting as the evidence for John's activity as a patron of the arts and literary works is scant. Scholars have not agreed on the date in which the poem was written.[538] However, it has been suggested that Moses arrived in Constantinople by c.1125.[539] Moses resided in the Byzantine capital where we know that he was at the service of the emperor.[540]

Moses' figure is noteworthy because of the different roles he played during the period he spent in Byzantium, certainly stretching from before 1129 until at least 1136. The evidence he has left provides us with insights about his time at the service of John II. The main sources for his stay in Byzantium are a couple of letters that he sent to his brother Peter. One of his two letters, sent in 1129, was written ex Datia and is a short pamphlet on a subject of Greek grammar.[541] It has been interpreted as having been sent from the Balkan borders of the empire (Dacia), while Moses was accompanying John II on campaign against Hungary.[542] From this detail it is already possible to point out that his skills were essential during the military expedition. Berschin suggested that Moses was a translator at the imperial court,[543] while Cremaschi suggested he had some post as scribe or secretary.[544] Filippomaria Pontani has recently argued that Moses was

[536] Gorni (1970), pp. 409-460.

[537] Cremaschi (1945), p. 115; Gorni (1970), pp. 412-413, 440.

[538] Gorni (1970), pp. 414-420.

[539] Ibid., p. 420.

[540] Ibid., p. 412.

[541] Pontani (1998a), pp. 16-17; Personeni (2010), pp. 30-36.

[542] The first author to suggest this idea was Charles Haskins. However he thought the letter was sent in 1128, Haskins (1914), p. 139.

[543] Berschin (1988), p. 222.

[544] Cremaschi (1945), pp. 56, 84.

employed as both translator and scribe. Thus, it is possible to imagine that while Moses was on the move with the Byzantine army, he translated and inscribed Latin documents that were received and produced by the Byzantine emperor. Perhaps he may even have acted as interpreter with Westerners. We can assume that Byzantine emperors already depended on skills that Westerners could offer better than the Byzantines.

The other of his two letters, sent in 1130, is a fascinating source full of significant details about his life and other aspects. This letter is an original autograph and was written in Constantinople.[545] Pontani has compared it on palaeographical grounds to the imperial Byzantine documents that had Latin translations. These are the first examples of Byzantine official letters written both in Greek and Latin. Finding similarities, he has concluded that the Latin versions in two letters sent by John II and Manuel in 1139 and 1146 were probably translated and written by Moses.[546] However, his conclusions have been contested.[547] According to Christian Gastgeber, certain mistakes exclude the possibility that Moses of Bergamo was the scribe of the letters. What is important to note is that the Byzantine administration decided to issue its documents, or at least some of them, with a Latin translation. The documents show that there was a change in the guidelines of the production of official documents in the chancery of the imperial palace, as the earliest of these letters, dated to 1139, and sent to the Pope, is the first example of bilingual document issued by the Byzantine chancery.[548] This change implies that the Byzantine court was aware that the Western factor had become crucial in the sphere of international relations. The use of Latin in diplomatic letters should be seen as a result of this. The fact that the letters were also translated into Latin may have also been intended to show that the Byzantine chancery was able to master the new lingua franca in the Mediterranean. It was an exercise of modernization that showed that Constantinople could rival the Western chanceries.

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[545] Pontani (1998b), pp. 156-161.

[546] Ibid., p. 159.

[547] Gastgeber (2000), pp. 32-35.

[548] Kresten and Müller (1993-1994), pp. 422-429.

Moses' origins are important. Although he was Italian, he did not belong to one of those maritime republics with commercial and political interests within the sphere of the Byzantine Empire. Moses was from Bergamo, at the time a city state which apparently had no links with the Byzantine Empire. Although from his letter we know that he was associated with Venetians, it is possible that his origins were one of the reasons for his appointment at the Byzantine court.[549] This is explained by another figure previously at the service of the Byzantine emperors, Cerbano. It is likely that Cerbano's Venetian origins and his flight during the conflict between John II and Venice left a bad impression at court. This could explain why Moses was selected from such an unimportant milieu. Perhaps the Byzantine court found that Moses would be more reliable as Bergamo played no role in the politics of the eastern Mediterranean. In fact, Moses may have replaced Cerbano in his position at the Byzantine court. As we have seen above, c.1125 is the proposed date for his arrival in Byzantium. This date would approximately match the period of Cerbano's escape from Constantinople.

There are many other interesting details in his two letters. For instance, in the second one he asked his brother to send him a boy in order to assist him on his way back to Bergamo.[550] His brother should send the boy to Venice, where he would have to find either the magistrate Domenico Bassedello or the abbot of San Nicholò. They would make sure that he arrived in Constantinople. Concerning Domenico, Moses explained that he would arrange the boy to travel Constantinople with the ship that sailed to the Byzantine capital every August. This reference suggests that Moses had connections with well positioned Venetians and also travelled to Byzantium in Venetian ships. In the tenth century, Liudprand of Cremona had already travelled to the Byzantine capital from Pavia in northern Italy through Venice.[551] It is obvious that Venice was the main harbour and travel station of northern Italy for departure to Constantinople. The request of a boy may be related to the death of his nephew Andrea, who had died in Thessaloniki in

[549] Pontani (1998a), pp. 22-23; Cremaschi (1945), p. 53; Haskins (1914), p. 134.

[550] Pontani (1998b), pp. 148, 150-151.

[551] Liudprand of Cremona, p. 197.

1129.[552] Andrea may have acted as Moses' assistant in Byzantium. Thus, Moses promoted the presence of Westerners in Byzantium as part of his entourage.

From the same letter we also learn that he lived near the Venetian quarter in Constantinople.[553] He reported to his brother that during a fire in the Venetian quarter (regionem Veneticorum nobis vicinam penitus incendio deflagrari) some objects he had stored there were burnt, most notably his collection of manuscripts that he had acquired in the Byzantine capital (Combusti sunt igitur omnes libri Graeci quos multo dudum labore quaesiveram).[554] His residence near the Venetian quarter of the capital, and the fact that he kept some valuable belongings there, were probably the result of his contacts with Venetian inhabitants. Furthermore, in the Venetian quarter he probably was able to follow a Western lifestyle. Thus, although Moses was not Venetian, part of his life is likely to have taken place there while he was in Constantinople.

It seems that Moses also translated for the Venetians. Pontani has argued that the signature of a certain 'Moyses' who 'fideliter transtuli et transcripsi' a Venetian document of San Giorgio Maggiore may well have been Moses of Bergamo.[555] This document, which has already been discussed above, was a concession to the Venetians of an oratory on the island of Lemnos, dated to June 1136. Moses probably translated the Greek document in Constantinople. A few months before Moses had taken part in the religious discussion in the Byzantine capital.

In the Constantinopolitan letter Moses also narrated the events that occurred with the appearance of a certain John.[556] Moses informs his brother that he has been offended by John's behaviour and attitude. Moreover, we also learn that John has claimed to be

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[552] Pontani (1998a), pp. 21-22.

[553] Ibid., pp. 21, 23; on the Venetian quarter during the reigns of Alexios I and John II, Martin (1978b), pp. 22-23; Jacoby (2001), pp. 153-170.

[554] Pontani (1998a), pp. 21, 23.

[555] Lanfranchi (1968), p. 382; Pontani (1998b), pp. 165-167.

[556] Pontani (1998a), pp. 21-22.

Moses' relative. We are not told to whom John had talked, but some lines below Moses mentions a 'regio vestiario.' A possible reconstruction of the events is that this John knew Moses or had met someone who knew about him and, being aware of his position at court, he decided to profit from the situation. Thus, in order to get favours or a job from the emperor he said he was Moses' relative. This hypothesis shows how some Westerners, after arriving in Constantinople, were able to get a job. Another example was Guillermus, whose brother already had contacts at court. However, the Komnenian emperors considered the arrival of new manpower as a beneficial event. Mercenaries, translators, scribes and clergymen found employment in the Byzantine Empire. The newcomers must have seen the palace as a source of wealth and prestige, and Moses' position and comfortable lifestyle must have been a proof of the riches awaiting those ready to serve the Byzantine emperor. Evidence for such a lifestyle is found in the second letter. Moses informs his brother that the Greek manuscripts destroyed in the fire of the Venetian quarter were worth 'trium librarum auri.'[557] This piece of evidence shows that he had money to collect such items. Moreover, Moses estimated that the rest of his goods destroyed in the fire added 'plus D byzantiis' (five hundred byzantios) more.[558] However, at the time he wrote the letter he noted that he still owned four beautiful mules, which according to him were worth 'CXXX byzantios' (one hundred and thirty byzantios).[559] All this evidence shows that Moses' possessions were very varied. Also, it is possible to say that Moses had some familiarity dealing with considerable amounts.[560] Cremaschi pointed out that this trait may suggest that Moses may also have had some commercial business.[561] We can assume that he received a good salary for his position at court.

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[557] Ibid., pp. 21, 23.

[558] By byzantios Moses means bezants, the term which was used in Western Europe for the Byzantine gold coins.

[559] Pontani (1998a), pp. 21-22.

[560] Ibid., pp. 23-24.

[561] Cremaschi (1945), p. 54.

Concerning the dishonest John we can still gather more information. Moses also narrated that John presented himself like a woman among men, and helpless among soldiers.[562] Then he stated that although John was young and strong, he was not even able to hold a stick to defend himself against the attack of a dog. From this reference it seems obvious that John was probably a soldier, a Western mercenary or at least he attempted to enter the service of the emperor as a warrior, which would have been the most frequent service among Westerners. Moses also mentioned that John was born in a warlike nation that even in peaceful times did not remain vulnerable. It is not possible to discover what his origins were. However, it is possible that he came from somewhere in northern Italy, as Moses added that he had learnt from many people that John went to Constantinople 'against the wishes of you all.' By this he probably meant his brother and other people they both knew back home. Pontani has noted a reference in Kinnamos, dated to the war against Hungary, where Ligurian knights (Λιγούρων ἱππέων) are mentioned fighting in the Byzantine army.[563] He has suggested that soldiers that arrived with John may have taken part in the Hungarian campaign. Thus, it is possible that Moses' north Italian origins could explain their presence in Byzantium.

The letter provides certain details regarding horses that are certainly interesting. For example, Moses told his brother that he had lost money on horses (in equis).[564] Cremaschi suggested that Moses seems to have been gambling at the hippodrome.[565] This suggestion could show that Moses took part in the everyday life like any other Constantinopolitan citizen. This would not only be an interesting detail on Byzantine leisure, but evidence that Moses took part in the activities in which the Byzantines spent their spare time. Nonetheless, further details may suggest another scenario. Moses told his brother that he assisted John by giving him a horse.[566] The horse was intended to ride

[562] Ibid., pp. 21-22.

[563] Kinnamos, p. 10; Pontani (1998b), pp. 152-153.

[564] Pontani (1998a), pp. 21, 23.

[565] Cremaschi (1945), p. 146.

[566] Pontani (1998a), pp. 21-22.

around the city or in order that John could join the cavalry in the Byzantine army. Moses informs his brother that three or four days later John had sold the horse without asking his permission. This detail could explain the previous reference of the money lost on horses. Instead of gambling at the hippodrome, Moses may have engaged in some business related to riding animals.[567] As we have seen above, he also owned four beautiful mules.[568] Moreover, the letter also details that among the goods destroyed by the fire in the Venetian quarter were 'equitaturas et indumenta.'[569] Those mounts surely were for the horses and the mules. It is not clear what Moses used the horses or the mules for. While horses were essential for war, mules were useful for transport. For example, Saewulf narrated that during his overland trip to Thebes, some people rode mules.[570] It is possible to suggest that Moses used the mules for his travels, for instance during the military campaign against Hungary. Moses' dealings with horses can be explained in another way. Moses gave a horse to John because they were acquaintances from back home or had common friends. On the other hand, Moses may have helped other north Italians to join the Byzantine army. Perhaps he provided them with horses and mounts. Maybe he actually rented them. Whatever the case was Moses' dealings with horses and mules played a significant role in his finances.

Returning to John, there is a last point to discuss. Moses, after John had sold the horse, still continued to help him. We are told that when the donations were distributed to the soldiers with whom John had come, Moses arranged for the 'regio vestiario' to give more than fifteen bezants to John. The figure of the vestiario, sometimes called imperial vestiarios, is rather obscure.[571] It is interesting that Moses referred to such a position, as it does not appear frequently in documents. It is usually found on seals, probably

[567] Personeni (2010), p. 11.

[568] Ibid., pp. 21, 23.

[569] Pontani (1998a), pp. 21, 23.

[570] Huygens (1994), p. 59; Wilkinson (1988), p. 95.

[571] *ODB*, vestiarios.

designating a special treasurer, which suits Moses' reference in the letter.[572] In this case the 'regio vestiario' distributed some kind of payment or largesse, probably from the emperor. This detail confirms that John entered the service of the emperor. It is also clear that Moses had contacts in the imperial administration and used his influence to benefit other Westerners.

The last secure evidence for Moses' stay in Byzantium is found in the *Dialogues*.[573] Anselm reported that Moses was selected as the simultaneous translator by the majority of the assistants of the meeting, who recognised him as the best one for the task (fidus interpres).[574] This detail shows that Moses, after a few years in the Byzantine capital, had become known to members of both communities. They possibly selected him because they trusted his language skills. However, it is fair to wonder if, having such an important position at the imperial chancery, his inclusion in the panel and task as interpreter were not encouraged by the emperor himself. At least it is possible to suggest that, after years at the service of the Byzantine Empire, Moses looked like a reliable figure to participate into this major meeting. John must have had a lot of expectations concerning the theological discussion. The meeting was the first important encounter that dealt with religious matters during John's reign, as the previous discussion had taken place during Alexios' reign.[575] More importantly, the event was arranged while Anselm was in Constantinople. He had travelled to the Byzantine capital as the envoy of the German Emperor Lothair and John was interested in renewing the alliance with the German emperor against Sicily. It is possible that the debate was an attempt to persuade the Germans of the Byzantines' goodwill on religious matters.

According to Pontani, Moses still was in Constantinople in 1146, at the beginning of Manuel's reign. It had previously been suggested that Moses may have been employed

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[572] Failler (1987), p. 201.

[573] Cremaschi (1945), p. 58; Anselm of Havelberg.

[574] Cremaschi (1945), p. 59; Cremaschi (1954), p. 55.

[575] Ciggaar (1996), p. 262; Grumel (1933), pp. 22-33.

by the Emperor Manuel I.[576] Manuel, usually known for his latinophile tendencies, was criticised for employing 'barbarians' in his court by contemporary figures.[577] The figure of Moses clearly shows that the presence of Westerners as civil servants at the imperial chancery did not start during Manuel's reign. It is a feature that Manuel inherited. Another Western figure residing in Constantinople during Manuel's reign was Burgundio of Pisa, who is also mentioned by Anselm of Havelverg in his *Dialogues*.

Burgundio of Pisa: Burgundio was an Italian jurist and translator of the twelfth century (c. 1110-1193).[578] He stayed in Constantinople at least twice. His better documented stay was the second one, during Manuel's reign. He achieved an influential position at court. This stay lasted several years and has already been the focus of research.[579] However, it is his first documented sojourn that interests us here. This was also recorded in Anselm's *Dialogues*, where he appears as one of the attendants to the public meeting that took place in April 1136 in Constantinople.[580] Coming from Pisa, he may have acted as envoy of the Italian city. As he died in 1193, in 1136 he must have been very young, probably in his twenties.[581] However, Anselm of Havelberg described him as mastering both the Greek and Latin languages.[582] Maybe Burgundio had already spent some time in Constantinople, where the Pisan quarter had been established since 1111.[583] Peter Classen and others have suggested that he spent part of his youth in the capital, where he

[576] Cremaschi (1954), p. 56.

[577] Darrouzès (1970), p. 235; Magdalino (1993), p. 223.

[578] *ODB*, Burgundio of Pisa.

[579] Classen (1974).

[580] Setton (1956), p. 22.

[581] Classen (1974), p. 13.

[582] Ibid., p. 69.

[583] von Falkenhausen (1998), p. 32; Malamut (2007), p. 430.

acquired his linguistic skills.[584] At some point after the discussion Burgundio returned to Pisa, though we do not know when. Recently it has been suggested 1140 at the latest.[585]

The *Dialogues* of Anselm were written for Pope Eugene III thirteen years after the event. Pope Eugene was also born in Pisa, with the name of Bernardo. It is possible that Anselm may have mentioned Burgundio and exaggerated his account because both Eugene and Burgundio were from Pisa. It is also likely that both men knew each other. What we know is that Burgundio was not selected by the attendants as the official translator of the 1136 discussion. The reference to Burgundio in the work of Anselm is the earliest evidence for Burgundio's life. It is likely that his presence in the discussion was related to other interests, in this case politics. As we have seen above, the discussion took place in the background of the politicking between the Byzantine Empire and Germany. Pisa also took part in the negotiations. Their aim was to create an anti-Norman alliance. Therefore, the participation of Burgundio in the discussion in 1136 is meaningful if the meeting is seen from a political perspective.[586] Moreover, the fact that the religious discussion had its first session in a church next to the Pisan quarter is not a coincidence. The location was likely to be related to negotiations in order to promote an alliance with Pisa against Roger II of Sicily. The negotiations between Pisa and the Byzantine Empire resulted in the Byzantine embassy to Pisa some months later in that year. Chalandon suggested that the embassy travelled there to reward the Pisan opposition to Sicily.[587] Therefore, it is possible to suggest that Burgundio probably acted as intermediary between the Pisan authorities and the Byzantine Empire.

It has also been suggested that Burgundio acquired certain manuscripts of Aristotle in Constantinople.[588] He seems to have commissioned them from a certain Ioannikios at

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[584] Vuillemin-Diem and Rashed (1997), p. 178.

[585] Ibid., p. 179.

[586] Classen (1974), p. 11.

[587] Chalandon (1912), pp. 159-161.

[588] Vuillemin-Diem and Rashed (1997), pp. 176-179.

some point between 1135 and 1140, and then he translated them into Latin. Thus, Burgundio's scholarly interest encouraged the copying of Byzantine manuscripts.

In sum, these figures provide evidence that Constantinople was a magnet not only for merchants, mercenaries and pilgrims, but also for a wider range of Westerners. The five figures discussed above found employment or had positions associated within the milieu of the Byzantine court. This detail is evidence that the imperial administration required a Western workforce for certain specific tasks. Their Western background was necessary because they could help the Byzantine Emperor to liaise with other Westerners. While Guillermus probably took care of the religious needs of Western mercenaries in Nicomedia, Moses translated Latin documents received at the Byzantine court. These positions were the result of the increase in the contacts between Westerners and Byzantines.

The origins of four of these five figures confirm the Italian peninsula as the bridge between Byzantium and the West and also highlight the variety of roles played by the Italians in the empire. Moreover, the fact that two were from Venice and a third was from Pisa shows that the privileges granted by Alexios were followed by a wave of Venetians and Pisans interested in pursuing a career in Constantinople.

Cerbano, James and Moses can be grouped together. They had linguistic skills and certainly literary interests. Constantinople was the perfect setting where to study Greek; there were libraries and establishments where they could find manuscripts and teachers. However, Constantinople was not the only place where Westerners could learn Greek. The Norman kingdom of Sicily is considered to have been the most important point for the contacts between the Greek and Latin cultures.[589] This was the case because of the former Greek presence in the area and the arrival of its new Western rulers. The position

[589] Haskins (1920), pp. 603-604.

of Cerbano and Moses, perhaps as the imperialium epistolarum interpres[590] (the Latin name of the Byzantine μέγας διερμηνευτής?), not only implies that the Byzantine court trusted more Westerners for such a task, their presence does not seem to have encouraged Byzantines to learn Latin. The fact that such positions were occupied by Westerners possibly reflects the contemporary knowledge of Latin among Byzantines. We have no evidence of many Byzantines who spoke Latin during this period. For example, Nikephoros Basilakes claimed that his brother Constantine, who was sent as an envoy to the West, knew Latin.[591] The poet John Tzetzes was only able to greet Westerners in Latin.[592] During Manuel's reign, Isaac Aaron learnt Latin in Sicilian captivity.[593] He was the interpreter for the Latins who were granted an audience with the emperor. A certain Leo Rogerios, perhaps a descendant of the Roger discussed above, also knew Latin according to an anonymous poem (λατινογλώσσους ἐκμεταφράζων φράσεις).[594] Also, it is significant that the material we have suggests that no Byzantine was considered for the post of interpreter in the theological debate in 1136. However, we only know about the discussion through Anselm's work and perhaps he did not report other Byzantine figures that attended the debate.

The group of Westerners discussed in this section was small. Although it is likely that there were others, it is clear that their impact on the Byzantine society was limited. Their activities were mainly related to the Byzantine court, that is Constantinople, and so their influence outside this milieu was insignificant. The next group of figures to be discussed is even smaller, however their central position at court could have played a significant role in introducing elements of Western culture.

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590 Pontani (1998b), p. 168; Personeni (2010), pp. 2, 17, 97-98.

591 Nikephoros Basilakes (1983), pp. 242-243; Kaldellis (2007), p. 296.

592 Kazhdan and Epstein (1985), pp. 183, 259.

593 Niketas Choniates, p. 144.

594 Lambros (1911), p. 129, n. 113; Magdalino (1993), p. 223.

COURT

This section explores the two diplomatic marriages that took place during this period between Byzantium and the West. It is significant that the period witnessed the first Western woman to become a Byzantine empress. While two and a half centuries earlier Eudokia Ingerina may have been the daughter of some figure from northern Europe, she was raised in Byzantium and her marriage to Basil I did not represent an alliance between ruling dynasties. Thus, it was Piroska, a Hungarian princess, the first Western woman to become Byzantine empress as John II's wife.[595] Later, Emperor John planned the marriage of his son Manuel to Bertha, a German princess. Both women were renamed Eirene. This section focuses on these matrimonial alliances as it is important to understand what led both emperors to arrange these unions. Moreover, the figures of the two women and their possible impact in the Byzantine court are analysed. Other diplomatic marriages are also briefly discussed in order to draw conclusions on the matrimonial policy of the first two Komnenian emperors regarding the West.

As we have seen in chapter one, before Alexios I became emperor in 1081, Michael VII's numerous diplomatic marriages may suggest the political crisis of the empire in the 1070s. Three of these marriages were with Western powers, and more importantly, in two cases they implied the export of Byzantine brides. Only the alliance with Guiscard meant that a Western woman, Olympias, arrived in Byzantium. However, the betrothal between Guiscard's daughter and Constantine was cancelled by Nikephoros III. The cases of Piroska and Bertha are different because the brides were 'imported' into Constantinople and their background may have influenced the Byzantine court. Nevertheless, many years passed before Alexios married his son John to Piroska. The period after Alexios I ascended the throne in April 1081 did not witness any marriages with the West; however, Alexios seems to have considered one. The Norman invasion placed Alexios in need for allies outside the Byzantine borders. The *Alexiad* details his

[595] John Zonaras, pp. 268-269.

attempts to persuade the German emperor to take action in Southern Italy in 1081.[596] This way Alexios hoped to distract Guiscard. Anna noted that her father knew the German emperor was the most powerful of the leaders of the Western lands, and she added that Robert would not be able to oppose him. Alexios sent many gifts to Germany, among them thousands of pieces of gold, purple cloths of silk, a reliquary and other treasures.[597] Moreover, in order to convince Henry IV, he also hinted at a diplomatic marriage. Alexios mentioned John, the son of his brother Isaac, in a letter to Henry, calling him 'my favourite nephew.' It is significant because in the same letter he also explained that as God had not blessed him with a son, John played the role of true heir. It is possible that the Byzantine emperor was acting out of desperation, though it is a coincidence that eventually he married his heir and son to another Western woman. Alexios' letter seems to give the impression that it was up to Henry to accept the Byzantine offer. The marriage never took place, but the German emperor finally invaded Italy, forcing Guiscard to withdraw from the Balkans. Alexios' proposal was a sign that he resorted to any means in order to achieve a diplomatic alliance against Robert. On the other hand, many of the marriages negotiated by the Byzantine emperors during the Middle Byzantine period show an interest in the most powerful rulers of the West, that is usually the King of the Franks or the German emperor. Although many of these did not finally take place, the negotiations provide evidence for the Byzantine interest in maintaining good diplomatic relations with the foremost power in the West. For example, there were marriage negotiations with Pippin (752-768) and Charlemagne (768-814).[598] The tenth century witnessed many marriage negotiations with Germany and in 972 Otto II married Theophano, John Tzimiskes' niece.[599] The last negotiations before Alexios resulted in the arrival of a Byzantine bride, Zoe, in Bari in 1002. She was going to marry Otto III, who died while she was on her way to Italy. One of the reasons

[596] Anna Komnene, pp. 112-114; Lounghis (1980), pp. 246-248.

[597] Macrides (1992b), p. 273.

[598] Davids (1995), pp. 104-107.

[599] Herrin (1995), pp. 64-85.

for these diplomatic alliances was the Byzantine presence in Italy. The German expansion in the Italian peninsula led to a confrontation with Byzantium, still holding onto certain territories in Southern Italy. The marriages may have helped to ease the atmosphere of mistrust and military intervention. Therefore, it is possible to say that Byzantine interests in Southern Italy were a significant factor for the promotion of diplomatic marriages with Western powers. In fact, as we have seen, the demise of Byzantine rule in Southern Italy and its substitution for the aggressive Norman state motivated the marriage of Guiscard's daughter and Michael VII's son.

The Norman hostility against Byzantium did not allow for the possible continuation of marriage negotiations between the two. The situation of antagonism possibly provoked the opposite trend; Alexios sought allies in order to oppose the Norman threat. This was the case of his son's marriage. The future Emperor John II was married to Piroska, the daughter of the late Hungarian King Ladislaus I (1077-1095) and his German wife Adelaide of Rheinfelden. When Piroska was sent to Constantinople her uncle King Coloman (1095-1116) was on the Hungarian throne. The marriage of John to Piroska of Hungary shows that certain international circumstances still obliged the Byzantine emperor to consider diplomatic marriages with Western powers. However, this case seems to have been an exception rather than the rule. John and Piroska were married in 1104 or 1105.[600] The union between John and Piroska answered to different circumstances. Scholars believe that the main reason was Bohemond's journey to Western Europe in 1104. The Byzantine hostility towards his rule over Antioch forced him to look for allies elsewhere. His plan was to invade the Byzantine Empire from Southern Italy. Although this expedition was the result of the First Crusade, it was a second Norman invasion (1107-1108). In France, Bohemond sought support and funds to carry out the assault. He also married Constance, the daughter of the French King Philip I. Alexios may have foreseen the possibility that Bohemond could also approach the Hungarian king for an anti-Byzantine alliance. Hungary and the Normans already had matrimonial ties. In 1097 the King of Hungary Coloman I had married Felicia, the

[600] Makk (1989), pp. 14-15; Stephenson (2000), pp. 180-181, 199; Stanković (forthcoming).

daughter of Count Roger I of Sicily. The possibility of a double invasion through the Balkans may have convinced Alexios to start the negotiations for the marriage. The union between John and Piroska took place against this background of political interests. The fact that Alexios proposed his own son and successor shows that he was serious about the proposal. However, he may also have realised the advantages of importing a foreign bride. Alexios was married for convenience to a woman of a powerful family, the Doukai. Eirene Doukaina played a growing role at court following the demise of Alexios' mother shortly after 1100. At the end of Alexios' life she even threatened the emperor's plans of succession. It is not possible to know if Alexios had reserved his son for a foreign marriage, and if so, to a Western woman. Nonetheless, by marrying John to Piroska, Alexios avoided an alliance with a prominent Byzantine family that may eventually have opposed John's will. In this way Alexios assured that the future empress' lineage had no chance to intervene in the politicking of the empire. Finally, Alexios was unaware that he started a Komnenian tradition of marrying the emperor's sons to foreign brides.

Eirene, born Piroska in 1088 in Esztergom, was sixteen when she arrived in Constantinople in order to marry the future John II, possibly in 1104.[601] Kinnamos praised her virtues and charitable activities.[602] His description suggests that Eirene-Piroska did not play any role in the imperial government. On the other hand, her origins may have complicated indirectly John's relations with Hungary. Eirene-Piroska's position at court surely encouraged further relations between Byzantium and the Hungarian Kingdom. John may have used her connections in order to closely follow the politics at the Hungarian court. Some years after John became emperor, he offered asylum to Duke Álmos, Stephen's uncle, who had fled Hungary.[603] The fact that the Hungarian prince Álmos decided to find refuge in Byzantium probably was the result of Eirene-Piroska's position at the Byzantine court. Álmos was allowed to settle in

[601] PBW Eirene 62

[602] Kinnamos, pp. 9-10. Michael Angold argued that Piroska set the tone of John's court (1995, p. 76).

[603] Kinnamos, p. 9, Niketas Choniates, p. 17.

Macedonia and when Stephen asked for his extradition, John protected him. His presence in Byzantium was the casus belli for the Hungarian invasion of 1127.[604] Nevertheless, a Hungarian source provides another interesting reason for the invasion.[605] *The Hungarian Chronicle* narrates that Piroska claimed that her cousin, the king of Hungary, was her liegeman. Stephen was outraged and responded by attacking the empire. It is possible that the Hungarian court blamed Piroska for the rejection of the expulsion of Álmos. Therefore, the diplomatic marriage between John and Eirene-Piroska had other indirect effects for Byzantine politics. Álmos would be followed by other pretenders to the Hungarian crown. As we have seen, the next one to find asylum in Constantinople during John's reign was Boris, who married a Byzantine woman from the aristocracy, possibly from the Doukai lineage.[606]

The union of Piroska-Eirene and John was the second marriage arranged between the Byzantine Empire and Hungary. This marriage would be followed by Manuel's attempt to marry his daughter Maria to the future King of Hungary, Béla III.[607] At the end of the twelfth century another diplomatic marriage between the two was negotiated, and Isaac Angelos married Béla III's daughter, Margaret-Maria. Thus, during this period Byzantine emperors continually renewed the alliance with Hungary. It is possible that the establishment of Christian and Western states along the borders of Byzantium increased the chances of diplomatic marriages. They became a key method to pursue regional diplomacy.

Concerning Piroska, we do not have many details about her life in Byzantium.[608] Perhaps her Byzantine name, Eirene, was in honour of John's mother, Eirene Doukaina. Nonetheless, during the Komnenian dynasty Eirene seems to have been the most usual

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[604] Urbansky (1968), pp. 40, 45; Makk (1989), pp. 22, 24; Stephenson (1996), pp. 177-187.

[605] Stephenson (2000), pp. 208-209.

[606] Urbansky (1968), p. 47; Makk (1989), pp. 31-32; Vitalien (1972), pp. 35-39.

[607] Moravcsik (1933), pp. 556-558.

[608] Barzos (1984), pp. 219-221.

name for female figures that joined the Byzantine court.[609] While Kinnamos briefly praised Piroska-Eirene's manners and named her as the founder of the Pantokrator monastery in Constantinople,[610] Anna does not even mention her in the *Alexiad*. This silence may have been the result of Anna's aversion to her brother John, and the fact that Anna's wish to become empress was finally achieved by her sister-in-law. Piroska's Western origins may have been another reason for the exclusion.[611] The *Alexiad* only reports that John's firstborn twin children, a girl and a boy, were born in Balabista before the second Norman invasion.[612] It is possible that Anna highlighted this geographic detail to inform her readers that John's eldest son, Alexios, had not been born literally in the Purple. Piroska-Eirene is also mentioned in two poems by Theodore Prodromos. One is a poem written to commemorate the coronation of her eldest son Alexios.[613] As his mother, Piroska-Eirene receives special attention and her ancestry is celebrated. The piece provides information about how the courtly poet decided to approach the figure of a foreign empress, in this case a Westerner. Prodromos called her the mistress of all the nations of the West (κυρία πάντων τῶν ἐθνῶν τῶν ἐπὶ τῆς ἑσπέρας).[614] This title confirms that the Byzantine court considered Hungary as a Western kingdom. The explanation for such a title is found in Piroska's connections with other Western powers through her father, her mother and their alliances. He went on to list them, providing an accurate list of the political alliances of Piroska's family. Among the peoples were Germans, Hungarians, Dalmatians, Italians and Sicilians. Although at the Byzantine court all these nations were mainly seen as barbarians, the long list of nations becomes a powerful sign of Piroska's influence and background, and indirectly, Byzantium's authority over the West. The poem is certainly interesting because it shows

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[609] Macrides (1992b), pp. 276-277.

[610] Kinnamos, p. 10.

[611] Lilie (1993b), p. 171.

[612] Anna Komnene, p. 370; Stanković (forthcoming)

[613] Theodoros Prodromos, 177-184; Mathieu (1953), pp. 140-142.

[614] Hörander (1993), pp. 164-165.

that her Western origin could also be seen as positive and useful. By giving her such a title, Prodromos elevated the Byzantine empress to a position of authority over the West. Thus, her Western origins were used in order to benefit the Byzantine Empire. This was not the first instance in which a woman from the West had been celebrated. A monody written for Bertha-Eudokia after her early death also praised her origins.[615] This detail confirms that once a foreign princess had joined the imperial family, poets found ways to exalt her background.

The other poem by Prodromos is an epitaph which provides details concerning Piroska-Eirene's death.[616] Nicholas Kallikles wrote another epitaph dedicated to her.[617] In it there is a reference to the union of the two powers, Byzantine and Western. Kallikles was then the second poet that decided to exploit the Western origins of the empress for the advantage of Byzantium. Piroska-Eirene died in 1134 in Bithynia. Some time later she was made a saint of the Orthodox Church and her life was commemorated on 13 August, that is the anniversary of her death.[618] It is significant that a Byzantine empress with Western origins became an Orthodox saint. Magdalino has suggested that this could have taken place during Manuel's reign. A short piece was written by an anonymous author in order to celebrate her life.[619] The text briefly mentions Piroska's parents as fortunate Western kings.

Finally, Piroska-Eirene is depicted next to John II and their son Alexios in the well known mosaic that decorates the east wall of the southern gallery of Hagia Sophia.[620] This is discussed in a section dedicated to hairstyles in chapter four, as her portrait includes two blonde braids falling over her shoulders. This could have been a Western

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[615] Shepard (2003a), pp. 7-8; Shepard (1988a), p. 88.

[616] Theodoros Prodromos, pp. 229-232; Vassis (2013), pp. 228-229.

[617] Nicholas Kallikles (1980), pp. 147, poem 28; Vassis (2013), p. 227-228.

[618] Magdalino (2013), p. 47.

[619] Kotzabassi (2013), pp. 170-175, Magdalino (2013), pp. 53-55; Vassis (2013), pp. 229-230.

[620] Whittemore (1942), pp. 24-26, 76-82, plates XXIX and XXX.

element introduced by the Hungarian princess. Furthermore, in chapter three the possibility that Piroska-Eirene may have been behind the introduction of Western material culture in Byzantium is presented. This is the case because if Piroska-Eirene indeed was behind the foundation of the Pantokrator monastery, she could be responsible for the stained glass that decorated one of its two churches, which will be discussed below.

During Alexios' reign there were no other diplomatic marriages with the West. The rest of Alexios' seven children were all married to Byzantines, perhaps with the exception of the Sebastokrator Isaac. The latter's wife was called Eirene and her origins are not clear. She may have come from Russia or Georgia (Kata, the daughter of David IV).[621] The fact that only John was married to a Western princess implies that the diplomatic marriages with Western powers did not play an important role in the politics of Emperor Alexios. John II followed his father's policy. The only diplomatic marriage he arranged with a Western power was that of his youngest son Manuel. It may be a coincidence, but John's son seems to have been destined to marry a Western woman. John first tried to arrange his marriage to the heiress of Antioch.[622] The aim was to achieve a peaceful union with the Principality. In fact, Kinnamos reported that John had planned the creation of an appanage for Manuel.[623] This would have included the coastal territories from Antioch to Attalia and the nearby island of Cyprus. While it is possible that John had realized the logical unity of these territories, the plan may have been the result of the marriage negotiations with Antioch. Perhaps it was a way to persuade the ruling class of Antioch, for in this way they would not have lost their independence. The situation in Antioch had been a thorn for the Byzantine court since Bohemond took over the Syrian capital. Thus, solving the issue seems to have been one of John's main political goals. The marriage proposal was his diplomatic attempt, but it did not succeed.

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[621] Barzos, p. 254; Kazhdan (1988-1989), pp. 419-420.

[622] Kinnamos, p. 16; Asbridge (2003), pp. 45-46.

[623] Kinnamos, pp. 22-23.

Years later Manuel was the object of a second round of negotiations for a diplomatic marriage with the West. This time John courted the German Emperor Conrad III. He had lured him to join forces against their common enemy, the kingdom of Norman Sicily. Details regarding the kinship ties are provided by Otto of Freising, who apparently recorded parts of the diplomatic correspondence between Conrad and John.[624] The alliance would be signed with the wedding between Manuel and a German bride, in this case the sister of Conrad's wife, Bertha of Sulzbach.[625] The aim of the marriage was to use Germany against Sicily while John pursued his eastern policies.[626] By searching for an ally in the figure of the German emperor, John followed Alexios' policy concerning the Normans. Although Alexios' proposal never became a reality, both emperors hoped that the German alliance would act as a deterrent against the Normans. In fact, the Hungarian alliance sought by Alexios may also have been the result of the Norman threat. It is interesting to note that without the powerful kingdom of Sicily, it is possible that Alexios and John may have approached the West in a different manner.

John unexpectedly died in a hunting accident in Cilicia in 1143 and Manuel was chosen as the new emperor. Manuel's future bride Bertha was already in Constantinople, but as a result of his new status he may have considered a better deal. John's plan had to wait a few years to materialise, but Manuel finally accepted the matrimonial alliance arranged by his father in 1146. Manuel's decision is explained by the change of the international situation. Paul Stephenson has argued that following the announcement of the Second Crusade, Manuel was afraid that the German Emperor Conrad would join the expedition.[627] He has argued that Manuel married Bertha in order to avoid Conrad's participation. However, Manuel may have married Bertha for the opposite reason, to achieve an ally within the new crusade. Whichever the real reason was, it does not change that it was again another movement in the West that possibly convinced Manuel

[624] Otto of Freising, pp. 54-57.

[625] Irmscher (1996), pp. 279-290, Barzos (1984), pp. 454-459.

[626] Stephenson (2000), pp. 210, 212.

[627] Ibid., pp. 212-216.

to accept Bertha as his wife, who was also renamed Eirene.[628] We do not have many details concerning the life of Bertha-Eirene before she married Manuel. Kinnamos informs us about her arrival in Constantinople.[629] It is possible to assume that she did not play any significant role as she was betrothed to the emperor's youngest son. Through Otto of Freising we know that the German emperor had asked for a place in Constantinople where to build a church.[630] This would have been reserved for the Germans in the Byzantine capital. While we do not know if the church was finally erected, we can suggest that Bertha's arrival was accompanied by certain German demands.

In general, it is possible to say that the policy on diplomatic marriages pursued by Alexios and John was very similar. The fact that they did not negotiate many diplomatic marriages with Western powers implies that they did not consider this as a necessity and suggesting that the two emperors did not intend to strengthen the ties with the West. Moreover, Alexios and John 'imported' the brides and did not send away Byzantine princesses to marry foreign potentates. The possible impact of this in Byzantium, mainly of Piroska-Eirene during the period under study, would only have been felt in the milieu of the Byzantine court. Thus, it is unlikely that the Byzantine population noticed their Western background. As the portrait of Piroska-Eirene in Hagia Sophia shows, the Western women that joined the imperial family followed the guidelines of the Byzantine court. Piroska-Eirene also followed the female tradition of the Komnenian dynasty of founding a monastery in Constantinople. These women also had to become familiar with the Greek language. They underwent a process of integration into the Byzantine aristocracy; a good example of this process is depicted in the Vatican manuscript (gr. 1851, c.1179) which shows a Western princess arriving in Constantinople in order to marry the Byzantine emperor's son.[631] The miniatures represent the princess before and

[628] PBW Eirene 66

[629] Kinnamos, p. 36.

[630] Otto of Freising, p. 56.

[631] Jeffreys (1981), pp. 101-115; Eastmond (2012), pp. 105-134.

after her arrival in the Byzantine city. Once there her clothes have changed and so she resembles other Byzantine women of the aristocracy. Changing her clothes may not have been all; it is even possible that Piroska's arrival in Constantinople was followed by a ritual of conversion into Orthodoxy. In the second meeting of the theological dispute which took place in the Byzantine capital in 1136, Anselm of Havelberg presented a custom which the Byzantines practised concerning Westerners.[632] Anselm had heard that when a Greek wished to marry a Latin wife, first she was anointed with holy oil poured into a vessel, and then they bathed her whole body in it. He added that this kind of marriage happened frequently, mainly among persons of imperial rank. He also concluded that once she had crossed over to the Orthodox rite, then she was ready for marriage. This piece of evidence seems to show that at least Western women underwent some kind of ceremony before marrying Byzantine men.[633]

To conclude, it is difficult to believe that the Western culture of these women was distinguished or influenced any aspects of the Byzantine court. As has been briefly mentioned above, the only case of a possible influence of Western material culture found associated with the Byzantine court is the fragments of stained glass discovered in two Komnenian churches of Constantinople. They are discussed in the following chapter.

[632] *PL* 188, cols. 1245-1246; Chadwick (2003), p. 231; Anselm of Havelberg, p. 208.

[633] Tia Kolbaba has argued that this ritual was not rebaptism (2005, pp. 42-43).

CHAPTER 3: MATERIAL CULTURE

The possibility that the West influenced Byzantine material culture during this period has always been disregarded. The reason for this is the lack of examples that corroborate the borrowing of Western features by the Byzantines. Kazhdan and Epstein concluded that most influences detected were superficial.[634] They mentioned two examples. One is the adoption of tournaments by the aristocracy. The second was the use of breeches, an item of clothing that may have become popular under Western influence. These two instances of Western influence in Byzantium could possibly be included in the category of habits and customs rather than in the field of material culture. Moreover, the evidence for both does not antedate Manuel's reign. The rest of the foreign influences pointed out by Kazhdan and Epstein had origins in the East rather than in the West. As a result, Krijnie Ciggaar has argued that the number of Byzantines willing to accept Western features was small, limiting this group of people both chronologically and socially to twelfth-century aristocratic.[635] She also mentioned elements of the Western knightly life, for instance jousting. Moreover, she also included feudal elements, as in the case of the oaths requested by Alexios from the Crusaders. This practice again belongs to habits and customs. In the artistic field, André Grabar had already argued that Western influence on Byzantine art was limited to very few examples, none of them dating to the eleventh or twelfth centuries.[636] Therefore, it is possible to say that, as a result of the dearth of evidence, modern scholars have established and repeated the belief that a culturally inferior West could not influence Byzantium. On the other hand, this view does not take into account the examples presented below, which have already been discussed in the light of possible Western influence. Thus, this chapter attempts a new and general evaluation of the debate by looking at these three instances.

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[634] Kazhdan and Epstein (1985), pp. 180-181.

[635] Ciggaar (1996), p. 13.

[636] Grabar (1984), pp. 9, 16.

STAINED GLASS

Fragments of stained glass have been found in the churches of the Chora (Kariye Camii) and the Pantokrator (Zeyrek Camii) monasteries in the Byzantine capital. There are two main reasons for their inclusion in this chapter. First, no similar find has been discovered anywhere else in the empire so far, making the fragments a unique example of this artistic tradition in Byzantium. Second, stained glass was a major element in the decoration of churches in Western Europe from the eleventh and twelfth centuries, though the tradition was possibly older, with Carolingian origins.[637] The *De diversis artibus*, a treatise by a monk called Theophilus and possibly written in Germany in the first part of the twelfth century, describes the production of stained glass windows.[638] Therefore, the discovery of the Constantinopolitan fragments has provoked a considerable debate among scholars. Although in recent times more examples of Byzantine glass have been discovered in different locations of the Byzantine Empire, they were part of windows glazed with coloured glass rather than painted glass. Moreover, they do not show figurative decoration inserted in lead cames (the lead pieces that hold all the glass sections together). Hence, the cases of the Chora and Pantokrator monasteries are still exceptional due to their figurative decoration and technique, though their chronology and context are still being debated.

The Fragments: The fragments of glass were found during excavations undertaken at both churches.[639] The fragments had been buried as debris with other random material under the church floors since the Ottoman conquest, after which the buildings were converted at different times into mosques. The fragments of the Pantokrator (Image 1) were recovered in 1961 from a vaulted chamber located under the apse of the south church, where they were most likely thrown to fill the space with other damaged pieces

[637] Rackham (1936), pp. 3-4.

[638] Hawthorne and Stanly Smith (1963), p. 61ff.

[639] For details on the finds: Megaw (1963), pp. 333-371.

of furnishings and decoration. The fragments of Chora (Image 2), which are less numerous, were discovered in 1957, in a hole found also under the bema of the church. The remains of the windows include fragments of glass and cames. Both sets of fragments share the same five colours, according to Arthur Megaw: blue, colourless, amber-yellow, emerald green and purple-red. Many of them show several decorative patterns. Some of the examples of the Pantokrator monastery depicted religious figures, while the remains of Chora are scantier and thus it is not possible to say if they represented any images as well. Both sets included inscriptions, which were probably written in Greek. Many pieces are not painted, and therefore scholars agree that the coloured glaze was only present in the main windows of the apse. The rest of the windows would have been unpainted.

The Discussion: Since their discovery, several authors have tried to explain their context and the chronology of such distinctive and Western looking windows. Megaw, who first published and studied the fragments, concluded rather controversially that the artistic tradition of stained glass was a Byzantine technique that was exported to Western Europe.[640] Though this view is no longer held, his study is an important source of information about the fragments and their discovery. He dated the fragments to the first decades of the twelfth century, a dating which is still considered valid.[641] His article was followed by a refutation by the glass specialist Lafond, who argued that the stained glass tradition could not have originated in Byzantium, but was a Western invention.[642] He also attributed the glass of the Pantokrator to the period of the Latin occupation of Constantinople (1204-1261).[643] He believed the stained glass to be a Western technique and thus, the period of Latin Empire was the obvious chronology for the production of

[640] Megaw (1963), p. 363.

[641] Ibid., p. 367.

[642] Lafond (1968), pp. 231-237.

[643] Ibid., p. 236.

the glass. Nevertheless, he did not suggest any date for the Chora fragments. Only in recent years has Ousterhout noted that after 1204 the Chora monastery was abandoned and the church was again renovated during the Late Byzantine period.[644] Therefore, the glass from Chora cannot be dated to the Latin occupation. In his study dedicated to the church of the Chora monastery, Ousterhout had already affirmed that the glass fragments belonged to the second Komnenian construction phase, which took place in the 1120s and was promoted by the Sebastokrator Isaac, the brother of John II Komnenos.[645] Underwood had also suggested a date of about 1120 for the construction.[646]

In recent times the glass fragments underwent laboratory analysis. The first examination, which used the fragments from Chora, yielded significant results, namely that the glass had been manufactured in a different technological tradition than that used in the West.[647] The conclusion was that the glass was probably produced locally, and that it was unlikely that Western artisans had any role in its making. Later thorough analyses also confirmed that the Pantokrator glass was produced with a different technique from that of the West.[648] Robert Brill also concluded that the glass was manufactured in the Byzantine world. Therefore, both examples of stained glass were not Western products and instead were likely to have been produced in Byzantium. However, he did not venture any attributions, for instance where and who painted them. Thus, although the glass was surely manufactured in the Byzantine Empire, the master glazier could have been a Westerner. Nevertheless, he noted that a glass specialist that had examined some fragments commented that they had been painted by someone inexperienced.[649] These last analyses also demonstrated that the batch materials used for the Chora and Pantokrator churches had a slightly different composition, but both sets of windows

[644] Ousterhout (2010), pp. 437-438.

[645] Ousterhout (1987), pp. 20-21, 31.

[646] Underwood (1966), pp. 10-13.

[647] Henderson and Mundel Mango (1995), pp. 333-356.

[648] Brill (2005), pp. 213-30.

[649] Ibid., p. 218.

could have been produced in one workshop during the same period.[650] Another interesting detail is that the lead in the glass and paint of the Pantokrator fragments is different from the Chora examples. The latter resemble examples from Western Europe.[651] The results could suggest that the supply of paint that the artists used for that church may have been imported.

The latest studies dedicated to the topic have been written by Francesca Dell'Acqua, who has given a new insight into the discussion.[652] She attempted to clarify the unusual character of the glass fragments, which clearly belongs to artistic traditions cultivated in Western Europe. For such uniqueness she found two reasons.[653] First, the Byzantine artisans lacked the technology to recreate Western models. She also suggested that this decoration method may have altered the balance between light and dark in the interiors of the Byzantine churches. She argued that this disruption of the traditional ambience may not have been promoted by the Byzantines. According to this second idea it is possible that Byzantine patrons and architects knew about the Western practice but did not use it because it did not fit the architecture and ambient light of Byzantine interiors. What seems obvious is that if the Byzantine use of such windows was indeed limited to these two examples, they must have represented an innovation in Byzantine art, and could probably be seen as a foreign import. For this reason, the issue of their patrons is one of the main subjects regarding the fragments. In her first study of the topic, Dell'Acqua suggested a third chronology for the glass, the second half of the twelfth century, during the reign of Emperor Manuel I (1143-1180). She thought that by then the Western master glaziers would have adapted their models to the traditional Byzantine interiors.[654] On the other hand, Ousterhout believes that the glass windows found in the

[650] Ibid., p. 219.

[651] Ibid., p. 220.

[652] Dell'Acqua (2004), pp. 68-77.

[653] Ibid., p. 74.

[654] Ibid., p. 73.

Pantokrator church were part of the original decoration programme of the monastery.[655] He has dated them to about 1125.[656]

In a more recent and general study on Byzantine glass, Dell'Acqua gave more details regarding the production and the background of the stained glass found in the two churches.[657] She proposed that the windows can be seen as a symptom of the convergence of two different artistic cultures or a response to the specific demands of the patrons.[658] She also stressed the experimental character of the introduction of figurative stained glass windows. Therefore Dell'Acqua believes that the windows were the result of the participation of Western artisans, though they were created in Constantinople.[659] According to her, the political links of the Komnenian emperors with the West would explain their presence in Constantinople. In this last study she did not give a more precise chronology.

Final Chronology: The evidence has so far yielded some hypotheses which are the starting point for the conclusions of this case study. Currently scholars agree that the examples from the Pantokrator and Chora were the result of some sort of Western influence. Most authors also believe that the window fragments of both buildings were created under the Komnenian dynasty, though the scholars do not agree on a more precise chronology. Two options have been proposed about the possible date. The first possibility is John II's reign, when the Pantokrator was built and also the Chora monastery underwent a reconstruction and temporarily became Isaac's burial place. The other possibility is the reign of Manuel I, who ordered some changes at the Pantokrator and was also buried in its funerary chapel. Among Manuel's additions was the expansion

[655] Ousterhout (2006), p. 758.

[656] Ousterhout (2008), p. 154.

[657] Dell'Acqua (2005), pp. 193-211.

[658] Ibid., p. 209.

[659] Ibid., p. 210.

of the opus sectile into the central area of the Archangel Michael chapel, the spot where his sarcophagus is thought to have stood.[660] The construction of the monastery and the later additions can indeed support the two proposed chronologies. Ousterhout has accepted that the iconography of the opus sectile in the south church suits more what we know about Manuel I. On the other hand, he has also admitted that this may be the result of the lack of information concerning John II's interests.[661] In fact, written sources do not provide any details concerning John's patronage. In any case, Ousterhout sustains that the stained glass and the opus sectile date from the construction of the monastery. According to him, both were integral parts of the church.

Pursuing Manuel's chronology, Dell'Acqua noted that Manuel married two Western women, Bertha of Sulzbach and Maria of Antioch. Thus, she implies that these two women could somehow be behind the introduction of the stained glass. While they could indeed have commissioned the stained glass, their origins are not firm evidence for their patronage. Regarding this detail, Ousterhout has recently pointed out that John's wife was also a Westerner.[662] Yet, she has never been mentioned in connection with the stained glass panels. Other evidence to support Manuel's reign is his latinophilia, a well known topos. Manuel's figure could fit the profile of the patron, that is someone interested in activities and ideas from Western Europe. On the other hand, the stained glass from the Chora windows should probably be dated to the period before Isaac Komnenos, Manuel's uncle, went into exile. While traditionally it was assumed that he went into exile in 1122, scholars now propose a later date, in 1130.[663] Thus, it is improbable that the Chora monastery, which must have been associated with Isaac's memory, received the patronage of Manuel or his successive wives. It is important to bear in mind that at the beginning of Manuel's reign Isaac was exiled again. Towards the

[660] Megaw (1963), p. 342; Ousterhout (2001), p. 135.

[661] Ousterhout (2001), p. 148.

[662] Ousterhout (forthcoming).

[663] Magdalino (1993), p. 193; Barzos, (1984), p. 230.

end of his life his patronage seems to have been focused on the Kosmosoteira monastery in Thrace, where he transferred his tomb from the Chora monastery.

It is likely that the fragments from the Chora church are dated to the early twelfth century, during the reign of John II, as Megaw had already suggested. After the first scientific analyses, Brill advised that Megaw's hypothesis should be seriously reconsidered.[664] Megaw suggested that the windows at Chora were manufactured earlier, maybe ten to twenty years before the ones at the Pantokrator.[665] Other evidence gives us more details on the chronology. If we agree that the two sets of windows were produced by the same workshop, it is likely that they were contemporary productions. The fact that there is a slight difference in the composition of the glass has been interpreted as the workshop using different batch materials for each set, and not necessarily to different but contemporary workshops.[666] This distinction could imply that the workshop first started in one church and then moved to the other. The good relations between John and his brother Isaac during the first part of John's reign support the scenario of the workshop working at the two Komnenian complexes. It is difficult to ascertain which of the two monastic foundations first received the stained glass decoration. In the case of the Chora monastery it is clear that the patron was Isaac. The sebastokrator was a significant patron of the arts, remarkable for his foundation at Bera and other artistic commissions.[667] On the other hand, it is more likely that the main imperial foundation, the Pantokrator monastery, was the first to receive the stained glass. Then the artisans were probably handed over to Isaac, who may have commissioned them a similar project at Chora. This chronological proposal cannot be substantiated by architectural evidence, as both projects were under construction in the same period, possibly during the first two decades after John's accession to the throne. However, if a workshop of glaziers was invited from outside the Byzantine Empire in order to create the stained

[664] Brill (2005), p. 222.

[665] Megaw (1963), p. 367.

[666] Dell'Acqua (2005), p. 207.

[667] For example, manuscripts: Anderson (1982), pp. 83-86.

glass, it is likely that the best positioned figure to do so was the emperor. He had both the economic resources and the diplomatic connections to bring the workshop to Constantinople. If such a reconstruction of the events is certain, it would reinforce the theory that the Chora windows were in place before Isaac went into exile, as it is doubtful that the glaziers would have worked for Isaac's foundation after the brothers fell out. In this light Megaw's chronology seems sensible regarding the Pantokrator. However, his earlier date for the Chora fragments was the result of the date of Isaac's exile. Thus, the chronology of the Chora windows may be established later than Megaw suggested. It is possible to assert that both sets of stained glass were manufactured at some point during the 1120s, when both projects were underway.

The Patron: Ultimately the issue seems to revolve around the patrons who could have commissioned such an example of Western-styled decoration. Currently the candidates are John II and his brother the Sebastokrator Isaac. The alliance of the brothers at the beginning of John's reign has already been noted, as have the Komnenian connections with the West. However, nobody has pointed out that there could be a third figure that could have been behind the introduction of such unusual decoration, namely John's wife. Piroska-Eirene matches the type of figure that authors have been looking for. Kinnamos attributed twice the foundation of the Pantokrator monastery to her.[668] On the other hand, Niketas Choniates attributed the monastery to John.[669] It is also suggested that she started the foundation with the erection of the south church, dedicated to the Christ Pantokrator.[670] The north church, dedicated to the Mother of God Eleousa, would therefore be attributed to her husband, who would have taken over the project when she died in 1134. However, by then most of the project must have been near completion, as the typikon dates from 1136. If Eirene started the complex alone or it was a joint plan of

[668] Kinnamos, pp. 10, 31.

[669] Niketas Choniates, p. 48.

[670] Ahunbay and Ahunbay (2001), p. 117.

the imperial couple,[671] she still proves to be a likely candidate. In the twelfth-century life of the empress she is mentioned as the founder of the Pantokrator monastery (βασιλίσσῃ καὶ κτητορήσσῃ).[672] Moreover, an anonymous poem celebrating the Pantokrator monastery also attributes the construction of the monastery to the Byzantine empress.[673] Margaret Mullett has argued that in the typikon John appropriated his wife's identity as the real founder of the Pantokrator monastery.[674] It is indeed possible that Eirene, as the new Byzantine empress, would have pursued the foundation of an imperial monastery. By doing so, she followed a family tradition established by John's grandmother, Anna Dalassene.[675] The latter had founded the monastery dedicated to Christ Pantepoptes. John's parents, Alexios and Eirene, founded the monasteries of Christ Philanthropos and the Theotokos Kecharitomene, which were located next to each other. Vlada Stanković has noted that the cooperation between the empress and emperor in the construction of their respective foundations must have been equal to the next joint enterprise, John's and Piroska's Pantokrator monastery.[676] However, he has explained that the new imperial couple not only copied the model of John's parents, but went a step further by joining their foundations into a single one. It is possible that although both emperor and empress were behind the foundation, Eirene actually took the main responsibility as John was usually involved in restoring the empire's glory by leading military campaigns.

There is further evidence associating Eirene with the building of the Pantokrator monastery. Both the life of Eirene and the poem commemorating the Pantokrator monastery name the architect of the monastery, a certain Nikephoros.[677] He is mentioned as the empress' collaborator, while she is attributed the construction of all the buildings

[671] Dimitropoulou (2007), pp. 89-90.

[672] Kotzabassi (2013), pp. 170.

[673] Vassis (2013), pp. 213-215; Magdalino (2013), pp. 49-50.

[674] Mullett (2004), p. 131-133; Mullett (2007), pp. 19-21.

[675] Stanković (2011), pp. 47-73.

[676] Ibid., pp. 56, 59-60.

[677] Kotzabassi (2013), p. 173; Vassis (2013), p. 214; Loukaki (2013), p. 191.

of the monastery. A Slavic version of her vita mentioned above confirms the name of the architect, of whom we are told that he was a trustworthy advisor of the empress.[678] Moreover, an encomium to a megas doux of Hellas written by Nicholas Kataphloron also attributes the monastic complex to the empress.[679] We are told that she conceived the construction and offered the materials.[680] This text mentions two officials assisting the empress in her plans to found the monastery. After Eirene's death, Emperor John appointed one of them as megas doux of Hellas. The other one may have been Nikephoros.[681] This evidence proves that Eirene was the main figure behind the monastery's foundation. We also learn about the architect, Nikephoros, and another collaborator, with whom the empress seems to have worked closely. Therefore, it is possible that Eirene proposed the idea of the stained glass for the church's apse. It is likely that the empress knew the stained glass technique from before her arrival in Byzantium and probably decided to import it, introducing a decorative novelty within the Pantokrator monastery. As the architect, Nikephoros must have worked together with the master glaziers who manufactured the stained glass for the windows. We do not know about the origins of the master glaziers. Lafond suggested that the glass of the Pantokrator had been manufactured by a German master, or someone who must have been under the direct influence of Germany.[682] Hungary bordered the German Empire, where some early examples of stained glass are preserved. Perhaps Eirene called masters from Germany in order to produce the stained glass windows. The good diplomatic relations with the German Empire may have facilitated the commission. However, the sources on the alliance between John and the German emperor date from 1136 onwards, when the church was surely finished and Eirene was already dead. The masters would have worked on site and mainly with Byzantine materials. Nevertheless,

[678] Živojinović (1964), pp. 483-492.

[679] Loukaki (2013), p. 192.

[680] Ibid., pp. 194-195.

[681] Ibid., p. 201.

[682] Lafond (1968), p. 236.

following the results of the analysis of the Chora fragments, it is possible to suggest that they travelled to Constantinople with some 'model' materials that ultimately were used there.

To conclude, the significant aspect is not the possibility that Western glaziers created the stained glass windows in Constantinople. What is remarkable is the fact that, for some reason, a decoration technique of Western origin was used at the two imperial monasteries. Artistic innovation and personal choice, rather than political statement, probably explain the presence of the windows in these two key foundations from the mid-Komnenian period. Furthermore, the fragments were likely to have been the result of a new ethnic element in the Byzantine court, that is a Byzantine empress with Western origins. Another interesting detail regarding the stained glass used in the Pantokrator and Chora monasteries is that it does not seem to have created a school, namely that the artistic technique did not spread. So far no similar fragments that can attest to the existence of other painted windows with figurative decoration have been found, though they may have disappeared. Coloured glass was used in Byzantium but never following the same technique of the two examples under study. The only example that can be considered comparable is a window from the Balkans. It is found in the Serbian church of Studenica and probably dates to c.1190. The window was interpreted as a fusion of Western technique, probably South Italian, and Byzantine iconography.[683] However, a second study proved that the window, with a strong Romanesque influence, had a Western origin.[684] Therefore, the artistic tradition of stained glass never became popular in Byzantium and it seems possible to assume that it was only practised randomly, almost certainly by Western masters. This discontinuity highlights the unique status of the two Komnenian commissions and supports the possibility of a Western patron behind its introduction in Constantinople. Piroska-Eirene may well have been this figure. More importantly and regardless of the identity of the patron that introduced the stained glass, the two sets of windows were surely produced during John's reign. This

[683] Ljubinkovic (1959), pp. 137-141.

[684] Radojkovi (1960-61), pp. 19-27.

fact helps us to change our perception of his period, usually seen as a parenthesis between the reigns of his father and son. The stained glass confirms that John's period also witnessed certain artistic innovations. Another example is found in the literary production. Elizabeth Jeffreys has argued that the last years of John's reign or the early years of Manuel's witnessed the creation of two new strands in Byzantine literature.[685] We usually tend to see Manuel's reign as the latinophile period par excellence. Although this indeed seems to have been the case, the stained glass fragments suggest that certain Western elements were already present before he became emperor.

On the other hand, the apparent lack of stained glass decoration after the imperial commissions may be a sign of the limits of the integration of Western elements into the established Byzantine culture. The discontinuity may just show what Dell'Acqua has proposed, namely that Byzantine interiors were not suitable for such windows, that is, for setting reasons. In this case, the differences between the two artistic traditions may have been too distant, even though the chances for cross-cultural relations had increased. Their unique status within Byzantium can be considered as an experiment; it was the introduction of a foreign element which did not have any further impact in the Byzantine artistic tradition. This is unlike the next case discussed, for written sources provide us with more evidence concerning the use of large bells for religious purposes.

[685] Jeffreys (1984), p. 204.

BELLS

Bells are metal instruments that were already known in antiquity; their size and use varied according to culture and period.[686] In the Roman Empire they usually were small and made of bronze. They had a wide range of functions; for example they could be found in houses or decorate horses.[687] The first attestation of a bell in a Christian context is in a letter from the beginning of the sixth century.[688] While this piece of information probably refers to a small bell (handbell), we learn that monasteries in Italy were already using them. Bells grew in size during medieval times. The use of these large bells became closely associated with the Christian religion. One of the oldest surviving examples is a bell from Canino, Italy, and may date from the eighth or ninth century.[689] The use of bells was accompanied by the building of belfries. Pope Stephen II (752-757) seems to have erected a bell tower in the Basilica of St Peter.[690] Bells were mainly used to announce specific times and regulate the religious schedule of lay and ecclesiastical communities. In this way large bells became associated with churches and monasteries all over Western Europe. However, in Byzantium such bells were rare and only appeared relatively late. They only became widespread during the last period of the empire's history, during the Palaiologan dynasty.[691] Their use in the Byzantine Empire may provide clues for Western influence on Byzantine culture and society.

The existing literature on the use of large bells in Byzantium has not taken into account all the available evidence. Firstly, studies focusing on bells in general have devoted limited attention to bells in Byzantium.[692] They have argued that large bells were mainly

[686] Morris (1959).

[687] Maieron (1998), pp. 30-32.

[688] Williams (1985), p. 20.

[689] Ibid., p. 25.

[690] Ibid., p. 21.

[691] Ibid., pp. 22-23.

[692] Price (1983); Williams (1985).

used after 1204, as a result of the establishment of the Latin Empire. Secondly, scholars working on Byzantium have mainly looked at bell towers rather than bells themselves.[693] As a consequence, Byzantine bells and bell towers, or church towers, have in most cases been studied separately. For these reasons, the following section intends to present a new and more complete reading of the available evidence. The aim of this section is not only to explore the use of large bells for religious purposes in Byzantium, but also to discuss the possibility that this use was the result of the Western presence in the empire during this period.

Semantra: In order to understand the introduction and the role of large bells in Byzantium, it is necessary to look at the objects that were used in the Byzantine world and which fulfilled the function exercised in the West by the bells within a religious context. Byzantines used semantra.[694] A semantron is an instrument usually made of wood, normally a beam that is hit with a hammer in order to produce sound. There are two main variations: a fixed one, usually found hanging, and a portable one, which can be carried by the person whose task it is to make it sound. A depiction of a portable semantron is found in the illuminated chronicle of John Skylitzes (Image 3).[695] The miniature is divided in two, with the right one showing the miracle of St Gregory, which took place in a monastery. A novice hitting a semantron has been included in order to indicate that the miracle occurred during the morning service. The semantron is depicted like a wooden beam that is supported on the novice's left shoulder, while he strikes it with a hammer held in his right hand. The illuminated chronicle contains another depiction of semantron.[696] Skylitzes narrated how the emir of Tarsus attacked the

[693] Barla (1959), Hallensleben (1966).

[694] For the semantron, see: Millet (1905), pp. 105-141; Williams (1985), pp. 10-19.

[695] Tsamakda (2002), p. 68, miniature 53 (fol. 28r).

[696] Ibid., p. 174, miniature 325 (fol. 135v, top).

Byzantine city of Herakleos during the reign of Constantine VII (944-959).[697] We are told how Themel, a priest who was celebrating the liturgy, took the semantron (τοῦ σημαντῆρος τῆς ἐκκλησίας) and attacked the Arabs. The illumination shows Themel outside a church fighting the Arabs with the semantron as a weapon (Image 4). The fact that semantra were usually made of wood explains the name with which they are commonly referred to in the Byzantine sources, ξύλον.[698] However, the semantron can also be made of other materials, most notably metal. Its size may vary according to its location or function. The use of semantra goes back to the early Byzantine period. One of the earliest references to this instrument is found in 325, during the Council of Nicaea.[699]

Our main sources for the use of semantra are the typika, the rules produced to define how a monastic community should function. Most typika of the Middle Byzantine period mention semantra. In some monasteries there was more than one, up to three different semantra. For example, the typikon of the Kosmosoteira monastery mentions a small one (τὸ μικρὸν... σήμαντρον), a large one (τὸ μέγα ξύλινον), a bronze one (τὸ χαλκοῦν) and even a fourth, the refectory semantron (τραπεζικοῦ συμβόλου).[700] The semantron was part of the long tradition of Byzantine monasteries; consequently it is no surprise that such an instrument was used by monks. The depiction in the Skylitzes chronicle, which shows a semantron in a monastic setting, confirms the use of semantron in monasteries.

Further evidence concerning non-monastic churches located in cities and towns corroborate that other religious buildings also used semantra. One is found in the history of Ibn al-Athir.[701] This Arabic source reports the fall of Emperor Michael V in 1042.

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[697] John Skylitzes, p. 240.

[698] For example, in Kekaumenos (84.02-03): βλέπεις μὲν τὴν χεῖρα αὐτοῦ / κρούουσαν τὸ ξύλον,...

[699] Price (1983), p. 80.

[700] Petit (1908), pp. 25-26, 30, 32.

[701] The translation of this text is included in: Aristakes Lastivertsi, pp. 40-41.

According to Ibn al-Athir, during the rebellion against Michael V, the patriarch struck the semantron of Hagia Sophia to gather the people against the emperor. Another piece of evidence is in *The Capture of Thessaloniki* by Eustathios of Thessaloniki.[702] Eustathios narrated that semantra had been beaten as an invitation to the future Emperor Andronikos I during the confrontations which took place after Manuel's death in Constantinople. These two pieces of information show that semantra were also used to signal moments of danger. Thus, they could have more than one function.

The description of the Holy Apostles by Nicholas Mesarites, written a few years before 1204, also records a semantron.[703] At the beginning of his description, Mesarites mentioned that the second most important church of Constantinople draws people from all sides by striking the ξύλον.[704] Mesarites' description provides us with an example of how a semantron was struck in order to summon the faithful to the church.

Another reference confirms the use of semantra in the Hagia Sophia. This piece of evidence is provided by a Russian pilgrim, the aforementioned Anthony of Novgorod, who visited the Byzantine capital in 1200.[705] Although his account is not always reliable, he recorded remarkable information. Anthony wrote that there were no bells in the Hagia Sophia, and he mentioned that a portable object was struck in order to call to the matins. The object has been translated as 'crécelle.'[706] The instrument Anthony saw most probably was a portable semantron. He added that other churches also used the same instrument to call for mass and vespers. Moreover, he explained that Byzantines struck the semantron after the angel's teaching. What is more interesting for this topic is that, after having narrated this, Anthony wrote 'on the contrary, the Latins ring bells.' This reference is highly relevant for two reasons. Firstly, it proves that the most

[702] Eustathios of Thessaloniki, p. 137.

[703] Nicholas Mesarites, pp. 855-924.

[704] Ibid., pp. 862, 897.

[705] Ehrhard (1932), pp. 44-65.

[706] Ibid., p. 56.

important church of the Byzantine Empire did not employ bells before 1204, while the same is also suggested for other churches in Constantinople. Secondly, we are told about the marked contrast between the Byzantine tradition and the Western custom. Russians also employed bells by that time.[707] Anthony may have referred to the presence of the Latins in Constantinople, or perhaps he simply tried to emphasize the fact that Russians and Westerners shared the custom of ringing bells. It is possible that he recorded the detail regarding the lack of bells in Hagia Sophia because perhaps he had expected such an important building to possess them.

All these references show that during the eleventh and twelfth centuries the semantron remained the main instrument to call the faithful to church, both in a monastic and a congregational church. The references by both Mesarites and Anthony, dated to shortly before 1204, are a clear indication that the two most important churches of Constantinople did not employ bells. However, the use of bells also appears during this period. The references are few, but nonetheless they prove that the use of large bells in Byzantine churches had begun before 1204.

Large Bells: Before we examine these references, it is necessary to briefly address a problem of terminology. Bells are termed κώδων(ες) in the sources. However, the same word may refer to different kinds of bells, not only those used in a religious context. For example, the *Farmer's Law* regulates the theft of cow- or sheep bells.[708] The term used is κώδωνα but this was an animal bell, much smaller and obviously without any religious associations. Moreover, the typikon of the Kecharitomene monastery, founded by Eirene Doukaina, Alexios I's wife, also mentions the word κώδωνος.[709] However, in this case it refers to a door bell. It was surely another kind of small bell that would have been placed next to the entrance of the convent. Niketas Choniates mentioned the word

[707] Williams (1985), p. 33-35; Kaminski (2006), p. 25.

[708] Ashburner (1900), p. 102.

[709] Gautier (1985), p. 77.

twice in his chronicle; the first use is during Manuel I's reign.[710] Choniates described how at some point during the battle of Myriokephalon (1176) Manuel was pursued by a group of Turks riding Arabian stallions which were adorned with tinkling bells (κώδωνας). Such bells had probably been common in Byzantium in earlier times as well. For example, the Ashmolean Museum of Oxford has two small bells of unknown provenance with Greek inscriptions that were surely produced to adorn horses (Image 5).[711] They are dated to the fifth and sixth centuries and one of them is decorated with a representation of St Theodore riding a horse while killing a snake. The second reference to bells in Choniates is found during the reign of Isaac II, and again takes place during a battle, this time against the Vlachs in 1187.[712] Choniates narrated that the enemy thought that a rescue army led by the Byzantine emperor was much larger thanks to the blast of the bronze-mouthed bells (χαλκόστομοι κώδωνες) and the display of military flags. The term used probably makes more sense if it is translated as trumpets, an instrument that armies would have used in their campaigns. For instance, trumpets are depicted in two military scenes in the illuminated chronicle of John Skylitzes (Image 6).[713] Bells (τοὺς κώδοναας) are also mentioned in relation to the dress worn by the Archbishop of Bulgaria John-Adrian Komnenos in the encomium by Nikephoros Basilakes.[714] This is probably a reference to the dress that the high-priest of the Temple in Jerusalem had to wear according to the Bible.[715] It included little bells hanging from the garments. It is not clear if Basilakes was simply comparing John II's cousin to the Ancient Testament figures, or in fact he actually described the archbishop's attire. In any case, this reference is quite unique. From this evidence it is clear that the word κώδων may have different meanings according to the context in which it is used. The common feature is

[710] Niketas Choniates, p. 185.

[711] Unpublished, inventory number: AN1980.26.25

[712] Niketas Choniates, p. 397.

[713] Tsamakda (2002), miniatures 504 (fol. 213r) and 513 (fol. 217r, bottom).

[714] Nikephoros Basilakes (1965), pp. 50, 97.

[715] Exodus 28:33-35; O'Brien (1879), p. 146.

that the object is some kind of instrument that makes a sound or noise. However, the actual bells had one thing in common: they were small bells, or at least they are not as large as the ones that were rung in a bell tower. Further references make clear that large bells were also used.

The first important reference to church bells in the Byzantine Empire is actually found in Western sources, the chronicles of John the Deacon, Andrea Dandolo and Marino Sanudo. The three Venetian authors claim that Orso I Partecipazio (or Badoer), doge of Venice (864-81), sent twelve bells (campanas) to the Byzantine Emperor Basil I (867-886).[716] The first of the authors to narrate this event, John the Deacon (d. 1009), included a detail not found in the other two chronicles later in date. Basil apparently placed the bells in a newly built church, most probably the Nea, located in the grounds of the imperial palace.[717] Relations between Orso and Basil were friendly. The Byzantine emperor had sent an embassy to Venice with valuable gifts and granted the doge the title of protospatharios.[718] Nicol has suggested that the twelve bells were sent to Constantinople in order to return the compliment. However, Nicol stated that there is no evidence for the story of the marriage between the doge and one of Basil's nieces.[719] The problem of the Venetian chronicles is that they were written after the events, and perhaps they are not reliable. Another significant detail is that the three chronicles explain that the Byzantines started using bells after the Venetian gift (et ex illo tempore Greci campanis uti ceperunt). This information, whether true or not, suggests that the Venetians who compiled the work centuries later knew about the relatively late or occasional use of bells by the Byzantines, and they wanted to be seen as those who had introduced such a novelty in the Byzantine Empire. While Venetians could not surpass Byzantine presents at the time, they still sent something which was considered worthy and unique.

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[716] Andrea Dandolo, p. 160; Marino Sanudo, p. 121.

[717] Monticolo, p. 126.

[718] Nicol (1988), pp. 33-34.

[719] Ibid., p. 34, note 1.

Scholars working on bells have reached different conclusions regarding the information found in the chronicles. It has been suggested that the bells, if indeed sent, never reached Constantinople because no Byzantine source mentions this event or the objects themselves.[720] It has also been suggested that they may have formed a musical set and that the gift was sent in order that the Venetians could profit from a possible new Byzantine market.[721] It is clear that even if such an event did not take place, the chronicles had a propagandistic aim based on a particular reality. We have no other information about these bells, and thus we cannot be certain about their nature, size or appearance. Only Marino Sanudo, who wrote in the late 15th and early 16th centuries, added one more detail: the bells were heavy. More evidence can be found in the *Antapodosis* of Liudprand of Cremona. Liudprand narrated that the Nea, the church built by Basil I, was also called the 'Ennean,' or the church of nine-times, because the clock that marked the office hours always struck (sonat) nine times.[722] Perhaps the Venetian bells were placed in the Nea as John the Deacon had stated. If this is correct, the bells may have been used as part of a clock device.

The number of bells in this reference could indeed indicate a musical instrument made of bells. A set of small bells dated to the sixth and seventh centuries and found in Stara Zagora has been interpreted as such (Image 7).[723] There are two different types of bells, and the assumption is that they belonged to two different sets. Such bells were hanging and would have been struck with a small hammer. Among the finds in Stara Zagora there are religious items. In fact, one of the bells has an inscription making reference to a certain Sergios presbyter. Nevertheless, the size of the bells confirms that they were part of musical instruments and not means to summon the congregation or monks. It is not possible to attest the continuation of such instruments in the Middle Byzantine period.

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[720] Williams (1985), p. 22.

[721] Price (1983), p. 100.

[722] Liudprand of Cremona, p. 126; *Liudprandi opera* (1915), p. 90.

[723] Ilieva and Cholavok (2005), pp. 51-63.

The earliest references to bells in Byzantine sources occur in two texts from the eleventh century and present problems of interpretation. The first one is found in the *Hypotyposis* of Athanasios the Athonite.[724] The Athonite rule was modelled closely on that of Theodore of Studios[725] and the latter does not mention bells, only semantra.[726] However, the Athonite document mentions a bell (κώδωνος) as well as a semantron. The function of the bell seems to summon the monks for the midday meal. It is interesting that the same regulation in the Studite rule mentions neither a bell nor a semantron.[727] The diversity of instruments could show the wealth of the monastery, but in this case it is clear that different instruments were used to mark different orders. It is possible that the growing complexity of monastic life required a more varied system of signs or sounds. However, the fact that a bell is mentioned for the first time in a written source concerning a monastic community is significant. Its use is likely to have been a novelty. The problem of this reference is that we are not told what kind of bell it referred to. It may well have been a large bell or a small one, namely a handbell. This is a fair suggestion because, as we will see later, there are a few references from the twelfth century that mention table bells which must have been used in connection with the eating regulations. Maybe this bell was an early example of such a small bell. Earlier we saw that small bells were employed in Byzantium. Thus, if this was a small bell the novelty probably was its use to mark signals in a monastic complex. But if indeed this was a large bell, it is not clear what may have prompted its introduction. As we have seen in chapter one, Athanasios had a close relation with the monastery of the Amalfitans, which was not too far from his own monastery on Mount Athos. It is possible that he learnt about the use of large bells in their monastery. An inscription found in the Lavra monastery and dated to 1060, describes a tower built in order to

[724] Meyer (1965), p. 136.

[725] *Byzantine monastic foundation documents* (2000), p. 213.

[726] *PG* 99, cols. 1704-1720.

[727] Ibid., col. 1713 (28).

house a δόνακος λαμπροῦ.[728] Gabriel Millet considered this to be a large semantron.[729] This inscription seems to prove that at least in the eleventh the main instrument to summon the monks still was a semantron, not a large bell.

The other reference to a bell is found in a text of Michael Psellos. He narrated that the holy bell (ὁ κώδων ὁ ἱερὸς) used to awaken the Emperor Constantine IX Monomachos in the middle of the night.[730] We do not know any details which can tell us more about what kind of bell it was. The fact that he called the bell holy implies some kind of religious context. If it was a large bell, we do not know where it was located. During this period there is no evidence regarding bells being employed in the imperial palace. Maybe one of its churches and chapels did. The Nea was certainly close, as it was located on the grounds of the imperial palace. Maybe the noise that disturbed Constantine's sleep was coming from there. If this suggestion is correct it would reinforce the possibility that the Venetian bells (or one of them) had been placed in the church built by Basil I. Perhaps the fact that it was located somewhere in the imperial palace explains why Anthony of Novgorod did not mention it.

The next reference comes from a document in the archive of the St Panteleimon monastery in Mount Athos.[731] It is an inventory of all the movable property of the monastery called Theotokos of Xylourgou (current skete of Bogoroditsa), which in 1169 joined St Panteleimon in order to become a single monastery, usually called Rossikon (Russian). The document is dated to 1142, which makes it one of the few references within the period under study. At this time its community was already Russian, as is attested by the Russian books listed in the inventory.[732] The list contains many different objects, starting with those kept inside the church. However, it also includes those used

[728] Millet (1905), pp. 122-123.

[729] Ibid., p. 126.

[730] Michael Psellos (1936), p. 27.

[731] Lemerle, Dragon and Ćirković (1982), pp. 65-76.

[732] Ibid., p. 5.

in everyday tasks, for example gardening and household items. At the beginning of the list of metal objects are two bells, one large and one small.[733] This is the first time that we have details about the bells mentioned in the sources, and it indicates the use of a large bell by a monastic community in the Byzantine Empire. Also, this is the first time that the term κανπ(ά)ν(α) is used for bell in Byzantine sources. While we do not know when this term started being used in Greek, it is clear that it derives from the Italian word for bell. Campana is also used in Medieval Latin. The use of this term in the inventory to refer to bells suggests the introduction of the word campana in the Greek language. It is probable that by then bells were associated with the West, most likely with the Italian communities established in the empire. This possibility would explain why the document used the Latin-Italian word campana for the two bells listed. Another explanation for the use of campana could be that large bells, not being very usual in Byzantium, could have been imported by Italians, thus being referred with their Italian name.

Also worth mentioning is that the list does not include any semantra. Perhaps they were excluded. Thus, we do not know if the Russian community used bells instead of semantra or employed both instruments. As we will see below, large bells and semantra could be present in the same monastery. Regarding the Russian monastery however, it is not possible to know what they used the bells for. Perhaps the large bell and the semantron had a similar function. Since bells were used in Russia during this period,[734] the Russian monks may have brought this custom from Russia. For this reason, the bells listed in the inventory do not necessarily imply a direct Western influence in religious habits. This is significant because it could suggest that other communities present within the Byzantine Empire, and not only the Westerners, employed large bells as part of their religious everyday life.

[733] Ibid., p. 74, line 28.

[734] Williams (1985), p. 33-35; Kaminski (2006), p. 25.

The same inventory of the Russian monastery lists another object (κονδ( ) τ(ῆς) τραπ(έ)ζ(ης)) after the two bells. This has been interpreted as a table bell.[735] This kind of object, which has already been mentioned above, appears for the first time with a new term, κονδιον. It was used to mark the beginning and the end of lunch in the refectories of monasteries. Its appearance in the sources corroborates that the instructions concerning the monastic life were evolving. Probably a similar object is also mentioned in the typikon of the monastery of St Nicholas of Kasoulon near Otranto and dated to 1160. However in this source the word used is κωδώνιον. The meaning probably is the same one, some kind of small and portable bell that is used at least in two circumstances. One is found in a church context: after the large semantron has been struck in order to summon the monks, a short time later another sign is given, either with the small semantron or the bell.[736] In fact the text stipulates the use of a bell if there is one. This could prove that bells were not so usual, not even small ones. It is possible to assume that the second sign was done to indicate that the church was ready for liturgy and the priest was about to start. The κωδώνιον was also used when the monks were in the refectory.[737] The bell indicated the time to drink wine.

The evidence discussed so far suggests that bells were introduced in the monastic sphere during the eleventh and twelfth centuries. They do not seem to have played an important role and it is obvious that they did not replace the semantra as means of summoning the monks to various services. It is possible to assume that in most cases these bells were small and they seem to have had a very specific function. The large bell in the Russian monastery inventory is the only example of a large bell.

The next piece of evidence is extremely significant because it is among the earliest clear testimonies of the use of large bells in a religious context. Rosemary Dubowchik has

[735] Pitsakis (1992), pp. 117-129.

[736] Dmitrievsky (1895), p. 797.

[737] *Nova patrum bibliotheca* (1905), p. 162.

noted it in her work on music in Byzantine monasteries.[738] It was also noted by M. E. Martin, who actually realised that it was among the earliest references to bells in Byzantium.[739] Thus, the investigation presented here is the first serious discussion of this evidence regarding this topic.

The source is the typikon of the Sebastokrator Isaac Komnenos for the Monastery of the Mother of God Kosmosoteira near Bera, dated to 1152 and briefly mentioned earlier. It has been pointed out that this monastery founded by the brother of Emperor John II (1118-1143) had four semantra. The fourth is the refectory semantron.[740] It is obvious that if the monastery was wealthy, like in this case, a number of semantra could be purchased in diverse sizes and materials, each one marking different signs. The refectory semantron suggests that the eating times were not only marked with small bells. However, the most significant aspect of this rule for the current study is that Isaac mentions twice two bells.[741] At one point in the document he instructed: 'On every feast -I mean of the Mother of God throughout the year...- I wish the monks to get ready to ring the two bells quite loudly with their hands before the hymnody.' Then, he clarified: 'I mean the two bells which I hung high up in the tower, in place of semantra.'[742] Then below he added another instruction saying: 'I wish, as was said, for the two large bells hanging quite high up in the tower to be rung loudly, as long as necessary –these being the very bells that I had hung up in fervent faith and in my reverence toward the Mother of God.'[743] The first detail that calls the reader's attention is that both times he explained which objects he was referring to. He gave details about the bells, giving the impression that the audience was not used to this kind of instrument. On the other hand, when semantra are mentioned, they do not usually have such a description, and if they do, they

[738] Dubowchik (2002), p. 287.

[739] Martin (1988), p. 203, note 8.

[740] Petit (1908), p. 32.

[741] Ibid., pp. 23, 26.

[742] Ibid., p. 23; *Byzantine monastic foundation documents*, p. 802.

[743] Petit (1908), p. 26; *Byzantine monastic foundation documents*, p. 804.

simply include an adjective that makes sure the reader understands which semantron is meant. These descriptions suggest that large bells were not a common object; they probably represented a novelty. This suggestion is confirmed by the fact that Isaac explained that the bells had taken the place of the semantra up in the tower. Thus, we learn about the location of the two bells, which were hung on the place destined for the semantra. The substitution of the traditional instrument for the two bells reinforces the innovative nature of their use. It seems possible to say that Isaac introduced the use of bells in his monastery. This is in part supported by the lack of references to such bells in the other preserved typika dated to the same period.

The fact that the bells were hanged in the tower is significant in relation to the controversy regarding bell or church towers. The aforementioned inscription from the Lavra monastery already mentioned a tower built to place the semantron. This piece of evidence confirms that such towers need not be the direct result of Western influence, at least not in a monastery. In such monastic complexes, usually located in the countryside or by the coast, monks surely used towers for many other purposes. In a church located within a city or a village the case is rather different. This topic is discussed below. However, the substitution of the semantra for bells in Kosmosoteira suggests that monastic towers could later be converted into bell towers. Once bells had become more common, the already existing towers within precincts of monasteries could also be used to hang bells. Isaac's foundation still preserves remains of the towers that marked the corners of the perimeter walls.[744] However, it is not possible to ascertain if any of those contained the bells. The reference to the tower, without any kind of specific detail, may mean that it was some kind of special structure, maybe a wooden tower inside the complex.

The two references in the typikon provide us with more information. Although it may seem obvious, it is important to emphasize that it was Isaac himself who ordered the bells to be placed on top of the tower. The fact that the monastery had two bells is thus a

[744] Sinos (1985), figs. 3-5.

consequence of Isaac's will. This was not the only case; the typikon shows that many details of the monastery's organisation and buildings were designed by him personally. This is remarkable because the typikon of his brother and Emperor John II does not mention bells at all. Although this lack of references to bells does not represent evidence, it could be assumed that the Pantokrator monastery did not have them. Both monasteries were imperial foundations. The Pantokrator was built not more than twenty years before Kosmosoteira, but only Isaac seems to have included bells in his monastery. This difference is also remarkable because Isaac himself stated that his typikon followed the rules of the Monastery of the Theotokos Evergetis.[745] This monastery was founded in the mid-eleventh century and, although its history is not well-known, its typikon was very influential during the twelfth century, as it became the model for many typika of the period.[746] Nevertheless, the typikon of the Evergetis monastery does not mention any bell either.[747] The question that arises is what could have led the sebastokrator to provide his monastery with bells?

The Sebastokrator Isaac was a remarkable individual. As we have seen above, he was a patron of the arts and his refurbishment of the Chora monastery included windows decorated with stained glass. His use of bells in the Kosmosoteira monastery is another innovation, perhaps prompted by the Western presence within the Byzantine Empire. It is likely that he saw and heard the bells used by the Italian communities in Constantinople. Moreover, Isaac went on exile and travelled to the courts of several states in the Middle East.[748] He seems to have visited the Crusader States, where he may also have become acquainted with the use of bells. During this period the church of Holy Sepulchre was being rebuilt in a new style. It included a bell tower of which the lower levels are still standing.[749] The discovery of a group of thirteen bells near the site

[745] Petit (1908), p. 23; *Byzantine monastic foundation documents*, pp. 784-785.

[746] Mullett (1994), pp. 1-16; Angold (1995), pp. 333-334.

[747] Gautier (1982), pp. 5-101.

[748] Chalandon (1912), pp. 82-83; Barzos (1984), pp. 242-243.

[749] Pringle (2007), p. 57.

of the Basilica of the Nativity in Bethlehem is especially significant. The group of bells, of different sizes and dated to the twelfth or thirteenth centuries, have been interpreted as components of a carillon.[750] Thus, both the increase of Western presence in the eastern Mediterranean and Isaac's innovative personal taste were the reasons behind the use of bells in his monastic foundation.

Another significant detail from the second reference to bells in the typikon is that Isaac defined them as large (μεγάλους ... κώδωνας). It is the second testimony concerning a large bell after the inventory of the Russian monastery. The adjective could suggest that these bells were not the kind of bells primarily used in Byzantium. Or perhaps the description is simply given in order to differentiate them from small bells, possibly more common. Table bells, door bells or animal bells were all small in size. Also, the way Isaac explained that he hung them up in fervent faith and in reverence toward the Mother of God is rather noteworthy. It suggests that the bells were seen as significant items by Isaac. This attitude regarding bells is not found in any other source. That Isaac had them in high esteem is supported by his orders to ring them on every feast of the Mother of God throughout the year, every Sunday and other important feast days that he enumerated.[751] The rest of the days he ordered the monks to sound the semantra. These rules provide evidence that Isaac considered the bells worthy of the special days, that is they were more significant than the semantra. Moreover, the fact that both semantra and bells were present in the monastery proves that even if Isaac was innovating, he did not wish to break with the Byzantine monastic traditions. By dividing the days between important feasts and the rest, he created a special category so that both bells and semantra could be employed. Nevertheless, the fact that the bells were used for signalling the special days demonstrates that the two items were seen in a better light, perhaps because they were more expensive and were seen as unique. It is only possible to wonder if he had them imported or they were produced by artisans in Byzantium. Finally, from the first reference we learn that the bells were to ring before the hymnody.

[750] Boas (1999), p. 159.

[751] Petit (1908), pp. 23, 25.

Apparently the signal given by the bells marked the day as a special festivity, but also the order to start singing the psalms. This is also the case for the rest of the days, for Isaac wanted the small semantron to be sounded first in order to gather the monks for the hymnodies, and then the large wooden one.[752]

A final reference to the use of bells is also very significant because it is the only one that mentions bells in a non monastic church before 1204. It is found in *The Capture of Thessaloniki* by Eustathios, archbishop of Thessaloniki.[753] He started narrating how the occupying forces of the city prevented the inhabitants from using the semantron, which served to announce to the people that they should gather in church. Eustathios explained that when it was first struck by the Katholike in the late afternoon, the Norman soldiers rushed to the place, inquired about the sign and made it stop. A few days later, priests struck the semantron to announce the beginning of the Feast of the Elevation of the Revered Cross. He described how the priests had to ascend to the highest point of the Katholike. By Katholike, which later he called Metropolitan church, it is possible that Eustathios meant the church where the archbishop of Thessaloniki had his seat, possibly Hagia Sophia. The priests surely ascended to the upper part of the church in order to make the signal more clearly heard. However, Eustathios did not mention a tower and no evidence for one survives today. These details suggest that the church did not have one specially built to place the semantron. Perhaps they used a portable one which they could take wherever they wanted to strike it. We are told that again the Norman soldiers rushed to the place, enquiring and threatening in order to discover if there was some plot. Only after being convinced by the priests about the innocence of the action did they calm down. Apparently they were suspicious when the wooden semantron was struck. Having narrated this, Eustathios wondered why soldiers were not suspicious when the large bells up in the church of the Myrobletes, that is Hagios Demetrios, were rung to mark the singing of psalms. The author then shared his version of the events, suggesting that the striking of the semantron may have displeased certain people from

[752] Ibid., pp. 25-26.

[753] Eustathios of Thessaloniki, pp. 135-137

Constantinople who had witnessed the civil unrest which took place there in 1183, when similar semantra had been struck in Hagia Sophia in order to invite Andronikos. This theory is not very clear, and it is possible that the Normans simply thought that the semantron was being used to call the inhabitants of the city to rebel against them.

Whatever the reason was, the information provided by Eustathios confirms that the most important shrine of the city had several bells. They were located somewhere up in the church, though he did not specify if it was a tower built for that purpose. There is no evidence that Hagios Demetrios had a bell tower, so perhaps it was some sort of bell-gable. He also described them as large (μεγάλους κώδωνας). The fact that he gave such detail about them shows that they were different to the small and common bells used in Byzantium. It is also interesting that the bells were rung as signal for the singing of psalms, a detail that has already appeared in Isaac's typikon. Eustathios only mentioned this particular function for the bells, but we do not know if it was the only occasion they were used for. It is likely that the gathering in the church simply started with the singing of psalms. Eustathios' sole reference to bells does not prove that the shrine of Hagios Demetrios was the only church employing this instrument.

We do not know when or why the bells were set up there. The shrine was the most famous church of the city and perhaps it used bells in order that its signal would be clearly identified as coming from there and not from any other church in the city, for example the Katholike, which used a semantron. Also, Thessaloniki had a fair that attracted many pilgrims and merchants from all over the Mediterranean world, among them Westerners (Καμπανῶν Ἰταλῶν Ἰβήρων Λυσιτανῶν καὶ Κελτῶν τῶν ἐπέκεινα Ἄλπεων).[754] The shrine preserved the relics of St Demetrios, the patron of the city. Thus, it was one of the most important pilgrimage sites of the empire. Moreover, Thessaloniki was the second most important Byzantine city, and it is probable that Westerners were established there. As we have seen above, evidence for a Western quarter within the city, at least towards the end of the twelfth century, is also found in Eustathios' work on the

[754] Pseudo-Luciano, pp. 53-55.

capture of the city by the Normans.[755] Perhaps the use of bells in the church of St Demetrios was the result of their presence in the city; the bells could have been a gift which the Western community offered in honour of the city's guardian.

The last piece of information is a treatise written by Theodore Balsamon, who was active during the second half of the twelfth century.[756] Towards the end of his life he was appointed patriarch of Antioch, but he was never able to occupy his seat because of the Western rule over the Syrian city. The topic of the treatise deals with the way the churches of Byzantine monasteries summoned the monks. The text describes the use of three different semantra: one large, one small and one made of bronze. At the end of the treatise the text includes a reference to the Latin use of bells. This evidence confirms that the use of bells in a religious context was not seen as part of the Byzantine tradition, or at least Balsamon did not consider it as such. The beginning of the treatise claims that some ignorant people, influenced by new things, seem to have turned against the use of the three different semantra in order to call the monks to church. For they say that the use of only one is enough. Then the text goes on to detail and explain the three different semantra and their specific uses. After Balsamon introduced the danger against which these traditions are to be protected: the Latin custom.[757] The text states that Latins spread another habit of calling the people to church. This is the bell (καμπάνα), which according to Balsamon is the only semantron that Latins use.

Balsamon's treatise suggests that the Byzantine ecclesiastic hierarchy was aware of the Western custom employed to summon people to church. They had surely heard it in the Western churches and monasteries established in Byzantium. From the text it is clear

[755] Jacoby (2003), pp. 88-92.

[756] Μελέτη, χάριν τῆς εἰς τοὺς θείους ναοὺς τῶν μοναστηρίων γινομένης μετακλήσεως διὰ σημαντηρίων τριῶν, *PG* 138, cols. 1073-1076; Rhalles and Potles (1854), pp. 520-521.

[757] *PG* 138, col. 1076.

that Balsamon was not fond of bells.[758] He saw them as a threat against the Byzantine traditions and he probably wrote the text as a reaction against its use by Byzantines and not Westerners. The treatise was surely directed at those monasteries which had apparently forgotten the Byzantine customs, or had introduced bells as means to summon the faithful. Balsamon indirectly attacked them, by reminding them which was the Orthodox custom. Therefore, the reading of his text confirms that Western customs were present on Byzantine territory and were also being adopted by some monasteries. The latter provoked Balsamon's response, namely the treatise. The document can be seen as a defence of the Byzantine monastic traditions, in this case, the use of the semantra, but also as a confirmation of the use of large bells in Byzantium.

It is also significant that Balsamon used the term campana, which as we have seen is the word for bell in both Medieval Latin and Italian. It is possible that Balsamon was simply trying to brag about his knowledge, but perhaps the word is related to the second term that he employed to describe the Westerners at the very end of the text. First he called them Latins (Λατίνοις) and then Italians (Ιταλοῖς). We can assume that the Byzantines knew of the word 'campana' as a result of the Italian presence and settlement in the Byzantine Empire, for example through Amalfitans, Venetians, Pisans and Genoese. Also, it is possible to suggest that the use of the word campana also indicates how noteworthy the Italian presence was towards the end of the twelfth century. This piece of evidence, together with the previous use of the word campana, found in the inventory of the Russian monastery, confirms that it is during this period that the Western word was

[758] Another Western source provides us with a further case of Byzantine opposition against bells (Ciggaar, 1980, p. 390). Among the tales of the *Morkinskinna/Flateyjarbók* version of the northern sagas is the narration of the battle between the Varangian guard and the Pechenegs. Before the battle we are told that Harald and his colleagues agreed to built a church dedicated to St Olaf. The church was built after the Varangian victory; it was adorned with a bell so large that there was none like it in Miklagarth. However, through the influence of bad people the king had the clapper removed. Because of Harald's presence in this version of the Varangian battle against the Pechenegs, Ciggaar argued that these events took place in the reign of Michael V. However, the other versions of the battle do not include Harald and thus scholars believe the event narrated was the battle of Beroia (1122), during the reign of John II. In any case, the removal of the clapper, that is the disabling of the bell, can be seen as a sign of disapproval concerning the use of bells by part of the Byzantine population. This piece of evidence implies that northern Europeans were aware that Byzantines did not use large bells.

introduced into the Greek language. Thus, the Western use of bells had another result, namely the addition of a foreign word into the Byzantine vocabulary.[759]

The discussion on bells in Byzantium cannot be entirely studied without looking at the structures where they were placed, the belfries. The following section looks at them in order to ascertain if their construction was the direct result of the use of bells in the empire.

Bell towers and church towers

Bells are usually associated with towers. Even today bells are placed on top of towers so that their sound can be more easily heard around the surroundings of the church or the monastic complex. Bell towers were thus a significant part of Western religious architecture. However, as we have seen above, towers were also present in Byzantium. Semantra could be placed as well on top of monastic towers. On the other hand, in the case of parish churches in cities and towns, the use of portable semantra did not require a tower. This section looks at towers, either through surviving examples or written sources, associated with religious buildings within the Byzantine Empire. The aim is to see if church towers were a common feature in Byzantium, and if their presence could be explained as a result of the Western presence and the use of bells. Moreover, in some cases the references will provide further information about the use of bells in Byzantium.

There has been research about belfries and church towers in Byzantium.[760] However, it has not been extensive[761] and either was focused on individual monuments[762] or was

[759] For other words of Western origin, see: Kahane (1982), pp. 127-153. Campana is not included.

[760] Barla (1959); Hallensleben (1966), pp. 309-311.

[761] Millet (1916), pp. 135-139; Ćurčić (1988), pp. 68-72.

[762] Ćurčić (1990), pp. 65-66.

limited to the last period of Byzantine history.[763] Gabriel Millet concluded that the bell tower was a Latin element. It is true that most of the standing examples of Byzantine bell towers belong to the period after the Fourth Crusade, when the use of bells became more widespread. Yet a tower was built at Kalenderhane Camii in Constantinople slightly earlier, the church dating from c.1195 (Image 8).[764] In Athens the church built inside the Parthenon also had a structure that could have been used as a bell tower, though it is not clear when it was erected.[765] The difficulty is that every time that a church has such a structure, the function of bell tower is usually suggested. In his study of Kariye Camii, Robert Ousterhout supported the idea that bell towers only appeared in Byzantine architecture after 1204.[766] He realised the importance of bells for the subject, giving some evidence which shows that large bells were not common before the conquest of the Fourth Crusade. Slobodan Ćurčić has also written about church towers. He first maintained that bells were used long before 1204 and that belfries, if not indigenous to Byzantium, were known earlier than previously thought.[767] More recently he has centred his attention on the church of Santa Maria dell'Ammiraglio or Martorana at Palermo. Built in the mid twelfth century, he argued that its tower had eastern origins.[768] He analyzed other towers in the Balkans and found that such towers had several uses, defining them as versatile structures, with more than one function. While he mentioned that the towers could be used for hanging bells, he did not discuss the controversy regarding the use of bells before 1204.

Concerning the Martorana it is necessary to point out a few details. The church was built by the admiral George of Antioch in the capital of Norman Sicily. The bell tower was built over the entrance, in the shape of an axial tower. Norman art mixed and joined

[763] Hallensleben (1963-1964), pp. 128-193; Hallensleben (1965), pp. 208-217.

[764] Striker and Doğan Kuban (1997), p. 70.

[765] Bouras (2010), pp. 136-137.

[766] Ousterhout (1987), pp. 106-109.

[767] Ćurčić (1988), p. 71-72.

[768] Ćurčić (2009), pp. 65-85.

different styles and techniques, so it is possible that the tower was built in 'Byzantine style', as Slobodan Ćurčić argued. However, as a result of their Western origins, Normans probably used bells. For example, the illuminated manuscript of the *Liber ad honorem Augusti* contains depictions of bells on different occasions.[769] The poem was written by Peter of Eboli in 1196 in Palermo, and the images in the manuscript are considered to be a good source of information for twelfth-century Sicily. The royal chapel of Palermo, the Cappella Palatina, is depicted twice with a series of bells one on top of another.[770] Therefore the tower could have been created in a Byzantine style but with a Western function. However, we do not know if the tower originally had bells. One of the comparative examples given by Slobodan Ćurčić is Nea Moni on the island of Chios. We do not know if it had a tower when the church was first built in the reign of Constantine IX (1042-1055), but it has been suggested that one was added soon after, probably during the second half of the eleventh century. This tower may well have been an early example of axial tower.[771] However, as we lack evidence concerning the instrument in these towers, we could propose that the foundations under the actual bell tower could have belonged to a tower for a semantron, for example. Other instances of churches in the Balkans have not been dated with precision and consequently it is very difficult to know if they were built before or after 1204. Moreover, the same explanation could be applied to them. Perhaps those towers were simply built for semantra, or with other functions we do not know. A reference found in the *Vita* dedicated to St Cyprian of Calamizzi is a good example of this.[772] Cyprian, who lived in the twelfth century, was the abbot of the Monastery of St Nicholas located in Calamizzi, near Reggio in Calabria. The Greek text reports that he refurbished the church of the monastery, rebuilding parts of it. We are also told that he ordered a tower to be built. This tower (πύργον) was

[769] Petrus de Ebulo, figs. in pages 39, 87, 119, 151, 159.

[770] Ibid., pp. 43, 47.

[771] Voyadjis (2009), pp. 241-242.

[772] Schirò (1959), pp. 65-97.

intended as place for the monk in charge to strike the semantron (το ξύλον).[773] Therefore, the evidence presented does not support the idea that Byzantine church towers were only intended to have bells before 1204. Likewise, it is not possible to say if these early examples of towers were the result of Western influence. What seems clear is that Byzantine church towers were not widespread, and we know that the most important church in Byzantium, Hagia Sophia, did not have one before 1204. It is not clear when the Great Church was provided with a bell tower; most scholars believe that its construction over the entrance of the church took place at some point during the period of Latin rule, after 1204.[774]

A few source references regarding bell towers in the Byzantine Empire are associated with Westerners. The first one is the Venetian document discussed above concerning the donation of an oratory in the island of Lemnos to the Venetians and dated to 1136.[775] The document defines the location where the Venetians have to build a campanarium, that is a bell tower. The document also allowed the Venetians to build a church dedicated to St George at their own expense. The fact that the bell tower was to be constructed by the Venetians, who were the beneficiaries of the document, is significant evidence. It is possible that the oratory, a Byzantine building, did not have a bell tower that the Venetians expected to use. The place was close to the coast, a detail which must have been important for the Venetians. It is likely that the campanarium was also intended as a lighthouse or watch tower, which they could also have used as a defensive building.

The second reference is also related to the Venetians.[776] In the Byzantine capital the Venetians owned a church, Sancta Maria of Vigla. This church had a bell tower built of timber that collapsed or was destroyed some time before 1201. There may be a third

[773] Ibid., pp. 92-93.

[774] Swift (1935), pp. 460-462; Berger (2004), pp. 59-73.

[775] Lanfranchi (1968), pp. 380-383, num. 181.

[776] Jacoby (2007b), p. 278.

reference to a bell tower. It is found in the Pisan chronicle of Bernardo Maragone.[777] He reported the Norman attack against Halmyros in 1158, in which we are told that the Pisan church of St James (sanctum Iacobum Pisanorum cum torre) was plundered and burnt down. The church seems to have had a tower, perhaps its belfry. All these references suggest that towers were a more essential feature of Western churches, at least more than in Byzantine churches. The word campanarium in the document of Lemnos implies the use of bells; it constitutes indirect evidence that Westerners present in the Byzantine Empire followed their religious customs, that is the tolling of bells, and thus introduced them to the Byzantine population. This is particularly the case of the Italian communities, whose merchants conducted trading businesses in the empire. Nevertheless, it is not possible to conclude that Byzantine church towers built during this period were the direct result of the Western presence in Byzantium.

Conclusions: From the sources it is obvious that during the twelfth century the use of large bells was not common in Byzantine churches and monasteries. The several references to this kind of bell show that their use was random, which may suggest an early stage of their use in the Byzantine Empire. This novelty was probably the result of the Western presence in Byzantine territory. Western communities had their own churches, in which bells were surely employed. Western presence was not only limited to trading communities and mercenaries within the empire. The new establishment of Western states along the Byzantine borders or over territories recently lost was another factor. Among them were the kingdom of Hungary, the Crusader Levant and Norman Sicily.

Balsamon's treatise is extremely significant in relation to the use of bells in Byzantium. It was written in a period when Byzantines were already witnessing the effects of the Western presence. This text was surely triggered by the new use of bells within the Byzantine Empire. In her work on the Byzantine lists registering all the Latin errors, Tia

[777] Bernardo Maragone, p. 17.

Kolbaba suggests that these lists were likely to be produced for a Byzantine audience rather than a Western one.[778] She proposed that their aim was to remind the Byzantines who had close contacts with Westerners of the Latin mistakes and their negative influence. They could be adopting foreign customs that were against Orthodoxy and the Byzantine traditions. The use of bells does not appear in any of the Byzantine lists, that is why Balsamon's treatise is unique. He was a well-known anti-Latin figure[779] and his treatise clearly shows his opinion: bells are what Westerners use while Byzantine monasteries use the three semantra. It is not only his belief; the treatise was an attempt to convince the ignorant Byzantines that semantra were the instruments to be used. It is obvious that the text was a reaction to the use of bells, which as the evidence shows, during the twelfth century seem to have occurred mainly in monastic communities. Perhaps the sound of bells implied some sort of ethnic or, more probably, religious distinction. Byzantines probably were not able to avoid listening to it. Although probably not considered a religious error and only a matter of instruments, that is a simple cultural difference, it is possible that the slow introduction of bells into the Byzantine church provoked Balsamon to write his treatise in the defence of the Byzantine conventional custom to summon the monks. He was surely warning the Byzantines of the use of bells, which was a Western custom, and hence, something strange and foreign. Tia Kolbaba puts Theodore as an example of the list-writer, who attempted to control the religious practices of the Byzantines and also used the canons to attack the Westerners.[780] Furthermore, she has noted the division between the practices in the Byzantine capital and the provinces.[781] Paul Magdalino had already argued that life outside the Byzantine capital did not comply with Constantinopolitan standards.[782] This is interesting because our evidence does not show any Byzantine use of bells in

[778] Kolbaba (2000), p. 17.

[779] Angold (1995), p. 507; Gallagher (1991), pp. 83-84.

[780] Kolbaba (2000)., pp. 70, 148.

[781] Ibid., p. 70.

[782] Magdalino (1991), pp. 184-188.

Constantinople before the thirteenth century, which is supported by Anthony of Novgorod's reference. On the other hand, all the cases are found in the provinces. It makes sense that the resistance against such a novelty was stronger in the capital, where the ecclesiastical authorities must have exercised a stronger control concerning such issues.

It is possible to conclude that the introduction of large bells for religious purposes in Byzantium was a consequence of the Western presence during this period. Although the Byzantine use was random and seems to have encountered opposition, the evidence confirms that the early employment of large bells grew as the Western presence increased in the empire. While large bells seem to have been rare in Byzantium before their introduction in this period, Westerners also carried with them other objects that were used by the Byzantines as well. This is the case of weapons and shields, the latter being the focus of the next section.

THE KITE SHIELD

The last case study of material culture deals with a specific type of shield which has been the focus of a long scholarly debate regarding its origins. The kite shield possibly was an eleventh-century innovation, as we find it represented in different artistic media from this period onwards. These representations originate from Western Europe, Byzantium and the Middle East. The kite shield seems to have been used within a wide geographic span. This fact and the similar chronology of the artistic representations do not aid in determining the origins of the shield. Scholars initially considered the shield to be a Western feature, probably due to the numerous depictions found in Western Europe. Therefore, it was proposed that the Byzantine adaptation of the kite shield was the result of Western, mainly Norman influence. As it has been argued in chapters one and two, the army was one of the main reasons for the presence of Westerners in the Byzantine Empire. Western mercenaries served in the Byzantine army, but also the wars against the Normans and the Crusades became a significant ground for military

exchanges. The contacts between Byzantium and the West were in this aspect regular and possibly fruitful. The case of the kite shield can provide visual information on the changes taking place in the Byzantine armed forces during the eleventh and twelfth centuries.

A New Shield: The so-called kite shield is named after its shape, which resembles a kite. It is also called almond, teardrop, or Norman shield. It is elongated, with a top that is wide and round while the bottom narrows ending in a point. The shield's elongated shape probably offered the holder more protection as it covered a larger part of his body. Before the appearance of the kite shield, approximately dated to the mid eleventh century, the usual shield was round. The representations of the kite shield documented in reliefs, manuscripts and embroideries, constitute the only available evidence, as an actual example has yet to be discovered. It was probably made of wood and leather.[783] Sometimes it had an iron boss in the middle, like round shields probably did as well. In the Bayeux tapestry (after 1066) many kite shields are depicted with a dot in the centre, possibly representing such pieces (Image 9). However, it is unclear if the boss was always present as it is not always clearly depicted. For example, Byzantine representations seem to ignore this detail. Perhaps the inclusion of the boss was a later development or its addition was just a matter of different production. The shield is displayed in different sizes, sometimes bigger or smaller, other times longer or shorter. It seems to be flat, though some representations show it as convex, as if embracing the soldier. All these differences could also be regarded as artistic conventions, and thus it is difficult to tease out more details. Moreover, it is possible that the same shield underwent changes and adaptations through time; it is also likely that there were geographic variations. One of the most important details of these representations is that they happen simultaneously in different geographic and cultural contexts. The kite shield is the most frequently represented kind of shield in the Bayeux tapestry (Image

[783] Ditchfield (2007), pp. 259-260.

10).[784] The embroidery also contains depictions of round shields, though they appear in a lesser number. At the same time, the kite shield also appeared in Byzantine manuscript illuminations, for instance in the Theodore psalter (1066) (Image 11).[785] It is also represented in small steatite icons (Image 12).[786] Meanwhile the round shield continued to be represented in Byzantine artistic representations. These different representations have led scholars to ask the question: Where did the kite shield originate?

The Discussion: The debate on this question has revolved around the origins of the kite shield, especially where it was first used. Scholars first considered the shield to be Norman and thus it was proposed that the Byzantine depictions were the result of Western influence.[787] It has also been suggested that Western infantry and cavalry could have adopted the shield from the Byzantines after serving as mercenaries or fighting the Byzantine army in Italy.[788] It was even proposed that the shield had its origins in the Middle East.[789] Taxiarchis Kolias suggested the possibility that such a shield was a development from a triangular shield mentioned in the *Sylloge Tacticorum*, a tenth century military manual.[790] He has also argued that while the shield was not unknown in Byzantium, its Byzantine origins are not certain.[791] The recent scholarship on the question seems to agree that at the moment given the available evidence, it is not possible to reach a definite conclusion.[792] It is possible that the common use of the kite shield in the West and the East was the result of the population movements of the

[784] Stenton (1957), pp. 63-64.

[785] Parani (2003), p. 127; *Byzantium* (1994), p. 154, n. 168.

[786] Kalavrezou-Maxeiner (1985), pp. 99-102, n. 6 and n. 8.

[787] Hoffmeyer (1966), pp. 84-87; Heath (1980), pp. 72, 88.

[788] Haldon (1999), p. 132, note 96.

[789] Nicolle (1982), pp. 30, 38; Nickel (2002), p. 115.

[790] Kolias (1988), pp. 107-108; Dain (1938), p. 59.

[791] Kolias (1994), p. 257.

[792] Parani (2003), p. 127; Grotowski (2010), p. 233.

eleventh century. Migrations and conquests of territories put many cultures in contact. The shield possibly spread with this military and demographic expansion. Piotr Grotowski has also pointed out the importance of diplomatic gifts, for example the precious shield, a gift from Otto I, which Liudprand was to give to his Greek friends together with other gifts.[793] In his *Relatio De Legatione Constantinopolitana* Liudprand mentioned that while in Corfu he gave the valuable shield to the son of a certain officer called Michael Chersonitis, possibly the governor of the theme of Cephalonia.[794] He described it as gilded and embossed with marvellous craft. Moreover, in his *Retribution* Liudprand narrated how he had offered his own gifts to Constantine VII as if they were the gifts of his lord Otto.[795] Among them were seven excellent shields with gilded bosses, but we are not told about their shape. It is significant that also in his embassy to Nikephoros Phokas in 968, the Byzantine emperor considered the size of the Lombard shields as an impediment in battle.[796] Although their shape and material are not known, this detail suggests that in the tenth century the Lombards used larger or heavier shields than the Byzantines. In the next century, the Byzantine representations of the kite shield imply that soldiers of the Byzantine army had started employing bigger shields as well. The question is: who were those soldiers? They could have been native soldiers, but the remarkable increase of Western mercenaries serving in the Byzantine army from the eleventh century opens the possibility that the models for the Byzantine representations included new but foreign details.

Byzantine Representations: As we have seen above, the earliest representations of the kite shield in Byzantium are dated to the eleventh century. However, the shield only appeared in monumental painting in the twelfth century. The kite shield can be seen in

[793] Grotowski (2010), p. 233, note 408.

[794] Liudprand of Cremona, pp. 280-281.

[795] Ibid., pp. 198-199.

[796] Ibid., p. 246.

the frescoes decorating the church of St Panteleimon at Nerezi, dated to 1164.[797] The two type of shields, round and kite, are part of the military saints' equipment (Image 13). The kite shield is also depicted next to the military saints decorating the twelfth-century church of St Nicholas tou Kasnitzi in Kastoria (Image 14).[798] The frescoes of this church have been associated with the paintings at Nerezi because of their style and chronology. Earlier examples of fresco decoration may have been lost. Or perhaps monumental painting took longer to integrate the kite shield as a new iconographic element. The Byzantine representations of the kite shield differ from the Western in their utilization. Byzantine images only show the kite shield in relation to infantry soldiers or military saints standing, never cavalry. For example, the steatite icons usually show the military saints with the kite shield next to them, with one of their hands on the top part, holding it in upright position.[799] In Western representations the kite shield is a common detail in cavalry representations. The first time when the kite shield appears being used by cavalry seems to be in Byzantine representations in the Madrid Skylitzes (Image 15).[800] However, this twelfth-century manuscript was probably produced in Sicily by artists of different background, possibly two workshops, one Byzantine and the other Western.[801] It is difficult to explain the difference between the Byzantine and Western representations of the kite shield. The fact that cavalry was not frequently depicted in Byzantine art could explain this feature. It is also possible that the shield was first used by the infantry, and then adopted by the cavalry. Western mercenaries, mainly Norman, were famous in Byzantium because of their horse riding skills. Thus, it would seem that Byzantine artists did not take them as models. On the other hand, Varangians seem to have fought on foot. Written sources provide more details about the shields used in the Byzantine Empire.

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[797] Sinković (2000), pp. 59-60, figs. LIII and LV.

[798] Pelekanidis and Chatzidakis (1985), pp. 51, 60-61; Sinković (2000), p. 60.

[799] Kalavrezou-Maxeiner (1985), plates 7 and 8.

[800] Tsamakda (2002), miniatures 11 (fol. 13v, top), 243 (fol. 107v) and 247 (fol. 109r, bottom).

[801] Ibid., pp. 310-311.

Written Sources: Important authors of the period indeed mention shields, however descriptive references are scant in general. Moreover, the information provided by the written sources complicates our understanding of the kite shield, namely it does not match what the artistic representations show. Perhaps the references have been interpreted incorrectly or the written sources do not reflect contemporary reality. This following section looks at the different references in order to gain an alternative perspective that can complement the visual evidence.

The most significant written reference is in the *Alexiad* by Anna Komnene.[802] Narrating the second Norman invasion (1107-1108), she describes the armour of the invaders, whom she calls Kelts. After the description, she adds that the armour was supplemented by a shield. She defines it as not round but θυρεὸς, elongated, and broad at the top and tapering to a point.[803] She added that inside it was slightly curved and it had a metal boss in the middle. Bernard Leib considered the shape as an isosceles triangle.[804] The fact that Anna wrote during the first years of her nephew's reign, Manuel I, leads one to question whether she is describing an early twelfth century shield or a later version. However, the shape of the shield described by Anna is similar to the kite shield. This piece of information presents a problem. The Byzantine representations of the kite shield discussed above are considered evidence for the use of the shield by the Byzantine army. If this was indeed the case, it is difficult to understand why she apparently attributed such a shield only to the Normans. She must have been aware that the Byzantine army also used a similar shield. Maria Parani has pointed out that the Western almond-shaped shield in Anna's narration is slightly curved, while on the Bayeux tapestry it appears to be flat.[805] Grotowski also believes that the shield described by Anna was different to the kite shield.[806] However, Anna's detailed description of the

[802] Anna Komnene, p. 405.

[803] Θυρεὸς usually meant a larger shield, sometimes as tall as a man. Dennis, pp. 75, 91, 97, 341, 601.

[804] Anna Komnene, vol. 3 (1945), p. 115, note 1.

[805] Parani (2003), p. 127, note 128.

[806] Grotowski (2010), p. 234.

shield probably provides us with an idea of the average Western shield, which according to the visual evidence, should have been the kite shield. Anna finished her description by saying that the shield would repel any arrow, an attribute which may imply that its entire surface was covered with metal, not only the boss. This feature could be another difference with the Byzantine shield, which may not have been covered with metal. Moreover, Anna's narration of Guiscard's invasion provides us with another piece of evidence concerning the shields employed by the Normans. She noted that the Norman soldiers, once they dismounted, were an easy prey.[807] One of the reasons for this was the size of their shields, a detail which implies that they were larger than the Byzantine shields.

The kite shield probably developed through time and changed. If the type used by the Normans evolved faster, that could explain why both kite shields, Byzantine and Keltic, looked rather different. Nevertheless, it is difficult to interpret Anna's reference. It is interesting that she pointed out that the shield was not round. By doing that, perhaps she implied that Byzantine soldiers regularly used round shields, or that the usual shape was round. Nevertheless, she was surely aware that Byzantine soldiers also used non-round shields. It is likely that her description had the aim to individualise the Norman enemy, making them completely different from the Byzantines. On the other hand, if the shield was actually a Norman shield, its use by the Byzantines would indicate the adoption of a foreign element, a detail which Anna would have purposedly tried to deny. In many cases the *Alexiad* shows anti-Western tendencies. It is possible that Anna did not want to accept that the Byzantine army was undergoing what could be seen as a process of westernisation. Perhaps the soldiers using that shield in the Byzantine army were Western mercenaries.

The second significant reference regarding the shields is found in Kinnamos' chronicle of the reigns of John II and Manuel I.[808] Kinnamos explained that when Manuel became

[807] Anna Komnene, p. 158.

[808] Kinnamos, p. 125.

emperor, he wanted to improve the equipment of the Byzantine army. Thus, he encouraged a series of changes concerning Byzantine weaponry and fighting tactics. These reforms can be explained due to the differences between Western and Byzantine warfare, as Kinnamos mentioned that soon after the changes, the Byzantine soldiers proved to be superior to the 'Germans' (French) and Italians. However, it must be said that Kinnamos was specially referring to the Western-like tournaments. Part of the reforms had to do with the weapons used by the Byzantines; according to Kinnamos, before the changes the custom was that they were armed with round shields (ἀσπίσι κυκλοτερέσι) and most of them used bows and carried quivers. Manuel taught them to hold shields reaching their feet (ποδὴρεις) and trained them to wield long lances and ride horses competently. Although Kinnamos is not always reliable, this reference is very significant. We learn that Manuel promoted changes in order to adapt the Byzantine cavalry to Western methods of warfare, which seem to have favoured other weapons. The most important question that arises from Kinnamos' reference is whether the long shield which is attested in the Byzantine minor arts was the shield introduced by Manuel. Parani has suggested that the unusually long shield carried by St Christophoros in a painting in the church of Sts Anargyroi in Kastoria, c.1180 (Image 16), belongs to the same type as the shield described by Kinnamos.[809] Attempting to explain this passage, Taxiarchis Kolias proposed that Kinnamos actually meant the kite shield for the conventional shield.[810] In any case, Kinnamos informed us that the customary shield was round, leaving the possibility that there were other shields being used by the Byzantine soldiers, among them the kite shield. Perhaps Manuel's reform actually entailed the official or mandatory use of the kite shield. Thus, Kinnamos used Manuel's reform as a way to stress his innovative character. According to him, the result of the reform resulted in a Byzantine army whose skills surpassed the Western nations.

It is also necessary to wonder whether all the changes enumerated by Kinnamos relate to the cavalry. After the changes Kinnamos explained the simulation of battles, or jousts,

[809] Parani (2003), p. 128.

[810] Kolias (1988), pp. 115-117.

that Manuel also introduced. Jousting would be practised by the horse riders, so it would seem that the innovations in fact applied to the cavalry. Perhaps by reaching the feet Kinnamos actually meant the use of the shield while riding the horse rather than on foot. It is likely that one of the advantages of the kite shield's shape was to cover the leg of the soldier while riding. Or perhaps, being elongated, it could also be used to hit like a weapon. However, as it has been said above, in Byzantine iconography riders were not so popular and thus the shield usually appears next to standing military saints and infantry. On the other hand, maybe the kite shield was mainly used by the infantry and Manuel finally introduced to the cavalry, an idea that would be supported by the Byzantine representations.

The shield held by St Christophoros could as well be Manuel's shield. Whether for cavalry or infantry, the question is why Manuel decided to introduce it. Kinnamos seems to refer to the changes at the beginning of Manuel's reign. Perhaps the reforms took place after Manuel succeeded his father. Manuel would have had much knowledge of Western warfare. His own military experience proved that he had seen Westerners in action before he became emperor. Manuel had witnessed action against Westerners, as he was present during John's second campaign against Antioch. Furthermore, Manuel would also have fought with them in the Byzantine armies. He may even have led a contingent of Westerners.[811] It is likely that after a while the Western element in the Byzantine army exercised some influence over the rest of the soldiers. Manuel has been labelled a latinophile, and these changes indeed prove that he appreciated Western warfare, or at least thought it was necessary to adopt Western tactics if Byzantine soldiers had to face Western armies. This last detail takes us to the other possibility regarding the date of the changes in the Byzantine army. Manuel's reign started in 1143 and only a few years later, in 1147, the Second Crusade crossed Byzantine territory. Perhaps the arrival of the Second Crusade prompted the changes. The reforms do not need to be seen as a result of the Crusader influence on Byzantium, they may have been a necessity in order to match the royal armies that were on their way to the Holy Land.

[811] Michael Italikos, p. 286.

Manuel may have considered it crucial to have a modernized army. The passage of the First Crusade had not been without violent experiences in Byzantine territory, and it was likely that such events were going to happen again. Moreover, the Second Crusade was suspected to have other secret aims, namely to attack the Byzantine capital. Manuel must have been concerned about the possibility that huge armies led by Western kings could intend an assault against the empire's capital. The Norman attack on Greece confirmed the possible threat from the West. Therefore, it is also possible that Manuel, through his personal acquaintance, had realised the differences between the Western and Byzantine armies and must have felt that in order to be at the level of the West, Byzantine warfare had to be adjusted to Western standards.

Other references in the written sources can help us to have a better understanding of the situation. Zonaras mentioned long shields during the reign of Alexios I.[812] He narrated that during the emperor's last expedition against the Turks in Anatolia (1117), while the army was withdrawing from Philomelion, Byzantine refugees were taken from the area in order to be settled somewhere safer. Zonaras described that some of the refugees were old and were carried on long shields (ἀσπίσιν... μακραῖς). This statement proves that at least by the end of Alexio's reign, the Byzantine army was already using shields that were not round, but perhaps of the kite shield type. While this detail supports the visual evidence from the Byzantine manuscripts and steatites, it seems to contradict Anna and Kinnamos' references. However, perhaps long shields were simply rare in the Byzantine army, their use could have been random. Maybe they were used by the Western mercenaries, or were slowly being introduced among the Byzantine ranks.

A last source that provides further information about the shield is a poem entitled *On the golden chamber* (κουβούκλειον) and which was written by the doctor Nicholas Kallikles in or after 1118.[813] According to Paul Magdalino, the poem describes a mural, possibly a

[812] John Zonaras, pp. 278-279.

[813] Nicholas Kallikles, pp. 103, 146.

mosaic, commissioned for an imperial palace, the Great Palace or the Blachernae.[814] The poem mentions a Keltic (κελτικὴν) shield, which is thrust aside, that is, defeated. Magdalino argued that part of the pictorial cycle represented a series of pictures showing Alexios defeating the Normans. This reference is significant because in relation to weapons, Byzantine literary sources frequently used the adjective Keltic regarding the spear. Similarly, the bow is always attributed to the Turkish enemies, as it is their weapon par excellence. From the Byzantine point of view, the spear and the bow were the weapons of the Western and Turkish enemies respectively, and thus they were used as examples of their military skills.[815] They seemed to have been superior to the others in their use. However, here the adjective Keltic is applied to a shield. We assume that every ethnic group used shields, whether they were different or not. Hence, the use of the adjective in such a circumstance can be read as a real and specific shield, which the Byzantines listening to the poem would have pictured in their heads. The question is what a Norman shield looked like. Possibly it was similar to the one described by Anna in the *Alexiad*, as she was narrating the second Norman invasion. Both shields are called Keltic, and they must have looked distinct to the Byzantine ones, at least the label suggests that it was seen as different. Therefore, the representation of the Keltic shield in the golden chamber was clearly recognised as foreign by the Byzantine audience. Its shape would have been a visual reference to the Norman invasions.[816] From Anna's description it is possible to say that the shield may even have inspired certain fascination from the Byzantine point of view. The poem shows that such a strong shield was not crushed easily, praising Alexios' victory over the Normans.

After Alexios' reign, there is further evidence for non-round shields in the Byzantine sources. For example, Niketas Choniates mentioned such shields at least twice during John's reign. The first reference is found in the narration of the battle of Beroia against

[814] Magdalino and Nelson (1982), p. 124, 126-130.

[815] For example, Anna Komnene, p. 450.

[816] Nicholas Kallikles, p. 181.

the Pechenegs in 1122.[817] Choniates narrated that John attacked the Pechenegs' fortress made of wagons, taking with him the Varangians. We are told that they were armed with long shields (περιμήκεσιν ἀσπίσι) and single-edged axes. Perhaps these long shields were kite shields. As we have seen in chapter one, the Varangian guard is famous for its axes, usually mentioned as their most common weapon. However, the detail about the shields is rather unusual and could imply that, as a group, they employed long shields as part of their weaponry. For example, Psellos described the Varangians carrying shields (γένος ἀσπιδοφόροι σύμπαντες) and single-edged axes, but he never explained if the shield they used was long.[818] Moreover, Anna also informs us that during the battle of Dyrrachion (1081) the Varangians carried shields like all the men of their race.[819] Choniates' reference can provide us with more details. Varangians usually fought on foot; the long shields would have been useful to protect their bodies. Also, Niketas was born during Manuel's reign. He did not witness the battle and so he either relied on earlier sources or was told about the detail of the long shields. He could also have assumed that the Varangians had used them because those long shields were associated with them, at least during his period. This piece of information supports the idea that before Manuel's period, some soldiers of the Byzantine army, in this case foreign mercenaries, employed long shields. So far Normans and Varangians have been associated with long shields. The possibility that the Varangian guard used the kite shield suggests that they contributed to the introduction of such shields in the Byzantine army. The second reference by Choniates is found in the narration of a duel during the siege of the fortress of Baka by John's army (1138).[820] Choniates reported that Eustratios, the soldier that fought on behalf of the Byzantine army, was given a shield the height of a man. While it is not possible to say if this was a kite shield, the scenario could suggest a shield like the one depicted being held by St Christophoros in Kastoria.

[817] Niketas Choniates, pp. 15-16.

[818] Michael Psellos, p. 253.

[819] Anna Komnene, p. 132.

[820] Niketas Choniates, p. 23.

All these references seem to confirm that long shields were used as a rule by the infantry, at least until Manuel's reforms.

The Crusader Element: The obvious differences between Anna's description and the Byzantine depictions of the kite shield are mainly two features. The illuminations and steatite icons do not seem to show a bronze boss, which Anna described. The other different trait is that the surface is slightly curved. Byzantine depictions usually show the front, and thus it is difficult to say if they were flat or not. On the other hand, the so-called Crusader art can give us more details about the Keltic shield. The shield used by the Crusader knights, undoubtedly a Western shield, could help us to understand the changes in the Byzantine military. Thus, images from Crusader monuments can help us to visualize the Keltic shield. The following examples are from the most significant productions of Crusader art and all are dated to the twelfth century.

The frescoes painted on the columns of the Basilica of the Nativity at Bethlehem provide the first example. Wall painting is considered the most Byzantine medium of Crusader art, though it also contains Western elements.[821] Most of the paintings show religious figures, among them saints that can be classified in different groups, for instance, holy kings. There are two figures in this category, Knute and Olaf.[822] These two holy kings were Western. St Knute was Canute IV (1080-1086), king of Denmark. St Olaf was Olaf II Haraldsson of Norway (1015-28), the saint to whom the Varangians dedicated a church in Constantinople. Both figures are leaning upon what clearly are kite shields (Images 17 and 18). Gustav Kühnel has interpreted this feature as a Western element. He dated the paintings to the mid-twelfth century.[823] There are other interesting features regarding the representation of shields in the basilica. On another column there is a depiction of the Virgin Glykophilousa, and beneath it is a portrait of a male donor

[821] Kühnel (1988), p. XIV.

[822] Ibid., pp. 13, 113-118.

[823] Ibid., pp. 124-125, 128.

kneeling, probably a knight or someone who belonged to the military nobility.[824] He has in front of him a kite shield (Image 19). Based on the remaining letters of his name, which include a letter W, Kühnel suggested that he was an Anglo-Saxon or had northern origins. This proposal is possible bearing in mind that two of the depicted saints had Scandinavian origins. On the other hand, the figure of St George, which according to the author followed the Byzantine iconography of soldier saints, includes a round shield (Image 20). Both Kühnel and Jaroslav Folda seem to ignore that the kite shield appears in Byzantine minor arts of the eleventh century, though it is true that the first examples of kite shield in Byzantine monumental painting date from the second half of the twelfth century.[825] Then, from the artistic point of view a dichotomy concerning the shape of the shield is established: round means Byzantine model while kite shield equals Western. It must be said that the fact that the two northern saints were painted with kite shields suggests that this type of shield was probably widely used during the period. In contrast, the round shield of St George may show that Byzantine models had not been updated so far to include new elements. To conclude, it is not possible to know if the shield represented on the columns, probably carried by Crusaders, is the same shield as the Keltic shield. However, its depiction associated with Western saints and donors implies that the shield was a Western element.

The next example is the famous Melisende psalter, which was produced before the mid-twelfth century, probably in Jerusalem.[826] Its covers are made of ivory and show different scenes that are set in medallions. A number of turquoise beads decorate the spaces between the medallions. Images narrating the life of King David are depicted on the front cover. One of them is the fight against Goliath, whose kite shield is decorated with a turquoise bead in the middle (Image 21). This oddly placed bead indicates very likely a metal boss, like the one that Anna mentioned in her description. Although the

[824] Ibid., pp. 16-17; Folda (1995), p. 94

[825] Grotowski (2010), pp. 233-234.

[826] *Byzantium* (1994), pp. 165-6, number 181; Folda (1995), pp. 152-153, 157-159; Evans and Wixom (1997), pp. 392-393, num. 259.

covers also include Byzantine details, the kite shield seems to be one of the Western elements in Crusader art.

The third example is also considered a masterpiece of Crusader art. It is a group of five capitals carved for the Church of the Annunciation in Nazareth and possibly buried c. 1187, around the time of Saladin's victory over the Crusaders.[827] They are assumed to have been produced shortly before, as they do not seem to have ever been placed on the actual building. One of the capitals is rectangular and shows some demonic figures (Image 22).[828] Two of them are holding shields that look of the kite shield type. The shields have a boss in the middle and both seem to be slightly curved. These details match the description in the *Alexiad*.

The Crusader iconography shows that the kite shield and its variations were frequently used by Crusader artists, who most probably employed real Western shields as models. Details like its curved surface, which were not part of previous kite shields, may have been the result of certain evolution and are also attested in Crusader iconography. Their representation could prove that such innovations of the kite shield were Western innovations. The Byzantines must have been aware of the changes, and it is possible to say that they recognised the kite shield type as the most usual Western shield. On the other hand, Byzantine iconography seems to have been more conservative and did not show developments or novelties in the paintings. Kolias proposed this trait of Byzantine art as the reason for the continued presence of the round shield.[829]

Decoration: Another feature that has been related to developments in the West is the figurative decoration of the shields, independently of their type. During the Middle Byzantine period shields were decorated with different ornamental motifs, which were

[827] Folda (1986), p. 3ff.

[828] Ibid., p. 43ff, plates 26, 28, 29, 30 and 31.

[829] Kolias (1988), p. 117.

rather simple and in some cases have been interpreted as unit identification marks.[830] However, a few twelfth-century shields appear decorated with interesting figurative motifs that seem to mirror Western trends. One of the earliest examples appears at the Monastery of St Panteleimon in Nerezi.[831] Here the military saint Theodore Teron holds a kite shield that shows a lion standing in heraldic pose (Image 23). Grotowski suggested that the artists were borrowing from Western heraldry.[832] On the other hand, Ousterhout has noted that the lion connoted power and prestige in a general way, rather than a heraldic meaning.[833] It is a coincidence that the same church contains the earliest examples of what look like kite shields in monumental Byzantine painting. Also a coincidence is the fact that the lion is depicted on a kite shield. Although the frescoes also include round shields, it is possible that the lion was painted on this type of shield because the Byzantines had seen such decorative elements on Western shields, very likely kite shields. The church was founded by a grandson of Emperor Alexios I in 1164, during Manuel's reign. Lacking examples from Constantinople, it is fair to wonder if this subtle representation follows imperial models that were promoted by Manuel. It is also important to note that heraldry gained popularity towards the mid-twelfth century, and therefore, the influence over Byzantium could not have occurred earlier. Thus, this chronological detail matches the date of the lion depicted in Nerezi. On the other hand, the sole example of the lion, even though it was indeed taken from a Western coat of arms, shows that the Byzantines had only copied the motif, rather than conveyed it with heraldic meaning. As an imitation, it must have been purely ornamental. Perhaps its function was apotropaic. Before the appearance of heraldry in Western Europe, shields were also decorated with fantastic animals. In the Bayeux tapestry are depicted what

[830] Grotowski (2010), pp. 238-240.

[831] Sinkević (2000), fig. 62.

[832] Grotowski (2010), p. 246-248.

[833] Ousterhout (2009), pp.158-159.

resemble winged serpents or dragons on a number of kite shields. Their meaning was not heraldic.[834]

Two other pieces need to be discussed regarding the shield decoration. Both are enamels that show the Crucifixion and possibly date from the twelfth century. The two scenes show the Centurion, also known as Longinus. One of the pieces, currently in the Hermitage Museum, shows him holding a small kite shield (Image 24).[835] The shield is decorated with what seems to be a very small stylized bird. The other enamel, currently in Munich (Image 25), shows Longinus holding what looks like a round shield.[836] The shield also seems decorated with a bird (Image 26). Scholars have identified the bird as a raven. They suggested that the raven, an animal sacred to the Norse soldiers, identifies Longinus as a Varangian.[837] Moreover, the Munich enamel includes beneath the crucifixion the three soldiers who are deciding who obtains Jesus' cloak. Two of them, clean shaved, have a shield nearby. The fact that they were depicted beardless could suggest that the artist had in mind Westerners, who would also have employed kite shields. The topic of the beard is discussed in the next chapter. Both shields are kite shields which are decorated. The one on the left (Image 27) shows some type of animal figure, what seems like a griffin, though it is difficult to be certain. Next to it there is possibly another bird, in this case black. The griffin is an animal which appears frequently in Byzantium.[838] It may be part of the decoration in textiles and churches, for instance it is shown in the opus sectile of the Pantokrator monastery. Ousterhout, who has dedicated an article to the opus sectile located in the south church of the Pantokrator monastery, has highlighted its uniqueness and compared part of its iconography with developments on heraldry.[839] The griffin, a creature of supernatural powers, is seen as an

[834] Heath (1980), pp. 120-121; Grotowski (2010), p. 247.

[835] Bank (1977), pp. 78-79, number 538.

[836] Baumstark (1998), pp. 144-146, n. 30.

[837] Heath (1980), p. 73; D'Amato (2010), pp. 40-42; D'Amato (2005), p. 43.

[838] Bouras (1983), pp. 9, 46-51.

[839] Ousterhout (2001), pp. 133-150; Ousterhout (2009) p. 168.

imperial symbol, but also with funerary connotations.[840] In such a shield however, it may also be an apotropaic symbol. The depicted griffin on the enamel differs from the usual representation of a griffin; it seems to be standing in a rampant pose. The similarity between the griffin and the dragons depicted on some of the shields of the Bayeux tapestry has already been noted (Image 28).[841] Perhaps the griffin was the way in which the Byzantines saw the Western dragon, or maybe they decided to represent a Byzantine supernatural animal, rather than the dragon, though they adapted it to the Western pose. Thus, it is possible that the Western imagery on shields encouraged the Byzantines to find a counterpart to the Western lion and the Norse raven. Nevertheless, it must be said that griffins were also being used in Western heraldry and coats of arms.

Decorating the shields in such small scale objects must have had some motivation. They were surely meant to show real decoration or a contemporary symbol which could be recognised. Their special meaning or message was understood by the viewer. Furthermore, these two pieces must have been commissioned by people who had some significant position, as enamel was expensive. Such patrons were probably aware of the decoration of Western shields and perhaps understood its significance. Or maybe the artist simply emulated the different ornamental elements that could be seen on shields of the period, both Western and Byzantine. If the bird was indeed related to Norse traditions, its depiction was a visual emblem that the Byzantines could have reproduced in order to indicate a certain ethnic group in the capital, likely the Varangian guard. Though it seems that in the twelfth century the guard was composed mainly of Anglo-Saxons, we know that Scandinavians still joined the Byzantine forces. No Byzantine author mentioned it, but perhaps the raven was the symbol of the Varangian guard. Norse sources indeed make reference to ravens. They seem to appear in literary pieces concerning battles, which probably suggest that the bird was a Scandinavian symbol of warfare. For example, the *Geisli*, a mid-twelfth century poem in honour of St Olaf,

[840] Ćurčić (1995), pp. 597-604.

[841] Heath thought that the similarity may show that this shield possibly belonged to a Western mercenary in Byzantine employ (1980, pp. 120-121).

narrates how at the battle of Beroia Norse soldiers dared to feed the ravens (or birds of prey) and won great renown.[842] Ravens also appear in descriptions of battles found in old English poetry.[843] Moreover, according to Norse sources, a raven was displayed on a banner used by Norse chieftains from the ninth to the eleventh century.[844] It has even been suggested that this same raven is depicted on William the Conqueror's banner on the Bayeux tapestry (Image 29).[845] The fact that the bird possibly depicted on the shields is a raven suggests different ideas. One is that the Varangians brought their own specific traditions while serving in Byzantium. Another is that the Byzantines knew their particular symbols and decided to include them in some artistic productions, possibly for representation purposes. Nevertheless, their small number and unique examples may imply that such an emblem was rather decorative and did not exercise any strong influence in Byzantine art.

It is possible that all these Western animals, heraldic or not, encouraged the Byzantines to employ such images in order to symbolise their power and authority. This could be the case of the Sebastokrator Isaac. The church of his monastic foundation in Thrace includes the image of an eagle made of brick and depicted on the exterior walls (Image 30).[846] This image predates the representations of eagles decorating the thirteenth-century church of Hagia Sophia in Trebizond.[847] The eagle had been depicted in Byzantine art before, for example in textiles (Image 31),[848] but this representation suggests a symbol with which Isaac may have felt identified. According to William of Apulia, the Byzantine emperor (Romanos IV Diogenes) was recognised by the golden

[842] Blöndal and Benedikz (1978), p. 152; Blöndal (1939), p. 162.

[843] Lukman (1958), pp. 133-134.

[844] Barraclough (1971), p. 69.

[845] Ibid., pp. 70-71.

[846] Sinos (1985), fig. 82.

[847] Eastmond (2004), pp. 147-148, 150.

[848] Evans and Wixom (1997), pp. 224-225, fig. 149.

eagle fixed to his armour.[849] Thus, it is possible that the eagle had previously been associated with imperial power, although it does not seem to have been a common feature during this period.

In fact, regarding the heraldic looking representations, Ousterhout has suggested that they were the result of a 'development of a common "language of power" among the mobile Mediterranean elite.'[850] This development took place because of the growing contacts between Byzantium and the West but also with the Muslims on the East. The apparition of real heraldry in Byzantium occurred with the Western conquest of 1204. For example, coats of arms can be found depicted in the Crusader paintings in the Frankish Gate at Nauplia, dated to the late thirteenth or early fourteenth century.[851] The paintings also include the figure of St George, who is depicted riding a horse and holding a kite shield.[852] With the Western rule over Byzantine territory, the shield was finally introduced into the cavalry iconography.

Final remarks: Descriptions in the written sources and visual representations of shields differ. Byzantine images show the kite shield as early as the mid-eleventh century, though their significance is difficult to evaluate. On the other hand, during this period Anna and Kinnamos seem to stress the use of an elongated shield, perhaps the kite shield, as a foreign element or a novelty in the Byzantine army. It is difficult to find an explanation. Perhaps the authors assumed that the round shield was the more usual as a result of conventions. However, the visual representations are silent and extracting conclusions from them may not be simple. The depiction of the kite shield presents a novelty that needs to be placed in a specific context. This context fits with the situation of the Byzantine army in the eleventh century, namely the growing dependence on

[849] William of Apulia (1961), p. 167.

[850] Ousterhout (2009), p. 170.

[851] Hirschbichler (2005), pp. 20-21.

[852] Ibid., p. 19, fig. 8.

mercenary forces, in many cases coming from the West.[853] This fact does not prove that the Byzantines adopted the shield from them, but it is likely that these Western mercenaries employed their own weapons while serving in the Byzantine army, among them the kite shield. This foreign use within the empire could have resulted in the early images of the kite shield in Byzantine minor arts and manuscripts. Also, the Byzantine Empire faced two Norman invasions and the passing of the First Crusade through Byzantine territory. Byzantine soldiers must have become familiar with the weapons and tactics employed by the Westerners. But moreover, the success of the Norman occupation of Southern Italy and the Crusading movement in the Levant must have impressed the Byzantines, who were struggling to cope with the Turkish invasion of Asia Minor. Therefore, the Western military presence must have been obvious in Byzantium. If the Byzantines always saw Westerners using the kite shield, it is possible that finally they perceived it as a Western artefact. The fact that Western mercenaries possibly used the kite shield while fighting in the Byzantine army may have encouraged its use by Byzantine soldiers. By the time of Manuel's reforms the Byzantines were already familiar with the new equipment. It is unclear if this adaptation, certainly a reaction to Western warfare, was successful. Rudi Paul Lindner has considered that during the first years of Manuel's reign the emperor westernised Byzantium by adopting European equipment.[854] What it is clear is that these reforms were a consequence of the Western presence in the Byzantine army since the early eleventh century.

[853] Haldon (2002), p. 45.

[854] Lindner (1982), pp. 207-208.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The three case studies discussed above are very different but they complement each other providing us with an insight on the impact of Western material culture in Byzantium during this period. First, the unique case of the stained glass from the Pantokrator and Chora monasteries is an example from the imperial milieu and possibly the commission of a Western figure at court. As far as we know, its manufacture did not create any local workshop of stained glass panels. Thus, the stained glass was a foreign import which probably started at the Pantokrator and finished at Chora. Although the panels decorated two imperial foundations, they did not have any impact in Byzantine art. Their introduction was likely the result of the presence of a Westerner at court who had the means to innovate, but it was just an artistic experiment. Second, the use of large bells belongs to the religious sphere. The increasing number of Western monasteries and churches was behind their introduction in Byzantium. However, as we have seen, the traditional instrument of the Byzantines, the semantron, was never abandoned or replaced. The evidence shows that the semantron and the bell coexisted, sometimes in the same monastery. Therefore, the impact was limited as the use of large bells only became common after 1204. Finally, the kite shield complemented the discussion on the Western presence in the Byzantine army. While it is likely that the kite shield was another Western import, it seems that the Byzantines adopted it slowly. It is likely that Western mercenaries usually fought with their own weapons and in contingents of Westerners. This surely limited the interaction with the rest of the Byzantine army.

To conclude, the impact of the Western presence in the Byzantine material culture was very limited during this period and only took place in specific spheres of the Byzantine society. This idea corroborates the previous research claiming that the adoption of Western elements was superficial. However, these three case studies show a more complicated picture. While the aristocracy has usually been seen as the recipient of certain Western elements, it is clear that these had an impact on further spheres, the clearest example being the use of large bells in churches and monasteries. After having

looked at different aspects of material culture we now turn to the immaterial sphere by looking at Western habits and customs in Byzantium.

CHAPTER 4: HABITS

The last chapter of the thesis looks at a number of Western habits and customs that may have been introduced in Byzantium as a result of the Western presence in the empire. The chapter is divided in three sections: tournaments and duels, hairstyles and facial hair and, finally, a hand gesture.

TOURNAMENTS AND JOUSTING

Tournaments are mock battles in which groups of knights used to fight against each other. The participants rode horses, but if they happened to be dismounted, they continued fighting on foot. They used a spear on horseback, but on foot the common weapon was the sword. Knights had to avoid being dismounted and captured. A tournament was a sport, a leisure activity where killing was never the aim.[855] However, in many cases participants suffered fatal injuries. Scholars agree that tournaments originated in Western Europe at the end of the eleventh century.[856] Other equestrian and military practices probably existed earlier.[857] The precise origins have been located in the area around northern France and Belgium, in the borders of what were Normandy, France and Flanders. During the twelfth century the practice spread and soon became one of the defining activities of the military classes in Western Europe. The nobility used this martial sport in order to perform and show off their military skills, usually during times of peace.

These sporting competitions have always been seen as a Western feature introduced into Byzantine culture. Choniates himself reported that Latins were particularly skilful at tilting.[858] He probably meant that Westerners usually fought in battles charging their

[855] Barber and Barker (1989), pp. 14-15.

[856] Ibid., p. 14; Crouch (2005), pp. 1, 3.

[857] Barber and Barker (1989), p. 13.

[858] Niketas Choniates, p. 35.

enemies with lances. The first clear references concerning tournaments date from the reign of Manuel I (1143-1180). This fact is one of the reasons why Manuel has been considered a latinophile. John's youngest son and successor is usually described as fond of tournaments and Westerners. The references are found in the works of Kinnamos and Niketas Choniates, in an unedited poem by Manganeios Prodromos and in an anonymous ekphrasis. The last one possibly describes an artistic depiction of a tournament that took place in Antioch in 1159.[859]

Two Byzantine sources narrate a similar type of military entertainment in a much earlier period.[860] It took place in Constantinople during Theophilos' reign (829-842). They mention an Arab captive who was skilful in handling two spears for striking down the enemy. He was asked by Theophilos to show his abilities in the hippodrome. After having witnessed the display, Krateros, a eunuch, noted he was not captivated by the Arab's skills. The emperor became angry and asked him if he, being effeminate, could accomplish a similar feat. The eunuch replied that he was not able to handle two spears and that in battle such activities had no value. He also said that only with faith in God, and using one spear, he would throw him from his horse, which he then proceeded to do. The occasion was represented in the illuminated version of the Skylitzes' chronicle (Images 32 and 33).[861] The depiction of Krateros dismounting the Arab captive does not show the usual jousting position, as the eunuch is riding behind his opponent and not face to face. The event is thought to be the first attested joust of the Middle Ages.[862]

Jousting was a practice that only involved two knights at the time.[863] The main aim was to dismount the opponent with a spear while riding against other. The piece of evidence concerning the Arab captive seems to constitute an isolated case, perhaps an early or

[859] Jones and Maguire (2002), pp. 104-148.

[860] Theophanes Continuatus, pp. 114-116; John Skylitzes, pp. 68-69.

[861] Tsamakda (2002), pp. 98-99, miniatures 129 (fol. 55r, top) and 131 (fol. 55v, top).

[862] John Skylitzes (2012), p. 71, note 71.

[863] Crouch (2005), pp. 111-116.

occasional form of jousting. It suggests that during this period there already were certain 'military' practices performed by soldiers as means for entertainment. While jousting became a significant part of Western tournaments, the event discussed cannot be considered a tournament as the source only mentions two participants. Tournaments were performed by different teams of knights and so there were many participants taking part at the same time. Such activities in Byzantium do not seem to antedate the twelfth century, when sources describe their performance for the first time.

Describing Manuel's military reforms, Kinnamos wrote that the Byzantine emperor trained the soldiers in horsemanship and the handling of long spears.[864] These are the most important skills needed to take part in tournaments and jousting. Following these changes, Kinnamos mentioned another novelty, the introduction of some sort of mock battles in which soldiers were arranged in formation opposite one another. Kinnamos' description suggests that there were different teams or groups. He continued saying that in one of these contests (Τοῦτον δὴ τὸν ἀγώνα), John, one of Manuel's nephews, was injured in one eye by an Italian lance.[865] Kinnamos' reference has been interpreted as Manuel introducing tournaments in the Byzantine army.[866] The fact that the changes in military tactics are followed by the mock battles may suggest that the tournaments were practised on purpose so that the Byzantine soldiers could learn the new methods. It is likely that Manuel preferred this mode to waging war in real battlefields. Kinnamos mentioned that the cause for the reforms was that Manuel wanted to improve the armament of the Byzantine soldiers. The weapons they used also altered the way in which they fought.

The introduction of such a practice can be explained further. If Manuel indeed wanted his soldiers to fight with these techniques, mock battles provided the Byzantine army with a chance to simulate a battle without actually fighting one. However, the

[864] Kinnamos, p. 125.

[865] Ibid., p. 126.

[866] Jeffreys (1984), p. 202.

composition of the Byzantine army may also have been a significant factor. As we have seen in chapter two, during this period many Western mercenaries fought in the Byzantine army. During the eleventh century they had joined the Byzantine army in large numbers. Among the most famous were the Normans. Even though many may have migrated via Southern Italy, their geographical origins match the area where tournaments seem to have originated, northern France. Another example is given by Anna Komnene when she narrated that the Count of Flanders had sent five hundred knights to Alexios.[867] It is likely that these soldiers may have practised such mock battles while in the Byzantine Empire, showcasing the activity to the Byzantines since the eleventh century. The Western soldiers fighting in the Byzantine army may have held tournaments during their free time, which may have given Manuel the opportunity, first to practise the activity himself, and second to consider it a good way to train the rest of Byzantine army.

Furthermore, the First Crusade was another historical event which surely encouraged the interaction between Western knights and the Byzantine army. Among the Crusaders were Normans from Southern Italy. A reference, found in the *Gesta Tancredi*, from the First Crusade may prove that the Crusaders practised an early variant of the tournament during their expedition to the Holy Land.[868] Ralph described how Tancred left the main body of Crusaders and took certain locations in Cilicia, among them Tarsus. When Baldwin learnt about the event, he wanted a share of the spoils and threatened Tancred's rule over the city. The conquests seem to have created tension between the two men. Tancred left and moved to Mamistra, from where the Turkish garrison left overnight and he was welcomed by the population. According to Ralph, the soldiers of Baldwin then moved to Mamistra where Tancred was established. At the beginning Baldwin was received and the situation was peaceful. However, later a market incident created a violent quarrel that threatened to become an armed conflict. Tancred and Baldwin's soldiers were in position but neither wanted to make the first step. After some time had

[867] Anna Komnene, pp. 218, 221-222, 242; Ganshof (1961a), pp. 73-74.

[868] Ralph of Caen (2005), pp. 68-69.

passed without any confrontation, young soldiers from both armies started single combats in order to spend the time. Ralph mentioned that this practice was a military custom. It seems that the practice was performed in order to see which side was better, but both sides enjoyed both victories and losses. Ralph used the expression martial games (ludum martium) to describe the practice.[869] The description of the combat mentions several details which match features of the tournaments. They were fighting with spears and were riding horses. Some were pierced and were dismounted. Then they brandished the sword until they were captured and disarmed. This description suggests that the two armies rather than fighting seriously employed a tournament as means to battle. The reference is also significant because Ralph revealed the identity of one of the participants who was captured, Richard of the Principate, or Richard of Salerno. Ralph also indicated that during the games Richard urged on his soldiers with his tongue and spear. Richard of Principate was one of the Normans who Anna Komnene mentioned at Alexios' side at the signature of the treaty of Devol (1108).[870] He was not a simple Norman soldier, but a noble from Southern Italy. This detail suggests that Western figures that became close advisors of the Byzantine emperor engaged in such martial practices.

On the other hand, this piece of evidence is problematic. Albert of Aachen also described the same confrontation and he narrated it as a simple battle, not a martial sport.[871] His description of the events differs from the *Gesta Tancredi*. According to Albert, Tancred attacked Baldwin's troops in order to take revenge and a fight ensued. The outcome of the fight was that many of Tancred's soldiers died. Albert also mentioned that Richard, prince of Salerno, was captured. The different interpretation of the events deserves further consideration. Perhaps Albert misunderstood the martial games, or maybe the battle took the form of a tournament. It is also possible that the way they fought resembled a tournament, as they used the same weapons and

[869] Ralph of Caen (2011), p. 44.

[870] Anna Komnene, p. 423; La Force (1936), pp. 153-65.

[871] Albert of Aachen, pp. 162-165.

techniques. Also, Ralph had served Bohemond and Tancred, and it is likely that he had reliable information regarding the event.[872] Nonetheless, it is possible that Ralph did not want to divulge that Tancred had attacked Baldwin's forces. Perhaps Ralph disguised the attack as military entertainment. Whether one or the other, the narration suggests that this kind of martial games were already performed at the time of the First Crusade.

Another piece of evidence is a Western reference found in the *Historia Iherosolimitana* of Robert the Monk.[873] Robert wrote that the Crusaders trained in fields, performing mock battles in which they turned their lances on each other. These details suggest some practice similar to the tournaments. While they did not face the enemy, they prepared themselves fighting against each other in fake battles. It has been proposed that Robert wrote his *Historia* only a few years after the First Crusade.[874] Although the detail may not show a real event, it is likely that by then knights were holding tournaments, either as entertainment or training.

The evidence suggests that Western knights that took part in the First Crusade or served in the Byzantine army as mercenaries performed tournaments. It is likely that this was their military training during times of peace. Thus, Byzantine soldiers probably knew such practices before they became part of the official training of the Byzantine army during Manuel's reign. Only then they seem to have become popular or widespread among the Byzantines. While many reasons could explain the late adoption of the Western tournaments in Byzantium,[875] it is possible that such practices were considered foreign or even dangerous by the Byzantines. Moreover, if Byzantine soldiers were not

[872] Ralph of Caen (2005), pp. 3-4.

[873] Robert the Monk, p. 92.

[874] Ibid., p. 7.

[875] For example, while tournaments originated in northern France, the first references of tournaments in other European regions date from the twelfth century (Crouch, 2005 p. 10).

used to fight with the same techniques as the Western mercenaries did,[876] we can assume that such practices were not necessary in order to train. We can conclude that during the reigns of Alexios I and John II Western tournaments did not have any impact in the activities of the Byzantine army and the imperial court.

DUELS

A duel was a combat between two persons; nobody else was allowed to participate. In medieval times it was a way to settle disputes between two individuals. The fight was a judicial trial or combat and the winner was considered to be in the right. Another characteristic was that the participants were usually appointed at a specific time and place, usually with witnesses. The judicial duel seems to have been established at the beginning of the sixth century by Gundebald, the king of the Burgundians.[877] Thus, the duel is considered a tradition of Germanic peoples and its origins were in north-western Europe. From there the tradition spread to other European regions. For example, it seems to have reached England with the Norman Conquest.[878]

Duels then became part of the law of the Middle Ages and also a significant feature of its martial culture. They can also be considered violent entertainment as they could take place in locations where audiences could attend. A duel could also take place on the middle ground between two armies, with the rest of the soldiers looking at the event. In his *Retribution*, Liudprand narrated a duel between two mounted knights. It took place while two armies, one Italian and one German, waited to fight outside the city of

[876] A reference in the *Alexiad* (p. 289) indeed hints at the possibility that certain Byzantines were actually fighting according to Western tactics (Shepard, 1993, pp. 277-278). Anna Komnene described how her brother-in-law, Nikephoros Eupharbenos Katakalon, killed a Cuman soldier.[875] Nikephoros rode towards the Cuman and struck him down with a long spear. Then Anna informs that he was skilled with the spear and knew how to protect himself with a shield. She concludes that on horseback he did not resemble a Byzantine but a native of Normandy (οὐ Ῥωμαῖον ἔικασεν εἶναι, ἀλλὰ Νορμανόθεν ἥκειν). Thus, Anna associates the way Nikephoros fought with the Normans, implying that he had fought like one of them. However, this may have been an isolated case.

[877] Baldick (1965), pp. 12-13.

[878] Ibid., pp. 13, 17.

Pavia.[879] With the passage of time, other reasons for duels appeared. They may not have been related to a legal dispute, but they could be the result of an insult or an offence.[880] For example, Liudprand's reference informs us that the duel started when a Bavarian knight reproached the Italian soldiers and insulted them. Hubald, one of the Italians, wished to avenge the insult, and went out to fight the Bavarian. The duel was the means that an individual who had received an offence had to defend his or her honour. This detail was part of the Western chivalric culture, in which knights had a special code of conduct.

Another example of this knight culture can be found in the work of William of Tyre. He narrated how in 1134 Walter I Grenier, or Walter of Caesarea, accused his stepfather Hugh II Count of Jaffa of treason and conspiracy against the King of Jerusalem.[881] Hugh denied the accusation and said that although he was innocent, he was ready to submit to the judgement of the court. It was decided to settle the matter in single combat. On the appointed day of the combat, Hugh did not appear. William added that it was uncertain whether the reason why he did not attend was his possible guilt. William also mentioned that such a practice was a custom of the Franks. This detail could imply that it was not an accepted method of trial everywhere, though perhaps William simply acknowledged that the tradition was originally a Frankish custom. This case shows that the tradition of judicial duels took place where the Franks were established, in this case the Holy Land.

Although duels seem to have been more important in Western culture, they were not unknown in Byzantium. For example, Skylitzes narrated that the Emperor John I Tzimiskes (969-976) proposed to Sviatoslav I of Kiev to decide the outcome of their battle through single combat (εἰς μονομαχίαν).[882] John tried to convince him by saying that the death of only one man, rather than having the two nations kill each other, would

[879] Liudprand of Cremona, pp. 60-61.

[880] Baldick (1965), pp. 22 ff.

[881] William of Tyre, vol. 2, p. 72.

[882] John Skylitzes, pp. 307-308.

settle their fight. Thus, though single combats existed in Byzantium, they were not the rule. More importantly, they were not part of a code of chivalric culture. As the example of Skylitzes demonstrates, behind Tzimiskes' proposal was the intention of saving the lives of the soldiers. It was a single combat instead of a battle between two armies.

For the period under study, Byzantine authors provide some references that are significant regarding this Western practice. Chronologically the first reference is found in the *Alexiad*, and it refers to the Crusaders' stay in Constantinople.[883] Although this piece of evidence is quite well known, part of it has not attracted sufficient scholarly attention. This piece of information offers one example on how the Byzantines got to know the Westerners and their customs. Anna described how a Crusader nobleman failed to observe the etiquette of the Byzantine court and sat on the imperial throne.[884] After he was reprimanded, the Crusader muttered to himself: 'What a peasant! He sits alone while generals like these stand beside him!'[885] Alexios found out the meaning of his words through an interpreter. Later the Byzantine emperor asked him who he was and his background. He explained that he was a pure Frank and of noble birth. He continued saying that he knew one thing: 'at a crossroads in the country where I was born is an ancient shrine; anyone who wishes to engage in single combat goes there prepared to fight; he then prays to God for help and there he stays awaiting the man who will dare to answer his challenge. I myself have spent time by that very crossroads, waiting and longing for the man who would fight – but there was never one who dared.'[886]

Ralph-Johannes Lilie challenged the veracity of this information and proposed that it never happened.[887] His arguments were that it is unlikely that someone would have been

[883] Anna Komnene, pp. 316-317.

[884] Ducange suggested that the figure was Robert of Paris, Anna Komnene, vol. 2 (1943), p. 229, note 4.

[885] Anna Komnene (2009), p. 291.

[886] Ibid.

[887] Lilie (1993b), p. 181.

able to sit on the throne on which Alexios himself would probably have been sitting. Although the reference may indeed seem suspicious, some of the information attributed to the Frank is not likely to be an invention. Ducange, who wrote in the seventeenth century, identified the shrine with a church dedicated to the Virgin at Soissons.[888] He explained that duellists went to the church in order to invoke St Drausin, a bishop of Soissons buried there. The church where Drausin was buried was the rich Benedictine Abbey of Notre Dame, which he helped to found in the seventh century.[889] The abbey was in one of the quarters of the city, a location which does not seem to fit the description of the Crusader, who said that it was at a crossroads. On the other hand, St Drausin was the patron of the duellists, who used to visit his tomb before a duel. A tradition assured that the victors in duels were decided according to their faith in Drausin.[890]

What the Crusader explained has also been described as 'seeking adventures', a term which appears in Western documents centuries after the present reference.[891] According to Juliet Barker, knights would ride looking for adventures and seeking any combats that they would come across. She proposed that the Crusader was one of these knights who wandered in crossroads wishing to show his ability in chance encounters.[892] However, the fact that the Crusader mentioned one specific place implies that such a location was a permanent place where combats used to take place, either by chance or by prior arrangement. Anna related the Crusader's story but she failed to explain the meaning of the account. The Westerner said he had not found anyone to fight with, probably bragging that nobody dared to fight against him. He surely meant that his prowess or fame was a deterrent for other knights. The probable aim of his boasting was to prove Alexios that he had never been contested. This detail was surely significant as such

[888] Anna Komnene, vol. 2 (1943), p. 230, note 1.

[889] Poquet (1855).

[890] Collin de Plancy, vol. 1 (1821), p. 257; Poquet (1855), p. 60.

[891] Barker (1986), p. 152.

[892] Ibid., p. 153.

combats were part of the life of a Western noble. Perhaps he thought that Alexios' inquiry implied a challenge or a future punishment for his disrespect and insult, and used the story as a warning. After he had been rebuked for sitting on the throne, he let Alexios know that he was always ready for a challenge of a single combat against anyone. In fact, it is possible that the Crusader used the story as a way to challenge Alexios to a duel. Or maybe he thought that if he had to prove his reputation and ancestry, the account would do. Alexios, who knew the impulsive attitude of the Westerners, attempted to avoid confrontations by telling him that the fight against the Turks would offer him many combats, and proceeded to advise the Crusaders on how to fight them. This narration shows that the close contacts between the Crusaders and Alexios provided the Byzantine court with a glimpse of Western martial culture. In any case, by then Alexios must have known the attitudes of the Western knights well. The Byzantine emperor pretended not to take any offence from the reckless Crusader and, more importantly, he decided not to engage with him in combat. While Alexios may have looked like a coward in the eyes of the Crusader, the emperor's reaction could be seen as a sign that Alexios, even when he had a very close contact with Westerners, did not adopt their chivalric practices.

The next two references date from the reign of John II and were recorded by Niketas Choniates. The first one relates an event that took place during John's first campaign to Cilicia and Syria.[893] In 1137, the Byzantine army was besieging the Cilician fortress of Baka. Constantine, an Armenian nobleman who was inside the stronghold, denigrated the emperor's wife and daughters with obscenities.[894] His offence against John's female relatives must have been heard by everyone as he was shouting the abuses from the top of the battlements. Moreover, he ridiculed the Byzantine troops and challenged any of the Byzantine soldiers to a duel. After hearing Constantine's abuse, John longed to catch him in order to have his vengeance. He ordered his generals to find an opponent for Constantine among his soldiers. The selected soldier was a certain Eustratios from the

[893] Niketas Choniates, pp. 22-25.

[894] Ibid., p. 23.

Macedonian legion. He stood at the foot of the hill where the fortress was built and challenged Constantine to come down quickly and face him if he dared. The Armenian took his words as a personal affront and went to meet him. The duel took place in the space between the fortress and the positions of the Byzantine army. They used swords, which were the usual weapon for duels.[895] Constantine was defeated after a combat in which even the Byzantine emperor expected Eustratios to be killed. The combat was followed closely by both sides and thus had a certain element of entertainment. The fight was the only way that both sides had to show off their prowess, as the rest of the confrontation was not a real battle between two armies but a siege.

Describing the event, Choniates did not associate the duel to Western customs. However, in this event there are similar aspects to features found in Western duels. For example, Constantine personally offended the Byzantine emperor by insulting his wife, who had died a few years before, and his daughters. For Western knights, a serious cause for a duel was if a woman they were related to was insulted.[896] In this case the honour of John's family was at stake. And as Choniates narrated, John wanted to seize the Armenian, and he finally agreed to answer his challenge. The fact that he did not fight Constantine in person is also significant. In Western Europe a class of proxy fighters, known as 'champions' had appeared.[897] They could fight for the persons involved in the duel, either for money or personal conviction. In this case John did not risk fighting himself and ordered one of his soldiers to fight. After Eustratios' victory, John presented him with gifts as a reward.

Although this reference cannot prove the influence of Western practices in the Byzantine army, the single combat between Constantine and Eustratios and the Western duel have many similarities. While Constantine's comments about the emperor's female relatives were the reason for John to answer the challenge, it is interesting that he did not want to

[895] Baldick (1965), p. 40.

[896] Ibid., p. 32.

[897] Ibid., p. 14.

avenge the offender himself. John used Constantine's challenge to punish him for his offence. The event also suggests that duels had become a common practice in other places outside Western Europe during this period, in this case Cilicia. The Armenian population of Cilicia had contacts with the Crusader States. Thus, it is possible that Armenians adopted the duel through Crusader influence. The fact that certain martial aspects were shared by different groups in the Mediterranean is significant. It could imply the creation of a wider culture over different societies, possibly as a consequence of the First Crusade.

The second piece of evidence is more significant because a Westerner was directly involved.[898] The event took place in 1139, at one of the battles between the Byzantine army and the Turkish Danishmendids around Neokaisareia. At some point, the emperor noticed a distinguished knight from Italy who was fighting without a horse. The emperor ordered his nephew John, the son of the Sebastokrator Isaac, to dismount from his Arabian stallion and to offer it to the Italian, as he did not lack horses. Apparently John did not like the order, as he did not obey. Instead he challenged the knight into single combat (εἰς ἀντιμάχησιν).[899] He proposed that if the Westerner was able to succeed, the horse would justly be his.

This reference can yield interesting information though we need to be cautious about its possible interpretations. The fact that John asked his nephew to provide this figure with his own horse may show that he may have been a significant person, or at least that he had some prominence in the imperial circle or the higher hierarchy of the army. Another significant detail is that the emperor's nephew resisted the command. It is possible that John, as a blood relative of the emperor, did not consider it appropriate to hand over his own horse to a Westerner, whom he may have considered a simple foreigner. We cannot be certain that his opposition to the order was based on the origin of the individual, but it seems clear that the order annoyed the emperor's nephew. Perhaps he may have felt that

[898] Niketas Choniates, pp. 35-36.

[899] Ibid., p. 36.

the emperor thought the Latin was more worthy of the horse than him. The result of this disagreement eventually led to John's defection to the Turks. While this could have been the consequence of John's attitude, the reference suggests that the Western presence created some tension within the Byzantine army.

The main question is if John's suggestion of the single combat to settle the ownership of the horse had anything to do with Western practices. The fact that there was a Western individual involved may point in this direction, but the evidence is not certain. Perhaps John was convinced that it was likely that the Westerner would accept the challenge, as it was part of his culture. The proposal of the single combat could imply at least a certain rivalry. Also, the judicial factor was present. The contest was to decide who obtained the horse, a method which may reveal Western thought. The main characteristic of the Western duel was that the decision was ultimately left to warlike skills. This sense can be found in the duel suggested by John. While we cannot be sure if John's proposal was the result of the Western chivalric culture, it is indeed a possibility. John's nephew used a Western custom in order to oppose his uncle's order; by proposing a duel, the ownership of the horse would be decided in combat. It is likely that John's nephew was at least aware of the Western duels and resorted to one as a way to clear his hurt pride.

In her study on the image of Westerners according to Kinnamos and Choniates, Catherine Asdracha pointed out that their military spirit was frequently the cause for duels and argued that duels became another way in which Westerners waged war.[900] She noted two cases recorded by Kinnamos. They describe duels fought by two soldiers of the Byzantine army during Manuel's campaign in Apulia (1155-1156). In fact, both soldiers of the Byzantine army possibly were Westerners. One was a certain Thomas from Antioch who had joined the Byzantine emperor many years before.[901] The other is described as a mercenary, but we are not told about his origins.[902] Thus, it is possible to

[900] Asdracha (1983), pp. 35-36.

[901] Kinnamos, pp. 159-160.

[902] Ibid., p. 168.

say that Kinnamos' narration would suggest that duels were mainly performed by Western mercenaries of the Byzantine army, even in Manuel's time.

Therefore, Byzantine soldiers do not seem to have adopted the duel, even when they had been exposed to such practice by the Western mercenaries fighting next to them. This possibility would suggest that the interaction between Byzantine and Western soldiers was certainly limited. On the other hand, the fact that Byzantine authors recorded this kind of incident implies that the behaviour of the Western mercenaries had indeed impressed them. They were aware that their conduct was different, they followed a foreign custom which did not agree with the Byzantine attitude. The cases discussed above suggest that through the presence of Western mercenaries in the Byzantine army, the Byzantines had the chance to learn about the culture of the Western knight. At court and at the army, Byzantines became aware of the differences between Byzantium and the Latins. While the evidence does not support any process of assimilation by the Byzantines in this aspect, it is clear that duels became another aspect of the everyday life of the Byzantine army. At least in two cases, Byzantines employed them to defend their honour. The fact that John's nephew used a Western custom in order to deal with a situation regarding another Westerner implies that he was aware of their habits. The recognition of each other's differences must not have only been the result of diverse habits, but also of their looks. In the next section we look at their hairstyles in the search of further interaction.

HAIR AND HAIRSTYLES

Hair is an aspect of Byzantine culture that has not attracted a significant amount of scholarly attention. This is surprising as hair is an important element of human appearance, and thus it can disclose many details about how each society decided to use it as means of representation. The main study concerning hair is still in Phaidon

Koukoules' work Βυζαντινών βίος και πολιτισμός.[903] It contains a large number of literary references where details regarding hair are discussed. They come from different genres of sources and cover the whole Byzantine period. More recently there have been a few studies on hair and headdresses; they cover shorter periods and mainly focus on a specific topic, for example the visual evidence from artistic representations.[904] This section presents a brief discussion based on a few cases that show certain changes and evolution of hairstyles in the Middle Byzantine period. This is done through a combination of both literary and iconographic sources, a necessary arrangement in order to obtain a fuller picture. These cases mainly concern imperial and aristocratic portraits as they offer more securely dated visual evidence. Some of the assumptions that have been put forward by scholars regarding these examples are also discussed. The aim is to examine if there was any interaction between Western and Byzantine fashions.

Female Hairstyles: The female hairstyles discussed concern plaits. This is the case because some scholars, when considering plaits in Byzantium, always seem to associate them with the West in some way. Although plaits are attested in Byzantium, for example in a sixth-century epigram, they do not seem to have been as common as in the West.[905] The following discussion deals with the portrait of Piroska-Eirene in the mosaic of Hagia Sophia (Image 34).[906] The panel has been dated to around 1122. John's wife is depicted with blond hair and with what look like two braids, falling from each side of her face over her shoulders up to the part of her loros worn around her neck. This kind of hairstyle is not very common and marks a change from previous times. Late Antique representations of empresses show all the hair tied up around their heads, appearing

[903] Koukoules (1951), pp. 342 ff.

[904] Auzépy (2002), pp. 1-12; Emmanuel (1993-1994), pp. 113-120.

[905] Emmanuel (1995), p. 770.

[906] Whittemore (1942), pp. 24-26, 76-82, plates XXIX and XXX.

fixed in some way around the diadem.[907] It was not usual to represent long hair falling over the shoulders. Piroska's hairstyle has not received many comments from scholars. Cyril Mango simply noted that the empress has elaborately plaited blond hair hanging down in two tresses.[908] Melita Emmanuel briefly mentioned it to point out that Piroska's hair under the crown was not covered with a scarf or a net.[909] In his detailed study of the South Gallery mosaics, Whittemore suggested that Piroska's Western origin was a reason to believe that her plaits were not artificial.[910] He based his idea on the fact that at the time Western women wore plaits. While he did not say that such a hairstyle was a Western fashion, he linked Piroska's Western origin (Hungarian) with the representation of the hairstyle.

Piroska's hairstyle is probably among the most imaginative of the Middle Byzantine period. Nonetheless, the two braids hairstyle had already been depicted before. There are at least two more representations showing a similar hairstyle, though not in such detail. Both of them are from the eleventh century, thus predating Piroska's portrait. One is the enamel portrait that depicts Michael VII Doukas and his wife Maria of Alania, currently part of the Khakhuli triptyph (Image 35).[911] It has been dated to shortly after their marriage, around 1072. Maria is portrayed with locks of dark hair falling along both sides up to the neck area of the loros. The representation of the hair gives the impression that Maria was portrayed wearing two plaits, though this is not entirely certain as the depiction is too small. The third example is in a manuscript of the homilies of St John Chrysostom kept at the monastery of St Catherine of Sinai (Ms. Sinait. Gr. 364, fol. 3r).[912] It depicts Constantine IX Monomachos flanked by his wife Zoe and her sister Theodora (Image 36). Both women clearly appear depicted with plaits. It has been

[907] James (2001), pp. 26-34.

[908] Mango (1967), p. 58.

[909] Emmanuel (1993-1994), pp. 115, 117 (note 25).

[910] Whittemore (1942), p. 25 and note 61 (p. 37).

[911] Spatharakis (1976), illustration 11.

[912] Ibid., illustration 66.

dated to the beginning of Constantine's reign, around 1042. There could be a fourth example. It is a portrait of Zoe on a small round enamel attached to the Pala D'Oro in Venice. However, probably due to the tiny scale of the work, the length of the locks of hair looks rather short.[913] These examples show that the two plaits hairstyle goes back to at least the eleventh century.

Although it is not possible to ascertain if this hairstyle was the result of foreign influence, it is unlikely that this was a Western import. Although the presence of Westerners increased during the eleventh century, we mainly find them in areas like the army and trade, that is, in male-dominated areas. The female presence in aristocratic spheres seems to have been rather restricted.[914] Moreover, the number of Western brides in Constantinople as a result of diplomatic marriages during the eleventh century was very limited. An early case was Olympias, Robert Guiscard's daughter, who arrived in Constantinople to marry Michael VII's son in the 1070's. In any case, the portrait of Zoe and Theodora predates Olympias' arrival.

Written sources can provide us with more information regarding female hairstyles. In his commentary of the canon 96 of the Council in Trullo (692), Zonaras criticized the superfluous practices employed by some people to arrange their hair during his time.[915] Among the different practices, he related how they made every effort to have their hair grow long, if possible as far as the waist (πᾶσαν σπουδὴν ποιουμένοις κομᾷν, καὶ γυναικώδεις φέρειν βοστρύχους, μέχρι ζωστῆρος καθιεμένους, εἰ δυνατόν). Zonaras did not specify if his critique concerned men or women or was directed against imperial individuals. Nonetheless, his commentary about the long hair would fit the two plaits hairstyle. We do not know when Zonaras wrote, but he was still alive in 1161, when

[913] Hahnloser and Polacco (1965), plate 61.

[914] A certain woman called Maria 'τῇ Οὐγκραίνη' (Hungarian or Pecheneg?) is mentioned in the will of Kale Pakouriane (Lefort, 1990, pp. 175, 181). PBW Maria 112

[915] Rhalles and Potles (1852), p. 534.

Emperor Manuel I married a second time.[916] Thus, it is likely that he witnessed the ladies at court or he had heard about their hairstyles.

The earlier examples show that Piroska's hairstyle followed a Byzantine fashion, though the depiction in mosaic shows it in much more intricate detail. Perhaps this sophistication is just a consequence of the portrait being more detailed, as a result of the mosaic technique or maybe the hairstyle became more elaborate. The hair on both sides of her face seems to be arranged in curls, or possibly braided too. The two-plaited hairstyle is not common in Byzantine imagery; it does not seem to appear in aristocratic portraits of the period. The portrait of Anna Radene is a good example (Image 37).[917] It is found in the church of Hagioi Anargyroi at Kastoria and is dated to the end of the twelfth century. In her case it has been suggested that Anna was portrayed wearing a wig because of the wide and unusual shape depicted. Although it is possible that no other examples of the two-plaited hairstyle have survived, the lack of examples could be the result of the critiques by the clergy.

The two plaits seem to have found their way into literature as a much later reference shows. It occurs in the Greek romance *Livistros and Rodamni*, probably written at some point in the first half of the fourteenth century.[918] Early in the story, a Latin noble by the name of Livistros meets while dreaming the allegory of Desire, a beautiful and enchanting lady whose hair is described in the following terms: 'Her hair was the color of milk and was made up into two plaits hanging low (εἰς δυὸ πλεμμένη χαμιλὰ) with curls in places.'[919] This description of two braids falling low matches the hairstyle of the imperial portraits. However, the romance is full of Western details. For example, Desire is described as wearing a Latin dress. Although the romance also includes many Byzantine elements, this piece of evidence is difficult to interpret. On one hand, it is

[916] Macrides (1990), p. 73.

[917] Emmanuel (1993-1994), p. 119.

[918] Beaton (1996), p. 108.

[919] Wagner (1881), p. 255; Betts (1995), p.102.

possible that the hairstyle described in the romance was inspired by the imperial iconography of the end of the Middle Byzantine period. On the other hand, it is also possible that the two-plait hairstyle may have been taken from Western sources. By the fourteenth century, parts of the Byzantine Empire were ruled by Westerners as a result of the Fourth Crusade. Thus, Western imports were more likely to be found among Byzantines. One of these could have been the plaited hairstyle. For this reason, it is necessary to consider this hairstyle in the relation with Western hairstyle fashion. This is not an easy task as studies concerning Western female hairstyles offer different chronologies. In her work on women's hairstyles and hats worn by English women, Georgine de Courtais pointed out that in England women only appeared in public showing their hair uncovered from the second quarter of the twelfth century.[920] She explained that ladies arranged their hair in two plaits hanging down the front. She added that such plaits could be of exaggerated length and in some cases were thickened with false hair. However, it is surprising to see that the two-plait hairstyle was already being worn in Byzantium at least half a century before. In her more general study, Victoria Sherrow explained that during the Middle Ages, women of the upper classes wore long hair, while young girls tended to wear theirs loose or in two plaits.[921] She dated its popularity in the West from 1000 to 1200.[922] After that period, plaits remained in fashion but they were coiled in the back or above their ears. Thus, it is not possible to say if Byzantine hairstyle fashion influenced the way in which Western women arranged their hair. At the moment the chronology suggests that it could be a possibility, though the opposite still remains an option. Nonetheless, what is significant is the fact that apparently both Western and Byzantine women employed the two plaits hairstyle during the same period.

To conclude, a complete history of the Byzantine female hairstyle remains to be written. It is possible to say that the popularity of the Western medieval plaits seems to have

[920] De Courtais (2006), pp. 11, 14-15.

[921] Sherrow (2006), p. 264.

[922] Sherrow (2001), p. 143.

eclipsed the Byzantine tradition, which certainly existed and may have contributed more than previously expected. The similarity concerning the plaited hairstyle in both Western Europe and Byzantium is significant, however, as the next section demonstrates, this was not the case of male hairstyle.

Male Hairstyles and Facial Hair: The history of men's hair in Byzantium has been studied to a greater extent than women's. Nevertheless, it is more complex than it may seem. As is frequently the case, visual evidence and literary sources often do not go together. Marie-France Auzépy's article is the most recent and deep study regarding male hair and beard in Byzantium from the seventh to the tenth centuries.[923] This research focuses on the following period, the eleventh and twelfth centuries, from which there are several details that can be discussed. In the following study hair and beard are presented separately.

Hair. The main feature concerning the hair of men in the Middle Byzantine period is its length. During these centuries it varied and it is obvious that fashion changed. In certain periods the typical style was longer hair, while in others it was usual to have it shorter. In his *Retribution*, Liudprand of Cremona reported that during the events that followed Romanos I's fall, his sons Stephen and Constantine placated the Constantinopolitan populace by forcing the future Constantine VII to show his head to the people. He also added that his hair was hanging down through one of the gates of the palace.[924] They ordered this so the people would know that Constantine was alive. The narration gives the impression that Constantine's hair was long. Also, in his *Relatio de Legatione Constantinopolitana*, Liudprand compared the King of the Greeks and the King of the Franks. He said that the Byzantine emperor, at that time Nikephoros II Phokas

[923] Auzépy (2002), pp. 1-12.

[924] Liudprand of Cremona, pp. 184-185.

(963-969), was long-haired (crinitus).[925] On the other hand, he said that the King of the Franks had his hair elegantly cut. It is obvious that the differences between the two rulers were clear. From Liudprand's account it is possible to say that Western and Byzantine men did not share the same hairstyles in the tenth century.

It appears that during the tenth century the fashion for Byzantine men was to have the hair long. This is at least the case of the emperors. Evidence for this characteristic is found for example in coins. During most of the tenth century coins seem to depict their hair falling or in a stylised bob, which probably should be interpreted as a rather long hair (Image 38).[926] This kind of representation is repeated from previous centuries. Other visual evidence is found in imperial portraits, for instance the well known mosaic representation of an anonymous prostrated emperor in Hagia Sophia (Image 39).[927] His hair can be seen over the emperor's back. There is also further written evidence regarding non imperial figures. Harun Yahya, a tenth-century Muslim, narrated his experience in the Byzantine capital. Describing an imperial procession, he reported the long hair of some of its participants.[928] Their hair reached their shoulders.

This trend does not seem to have lasted until the end of the Middle Byzantine period. For example, the portrait of Basil II depicted in the manuscript Marc. Gr. Z 17 does not seem to show long hair.[929] The portrait seems to show the emperor wearing short grey hair (Image 40). If he was still wearing long hair, it cannot be appreciated clearly. Depictions on later coins are difficult to interpret because the emperors were represented in full figure. As a result, the hair was not very detailed and usually only the prependoulia of the crown are visible. A reference in the *Alexiad* can yield more evidence regarding a possible change of fashion. When Anna described Robert

[925] Ibid., p. 263.

[926] Grierson (1973), plates XXIV and XXXV (Leo VI), XXXIX (Constantine VII) and XLI (Nikephoros II).

[927] Whittemore (1933), p. 18, plate XIV.

[928] Vasiliev (1932), p. 158.

[929] Spatharakis (1976), pp. 20-26, fig. 6.

Guiscard's hair, she said that it was always of the right length (σύμμετρον τὴν κόμην ἔχων ἀεὶ τῇ κεφαλῇ).[930] This piece of information is unclear but it implies that Guiscard's hair had the same length as Byzantine men, which was shorter than Westerners. Anna's description of another Westerner suggests that Guiscard's hair was in fact short. This second Westerner was Bohemond, Guiscard's illegitimate son.[931] Anna said that his hair was light-coloured and did not go down to his shoulders as it did with other barbarians (καὶ ἡ κόμη ὑπόξανθος, ἀλλ' οὔμενουν μέχρι τῶν μεταφρένων αἰωρουμένη κατὰ τοὺς ἄλλους βαρβάρους). Although she did not specify which barbarians, it is possible to assume that she referred to Westerners, possibly Normans. She added that actually Bohemond had no predilection for long hair, and wore his short, to the ears. Anna's descriptions provide us with significant details concerning the differences between Byzantines and Westerners during her time. One is the length of their respective hair. Anna's information shows that Westerners mainly wore long hair, usually to the shoulders. It is indeed true that during this period Westerners wore long hair, although the Western church opposed this fashion and attempted to impose a shorter style.[932] On the other hand, the portraits of eleventh-century Byzantine emperors, for example the mosaic of Constantine IX Monomachos in Hagia Sophia, do not show their hair long or reaching their shoulders (Image 41).[933] This detail does not prove that it was in fact very short, but Anna's comment confirms that Byzantines did not have their hair as long as Westerners did.

Towards the end of the tenth century there was a change in Byzantine male hairstyle. However, it is possible that the fashion may have changed again during the twelfth century. At least some imagery shows that the hair was left to grow longer. Some examples are found on ceramics dated to the second half of the twelfth century. One glazed plate from Rhodes is decorated with a dance scene, on which a very tall man is

[930] Anna Komnene, p. 183.

[931] Ibid., p. 412.

[932] Sherow (2006), p. 265; Corson (1977), p. 93, 97

[933] Whittemore (1942), plate X.

depicted with long curly hair.[934] In addition, a glazed bowl from Pella (Macedonia) shows an armed warrior who also has long hair.[935] It is likely that during the twelfth century long hair became fashionable again. As we have seen, Zonaras mentioned the people's custom of leaving their hair long. If he was writing at some point in the mid-twelfth century, this could suggest that by then long hair among men was already becoming fashionable.[936] An imperial figure that may have embraced the fashion for wearing long hair was the Sebastokrator Isaac. Three different images associated with John's brother show a figure with a rather long hair. The first is Isaac's portrait in mosaic at the church of the Chora monastery. The portrait shows Isaac kneeling next to an image of the Mother of God while he looks towards an image of Christ (Image 42). His hair is depicted over his shoulder, giving the impression that the sebastokrator wears long hair. While the mosaic is dated to the early fourteenth century, it has been suggested that it was produced after a twelfth-century portrait of Isaac kept in the church.[937] The second image is found in the Codex Ebnerianus, an illuminated manuscript of the Bodleian Library in Oxford (Auct. T. inf. 1. 10).[938] It includes the image of an aristocratic figure whose hair is depicted on both sides of his face (Image 43). It is not possible to say more about the hair as the depiction is too small. Kallirroe Linardou has recently proposed that the manuscript was commissioned by Isaac and the anonymous figure is his portrait.[939] The third and last image is part of the fresco decoration the church of the Kosmosoteira monastery in Bera. The frescoes include four standing military saints, one of whom, St Merkourios, has been tentatively identified as the founder of the monastery, the Sebastokrator Isaac (Image 44).[940] This figure is

[934] Papanikola-Bakirtzi (2002), pp. 200-201, n. 223.

[935] Ibid., p. 330, n. 365.

[936] Beck (1986), pp. 334-335.

[937] Linardou (forthcoming).

[938] Ibid.; Hutter (1977), pp. 59-67, num. 39.

[939] Linardou (forthcoming).

[940] Bakirtzis (2001), pp. 86-87.

depicted with the hair falling on both sides of his face. There is enough detail to suggest that his hair was long and curly. If the three images indeed convey Isaac's look, it is possible to say that the sebastokrator wore his hair long.

Michael Choniates was another author who reported hair practices of the Byzantine population. In a funerary oration written for his godfather Niketas, the metropolitan of Chonai, Michael narrated Niketas' efforts to change the habits of its community, mainly those who dedicated too much attention to their bodies.[941] Michael informs us that men used to curl their hair, their curls falling on their shoulders down to the back exactly like women. Niketas, a eunuch, was already metropolitan of Chonai in 1143, when Manuel had just become emperor and was on his way to Constantinople through Asia Minor.[942] This detail may suggest that changes in male hairstyle were underway by the mid-twelfth century. This piece of evidence could show that such practices were taking place in provincial cities, that is long hair had become fashionable beyond the imperial court. However, it has been suggested that Michael may have provided further details from his personal experience in Constantinople.[943]

Another piece of evidence regarding long hair in provincial centres is found depicted on the walls of the church of the Hagioi Anargyroi in Kastoria, mentioned above. The portrait of Theodore Lemniotes, the husband of Anna Radene, shows his hair falling over his left shoulder (Image 45).[944] Although the paintings have been dated to the end of the twelfth century, Theodore's hairstyle suggests that by then Byzantine men wore their hair long. It is likely that this hairstyle followed the fashion at the imperial court.

To conclude, Byzantine fashion changed, and the same thing happened to Western fashion. What seems obvious is that long hair may have become fashionable again in Byzantium. However, it is not possible to assume that all men wore long hair. The

[941] Lambros (1879), p. 42.

[942] Niketas Choniates, p. 219.

[943] Beck (1979), p. 320, note 1.

[944] Hatzaki (2009), p. 24 and figure 10.

reasons behind the return of the long-haired fashion are difficult to identify. Literary sources and iconography show that fashion changed and evolved, without telling us why. The possibility that long hair became fashionable during the twelfth century could be related to the contact with Westerners, as they wore longer hair. For example, the Western presence at court and in the Byzantine army could explain this change. The evidence regarding the beard provides us with more details.

Beard. The beard was a significant and compulsory physical feature of the Byzantine man.[945] The lack of beard could signify a very young man or the possible identification of a man as a eunuch or a woman, even a hermaphrodite. Thus, the beard was one of the traits that distinguished certain classes and groups within Byzantium.[946] It also differentiated the Byzantines from other ethnic groups which did not wear them. This is the case of the Westerners. Although some of them wore a beard, in the West the norm was to be clean-shaven. The eleventh century probably marked a decisive moment for facial hair in Western Europe. The clergy was ordered to shave as a rule.[947] Moreover, during this period the Western church tried to regulate men's hair and issued several decrees that also forced laymen to shave their beard.[948] Moralists also attacked those who grew a beard and it is clear that those who did not shave it were a minority, sometimes as a result of a particular situation. This difference between Westerners and Byzantines was already pointed out by Keroularios in 1045 and it continued to appear in the writings and lists of errors written by Byzantines and Westerners against each

[945] Bréhier (1950), p. 48.

[946] However, eunuchs could still be depicted with beard. According to Bente K. Bjørnholt and Liz James this artistic oddity emphasized their manliness (2007, pp. 51-56).

[947] Reynolds (1950), p. 120; Corson (1977), p. 99; Peterkin (2001), p.25.

[948] Reynolds (1950), pp. 91-92; Corson (1977), pp. 95, 98.

other.[949] However, this period witnessed more contacts between the two groups and the evidence certainly shows remarkable interaction.

Amatus of Montecassino in his *History of the Normans* related an incident that provides information about facial hair.[950] We are told that the Archbishop of Salerno Alfanus I went on pilgrimage to Jerusalem. During his return journey he stayed in Constantinople as a hostage. Once Alfanus was back in Italy he went to meet Robert Guiscard, who received him as a friend. Amatus reported that Robert was shocked that Alfanus had a long beard as if he were from Constantinople. The trip has been dated to around 1062.[951] From this piece of evidence it is clear that at least long beards were not common among the Normans in Southern Italy. Although we do not know where Alfanus grew his beard, Robert's reaction implies that such a beard was a Byzantine feature. Perhaps Alfanus grew it while he was in Constantinople in order to follow the Byzantine fashion. The reason for growing such a long Byzantine beard is not certain. He may have felt that it was polite to do so, but maybe we are in front of an act of cultural appropriation. It is possible that Alfanus was impressed by the habit of Byzantine ecclesiastics of growing long beards and decided to emulate them.

The next important piece of evidence is Anna's description of Robert Guiscard. As we have seen above, the length of his hair appeared right to the Byzantine princess. She also added that Guiscard wore a thick beard (βαθυπώγων).[952] The fact that both details seem to be in agreement with the Byzantine fashion is interesting. Anna's description surely gives us an idea of how Guiscard looked like during the years of his invasion of the Balkans. Thus, the fact that he had a thick beard may suggest that he may have decided to grow one at some point before his invasion of the Balkans. The beard would have provided him with a more Byzantine look, an essential step to win over the population

[949] Bréhier (1899), pp. 184-185; Auzépy (2002), p. 9; Kolbaba (2000), pp. 56-57; Constable (1985), pp. 111-112.

[950] Amatus of Montecassino, pp. 124-125.

[951] Ibid, p. 123, note 49; Lentini (1959), pp. 437-443.

[952] Anna Komnene, p. 183.

of the empire he intended to conquer.[953] On the other hand, Anna's description of Bohemond, Guiscard's son, informs us that he did not wear a beard (ὁ ξυρὸς γὰρ ἐπεξῆλθεν αὐτὸ).[954] However, narrating the beginning of Guiscard's invasion Anna mentioned that the Venetians made fun of Bohemond's beard without disclosing the reason (τῶν δὲ εἰς τὸν πώγωνα αὐτοῦ ἐφυβρισάντων τοῦτο...).[955] The fact that Westerners were clean-shaven must have been rather shocking to the Byzantines. This physical trait probably singled out Westerners from the rest of the population in Byzantium. However, in this early period Byzantine references do not seem to highlight this detail as a threatening feature. For example, Archbishop Theophylact of Ohrid thought that it could be rather funny. Writing a letter about the Western differences, he warned his recipient not to laugh about the fact that Westerners shaved.[956] The letter may have been written c.1090.

Another significant piece of information concerning the beard is found in Andrea Dandolo's chronicle of the Venetian doges.[957] His narration of the conflict between Venice and the Byzantine Empire in the 1120s includes an extremely interesting detail. We are told that the Venetian Doge Domenicho Michele decreed that all the Venetians with beard be clean-shaven from that moment onwards. The tension between the Byzantines and Westerners was such that apparently the doge did not want the Venetians to look like Byzantines.[958] Regarding this reference it is also interesting to note Choniates' description of the Venetians in Byzantium.[959] He narrated that they migrated into the Byzantine Empire where they were soon considered as native Romans, that is

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[953] However, Orderic Vitalis, who is not fond of beards, informs us that Guiscard swore not to bathe, shave or cut his hair before marching on Rome in 1084. This has been interpreted as a sign of punishment or penance (Constable,1985, pp. 66-67).

[954] Anna Komnene, p. 412.

[955] Ibid., p. 123.

[956] Theophylact of Ohrid, pp. 248-249.

[957] Andrea Dandolo, p. 236.

[958] Nicol (1988), p. 80.

[959] Niketas Choniates, p. 171.

Byzantines. The only difference was that they simply kept their family names. This piece of evidence could imply that the Venetians established in Byzantium had adopted certain local habits and customs. The doge may not have wished the Venetians in the empire to be confused with Byzantines, establishing a clear physical distinction between his citizens and the Byzantines. The fact that in the West wearing a beard was banned could suggest that Venetians did indeed wear beards in imitation of the Byzantines. This is likely as the Venetians were copying other Byzantine practices, for example, artistic techniques and buildings. This information is noteworthy because it shows that during this period habits were not only being imported from West to East, but also in the opposite direction.

On the other hand, a few Byzantine references suggest certain changes during the second half of the twelfth century and later. In the aforementioned commentary of canon 96, Zonaras also condemns shaving the beard, which he calls a disease brought about by foreigners of Christian name (νόσημα ἐπιδήμιον ἐνσκῆψαν τοῖς χριστωνύμοις).[960] It is interesting that the canon does not mention anything about beards. Thus, Zonaras' comment demonstrates a contemporary trend. Although he does not specify that this practice was the result of direct Western influence, Robert Browning argued that he actually referred to them as a clean-shaven chin was the stereotype of the Latins.[961] According to him, Zonaras found the practice to go against the ethnic and cultural identity of the Byzantines and was also part of a westernisation which aroused hostility during Manuel's reign. Another reference is found in the source written by Michael Choniates and mentioned above. Describing further habits of the community, he narrated how men had their faces shaved smooth like women and young boys.[962] For Michael, this situation did not allow for differentiation between a man and a woman. The men described by Michael were accused of dedicating too much care to their bodies. According to him, they looked like women or the hermaphrodites of ancient

[960] Rhalles and Potles (1852), p. 535.

[961] Browning (1989), p. 425.

[962] Beck (1979), p. 320.

Greece. However, it is not mentioned for which reason they shaved. Another piece of evidence may provide us with more information. In his commentary on the *Odyssey*, Eustathios of Thessaloniki made an interesting observation on the passage where Hermes, in the likeness of a young man with the first down on his lip, met Odysseus.[963] Eustathios compared the god's likeness to those in Byzantium who followed the Latin customs (οἱ Λατινοήθεις μεθοδεύοντες), that is they were always trying artificially to look as if they were just getting a beard, constantly shaving and feeling ashamed if their beard started to grow out. This remark is indeed an accusation against Byzantine men for shaving their beard, which he saw as a Western practice.[964] It is unlikely that shaving one's beard became a general trend. However, this claim suggests that Byzantines were aware that the Western presence was generating certain changes in the Byzantine society. The information indirectly blames Westerners for introducing new customs that threatened the Byzantine traditions, as they had become a model for the new Byzantine generations. Eustathios' reference definitely identifies the Westerners as the source for the change in the Byzantine approach to the beard. Michael Choniates' reference, probably written at some point in the second half of the twelfth century, confirms that some Byzantine men were by then shaving. Although it is not possible to ascertain that this innovation was the result of Western influence, it is during this period that the Western presence must have been felt stronger.

To conclude, it seems that the hair of the Byzantine men during the eleventh and twelfth centuries varied and never followed an exclusive norm or trend. The sources show that hairstyles and beard in the West and Byzantium did not go together. However, certain references seem to suggest that during part of this period, Byzantium still exercised a significant power of integration over the foreigners established within the empire. This seems to have been the case of the Venetians. On the other hand, the increasing presence of Westerners in the Byzantine Empire introduced an alternative fashion to the local one. This new fashion slowly gained some followers, but it did not become general.

[963] Koukoules (1951), p. 359; Constable (1985), p. 97.

[964] Koukoules (1951), p. 359.

Moreover, it provoked the reaction from ecclesiastic figures who opposed such changes in the Byzantine society. They did not approve changes to the Byzantine traditions, reminding us of Balsamon's treatise on the use of semantra. Nevertheless, not all Western habits practised in Byzantium are criticised in the written sources. This is the case of the custom presented in the last section of this chapter.

HAND GESTURES AND OATHS

The following section focuses on a gesture which was performed with the hands and that is found in both Byzantine and Western sources. The gesture was performed by two people and a number of accounts show it taking place between Byzantines and Westerners, hence the reason it has been included. The analysis of its meaning provides us with information concerning the relations between certain Byzantines and Westerners. Although it has been mentioned by several scholars, this study puts all the sources together and it attempts a different interpretation of the gesture.

The Gesture: The main reason for including the gesture in this chapter is a reference narrated in both the *Alexiad* and Bryennios' chronicle, where the gesture appears in relation to Western mercenaries. In the *Alexiad* the reference is found in book one, while the future emperor Alexios was still domestikos of the Schools.[965] Anna described her father's campaign to quell the uprising of Nikephoros Bryennios the Elder, the doux of Dyrrachion. Alexios and the imperial army encountered Nikephoros' troops in Thrace, where a battle was fought. It was the year 1078, and Nikephoros III Botaneiates had just overthrown Michael VII Doukas. Anna narrated how during the first part of the battle, when Alexios' army seemed defeated, his group of Frankish mercenaries either surrendered or defected and joined Bryennios' army.[966] Anna also related the moment

[965] Anna Komnene, p. 24.

[966] Haldon (2008), pp. 181-186; Neville (2012), p. 71.

and the event which ensued when the Frankish contingent arrived where Nikephoros was stationed. They dismounted their horses and 'gave their right hand to him' (καὶ γὰρ τῶν ἵππων ἀποβεβηκότων τῶν Φράγγων καὶ δεξιὰς διδόντων αὐτῷ, καθάπερ δὴ πάτριόν ἐστι διδόναι τὰς πίστεις). She added that the ritual performed by the Franks was the way in which they promised to be faithful, and she also explained that such an oath was their ancestral custom. Anna does not say that the gesture was a Western custom, but she associates it with the Frankish mercenaries. Thus, the gesture was considered a foreign custom, most probably Western. From her description, we are left to believe that the Byzantines did not use the same gesture, or if they had, it did not imply the same message or connotation. As Anna mentioned that the Franks gave their right hand to Nikephoros, it is possible to believe that at the time the Byzantines knew the gesture, or at least some were acquainted with the custom and its meaning. While Nikephoros may have improvised, it is apparent that he was aware of the meaning of such a gesture. In this case the gesture can be see as a symbol of good faith. It was a sign of peace towards Nikephoros after they had fought against him in Alexios' army. Perhaps, as the Franks had now entered Nikephoros' service, the gesture can also be seen as the procedure to formalise the new relationship established between a general and his new soldiers. According to Anna, the event was watched by other soldiers of Nikephoros' army, who had gathered to see what was going on. The gesture must have been evident to all those present. Alexios himself was watching the scene standing on a nearby hill, from where he was showing the positions of the enemy to his new detachment of Turkish soldiers that had just arrived. The performance of the ritual had different messages according to the audience. Alexios learnt about their surrender, while Nikephoros had accepted their peace offer. Everyone who had witnessed the event must have been aware of the meaningful gesture.

The event was also narrated by Anna's husband, the Caesar Nikephoros Bryennios, in his work dedicated to the Komnenian family, known as *Materials for a History*.[967] Regarding the battle, he included some minor details not reported by Anna. For

[967] Nikephoros Bryennios, p. 274.

example, Nikephoros added that Alexios' Frankish contingent was from Italy.[968] Perhaps they were Normans that first had fought as mercenaries in Southern Italy. More importantly, Nikephoros described the gesture in different terms than Anna did. This is interesting as Anna's source for the *Alexiad* has been assumed to be Bryennios' text.[969] Nikephoros mentioned that the Franks at the service of the Emperor Nikephoros III Botaneiates defected to Nikephoros Bryennios. They dismounted from their horses and 'placed their hands in his hands according to their ancestral custom to commit their faith' (ταῖς ἐκίνου χερσί τὰς χεῖρας ἐμβάλλοντες, ὡς δὴ πάτριος νόμος τούτους ἐστί, πίστεις ἐδίδουν). Nikephoros also added that all the soldiers of the army flocked to witness the scene. The differences between Anna and Nikephoros seem to be minor, but they are nevertheless significant.[970] First, Anna and Bryennios used different verbs to describe apparently the same action. While Anna used the verb 'to give' (δίδωμι), Nikephoros used 'to put in' (ἐμβάλλω). Anna also detailed that the Franks used their right hands, while Bryennios did not specify which one, though the use of plural could suggest that each mercenary put both hands. Finally and more important, Nikephoros' description is more detailed, as he narrated that Bryennios' used both hands in the gesture. The conclusion of these differences suggests that the authors understood the performance in a different way and as a result their descriptions, though similar, are not alike. However, for Anna and Nikephoros the meaning of the gesture was the same one. The clarification after the gesture confirms that. The fact that both authors briefly explained what the gesture meant probably indicates that they expected their audience to ignore its meaning. This battle was also narrated by Attaleiates, but he neither mentioned the gesture nor the Frankish surrender.[971]

This remarkable reference has not received a lot of scholarly attention. Pryor interpreted the gesture as if the Frankish mercenaries had performed vassal homage and had sworn

[968] Ibid., p. 264.

[969] Howard-Johnston (1996), pp. 260-301; Neville (2012), p. 186.

[970] The variant has been noted by Ruth Macrides: George Akropolites (2007), p.p. 363-364, note 14.

[971] Michael Attaleiates, pp. 206-208.

fealty.[972] Nevertheless, he described the ceremony with the Frankish soldiers 'kneeling with hands between hands', which does not match the description of the event in our sources. Neither Anna nor Nikephoros narrated the Frankish soldiers kneeling down. It seems that Pryor was trying to fit the description with the feudal ceremony of homage used in Western Europe. While Anna probably copied Nikephoros, it is more difficult that the latter may have missed details about the performance. Although he was not present in the battle, Bryennios was Nikephoros' grandson and thus he probably had reliable sources. Moreover, the existence of a later and similar description reduces the possibility that the mercenaries actually kneeled down. Jonathan Shepard used the reference by Anna and Nikephoros to show that by the First Crusade, Alexios was probably well acquainted with the Latin oath-taking practices. He had either received oaths of fealty from Western knights whom he employed in the 1070s or knew of them by having witnessed such events, as Anna and Nikephoros narrated.[973] Shepard saw the gesture as a formal ceremony of oath-giving. While it is true that the gesture surely was a prescribed habit, the circumstances of the event show that the occasion was not very formal. The gesture was the result of Alexios' mercenaries surrendering during a battle. The gesture took place in the battlefield. Finally, Dieter Reinsch simply acknowledged that Anna was right to consider the Western gesture as a foreign custom.[974]

The First Crusade: The next evidence regarding a hand gesture performed between Westerners and Byzantines is found in the Western sources narrating the First Crusade. The arrival of the Crusader armies forced Alexios to find a way to associate their chiefs to his authority. First of all, Alexios asked the Crusader leaders to swear allegiance to him. For example, Anna reported that one after the other, when they arrived in Constantinople, they were asked to take the customary oath of the Westerners (τὸν τοῖς

[972] Pryor (1984), p. 115.

[973] Shepard (1996), pp. 106-107.

[974] Anna Komnene (1996), p. 39, note 54.

Λατίνοις συνήθη ὅρκον).[975] Some of the Crusader leaders seemed to have opposed this, among them was Godfrey Duke of Lorraine. After violent skirmishes around the Byzantine capital, Godfrey finally swore the oath (ὅρκον).[976] According to Anna, the oath obliged Godfrey to return any former Byzantine territory they had conquered to the emperor's officials. Thus, Alexios and the Crusaders reached an agreement which was going to regulate their relations throughout the expedition. This agreement was certainly a contract between two parts. Alexios would assist them during their campaign while the Crusaders would not harm Byzantine interests as well as return any territory which had previously been under Byzantine rule. If we are to believe Anna, Alexios intended to subordinate the Crusader chiefs by employing their own methods, the customary oath of the Westerners. By doing so Alexios employed Western usages in order that his counterparts would understand the new relationship established.[977] In one word, Alexios acted as a Westerner so the Crusaders would accept him as the person in charge. However, it is not clear that the oath mentioned by Anna was the same as the feudal oaths of homage and fealty. Shepard argued that the arrangement agreed between the Crusader leaders and Alexios had no precedent.[978] Moreover, for his association with the Crusader leaders Alexios seems to have also used the Byzantine method. Alexios became the father of the main Crusader leaders in a ritual of adoption.[979]

There are more details about the oaths taken by the Crusaders. They are provided by the Western sources. The first example is found in the account of the First Crusade by Albert of Aachen. Albert reported that Godfrey was not only adopted by Alexios as his son, but also became his vassal.[980] Albert's narration included the method by which Godfrey became Alexios' vassal, by joining their hands (sed etiam in vassalum junctis

[975] For example, Hugh of Vermandois, Anna Komnene, p. 303.

[976] Anna Komnene, pp. 313-314.

[977] Ganshof (1961b), pp. 49-63.

[978] Shepard (1996), pp. 105-106.

[979]Ibid., pp. 81-82, 111-113.

[980] Albert of Aachen, p. 86-87.

manibus reddidit). However, the description does not offer details concerning the exact performance. The reference is not confirmed by any other account and raises doubts on its authenticity as it is unlikely that the Godfrey would have agreed to become a vassal of the Byzantine emperor. Furthermore, Albert was not present and may simply have assumed that, being the most usual in Western Europe, it was the ceremony which had been performed.

The next piece of evidence is found in Ralph of Caen's *Gesta Tancredi*.[981] This narration of the First Crusade focuses on the deeds of Tancred, nephew of Bohemond. Ralph reported a hand gesture twice. The first time is in relation to the oaths taken by Bohemond.[982] The author reminds us that Bohemond had concluded treaties with Alexios, which seem to have been ratified, among others, by the two parts joining their right hands and also the oath of homage (Boamundus per pacta federa, per junctas dexteras, per hominagii fidem adiratus).[983] The second reference is in the narration of Tancred's submission to Alexios' will.[984] After the fall of Nicaea, Alexios reminded the leaders of the Crusade the oath that they had taken and asked those who had not to meet him before departing for Antioch. Among them was Tancred, who had avoided swearing to the Byzantine emperor. However, Bohemond forced him to agree to Alexios' demands and brought Tancred in front of the emperor. Ralph described the encounter and reported a speech that Tancred gave to Alexios. He stated that he would serve the emperor if Alexios would join the Crusade and would help the crusaders. According to Ralph, Alexios agreed with Tancred's words and then they joined their right hands (Iugunt dextras).[985] Ralph's information regarding the hand gesture is more precise; we learn that as part of their agreements and oaths, Alexios clasped his right hand with

[981] Ralph of Caen (2005), pp. 32, 40-42.

[982] Ralph of Caen (2011), p. 21.

[983] Jonathan Shepard has argued that the bond established between Alexios and Bohemond was special and closer than that between the emperor and the rest of the Crusader leaders (1988b), pp. 185-277.

[984] Ralph of Caen (2005), p. 42.

[985] Ralph of Caen (2011), p. 22.

Bohemond's and Tancred's. The gesture, which resembles a modern handshake, is likely to be the same that Anna and Nikephoros described. This piece of evidence is significant because a Latin source seems to confirm the gesture described by Anna. This is probably the same gesture, recorded here from a Western point of view. The account continues telling us that Tancred, after having celebrated the same rite that the other leaders had observed in making these agreements (Celebrato ritu, quem ad haec federa principes obseruant), was asked to make a request from the emperor. The rite is likely to have been the oath-taking ceremony. Tancred dared to ask for the imperial tent. From the narration it is possible to deduce that the gesture with the right hands and the rite were two different parts of the same meeting, or at least they seem to have occurred one after the other.

Anna Komnene also narrated this event.[986] However, she did not mention the gesture with the right hands. She used the opportunity to criticise Tancred's bold request of the imperial tent full of money. Her account informs us that Tancred only took the oath after he had requested the tent (δίδωσι καὶ αὐτὸς ὅρκια). Anna's omission of the gesture may just be accidental, or perhaps she was never told about it. After all, she has not described in detail the customary oath of the Westerners. However, it is also possible that she was aware but decided not to include it. The fact that Anna may have excluded the gesture on purpose is even more surprising as she had described it and explained its meaning at the beginning of the *Alexiad*. It is not possible to be certain about the reasons behind her omission. Although she had narrated the close contact between the Crusaders and Alexios, it is likely that she was not keen on showing that her father had performed a gesture that the Byzantines had in some way associated with Westerners. The narration of the gesture would reveal Alexios as a Westernised Byzantine emperor.[987] On the other hand, this detail does not need to show a process of acculturation by Alexios, but his alternative and personal way to approach the Crusaders, as Shepard has noted.[988]

[986] Anna Komnene, pp. 329-330.

[987] Malamut (2007), p. 176.

[988] Shepard (1996), pp. 92-98, 104.

The third source that mentions a hand gesture is the *Hierosolymita*, the work of Ekkehard of Aura. Describing the Crusaders of 1101, he enumerated the rites that associated Alexios and the Crusader leaders. Among them, Alexios seems to have received their hands (eisdemque post manus acceptas).[989] From all this evidence it is clear that the official establishment of an agreement between the Byzantine emperor and the Crusaders leaders was marked by a hand gesture which, at least according to Ralph of Caen, involved the use of the right hands. It is possible that the other Western sources regarding the First Crusade did not include such a detail because the gesture would probably have seen as common, and thus not necessary to report. However, according to the Western chronicles, the Crusader leaders swore homage to Alexios. For them it was important to state that the Byzantine emperor had not kept his promise, his part of the agreement, by not helping them during the siege of Antioch. The conquest of Antioch and the following events concerning the status of the Syrian city were going to spoil the relationship between Alexios and most of the Crusaders leaders. For example, one of the results was Bohemond's invasion of the Balkans in 1107. The treaty of Devol (1108) between Bohemond and Alexios saw the further employment of feudal usages.[990] Bohemond certainly became Alexios' vassal (λίζιον).[991] Although he was allowed to continue ruling over Antioch, he would do it in the name of the Byzantine Empire. The conditions of the treaty, copied verbatim by Anna in the *Alexiad*, state that once Bohemond died, the city was to return to Byzantine administration. Nevertheless that was never the case. Bohemond never went back to Antioch and Tancred never accepted the conditions of the treaty.

Finally, the *Historia Ierosolimitana* of Albert of Aachen provides further evidence concerning the hand gesture. It appears mentioned a few times, always making reference to the right hand. For instance, the gesture took place soon after the arrival of the

[989] *RHC* (1895), p. 29.

[990] Anna Komnene, pp. 413-423.

[991] Ibid., p. 414.

Crusaders to Jerusalem.[992] Thus, it did not involve Byzantine and Western figures; in this case the gesture was performed between Westerners and Muslims. The Fatimid army had attacked Ramla and the Crusaders were garrisoned in a fortress. We are told that at some point, the Crusader soldiers agreed to clasp their right hands in return for their life. We are told that the surrender resulted in the beheading of all the Crusaders, but two prominent knights, Conrad and Arpin, who were taken on the pledge of their right hands and sent into captivity (sed Cunrado et Arpino in dextris eorum susceptis). This reference is significant because it confirms the gesture as a surrender sign. Another reference to the hand gesture is found at the beginning of the chronicle.[993] We are told that dukes and counts promised to god an expedition to the Holy Sepulchre and they pledged their right hands to it (huius uie datis dextris inter potentissimos creuit). In this case, the gesture implies a different message: these individuals promised each other to carry on their promise, it was a way to seal their agreement. Therefore, the ritual of the right hand could have one or another meaning according to the circumstances. The gesture was not an 'international' ritual and it seems to have originated in the West. However, according to Yvonne Friedman, who has studied peacemaking rituals in the Latin East, the hand gesture was not only limited to its use by Westerners.[994] Like the Byzantines, Muslims also learnt about the gesture and its meaning. In the latter's case this cultural transmission took place through the contacts in the Levant during the Crusades. Albert of Aachen narrates a significant example. After Antioch fell to the Crusaders, the ruler of Azaz in Syria was told by one of his mercenaries (a Turkish knight), who had married a Crusader captive, to become Godfrey's friend with the pledge of right hand (amicum datis dextris tibi).[995] It was the Crusader woman who instructed her husband about the gesture.[996] However, Friedman argues that the hand

[992] Albert of Aachen, pp. 644-647.

[993] Ibid., pp. 8-9.

[994] Friedman (2007), pp. 37.

[995] Albert of Aachen, pp. 344-347.

[996] Friedman (2007), pp. 34-35; Friedman (2011), p. 246.

gesture with surrender connotation, as in the case of the Crusaders at Ramla, was known to the Muslims. She believes that only the use of the right hand as means to seal a treaty was a Western custom and she cites the performance of the gesture between Richard I of England and Saladin in September 1191 as an example of acculturation.[997]

John and the Crusader States: A last reference yields more information regarding the gesture. It is found in a panegyric dedicated to John II by the rhetor Michael Italikos. It was written to celebrate John's expedition to Cilicia and Syria (1137-1138).[998] One of the most significant achievements of John's campaign was the temporary submission of the city of Antioch. The panegyric reports that the leaders of the Phoenicians submitted to him.[999] By Phoenicians the author meant the Westerners ruling the Holy Land. Michael reported that from 'afar they put their right hand' (καὶ πόρρωθεν ἐμβάλλουσι δέξιάν). The reference could be interpreted as a real event in which a hand gesture between John and the Crusader leaders was performed, though it is not certain who they were. The poem mentions Joscelin II Count of Edessa and Fulk King of Jerusalem; however the sources do not mention that the latter was present during John's sojourn in Syria. Paul Gautier proposed that one of the leaders was the Count of Tripoli, Raymond II.[1000] Moreover, Niketas Choniates narrated that as John considered both Raymond II of Tripoli and Raymond of Poitiers his liegemen (λίζιον), he decided to attack the cities around Antioch which were occupied by the Muslims.[1001] Although the Prince of Antioch Raymond of Poitiers is not clearly mentioned in Italikos' poem, Michael must have referred to him, as he surrendered Antioch to John. The city was one of the main objectives behind the Byzantine expedition. Regarding the King of Jerusalem, Orderic

[997] Friedman (2007), pp. 37-38.

[998] Fusco (1969-70), pp. 146-169.

[999] Ibid., p. 162.

[1000] Michael Italikos, p. 260, note 75.

[1001] Niketas Choniates, p. 27.

Vitalis narrated that Raymond of Poitiers had sent Fulk envoys in order to enquire how to proceed with the Byzantine demands during the siege of Antioch.[1002] According to Orderic, Fulk's reply was positive concerning John's rights over Antioch. Therefore Italikos' reference may have proclaimed the good intentions of the King of Jerusalem and the other Crusader leaders towards the Byzantine emperor. It is possible that the Count of Tripoli and the King of Jerusalem sent friendly emissaries to John. This case scenario would match Michael's description 'from afar', and thus the reference could be seen as a symbolic interpretation of the events. It is obvious that John's presence in Syria must have attracted the interest of the Crusaders, raising both fears and prospects.

The reference has not attracted a lot of attention. The event is seen as evidence that the Crusaders performed feudal homage to John.[1003] The narration is certainly similar to the event described by Anna and Nikephoros. However, Italikos' piece of evidence is a mixture of the other two. For example, Italikos used the verb to put in (ἐμβάλλω), the same one employed by Nikephoros Bryennios. On the other hand, Michael's narration includes the detail of the right hand, which was also described by Anna. Thus, although the three references are not identical, Anna's and Italikos' emphasize the element of the right hand. As we have seen above, the detail of the right hand is also emphasized by Ralph of Caen. What is clear is that with this expression Italikos made reference to the relationship between the Crusader States and the Byzantine Empire. The Western presence in the Levant opposed John's attempts to impose his authority in the region. However, when John's army threatened to take Antioch by force, the Crusaders decided to submit. The Crusaders were caught between two threats, Byzantium and the Muslims. Their submission to Byzantium was probably a temporary and clever move which they intended to exploit against the Muslims. The reference to the right hand probably was a ceremony that represented either the Crusader's submission or the agreement they had reached with John. Before John's arrival the relation between Antioch and Constantinople had been tense. The marriage proposal between Constance of Antioch

[1002] Orderic Vitalis, VI, pp. 506-509.

[1003] Lamma (1968), pp. 339-367; Fusco (1970-1971), p. 803., n. 93.

and John's youngest son Manuel had been cancelled and she was married to Raymond of Poitiers.[1004] Finally, when John's army arrived in Antioch, it was received with military resistance. Eventually a formal arrangement was concluded and John and Raymond of Poitiers became allies temporarily. It is likely that the gesture symbolised the official establishment of peaceful relations between the Byzantine emperor and the Crusaders.

The same expedition was also narrated by Nikephoros Basilakes. He also wrote a panegyric commemorating the campaign to Cilicia and Syria.[1005] Basilakes only made reference to the ruler of Antioch. The author mentioned the encounter between John II and Raymond of Antioch by describing Raymond's submission. According to Basilakes Raymond 'draws back his right hand, bends his neck and becomes an ally' (καὶ τὴν δεξιὰν ὑποστέλλεται, καὶ τὸν αὐχενα κάμπτεται, καὶ γίνεται ξύμμαχος).[1006] Although Basilakes described a gesture with the right hand, it is not the same one described by Italikos. Basilakes meant that Raymond had stopped attacking, that is he had put down the hand used to fight. Nonetheless, Basilakes added the gesture of bending the neck, which symbolised Raymond's obedience and respect towards John. We do not know if such a ceremony happened, but it could well be a fancy literary topos to describe Raymond's submission. For the Byzantines, the fact that John had received the submission of Antioch must have been a significant triumph, which his father had obtained in legal terms, but had never materialised.

In both narrations the meeting between John and the Crusaders during the campaign plays an important role. However, Italikos and Basilakes did not describe the same interaction. This literary detail could suggest the authors' different approach towards the Western rulers of the Levant, and also a diverse conception of the Byzantine emperor. From the references in both Nikephoros Bryennios and Anna Komnene, we can assume

[1004] Kinnamos, p. 16, Asbridge (2003), pp. 45-46.

[1005] Nikephoros Basilakes (1977), p. 109.

[1006] Fusco (1968), p. 294, n. 101.

that the hand gesture was a Western practice. If Italikos' narration was a real event in which a hand gesture was performed, it implies that he was aware of such a custom and most importantly, he decided to report it. The fact that he included it in his panegyric provides evidence that the audience was able to understand the meaning of the gesture. When Nikephoros and Anna mentioned the gesture, they briefly explained its meaning. On the other hand, Italikos did not give any details regarding its connotation. Although the literary piece did not encourage such a briefing, the possibility that the Byzantine court recognised the gesture would confirm that such a sign had become more common, or at least it was employed in the ceremonials between Byzantines and Westerners.

It is interesting to wonder if there was some reason for which Italikos decided to record such a gesture. John II had sent him on an embassy to the West, and so it is possible that he was more familiar with Western culture.[1007] And regarding the possible meaning of his surname, Paul Magdalino has suggested that Michael may have had some kind of Western connection, and proposed that perhaps he spoke Latin.[1008] These details show that Michael may have known Westerners and their practices, which could explain why he included the gesture. On the other hand, Basilakes' narration of the meeting describes Raymond bending his neck in front of the emperor. This detail, not mentioned by Italikos, shows a more traditional aspect of Byzantine power, a kind of prostration. However, it is not possible to know what exactly happened during the meeting. Whether true or not, what is significant is the fact that the gesture in Italikos' panegyric depicts a different figure of the Byzantine emperor.

Other authors narrated John's first campaign to Cilicia, though they did not include such minor details. Kinnamos narrated that when the Byzantine army besieged Antioch, Raymond begged John to accept him as the guardian of the city, while he would be proclaimed its lord.[1009] After a few days, these terms were agreed to and the troops

[1007] Angold (1995), p. 174.

[1008] Magdalino (2003), p. 51.

[1009] Kinnamos, pp. 18-19.

defending the city surrendered. Niketas Choniates did not mention any military operations, only that John was welcomed into Antioch by Raymond and the people of the city.[1010] William of Tyre has left us a longer description of the events.[1011] He narrated that certain persons were chosen as arbitrators and went to the camp of the emperor with proposals of peace. They finally arranged that Raymond, attended by all his barons, would present himself before the emperor and his courtiers, and then would swear allegiance and fealty to John. The Byzantine emperor would be allowed into Antioch or its citadel whenever he wanted. In return for the oath of fealty, if John succeeded in taking Aleppo, Shaizar and other places, he would hand them over to Raymond. This meeting between John and Raymond could well have been the occasion of the gesture described by Italikos. Orderic Vitalis has also left us an account of the events.[1012] He narrated that John invited Prince Raymond to a parley, a sort of peace conference. Raymond went to the meeting and the emperor exposed the Byzantine view regarding the issue of Antioch. John told him that Antioch was part of the Byzantine Empire. He also reminded him that Bohemond did homage to Alexios and swore, as the other Crusader leaders had done, to return to the empire any territories conquered by the Turks. Thus, John requested from Raymond the same settlement: to return the city to the empire. Raymond replied that he had received Antioch from the King of Jerusalem and that he had to consult the matter with him. As it has been mentioned above, envoys were sent to Fulk, and according to Orderic, the King told Raymond that John was right and asked the prince to make peace with the emperor. After the envoys were back, John and Raymond ratified a peace treaty. Raymond became the emperor's vassal and received Antioch from him.

The references by Italikos', Nikephoros and Anna seem to narrate a similar gesture. Nonetheless, there is a major difference between both events. While Nikephoros Bryennios had only been a Byzantine doux intending imperial power, John was the

[1010] Niketas Choniates, p. 27.

[1011] William of Tyre, vol. 2, pp. 92-93.

[1012] Orderic Vitalis, VI, pp. 502-503, 506-509.

Byzantine emperor. Moreover, the leaders of the Phoenicians were not simple Western mercenaries; they were the rulers of the Holy Land. The fact that both the mercenaries and Crusader rulers possibly used the same gesture demonstrates that it was indeed established among Westerners, but it had different connotations according to the circumstances. Finally, the fact that the Byzantine emperor had performed the hand gesture shows that part of the Western system of body language was used in certain occasions or ceremonies between Westerners and Byzantines.

The reference provides us with information about two important features about the period. First, the increasing presence of Westerners in and around Byzantium, in this case the Crusaders, exposed the Byzantines to Western customs. It was the Crusader establishment in the Levant which prompted the use of the gesture. Second, the gesture confirms the new figure of the Byzantine emperor, represented by a soldier. Although by then the gesture must not have been a novelty, the fact that the Crusader leaders were able to touch John's hand represented a change in relation to previous times. However, as we have seen, such a close contact goes back to the reign of John's father Alexios. Shepard has noted the proximity with which Alexios treated the leaders of the First Crusade.[1013] This personal touch marked a change regarding the ceremonial present at the court of previous emperors. John II possibly followed his father's friendly approach, at least towards Westerners. Both emperors seem to have acknowledged the Western role in the politics of the eastern Mediterranean. This idea is also confirmed by Alexios and John's attempts to achieve a matrimonial alliance between some of their children and certain Crusader figures.[1014]

After all the evidence has been presented, we are now going to look at the two Western rituals that could have been behind the analysed references: the homage and the handshake. The aim is to find out which of the two is more likely to have taken place.

[1013] Shepard (1996), pp. 90-97, 104; Malamut (2007), p. 456.

[1014] Malamut (2007), p. 433; Asbridge (2003), pp. 45-46.

Homage: Scholars have mainly seen the gesture under study as the Western or feudal sign that established a relationship between a lord and a vassal. This is supposed to have been the case for the meetings between Alexios and the Crusaders. The ceremony that established vassalage, that is personal dependence, between two men, was called commendation and later homage, the latter being the most frequent name.[1015] Such a bond united the two men: the lord had the mission to protect and maintain the vassal, frequently offering him a fief. In the written sources, the subordinate is simply called the man or the vassal. His mission was to serve his lord and be faithful. The homage was a ritual that followed several steps, though there may have been changes throughout the Middle Ages. In the ceremony, which had originated in the Carolingian Empire, the future vassal placed his two hands together between the hands of the future lord, who then closed his around. This rite is called 'immixtio manuum.' Sometimes the vassal knelt in front of the lord the moment before the gesture of the hands, but that was not always the case. Once their hands were in this position, the future vassal declared himself to be such. Sometimes there also was a ceremonial kiss as a symbol of their friendship. After the homage ceremony there was another rite, essentially religious, the oath of fealty or fidelity.[1016] The new vassal placed his hand on the gospels or on relics and swore to be faithful to his lord.

Having analysed carefully the evidence concerning the associations between the Byzantines and Westerners, it is not very clear that the hand gesture that we encounter corresponds to the one described in the homage ritual. The descriptions of the gesture in the Greek sources do not seem to match with the homage gesture. The main difference is the use of the two hands in the homage ceremony, while the Byzantine references seem to emphasise one of the hands, the right one. On the other hand, the gesture in our references may have been another gesture with a different meaning. As we have seen above, it has been suggested that the oath-taking of the Crusader leaders had no precise

[1015] Bloch (1989), pp. 145-146; Ganshof (1976), pp. 72-75; Le Goff (1976), p. 687.

[1016] Bloch (1989), pp. 146-147.

precedent.[1017] It is true that certain relics were present during the rites in which the Crusader leaders swore the oaths. For example, in his account of the First Crusade, Raymond D'Aguilers narrated how the Count Raymond of Toulouse reminded the Crusaders that they had swore upon the holy cross, the crown of thorns and many holy relics.[1018] Anna Komnene mentioned that Bohemond agreed to the treaty of Devol (1108), swearing by the Holy Gospels put before him and the spear that pierced the body of Jesus during the crucifixion.[1019] On the other hand, the *Gesta Tancredi* seems to confirm that the hand gesture between Tancred and Alexios took place first and then the former performed the same rite that the other Crusader leaders had observed in making their agreements with the Byzantine emperor. The latter was likely to have been the ceremony involving the relics. The use of relics reminds us of the rite of fealty, when the subordinate swore to be faithful. Perhaps they swore to comply with the conditions of the agreement established between the two parts. Thus, the hand gesture in our references, more likely a handshake, may have been a substitute for the 'immixtio manuum.' The second part of the feudal homage was still performed as a way to formalise the treaty between the two parties.

Therefore, the agreements between Alexios and the Crusader leaders probably did not create the usual feudal subordination between a lord and a vassal. Among all the Crusader leaders, Bohemond seems to have acquired a special association with Alexios in 1097, perhaps that of liege-homage.[1020] Thus, Bohemond is supposed to have paid homage to the emperor and swore fealty. Bohemond intended to become one of the main leaders of the Crusade. For example, he demanded the position of domestikos of the East, though the emperor asked him to wait for that honour.[1021] The relationship between Alexios and Bohemond was renewed later at the treaty of Devol, but the conditions were

[1017] Shepard (1996), pp. 105-106.

[1018] Raymond D'Aguilers, pp. 74-75.

[1019] Anna Komnene, p. 424; Anna Komnene (2009), p. 397, n. 1.

[1020] Shepard (2006), p. 105.

[1021] Anna Komnene, p. 320.

never implemented. As it has been noted above, the details of the treaty show that Bohemond was clearly declared vassal in feudal terms. In this case Anna employed the word λίζιος, that is vassal.

As we have noted above, the feudal relationship has also been considered for Raymond of Poitiers and John II. Raymond apparently surrendered Antioch to John, but still guarded it in the emperor's name. John promised to conquer certain locations nearby under Muslim rule and to hand them over to the Crusaders. Although the Byzantine emperor took a few and granted them to certain Crusaders, he failed to conquer Aleppo and had to abandon Shaizar without having taken its citadel.[1022] Thus, it is possible to say that John did not comply with the conditions of the agreement they had reached. It has also been suggested that John did not want to take Antioch, but simply use it as a military base for the campaign against the Muslims.[1023] In any case, Raymond and Joscelin plotted against the Byzantine emperor and finally John left the region without having the control of the city.

Handshake: The descriptions of the sources seem to describe a gesture similar to a handshake between two figures. We are told in some cases that the gesture is performed with the right hand, a significant detail that points in this direction. The *Gesta Tancredi* supports this identification quite clearly. On the other hand, if the ceremony of vassalage indeed involved the two hands, the gesture under study is not the same one. Only Nikephoros' narration of Kalavryai suggests that the Western mercenaries put their hands into Bryennios' hands.

A handshake is a short gesture in which two people grasp one of each other's hands, frequently the right one. In our contemporary society handshaking is an important part

[1022] Niketas Choniates, pp. 27-31.

[1023] Parnell (2010), pp. 149-157.

of the non-verbal communication between two people and it is practised universally.[1024] Commonly this practice takes place when two people meet and part; it is a kind of polite and official way of greeting and saying goodbye. It can also be employed as a way to officialise a deal. The two people may represent two companies, states or any other groups, which through a handshake symbolise an agreement or a treaty. Therefore, a handshake plays a central role in social and diplomatic communication in different occasions.

The handshake was already practised in ancient times, as the gesture appears represented in scenes from Mesopotamia and elsewhere in the Middle East.[1025] The gesture is also attested in the written sources.[1026] For example, in his epistle to the Galatians, the apostle Paul narrated how James, Cephas and John gave to him and Barnabas the Right Hand of Fellowship.[1027] The Right Hand of Fellowship has been interpreted as a sign of partnership, recognition or agreement between two sides.[1028] Therefore the use seems to have had a wide range of meanings, though the gesture was the same or probably very similar. Its last use seems to be connected with the ceremony of marriage.[1029] At one point, the priest joins the couples' right hands, which they continue to hold during the ceremony. This rite is called 'dextrarum iunctio,' and it symbolized the union of the couple. A good example is David's marriage on the well known seventh-century silver plate from Cyprus (Image 46).[1030] A unique twelfth-century representation is Empress Zoe's second wedding depicted in the illustrated chronicle of John Skylitzes (Image 47).[1031] However, it is not clear as Michael IV seems

[1024] Cohen (1987), pp. 91-95.

[1025] Weinfeld (1990), pp. 175-191.

[1026] Wildeblood (1973), pp. 44-45.

[1027] Galatians 2:9.

[1028] Macgregor (1879), p. 55; Stott (1968), pp. 45-46.

[1029] Kalavrezou (2003), pp. 217, 222.

[1030] Durand and Giovannoni (Paris, 2012), pp. 72-73, fig. 19e.

[1031] Tsamakda (2002), miniature 490 (fol. 206v, bottom).

to be holding her left hand by the wrist. The same manuscript contains another interesting miniature. It depicts the end of Bardas Phokas' rebellion in 970.[1032] He surrendered to Bardas Skleros, an event that has been represented with the two either shaking hands or Skleros arresting Phokas by holding his left hand by the wrist (Image 48).

The problem arises if we are to believe Anna and Nikephoros, who seem to have considered the gesture a foreign practice. If we are to believe them, although handshaking was employed during the Roman Empire, it would seem that the Byzantines gave up its use at some point after Late Antiquity. Maybe from then onwards, the use of the handshake was more common and significant among Westerners, and that is why Anna and Nikephoros considered it their ancestral custom. It is significant to note that all the references that have been discussed show the gesture being performed between Byzantines and Westerners. Thus, the Western factor is probable. Another possibility is that, due to their lack of acquaintance with it, the Byzantine authors had misunderstood the homage gesture with the more usual handshake. However, Ralph of Caen's description of the handclasp seems to eliminate this option. Thus, the appearance of the hand gesture in the Byzantine sources provides us with information about the interaction between Westerners and Byzantines. For instance, Nikephoros Bryennios' reception of the handshake may have simply been an example of reciprocity on his part. He must have felt obliged to follow their custom in order to accept their loyalty. In any case, this shows that new ethnic groups introduced new practices or at least that through contact, the Byzantines had become more aware of the habits performed by other groups. Moreover, the reference suggests the weight of the Western contingents in the Byzantine army.

The *Gesta Tancredi* shows that Alexios I, who at least had seen the performance of the gesture, shook hands with Bohemond and Tancred. The handshake could have marked that their differences and animosity had been overcome. Also, the gesture may have

[1032] Tsamakda (2002), miniature 414 (fol. 164r, bottom).

indicated that they reached an agreement. These two ideas also fit Italikos' reference concerning John II and the Crusaders. The event may have been the physical way to erase the mistrust between them and the Byzantine emperor and to open a new period of mutual collaboration.

To conclude, the descriptions in the sources suggest that the hand gesture was likely to be a handshake between two persons. However, there were other gestures employing the hands that conveyed different meanings. The information and details regarding the situation of the handshakes discussed above shows that the gesture was used to display friendship and peaceful intentions between the figures performing the act, sometimes establishing an association between the two parts. All the attested instances involved Westerners and Byzantines. Therefore, while the handshake in such circumstances seems to have been a novelty in Byzantium, it was only employed with Westerners. This detail is significant because we have no evidence which demonstrates that the hand gesture was adopted among Byzantines, it was only employed in their diplomatic relations with Westerners. In fact, it is possible to say that Westerners used the gesture with the Byzantines. This reality implies that there was no Byzantine acculturation of the gesture, but a more open-minded approach in the relations with the Westerners, in which the interaction between the two groups was not regulated solely by guidelines of Byzantine diplomacy.[1033] Therefore, the importance of the gesture is certainly marginal and its performance was limited to the relations between Westerners and very likely, only Byzantine figures from the aristocracy. As we have seen, the Byzantine performers were a doux and two emperors. The gesture only took place between figures who had contact with Westerners in specific circumstances, in the military and diplomatic fields. It is likely that the rest of the Byzantine population would have been unaware of its use and meaning. In order to see the gesture performed between Byzantines we have to wait until the thirteenth century. The handshake is mentioned in the *History* of George

[1033] In her study of peacemaking in the Latin East, Friedman has argued that the usage of a Western practice, that is the ceremony of extending the right hand, between Crusaders and Muslims could be seen as a sign of Frankish primacy (2007, pp. 36-37). However, in the cases under study, the use of a Western gesture suggests the clever approach of the Byzantine emperors in the diplomatic field. They performed a Western gesture so they could be understood by a Western audience as well.

Akropolites, in the narration of the so-called battle of Pelagonia (1259 or 1260).[1034] And again the event marked either surrender or defection (ἔδωσαν τὰ χέρια καὶ ὁρκίσθηκαν πίστη στὸν αὐτοκράτορα). But by then, after the Fourth Crusade, it is possible that the Western influence was much stronger.

[1034] George Akropolites (2003), pp. 280-281; George Akropolites (2007), pp. 361, 363-364, note 13.

CONCLUSIONS

This project has shown the diversity and complexity of the relations between Westerners and Byzantines during the reigns of Alexios I and John II. The eleventh century marked a change in the relations between Western Europe and Byzantium. One of the main traits of this new relationship was the expansion of the Western presence in both the Byzantine Empire and the eastern Mediterranean in general. While there already was a Western presence in Byzantium before 1081, it increased during the period under study, and this is particularly obvious during the reign of Alexios I. As we have seen in chapter two, Alexios' reign witnessed an unprecedented movement of Westerners into Byzantium as a result of different causes, many associated with significant political events (Robert Guiscard's invasion, the First Crusade). Nevertheless, Byzantium also played its own role in these migrations; the empire attracted people with the prospect of opportunities and wealth. As in previous times, the two emperors continued to promote the recruitment of Westerners into the Byzantine army, which had become dependent on mercenaries. However, there were significant changes from pre-Komnenian times. While before 1081 Western mercenaries had served the Byzantine emperors, they only ascended socially to join the Byzantine aristocracy during Alexios' reign. Some Byzantine families of the twelfth century could trace their origins from such Western officers, for example the Petraliphas. This integration process also occurred with non-Western ethnic groups, for instance the Turks,[1035] and it would be misleading to suggest that Alexios only favoured Westerners. It is safe to assume that the new presence of Turks and Westerners at the Byzantine court was the result of a new political landscape around Byzantium, but it was also an attempt by the emperor to associate himself with the new rulers of former imperial territories, especially Normans from Southern Italy and Turks from Asia Minor. The process suggests that Alexios was interested in employing these individuals for their military skills, and thus turn enemies into allies. It is interesting that during this period there is no evidence of any negative reaction to the new ethnic elements at court. In the 1070s Kekaumenos had advised the emperor not to

[1035] Brand (1989), pp. 1-25.

appoint foreigners to certain high positions instead of Byzantines.[1036] On the other hand, at the time that Kekaumenos was writing, leaders of Western contingents serving in Byzantium were actually alienated because they did not receive important titles (like Hervé Phrangopoulos)[1037] or because they believed they had not been rightly honoured (like Crispin).[1038] Kekaumenos seems not to have foreseen the rebellions led by the Western contingents in the late 1070s. With the arrival of Alexios there seems to have been a change in the approach to the leaders of the Westerners serving in the Byzantine army. They not only joined the court, they also received major titles. Even though Humbertopoulos plotted against Alexios, it seems that the emperor was able to contain the aspirations of the Western mercenaries by integrating them into the Byzantine aristocracy. It is possible that by then the Byzantines were more used to the presence of Westerners. However, before Alexios became emperor he had led Western mercenaries and as a result of his personal experience he was aware of the problems behind the defections of Western mercenaries. Moreover, the political circumstances in 1081 were not the same as in the reign of Michael VII. The deterioration of military matters may have forced Alexios to welcome Westerners in order to counter Guiscard's dangerous invasion. Finally, as a military man himself Alexios must have valued the military skills of these Westerners. These common values must have facilitated the integration of the Westerners into the Komnenian elites.

Western mercenaries serving in the Byzantine army would have met other soldiers, both Byzantine and foreign, when the army was on campaign. However, the chances of interaction between them were probably limited because soldiers usually fought in independent contingents numbering a few hundreds. Furthermore, each contingent fought with their own weapons and according to their military tactics. Thus, it is not clear if the superficial contacts between the Western and the Byzantine soldiers led to the adoption of new military practices. For example, the Varangians were famous for

[1036] Kekaumenos (95.04-10).

[1037] John Skylitzes, pp. 484-485.

[1038] Michael Attaleiates, p. 92.

their axes, but this weapon does not seem to have been adopted by the rest of the Byzantine army. Moreover, Anna mentions another weapon of the 'barbarians' (in her narration it is employed by Westerners), the cross-bow or τζάγρα, which was unknown to the Greeks.[1039] In her meticulous description of the weapon, Anna explains that the cross-bow is very effective, killing a man without him feeling the blow.[1040] Although this weapon was very efficient, there is no evidence that the Byzantines made use of it. On the other hand, a possible example of Western influence in Byzantine warfare is the kite shield, which is discussed in chapter three. While it appears depicted in Byzantine art, the textual sources seem to suggest that such an elongated shield was a Western artefact. Therefore, although the depictions of the shield do not prove conclusively that it was an actual Byzantine artefact they can be seen as evidence of its slow introduction in the Byzantine army. Thus, the appearance of the kite shield in Byzantium should be related to the presence of Western mercenaries in the empire from the eleventh century. However, the shield only became officially part of the Byzantine weaponry after the period under study. The case of the tournaments, which has been discussed in chapter four, is certainly similar. Jousting and tournaments were part of the military culture of the Western knights and the Byzantines would have been aware of such practices. Nonetheless, these were only promoted in the Byzantine army during the reign of John's son and successor. From these instances it is possible to suggest that certain Western elements were present in the empire but they were not employed until they received imperial approval. It is possible that by then, that is after two generations, the Byzantine military aristocracy was more used to these practices and artefacts. On the other hand, the duel seems to have been an example of the exchange between Western and Byzantine soldiers during John's reign. While single combats were not unknown in Byzantium, the two cases discussed in chapter four show that the Western concept of the duel, namely a single combat between two individuals in order to settle an offence, was already present among the military elite of the empire. At least John II and his nephew

[1039] Anna Komnene, p. 305; Nishimura (1988), pp. 422-435; Kaldellis (2007) has pointed out that by Greeks Anna did not mean the Byzantines, but the ancient Greeks, p. 288.

[1040] Anna Komnene, p. 306.

resorted to employ it when they felt they had been wronged. The fact that Emperor John did so is an indication that a change had taken place; as we have seen his father had been offended by a Crusader who dared to sit on the throne, but Alexios did not answer his challenge to a duel.

The temporary presence of the Western mercenaries in different locations (along the campaign routes and in winter quarters near cities or towns) suggests that their contacts with the local population were rather limited, except probably in the case of Constantinople. Only in specific cases was the level of interaction much higher. For instance, as we have seen in chapter two, the Varangians guarded the premises of the imperial palace. The arrival of new ethnic groups, in this case the English, changed the main component of the Varangian guard during this period. Nonetheless, Scandinavians continued to be part of it. Both communities had their own churches in Constantinople: the English church was dedicated to St Augustine and St Nicholas, while the Varangian church was dedicated to St Olaf. Thus, two new saints, St Augustine and St Olaf, were introduced to a Byzantine audience. However, there is no evidence that their cult spread in either the city or beyond; no other churches dedicated to them seem to have been built and the saints' images were never introduced into the iconographic programme of Byzantine churches. In fact, we only know about their cult in Constantinople through Western sources, which may suggest that Byzantine authors were not interested in Western saints or found them unimportant. It is likely that their cult did not become popular because they were not Orthodox saints or were unrelated to Byzantine culture. The churches dedicated to St Olaf and St Augustine were built for ethnic groups who maintained their cultural and religious traditions. On the other hand, Westerners who joined the imperial court were assimilated into Byzantine culture and converted into Orthodoxy. In sum, in this instance Byzantine culture played the hegemonic role and remained strong despite increasing encounters with Western individuals and their culture.

Italian merchants also increased their activities within the empire in this period. Alexios granted privileges to both Venice (1082) and Pisa (1111). Perhaps the Byzantine emperor was well aware of the naval potential of the Italian communities. However, it is likely that Alexios' policy was simply guided by military and political expediency. As we have seen in chapter two, the Venetian privileges were the result of the Norman invasion. Alexios requested the support of the Venetian fleet in order to oppose Guiscard's expedition and in return offered the privileges. In different circumstances Alexios would not have granted such far-reaching privileges; it was the necessity of the moment that forced him to act in this way. He allowed them to trade in Byzantium without paying taxes, so one could suggest say that by issuing the privileges he was, in a way, paying for the use of the Venetian fleet. Alexios used Westerners in both land and sea in order to pursue his political aims. An obvious example of this is how the passage of the First Crusade armies allowed him to reconquer parts of Asia Minor. Alexios manipulated the dynamism and resources of the West in favour of the Byzantine Empire.

The commercial privileges placed the Venetians and Pisans in an advantageous position over both Byzantine and other foreign merchants. The activities of the Italian merchants made a positive contribution to the Byzantine economy and stimulated its expansion during the eleventh and twelfth centuries. Italian merchants were attracted by certain commodities available in the Byzantine markets, for example silks. The presence of Western merchants in Byzantium was partly associated with the availability of luxurious products which they could not obtain back home.

The most visible result of the Italian presence in Byzantium was the creation of Western quarters in Constantinople and other locations (Halmyros, Thessaloniki), with their own churches and monasteries. Therefore, their presence, although restricted to certain locations, was more permanent and extensive than that of the Normans or Scandinavians. It is possible to say that the Italian merchants constituted the most numerous Western community in the empire. The interaction between the Italian merchants and the Byzantine population took place within the commercial sphere. In

provincial centres Italians must have had contacts with suppliers of local commodities which they would have mainly sold in Constantinople, as, for example, the case of Laconia (olive oil) makes clear. In the Byzantine capital they interacted with the local population to whom they sold these commodities. These exchanges did not involve the court or the army. In fact, the Byzantine aristocracy had a negative opinion of trade[1041] which the activities of the Italian merchants do not seem to have changed. For instance, Kinnamos, narrating Manuel's move against the Venetian community in 1171, compared the Venetians to the people of the sea, that is sailors and merchants.[1042] David Jacoby has suggested that the fact that the Italian merchants became more prominent and wealthy may have fueled animosity towards them. However, the consequences of this latent xenophobia were only felt much later, for example when the Latins of Constantinople were attacked in 1182.[1043] On the other hand, Byzantine merchants and suppliers surely realised the potential of doing business with the Italians. The document which mentions the silk salesman Kalopetros (1111), who also was an imperial official, demonstrates that the Byzantines found in the Venetians reliable partners with whom to conduct business. Moreover, their tax exemptions possibly encouraged the Byzantines to find Venetian middlemen in order to sell their commodities. According to the document regarding the concession of an oratory in Lemnos (1136), even the ecclesiastic hierarchy of the island profited from their activities. In any case, it is not possible to say that Alexios allowed the Italians to take over the entire trade sector within the Byzantine Empire. In 1082 it was impossible to foresee that the Venetian community would become so influential within the empire. Nonetheless, the fact that John II was forced to renew the privileges can be seen as a sign that the Byzantine use of Westerners also incorporated real dangers. As in the case of the First Crusade, the relations between Byzantium and the Westerners were not easy and could incite anti-Byzantine reactions. While Alexios employed the Crusaders against the Turks, the campaign resulted in

[1041] Jacoby (2000a), p. 130.

[1042] Kinnamos, pp. 280-281.

[1043] Jacoby (2000a), p. 142.

Bohemond as the new ruler of Antioch. The Byzantine court could not always control the changing aspirations and goals of the Westerners it was dealing with.

During this period Westerners in the Byzantine Empire are found in new roles. A few individuals seem to have had positions in the administration, most likely as interpreters and translators. Byzantium offered not only military careers and business opportunities, it also required Westerners who mastered linguistic skills. The positions of Cerbano Cerbani and Moses of Bergamo indicate that the administration required men skilled in both Greek and Latin. The reasons for such language skills at the Byzantine court suggest new needs. An increase in the contacts with Western powers probably resulted in the necessity to translate Latin documents; the volume of correspondence between the imperial and Western chanceries must have increased. Moreover, the court would also need interpreters in its interaction with envoys and other individuals who did not speak Greek. From previous centuries we have no records of Westerners employed by the court as translators or interpreters,[1044] a detail which highlights that a change took place during this period. Their presence emphasises language as an important means of communication between the Byzantines and the Westerners. For example, during the negotiations that led to the treaty of Devol with Bohemond in 1108, Anna noted that one of the hostages sent to Bohemond was a certain Adralestos, who understood the Keltic language (French?).[1045] Adralestos is likely to have been a Byzantine.[1046] Anna also informs us that during a naval battle against a pirate ship from Italy, Marianos Maurokatakalon, the son of the Byzantine naval commander, talked to the crew in their language (Italian?).[1047] Importantly, these two references show that some Byzantines were learning Western languages, perhaps through their contacts with mercenaries and

[1044] An exception is a certain Swain/Sven (Σφένι?), recorded in a seal dated to the second half of the eleventh century. He was patrikios and interpreter of the English (δ(ιε)ρμ(η)νευτῇ τ(ῶ)ν Ἐνκλίνων). His office must have been related to the presence of English exiles in Byzantium (Zacos, 1984, vol. II, p. 337, no. 706).

[1045] Anna Komnene, p. 408.

[1046] Kazhdan and Wharton Epstein (1985), p. 183. PBW Adralestos 101

[1047] Anna Komnene, p. 305. PBW Marianos 15001

sailors. The presence of translators and interpreters is another sign of the increasing role played by Western nations and the Papacy in the politics of the eastern Mediterranean. Latin was their lingua franca and the Byzantine administration was under pressure to employ it, or at least, to read it and understand it. The surviving letter sent to the Pope by John II, which included a Latin translation of the original Greek text, shows that the Byzantine civil servants changed the ways in which the imperial chancery approached the recipients of imperial missives. This is an important change brought by the increasing contacts between Byzantium and the West. Emperor Michael III (842-867) had supposedly called Latin a barbarian language,[1048] but now some imperial documents were drafted in both Greek and Latin. It is possible that the Byzantine chancery was trying to show off its linguistic skills, but perhaps they were also aware that some recipients would not understand Greek. In any case, the number of the Westerners involved in translating was very small and so their impact in Constantinople or at court must have been very limited. The fact that during Manuel's reign Western figures still occupied the same role, for example Leo Tuscus, may suggest that their presence did not encourage Byzantines to learn Latin. Actually, it is likely that these figures learnt Greek in Constantinople, which was in turn a consequence of their stay in the Byzantine capital. Moreover, other Westerners with scholarly interests were in Constantinople for different reasons, for instance James of Venice. A translator of texts by Aristotle and perhaps a member of the scholarly circle around Anna Komnene, his activities could imply that Byzantium also attracted Westerners because the Byzantine capital also had libraries/collections of manuscripts and it was a centre for education and learning. Burgundio of Pisa is a similar case. During his first stay in Constantinople, which took place in the second half of 1130s, he acquired a number of manuscripts not available in Western Europe and translated them into Latin. The presence in Constantinople of individuals like James and Burgundio contributed to the cultural transfer from Byzantium to the West. On the other hand, the impact of these people's presence was limited, as their interaction was restricted to a small part of the Byzantine population.

[1048] Runciman (1953), p. 598.

Finally, diplomatic marriages introduced Western brides into the Byzantine court. Although this was nothing new, it was for the first time in this period that a Western woman became the emperor's wife. This was the Hungarian princess Piroska, who married Alexios' son and became empress in 1118. However, marriage alliances with Western potentates do not seem to have played an important role in the politics of Alexios and John. Both emperors had many children, but only one of each was married to a Western bride. This small number of unions demonstrates that Alexios and John did not promote diplomatic alliances with Western powers, except under specific political circumstances.

Piroska's life at court is a good example of the hegemonic role of Byzantine culture. It is clear that since the day she arrived in Constantinople she underwent a process of hellenization; her name was changed to Eirene and she must have learnt Greek. From the available evidence we know that she also wore a traditional hairstyle (the two plaits examined in chapter four) and was dressed following the imperial conventions.[1049] John's wife may even have undergone a ritual of conversion into Orthodoxy. Piroska-Eirene spent her life at court, mainly interacting with her husband's family, imperial officials and servants. Most of these would have been Byzantines, like her two known collaborators in the construction of the Pantokrator monastery, the architect Nikephoros and Nicholas Kataphloron. She also ended her life as an Orthodox nun with the name Xene. On the other hand, she may have been behind the introduction of the stained glass which decorated the Pantokrator monastery (see chapter three). Stained glass was a Western practice which perhaps Piroska-Eirene knew from her early life in Hungary. While the evidence is not conclusive, the Hungarian-born empress should be considered as a good candidate for the individual who commissioned the panels. The commission of the stained glass was the result of the presence of Western elements at the Byzantine court. Nevertheless, the stained glass panels do not appear to have had any impact in

[1049] The mosaic in Hagia Sophia shows Piroska wearing the loros, one of the most famous imperial costumes. The epitaphs by Prodromos and Kallikles also provide us with details about her clothing. Both authors mention the purple clothes she wore, for example her chiton (Nicholas Kallikles): τὸν πορφυροῦν χιτῶνα τῆς ἁλουργίδος (Vassis, 2013, p. 227).

Byzantium as fragments have only been found in two imperial foundations (Pantrokrator and Chora). Thus, this unique manufacture was an imperial commission and it did not add a new medium to Byzantine art.

The examination of these categories clearly shows that there was continuity in the roles played by Westerners, but also significant changes. While the first two categories (army and trade) were already represented before 1081, the other two suggest both an increase of the Western presence and its expansion into different milieux (administration and court). This expansion implies the presence of more Westerners in and around the empire. There are four main different reasons for this development. One is the needs on the part of the Byzantine army and administration. For example, Alexios and John employed Westerners as mercenaries and interpreters. Second, Westerners had interests in Byzantium. Italian merchants conducted commercial activities in the empire. Moreover, Western mercenaries were attracted by the salaries paid at the Byzantine army. Third, political events also facilitated the migration of groups from West to East, as in the case of the First Crusade. Finally, it is important to mention that during the eleventh century Western Europe witnessed a demographic and economic expansion. The increasing presence of Westerners in Byzantium (and also in other European regions) was the result of this expansion. The demographic growth in Western Europe resulted in individuals migrating in order to find fortune and lands.[1050] Therefore, the causes for the increasing Western presence in the Byzantine Empire can be found in both Byzantium and in Western Europe.

As we have seen above, religion is an aspect that appears in the different layers of interaction between Westerners and Byzantines. From the ritual of 'conversion' to the new cults in Constantinople, the growing number of Westerners and their more permanent establishment in Byzantine territory emphasised the differences between the two religious rites (Latin and Orthodox). It is possible to say that religion became one of the main signs of identity for both Westerners and Byzantines, at least among the clergy

[1050] Russell (1986), pp. 53-58.

and the aristocracy. They were fully aware of their differences concerning religious practices and during this period they discussed them publicly in at least two theological debates which took place in Constantinople, one during Alexios' reign (1112) and another under John (1136). The first involved the Archbishop of Milan Peter Grossolanus, who discussed the procession of the Holy Spirit with Byzantine theologians before Alexios.[1051] The second took place during the visit of Anselm of Havelberg to the Byzantine capital in order to forge an alliance between the German emperor and John II.[1052] Anselm discussed with Niketas the metropolitan of Nicomedia in two different meetings. The occasion of the debate and its conciliatory outcome suggest that Byzantine emperors used religion as a means to achieve their political goals. However, this period also witnessed the use of religion against Byzantine interests. In a document issued in March 1138 Pope Innocent II decreed that all the Latin mercenaries in the Byzantine army should withdraw from the service of the Byzantine emperor if he would attack Antioch.[1053] Thus, the Pope employed his influence in order to oppose John's ambitions in the East. This innovation, namely the use of religion as a political tool against Byzantium, is an important development. While Innocent only called the Byzantine emperor a schismatic (rex Constantinopolitanus, qui se ab unitate Ecclesie dividit... inobediens est), the association between Orthodox and heretic would justify the sack of Constantinople by the Fourth Crusade in 1204.

The religious contacts between Westerners and Byzantines did not occur only in Constantinople and among members of the aristocracy. According to the *Life of Meletios the Younger* (c.1035-c.1105) by Nicholas of Methone, the holy man helped to free a group of men of 'the old Rome.' They were travelling on their way to Jerusalem and were detained by an imperial official, the 'athenarchos,' after they arrived at the Piraeus.[1054] They were so grateful for his action that in the following year some came

[1051] Grumel (1933), pp. 22-33; Peter Grossolanus (1933).

[1052] Russell (1979-1980), pp. 19-41; Lees (1998).

[1053] Bresc-Bautier (1984), pp. 51-52, n. 10; Lilie (1993a), pp. 131-132.

[1054] Abrahamse (1986), pp. 194-195; *ODB*, Meletios the Younger.

back to visit him in his monastery on Myoupolis, between Boeotia and Athens, where they received hospitality. While their presence was only temporary, this piece of evidence shows that even if individuals of the Orthodox Church cared about the religious differences between the two rites, this did not prevent them from having contacts with Westerners. On the other hand, Westerners settled in the island of Rhodes seem to have used unleavened bread with the native population according to Nicholas, the bishop of Andida.[1055] His writings give the impression that Westerners tried to compete for the local population, that is, Westerners used their presence in Byzantium to spread their religious beliefs and practices. Alternatively, and in combination with Balsamon's negative comments on Byzantine use of large bells (see chapter three), one can use such information to detect how Latin customs were being received by Byzantine populations, that is beyond the elite level. The evidence is quite impressionistic at present, but a closer reading of texts in this direction may well make this cultural exchange more visible in future.

Nevertheless, we have seen that the different Western communities had their own churches and monasteries. It is possible that this was the result of the use of Greek instead of Latin in Byzantine churches, but it can also be a sign that Westerners wanted to follow their own rite. Thus, the use of different churches actually reduced the chances of interaction between the two rites. However, the increasing use of large bells in a Byzantine context suggests that the foundation of Western churches and monasteries may have introduced this practice in the empire. A clear indication of this is the fact that bells are recorded in two locations (Mount Athos and Thessaloniki) where Italian merchants and their monasteries were established. However, this innovation did not supersede the traditional instrument of the Orthodox Church, the semantron. As the typikon by the Sebastokrator Isaac Komnenos demonstrates, while the two large bells were only rung during particularly important feasts, the Kosmosoteira monastery still employed four semantra. Thus, while the bells were an innovation, Isaac did not break with the Byzantine monastic tradition. He did not adopt the large bells as the main

[1055] Darrouzès (1974), pp. 199-210; Angold (1995), p. 511.

instrument of the monastery, he adapted them to the Byzantine context by ordering their use in specific occasions. Moreover, the use of large bells by imperial figures such as Isaac did not mean that their use spread. As we have seen in chapter three, the fact that the Hagia Sophia and the Holy Apostles still used semantra in c.1200 confirms that Byzantine customs still prevailed in the most important Constantinopolitan churches. The reason behind this may well be the fact that these churches were managed by top religious authorities, which probably were more reluctant to employ such a foreign innovation.

The closer contact with Westerners also introduced the Byzantines to further customs (see chapter four). Although this did not necessarily result in the latter's adoption by the wider Byzantine population, we have evidence that certain habits not previously attested were employed in certain contexts, for instance diplomacy. According to Byzantine and Crusader sources, a hand gesture was performed between Westerners and Byzantines. The gesture, most likely a handclasp, was not a Byzantine custom. Its performance by the Byzantines was encouraged by the presence of Westerners in the army and in the Levant (the Crusader States). Nonetheless, the gesture did not become common among Byzantines. Thus, the gesture was exclusively used in diplomatic encounters with Westerners. The fact that Westerners were allowed to touch the hands of Alexios and John mainly shows a change in the emperors' relations with Westerners. As we have seen, Alexios had a distinctive approach which was marked by his close contact with Westerners. Also, the new military and political circumstances, which had altered the image and the status quo of the Byzantine Empire, forced the Komnenian emperors to change their approach in the sphere of diplomatic encounters. On the other hand, the use of these diplomatic gestures between Crusaders and both Byzantines and Muslims suggests that such rituals played a major role in Western society.[1056] In Byzantium and the Islamic States, the representation of power did not include such physical contacts. Therefore, the use of body language between Westerners and Byzantines could be interpreted as a sign of the latter's weaker position in the relationship between the two.

[1056] Schmitt (1991), pp. 59-70.

Nevertheless, it actually suggests a clever manoeuvre by the Byzantine emperors. By performing the gesture they ensured that Westerners would see them as real partners. This is also the case of the treaty of Devol (1108). The fact that Bohemond became the emperor's λίζιος confirms the Byzantine use of Western practices in order to regulate their relations with Westerners. The aim was that the Westerners understood and observed their agreements. Moreover, it is also possible that the Byzantines approved of the use of these Western practices in order not to alienate their Western partners. Another case was John's victorious entry into Antioch in 1138. According to Niketas Choniates, the reins of John's horse were taken by Raymond the Prince of Antioch (ὑπτίαις χερσί παρά τε τοῦ πρίγκιπος Ῥαϊμούνδου).[1057] This Western ritual was the service of strator,[1058] which was apparently performed by Reginald of Châtillon when Manuel entered the Syrian capital in 1159 (Ῥενάλδον δὲ καὶ τοὺς ἄλλους περὶ τὰ φάλαρα τοῦ ἵππου καὶ τοὺς τῆς ἐφεστρίδος πονεῖσθαι ἱμάντας).[1059]

All this interaction and innovations were the result of the increasing contacts between Byzantines and Westerners during this period. While the number of Western elements studied is limited and some cases cannot yield convincing conclusions, these innovations show that the growing interaction certainly had effects on the empire. The introduction of new practices (the duel and the handclasp) and elements of material culture (the stained glass and the use of large bells) are significant examples of the impact of the Western presence in Byzantium. On the other hand, the increase in contacts did not lead to a major process of cultural transfer: the Western impact on Byzantine society in general was minor. Westerners were only present in certain milieux and areas of the Byzantine Empire, and only where this presence was more permanent did it result in exchanges. Except at court, most of the Westerners in the empire simply coexisted with the Byzantines but they did not mix. From the available evidence it seems possible to say that Byzantine culture during the period examined here was not

[1057] Niketas Choniates, p. 27.

[1058] Ostrogorsky (1934), pp. 187-204.

[1059] Kinnamos, p. 187.

radically altered by the Western presence; it continued to evolve independently. Features of Western culture were present, but they mainly had a superficial impact. A very clear example of this is the case of the stained glass. Thus, although there was an increase in contacts, Byzantine culture maintained its hegemonic role. The result of these exchanges was limited to a few Western imports, happening mostly at the level of the ruling elite and which did not displace Byzantine traditions. The evidence I have surveyed does not suggest that these imports affected the Byzantines beyond the aristocracy, usually settled in Constantinople. In this period it seems that the Western presence was therefore mostly limited to the sphere of elite culture. The protracted exposure to Westerners and their customs, however, would, in some cases, percolate to Byzantium after the thirteenth century with more lasting effects. As a result, the period I have examined can be seen as an early stage for this top-down process.

Byzantine society and culture were strong, and more importantly, continued to assimilate new elements, at least in the aristocratic milieu.[1060] This is certainly the case of the court, which witnessed the integration of Westerners and other foreigners. This assimilation may have had consequences. Anthony Kaldellis has suggested the possibility that this more heterogeneous regime resulted in some of its members, the intellectuals, being more aware of their cultural heritage.[1061] As a result, they employed their Greek education and literary skills as a means to differentiate themselves from the newcomers, who lacked this hellenic background. Moreover, Kaldellis has also argued that this hellenism was certainly positioned in antithesis to the Latin elements, as Westerners posed not only a serious military threat but also an ideological challenge. In the same line, Gill Page agreed that this threat was not simply a military one, but was conveyed by important cultural differences. She argues that the ethnic awareness of a group, in this case the Byzantine elite, emerged when there was a threat by another group, in this case the Westerners.[1062] Thus, she has suggested that the creation of a

[1060] Kazhdan and Wharton Epstein (1985), pp. 180.

[1061] Kaldellis (2007), pp. 293-295.

[1062] Page (2008), pp. 47-48, 56-57.

Byzantine identity actually emerged against this background of increasing contacts with the Westerners. Being Byzantine, that is Roman, was based on two criteria shared by the ruling elite of the empire, Orthodoxy and Greek language, elements that distinguished them from other ethnic groups, among them Westerners. Thus, these significant developments can be considered as less visible results of the Western presence in the Byzantine Empire.

The period under study only represents the first part of the process of increasing interaction between Westerners and Byzantines, a period which lasted sixty-two years (1081-1143). The next stage, during Manuel's reign, witnessed the continuation of this process and possibly its culmination before 1204. The Western element became stronger and the contacts between Byzantines and Westerners were more frequent. However, it is possible to say that the Western presence during the reigns of Alexios I and John II prepared the way for Manuel's latinophilia. At least Manuel's allegedly pro-Western attitudes can be better understood with the interaction that had taken place since 1081 in mind. On the other hand, Manuel's approach was certainly different from his father's and grandfather's. He willingly encouraged the interaction between East and West. Manuel introduced tournaments and new equipment in the Byzantine army. He also offered commercial privileges to Genoa thus enlarging the presence of Italian merchants in his realm.[1063] Moreover, Manuel negotiated many marriages with Western potentates in order to achieve diplomatic alliances. He married his two children and many other relatives to Westerners. The number of marriages not only increased, Byzantine women were also 'exported' for such unions. This had not occurred since the marriages negotiated by Michael VII. Thus, it is possible to say that John's son decided to divert from the guidelines he had inherited from the two previous emperors. Therefore, his pro-Western attitudes do not seem to have been the result of a linear development. For this to have happened one would expect that the period before he became emperor, that is John's reign, to have witnessed an important arrival of Westerners into Byzantium. However, this was not the case. It was during the reign of Manuel's grandfather, Alexios

[1063] Origone (1997), pp. 90-92.

I, that Byzantium received the largest numbers of Westerners (for instance, the Normans from Southern Italy). By Manuel's reign most of these had died and their descendants had already been integrated into Byzantine society. Westerners continued to travel to Byzantium during John's reign, but it is possible to say that the Western flow into the court was less acute. Thus, Manuel's attitudes cannot be simply explained by the presence of Westerners in Byzantium both before and after he became emperor in 1143. His attitudes were also the result of a personal choice. It is possible to say that Manuel took a step forward in the way he dealt with Westerners. He promoted closer relations with Western powers in order to pursue his international policy. Furthermore, he seems to have favoured the Westerners present in Byzantium over other ethnic groups in the empire. The prominent role played by Western Europe and Manuel's political ambitions can help us to understand the reasons behind this personal approach. Manuel's pro-Western attitudes were not simply the inevitable result of the Western presence in Byzantium, they were a conscious choice with specific objectives. As Paul Magdalino has stated, Manuel was as much a symptom as a cause of westernisation in twelfth-century Byzantium.[1064]

More importantly, during Manuel's reign Byzantine authors complained about the presence of 'barbarians' in the administration, some of whom are supposed to have been Westerners.[1065] Thus, it is not a coincidence that certain works and treatises dated to the second half of the twelfth century identified the Western presence as the agent for certain changes in Byzantine society. As we have seen in chapter four, Eustathios of Thessaloniki compared beardless Byzantines with Westerners while Balsamon reminded Byzantine monasteries of the traditional semantra against the use of bells. It was in this period, towards the end of the twelfth century, that the Western presence probably was more extensive and the empire's political weakness more apparent. However, we need to bear in mind that this anti-Latin feeling was not strong outside the capital or the court

[1064] Magdalino (1988), p. 193.

[1065] Darrouzès (1970), p. 235; Magdalino (1993), pp. 221-223.

circles.[1066] As both Kaldellis and Page have pointed out, this Byzantine identity was an elite construction, a matter of high culture and not a national identity.[1067] That is why educated individuals indirectly inform us that the Western presence had become more obvious and was possibly seen as a threat towards the end of the twelfth century. Nonetheless, the origins of this process are to be found in the period starting in 1081. Therefore, we can conclude that the Western presence during the reigns of Alexios I and John II should be seen as the base for developments that took place during Manuel's reign and the later period before 1204.

However, in order to have a complete picture of the Western presence in the Byzantine Empire during the Komnenian dynasty (1081-1185), Manuel's period should also be examined thoroughly. In fact, his reign has been the focus of extensive scholarly research. Yet, the Western influence is usually associated with the fact that Manuel introduced tournaments and also that he married Western women, Bertha of Sulzbach and Maria of Antioch. It is clear that during Manuel's reign the interaction was more fruitful as the Western presence had increased further and the contacts between Westerners and Byzantines had been taking place for a longer period. On the other hand, there is further evidence which has not been considered so far and can provide us with more details concerning the interaction between Westerners and Byzantines and Manuel's latinophile attitudes. For example, further Western practices are also attested by Byzantine authors. This is the case of the deditio, a diplomatic ritual which had the objective of establishing peaceful relations between two opposed parties.[1068] It involved a staged representation in which one of the two parties humiliated himself in front of the other. Kinnamos narrates the performance of this Western ritual in different occasions, for instance between Manuel and the Prince of Antioch Reginald in 1159.[1069] More interestingly, the ritual also took place between Manuel and the Serbian King Stefan

[1066] Page (2008), p. 69.

[1067] Kaldellis (2007), p. 226, Page (2008), p. 69.

[1068] Althoff (1997), pp. 27-52; Althoff (2001), pp. 273-279.

[1069] Kinnamos, pp. 182-183.

Nemanja in 1172.[1070] From Manuel's reign there also are references to trousers (braccae or anaxyrides),[1071] a piece of male clothing that seems to have been a novelty and which may well have been a Western import.[1072] It is also possible that the representation of a new female hairstyle, the single braid on the back, was the result of the Western presence at the Byzantine court.[1073] It appears depicted in the εἰσιτήριοι for Agnes of France, the Vatican manuscript (Cod. Gr. 1851) mentioned above and which was possibly produced for Agnes of France, the bride of Manuel's son Alexios.[1074] Moreover, Manuel may have been the first Byzantine emperor to have been anointed.[1075] Royal anointing/unction was a ritual which took place during the coronations of Western kings and possibly had its origins in Celtic Ireland or the Visigothic Kingdom.[1076] Finally, among the fiscal officials of Manuel's administration there was a certain Astaforte, a Jew from Hungary.[1077] While he was not the only Jew at the service of Manuel (one of his physicians, for example, was Solomon from Egypt, as recorded by Benjamin of Tudela), this individual deserves more attention because of his origins and activities. Therefore, all these possible cases of cultural exchange during Manuel's reign indicate that even though his period has been well studied, there are still unexplored avenues for further research concerning the interaction between Westerners and Byzantines and its possible effects on Byzantine society. In sum, not only has the current project shown new ways of looking at the cultural dynamics taking place during the reigns of Alexios I

[1070] Kinnamos, pp. 287-288.

[1071] Niketas Choniates, pp. 186, 273, 298; Kazhdan and Epstein (1985), pp. 76-77.

[1072] Kazhdan and Epstein (1985), p. 181.

[1073] Spatharakis (1976, pp. 229-230) noted the representation of women wearing braids, but the hairstyle has not received any scholarly attention.

[1074] Jeffreys, M. (1981), pp. 101-115.

[1075] Niketas Choniates, p. 52; Michael Italikos, p. 79; Nicol (1976), pp. 50-51; Macrides (1992a), pp. 194-195.

[1076] Enright (1985), pp. 79-80.

[1077] Magdalino (1988), pp. 192-193.

and John II, but also advances a number of promising lines of enquiry for Manuel's period.

IMAGES

1. Fragments of stained glass from the Pantokrator monastery (Zeyrek camii). These fragments show an eye and the letter Y. Source: Dell'Acqua (2004), p. 71 (fig. 46)

2. Fragments of stained glass from the Chora monastery (Kariye camii). Source: Dell'Acqua (2004), p. 74 (fig. 52).

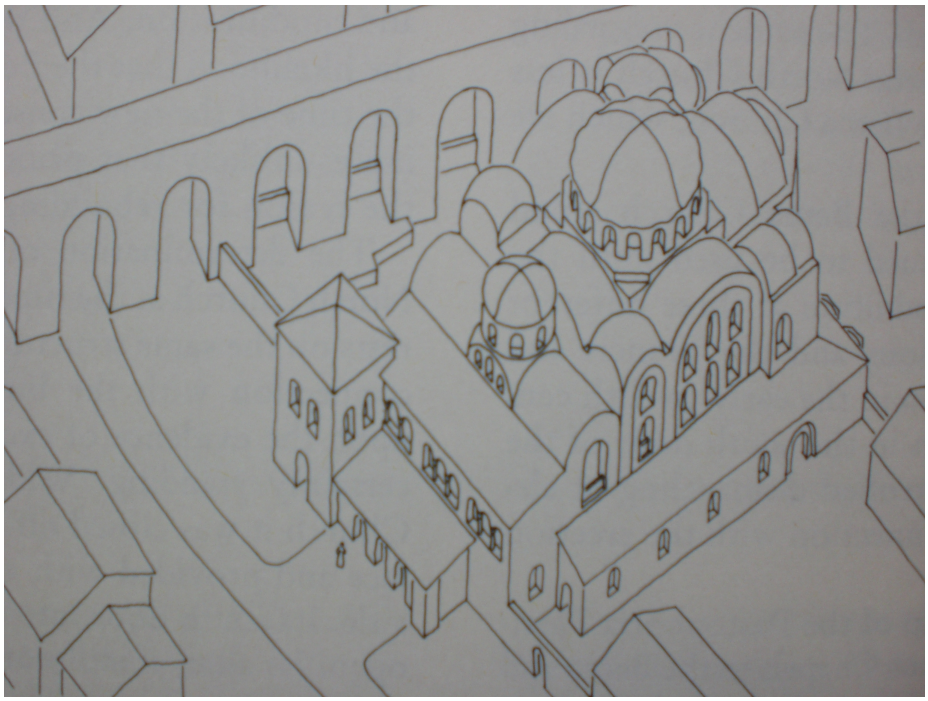
3. Illumination from the Madrid Skylitzes (fol. 28r), second half of the twelfth century (Biblioteca Nacional, Madrid). Novice playing a portable wooden semantron in a monastery. Source: Tsamakda (2002), miniature 53 (detail).

4. Illumination from the Madrid Skylitzes (fol. 135v, top), second half of the twelfth century (Biblioteca Nacional, Madrid). The priest Themel fighting the invading Arabs with a wooden semantron. Source: Tsamakda (2002), miniature 325.

5. Small bells with Greek inscriptions. The one on the left has an image of St Theodore riding a horse. Fifth or sixth century (Ashmolean Museum, Oxford: AN1980.26.25). Source: Author (unpublished).

6. Illumination from the Madrid Skylitzes (fol. 217r, bottom), second half of the twelfth century (Biblioteca Nacional, Madrid). Battle scene with two trumpet players. Source: Tsamakda (2002), miniature 513 (detail).

7. Bells from Stara Zagora (Bulgaria). They probably were part of a set, sixth and seventh centuries. Source: Author.



8. Reconstruction of the church possibly dedicated to the Theotokos Kyriotissa (Kalenderhane camii), c.1200. The tower is on one side over the porch. Source: Striker, Cecil L. and Doğan Kuban (1997), p. 60 (fig. 29).

9. Infantry soldiers depicted on the Bayeux tapestry (embroidery, 1070s). They hold kite shields which are represented with a dot in the middle of the round part, possibly a metal boss (Musée de la Tapisserie de Bayeux in Bayeux, France). Source: Stenton (1957), fig. 63 (detail).

10. Cavalry soldiers fighting with spears and holding kite shields (Bayeux tapestry). Source: Stenton (1957), fig. 25 (detail).

11. Theodore Psalter (Feb 1066): Add MS 19352 (British Library), f.12r (detail). The soldier on the left is holding a kite shield while the soldier on the right holds a round shield. Source: British Library website http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/Viewer.aspx?ref=add_ms_19352_f189v#

12. Steatite icon showing the image of St George, eleventh century (Vatopedi monastery, Mount Athos). Source: Kalavrezou-Maxeiner (1985), n. 8, plate 8.

13. Military saints decorating the north wall of the naos of St. Panteleimon at Nerezi (1164). Two of them are depicted with kite shields. Source: Sinković (2000), p. 148, fig. LV.

14. St Demetrios and St. George on a wall painting of Hagia Nikolas tou Kasnitzi (second half of the twelfth century, Kastoria). Source: Pelekanidis and Chatzidakis (1985), p. 60. They have kite shields.

15. Illumination from the Madrid Skylitzes (fol. 109r, bottom), second half of the twelfth century (Biblioteca Nacional, Madrid). Battle scene with cavalry soldiers holding kite shields. Source: Tsamakda (2002), miniature 247 (detail).

16. Image of St Christophoros holding a very long shield, c.1180 (Sts Anargyroi, Kastoria). Source: Parani (2003), fig. 146.

17. Kite shield depicted next to the portrait of Canute IV, king of Denmark (mid-twelfth century), Basilica of the Nativity, Bethlehem. Source: Kühnel (1988), plate XXXIII (56).

18. Kite shield depicted next to the portrait of Olaf II, king of Norway (mid-twelfth century), Basilica of the Nativity, Bethlehem. Source: Kühnel (1988), plate XXXV (60).

19. Portrait of male donor kneeling in front of the Virgin Glykophilousa. Next to him there is a kite shield (mid-twelfth century), Basilica of the Nativity, Bethlehem. Source: Kühnel (1988), plate VI (8).

20. St George's round shield (mid-twelfth century), Basilica of the Nativity, Bethlehem. Source: Kühnel (1988), plate XXIII (37).

21. Medallion showing the fight between David and Goliath (ivory, mid-twelfth century). The latter holds a kite shield decorated with a turquoise bead, possibly the meal boss (British Museum). Source: Evans and Wixom (1997), p. 391 (detail).

22. Demonic figure holding a kite shield, capital of the Church of the Annunciation in Nazareth (Franciscan Museum, Nazareth). Source: Folda (1986), plate 28.

23. Kite shield decorated with a lion standing in heraldic pose. Detail of image 13 (St. Panteleimon at Nerezi, 1164). Source: Sinković (2000), p. 148, fig. LV.

24. Byzantine enamel decorated with crucifixion scene, probably twelfth century (State Hermitage Museum). The centurion holds a small kite shield decorated with a small stylized bird. Source: *Sinai, Byzantium and Russia* (2000), number B63, p. 88 (detail).

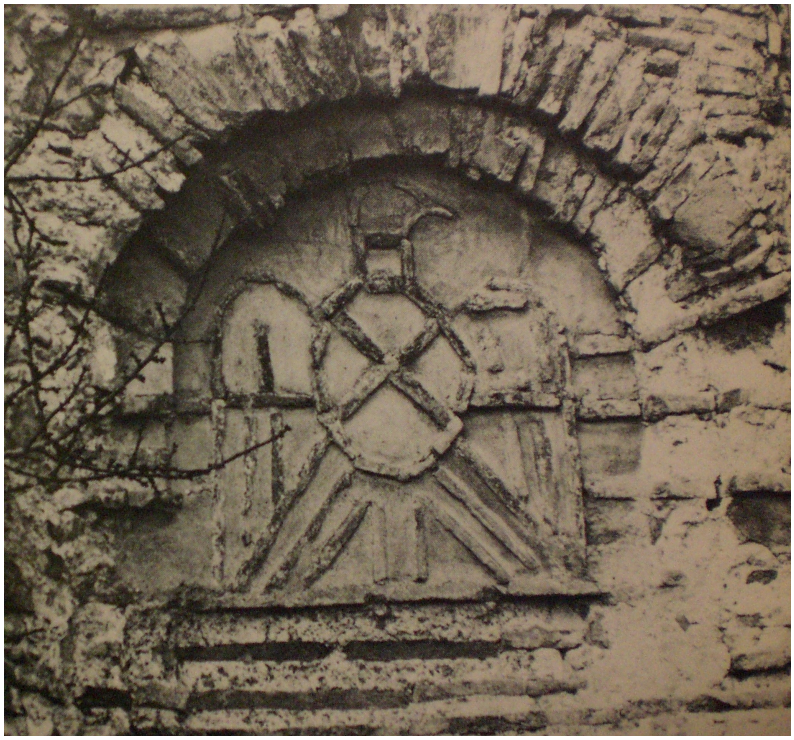
25. Byzantine enamel decorated with a crucifixion scene, twelfth century (Munich). Source: Baumstark (1998), n. 30.

26. Detail of 3.3.17. The centurion's roundish shield is decorated with a green and black bird (a raven?). Enamel, twelfth century (Munich). Source: Baumstark (1998), n. 30.

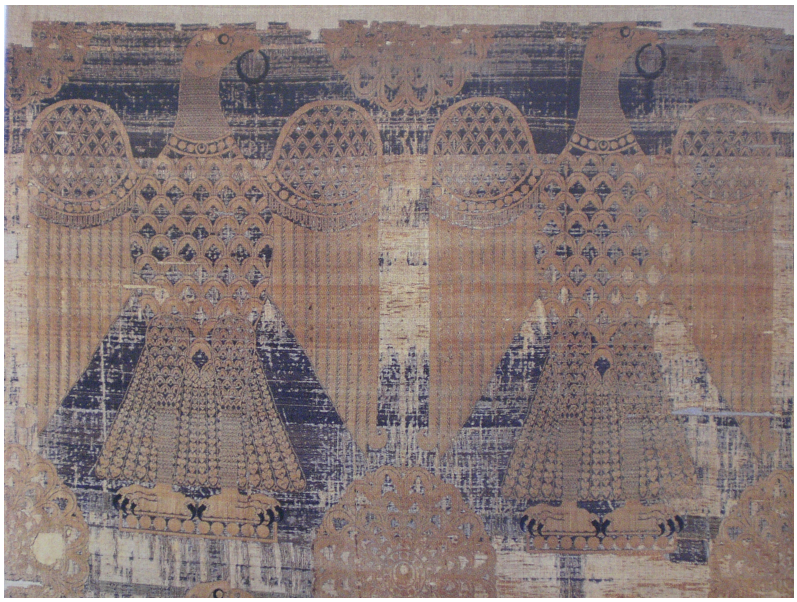
27. Detail of 3.3.17. Kite shield decorated with a griffin (?) and a black bird, perhaps a raven. Enamel, twelfth century (Munich). Source: Baumstark (1998), n. 30.

28. Horsemen depicted on the Bayeux tapestry (embroidery, 1070s). They hold kite shields which are decorated with dragons (Musée de la Tapisserie de Bayeux in Bayeux, France). Source: Stenton (1957), fig. 13 (detail).

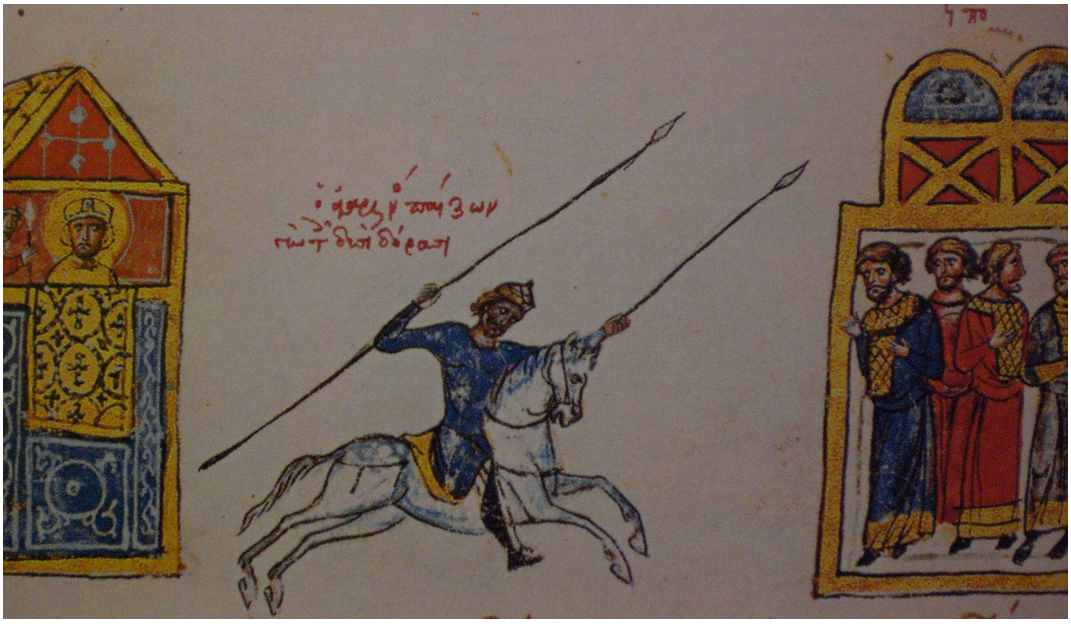
29. Horsemen depicted on the Bayeux tapestry (embroidery, 1070s). One holds the banner of William the Conqueror, which may be decorated with a raven (Musée de la Tapisserie de Bayeux in Bayeux, France). Source: Stenton (1957), fig. 13 (detail).



30. Eagle decorating an exterior niche on the rear of the church of the Kosmosoteira monastery (c.1152). Source: Sinos (1985), image 82.



31. Textile fragment decorated with eagles, from the reliquary of St Germanus, c. 1000, Byzantine silk (Musée Saint-Germian, Auxerre). Source: Evans and Wixom (1997), p. 225 (fig. 149).



32. Illumination from the Madrid Skylitzes (fol. 55r, top), second half of the twelfth century (Biblioteca Nacional, Madrid). An Arab captive handling two spears in the hippodrome of Constantinople. Source: Tsamakda (2002), miniature 129 (detail).

33. Illumination from the Madrid Skylitzes (fol. 55v, top), second half of the twelfth century (Biblioteca Nacional, Madrid). The eunuch Krateros dismounts the Arab captive. Source: Tsamakda (2002), miniature 131.

34. Mosaic showing the portrait of Piroska-Eirene (c.1122, Hagia Sophia). Her hair is plaited in two braids. Source: *Byzantium: An oecumenical empire* (2002), p. 72, fig. 22 (detail).

35. Detail of the Byzantine enamel showing the portrait of Maria of Alania, currently part of the Khakhuli triptyph (c.1072, Art Museum of Georgia, Tbilisi). Maria seems to be wearing her hair in two plaits. Source: Amiranachvili (1962), p. 101 (detail).

36. Portraits of Constantine IX, his wife Zoe (left) and her sister Theodora (right) in a manuscript preserved in the monastery of St Catherine of Sinai (Ms. Sinait. Gr. 364, fol. 3r). The two empresses clearly wear two plaits. Source: *Sinai. Treasures of the Monastery of Saint Catherine* (1990), p. 331, fig. 8 (detail).

37. Portrait of Anna Radene decorating the north aisle of the church of the Hagioi Anargyroi, Kastoria (end of the twelfth century). Source: Pelekanidis and Chatzidakis (1985), p. 42.

38. Coin showing the portrait of Constantine VII (years). His hair is depicted in a stylised bob. Source: Grierson (1973), plate XXXIX (26.14 and 26.17).

39. Portrait of unidentified emperor, tenth-century mosaic (Hagia Sophia). His hair falls over his back (detail). Source: Whittemore (1933), p. 18, plate XIV (detail).

40. Portrait of Basil II from the manuscript Marc. Gr. Z 17 (early eleventh century, Biblioteca Marciana, Venice). Source: Eastmond (2013), p. 159.

41. Head of Constantine IX (mid-eleventh century, Hagia Sophia). Source: Eastmond (2013), p. 175.

42. Early fourteenth-century mosaic showing the portrait of the Sebastokrator Isaac, Kariye camii (Chora monastery). Source: Underwood (1966), vol. 2 (the mosaics), p. 37, plate 6a.

43. Possible portrait of the Sebastokrator Isaac (Codex Ebnerianus, Auct. T. inf. 1.10), mid-twelfth century (Bodleian Library, Oxford). Source: Linardou (forthcoming) (detail).

44. Fresco painting showing the image of St Merkourios (perhaps a disguised portrait of the Sebastokrator Isaac), Kosmosoteira church (c.1152). Source: Bakirtzis (2001), p. 86, plate 9.3.

45. Portrait of Theodore Lemniotes in the church of the Hagioi Anargyroi (end of the twelfth century), Kastoria. Source: Pelekanidis and Chatzidakis (1985), p. 43.

46. One of the David plates, seventh century (Cyprus Museum, Nicosia). It is deco rated with the wedding of David and Michal (dextrarum iunctio). Source: Durand and Giovannoni (2012), p. 72 (fig. 19e).

47. Illumination from the Madrid Skylitzes (fol. 206v, bottom), second half of the twelfth century (Biblioteca Nacional, Madrid). Empress Zoe marries Michael IV (dextrarum iunctio). Source: Tsamakda (2002), miniature 490 (detail).

48. Illumination from the Madrid Skylitzes (fol. 164r, bottom), second half of the twelfth century (Biblioteca Nacional, Madrid). Bardas Phokas surrenders to Bardas Skleros (handclasp?). Source: Tsamakda (2002), miniature 414 (detail).

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Abbreviations

AASS	*Acta Sanctorum*
ANS	*Anglo-Norman Studies*
BCH	*Bulletin de Correspondance Hellénique*
BF	*Byzantinische Forschungen*
BMGS	*Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies*
BZ	*Byzantinische Zeitschrift*
DCAE	*Δελτίον Τῆς Χριστιανικῆς Ἀρχαιολογικῆς Ἑταιρείας*
DOP	*Dumbarton Oaks Papers*
EO	*Échos d'orient*
GRBS	*Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies*
IRAIK	*Izvestiya russkogo arkheologicheskogo instituta v Konstantinopole*
JRS	*Journal of Roman Studies*
NE	*Νέος Ἑλληνομνήμων*
PG	*Patrologia Graeca*
PL	*Patrologia Latina*
RHC	*Recueil des Historiens des Croisades*
REB	*Revue des études byzantines*
RIS	*Rerum Italicarum Scriptores*
TM	*Travaux et Mémoires*
ZRVI	*Zbornik radova Vizantoloskog Instituta*

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