

“THE END FOLLOWED IN NO LONG TIME”: BYZANTINE DIPLOMACY  
AND THE DECLINE IN RELATIONS WITH THE WEST  
FROM 962 TO 1204

by

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ABSTRACT

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From the time Otto the Great was proclaimed Western Emperor in 962 to the conquest of Constantinople by the Fourth Crusade in 1204, numerous ambassadors traveled east on errands from their principals. The diplomacy they engaged in at the Byzantine capital infected every aspect of the East-West relationship, including commercial privileges, marriage alliances, church schism, and the crusades. As a result of changing conditions facing Byzantine foreign policy, especially in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, a negative perception of Byzantium as a traitor to Christendom began to erode the once amicable relations between Greeks and Latins.

In this context a select number of persons and events came to exemplify the deepening divisions between East and West. This study will examine these examples in the context of diplomacy between Byzantium and Western European powers, explaining

how a breakdown in diplomacy affected every facet of the East-West relationship, creating the conditions in which the Fourth Crusade's diversion to Constantinople was possible.

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

At this time [January 1146] the emperor wedded [Bertha-]Irene [of Sulzbach], who had been affianced to him when he was not yet emperor, a maiden related to kings, who was not inferior to any of those of that time in propriety of character and spiritual virtue. The following is reported about her. When she first arrived at Byzantium [1142], some women distinguished for nobility met her, as well as she who was wedded to the emperor Alexius [John's eldest son]; she wore a garment of linen, and for the rest was adorned in gold and purple. But the dark purple of the linen caused her to be noticed by the newcomer. She at once inquired of the bystanders who the nun was who was speaking magnificently. This omen did not seem at all good to the listeners, and the end followed in no long time.<sup>1</sup>

In this manner the Byzantine bureaucrat and chronicler, John Kinnamos, introduced Bertha-Irene of Sulzbach, the first wife of Emperor Manuel I Comnenus and sister-in-law of the German King Conrad III. This union sealed an alliance against the Normans, who challenged both German and Byzantine policy in the Mediterranean, but Kinnamos's comments tell us about more than merely the arrival of an austere and virtuous German princess. His anecdote suggests that some Byzantine citizens may well have had reservations about their new empress. The embarrassing confusion over the identity of Irene, wife of Alexius, came to be seen as a foreboding sign, Kinnamos explains, as only a year later Alexius was dead and his widow did indeed enter a convent.

The marriage of Bertha-Irene and Manuel I was only one instance of Byzantine diplomacy with the West in the period between the coronation of Otto the Great as

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<sup>1</sup> John Kinnamos, *Deeds of John and Manuel Comnenus*, trans. Charles M. Brand (New York: Columbia University Press, 1976), II.4.36-37; Alexius was co-emperor with his father, John II, from 1122 to 1142. Alexius died of a fever a year before his father died, and Manuel I succeeded to the throne. Warren T. Treadgold, *A History of the Byzantine State and Society* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997), 636.

western emperor in 962 and the conquest of Constantinople by the soldiers of the Fourth Crusade in 1204. In retrospect the marriage appears as an omen of unfortunate events to come. Otto's coronation in Rome in 962, while perhaps not as pivotal as the 800 coronation of Charlemagne, represents a turning point event in East-West relations.<sup>2</sup> Under Otto and the Saxon dynasty, a Western Europe that had been fractured after the death of Charlemagne rose once again to a position of strength and posed new challenges for Byzantium's foreign policy, especially in Italy where the two empires came into contact. As Liudprand of Cremona put it, Otto "gathered up what had been scattered and shored up what had been broken."<sup>3</sup> Despite this resurgence of Latin Europe at the end of the tenth century, Byzantine diplomats and policy makers enjoyed no small degree of accomplishment on several other fronts. To the North the Bulgars and Magyars were kept at bay, while in the East the Byzantines were enjoying unprecedented success against the Arabs under soldier emperors like Nicephorus II Phocas and John I Tzimiskes.

By the twelfth century the challenges facing Byzantium had changed. The defeat of the Byzantine armies under Romanos IV Diogenes at Manzikert in 1071 at the hands of the Seljuk Turks ended any effective defense of the empire's frontier in Anatolia, and forced the Byzantines to look to the West for auxiliary units to overcome their manpower needs. Byzantine foreign policy at this time was in the odd position of having to maintain the empire's position as the foremost Christian power in Europe, while still securing support against the Turks. In 1095, Western Europe forcefully inserted itself into the

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<sup>2</sup> Leyser notes that Otto's coronation required Byzantine approval, though the act itself did little to change political realities at the time. Leyser, "Theophanu divina gratia imperatrix augusta," in *The Empress Theophano: Byzantium in the West at the Turn of the First Millennium*, ed. Adelbert Davids (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 10.

<sup>3</sup> Liudprand of Cremona, *Historia Ottonis*, in *The Complete Works of Liudprand of Cremona*, trans. Paolo Squatriti (Washington D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 2007), 221.

Eastern Mediterranean with the crusades, which strained East-West relations. The Byzantines were understandably wary of large armies of *militia Christi* marching across their lands on the way to Jerusalem, and the crusaders' goals were not always parallel to the objectives of the Byzantine Empire. Often it appeared to the crusaders that the Byzantines, by pursuing policies that enhanced their own security, were deliberately impeding attempts to secure Jerusalem for Christendom.

East-West relations during the crusades were worsened by the religious schism of 1054. The ill-fated mission of the papal legate Humbert of Moyenmoutier in 1054 reveals deep divisions in church matters. His actions affected and were affected by the diplomacy between East and West at the time. Relations soured after the schism, breeding hostility and resentment on both sides. This animosity boiled over during the reign of Manuel I, under whom many Latins found employment in the empire, both in the government and as mercenaries. When the usurper Andronicus Comnenus approached Constantinople in 1182, the city erupted in a xenophobic frenzy, massacring almost all the Latins in the city in what is considered by many historians to be a reaction to years of pro-Latin rule under Maria-Xena of Antioch, the widow of Manuel and regent for their young son, Alexius II.<sup>4</sup>

The animosity prevalent in the schism of 1054, the crusades, and the massacre of 1182 would eventually bring about the disastrous events of 1204. Geoffrey of Villehardouin's account of the Fourth Crusade illustrates the intense diplomacy that accompanied the expedition that represents the culmination of a long conflict between Byzantines and the crusaders. The leaders of the Fourth Crusade, upset by what they perceived as a lack of enthusiasm for the crusading movement by the Byzantines,

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<sup>4</sup> Charles M. Brand, *Byzantium Confronts the West, 1180-1204* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1968), 8.

demanded the emperor contribute to the effort to retake Jerusalem, and when that support was not forthcoming they seized Constantinople.

### 1.1 General Historiography

The goals and methods of Byzantine diplomacy have been subject to much debate in recent historiography.<sup>5</sup> Most studies have included the period from the eighth to the tenth centuries: others that have examined the period until 1204, such as “Byzantine Diplomacy, A.D. 800-1204: Means and Ends” by Jonathan Shepard and “The Principles and Methods of Byzantine Diplomacy” by Dimitri Obolensky, have neglected to provide a central focus on diplomacy between Byzantium and the West. This analysis examines what the methods of Byzantine diplomacy with the West were during the period of 962 to 1204, how might they have changed, and how successful they were in the face of new challenges.

Such a focus will remedy the oversights made in previous analyses, and expands on the research of Shepard, as well as others. The method of imperial marriages as a form of alliances has been frequently examined by modern historiography, most notably by Ruth Macrides.<sup>6</sup> Even she, however, focused almost entirely on examples before the eleventh century, and did not carry her analysis into the period of the crusades, which

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<sup>5</sup> Derek Baker, ed., *Relations between East and West in the Middle Ages* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1973); Jonathan Shepard and Simon Franklin, ed., *Byzantine Diplomacy: Papers from the Twenty-Fourth Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies* (Aldershot: Variorum, 1992); Adelbert Davids, ed., *The empress Theophano: Byzantium and the West at the turn of the first millennium* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995); Brand, *Byzantium Confronts the West*; Gerald W. Day, *Genoa's Response to Byzantium, 1155-1204: Commercial Expansion and Factionalism in a Medieval City* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1988); J.D. Howard-Johnston, ed., *Byzantium and the West, c. 850-1200: Proceedings of the XVIII Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies* (Amsterdam: Hakkert, 1988).

<sup>6</sup> Ruth Macrides, “Dynastic Marriages and Political Kinship,” in *Byzantine Diplomacy: Papers from the Twenty-Fourth Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies*, ed. Jonathan Shepard and Simon Franklin (Aldershot: Variorum, 1992).

presented new challenges for the Byzantines. Shepard himself pondered if Byzantine diplomacy was in some way responsible for the problems facing the empire in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, but leaves the question up to future research.<sup>7</sup> This study will answer the question with a definitive yes. A breakdown in diplomatic relations was, at least indirectly, responsible for the various conflicts between Byzantium and the West from 962, which culminated in the disastrous events of 1204.

The search for the cause of the Fourth Crusade's diversion to Constantinople in 1204 has been subject to much scrutiny. In the nineteenth century, Count Louis De Mas Latrie and Charles Hopf depicted the events leading up to 1204 as the result of the manipulations of Enrico Dandolo, the doge of Venice who was contracted to transport the Fourth Crusade to the original destination of Egypt.<sup>8</sup> Since then the belief in a malicious conspiracy to attack Constantinople has abounded, although the central villain in the story has often been shifted to include other individuals, such as Pope Innocent III or Boniface of Montferrat. Runciman famously explained that the cause of the Fourth Crusade's diversion as the natural result of increased contact between East and West:

It is commonly believed by worthy people that the more we see of each other, the more we shall like each other. That is a sad delusion. There is far more truth to the older proverbs that 'absence makes the heart grow fonder' and 'familiarity breeds contempt' – contempt, or even downright dislike.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Jonathan Shepard, "Byzantine Diplomacy, A.D. 800-1204: Means and Ends," in *Byzantine Diplomacy: Papers from the Twenty-Fourth Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies*, ed. Jonathan Shepard and Simon Franklin (Aldershot: Variorum, 1992), 44-45.

<sup>8</sup> Jonathan Harris, *Byzantium and the Crusades* (London: Hambledon and London, 2003), xiv.

<sup>9</sup> Steven Runciman, "Byzantium and the Crusades," in *The Crusades: The Essential Readings*, ed. Thomas F. Madden (Oxford: Blackwell, 2002), 212; Nicol shares this conclusion, explaining that closer contact between East and West caused "a deepening of mistrust and suspicion, a strengthening of prejudices, an increasing awareness of racial differences, an obstinate withdrawal by the Byzantine into the protective shell of their tradition." Donald MacGillivray Nicol, "The Byzantine View of Western Europe," in *Byzantium: Its Ecclesiastical History and Relations with the Western World – Collected Studies*, ed. Donald MacGillivray Nicol (London: Variorum Reprints, 1972), 329.

Runciman's theory that closer contact between the Byzantine and Latin worlds brought about the disastrous events of 1204 has often been challenged, especially in Queller and Madden's *The Fourth Crusade*, which explains the attack on Constantinople as the conclusion of a random set of events begun with the contract between the crusaders and Venetians to provide transportation.<sup>10</sup> More recently, Harris has depicted the sacking of Constantinople as an ideological misinterpretation, in which the goals and claims of the two halves of Christendom were diametrically opposed and mutually exclusive.<sup>11</sup>

Although this study does not endorse any of the previous theories on the cause of the attack on Constantinople, it does not discount any of them either. A breakdown in diplomacy is compatible with all of the aforementioned positions. Queller and Madden, Harris, and Runciman's studies were all useful in the research for this thesis, but the goal here is to isolate and elucidate a feature of the overall East-West conflict that has been somewhat overlooked in previous studies.

From 962 to 1204, embassies from the West continued to make the journey east, but the western outlook on how to handle interactions with this bulwark of Christian Europe began to shift from one of subservience to aggressive posturing. Several historians have commented on the deeds and voyages of these medieval envoys, but few have analyzed these individuals and the greater implications their missions had on East-West diplomacy.<sup>12</sup> Byzantium's foreign policy makers were either unwilling or unable to

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<sup>10</sup> Donald E. Queller and Thomas F. Madden, *The Fourth Crusade: The Conquest of Constantinople*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1997), 18.

<sup>11</sup> Harris, *Byzantium and the Crusades*, xvii.

<sup>12</sup> Individuals involved in East-West diplomacy will be described in terms of envoy, ambassador, diplomat, and embassy in this study, even though the modern definitions of such positions may not fully apply to the office in medieval terms. For more on the nuances of definition, specifically the difference between *nuncii* and *procuratores*, see Donald E. Queller, "Thirteenth-Century Diplomatic Envoys: *Nuncii* and *Procuratores*," in *Medieval Diplomacy and the Fourth Crusade*, ed. Donald E. Queller (London: Variorum Reprints, 1980), 196.

adapt their responses to deal with a more assertive Latin West that was no longer disposed to tolerate a perceived arrogance on the part of the Greeks. Perception, in fact, came to have a heavy impact on relations, as the western image of the Byzantines as the defenders of Christendom sharply declined in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. Religious schism and the crusades created a picture of the Byzantines as the enemies of Christendom, accused of hampering and even attacking Latin Christians whenever possible.

## 1.2 Primary Sources

Numerous examples from the period reveal this trend. With the declining position of the Byzantine Empire in the West, both in perception and in political reality, Liudprand of Cremona (920-972) appears both as one of the last envoys to a supreme Byzantium, as well as one of the first ambassadors to a Byzantium struggling to maintain its superior position. Liudprand traveled east at least four times and left behind wonderfully detailed – if sometimes unreliable – accounts of his activities.<sup>13</sup> Liudprand's two famous descriptions of diplomatic missions to Constantinople – the *Antapodosis* and the *Relatio de legatione Constantinopolitana* – have drawn serious criticisms as valid works of history, yet numerous historians have been careful not to discount their worth as

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<sup>13</sup> Liudprand ventured east on behalf of Berengar in 949 and recorded his experience in the *Antapodosis*, Book VI. His first mission to Constantinople on behalf of Otto I in 960 only made it as far as the island of Paxos; the next, also on behalf of Otto I to Nicephorus Phocas in 968, was recorded in the *Relatio de legatione Constantinopolitana*; and finally in 971 Liudprand participated in another German embassy lead by Archbishop Gero of Cologne. Leyser, “Ends and Means in Liudprand of Cremona,” in *Communications and Power in Medieval Europe: The Carolingian and Ottonian Centuries*, ed. Karl Leyser and Timothy Reuter (London: Hambledon Press, 1994), 126.

a window into the mood and demeanor of Latin-Byzantine relations in the tenth century.<sup>14</sup>

Another useful Latin source for the deteriorating relations is Odo of Deuil (1110-1162), who, as a member of Louis VII's inner circle during the Second Crusade, observed or was close at hand to many diplomatic encounters.<sup>15</sup> The Second Crusade was notable for its antagonism towards Byzantium. Odo often remarks that more hard line elements within the French crusading army often advocated attacking Constantinople.<sup>16</sup> "Constantinople is arrogant in her wealth," Odo relates, "treacherous in her practices, corrupt in her faith."<sup>17</sup> Odo's reaction is emblematic of the crusaders' stance when dealing with Byzantium.

For the Byzantine side of the question, this study considers the accounts of John Kinnamos (twelfth century) and Nicetas Choniates (ca. 1150-1215/16). Both had a great deal of access to Byzantium's ruling circle and even the emperor himself, and subsequently left unique and indispensable accounts of their times. Both describe episodes in which the growing disrespect of the Latins towards the Byzantines is clearly

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<sup>14</sup> The *Relatio de legatione Constantinopolitana* will hereafter be referred to as the *Legatio*. For arguments supporting Liudprand's accounts as a useful history, see Jon N. Sutherland, *Liudprand of Cremona, Bishop, Diplomat, Historian: Studies of the Man and His Age*, (Spoleto: Centro Italiano di Studi Sull'Alto Medioevo, 1988), 20, 45; Ross Balzaretto, "Liutprand of Cremona's Sense of Humour," in *Humour, History and Politics in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages*, ed. Guy Halsall (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 127; Leyser, "Ends and Means," 141. For arguments against Liudprand's reliability, see John E. Rexine, "The Roman Bishop Liutprand of Cremona," in *The Hellenic Spirit, Byzantine and Post Byzantine: Collected Essays*, ed. John E. Rexine (Belmont, Mass: Institute for Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies, 1981), 20; or more recently Constanze M. F. Schummer, "Liudprand of Cremona – a diplomat?" in *Byzantine Diplomacy: Papers from the Twenty-Fourth Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies*, ed. Jonathan Shepard and Simon Franklin (Aldershot: Variorum, 1992).

<sup>15</sup> Macrides notes that Odo would have had exceptional access to the city of Constantinople as a member of the king's entourage, whereas the movement of the rank and file crusader in the city was largely restricted. Ruth Macrides, "Constantinople: the Crusader's Gaze," in *Travel in the Byzantine World: Papers from the Thirty-Fourth Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies, Birmingham, April 2000*, ed. Ruth Macrides (Aldershot, Hants, England: Ashgate, 2002), 194.

<sup>16</sup> Odo of Deuil, *De profectioe Ludovici VII in orientem*, ed. and trans. Virginia Gingerick Berry (New York: Columbia University Press, 1948), 59, 71.

<sup>17</sup> *Constantinopolis superba divitiis, moribus subdola, fide corrupta*. Ibid., 86-87.



visible. At times Choniates even seems aware that these instances were due to the failure of the Byzantine diplomatic machine.

For relations between the Catholic and Orthodox Churches, this study relies on Anselm of Havelberg's account of his 1136 debate with a Byzantine cleric. Many beneficial studies of Anselm have preceded this study, but too often his position as the ambassador of the Western Emperor is forgotten. His debate over issues in religious practice and doctrine was a secondary concern during his stay in Constantinople. His principle concern was an alliance against the Normans, for which he had been sent to negotiate.

### 1.3 Outline of Chapters

Chapter One of this thesis will detail the goals and methods of Byzantine diplomacy with the West from 962 to 1204. As mentioned, the traditional tools of Byzantine diplomacy – generous use of money (and/or gifts), the bestowal of titles and the sending of embassies – were continued and expanded during this period. In a few instances this research shall identify adaptations in diplomacy, such as offering commercial benefits to lure the support of Italian merchant cities, such as Venice and Genoa. This discussion shall also include an in depth analysis of Liudprand's works in order to show his personal evolution from an admirer of Byzantium to one of its most renowned critics. As Liudprand represented the new Western Emperor, Otto I, in 968, an examination of the conflict over claims to succession to ancient Rome and conflicting ideology between Eastern and Western emperors is appropriate. The chapter ends with a discussion of the massacre of 1182 and its repercussions on East-West relations. The

analysis in Chapter One illuminates the sharp decline in amicable diplomatic encounters between Latins and Byzantines in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, explaining how time-honored methods in diplomacy did more harm than good to Byzantine security.

Chapter Two discusses marriage alliances between East and West. Although political marriages have long been a topic of Byzantine diplomatic historiography, this study pursues the premise that such alliances between Byzantium and the West from 962 to 1204 took on an exceptional character. Marriage negotiations before this period had failed more often than not, but, starting with Otto I, successful marriage negotiations occur at an exponential rate, giving clear indications of the success, or idea of success, of marriages as a method of diplomacy. Chapter Two begins with an analysis of the 972 marriage of Otto II and Theophano. Although the union is often heralded as a triumph of East-West relations, this analysis shows that this marriage, as well as others, carried unforeseen consequences for the Byzantines, both in political spheres and in terms of perception. Depictions of Byzantine brides who came west were often full of condemnations of the luxury and immoral habits of the Greeks. The public relations disaster caused by such marriages did more harm to Byzantium's long term security than one might expect, even though the Byzantines themselves could easily justify their actions by numerous short term gains. Even unions with rulers of the crusader states that did much to enhance Byzantium's image in the Latin West, could not effectively eliminate the Latin perception, which viewed the Byzantines as lazy and effeminate.

Chapter Three attempts to illustrate how the schism of 1054, rather than being the result of religious differences, was brought about by singular failures in diplomacy. The conduct of the parties involved in the events of 1054 had clear personal and political

motivations. Subsequent religious encounters, such as Anselm's 1136 debate, were cordially conducted, suggesting that amiable and responsible diplomacy could yet offer positive steps towards a resolution. Any such attempt, however, was clearly hampered by the august claims of the reformed papacy of the late eleventh century, and finally by the crusades.

Diplomacy during the crusades is the subject of Chapter Four. Friendly relations were almost impossible to maintain while armies from the West marched over Byzantine territory, taxing the empire's resources and often provoking violence. Attempts to subdue the threat posed by the crusades through oaths of allegiance to the emperor appear to have been only marginally successful, forcing the Byzantines to find new methods to control the unwanted foreigners. The withholding of food and provisions became the tool of choice to control the crusaders, who were threatened with hunger if they did not behave while in the empire. However, this, along with failing diplomacy during the Third Crusade, only supported the image of Byzantium as the enemy of crusading, and contributed to the mood which brought the Fourth Crusade to Constantinople in 1203. By this time, Byzantine diplomacy was hopelessly unable to control the threat, and attempts to subdue the crusaders resulted in the conquest of the city in 1204.

Poor relations created the atmosphere that made the Fourth Crusade possible. While this study stops short of positing that a diplomatic breakdown from 962 to 1204 was an underlying cause of the diversion of the Fourth Crusade, the research examines how such a breakdown made the events of 1204 more likely. The Byzantium that Liudprand describes in 948 is the beacon of hope in Christendom, the leader against the heathens that threatened its frontiers. Only a long and sustained collapse in diplomatic

relations could have allowed that image to have decayed to the point at which Byzantium was the villain, the oppressor of Christians and the impeder of the crusades, allowing the end, in the form of the Fourth Crusade, to follow “in no long time.”<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Kinnamos, *Deeds of John and Manuel Comnenus*, II.4.37.

## CHAPTER 2

### GOALS AND METHODS OF BYZANTINE DIPLOMACY

The period from 962 to 1204 represents a dramatic shift both in the challenges facing Byzantine diplomacy and how those challenges were met by Byzantium's foreign policy makers. Throughout its history the Byzantine Empire was surrounded by potential enemies, but the severity and number of threats changed over time. As Jonathan Shepard explains, before the tenth and eleventh centuries, the Byzantines were concerned with relatively few and inferior threats.<sup>19</sup> The Abbasid Caliphate had fallen into decline, the Western Empire had collapsed under the successors of Charlemagne, and the most serious threat to Byzantium was posed by the mild threat of the Bulgars.<sup>20</sup> Byzantine emperors could expand at their discretion against weak and disorganized opponents.

Beginning with the coronation of Otto I in Rome in 962, however, foreign powers began to turn against Byzantium, reducing its status as the premier Christian power in the Mediterranean. Ottonian Germany represented a strong and centralized authority that challenged Byzantine supremacy in southern Italy, to be followed closely by the more serious threat of the Normans in the eleventh century. In the East, the once serious threat of the Abbasids based in Baghdad had dwindled into sporadic border wars, and their

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<sup>19</sup> Shepard, "Byzantine Diplomacy, A.D. 800-1204, Means and Ends," 44.

<sup>20</sup> Shepard, "Byzantine Diplomacy, A.D. 800-1204, Means and Ends," 44. For the Byzantines' general lack of concern over Charlemagne's empire, see Theophanes, *Chronographia*, in Geanakoplos, *Byzantium: Church, Society, and Civilization Seen Through Contemporary Eyes*, 203. Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus appears most concerned with the Franks only in their interference with Byzantine authority over Venice. Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus, *De administrando imperio*, ed. Gyula Moravcsik, trans. Romily James Heald Jenkins (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Center for Byzantine Studies, 1967), 121.

challenge was replaced by the energetic Seljuk Turks.<sup>21</sup> The creation of a Seljuk sultanate based in the Anatolian city of Iconium represented a serious challenge to Byzantine security. The importance of their victory over the Byzantines at Manzikert in 1071 is difficult to exaggerate, but was not made complete until an equally devastating defeat of Manuel I Comnenus and his army at Myrioccephalum nearly a hundred years later in 1176.<sup>22</sup> In addition, the Byzantines, in the period under consideration, were forced to endure the crusades from the West beginning in the eleventh century. Before the tenth century the Byzantines benefited from their wide frontiers and the defensibility of their capital. Their geographical position took advantage of Byzantine control of the seas and the high risk and expense of maritime travel.<sup>23</sup> With the coming of the crusades, however, the empire now lay on the path to a destination, and thus saw an unprecedented influx of foreigners.<sup>24</sup> In an attempt to adapt to these challenges and deal with more numerous and aggressive Westerners, Byzantine foreign policy makers searched for new methods in their diplomacy.

In order to pacify enemies and secure the well-being of the empire through means that did not drain the empire's dwindling manpower, the Byzantines began to use the promise of economic benefit to lure support from Italian merchant cities. As Byzantine influence in and control of southern Italy declined, the empire relied more often on the naval prowess of Venice or Genoa to enforce their policies there. In exchange, the Byzantines granted lucrative and unprecedented commercial privileges to the Italians.

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<sup>21</sup> Shepard, "Byzantine Diplomacy, A.D. 800-1204, Means and Ends," 44.

<sup>22</sup> Harris suggests that the Norman invasion in 1081 was just as destructive to the Byzantine Empire as was the defeat at Manzikert. Harris, *Byzantium and the Crusades*, 34.

<sup>23</sup> Shepard, "Byzantine Diplomacy, A.D. 800-1204, Means and Ends," 44. For information on advancements in shipbuilding in Western Europe, see John H. Pryor. *Geography, Technology, and War: Studies in the Maritime History of the Mediterranean, 649-1571* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1988), 30.

<sup>24</sup> Shepard, "Byzantine Diplomacy, A.D. 800-1204, Means and Ends," 44 .

This approach, however, was employed along with a time-honored array of methods when dealing with foreign rulers and their representatives: the bestowal of gifts or money, imperial titles and marriage alliances. Along with these mainstays of Byzantine diplomacy, the grants of commercial privileges in tenth and eleventh centuries ought to be recognized as a diplomatic as well as an economic development. Analysis of successive diplomatic engagements shows that the Byzantine use of all these devices, old and new, came to have the opposite effect from that desired, especially their flamboyant display of wealth. Efforts which once would have made the most aggressive barbarians submissive in the presence of the emperor now gave the impression of affluent laziness and the prospect of easy loot; in other words the Byzantines managed to embolden Western envoys.

## 2.1 Money and Gifts

The bestowal of money or gifts was often the first and likely the most widely used tool of Byzantine diplomacy.<sup>25</sup> Generous gifts were used to secure alliances and also bind persons – both ambassadors and their principals – to the Byzantine emperor in subjugating relationships.<sup>26</sup> Such was the case when Liudprand of Cremona, at the end of his first visit to Constantinople and the court of Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus in 949,

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<sup>25</sup> Ibid., 41.

<sup>26</sup> This can be seen in the case of Liudprand of Cremona and his family, who accepted numerous monetary gifts from Byzantine emperors. Squatriti even suggests it was this acceptance of money from a foreign power that convinced Liudprand's principal, Berengar of Ivrea, to exile him upon his return to Italy. Paolo Squatriti, *The Complete Works of Liudprand of Cremona* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 2007), 202, notes 8. Shepard points out the comparative poverty of even the richest western potentates to Byzantium in the tenth and eleventh centuries. Jonathan Shepard, "Aspects of Byzantine Attitudes and Policy towards the West in the Tenth and Eleventh Centuries," in *Byzantium and the West, c. 850-c. 1200: Proceedings of the XVIII Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies, Oxford 30<sup>th</sup> March – 1<sup>st</sup> April 1984*, ed. J.D. Howard-Johnston (Amsterdam: Hakkert, 1988), 85.

received a cloak and a pound of gold from the emperor.<sup>27</sup> The practice of generosity to foreign envoys had not changed after Liudprand's time. In the 1160s Manuel I Comnenus gave several gifts of gold to the Lombard League, which was fighting the Western Emperor, Frederick I Barbarossa.<sup>28</sup> When Henry the Lion, duke of Saxony, arrived in Constantinople during his pilgrimage to Jerusalem, Manuel presented him with numerous silk garments for himself and his comrades.<sup>29</sup> On his journey home, again stopping at the imperial capital, Henry was presented with holy relics.<sup>30</sup> In every instance the receiving party was made into a grateful supplicant to the emperor, thus allowing him to exert a considerable influence over the foreigner.

Money could also be used as a threat. As in the case of Manuel and the Lombard league, the Byzantines were not afraid to employ their wealth against a supposed foe. In one incident in the *Legatio*, Liudprand insulted his Byzantine hosts by insisting that his principal, Otto I, resented the Byzantines, likely due to his ambassador's long detainment in Constantinople.<sup>31</sup> The Byzantines responded that "if he [Otto I] should try anything... [then] through our money, which gives us power, we shall induce all the nations to attack

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<sup>27</sup> Liudprand jokingly relates the story that the emperor required him to be present at the annual gift of favors to imperial officials, during which he asked the Lombard ambassador if he was pleased by the display. Liudprand claims that his response was that "it would please me, if it profited me," thus inducing the emperor to bestow the unexpected gift. Liudprand of Cremona, *Antapodosis*, in *The Complete Works of Liudprand of Cremona*, trans. Paolo Squatriti (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 2007), VI.10.

<sup>28</sup> Although she doubts that Manuel intended to gain direct control over Milan and other Lombard cities by this act, Ciggaar admits that it remains an example of the Byzantine emperor extending his influence by monetary means. Krijna Nelly Ciggaar, *Western Travellers to Constantinople: The West and Byzantium, 962-1204: Cultural and Political Relations* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1996), 275.

<sup>29</sup> Ciggaar, *Western Travellers to Constantinople*, 236; Kinnamos, *Deeds of John and Manuel Comnenus*, VI, 11, 214.

<sup>30</sup> Ciggaar, *Western Travellers to Constantinople*, 236. The bestowal of relics as a gift to foreign powers was not unknown at this time. Basil II gave the relics of St. Barbara to John, the son of Doge Peter II Orseolo, in 1005. Donald MacGillivray Nicol, *Byzantium and Venice: A Study in Diplomatic and Cultural Relations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 46.

<sup>31</sup> Liudprand of Cremona, *Relatio de legatione Constantinopolitana*, in *The Complete Works of Liudprand of Cremona*, trans. Paolo Squatriti (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 2007), ch. 53.



him, and we shall shatter him like some ceramic.”<sup>32</sup> Clearly, money was an advantage and an instrument that the Byzantines were practiced in using and did so self-consciously.

## 2.2 Titles

In addition to monetary gifts, titles were frequently dispensed as a means of pacifying a potential enemy.<sup>33</sup> This tool was used to great effect with Charlemagne in 812, Peter of Bulgaria in 927, and Symeon of Bulgaria in 913, binding them into a formal relationship to the empire and granting them a place in the Byzantine *Oikoumene*. Byzantine emperors used titles to remind foreign powers of Byzantine dominance. In 996 the Western Emperor Otto III stood as godfather to Peter, renamed Otto after his confirmation, the son of Doge Peter Orseolo II of Venice. This was a clear encroachment on a Byzantine satellite by the German Emperor, prompting the Byzantine emperor, Basil II, to invite Otto and his elder brother John to Constantinople in 1005.<sup>34</sup> John, who had already been associated with his father on the ducal throne of Venice, was lavishly entertained in Constantinople.<sup>35</sup> Among the honors bestowed on him was the Byzantine title of *patrkios* (an honorific title created by Constantine I that became increasingly popular among Frankish kings in the eighth century), rather than the title of

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<sup>32</sup> Liudprand of Cremona, *Legatio*, ch. 53. Leyser suggests that, in this instance, though the Byzantine military machine greatly outmatched the Ottonian military, Nicephorus Phocas nonetheless was underestimating the military capabilities of his German neighbors. Leyser, “*Theophanu divina gratia imperatrix augusta*,” 4.

<sup>33</sup> Dimitri Obolensky, *The Principles and Methods of Byzantine Diplomacy* (Ochride: Rapports XIIIe Congès International des Études Byzantines, 2, 1961), 58.

<sup>34</sup> Karl Leyser, “The Tenth Century in Byzantine-Western Relationships,” in *Relations between East and West in the Middle Ages*, ed. Derek Baker (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1973), 31-32. Nicol suggests that, by sending their sons to be honored at the Byzantine court, Venetian doges were showing “their admiration and respect for an older civilization.” Doge Orso II sent his son Pietro to the court of Leo VI. When that son became Doge Pietro II Candiano, he sent his son, another Pietro, to the court of Romanos I. Nicol makes no mention of Otto III’s encroachments on Venice as a motivation for Basil’s invitation to John. Nicol, *Byzantium and Venice*, 22, 36.

<sup>35</sup> Leyser adds that, as generous as Basil was to John, he was equally disdainful of Otto during the brothers’ visit. Leyser, “The Tenth Century in Byzantine-Western Relationships,” 32.

*protospatharios* (roughly “sword bearer”, an honorary title usually given to senators, generals and several foreign princes), that was usually given to the Venetian doge.<sup>36</sup> The first doge to be made *protospatharios* was Orso I in 879, who was so pleased with the title that he sent a present of twelve bells to Constantinople.<sup>37</sup> The promotion of John to *patrkios*, a title usually reserved for the most important governors and generals of the empire, was certainly an accolade for him and his family. It confirmed Venice’s place in the Byzantine *Oikoumene* and reinforced Byzantium’s influence in Venice’s lagoon.

As the granting of titles continued under the Comneni emperors, however, it began to harm the prospects of the Empire, rather than secure it. Kinnamos relates the story of John Roger, a Norman of unknown origin, made *caesar* (a title usually reserved for the emperor’s heir, made less important by Alexius I in the eleventh century) by John II, who attempted to seize the throne with the support of the Latin inhabitants of the empire.<sup>38</sup> The title of *caesar* was also granted to Renier-John, son of the marquis of Montferrat, by John II’s son and successor Manuel I in 1180, who gave him a coronet and the city of Thessalonica as *pronoia* – an estate held for life.<sup>39</sup> Renier-John’s brother, Boniface, titular leader of the Fourth Crusade, mistook the gesture as the granting of a

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<sup>36</sup> Alexander P. Kazhdan, *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 1600, 1748; Leyser, “The Tenth Century in Byzantine-Western Relationships,” 32; Nicol, *Byzantium and Venice*, 46.

<sup>37</sup> Nicol, *Byzantium and Venice*, 33.

<sup>38</sup> Kazhdan, *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*, 363; Kinnamos, *Deeds of John and Manuel Comnenus*, II.4.37-38. For more on John Roger, see Treadgold, *A History of the Byzantine State and Society*, 639, 642, 680, 683.

<sup>39</sup> Alexander P. Kazhdan, “Latins and Franks in Byzantium: Perception and Reality from the Eleventh to the Twelfth Century,” in *The Crusades from the Perspective of Byzantium and the Muslim World*, ed. Angeliki E. Laiou and Roy P. Mottahedeh (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 2001), 96; Queller and Madden, *The Fourth Crusade*, 28; Kazhdan, *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*, 1734.

royal crown and an imperial fief.<sup>40</sup> The dispute over Renier-John's inheritance would thus become one of the leading motivators for Boniface to join the crusade.<sup>41</sup>

### 2.3 Embassies

Yet another method of East-West diplomacy was the dispatch of embassies to and from Constantinople. Queller points out that those who participated in these embassies were rarely professional diplomats; usually they were churchmen, lawyers, merchants, or even rulers representing themselves, as was common during the crusades.<sup>42</sup> Very often the diplomatic mission was not the sole purpose of the envoys' journey, as Henry the Lion or Count Robert of Flanders visited the emperor's court only as a stop on their pilgrimages to Jerusalem. Queller also emphasizes that these envoys, or *nuncios*, had little authority to act on their principals' behalf.<sup>43</sup> They could not commit their patrons to new agreements nor make promises their principals had not authorized.<sup>44</sup> Liudprand relates the story of one Dominic the Venetian, a representative of Otto I, who was repudiated by his principal, reportedly for swearing that Otto would never invade Byzantine Italy.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> Alexander Kazhdan notes that the best Latin source for Byzantium from the eleventh to the twelfth centuries, William of Tyre, makes no mention of a fief to Renier-John and assumes that Westerners were confusing the caesar's coronet with a regal crown. Kazhdan, "Latins and Franks in Byzantium: Perception and Reality from the Eleventh to the Twelfth Century," 96. William of Tyre, *A History of Deeds Done Beyond the Sea*, trans. Emily Atwater Babcock and A. C. Krey (New York: Octagon Books, 1976), XXII.4.450.

<sup>41</sup> Queller and Madden. *The Fourth Crusade*, 29.

<sup>42</sup> Donald E. Queller, *The Office of Ambassador in the Middle Ages* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1967), ix.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, 225.

<sup>44</sup> Queller explains that envoys could negotiate drafts of agreements, but final approval from the principal was always required before it was ratified. *Ibid.*

<sup>45</sup> Liudprand of Cremona, *Legatio*, ch. 31; Leyser wonders if Dominic's actions were not in fact beneficial to Otto, as the envoy's promises delayed a Byzantine expedition to Italy. Leyser, "The Tenth Century in Byzantine-Western Relationships," 31.

Unfortunately, envoys could cause as many problems for East-West relations as they were sent to solve. Exactly how the papal envoys from Leo IX in 1054 caused one of the most noted breaches between the Byzantine and Latin worlds will be examined in a following chapter. Otto of Freising reports that Frederick Barbarossa scolded an embassy from Manuel I in 1157 because they “appeared to smack of royal pride and (in their over-ornate speech) of the arrogance of the Greeks.”<sup>46</sup> Barbarossa apparently forgave the envoys after many “entreaties and tears.”<sup>47</sup> Clearly, frequent contact through embassies between the East and the West did not guarantee good relations. This is most apparent in the accounts of Liudprand of Cremona, who frequently led or participated on embassies to Constantinople.

#### 2.4 Byzantium as depicted in the *Antapodosis*

In Liudprand’s account one can see the best example of Byzantine diplomatic methods in action at the beginning of this period. Born into an aristocratic Lombard family in Pavia, Liudprand was active at the royal court at a very young age.<sup>48</sup> His 949 mission to the East, related in the *Antapodosis*, is filled with a sense of awe at the wealth and display of the Byzantine court. Another mission to Constantinople in 968/9, which Liudprand describes in the *Legatio*, was conducted for the purpose of marriage negotiations. Liudprand exhibits one of the earliest examples of the lackluster opinion of Byzantines held by many Latins. In 949 the minor Lombard envoy was dazzled by the displays of gold and fantastic architecture in Constantinople. However, that same show of

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<sup>46</sup> Otto of Freising, *The Deeds of Frederick Barbarossa*, trans. Charles Christopher Mierow (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, in association with the Medieval Academy of America, 1994), III.6.178.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>48</sup> Sutherland, *Liudprand of Cremona, Bishop, Diplomat, Historian*, 4-5.

wealth appeared decadent and gluttonous to the ambassador of the Western emperor in 969.

In many ways Liudprand appears as the quintessential Latin envoy to the Byzantine court. Many ambassadors from Latin powers who ventured to Constantinople were clerics with their own agendas. William of Tyre, who visited Constantinople twice on diplomatic missions from the Kingdom of Jerusalem in 1168-9 and 1179, filled his chronicle with partisan comments.<sup>49</sup> In his *Dialogi*, Bishop Anselm of Havelberg mentions nothing of the anti-Norman alliance he was sent to form between the Germans and the Byzantines. His account of the 1136 theological debate with Archbishop Nicetas of Nicomedia illustrates the weight ecclesiastical matters exercised even among envoys charged with a secular mission. For the purposes of this study, both William and Anselm are examples of how personal interests can often cloud the account of a Latin envoy to Constantinople.

The *Antapodosis* – which records Liudprand’s efforts on behalf of Berengar II of Ivrea, the Lombard ruler of Italy – is often noted for its light-hearted demeanor, its fantastic account of Constantine VII’s mechanical throne, as well as for Liudprand’s boasting, visible in the episode of the gifts given to the emperor and the amusing conversation and entertainment enjoyed by the envoy and his host.<sup>50</sup> The general fondness for the Byzantines in the *Antapodosis* can safely be attributed to Liudprand’s youth, inexperience, and the ease of his assignment.<sup>51</sup> Liudprand was clearly humbled by the ostentatious display of his hosts; this was their intent. The Byzantines’ display of

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<sup>49</sup> R.H.C. Davis, “William of Tyre,” in *Relations between East and West in the Middle Ages*, ed. Derek Baker (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1973), 66.

<sup>50</sup> Liudprand of Cremona, *Antapodosis*. VI.5, 6, 8 and 9.

<sup>51</sup> Sutherland, *Liudprand of Cremona, Bishop, Diplomat, Historian*, 5.

wealth and widespread authority was one of the more subtle tools at their disposal, and in Liudprand's case it worked to perfection.

In his famous treatise, *De ceremoniis*, Constantine VII explained that grandiose ritual made "imperial power appear more majestic... and evokes the admiration both of strangers and of our own subjects."<sup>52</sup> The Lombard envoy was quite taken with the Magnaura palace, astonished by the size of the golden dishes which had to be brought to the banquet on a purple-veiled cart, and notably honored when Constantine VII spoke to him directly.<sup>53</sup> These displays and honors alone, though, cannot account for Liudprand's awe and lighthearted demeanor during his first mission east. According to Liudprand's own account, his duties amounted to little more than a courtesy call, as the Byzantines had previously sent emissaries to Italy inquiring after his principal, Berengar of Ivrea.<sup>54</sup> Liudprand likely welcomed and enjoyed the assignment, as he followed in the footsteps of his father and step-father, both of whom had previously served as Lombard ambassadors to the Bosphorus.<sup>55</sup> Still, the Byzantines clearly engineered Liudprand's experience in Constantinople in 949 to cow the foreign ambassador and assert Byzantine supremacy in this and any following encounters.

The reception given to Liudprand by Constantine VII has become the stuff of legend. Liudprand vividly describes the devices surrounding the emperor's throne, complete with mechanical roaring lions and singing birds, glistening with gold and precious stones, and explains that the only reason he was not surprised by the spectacle

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<sup>52</sup> Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus, *De ceremoniis*, in *Byzantium: Church, Society, and Civilization Seen Through Contemporary Eyes*, trans. Deno John Geanakoplos (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984), 22.

<sup>53</sup> Liudprand of Cremona, *Antapodosis*. VI.5, 7, and 8.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, VI.2.

<sup>55</sup> For information on the connections of Liudprand's family and Byzantium, see Leyser, "Ends and Means," 126-127.

was because he was told of it beforehand by someone familiar with the exhibition.<sup>56</sup> He was surprised, however, when, after prostrating himself before the emperor, as was expected of him, Liudprand lifted his head to find the emperor and his chair had risen almost to the ceiling of the room, so high that an intermediary was needed to convey the emperor's words to his guest.<sup>57</sup>

Liudprand's astonishment continued when he was invited to dine with Constantine VII, where he was held in awe of the extravagant serving dishes and a group of acrobats who performed for the assembly.<sup>58</sup> Even in his amazement, Liudprand boasted his abilities with humor. He reports that at one point during the performance the emperor leaned over to ask him which of the acrobats appeared more wondrous. Liudprand replied that he could not decide, at which point Constantine VII is said to have laughed in agreement.<sup>59</sup> Clearly, the spectacle of wealth presented to foreign ministers was meant to awe and subdue, leaving them in wonder over the power and majesty of their hosts.

## 2.5 Byzantium as depicted in the *Legatio*

Unfortunately for the Byzantines, such spectacles did not continue to maintain their luster in the eyes of foreigners such as Liudprand. As discussed above, beginning in 962 the position of the Byzantine Empire in Europe and the Mediterranean began to weaken as foreign powers became stronger and more confident. This shift of the status of

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<sup>56</sup> Liudprand of Cremona, *Antapodosis*, VI.5.

<sup>57</sup> Liudprand does not contend that Constantine VII meant at this point to speak to him directly, merely that the emperor was too far away to be heard if he had wished to do so. Liudprand of Cremona, *Antapodosis*, VI.5; Shepard suggests that most Byzantinists, because of their familiarity with this episode, have forgotten how spectacular the scene must have seemed to the medieval visitor. Shepard, "Byzantine Diplomacy, A.D. 800-1204, Means and Ends," 49-50.

<sup>58</sup> Liudprand of Cremona, *Antapodosis*, VI.9.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*

the Byzantine Empire in Christendom is evident as early as Liudprand's second recorded journey to the east in 968, as related in the *Legatio*. Even at this point, the beginning of the period of our focus, the decline of East-West relations is visible in Liudprand's conduct and reaction to the embassy. Though his objective was to secure a princess born to a reigning emperor, otherwise known as a *porphyrogenita*, as a bride for Otto II, Liudprand was soon told that no such marriage alliance could take place as long as his principal, Otto I, was attacking Byzantine interests in southern Italy.<sup>60</sup> Liudprand's constant criticism of his hosts in the *Legatio* suggests a new mindset for an aggressive Latin Europe. Liudprand complains about his quarters – a drafty palace “which neither protected from the cold nor kept out the heat.”<sup>61</sup> Liudprand's trials are exacerbated by food smothered in fish sauce, undrinkable wine, an undetermined illness which seemed to linger for his entire stay in Constantinople, and arguments over imperial titles.<sup>62</sup>

Such squabbles are common throughout the *Legatio*, but as numerous scholars have pointed out, the *Legatio* was written with a purpose. John E. Rexine looks at the *Legatio* as a “masterpiece of satire” in the form of a political pamphlet espousing propaganda against the Greeks in favor of the Ottonians, as opposed to considering it as a serious diplomatic account.<sup>63</sup> Telemachos Lounghis accepts Liudprand's description of his sordid reception at Constantinople in 968 as sincere, pointing out that the new emperor, Nicephorus Phocas, who had recently usurped the throne from the Macedonian Emperors, would have wanted to break with their policy of amiable relations with the

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<sup>60</sup> *Porphyrogenita* is the title bestowed on a daughter born to a sitting emperor, Liudprand of Cremona, *Legatio*, ch. 15.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, ch. 1.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, ch. 1, 11, 20, 21, 23. The debate over Otto being addressed “Emperor of the Romans” while Nicephorus was addressed “Emperor of the Greeks” was brought about by a letter from Pope John XIII for which Liudprand was called to answer. *Ibid.*, ch. 47.

<sup>63</sup> Rexine, “The Roman Bishop Liutprand of Cremona,” 27.



West.<sup>64</sup> Henry Mayr-Harting puts forward the theory that the *Legatio* was written to win over Italian princes to the Ottonian cause by illustrating the low opinion held of them in Byzantine circles.<sup>65</sup> In his introduction to *The Complete Works of Liudprand of Cremona*, however, Paolo Squatriti notes that no medieval manuscript of the *Legatio* survives, suggesting it was meant for a small audience, probably only for Otto I himself.<sup>66</sup> Liudprand likely wrote the *Legatio* to explain to his Ottonian master the failure of his mission to secure a Byzantine bride.<sup>67</sup> In addition, Squatriti remarks that the *Legatio* would likely have served as an embarrassment to Liudprand had it been read by the wrong people, as his connections to Byzantium – an important reason for his success in Ottonian circles – would have been forfeit.<sup>68</sup>

Whatever his true audience or intent, Liudprand's account of the 968 mission represents a dramatic shift in the way relations with Byzantium were to be regarded in Western circles henceforth. As Leyser makes clear, the Byzantine Empire as portrayed in the *Antapodosis* was the center of the Christian Mediterranean world – a leader for Christendom's resistance to foreign invaders, such as the Arabs, Vikings and Magyars.<sup>69</sup>

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<sup>64</sup> Telemachos Lounghis, "The Adaptability of Byzantine Political Ideology to Western Realities as a Diplomatic Message (476-1096)," (*Settimane di Studio-Centro Italiano di Studi Alto Medioevo*. 1, no. 52: 2005), 354-55.

<sup>65</sup> Henry Mayr-Harting, "Liudprand of Cremona's Account of his Legation to Constantinople (968) and Ottonian Imperial Strategy," *The English Historical Review*, Vol. 116, No. 467 (June 2001): 539.

<sup>66</sup> Squatriti explains that the sole known copy of the *Legatio* was lost since it was used for the first edition of 1600, thus we have only an early modern edition, but it appears reliable, Squatriti, *The Complete Works of Liudprand of Cremona*, 30.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, 29-30.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, 30.

<sup>69</sup> Leyser, "Ends and Means," 133-135. For an example of Byzantium's international appeal as a champion of Christendom, see *The Chronicle of 754*, in *Conquerors and Chroniclers of Early Medieval Spain*, trans. Kenneth Baxter Wolf (Liverpool: Liverpool Univ. Press, 1999), 111-60, in which a Spanish Christian Mozarab consistently bases his chronology on which emperor is reigning in Constantinople.

Less than twenty years later, in the *Legatio*, the Byzantines had become a greedy and misshapen people, reeking of fish sauce and bent on making war on fellow Christians.<sup>70</sup>

This growth of self-confidence and assertiveness in Western Europe, evident in Liudprand's *Legatio*, denotes the importance of Otto I's coronation in Rome in 962 as Western Emperor and successor to Charlemagne. Leyser points out that in Liudprand's writings, as in his Easter homily, written shortly before Otto I's coronation, he portrays Otto I as guided by the divine power, not by chance.<sup>71</sup> Otto gained victory over his brother Henry and Duke Gisibert of Lotharingia in 939 not because of his skill as a strategist or his use of the terrain, but because Otto prayed before the Holy Lance and nails of the Cross before the engagement.<sup>72</sup> Liudprand's Otto I is one ordained by God to guide Christendom to victory. This image directly conflicts directly with that of the Byzantine Emperor as successor to the apostles and the vicegerent of God on Earth.<sup>73</sup> From Liudprand's time onward the positions of the Eastern and Western emperors conflicted not only in the matter of titles but in ideological perception, creating further problems in diplomatic encounters.<sup>74</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> For a negative description of the appearance of Nicephorus Phocas, see Liudprand of Cremona, *Legatio*, ch. 3.

<sup>71</sup> Karl Leyser, "Liudprand of Cremona: Preacher and Homilist," in *Communications and Power in Medieval Europe: The Carolingian and Ottonian Centuries*, ed. Karl Leyser and Timothy Reuter (London: Hambledon Press, 1994), 122-124.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, 122.

<sup>73</sup> Harris, *Byzantium and the Crusades*, 13-15, 22; Ciggaar, *Western Travellers to Byzantium*, 93; Angeliki E. Laiou, "Byzantium and the West," in *Byzantium, a World Civilization*, ed. Angeliki E. Laiou and Henry Maguire (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 1992), 61-62. For more on the conflict of titles between eastern and western empires, see Geanakoplos, *Medieval Western Civilization and the Byzantine and Islamic Worlds: Interaction of Three Cultures* (Lexington: D.C. Heath, 1979), 83.

<sup>74</sup> Leyser, "Theophanu divina gratia imperatrix augusta," 1.

## 2.6 Emperor as the successor to the Apostles and head of the *Oikoumene*

Since Constantinople was founded it had become not merely the New Rome, but the New Jerusalem.<sup>75</sup> Its emperor was the same ruler whom Christ and St. Peter had commanded all Christians should obey, and thus came to be seen as the successor to the apostles.<sup>76</sup> Jonathan Harris stresses that the bureaucracy in Constantinople was almost entirely made up of a highly educated elite, and their secular background was very different from the clerical civil servants employed in the West.<sup>77</sup> Still, this educated elite in Byzantium were well aware of the hallowed place of the emperor in the Christian *Oikoumene*, as well as his status as the successor to the emperors of ancient Rome.<sup>78</sup> In addition to securing the frontiers of their empire, securing the recognition of the emperor as the supreme overlord of the Christian world was a consistent objective of their foreign policy, and they noted incidents in which foreigners failed to observe the proper respect.<sup>79</sup>

When King Baldwin III of Jerusalem came to meet with Manuel I during his march on Antioch in 1158, John Kinnamos relates that the emperor “honored and welcomed the man in a fashion worthy of the throne of David.”<sup>80</sup> Because of what Kinnamos calls an “inborn arrogance,” Baldwin dismounted his horse in the place reserved for the emperor, a grave misstep on the part of the king.<sup>81</sup> One may assume that Baldwin was not aware of the proper place to dismount respectfully, and clearly no one

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<sup>75</sup> Harris, *Byzantium and the Crusades*, 13.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid., 16-17.

<sup>78</sup> Laiou explains that the Byzantines viewed the foundation of Constantinople by Constantine the Great not as the foundation of a new state, but simply the moving of the capital of the Roman Empire. Laiou, “Byzantium and the West,” 62.

<sup>79</sup> Harris, *Byzantium and the Crusades*, 23.

<sup>80</sup> Kinnamos, *Deeds of John and Manuel Comnenus*, IV.20.141.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid.

thought it worthy of pointing out at the time, as the king and emperor went on to have a pleasant and amenable encounter.<sup>82</sup> The fact that Kinnamos mentioned the incident in his account, however, reveals that this educated elite in Byzantium's bureaucracy remembered even minor slights against their emperor, even if they kept their distress from their Latin guests. This memory of past offenses, even minor ones, added to the decline in cordial diplomacy between Byzantines and Latins, which by Kinnamos's time had picked up speed toward a rapid decline.

## 2.7 Venice and Byzantium

Slights, both large and small, were a constant strain on Byzantium's relations with Venice. The interaction between Byzantium and Italian maritime cities, especially Venice, emerges as one of the most striking issues in our study. As nominal part of the Byzantine *Oikoumene*, Venice held a unique place in East-West relations. Existing always on the periphery of the Byzantine world, the Venetians employed their large degree of autonomy from Constantinople to make their fortunes.<sup>83</sup> Their aggressive commercial expansion took the inhabitants of the Venetian lagoon and the Byzantines from mutual interests and cooperation, best shown by their joint efforts against the Normans in southern Italy, to a relationship of greed and a shared loathing, as Venice exploited commercial advantages and drew the resentment of the Byzantine people.<sup>84</sup> It was with Venice that the Byzantine practice of granting commercial privileges in

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<sup>82</sup> Kinnamos explains that Manuel showed Baldwin every attention and entertained him to a banquet. Ibid.

<sup>83</sup> Arnold Joseph Toynbee, *Constantine Porphyrogenitus and his World* (London: Oxford University Press, 1973), 281.

<sup>84</sup> Jacoby explains that "the seemingly unstoppable Italian economic expansion" stressed feelings of animosity between the Byzantines and their guests. David Jacoby, "The Byzantine Outsider in Trade, c. 900-1350," in *Strangers to Themselves: The Byzantine Outsider : Papers from the Thirty-Second Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies, University of Sussex, Brighton, March 1998*, ed. Dion Smythe (Aldershot: Variorum Reprints, 2000), 138.

exchange for military support became a hallmark of East-West diplomacy, beginning with the 992 *chrysobull* (solemn documents issuing the decree of the emperor) of Basil II, which granted Venice reduced customs dues because they “were fellow Christians, loyal to the empire,” who “had never forgotten their pledge to come to the emperor’s aid whenever his armies were fighting in Italy.”<sup>85</sup> Italian merchants became even more entrenched in the East in 1082 when Alexius I granted still greater privileges to Venice in exchange for their support against the Normans, who under Robert Guiscard had invaded Byzantine lands in the Balkans.<sup>86</sup> The doge was given the imperial title of *Protosebastos*, and a quarter in Constantinople was set aside for Venetian merchants.<sup>87</sup> Numerous historians have suggested that this agreement gave Venice a veritable monopoly over trade in the empire, effectively granting the Venetians “a foot in the door that led to the wealth of Byzantium.”<sup>88</sup> One estimate puts the population of the Venetian quarter in Constantinople under Alexius I at ten thousand citizens with its *bailo*, the head of the Venetian government in Constantinople, as one of the most powerful men in the city, capable of disrupting the emperor’s control over his own capital.<sup>89</sup> Venice’s faithful service to the empire brought it much benefit; the Venetians’ greed, however, would soon outweigh their loyalty.

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<sup>85</sup> Nicol, *Byzantium and Venice* 41, quoting the *chrysobull* of 992. Kazhdan, *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*, 451-52.

<sup>86</sup> Nicol notes that the date 1082 has been called into question. Nicol, *Byzantium and Venice*, 59-60; Ciggaar explains that every agreement which exchanged military aid for commercial privileges resulted in a better advantage for Venice, weakening the position of the Byzantine Empire both economically and politically and enhancing the image of the arrogant Venetian merchant. Ciggaar, *Western Travellers to Constantinople*, 265.

<sup>87</sup> Nicol, *Byzantium and Venice*, 60-61

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*, 62

<sup>89</sup> Eric Dursteler, *Venetians in Constantinople: Nation, Identity, and Coexistence in the Early Modern Mediterranean* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006), 23. Magdalino explains that, although their residence in Constantinople was increasingly permanent, the Italian merchants in the city remained cultural outsiders. Paul Magdalino, “Constantinople and the Outside World,” in *Strangers to Themselves: The Byzantine Outsider : Papers from the Thirty-Second Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies, University of Sussex, Brighton, March 1998*, ed. Dion Smythe (Aldershot: Variorum Reprints, 2000), 153.

Relations took a turn for the worse as John II Comnenus, Alexius's son and successor, refused to renew his father's *chrysobull*. In response, the Venetian doge, Domenico Michiel, took the cross in 1122, and on his way to and from the Holy Land he attacked Byzantine towns and islands, further enraging the Byzantines by depriving shrines of their relics.<sup>90</sup> John II finally renewed the *chrysobull* in 1126. His son and successor Manuel I did so in 1147 in exchange for further Venetian assistance against the Normans, who had launched fresh assaults against Corfu and raided up to Thebes and Corinth under the leadership of Roger II.<sup>91</sup> The Byzantines, however, did not forget the transgressions of the Venetians in 1122. By 1171 "the misdeeds of the Venetians were deemed to be excessive," prompting Manuel to execute an empire-wide attack on Venice's assets, arresting its citizens and confiscating its property.<sup>92</sup>

This episode has drawn no small amount of debate among historians. Manuel's motives and degree of success have all been subject to conjecture. His efforts can be viewed as an excuse to fill the imperial coffers, a legitimate attempt to curb growing Venetian economic power in Byzantium, or a diplomatic blunder on an enormous scale.<sup>93</sup> Whatever one's view, Manuel's actions must be viewed as a response to foreign merchants who, from the Byzantine perspective, had grown increasingly intolerable due

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<sup>90</sup> Nicol, *Byzantium and Venice*, 80. Queller and Madden appear to take Doge Domenico's crusader zeal for granted. Queller and Madden, *The Fourth Crusade*, 60.

<sup>91</sup> Nicol, *Byzantium and Venice*, 85

<sup>92</sup> Nicol, *Byzantium and Venice*, 96; Nicetas Choniates, *Historia*, in *O City of Byzantium: Annals of Niketas Choniates*, trans. Harry J. Magoulias (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1984), II.5.97.

<sup>93</sup> Brand adds that Manuel's disposition towards the Venetians was tarnished by a previous incident during joint action against the Normans during which the Venetians seized the imperial galley and placed an Ethiopian slave on the emperor's throne and bedecked him in imperial robes. Brand, *Byzantium Confronts the West*, 15; Nicolas Oikonomides, "The Role of the Byzantine State in the Economy," in *The Economic History of Byzantium: From the Seventh Through the Fifteenth Century. Vol. 3*, ed. Angeliki E. Laiou (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 2002), 1053. Bryer equates Manuel's maneuver with Basil II's treatment of Armenia which allowed the Seljuk Turks a doorway into Asia Minor. Anthony Bryer, "Cultural Relations between East and West in the Twelfth Century," in *Relations between East and West in the Middle Ages*, ed. Derek Baker (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1973), 89.

to their arrogance.<sup>94</sup> According to Nicetas Choniates, the Venetians “amassed great wealth and became so arrogant and impudent that not only did they behave belligerently to the Romans but they also ignored imperial threats and commands.”<sup>95</sup> Kinnamos remarked that the Venetian nation “is corrupt in character, jesting and rude more than any other, because it is filled with sailors’ vulgarity.”<sup>96</sup> As members of the Byzantine government, Choniates and Kinnamos were keenly placed to gauge the reasoning of the Emperor and his inner circle; thus modern scholars must accept their explanation of Manuel acting against perceived “Venetian arrogance” as trustworthy.

Venice retaliated to Manuel’s attack on their assets by dispatching a fleet to raid Byzantine held Dalmatia in 1172, but this show of force was less successful than it was in 1122, and the Venetians were forced to withdraw due to disease. It was at this point that Enrico Dandolo, the future doge of Venice, is said to have been sent on an embassy to Constantinople and became involved in a scuffle that blinded him.<sup>97</sup> In response to Venice’s aggression Manuel wrote:

From a long time back your nation has displayed great ignorance regarding what ought to be done. For when you formerly poured into the Romans’ state as wanderers really gripped by poverty you showed extreme disdain towards them. You had a great ambition to betray them to their enemies; it is superfluous to enumerate in detail what your present circumstances are. Dejected thereby, you were justly expelled from their land. Out of vainglory you decided that a conflict with them would be on equal terms, [you] a nation not even anciently worthy of the name, but at length now well-known on account of the Romans, you not comparable [to them] in strength; imagining this, have incurred much laughter

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<sup>94</sup> Nicetas Choniates, *Historia*, II.5.97, IX.326; Kinnamos, *Deeds of John and Manuel Comnenus*, IV.10.210.

<sup>95</sup> Nicetas Choniates, *Historia*, II.5.97.

<sup>96</sup> Kinnamos, *Deeds of John and Manuel Comnenus*, VI.10.210.

<sup>97</sup> Nicol, *Byzantium and Venice*, 99. Queller and Madden explain that this story is pure fiction: though Dandolo likely participated in the embassy, it took place in 1172, whereas Dandolo retained his sight at least until 1176. Queller and Madden, *The Fourth Crusade*, 9-10, notes 9-11.

from every hand. How can that be? With them [the Byzantines] not even the pick of nations, anywhere whatsoever, could wage war unpunished.<sup>98</sup>

It is easy to see the Venetians as “thirsting for blood and for revenge against the Greeks,” and in Manuel’s response a determination “to make the Venetians suffer for their arrogance.”<sup>99</sup> The diplomatic ramifications of this episode, though, go far deeper. Whether one views Manuel’s actions in 1171 as selfish or beneficial to the Byzantine state, the subsequent events it triggered represent a failure of the imperial diplomatic machine. The promise of commercial privileges was not enough to inspire the Venetians’ good behavior, nor did the threat of their withdrawal inhibit the Venetians’ desire for revenge. Manuel finally relented in 1179, restoring Venice’s property and privileges and freeing its citizens still in custody after Venice had threatened to join the Normans in an invasion of the Balkans.<sup>100</sup>

## 2.8 Genoa and Byzantium

The experience of Genoese trade in Constantinople led to a similar result. Gerald Day explains that, as Genoa’s trade in the East expanded during the crusades, ports and harbors which granted special privileges to foreign merchants enjoyed particular patronage, thus obtaining such privileges became a central goal of Genoa’s foreign policy.<sup>101</sup> When John II marched on Antioch in 1142, the Genoese dispatched envoys to him to ensure the preservation of their trading rights in the city in the event that he

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<sup>98</sup> Kinnamos, *Deeds of John and Manuel Comnenus*, VI.10.213; for a slightly different translation see Nicol, *Byzantium and Venice*, 99.

<sup>99</sup> Nicol, *Byzantium and Venice*, 99

<sup>100</sup> Nicol, *Byzantium and Venice*, 101; Treadgold, *A History of the Byzantine State and Society*, 649; Choniates is disappointingly less than specific when relating why Manuel relented. Nicetas Choniates, *Historia*, II.5.98.

<sup>101</sup> Day, *Genoa’s Response to Byzantium*, 5.



expelled the crusader regime under Raymond of Poitiers.<sup>102</sup> Genoese support for the empire was not guaranteed even after commercial privileges were finally granted under Manuel I in 1155/6, as the Genoese continued their close relations with King William I of Sicily and the Western Emperor Frederick I Barbarossa.<sup>103</sup> In 1162, after open fighting in Constantinople between the Genoese and their rivals the Pisans, Manuel withdrew their commercial privileges and barred them from the city.<sup>104</sup> Their status in Constantinople was restored in 1170 only after much negotiation, but over the remainder of Manuel I's reign, Byzantine-Genoese relations appear to have prospered.<sup>105</sup> One Genoese sea captain, Baldovino Guercio, was even granted a *pronoia* by the emperor in 1179 for his service to the empire.<sup>106</sup>

Relations with both Venice and Genoa, as well as the rest of Latin Europe, suffered, however, with the ascension of Andronicus I Comnenus to the Byzantine throne. In 1182 Andronicus marched on Constantinople in order to overthrow the unpopular regency ruling on behalf of Alexius II, headed by his mother and Manuel's widow, Maria-Xena of Antioch. Andronicus's approach unleashed pent up anti-Latin xenophobia in Constantinople; thousands of Latins were massacred and some four

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<sup>102</sup> Ibid., 24.

<sup>103</sup> Manuel was particularly alarmed by Genoa's support for Barbarossa's Sicilian campaign in 1162. Ibid., 25-26.

<sup>104</sup> Day rejects accusations that Manuel encouraged the Pisans to attack the Genoese because of their ties to Barbarossa. Ibid., 26.

<sup>105</sup> The Venetians, hoping to protect their position in Constantinople, attacked the Genoese colony in the city almost as soon as it was restored in 1170, giving Manuel yet another reason for seizing Venetian goods and citizens in 1171. Day notes that the Byzantines were very grateful for the naval assistance subsequently provided by Genoa against Venice. Ibid., 27-28.

<sup>106</sup> Manuel apparently trusted Guercio so much that he entrusted him with the transport of Agnes, daughter of King Louis VII of France, who came to Constantinople in 1179 as a bride for the emperor's son and successor, Alexius II. Day, *Genoa's Response to Byzantium*, 28; Ciggaar, *Western Travellers to Constantinople*, 273.

thousand who survived were sold to the Turks as slaves.<sup>107</sup> The outraged reaction of Western Europe forced Andronicus to pay embarrassing reparations.<sup>108</sup>

Both Isaac II Angelus and his brother Alexius III were quick to renew the privileges of Italian merchants in an attempt to purchase Latin goodwill, but the animosity brought about by Manuel's actions in the 1170s and the massacre of Latins in Constantinople in 1182 weighed heavily on the Western mind.<sup>109</sup> Perhaps the best example of this growing disrespect for Byzantium from the West is the reception given to the envoys of Henry VI, son and successor of Frederick Barbarossa in 1196. Nicetas Choniates relates the arrogance of the envoys as they arrived at the imperial court, demanding that Henry be acclaimed "lord of lords" and "king of kings," and insisting that Byzantine naval forces be dispatched in support of the crusader states.<sup>110</sup> Choniates is equally incensed by Alexius III's lack of tact in their reception when they returned later that year. In an effort to cow the visiting German envoys, Alexius and his court bedecked themselves in their most splendid imperial robes, employing the same methods that dazzled Liudprand some two hundred years earlier. In this instance, however, the foreigners' reaction was quite different:

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<sup>107</sup> Nicol, *Byzantium and Venice*, 107; Brand, *Byzantium Confronts the West*, 40-41, 325-26; Treadgold, *A History of the Byzantine State and Society*, 652. Ciggaar explains that, as the Venetians had recently been expelled from Constantinople, relatively few were involved in the massacre. Ciggaar, *Western Travellers to Byzantium*, 270; Nicetas Choniates, *Historia*, III, 140. Davis points out that William's description of the 1182 massacre of Latins in Constantinople was also rather mild, as he reports the events dispassionately and gives equal attention to the retaliatory attacks by Latins on the towns and monasteries along the Sea of Marmara. Davis, "William of Tyre," 70; William of Tyre, *A History of Deeds Done Beyond the Sea*, XXII.12.464-65.

<sup>108</sup> Nicol, *Byzantium and Venice*, 109

<sup>109</sup> Isaac II restored the commercial privileges to the Venetians in 1187 in exchange for military support against the Normans, the Venetian negotiators took the advantage to force Isaac to agree to pay reparations for Venice's losses in 1182. Nicol, *Byzantium and Venice*, 110-13. After many attempts on the part of the Genoese, Isaac II restored their commercial privileges in a *chrysobull* in 1192. Day, *Genoa's Response to Byzantium*, 29.

<sup>110</sup> Nicetas Choniates, *Historia*, VI.1.261.

The Germans have neither need of such spectacles, nor do they wish to become worshippers of ornaments and garments secured by brooches suited only for women whose painted faces, headdresses, and glittering earrings are especially pleasing to men.... The time has now come to take off effeminate garments and brooches and put on iron instead of gold.<sup>111</sup>

Choniates's account of the Germans' reaction suggests that at least a small element within the Byzantine government had come to realize the ineffectiveness of their methods. Displays of wealth that would have intimidated foreign envoys in the past now incited them against the empire. In what he sees as an unprecedented event in Byzantine history, Choniates explains that Alexius III paid five thousand pounds of gold in exchange for Henry's good will.<sup>112</sup>

## 2.9 What were the Latins trying to do?

Accounts of the grandiose spectacles of wealth, such as Liudprand's *Antapodosis*, lead one to wonder why Byzantium's neighbors would willfully participate in what Shepard refers to as "palace diplomacy" when they were at such an obvious disadvantage.<sup>113</sup> Shepard notes that, as well as being able to amaze their guests with their wealth and entertainment, the palaces of Constantinople also granted the Byzantines another advantage – storage and access to diplomatic documents.<sup>114</sup> In the West, potentates were known to move often from place to place. At Constantinople, the facility for reception of foreign dignitaries remained stationary, allowing Byzantine ministers and emperors access to previous agreements and treaties that their Western opponents might no longer have on hand. This advantage is obvious during Liudprand's account of his

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<sup>111</sup> Choniates quotes the German ambassadors in their reaction to the spectacle, *Ibid.*, VI.1.262.

<sup>112</sup> *Ibid.*, VI.1.261.

<sup>113</sup> Shepard, "Byzantine Diplomacy, A.D. 800-1204, Means and Ends," 58.

<sup>114</sup> *Ibid.*, 47-48.

later mission to Constantinople of 969, when Emperor Nicephorus II Phocas brought forth documents with promises delivered by a previous Ottonian envoy.<sup>115</sup>

Shepard answers that the risk of not engaging in diplomacy with the empire outweighed any possible disadvantage. Those who refrained from indulging in the Byzantine court spectacle, or at least refused to send a representative, certainly had to beware the actions of their neighbors, who likely would participate.<sup>116</sup> Also, foreign princes probably looked at diplomacy in Constantinople as an opportunity – a chance to gauge the other foreign powers and their dealings with Byzantium.<sup>117</sup> These reasons, however, presume that the Byzantine Empire was the foremost power of the time, as portrayed by Liudprand in the *Antapodosis*. From 962 to 1204, Byzantium fell further away from this accolade, and thus one must look for other reasons for Westerners to engage in diplomacy at the Byzantines' renowned court.

As in the case of Henry VI, it appears that Western powers were assuming a position of dominance in their relations with Byzantium. No longer would they allow themselves to be cowed into submission. Instead they arrived in Constantinople to dictate terms. Such was the case with Otto I, who used marriage negotiations for his son Otto II to further his ends in southern Italy.<sup>118</sup> The audacity of the Venetians, who attacked the Byzantines in 1122 and 1172 in order to force the emperor to capitulate regarding their commercial privileges, is yet another example of a Western power forcing the empire to come to terms. It must therefore be concluded that the old methods of Byzantine diplomacy – gifts, titles, marriage, and even the addition of commercial privileges – had

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<sup>115</sup> Liudprand of Cremona, *Legatio*, ch. 25.

<sup>116</sup> Shepard, "Byzantine Diplomacy, A.D. 800-1204, Means and Ends," 59.

<sup>117</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>118</sup> Boyd H. Hill, *Medieval Monarchy in Action: The German Empire from Henry I to Henry IV* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1972), 43.

failed to maintain Byzantine supremacy in encounters with the West. This change is not simply a failure on the part of the Byzantines to adapt to changing circumstances, but an achievement on the part of the Westerners, who saw through the Byzantine show of wealth to assume a superior position in diplomatic machinations.

## CHAPTER 3

### MARRIAGE AS A TOOL OF EAST-WEST DIPLOMACY

Perhaps the most widely noted strategy of imperial diplomacy with the West was alliance by marriage. In her study of dynastic marriages, Ruth Macrides explains that marriage was only one means of establishing ties of kinship.<sup>119</sup> Marriage alliances between Byzantium and the West, however, took on a primary role because the other methods – baptismal sponsorship and adoption – were less practical due to the distances involved and the difficulty of transportation.<sup>120</sup> As already shown, however, Western powers became extremely adept at utilizing Byzantine methods of diplomacy for their own ends. No other method expresses this better than marriage. From the end of the eighth to the end of the tenth centuries, Macrides identifies thirteen incidents of marriage negotiations between East and West, with only three resulting in a successful union.<sup>121</sup> The earliest known negotiations for a marriage alliance between the Latin West and the

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<sup>119</sup> Macrides describes marriages as a “mainstay of Byzantine diplomacy.” Macrides, “Dynastic Marriages and Political Kinship,” 263-64.

<sup>120</sup> Macrides points out that baptismal sponsorship and adoption were methods much more common in Byzantium’s dealings with northern neighbors (Bulgars, Rus, etc). Diametrically marriage alliances with these peoples were much more rare than with the West. Macrides, “Dynastic Marriages and Political Kinship,” 270. For the dire nature of sea travel see Pryor, *Geography, Technology and War*; Alexander P. Kazhdan and Giles Constable, *People and Power in Byzantium: An Introduction to Modern Byzantine Studies* (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks, Center for Byzantine Studies, Trustees for Harvard University, 1982), 42.

<sup>121</sup> The three successful marriages were Euanthia, granddaughter of St. Philaretus, and Grimoald, duke of Benevento (788); Anna, daughter of Leo VI and Louis III of Provence (ca. 900); and Romanus II and Bertha, daughter of Hugh of Italy (942). Macrides, “Dynastic Marriages and Political Kinship,” 268, notes-26; Adelbert Davids, “Marriage Negotiations between Byzantium and the West,” in *The Empress Theophano: Byzantium and the West at the Turn of the First Millennium*, ed. Adelbert Davids (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 104-107.

Greek East were between Leo IV and Gisela, the daughter of Pippin III, in 765.<sup>122</sup> As in this case, such negotiations were often unsuccessful, resulting in few marriages. The first marriage between the Byzantine and Frankish royal families did not occur until 900 between Anna, daughter of Leo VI, and Louis III of Provence in 900. Even this union did not establish a strong precedent for East-West relations.

Marriage alliances did not become a common feature of Byzantine diplomacy with Western powers until the marriage of Otto II and Theophano, niece of John Tzimiskes, in 972, at which point the importance of marriage negotiations with the West appears to take on a dramatically greater importance.<sup>123</sup> From the marriage of Otto II and Theophano in 972 to 1204, the research for this study found that at least twenty-two marriage negotiations took place between Byzantium and a Latin power, with fifteen resulting in a successful union.<sup>124</sup> The reason for the increase in successful negotiations, as well as the implications for East-West relations, is the question which must be addressed. The dramatic increase in diplomatic engagements, intended to enhance the security of the empire in the long term, presented fewer dividends for the Byzantines than

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<sup>122</sup> Davids concludes that the purpose of this alliance would have been to isolate the Lombards and the papacy from possible Frankish support. Davids, "Marriage Negotiations between Byzantium and the West," 104.

<sup>123</sup> For questions concerning Theophano's origins and imperial relations, see Leyser, "*Theophanu divina imperatrix augusta*," 17. Jenkins believes Theophano to be a *porphyrogenita* and "the undoubted heiress of the line of Basil the Macedonian." Romilly James Heald Jenkins, *Byzantium; The Imperial Centuries, A.D. 610-1071* (New York: Random House, 1967), 324. Davids, noting that Theophano's name is not mentioned in Byzantine sources before her marriage, posits the theory that she changed her name upon her union with Otto II. Davids, "Marriage Negotiations between Byzantium and the West," 120. Engels explains that Theophano was also related to the previous emperor, Nicephorus Phocas, through her mother. Odilo Engels, "Theophano, the Western Empress from the East," in *The Empress Theophano: Byzantium and the West at the Turn of the First Millennium*, ed. Adelbert Davids (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 32. German sources refer specifically to Theophano as the niece of the emperor of Constantinople. Thietmar of Merseburg, *Chronicon*, in *Ottoman Germany: The Chronicon of Thietmar of Merseburg*, trans. David Werner (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000), II.5.103.

<sup>124</sup> For a complete list of the marriages examined, see Appendix. This study does not pretend to be comprehensive, and admits that certain marriages and marriage negotiations may have been omitted. In addition a relative dearth of sources may cause the researcher to overlook examples both before and after 972. Macrides's study focuses almost entirely on marriages before 972.

they had hoped. Latin partners gained prestige, a place in the Byzantine imperial household, and at times even military assistance. The short-term benefits of marriage alliances for Byzantium were aimed at securing the frontiers of the empire or pulling support away from an opponent. The benefits for the Byzantine Empire became increasingly inconsequential over time, however, and eventually proved detrimental to Byzantium's long term security.

### 3.1 Theophano and Otto II – a precedent

The marriage of Otto II to Theophano, for example, aimed at settling border disputes between the Eastern and Western empires in Italy. Liudprand of Cremona originally attempted to obtain the bride for the son of his patron, Otto I, on his 968/9 mission to the court of Nicephorus Phocas. When Liudprand arrived in Constantinople seeking a *porphyrogenita* to marry Otto II, he was told that the marriage of such a princess to a barbarian was unprecedented and abhorrent.<sup>125</sup> This was not at all the case.<sup>126</sup> Imperial brides, even those “born in the purple,” were married off to foreign princes both before and after Liudprand's time.

The Emperor Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus explained in his famous treatise, *De administrando imperio*, that the Franks alone were the exception to the ban on marriages between imperial daughters and neighboring barbarians, due not only to the fact that “the Holy Constantine... himself drew his origin from those parts,” but also

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<sup>125</sup> Liudprand of Cremona, *Legatio*, ch. 15.

<sup>126</sup> Engels suggests that the claim of a *porphyrogenita* given to a barbarian as unprecedented was merely an excuse, as Adalbert, the son of Berengar of Ivrea, had offered his subjugation to the Byzantines if they would help him regain his kingdom from Otto I, forcing the Byzantines to find a way to sabotage the negotiations with Liudprand. Engels, “Theophano, the Western Empress from the East,” 31.



“because of the traditional fame and nobility of those lands and races.”<sup>127</sup> Not only was Western Europe the home of Constantine the Great, but the Franks shared a common faith with the Byzantines, a factor notably absent from possible alliances with other peoples. Constantine VII further explained his reasoning for permitting marriages with the Franks in his discussion of two previous marriages that did not fit his criteria. When Constantine V married Tzitzak-Irene, the daughter of the Khazar Khan in 732, he “attached great shame to the empire of the Romans and to himself.”<sup>128</sup> Furthermore, Constantine VII explains that Constantine V “was not even an orthodox Christian, but a heretic and a destroyer of images. And so for these, his unlawful impieties, he is continually excommunicated and anathematized in the church of God.”<sup>129</sup> The other unsuitable marriage discussed by Constantine VII is that of Peter of Bulgaria to Maria, granddaughter of Constantine’s father-in-law, Romanus I Lecapenus, in 927.<sup>130</sup> Constantine explains the failing of this union by referring to the ineptness of Romanus, who himself brokered the marriage:

The lord Romanus, the emperor, was a common, illiterate fellow, and not from among those who have been bred up in the palace, and have followed the Roman national customs from the beginning; nor was he of imperial and noble stock, and for this reason in most of his actions he was too arrogant and despotic, and in this instance he neither heeded the prohibition of the church, nor followed the commandment and ordinance of the great Constantine.<sup>131</sup>

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<sup>127</sup> Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus, *De administrando imperio*, 71-73.

<sup>128</sup> *Ibid.*, 73.

<sup>129</sup> Referring to the Iconoclast controversy; Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus, *De administrando imperio*, 73; Macrides points out that Constantine VII was at this point mistaken, believing it to have been Leo III who married a Khazar bride, when in reality it was his son Constantine V. But the accusation of Iconoclasm still stands. Macrides, “Dynastic Marriage and Political Kinship,” 267.

<sup>130</sup> For more on the marriage of Peter and Maria, especially as a precedent for the marriage of Theophano to Otto II, see Jonathan Shepard, “A marriage too far? Maria Lekapena and Peter of Bulgaria,” in *The Empress Theophano: Byzantium and the West at the Turn of the First Millennium*, ed. Adelbert Davids (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

<sup>131</sup> Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus, *De administrando imperio*, 73. Romanus I’s harsh treatment of his son-in-law may excuse Constantine’s diatribe against him, and Shepard explains that “foreign affairs were very often more personal affairs than Byzantine sources disclose.” Shepard, “Byzantine Diplomacy, A.D. 800-1204, Means and Ends,” 70. Kazhdan notes that the marriage of Peter and Maria, like that of

No such condemnation applied to a marriage alliance with the son of the Western emperor; similar unions had long been pursued on both sides.<sup>132</sup> Constantine VII's endorsement of marriages to cement alliances and seal treaties with the West became a hallmark of Byzantine diplomacy. As his treatise was written around 950, long before Liudprand's request of the hand of Theophano for the young Otto II, one can safely presume that the refusal of the Byzantines was due to other reasons.

According to Liudprand's own account, the Byzantines were unwilling to part with a princess because of Otto I's incursions into Byzantine Italy. He explains that his Byzantine hosts in 968 reproached him for Otto I's attack on Berengar, his occupation of Rome, and his advance into southern Italy.<sup>133</sup> Thietmar of Merseburg reports that, shortly after Otto I elevated his son to the imperial throne with him in 967, he dispatched an embassy of leading individuals to Constantinople to negotiate for a Byzantine princess to marry Otto II, but that "during the trip, the Greeks, with their customary slyness, unexpectedly attacked and killed some of them."<sup>134</sup> Thietmar describes this attack on diplomatic envoys as Otto I's reason for invading Byzantine Italy, but his account is unfortunately lacking in details concerning the incident.<sup>135</sup> He does not explain where the attack took place or if it was officially sanctioned by authorities in Constantinople. It may

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Theophano and Otto II, was negotiated under duress. Alexander P. Kazhdan, "The Notion of Byzantine Diplomacy," in *Byzantine Diplomacy: Papers from the Twenty-Fourth Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies, Cambridge, March 1990*, ed. Jonathan Shepard and Simon Franklin (Aldershot: Variorum, 1992), 17.

<sup>132</sup> Constantine VI negotiated for Rotrud, the daughter of Charlemagne (771); Michael I attempted to obtain a Frankish princess as a bride for his son Theophylact (811/12); Macrides, "Dynastic Marriages and Political Kinship," 268. Theophanes reports that Charlemagne himself proposed marriage to the Empress Irene in 802. Theophanes, *Chronographia*, in *Byzantium: Church, Society, and Civilization Seen Through Contemporary Eyes*, trans. Deno John Geanakoplos (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984), 472-73.

<sup>133</sup> Liudprand of Cremona, *Legatio*, ch. 3.

<sup>134</sup> *Quos in ipso itinere Greci solita calliditate ex inproviso irruentes*. Thietmar of Merseburg, *Chronicon*, II.15.102; For the Latin text, see *Thietmari Merseburgensis episcopi Chronicon*, ed. Fridericus Kurze (Hannoverae: Impensis bibliopolii Hahniani, 1889), 27.

<sup>135</sup> Thietmar of Merseburg, *Chronicon*, II.15.102.

simply have been nothing more than the actions of some hotheaded Greek citizens of southern Italy, with little connection or concern with policy in Constantinople. Liudprand makes no mention of an attack on his embassy, so his was either not the first embassy to be sent by Otto I or Thietmar was mistaken. In either event, Thietmar's story still conveys the bitterness of the quarrel between Ottonians and Byzantines in southern Italy. Both sides blamed the other for beginning the conflict and saw their actions as entirely justified. With this in mind, it is not hard to imagine why officials in Constantinople would be unwilling to grant Liudprand's request for a *porphyrogenita* princess.

In the end Liudprand's efforts to obtain a bride for Otto II failed, and it was left to a later embassy to negotiate for Theophano to come west.<sup>136</sup> In 971, another embassy, headed by Archbishop Gero of Cologne, successfully negotiated for the long awaited bride.<sup>137</sup> There was a problem, however. Thietmar reports that many in Otto I's circle objected that Theophano – though related to the reigning emperor, John Tzimiskes – was not the expected *porphyrogenita*:<sup>138</sup>

Immediately this ruler [John Tzimiskes] sent across the sea to our emperor, not the desired maiden, but rather his niece, Theophanu, accompanied by a splendid entourage and magnificent gifts. He thereby absolved his people's guilt and obtained the desired friendship of Caesar Augustus [Otto I]. There were some who tried to dissuade the emperor from this alliance and recommended sending

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<sup>136</sup> Squatriti concludes that Liudprand's purpose in writing the *Legatio* may very well have been to explain the failure of his mission. Squatriti, *The Complete Works of Liudprand of Cremona*, 32;

<sup>137</sup> Ironically, Liudprand appears to have taken part on this embassy as well, despite his ranting against the Byzantines in the *Legatio*. Leyser, "Ends and Means," 126; Ciggaar, *Western Travellers to Constantinople*, 212. Schummer doubts that Otto I ever saw the *Legatio*, otherwise he would not have sent Liudprand on the embassy in 971. Schummer, "Liudprand of Cremona – a Diplomat?" 200, notes 10; Leyser suggests Liudprand was compelled to go because of his knowledge of Greek. Leyser, "Ends and Means in Liudprand of Cremona," 126.

<sup>138</sup> It is likely that the bride targeted by Ottonian negotiators was Anna, the *porphyrogenita* daughter of Romanus II, who was in fact the first *porphyrogenita* given as a bride to a foreign power, marrying Vladimir of Kiev in 989. Engels, "Theophano, the Western Empress from the East," 30; Davids, "Marriage Negotiations between Byzantium and the West," 107.

the bride home. He did not listen to them, however, and gave her to his son in marriage, with the approval of all the leading men of Italy and Germany.<sup>139</sup>

While Thietmar himself gives no direct insight into Otto's reasoning, there are certain points we can glean from his account. The fact that Otto I overrode the recommendations of his advisors and pursued the union suggests he deeply desired the marriage to be achieved.<sup>140</sup> It was clearly a vital part of his foreign policy. With the marriage of Otto II and Theophano, the Ottonian dynasty gained an implied recognition as Western emperors.<sup>141</sup> Otto I likely expected the Byzantines to cede their claims to southern Italy, though in fact they only surrendered Capua-Benevento, keeping Apulia and Calabria firmly under the rule of Constantinople.<sup>142</sup>

Theophano's marriage into the Saxon ruling family had a dramatic effect on medieval Germany and East-West relations. Ciggaar points out that Theophano set in motion the trend towards luxury and imperial style in Germany.<sup>143</sup> Without her arrival

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<sup>139</sup> *Qui mox magnificis muneribus comitatuque egregio non virginem desideratam, set neptem suam, Theophanu vocatam, imperatori nostro trans mare mittens suos absolvit amicitiamque optatam cesaris augusti promeruit. Fuere nonnulli, qui hanc fieri coniunctionem apud imperatorem impedire studerent eandemque remitti consulerent. Quos idem non audivit, sed eandem dedit tunc filio suimet in uxorem arridentibus cunctis Italiae Germaniaeque primatibus.* Thietmar of Merseburg, *Chronicon*, II.15.103; Kurze, *Thietmari Merseburgensis episcopi Chronicon*, 27. Leyser supposes that Liudprand himself was one of those who spoke out against Theophano as a bride, as he of all people would have been aware of the subtle significance of birth in Byzantine aristocracy. Leyser, "*Theophanu divina gratia imperatrix augusta*," 19.

<sup>140</sup> Engels asserts that because Otto I's signature appears on the marriage charter of 972, the marriage was a political matter which could proceed only with his blessing. Engels, "Theophano, the Western Empress from the East," 33. Leyser suggests that Otto I was eager to put the marriage matter to rest and return north from Italy to deal with challenges to his authority. Leyser, "*Theophanu divina gratia imperatrix augusta*," 19.

<sup>141</sup> Hill refers to the marriage as the most important deed of Otto II's reign. Hill, *Medieval Monarchy in Action*, 43; Leyser, "*Theophanu divina gratia imperatrix augusta*," 14. Reuter explains that recognition from the Byzantines was Otto I's sole motivation in pursuing the union. Timothy Reuter, *Germany in the Early Middle Ages, c. 800-1056* (London: Longman, 1991), 174.

<sup>142</sup> Hill, *Medieval Monarchy in Action*, 43, notes 3. Leyser notes that the marriage agreement secured the release of numerous prisoners being held by the Byzantines, such as Pandulf Ironhead, ruler of Capua-Benevento, who had been captured near Bovino in 969. Leyser, "*Theophanu divina gratia imperatrix augusta*," 20.

<sup>143</sup> Ciggaar points to the chapel of St. Bartholomew in Paderborn and the painted head and hands of Christ in the Gospel Book of Echternach. Ciggaar, *Western Travellers to Constantinople*, 208-210.

ushering in Byzantine models, none of the ivories, enamels, jewelry, goldsmith work, or illuminated manuscripts of the late Ottonians would have been possible.<sup>144</sup> Indeed the Ottonian appetite for such luxuries was apparent well before the 972 union. Liudprand's "clandestine" attempt to purchase silk in Constantinople for his master, Otto I, in 968, as well as a proviso requiring a tribute of Byzantine silk robes from Venice in a 967 treaty, show that such comforts were actively sought from markets in Byzantium.<sup>145</sup> After the death of Otto I, Theophano became co-ruler with her husband, taking the title of *imperatrix*, and when Otto II died suddenly in 983 she became regent for her infant son, Otto III, as was customary in Byzantine tradition.<sup>146</sup> Immediately she was forced to manage the threat of Henry the Wrangler, duke of Bavaria, who took the initiative after Otto II's death to seize his heir while Theophano was in Italy and proclaim himself king.<sup>147</sup> Her son, Otto III, would exhibit a notable Byzantine influence.<sup>148</sup> He spoke Greek, for example, and employed Byzantine titles in his administration. His Greek teacher, John Philagathos of Calabria – later the anti-Pope John XVI, who first came to the Ottonian court in Theophano's circle – spoke very highly of his student's academic skill.<sup>149</sup> Otto III put an end to the wandering of the Ottonian court, settling in Rome. He introduced much Byzantine imperial ceremony to his court and, in 997, addressed himself

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<sup>144</sup> Leyser, "The Tenth Century in Byzantine-Western Relationships," 44. Ciggaar attributes the large collection of Byzantine artifacts in Germany to the marriage between Theophano and Otto II. Ciggaar, *Western Travellers to Constantinople*, 81, 206.

<sup>145</sup> Liudprand of Cremona, *Legatio*, ch. 53-54; Leyser, "The Tenth Century in Byzantine-Western Relationships," 60, notes 89; "Otto I renews the treaty with the Venetians," in *Medieval Monarchy in Action: The German Empire from Henry I to Henry IV*, ed. Boyd H. Hill (London: Allen and Unwin, 1972), 161.

<sup>146</sup> Irene became regent for her nine-year-old son Constantine VI in 780. Constantine VII's mother Zoe acted as regent for her son until 919. Leyser counts seventy-nine instances in which Theophano intervened politically during her husband's reign. Leyser, "*Theophanu divina gratia imperatrix augusta*," 21.

<sup>147</sup> Engels, "Theophano, the Western Empress from the East," 36.

<sup>148</sup> Leyser points out that the court under Otto III had to remain very approachable and somewhat informal; thus the Byzantine influence on aristocratic living in Germany "sat lightly on those who received it and [was] soon forgotten." Leyser, "The Tenth Century in Byzantine-Western Relationships," 44.

<sup>149</sup> Engels, "Theophano, the Western Empress from the East," 41; Hill, *Medieval Monarchy in Action*, 59.

as “emperor augustus of the Romans.”<sup>150</sup> Otto III even applied to Constantinople for a Byzantine princess as a suitable bride; in response the first *porphyrogenita* was sent west. In 1002, Bishop Arnulf of Milan was sent east to negotiate on Otto III’s behalf, and he returned with Zoe, the daughter of Constantine VIII.<sup>151</sup> Alas, Otto III died suddenly in 1002, just as Zoe was arriving in Italy. Although it is difficult to gauge what may have resulted from such a union, the marriage of a *porphyrogenita* into the ruling house of the Western Empire would certainly have carried unprecedented implications for diplomatic relations.<sup>152</sup>

Unfortunately, Theophano’s legacy was not as positively viewed immediately after her death as it has become today. Thietmar, for his part, often spoke well of his queen, referring to her as the *pia mater*, and explains that she was exceptional both as a Greek and as a woman.<sup>153</sup> Even his praise of Theophano, however, exhibits some reservations about Byzantium. “Although of the fragile sex,” Thietmar says of Theophano, “her modesty, conviction, and manner of life were outstanding, which is rare in Greece. Preserving her son’s rulership with manly watchfulness, she was always benevolent and just, but terrified and conquered rebels.”<sup>154</sup> This tribute, while positive on

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<sup>150</sup> Engels, “Theophano, the Western Empress from the East,” 41; Hill, *Medieval Monarchy in Action*, 51.

<sup>151</sup> Ciggaar notes that Arnulf rode into Constantinople on a horse shod with golden shoes in an attempt to compete with the splendor of the Byzantine court. Ciggaar, *Western Travellers to Constantinople*, 214-15; Davids settles on Zoe, but leaves open the possibility that the bride in question could have been her sister, Theodora.” Davids, “Marriage Negotiations between Byzantium and the West,” 109; Jenkins, *Byzantium, The Imperial Centuries*, 324.

<sup>152</sup> Jenkins suggests that all marriages between the Franks and Byzantines up until this point were purposely aimed at uniting the two empires. He is certain that a scenario in which a marriage had been achieved between Otto III and Zoe, who he believes were first cousins, would have resulted in a reinvention of the ancient Roman Empire. Jenkins, *Byzantium, The Imperial Centuries*, 324.

<sup>153</sup> Thietmar of Merseburg, *Chronicon*, IV.10.157, Kurze, *Thietmari Merseburgensis episcopi Chronicon*, 70.

<sup>154</sup> *Haec, quamvis sexu fragilis, modestae tamen fiduciae et, quod in Grecia rarum est, egregiae conversationis fuit regnumque filii eius custodia servabat virili, demulcens in omnibus pios terrensque ac superans erectos.* Thietmar of Merseburg, *Chronicon*, IV.10.158, Kurze, *Thietmari Merseburgensis episcopi Chronicon*, 70.

the surface, carries clear negative implications. Theophano is described here as fair and noble despite her gender and ethnicity.

This is not the only occasion in which a prejudice becomes apparent in Thietmar's work. He again stops short of full praise for Theophano when imploring his fellow Germans not to react rashly to a solar eclipse:

But I urge all Christians to truly believe that this does not occur because of the incantations of evil women, or through being devoured, or that it can be assisted by any earthly means, but rather that it has to do with the moon, as Macrobius testifies and other wise men assert.<sup>155</sup>

Thietmar's insistence that Theophano was not to blame for the eclipse implies that such charges were indeed being levied against her. At the very best Thietmar must be considered a grudging defender of Theophano's image, and defense may be due to the fact that his father was a proud and faithful servant of the queen.<sup>156</sup>

If Thietmar was only a half-hearted defender of Theophano's legacy, there were certainly many others very eager to tear her down completely. Otto I's widow and co-regent with Theophano, Adelaide, clashed frequently with her daughter-in-law, and though she was quick to comfort Otto III after the death of his mother in 991, one can assume she was at least moderately pleased to see her political rival pass away.<sup>157</sup> But for the purposes of this study, more important consequences after the death of Theophano are

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<sup>155</sup> *Sed cunctis persuadeo christicolis, ut veraciter credant, hoc non aliqua malarum incantacione mulierum vel esu vel huic aliquot modo seculariter adiuvari posse, sed sicut Macrobius testator caeterique sapientes fieri asserunt, et id de luna.* Thietmar of Merseburg, *Chronicon*, IV.15.161, Kurze, *Thietmari Merseburgensis episcopi Chronicon*, 73.

<sup>156</sup> David Warner, *Ottonian Germany: The Chronicon of Thietmar of Merseburg* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000), 48.

<sup>157</sup> For the rivalry between Theophano and Adelaide, see Hill, *Medieval Monarchy in Action*, 50; Leyser, "Theophanu divina gratia imperatrix augusta," 21; Engels, "Theophano, the Western Empress from the East," 33-34.

seen in the sphere of perception of the luxury of the Byzantines.<sup>158</sup> According to the German monk Otloh of St. Emmeran, shortly after her death, Theophano appeared in a dream to a nun, explaining that she was being punished for introducing opulence and jewelry to the West.<sup>159</sup> Peter Damian even accused Theophano of having an inappropriate relationship with her son's tutor, John Philagathos.<sup>160</sup> These accusations overshadow what we today might see as Theophano's achievements. Certainly, her marriage to Otto II settled matters in Italy favorably for the Byzantines, at least for a while. However, her reputation in the West created consequences in regard to perception that the Byzantines clearly did not expect and of which they were likely never made aware.

### 3.2 Latin Perception of the Byzantines in Diplomatic Marriage

Theophano was not the only Greek wife to suffer the ire of Peter Damian, whose condemnation of another such union reveals a growing disdain for the conduct of Byzantine princesses and consequently, the Byzantines themselves. As explained in Chapter One, Basil II did his best to counter the inroads of Otto III in Venice by enticing John, the son and heir of Doge Peter II Orseolo, with gifts and titles. A marriage to a Byzantine noblewoman was just another means to this end, as Basil arranged to have John married to Maria, sister of the future emperor Romanus III Argyros and daughter of a Byzantine aristocrat.<sup>161</sup> As Macrides explains, marriage alliances such as that of

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<sup>158</sup> Davids briefly references the correlation between Western condemnations of luxury and Byzantine brides, giving fuel to the "virulent anti-Byzantine attitude of Western ecclesiastical reformers." Davids, "Marriage Negotiations between Byzantium and the West," 111.

<sup>159</sup> Otloh of St. Emmeran, *Liber Visionum, visio 17, MGH*, Bd. 13, ed. Paul Gerhard Schmidt (Weimar: Böhlau, 1989), 91; Ciggaar, *Western Travellers to Constantinople*, 14-15, 210.

<sup>160</sup> Ciggaar, *Western Travellers to Constantinople*, 210.

<sup>161</sup> On Maria's background before her marriage to John Orseolo, see Ciggaar, *Western Travellers to Constantinople*, 266; Nicol, *Byzantium and Venice*, 45. Davids points out that John the Deacon wrongly



Theophano and Otto II and John Orseolo and Maria Argyros were pursued not simply in order to seal a peace, but to gain the support of powerful neighbors in pursuit of one's interests.<sup>162</sup> John's father, Doge Peter II Orseolo, had provided faithful service to the empire against the Slavs in Dalmatia in 1000 and against the Arabs, who were attacking Byzantine Bari, in 1004.<sup>163</sup> The marriage reaffirmed Venetian support for Byzantine policy in the Adriatic. However, as in the case of Theophano, this marriage carried unexpected consequences.

Peter Damian's polemic against the indulgences of Maria Argyros is particularly harsh. The couple lived in Venice until their death from plague in 1006, inspiring him to invent an elaborate tale of the Greek princess who came to Venice and was divinely punished with a hideous death for her self-indulgence.<sup>164</sup> Peter Damian attributes much behavior to Maria that was objectionable to him:

On the wife of the doge of Venice, who earlier had been wanton, then finally her whole body became putrefied. For that which ought to be strengthened, it is appropriate that we put forward a fitting example of the living flesh. I heard what I am about to tell you from a true and honorable man. The doge of the Venetians had a wife who had been a citizen of the city of Constantinople. Without doubt she lived trivially, luxuriously, and in a superstitious and an unnatural manner, so to speak. She pleased herself with joy, and she refused even to wash herself with common water; her servants bustled about to gather rain droplets from wherever they could find them, out of which they might procure a sufficient bath for her. Also, she did not touch food with her own hands, but her food was chopped up into small pieces by her eunuchs; that same food she next, licking her lips, brought into her mouth with a two and three pronged golden fork. Her apartment emitted the scent of so many types of incense and spice and it stank so bad that to speak of it is repellant to us, and perhaps the listener may not believe it. The arrogance of this woman was so hateful to almighty God that undoubtedly

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believed Maria to be a member of the imperial family. Davids, "Marriage Negotiations between Byzantium and the West," 110.

<sup>162</sup> Macrides, "Dynastic Marriages and Political Kinship," 270-73.

<sup>163</sup> Ciggaar, *Western Travellers to Constantinople*, 266. Nicol doubts that Peter's 1000 campaign against the Slavs was a cooperative venture between himself and Basil, though he notes that Peter accepted Byzantine sovereignty over the region. Nicol, *Byzantium and Venice*, 43-45.

<sup>164</sup> Nicol, *Byzantium and Venice*, 47; Davids, "Marriage Negotiations between Byzantium and the West," 110-111.

he punished her for this shame. Blandishing the sword of divine justice over her, her whole body decayed, and thus her limbs withered from every direction, and her apartment was filled by an utterly insufferable stench. Neither was any handmaiden or slave girl able to endure the offense to the nose. Only with difficulty did just one maidservant, not without a cover for the odor, in painstaking attention observe her duties. Nevertheless even that girl hurriedly entered, and without pause she fled [from the chambers]. For a longer time since this illness tormented and boiled in a miserable way, [until] at last she ended her days with her friends outside rejoicing. Let the flesh itself teach what is of the flesh; and what the dying flesh shows, let the living flesh bear witness.<sup>165</sup>

Clearly, Peter Damian was incensed by what he perceived as Maria's decadence and immorality, for which she was punished by God.<sup>166</sup> A degree of sexual misconduct and a love of luxury condemn Maria in Peter's account. Although the text was certainly intended to warn the wicked indulgences of women, the theme of the Greek wife would not have been possible without the 1004 marriage of John and Maria.

Compared to some of Peter's other charges against female morality, this diatribe does not appear so entirely unusual. Blum relates that in a letter to a fellow cleric written after 1060, Peter grumbled about a "lewd woman" who lived next door to him when he

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<sup>165</sup> *De Veneti ducis uxore, quae prius nimium delicata, demum toto corpore computruit. Sed, ad id quod asserimus roborandum, congruum est ut etiam de viva carne proferamus exemplum. Veracis itaque et honesti viri didici relatione quod narro. Dux Venetiarum Constantinopolitanae urbis civem habebat uxorem, quae nimirum tam tenere, tam delicate vivebat, et non modo superstitiosa, sed artificiosa, ut ita loquar, sese jucunditate mulcebat, ut etiam communibus se aquis dedignaretur abluere; sed ejus servi rorem coeli satagebant undecunque colligere, ex quo sibi laboriosum satis balneum procurarent. Cibos quoque suos manibus non tangebant, sed ab eunuchis ejus alimenta quaeque minutius concidebantur in frusta; quae mox illa quibusdam fuscinulis aureis atque bidentibus ori suo, liguriens, adhibebat. Ejus porro cubiculum tot thymiamatum, aromatumque generibus redolebat, ut et nobis narrare tantum dedecus feteat, et auditor forte non credat. Sed omnipotenti Deo quantum hujus feminae fuerit exosa superbia, manifesta docuit ulciscendo censura. Vibrato quippe super eam divini mucrone 781 iudicii, corpus ejus omne computruit, ita ut membra corporis undique cuncta marcescerent, totumque cubiculum intolerabili prorsus fetore complerent; nec quispiam tantam perferre narium injuriam potuit, non cosmeta, non servulus, vix una duntaxat ancilla, non sine speciei redolentis auxilio, in ejus obsequii sedulitate permansit. Eadem tamen raptim accedebat, et protinus fugiens abscedebat. Diutius igitur hoc languore decocta et miserabiliter cruciata, amicis quoque laetantibus, diem clausit extremum. Quid ergo sit caro, doceat ipsa caro; quodque perhibet mortua, testatur et viva.* Peter Damian, *Institutio monialis*, 11; Migne PL 145, c. 744.

<sup>166</sup> John, Maria, and their son Basil all died of plague in 1006. Nicol, *Byzantium and Venice*, 47; Ciggaar, *Western Travellers to Constantinople*, 266.

was a student in Parma.<sup>167</sup> She was the mistress of a cleric known as Teuzolinus, whom Peter vilifies for his love of “sable hats” and “fine attire.”<sup>168</sup> The woman is depicted by Peter as a servant of the devil meant to lead men away from morality.

I was so tempted by sexual excitement that even after I came to the hermitage, the memory of this alluring scene often attacked me. I must confess that frequently the devilish enemy flashed these images before my eyes and tried to persuade me that people who live such delightful lives are the most happy and fortunate.<sup>169</sup>

Peter relates, with some sense of grim satisfaction, that the sinful couple were “found in the house, dying together in the flames” of a fire which swept through Parma in 1055.<sup>170</sup>

A similar sense of disapproval is employed in descriptions of the doge’s wife Maria. Like the lewd woman of Parma, Maria died a horrible death because of the sinful way in which she lived, but this does not suggest that Peter was free of ethnic prejudice. Many of Maria’s habits that Peter charges to be immoral were uniquely Greek, such as the use of utensils and the employment of eunuchs. Peter’s readers would have realized that, in Maria’s case, he was making a charge against Greeks as well as women.

### 3.3 Byzantine Perception of Latins in Diplomatic Marriages

The developing prejudice experienced as a consequence of marriage alliances was a factor in Byzantine as well as Latin circles. Byzantine stereotypes of Latins become apparent in the 1148 marriage between Henry Jasomirgott, duke of Bavaria and Austria and cousin of the future emperor Frederick I Barbarossa, and Theodora, the third daughter of the *sebastokrator* (a title created by Alexius I, ranked second only to the

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<sup>167</sup> Owen J. Blum, *The Letters of Peter Damian, Vol. 1, 1-30* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1989), 4.

<sup>168</sup> Peter Damian, *Letter 70*, in *The Peter Damian: Letters 61-90, vol. 3*, trans. Owen J. Blum (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1992), 110.

<sup>169</sup> *Ibid.*, 110-11.

<sup>170</sup> *Ibid.*

emperor, usually reserved for the emperor's brothers or sons<sup>171</sup>) Andronicus Comnenus and the *sebastokratorissa* Irene, and niece of Manuel.<sup>172</sup> The two were married as Henry and his half-brother Conrad III, king of Germany, were passing through Constantinople on their way home from the Second Crusade. Their union cemented the Byzantine-German alliance against the Norman Roger II and, eventually, against the Hungarians. But at the Byzantine court the political advantages were forgotten in favor of a depiction of Henry as a brute who carried away the poor Theodora.<sup>173</sup>

Elizabeth and Michael Jeffreys depict this marriage alliance as the “central plank” of Manuel's Western policy.<sup>174</sup> Indeed the couple served to reconcile Manuel with Frederick Barbarossa in 1166, as they traveled to Serdica (modern day Sofia) to negotiate with him and resolve the differences between the Eastern and Western empires.<sup>175</sup> The Jeffreyses are quick to point out, however, that opinions of the union appear to differ in public as opposed to private spheres. The court poet Manganeios Prodromos, in the official poem written for the wedding, praises the union.<sup>176</sup> “Dance, Alamania, and leap and shine brilliantly!” he says, “for the *Sevastokrator's* most beautiful daughter is being united to the glorious duke, to his great good fortune, and he is becoming more brilliant from her greater brilliance and much more glorious from her greater glory.”<sup>177</sup> The praise

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<sup>171</sup> Kazhdan, *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*, 1862.

<sup>172</sup> Ciggaar explains that union remained only minor in regard to a unification of the houses. Ciggaar, *Western Travellers to Constantinople*, 228-29.

<sup>173</sup> Elizabeth and Michael Jeffreys, “The Wild Beast from the West,” in *The Crusades from the Perspective of Byzantium and the Muslim World*, ed. Angeliki E. Laiou and Roy P. Mottahedeh (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 2001), 115; Ciggaar, *Western Travellers to Constantinople*, 228.

<sup>174</sup> Elizabeth and Michael Jeffreys, “The Wild Beast from the West,” 114.

<sup>175</sup> As is often the case, Kinnamos is woefully unspecific about the negotiations. Kinnamos, *Deeds of John and Manuel Comnenus*, VI.4.196-97; Ciggaar, *Western Travellers to Constantinople*, 229.

<sup>176</sup> Manganeios is described as a different individual from the more prominent poet Theodore Prodromos. Elizabeth and Michael Jeffreys, “The Wild Beast from the West,” 101-102.

<sup>177</sup> Translation found in Elizabeth and Michael Jeffreys, “The Wild Beast from the West,” 114.

for Henry and the new couple is clear, but in a later poem, written privately for the bride's mother, it becomes clear that this adulation was only a surface phenomenon.

When did such a union of opposites take place? When did a maiden cohabit with a flesh-eating beast? When did a delicate girl unite with a dragon? When has a tender calf been joined to a wild boar? All this I endured when I saw my tender daughter defiled, when the wild beast from the West was joined with her, and I wept over my living daughter as though she were dead.<sup>178</sup>

Any praise for the union must be understood with the later lamentation in mind. The marriage alliance was clearly viewed as a sacrifice, as this “delicate girl” was sent to live with a “dragon,” a “wild boar,” and finally with “the wild beast from the West.”<sup>179</sup> One can imagine that similar anxieties accompanied other such unions. There is no indication that Theodora, or any of the Byzantine princesses that preceded her in a Western marriage, knew any language other than their native Greek. The world in which they would arrive after departing with their new husbands would have been entirely alien. Thus it is difficult for us today to gauge how much of the slanted perception of Latins put forth by Prodromos is exaggeration and how much is truly justified.

### 3.4 Political Pitfalls of Alliances by Marriage

Marriage alliances posed political problems as well as dilemmas in perception and reputation. Hoping to delay a Norman invasion, in 1074 Michael VII Ducas proposed a marriage alliance between his son Constantine and Helena, the daughter of the Norman ruler Robert Guiscard.<sup>180</sup> The proposed marriage was canceled when Michael was

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<sup>178</sup> Ibid., 116.

<sup>179</sup> One wonders how much of a sacrifice it was for Manuel to see his niece Theodora leave for Germany. Choniates accuses the emperor of having an improper relationship with his brother's daughter, thus Manuel was either eager to get rid of a familiar face at court that frequently reminded him of his indiscretion, or he deeply regretted losing a valued mistress. Nicetas Choniates, *Historia*, II.1.32.

<sup>180</sup> Runciman, *The Eastern Schism*, 59;

overthrown and replaced by Nicephorus III Boteniates, and Helena remained either in the Byzantine palace or in a convent.<sup>181</sup> Although she was well treated in Constantinople, the annulment of her engagement to the *porphyrogenitus* Constantine gave Guiscard the perfect pretext to invade the Byzantine Empire.<sup>182</sup> Anna Comnena suggests that Guiscard wished to make himself emperor in Constantinople.<sup>183</sup> He had at first hoped to gain this position through manipulation of a son-in-law, but after the marriage contract was abandoned it provided him the perfect excuse for “his hatred and warlike attitude to the Romans.”<sup>184</sup> The Norman invasion of the Balkans and capture of Dyrrhachium in 1082 was the direct result.<sup>185</sup>

Additional political problems for marriage alliances become clear in the case of Irene-Maria, the daughter of Isaac II Angelus and widow of Roger III, duke of Apulia, who was captured by Henry VI after a German invasion in 1193.<sup>186</sup> She was married to his brother, Philip of Swabia, the son of Frederick Barbarossa. Her association with the German court would prove disastrous for Byzantium. Choniates reports that, after he was overthrown by his brother, Alexius III, Isaac II was not barred from receiving guests. Thus Isaac II carried on a frequent correspondence with his daughter at the German court, urging her to come to his aid.<sup>187</sup> When Isaac II’s son, the future Alexius IV, escaped Constantinople onboard a Pisan ship, he found his way to Philip’s court at Hagenau, where on Christmas 1201 he was introduced to Boniface of Montferrat, soon to be

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<sup>181</sup> Ciggaar, *Western Travellers to Constantinople*, 283.

<sup>182</sup> Runciman notes that Helena was eventually returned to her uncle Roger of Sicily. Runciman, *The Eastern Schism*, 60; Harris, *Byzantium and the Crusades*, 38-39.

<sup>183</sup> Anna Comnena, *Alexiad*, trans. E. R. A. Sewter (London: Penguin, 2004), 53.

<sup>184</sup> *Ibid.*, 57.

<sup>185</sup> Treadgold points out that Alexius virtually abandoned Anatolia to the Turks in order to fend off the Normans, who advanced into northwestern Greece. Treadgold, *A History of the Byzantine State and Society*, 614-15.

<sup>186</sup> Ciggaar, *Western Travellers to Constantinople*, 240.

<sup>187</sup> Nicetas Choniates, *Historia*, VI.2.294.

appointed the leader of the Fourth Crusade.<sup>188</sup> This meeting, long pointed to as an ominous prelude to the Fourth Crusade's attack on Byzantium, would not have been possible without the practice of foreign marriage alliances.<sup>189</sup>

As this study explained in Chapter One, the marriages of John Roger and Renier-John of Montferrat to imperial daughters also had unforeseen consequences for the Byzantines. Though he does not give an explicit reason for the marriage alliance, Choniates notes that Renier-John was “fair of face and pleasant to look upon; his well-groomed hair shone like the sun and he was too young to grow a beard.”<sup>190</sup> Choniates does report that Manuel broke off marriage negotiations that would have married Maria Porphyrogenita to William II of Sicily because he “deemed a marriage with the king of Sicily to be disadvantageous to the Romans.”<sup>191</sup> Thus it appears that the 1179/80 marriage was another attempt by Manuel I to further his influence among the opponents of Frederick Barbarossa, and the House of Montferrat was perfectly suited for such an end.<sup>192</sup> In this Manuel must be acclaimed as successful in furthering Byzantium's foreign policy goals, at least in the short term. As mentioned earlier, however, this marriage had unintended effects. Robert of Clari depicts Renier-John's brother, Boniface of Montferrat, as the most eager of the crusading princes to go to Constantinople, and the

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<sup>188</sup> Nicetas Choniates, *Historia*, VI.2.294; Harris, *Byzantium and the Crusades*, 153. Though they disagree with historians who suggest Philip intentionally used his influence over Boniface to steer the Fourth Crusade towards reinstalling his brother-in-law in Constantinople, Queller and Madden point to this meeting between the young Alexius and Boniface as a pivotal step toward the diversion of the crusade to Constantinople. Queller and Madden, *The Fourth Crusade*, 37.

<sup>189</sup> The implications of this 1201 meeting between the young Alexius and Boniface will be examined more in depth in a later chapter.

<sup>190</sup> Nicetas Choniates, *Historia*, II.5.97.

<sup>191</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>192</sup> Brand explains that the Renier-John's marriage was a large part of Manuel's attempt to woo the Montferrats, who felt betrayed by Barbarossa's sudden peace with the Lombard league, Brand, *Byzantium Confronts the West*, 18; Ciggaar explains the Montferrats opposition to Frederick Barbarossa, as well as their ties to Genoa, as the reason why the Comneni chose to make such close ties with them, Ciggaar, *Western Travellers to Constantinople*, 274; Queller and Madden, *The Fourth Crusade*, 28.

perceived wrongs done to his brother were probably foremost in his mind.<sup>193</sup> Renier-John's marriage into the Comneni family did not lead him to a happy end. As mentioned, Manuel granted Renier-John the title of *caesar* and gave him the city of Thessalonica as a *pronoia*.<sup>194</sup> Through his wife Maria, who was the heir to the Byzantine throne before the birth of her brother, Renier-John became enwrapped in the palace intrigue surrounding Alexius II's rule after Manuel's death in 1180.<sup>195</sup> When Andronicus I Comnenus seized power in 1182, Renier-John and his wife were poisoned to clear his way to the throne.<sup>196</sup>

The marriage of Renier-John and Maria Porphyrogenita was not the only union between the Byzantine imperial household and the House of Montferrat to end dubiously. Renier-John's elder brother, Conrad of Montferrat, married Theodora, the sister of Isaac II in 1187. Nicetas Choniates writes very highly of him, saying "he so excelled in bravery and sagacity that he was far-famed, not only among the Romans [Byzantines] but also celebrated among his countrymen."<sup>197</sup> Choniates's comments likely stem from Conrad's service to the empire both before and after his marriage to Theodora. He praises Conrad for taking captive Archbishop Christian of Mainz, Frederick Barbarossa's chancellor in Italy, who had invaded that country with a large army in 1178.<sup>198</sup> After Conrad's marriage and arrival in Constantinople, his role is described as instrumental in helping

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<sup>193</sup> Robert of Clari, *The Conquest of Constantinople*, trans. Edgar Holmes McNeal (New York: Octagon Books, 1966), 59.

<sup>194</sup> Brand notes that there is not proof that Renier-John ever exercised any authority over the city, or that he even resided in it; thus it is likely that he merely utilized the region's revenues. Brand, *Byzantium Confronts the West*, 19. Bryer supposes that the peasantry of Thessalonica, more concerned with the ever rising taxes under the Comneni, paid little mind to the nominal Latin ruler of their city. Bryer, "Cultural Relations between East and West in the Twelfth Century," 87.

<sup>195</sup> Queller and Madden suggest that Renier-John was "a passive follower of his ambitious wife" who plotted against the regent Empress Maria-Xena and her lover, the *protosebastos* Alexius. Queller and Madden, *The Fourth Crusade*, 28-30.

<sup>196</sup> Nicetas Choniates, *Historia*, III.145; Queller and Madden, *The Fourth Crusade*, 29; Brand, *Byzantium Confronts the West*, 45.

<sup>197</sup> Nicetas Choniates, *Historia*, V.1.210.

<sup>198</sup> Choniates notes that Conrad's allegiance to Manuel against Barbarossa was bought with "bounteous gifts." Ibid.



Isaac II fight off the rebel Alexius Branas, even to the point of raising a fighting company from the Latin residents of Constantinople.<sup>199</sup> On observing his brother-in-law's voracious appetite at a banquet, Conrad is said to have remarked to him: "Would that you showed the same eagerness in attending to the present conflict as you do to running to banquets, falling with gluttonous appetite on the foods set forth, and wasting all your efforts on emptying out dishes of carved meat."<sup>200</sup> While we might question Choniates' recollection of Conrad's exact words, this incident conveys what must have been observed by Choniates and other elites in the Byzantine bureaucracy as brazen familiarity on the part of Conrad. Conrad clearly thought Isaac a weak administrator and a poor military leader, and after his marriage with Theodora he likely perceived himself in a position to criticize the emperor.

For reasons that continue to be debated, Conrad left the Byzantine court and sailed to Tyre, where he again roused a city's defenders against Saladin's besieging troops.<sup>201</sup> Choniates claims that Conrad "was openly displeased that the emperor showed him favors he considered unbecoming to his family status and not harmonious with his imperial marital connection and was unhappy that all his proud hopes resulted only in his wearing the buskins of uniform color that are given to but a few."<sup>202</sup> Another chronicler, Robert of Clari, explains that Conrad departed Constantinople to pursue his crusader

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<sup>199</sup> In addition to leading a band of some two hundred and fifty Latin knights and five hundred soldiers in the service of Isaac, Choniates also claims that Conrad advised Isaac to spend more money to attract allies, bolstered the emperor's spirits, and even woke him up at an early hour in order to see to the troops. Ibid.

<sup>200</sup> Ibid., V.1.211.

<sup>201</sup> Runciman states that Conrad left Constantinople because he was implicated in a murder. Steven Runciman, *A History of the Crusades. Vol. 2, The Kingdom of Jerusalem and the Frankish East, 100-1187* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1952), 384-85; Queller and Madden, *The Fourth Crusade*, 27-28.

<sup>202</sup> Blue buskins were usually permitted only to those with the rank of *caesar*, to which rank Conrad was promoted to on his marriage to Theodora. Nicetas Choniates, *Historia*, V.2.217. Queller and Madden suggest that Conrad was not allowed to wear the traditional blue buskins. Queller and Madden, *The Fourth Crusade*, 30.

vows.<sup>203</sup> Robert adds other circumstances that may have encouraged Conrad to leave town. He reports that Isaac II closed the doors behind Conrad when he went out to fight Branas and that after the battle Isaac planned on having his brother-in-law assassinated.<sup>204</sup>

One must remember that Robert of Clari's information likely comes from hearsay heard in the camps of the Fourth Crusade.<sup>205</sup> His account is likely embellished by the events occurring around him, which would have encouraged him to paint the Byzantine emperors in as negative a light as possible. Nonetheless, any study of the implications of Conrad's marriage into the Byzantine imperial family must include Robert's anecdote. Even if Isaac did not order Conrad's death, and his brother-in-law simply left because he felt himself underappreciated, what is important is that the Latin point of view saw the emperor as the villain in the story. For the Latins, Conrad was a good man and a notable soldier who served the empire nobly, only to be disregarded by Isaac II as an outsider. Conrad eventually set aside his marriage to Theodora, and after reaching the entrenched city of Tyre he married Isabella, the sister of Baldwin IV, thus staking his claim to the throne of Jerusalem, without having ever annulled his previous marriage.<sup>206</sup>

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<sup>203</sup> Robert makes no mention of Conrad's marriage to Theodora or his elevation to the title of *caesar*. Robert of Clari, *The Conquest of Constantinople*, 59. Choniates makes no mention of Conrad's crusader vows, whereas Clari describes Conrad as coming through Constantinople on his way to Jerusalem. Choniates explains that Conrad came to Constantinople after Byzantine envoys, who found his brother Boniface already married, convinced Conrad to enter into a marriage alliance with "grand promises." Nicetas Choniates, *Historia*, V.1.210.

<sup>204</sup> Robert of Clari, *The Conquest of Constantinople*, 61; rather than have him remain in the city for the battle, Choniates explains that Isaac commanded the right wing of his army during the battle with Branas. Nicetas Choniates, *Historia*, V.1.212.

<sup>205</sup> McNeal explains that Robert of Clari's chronicle still possesses historical merit since he was relating events as he heard and saw them, even if they are presented from the perspective of an ordinary knight. McNeal, introduction to Robert of Clari, *The Conquest of Constantinople*, 12-13.

<sup>206</sup> Queller and Madden, *The Fourth Crusade*, 27-28. Runciman explains that the most pressing obstacle to Conrad's marriage to Isabella was not his wife in Constantinople but Isabella's husband, Humphrey of Toron. Steven Runciman, *A History of the Crusades. Vol. 3, The Kingdom of Acre and the later Crusades* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1954), 26.

### 3.5 Byzantine-Crusader Marriage Alliances

Byzantine marital ties to crusader Jerusalem predated Conrad and his fickle interloping. To better perceive the goals and methods of Byzantine diplomacy with Latins in the Eastern Mediterranean, an analysis of marriage alliances with the crusaders is key. The benefit of these marriage alliances for both Byzantium and the crusader states is clear. The crusaders gained the support of the Byzantine navy in action against Egypt. Manuel, on the other hand, was able to improve his standing with the Latin West by depicting himself as a supporter of the crusading movement, while still pressing his rights over Antioch.<sup>207</sup> Kinnamos reports that the status of Antioch, which had placed itself under Amalric's protection after Reynald of Chatillon was taken prisoner in 1160, was the greatest hurdle during the negotiations.<sup>208</sup> As will be argued in Chapter Four, Manuel was in need of a public relations victory in the eyes of Western Europeans. Byzantium's policies, while commensurate with their objectives, gave the impression to the Latin crusaders that they were trying to impede the crusading movement, and were thus just as much an enemy of Christendom as were the followers of Islam.<sup>209</sup> Manuel's marriage ties to Jerusalem and his support of crusader objectives won him many supporters among the Latins, as William of Tyre attests.

Two examples of Manuel's crusader marriage policy are of particular interest. The first was between King Baldwin III of Jerusalem and Theodora, niece of Manuel I, in 1158. The marriage alliance sealed an agreement to join forces against Fatimid Egypt and increased Byzantium's influence in the Latin East. William of Tyre describes Theodora

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<sup>207</sup> Harris, *Byzantium and the Crusades*, 101-104.

<sup>208</sup> Kinnamos, *Deeds of John and Manuel Comnenus*, V.13.179.

<sup>209</sup> Harris, *Byzantium and the Crusades*, 92.

as notably beautiful and raised in the strictest seclusion of the Byzantine imperial palace.<sup>210</sup> This union was especially important concerning Antioch, over which the Byzantines continually claimed suzerainty.<sup>211</sup> The status of Antioch has been explained as the cause for much of William of Tyre's negative accounts of Byzantium. Because of their claims on Antioch, William often denounced the Byzantines, but just as easily his attitude towards them could shift to one of patient understanding.<sup>212</sup> When he described Reynald of Chatillon's attack on Cyprus in 1155, or Thoros of Armenia's advancement on Byzantine holdings in Cilicia, William could appear largely sympathetic towards the Byzantines and their plight.<sup>213</sup>

Baldwin III's brother and successor, Amalric I, also married a Byzantine princess. Amalric was married to Maria, the grandniece of Manuel I and daughter of the *protosebastos* (a title created by Alexius I, usually given to relatives of the Emperor<sup>214</sup>) John Comnenus, in 1167. This agreement, like the one before it, was intended to bring about Byzantine support for the Kingdom of Jerusalem. As a result, Byzantine fleets were dispatched to assist crusader campaigns in Egypt in 1168 and 1169.<sup>215</sup> As an envoy to Constantinople in 1168 and 1179 to 1180, William of Tyre was keenly aware of the helpful role Byzantium could play for the crusader states, giving yet another reason for his reasonable account of the Byzantines. William records that Amalric personally

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<sup>210</sup> William of Tyre, *A History of Deeds Done Beyond the Sea*, XVIII.23.274.

<sup>211</sup> Both John II and his son Manuel I lead expeditions to Antioch to enforce their claims on the city. See Nicetas Choniates, *Historia*, I.22, II.3.59; Kinnamos, *Deeds of John and Manuel Comnenus*, I.8.23-25, IV.17-21; William of Tyre, *A History of Deeds Done Beyond the Sea*, XIV.30.92-94, XV, XVIII.24-25.277-81.

<sup>212</sup> P.W. Edbury and John Gordon Rowe, *William of Tyre, Historian of the Latin East* (Cambridge University Press, 1988), 142.

<sup>213</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>214</sup> Kazhdan, *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*, 1747.

<sup>215</sup> Treadgold, *A History of the Byzantine State and Society*, 647.

traveled to Constantinople in 1171 to plead for further support.<sup>216</sup> While there, Manuel employed the usual Byzantine display of wealth and ritual ceremony to subordinate his guest. John Kinnamos states very clearly that Amalric subjected himself to the emperor after “petitioning the emperor for what he required.”<sup>217</sup> William, however, makes no mention of any agreement that placed the Kingdom of Jerusalem in a position subservient to Constantinople.<sup>218</sup> Nor does William bring up the fact that Amalric’s efforts brought little or no material gain for relief to the crusader states.<sup>219</sup>

### 3.6 Marriage Alliance Policy under Manuel I

Such was Manuel’s intent when he himself twice took a Latin woman as a wife. Manuel’s marriages to Latin wives present the zenith of marriage alliances as a method of Byzantine foreign policy. In 1146, Manuel married Bertha-Irene of Sulzbach, the sister-in-law of the Western Emperor Conrad III.<sup>220</sup> The marriage was arranged by his father, John II, as a means of sealing an alliance against the Normans in southern Italy, who threatened both Byzantine and German interests in the area.<sup>221</sup> Both John Kinnamos and Nicetas Choniates speak well of Bertha-Irene, describing her as pious, courageous, and as someone “who was not inferior to any of those of that time in propriety of character and

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<sup>216</sup> Kinnamos, *Deeds of John and Manuel Comnenus*, VI.10.209; William of Tyre, *A History of Deeds Done Beyond the Sea*, XX.22-24.377-83.

<sup>217</sup> Kinnamos, *Deeds of John and Manuel Comnenus*, VI.10.209.

<sup>218</sup> Edbury and Rowe, *William of Tyre*, 147. Riley-Smith suggests that Amalric did indeed acknowledge Byzantine suzerainty, though it meant nothing in practice. Jonathan Simon Christopher Riley-Smith, *The Crusades: A Short History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1987), 73.

<sup>219</sup> Edbury and Rowe, *William of Tyre*, 147.

<sup>220</sup> Ciggaar notes the happy reception given to Bertha-Irene by the court poet Theodorus Prodomus. Ciggaar, *Western Travellers to Constantinople*, 225-26.

<sup>221</sup> Otto of Freising was more concerned with the anti-Norman alliance than with the marriage itself, failing even to mention the bride’s name, saying only that she was Conrad III’s sister-in-law. Otto of Freising, *The Deeds of Frederick Barbarossa*, I.24.54.

spiritual virtue.”<sup>222</sup> However, Choniates suggests that it was this piety that drove Manuel to adultery, and perhaps was the reason Manuel put off the marriage for some three years after Bertha-Irene’s arrival in Constantinople:<sup>223</sup>

She was not so much concerned with physical beauty as with her inner beauty and the condition of her soul. Disdaining face powder, eye liner, and eyeshadow underneath the eye, and rouge instead of nature’s flush, and ascribing such aids to silly women, she was adorned by the virtues to which she was devoted. She had the natural trait of being unbending and opinionated. Consequently, the emperor was not very attentive to her, but she shared in the honors, bodyguard, and remaining imperial splendors; in matters of the bed, however, she was wronged. For Manuel, being young and passionate, was wholly devoted to a dissolute and voluptuous life and given over to banqueting and reveling; whatever the flower of youth suggested and his vulgar passions prompted, that he did. Indulging in sexual intercourse without restraint [Manuel] copulated undetected with many female partners.<sup>224</sup>

Choniates’s account clearly indicates that Manuel was dissatisfied with his German wife. Kinnamos too suggests that Bertha-Irene’s arrival in Constantinople was not an entirely positive event, as she mistook her intended sister-in-law, the Empress Irene, for a nun in an embarrassing mix up.<sup>225</sup> Both Choniates and Kinnamos explain that unexpected incidents complicated the intended marriage alliance, but the fact that Manuel went ahead with the marriage shows the importance placed on the German-Byzantine alliance.

Though she bore him two daughters, Bertha-Irene and Manuel never had a son.<sup>226</sup> Thus, soon after her death in 1160, Manuel began looking for a second wife in the hope

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<sup>222</sup> Kinnamos, *Deeds of John and Manuel Comnenus*, II.4.36-37. Kinnamos’s description of Berth-Irene’s arrival in Constantinople is quoted at length in the introduction.

<sup>223</sup> Magoulias suggests that the marriage was put off because, it had been arranged before Manuel became emperor and before he was the definite heir to his father John II. There seems to have been some question whether she was worthy to marry an emperor. Harry J. Magoulias, *O City of Byzantium, Annals of Niketas Choniates* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1984), 376, notes 140.

<sup>224</sup> Nicetas Choniates, *Historia*, II.1.32.

<sup>225</sup> Kinnamos, *Deeds of John and Manuel Comnenus*, II.4.36-37.

<sup>226</sup> Maria, who would later marry Renier-John of Montferrat, and Anna.

of fathering a male heir, and appeared to have settled on yet another Latin wife.<sup>227</sup>

According to Kinnamos, Manuel first sent envoys to negotiate for the daughter of Raymond of Tripoli as his next bride, as she was famed for her beauty.<sup>228</sup> An illness robbed her of her good looks, however, shortly after she was interviewed by the envoys, and Manuel switched his attentions to the daughters of Raymond of Poitiers, Prince of Antioch, who were also noted for their beauty.<sup>229</sup> Maria-Xena, daughter of Raymond and step-daughter of Reynald of Chatillon, was married to Manuel in December 1161 and the couple had a son, the future Alexius II.

Manuel's marriage to a princess of Antioch was clearly intended to increase his influence in that city, but the fact that he considered a daughter of the count of Tripoli suggests that he was content to connect himself with any crusader principality, as long as the bride met his criteria for good looks. His marriage to Maria-Xena must therefore be viewed in respect to his wider policies towards crusaders and Latins, rather than simply an extension of his power over Antioch. Marriage to a crusader princess increased his prestige in Western eyes, and made it easier to depict himself as a friend to the crusading movement.<sup>230</sup> Thus it appears that Manuel was aware of the negative perception of

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<sup>227</sup> Ironically, Choniates relates that Manuel was particularly distraught over his wife's death, "looking upon her demise as if a limb had been torn from his body," despite his many indiscretions. Nicetas Choniates, *Historia*, II.3.65. Aerts makes it clear that Manuel's choice of a second Latin bride was an attempt to make up for the negative effects of the Second Crusade. W. J. Aerts, "A Byzantine Traveller to one of the Crusader States," in *East and West in the Crusader States: Context - Contacts - Confrontations 3 Acta of the Congress Held at Hernen Castle in September 2000*, ed. Krijnie N. Ciggaar (Leuven: Peeters, 2003), 165.

<sup>228</sup> Kinnamos, *Deeds of John and Manuel Comnenus*, V.4.158.

<sup>229</sup> Raymond apparently never forgave Manuel for the slight, and raided Byzantine Cyprus in response to the rejection of his daughter. Kinnamos, *Deeds of John and Manuel Comnenus*, V.4.159. For a translation of the report of one of the members of the mission to Tripoli, which attests to beauty of Raymond's daughter, see Aerts, "A Byzantine Traveller to one of the Crusader States," 172-219.

<sup>230</sup> Harris notes that Manuel and his court began dressing their dealings with Muslims in crusader terms as a further means of blunting their criticisms of his policies. Harris, *Byzantium and the Crusades*, 103-104.

Byzantines held in many Latin circles, and his marriages, as well as other policy decisions, were geared to dispelling this stereotype.<sup>231</sup>

Not all of Manuel's marriage alliances produced such widely felt and positive results. In 1179, seeking further alliances with the West, Manuel sent his niece Eudocia to Aragon to marry Alfonso II. Unfortunately he was already married, and Eudocia married William VIII of Montpellier instead. This marriage above all others gains the ire of the modern historian, Brand, who explains that nothing was gained for Byzantium by marriage alliances with a baron who could do little to further Byzantine policy.<sup>232</sup> This judgment may be too harsh. As we have seen, Manuel was fighting a propaganda war. An alliance with the relatively unimportant house of Montpellier may have had little value in practical terms, but it surely bolstered the image of Byzantium in Christian Spain, as well as elsewhere in Western Europe.

The same can be said of the marriage between Manuel's son and heir, Alexius II, and Agnes-Anna, the daughter of Louis VII of France.<sup>233</sup> The marriage represented one of the great achievements of Manuel's marriage alliance policy, as it made a friend and ally of Louis VII, who had once been one of his most ardent critics, blaming Manuel for the failure of the Second Crusade. This illustrious union indirectly proved detrimental to Byzantium's image abroad, however, as Agnes-Anna became a martyr in the coup of Andronicus I Comnenus, surviving only by agreeing to marry the usurper fifty years her senior.<sup>234</sup> The Byzantine Empire was no more secure and no better thought of as a result

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<sup>231</sup> In combating Byzantium's negative image in the West, Harris views Manuel less a Latinophile as others have claimed, explaining that the Emperor pursued the same policies as his predecessors. He simply depicted them in a way that appeased western critics. *Ibid.*, 93.

<sup>232</sup> Brand, *Byzantium Confronts the West*, 21.

<sup>233</sup> Brand refers to this union as the culmination of Manuel's policy of alliances by marriage. *Ibid.*, 22.

<sup>234</sup> Harris, *Byzantium and the Crusades*, 118. Nicol supposes that, despite this experience, Agnes-Anna became quite acclimated to her new home in Constantinople. When the soldiers of the Fourth Crusade first



of the marriage of Alexius II and Agnes-Anna, despite the fact that it appeared, and indeed was, a prudent and justified maneuver.

It is important not to regard the success or failure of marriage alliances as a method of Byzantine diplomacy with the West from a more modern point of view. It is only with hindsight that all of these engagements appear eventually to lead to the fateful events of 1204, as each union entrenched Byzantium deeper into the Western European political scene.<sup>235</sup> Conrad and Renier-John's marriages with Byzantine princesses and former place in the Byzantine court gave Boniface cause to seek revenge for the fate of his brothers. Irene-Maria's marriage into the royalty of Sicily lead her to the German court where she may very well have influenced elements against the rule of her usurping uncle, Alexius III. Marriage alliances with Western potentates such as the Ottonians, Venetians, the Montferrats and others cemented necessary relationships, agreements, and treaties. They theoretically ensured the loyalty and reciprocation of the partner in the agreement, although even this did not always come to pass.<sup>236</sup> Marriages that presented little or nothing to regret at the time, such as the marriage of Theophano to Otto II or Maria Argyros to John Orseolo, came to be more injurious to Byzantium than might be expected through fostering stereotypes. Losses in prestige may well have outweighed the gains in strategic or political spheres, but this was by no means apparent to the

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entered the city in 1203 they inquired after her. She had married the Byzantine nobleman, Theodore Vranas, after the death of Andronicus I and wanted nothing to do with her crusading brethren. Claiming to have forgotten her French, she insisted on the use of an interpreter. Donald MacGillivray Nicol, "Mixed Marriages in Byzantium in the 13<sup>th</sup> century," in *Byzantium: Its Ecclesiastical History and Relations with the Western World - Collected Studies*, ed. Donald MacGillivray Nicol (London: Variorum Reprints, 1972), 163.

<sup>235</sup> This question will be discussed further in a later chapter.

<sup>236</sup> Macrides, "Dynastic Marriages and Political Kinship," 265-66.

Byzantines. The Byzantines' continuing faith in marriage alliances as an aim of diplomacy is proven by the dramatic increase in their occurrence from 972 to 1204.<sup>237</sup>

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<sup>237</sup> Nicol points out that four of the five Comneni emperors married Latin wives. Nicol, "Mixed Marriages in Byzantium in the 13<sup>th</sup> century," 162.

## CHAPTER 4

### EAST-WEST DIPLOMACY AND THE GREAT SCHISM

The schism between the Catholic and Orthodox churches developing from 962 to 1204 rarely has been viewed from a diplomatic perspective. Numerous scholars have investigated the religious and dogmatic context of the growing chasm between Eastern and Western churches. While these studies are crucial for the religious details of the schism itself, an examination of the diplomatic implications of encounters related to the schism will show that the problem went beyond debates over leavened or unleavened bread, the *filioque* clause, or the ecclesiastical authority of the pope. A growing disrespect between Latin and Greek representatives, spurred on by the prejudices of the participants in schism diplomacy, proved to be just as much a barrier to church reunion as any point of dogma.<sup>238</sup> This does not suggest that matters of church practice and policy did not have their share in causing the breach between Byzantines and Latins. That legitimate religious matters added to the conflict is not in dispute. This study, however, intends to explain how these differences alone did not bring about the religious schism; rather it was the breakdown in East-West diplomacy that made a resolution impossible. A failure in diplomatic relations, not religious differences, finally made the break between Eastern and Western churches a reality of life.

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<sup>238</sup> For the opposing view, arguing that the schism between East and West was not conditioned by cultural, political, and economic factors, but that its fundamental cause was theological, not secular, see Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, 43-44. Kolbaba suggests that prejudices that may appear secular and ethnic in origin often have religious significance. Tia M. Kolbaba, *The Byzantine Lists, Errors of the Latins* (Illinois medieval studies. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2000), 1-3.

The tools of Byzantine diplomacy, which were aimed towards subduing or even subjecting foreign threats, were incapable of dealing with religious schism. Often an attempt to address theological issues would be put on hold for fear that rousing religious turmoil might complicate aspects of foreign policy, especially alliances against the Normans.<sup>239</sup> Furthermore, representatives of the Latin Church and the papacy were not impressed by a dramatic show of wealth in Constantinople, which has already been shown to have had a negative effect on envoys from secular powers in the West, and may have appeared to religious embassies as a challenge to papal authority. The fact that amiable encounters between the Eastern and Western churches did occur after 1054, the year usually given as a definitive breach, proves that capable diplomacy could still overcome the religious differences which plagued relations. Anselm of Havelberg's 1136 debate in Constantinople with Archbishop Nicetas of Nicomedia is one such instance. Jay T. Lees notes that the cordial and conciliatory tone in this debate was oddly exceptional.<sup>240</sup> In this way Anselm proves the rule, in that encounters between Eastern and Western clerics deepened a religious schism which became less about the particulars of faith and more about perception and political reality.

#### 4.1 Church Differences before 1054

Conflict over doctrine, hierarchy, and policy predated the period of this study's focus. Runciman explains that differences in the outlook of the Church in the East stemmed from the presence of the emperor in Constantinople; his influence was always

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<sup>239</sup> Forming alliances with the Germans and popes against the Normans is a constant subject of Byzantine diplomacy. See Otto of Freising, *The Deeds of Frederick Barbarossa*, I.24.54; Anna Comnena, *Alexiad*, 126.

<sup>240</sup> Jay T. Lees, *Anselm of Havelberg: Deeds into Words in the Twelfth Century* (Leiden: Brill, 1998), 5

felt in religious matters, whereas the sway of a secular authority was often absent in the West, allowing the pope to fill a role of lay authority.<sup>241</sup> Geanakoplos attributes the divergence between the churches to the Orthodox tendency towards mysticism, whereas the Catholic Church embraced a more pragmatic and legalistic view of ecclesiastical matters, giving rise, he thinks, to a rigid hierarchical structure in the West.<sup>242</sup> Kolbaba remarks that, as the Greeks appear to have been largely ignorant of Augustine and the Latins equally unfamiliar with many Greek Fathers, the theological differences between the Orthodox and Catholic Churches go back at least as far as the fourth century.<sup>243</sup> Important points of conflict before 962 include the Iconoclast controversy – the divisive practice of destroying sacred images ushered in by Emperor Leo III in the eighth century and opposed by many of his fellow Byzantines – and the Photian schism, in which the Patriarch Photius (810-893) of Constantinople, the most noted scholar of his day, opposed Latin missionaries in Bulgaria over several of points of doctrine.<sup>244</sup>

Perhaps the most noted religious difference between the two churches is the controversy over the *filioque* clause. In fact no discussion of the schism is complete without illuminating the part played by the *filioque* and matters like it. The *filioque* was an addition to the Christian Creed introduced at the Council of Nicaea in 325 and

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<sup>241</sup> Steven Runciman, *The Great Church in Captivity: A Study of the Patriarchate of Constantinople from the Eve of the Turkish Conquest to the Greek War of Independence* (London: Cambridge U.P., 1968), 9.

<sup>242</sup> Geanakoplos, *Medieval Western Civilization and the Byzantine and Islamic Worlds*, 126.

<sup>243</sup> Kolbaba, *The Byzantine Lists, Errors of the Latins*, 9.

<sup>244</sup> Francis Dvornik, *The Photian Schism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970). Ware points out that the Photian Schism is usually referred to as the “schism of Nicholas” in Eastern Christendom, referring to Pope Nicholas I. Timothy Ware (Kallistos, Bishop of Diokleia), *The Orthodox Church* (London: Penguin Books, 1993), 45, 52. Geanakoplos explains that Byzantine attempts to enforce Iconoclasm in Italy drew the consternation of the popes. Geanakoplos, *Medieval Western Civilization and the Byzantine and Islamic Worlds*, 116. Kolbaba identifies these points being taught by Latin missionaries in Bulgaria as fasting on Saturdays, celibate clergy, improper observance of the Lenten fast, the confirmation of bishops only by other bishops, and the addition of the *filioque* to the Creed. Kolbaba emphasizes that only the final accusation was considered heretical by the Byzantines. Kolbaba, *The Byzantine Lists, Errors of the Latins*, 11.

finalized at the Second Ecumenical Council in Constantinople in 381. The clause in question inserted the words “and the Son” to the procession of the Holy Spirit. From its first inception at the Council of Toledo in 589, the *filioque* found its way to the court of Charlemagne and to his successors in Germany.<sup>245</sup> As German influence in Italy grew in the tenth century, and especially through the influence of German popes in Rome, the *filioque* entered official use in Rome in 1014.<sup>246</sup>

Although the debate over this clause added to the Creed is considered to have been largely an academic one before the period of the present consideration, it is important to remember that this and other dogmatic differences created very real and visible differences in practice from East to West.<sup>247</sup> It has been argued that it was only with the coming of the crusades – when greater numbers of Latins and Greeks came into contact over longer periods of time – that the differences in religious thought became apparent to both groups.<sup>248</sup> Problems such as the *filioque* had been overcome previously, as in the case of the Photian Schism, and good relations were restored between the two churches. The impact of the crusades on religious dialogue is clear, therefore, as they complicated attempts at a resolution.

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<sup>245</sup> Ware notes that Pope Leo III wrote to Charlemagne in 808, warning him of the dangers of tampering with the Creed, Ware. *The Orthodox Church*, 50-51.

<sup>246</sup> Francis Dvornik, *Byzantium and the Roman Primacy* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1966), 127.

<sup>247</sup> Dvornik suggests that it was not until the twelfth century that the *filioque* became “the most powerful weapon in the arsenal of the Greek and Latin polemicists.” *Ibid.*, 14-15.

<sup>248</sup> Kolbaba laments that “although differences had developed between the practices of the two halves of the church, they were easily overlooked. The crusades, however, brought the two sides face-to-face. In fact, they brought some of the less sophisticated thinkers of the two churches face-to-face. If some (and only some) of their more educated brethren could draw fine distinctions between matters of custom and matters of dogma, most crusaders and Byzantines could not.” Kolbaba, *The Byzantine Lists, Errors of the Latins*, 12; Runciman, “Byzantium and the Crusades,” 212.

## 4.2 Liudprand's Perception of un-Christian Byzantines

Religious debate appears to have been rather muted before the eleventh century, even among diplomats. For an example of this cordial conduct one may look again to Liudprand of Cremona. As noted above, Liudprand's *Antapodosis* often depicts the Byzantines in the best possible light, and in this work describes the Byzantines as faithful Christians. One sees this in Liudprand's relation of the story of Basil I, who rose to power in 867 by murdering his predecessor and then repenting for his sins after being questioned by Jesus Christ in a dream.<sup>249</sup> Liudprand describes a deeply spiritual man who was "freed from the eternal fire of hell" by taking it upon himself to atone for his misdeeds.<sup>250</sup> The later emperor, Romanus I Lecapenus, is portrayed by Liudprand as "quite worthy of memory and praise.... a generous man, human, prudent, and pious."<sup>251</sup> Evidently, Liudprand had no developed notion of the Byzantines as schismatics or heretics in his early career.

Like his opinion of the Byzantine Empire as the defender of Christendom against its enemies, however, Liudprand's praise for the faith of the Greeks declined dramatically in the later work, the *Legatio*, showing that he was by no means ignorant of the religious gulf in his time.<sup>252</sup> On his return trip to Italy, Liudprand complains about the Greek bishops who hosted him at Leucada. "In all of Greece," Liudprand explained, "I did not discover any hospitable bishops.... They sit at bare, small tables, serving themselves ash-baked bread, and then not drinking, but sipping bath water in a tiny glass."<sup>253</sup> As Leyser

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<sup>249</sup> Liudprand of Cremona, *Antapodosis*, I.10.

<sup>250</sup> *Ibid.*, I.10.

<sup>251</sup> *Ibid.*, III.22.

<sup>252</sup> Leyser. "Liudprand of Cremona: Preacher and Homilist." 120.

<sup>253</sup> Liudprand of Cremona, *Legatio*, ch. 63. Squatriti explains Liudprand's misconception of "bath water" as a confusion over appropriate temperatures. Squatriti, *The Complete Works of Liudprand of Cremona*, 279, notes 119.

points out, this abhorrence for what was seen as insufferable piety on the part of Greek bishops was not a new phenomenon, but was noted earlier by Notker of St. Gallen, who described his eastern brethren as being “as holy as one could be without God.”<sup>254</sup> At the very least, a strong disdain for Greek clergy is thus visible even in this early period.

Liudprand was even harsher in his description of Byzantine secular authorities. On being received in Corfu by the governor of the Cephallenia theme, Michael Chersonitis, Liudprand explained that his host had been revealed to be “a devil in disposition,” as God sent certain signs that it was so, first with earthquakes, and then with an eclipse.<sup>255</sup> Liudprand’s negative description of Chersonitis may stem from the envoy’s detention on Corfu, which Liudprand explains was at his own expense.<sup>256</sup> The condemnation of Chersonitis cannot be dismissed so lightly, however, as it bears a striking similarity to Liudprand’s description of the emperor Nicephorus Phocas in its demonic qualities:

He is a quite monstrous man, dwarfish, with a fat head, and mole-like by virtue of the smallness of his eyes, deformed by a short beard that is wide and thick and graying, disgraced by a finger-like neck, quite like Hyopas because of the abundance and thickness of his hair, in color quite like the Ethiopian whom you would not like to run into in the middle of the night.<sup>257</sup>

The image of a deformed, hairy, and dark man clearly fits into the medieval image of the devil.<sup>258</sup> Even if Liudprand once saw the Byzantines as good Christians, his descriptions here show that at least a few had become worthy of severe censure.

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<sup>254</sup> Leyser, “Ends and Means,” 139.

<sup>255</sup> Liudprand of Cremona, *Legatio*, ch. 64. Squatriti suggests that Liudprand, with his penchant for humor, may have been “gently teasing” Otto I by mentioning the eclipse, which was seen all over Europe on December 22, 968, and terrified the Ottonian army in Calabria. Squatriti, *The Complete Works of Liudprand of Cremona*, 281, notes 127.

<sup>256</sup> Liudprand of Cremona, *Legatio*, ch. 65.

<sup>257</sup> *Ibid.*, ch. 3.

<sup>258</sup> For more on medieval demonic imagery, see Debra Higgs Strickland, *Saracens, Demons & Jews: Making Monsters in Medieval Art* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003).



### 4.3 Lead up to the Schism of 1054

All the negative images of the Greeks in Liudprand's work stem from diplomatic encounters and must be understood in that way. No diplomatic encounter, however, can be considered more damaging to East-West church relations than the traumatic events of 1054, when a papal embassy to Constantinople ended in the mutual excommunication of the pope's legates and the patriarch of Constantinople. The principles of the papal embassy in 1054 were largely determined by the Cluniac Reform that had swept through Western Europe in the eleventh century and had come to Rome through the election of Pope Leo IX in 1049. Leo IX was a relative of the western Emperor Henry III and he quickly set to work to end the practice of simony and eliminate lax clerical standards.<sup>259</sup>

Another important item on the reform movement's agenda was a strong emphasis on the leadership of the pope in all of Christendom, which was bound to conflict with the ideology in Byzantium of the emperor as the "viceroys of God on Earth." Previously, papal authority had been blunted by a period of corruption and factional infighting which overran Rome for much of the period of the ninth and tenth centuries.<sup>260</sup> The resurgence of the reformed papacy created new problems for East-West relations.

Leo IX and the Byzantines clashed initially not over ideology, but political matters. Norman adventurers began to appear in southern Italy in the early eleventh century, and thanks to their ability to quickly adapt to new surroundings and situations, they quickly became a force in their own right in Italian politics.<sup>261</sup> When the population

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<sup>259</sup> Marriage among the clergy, as have seen in the case of Peter Damian, one of the most active proponents of reform in the eleventh century, was of major concern in this reform movement. Peter Damian, *Letter 70*; Geanakoplos, *Medieval Western Civilization and the Byzantine and Islamic Worlds*, 216.

<sup>260</sup> Geanakoplos, *Medieval Western Civilization and the Byzantine and Islamic Worlds*, 120.

<sup>261</sup> Hubert Houben, *Roger II of Sicily: A Ruler between East and West* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 12.

of Apulia appealed to Leo IX for help against the invaders, he allied with the Byzantine military governor in Italy, Marianos Argyros, to drive them out.<sup>262</sup> At the battle of Civitate in 1053, however, the papal army was destroyed and Leo taken prisoner. It seems likely that the failure of the Byzantine reinforcements to arrive in 1053 was never far from Leo's mind.

If relations were strained due to the claims of the reformed papacy, they became even more volatile when the patriarch of Constantinople, Michael Cerularius, closed all Latin churches in the city in 1052.<sup>263</sup> In a letter to Leo IX, Cerularius referred to himself as "Oecumenical Patriarch," which translators in the Pope's circle correctly interpreted as "universal," although the Byzantine meaning of the word had come to denote the boundaries of their empire, rather than the world.<sup>264</sup> It has been suggested that Cerularius was perhaps the worst possible figure to be on the patriarchal throne at this time.<sup>265</sup> After being implicated in a conspiracy against Emperor Michael IV in 1040, Cerularius was exiled until being returned to favor under Constantine IX, who selected Cerularius to succeed Patriarch Alexius on March 29, 1043. Cerularius entered the clergy only late in life, during his confinement, having spent most of his years as a civil servant in

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<sup>262</sup> Houben, *Roger II of Sicily*, 10; Steven Runciman, *The Eastern Schism: A Study of the Papacy and the Eastern Churches During the XIth and XIIth Centuries* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1955), 42; Richard Mayne, "East and West in 1054," *The Cambridge Historical Journal*, Vol. XI, No. 2 (1954): 134.

<sup>263</sup> Runciman, *The Eastern Schism*, 41.

<sup>264</sup> Runciman depicts Cerularius's closure of the Latin churches as a response to reports that the Normans were forbidding Greek liturgical practice in parts of southern Italy. Also, certain Latin practices he considered errant, which could be freely viewed in the Latin churches at Constantinople, were inconvenient in Cerularius's attempts to enforce conformity over the Armenian Church, which shared many of the same practices. Runciman, *The Eastern Schism*, 41-42. Dvornik explains Cerularius's actions as a response to the Synod of Siponto in 1050, in which Leo IX condemned a number of Greek liturgical uses. Dvornik, *Byzantium and the Roman Primacy*, 131. Other reports suggest Cerularius was acting preemptively. See J.B. Bury, J.R. Tanner, C.W. Previté-Orton, and Z. N. Brooke, *The Cambridge Medieval History. Vol. IV, The Eastern Roman Empire (717-1453)* (Cambridge: at the University Press, 1927), 267.

<sup>265</sup> Bury, *The Cambridge Medieval History, Vol. IV*, 265; Kolbaba suggests that Cerularius attempted to regain the power he had sought in his youth by depicting himself in his role of patriarch as the "defender of Orthodoxy and righteousness" against an unpopular emperor, and notes that "politics and religion were inextricably linked" for Cerularius. Kolbaba, *The Byzantine Lists, Errors of the Latins*, 28.

Constantinople's flourishing bureaucracy.<sup>266</sup> He was often noted for his ambition and arrogance, as well as his popularity in the city of Constantinople.<sup>267</sup>

Cerularius was a political opponent of Argyros, and thus he opposed the alliance with Rome.<sup>268</sup> Leo IX was still a prisoner of the Normans when he decided to dispatch his embassy to Constantinople.<sup>269</sup> The embassy was prompted by a letter from archbishop Leo of Ochrida to the Greek bishop John of Trani, in which the Byzantines accused the Latins of following Jewish practice too closely in their use of unleavened bread in the Eucharist.<sup>270</sup> The reformer Humbert of Moyenmoutier translated the letter and brought it to the pope's attention, at which Leo was understandably perturbed.<sup>271</sup> Not only had the Byzantines failed to assist him in his battle with the Normans, but now the Latin Eucharist practices were, from his perspective, under attack from someone who opposed the very Byzantine commander who was to come to his aid.<sup>272</sup> It is entirely possible that Leo may have considered the possibility that Cerularius had seen to it that Argyros was delayed, ensuring the defeat of the papal army at Civitate. Leo dispatched an embassy to Constantinople to obtain the patriarch's submission and hold him accountable for his actions.<sup>273</sup>

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<sup>266</sup> Runciman, *The Eastern Schism*, 39. Bury, *The Cambridge Medieval History*, Vol IV, 265.

<sup>267</sup> Mayne thinks it likely that Cerularius hoped to gain the throne for himself. Mayne, "East and West in 1054," 139; Runciman, *The Eastern Schism*, 40;

<sup>268</sup> Runciman, *The Eastern Schism*, 44-45.

<sup>269</sup> *Ibid.*, 42.

<sup>270</sup> Leo of Ochrida, *Letter to the Bishop of Trani*, "Patriarch Michael Cerularius's Spokesman Criticizes Latin Religious Practices" in *Byzantium: Church, Society, and Civilization Seen Through Contemporary Eyes*, trans. Deno John Geanakoplos (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984), 207.

<sup>271</sup> Runciman suggests that Humbert's Greek may have been less than stellar, and that this flaw perhaps exaggerated Leo's negative reaction to the letter, Runciman, *The Eastern Schism*, 42.

<sup>272</sup> Runciman explains that the reason the Byzantine army failed to arrive at Civitate was because they had already been defeated by the Normans some months previously. *Ibid.*

<sup>273</sup> Bury, *The Cambridge Medieval History*, Vol. IV, 269.

#### 4.4 The Papal Embassy to Constantinople in 1054

Like the embassies of Liudprand, that of Humbert of Moyenmoutier and his two companions, Frederick of Lorraine and Archbishop Peter of Amalfi, has received a great deal of attention. Just as Cerularius is described as unfit to handle the challenge of the reformed papacy, Humbert's background can be seen to influence his conduct during his embassy to Constantinople. Humbert is usually considered something of an anti-Greek, due largely to the fact that his career was aimed at restoring the authority of the pope over all Christians, a goal which the Byzantines appeared to oppose.<sup>274</sup> As a reformer opposed to clerical marriage, Humbert was naturally opposed to the Orthodox practice allowing clergy to marry.<sup>275</sup> In addition, the papal reforms of the eleventh century, which aimed at restoring the leadership of the pope, probably appeared unwarranted in the East where at least a nominal acceptance of the pope's authority had always been maintained.<sup>276</sup> What is important for the purpose of the present study is the conduct and reception of the papal legates in Constantinople, which reveal the tools and methods already discussed with respect to diplomatic encounters between Byzantium and the West.

Emperor Constantine IX Monomachus, who desperately needed to maintain the anti-Norman alliance and preserve Byzantine territories in Italy, saw to it that Humbert and his companions were well cared for.<sup>277</sup> Just as Liudprand, who represented the Western Emperor Otto I, was housed in a palace during his stay at Constantinople,

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<sup>274</sup> Geanakoplos describes Humbert as "intransigent." Geanakoplos, *Medieval Western Civilization and the Byzantine and Islamic Worlds*, 292. Runciman calls him "hot-tempered and truculent." Runciman, *The Eastern Schism*, 44.

<sup>275</sup> Dvornik goes one step further and describes Humbert as a reforming zealot, entirely ignorant of Byzantine customs. Dvornik, *Byzantium and the Roman Primacy*, 129-30.

<sup>276</sup> *Ibid.*, 129-30.

<sup>277</sup> *Ibid.*, 132.

Humbert's embassy was lodged in the Palace of the Springs outside the Great Wall.<sup>278</sup> It is fair to suppose, also, that the papal delegates were richly entertained, just as Liudprand was at the lavish banquet with Constantine VII in 949. Constantine IX also went to great pains to blunt any divisive issue that might arise during Humbert's stay in Constantinople.<sup>279</sup> When the Latin envoys engaged in what Dvornik describes as "pamphlet warfare" with the Greek churchmen in Constantinople, they prompted the monk Nicetas Stethatus to publish a treatise denouncing the Latin use of unleavened bread.<sup>280</sup> Constantine IX was instrumental in encouraging Stethatus to retract his statements and preserve the goodwill of Humbert and his companions.<sup>281</sup>

Again, as in Liudprand's depiction of his 968 embassy to Nicephorus Phocas, we can see in Constantine IX's efforts at friendship a failure to subdue the papal legates. The belligerence Humbert displayed in his embassy to Constantinople exhibits startling similarities in conduct to Liudprand, especially as seen in the *Legatio*. Humbert's demeanor as a diplomat in Constantinople was decidedly less than cordial, as he refused to give the Patriarch Michael Cerularius the customary salutations on their first meeting, instead delivering his letter from the pope and leaving.<sup>282</sup> Cerularius, in turn, suspected the papal delegation to be the work of his political enemies in Italy, and thus refused to meet with them.<sup>283</sup>

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<sup>278</sup> Bury, *The Cambridge Medieval History, Vol. IV*, 269.

<sup>279</sup> Mayne, "East and West in 1054," 135.

<sup>280</sup> Dvornik notes that this "pamphlet warfare" offered the Greeks the first glimpse at the priorities of the reforming papacy. Dvornik, *Byzantium and the Roman Primacy*, 133-34.

<sup>281</sup> Runciman indeed suggests that Stethatus was indeed strong-armed into apologizing for the diatribe, Runciman, *The Eastern Schism*, 47; Bury, *The Cambridge Medieval History, Vol. IV*, 269.

<sup>282</sup> Runciman, *The Eastern Schism*, 45; Bury, *The Cambridge Medieval History, Vol. IV*, 269.

<sup>283</sup> Mayne, "East and West in 1054," 140; Runciman, *The Eastern Schism*, 46.

Matters became worse on April 15, 1054 when, only a few days after Humbert's arrival, word reached Constantinople that Pope Leo IX had died.<sup>284</sup> With the death of their pope, Humbert's delegation lost all legal standing, and Cerularius could pride himself on his supposed wisdom in ignoring them.<sup>285</sup> In his analysis of medieval diplomats, Queller explains that embassies in the eleventh century had not reached the point where they could commit their principals to any action or agreement.<sup>286</sup> At no time is this truer than when that principal had ceased to be. The papal delegation lost all initiative, but rather than pack up and go home, the embittered Humbert interrupted the liturgy being performed at the Hagia Sophia on Saturday, July 16, and laid a bull of excommunication on the altar before quickly departing.<sup>287</sup>

#### 4.5 Aftermath of 1054

The bull of excommunication directed at Cerularius contained a plethora of charges against the patriarch.<sup>288</sup> It begins by claiming that Cerularius "without right bears the title of Patriarch."<sup>289</sup> This accusation may refer to the fact that Cerularius was still relatively new to the clergy, having only been ordained some four years previously. In addition to Cerularius, the bull excommunicated Archbishop Leo of Orchrida, and the patriarchal chancellor, Michael Constantine, and goes on to accuse Cerularius and his followers of such outrageous indiscretions as simony, ignoring the Mosaic Law, and

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<sup>284</sup> Runciman, *The Eastern Schism*, 45-46; Bury, *The Cambridge Medieval History*, Vol. IV, 270.

<sup>285</sup> Runciman, *The Eastern Schism*, 46.

<sup>286</sup> Queller, *The Office of Ambassador in the Middle Ages*, 225.

<sup>287</sup> Runciman, *The Eastern Schism*, 47; Bury, *The Cambridge Medieval History*, Vol. IV, 270; Geanakoplos, *Medieval Western Civilization and the Byzantine and Islamic Worlds*, 292.

<sup>288</sup> Runciman comments that, when the bull had been translated for him, Cerularius must have smiled at the erroneous charges in the document. Runciman, *The Eastern Schism*, 48.

<sup>289</sup> Humbert of Moyenmoutier, *The Bull of Cardinal Humbert, July 16, 1054*, in *Historical Investigation*, trans. Paul Burns (New York: Paulist Press, 1966).

allowing priests to marry.<sup>290</sup> In truth, simony was a frequent problem in the Roman church in Humbert's time as well, and one he himself had campaigned against. The charge of abandoning Mosaic Law was entirely unfounded and, while priests were allowed to marry before their ordination into the Orthodox Church, a priest who was already ordained could not.<sup>291</sup>

While Humbert's actions appear to modern eyes precipitous, an adequate explanation of why he committed such a blatant offense remains lacking. From a diplomatic perspective, it is easy to see why the events of 1054 gained almost no mention in Byzantine chronicles. Humbert was very careful not to excommunicate all Greeks or even the emperor, but only Cerularius and his inner circle, thus leaving the possibility open for further negotiations toward an anti-Norman alliance. Such negotiations were pursued at the directive of Frederick, the very same envoy who accompanied Humbert to Constantinople, and who later became Pope Stephen IX.<sup>292</sup> The negotiations failed, however, because Stephen IX was dead by the time his embassy had reached Bari in January 1058, at which point his envoys returned home, having learned their lesson from the events of 1054.<sup>293</sup> It soon became apparent that Rome needed allies closer at hand, and thus Rome came to terms with the Normans under Pope Nicholas II in 1059.<sup>294</sup>

Cerularius responded to the excommunication by solemnly anathematizing Humbert and the other delegates. In a letter to Patriarch Peter of Antioch, Cerularius accused the Latins of similarly outlandish heresies.<sup>295</sup> Numerous scholars have noted that

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<sup>290</sup> Runciman, *The Eastern Schism*, 48.

<sup>291</sup> For a complete list of the fallacies in Humbert's Bull, see Runciman, *The Eastern Schism*, 48.

<sup>292</sup> *Ibid.*, 57.

<sup>293</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>294</sup> Mayne, "East and West in 1054," 148; Runciman, *The Eastern Schism*, 57.

<sup>295</sup> Michael Cerularius, "Epistle to Peter, Patriarch of Antioch," in *Acta et scripta quae de controversiis ecclesiae Graecae et Latinae saeculo undecimo composita extant*, ed. C. Will (Leipzig: Marburg, 1861).

the events of 1054 may not necessarily represent the final schism of the Catholic and Orthodox churches, but the episode certainly appears as a crucial confrontation between East and West.<sup>296</sup> While it is true, as Richard Mayne put it, that no one can easily plot the crucial point on the curve of East-West relations, scholars can say with some assurance that 1054 rests on the downward slope.<sup>297</sup>

While Humbert and Cerularius had been careful about whom they excommunicated, their successors were not so precise. Rampant and ill-conceived excommunications of Byzantine emperors by the popes exacerbated the situation and made a resolution to the 1054 conflict more difficult. When Emperor Michael VII was overthrown in 1078, Pope Gregory VII promptly excommunicated his successor, Nicephorus III Boteniates. Runciman, noting a Greek individual whom Guiscard presented in Rome and who claimed to be dethroned Michael VII, suggests that Gregory allowed himself to be coerced into supporting Guiscard's 1080 invasion of Byzantium, thus leading to the excommunication.<sup>298</sup> It is more likely, however, that Gregory abhorred the overthrow of someone he had considered a close ally in Constantinople. Gregory had been impressed by an embassy from Michael VII in 1073 that had shown strong promise for a resolution to the 1054 dispute.<sup>299</sup> He was certainly disappointed by the downfall of someone he had come to depend on for expanding his authority over the Eastern Church.

Although Gregory may have had cause to excommunicate Boteniates, it is less clear if he was justified in excommunicating the young general Alexius Comnenus, who

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<sup>296</sup> Kolbaba, *The Byzantine Lists, Errors of the Latins*, 9-11; Runciman, *The Eastern Schism*, 50.

<sup>297</sup> Mayne, "East and West in 1054," 138.

<sup>298</sup> Anna suggests that Gregory endorsed Guiscard's "Michael VII" pretender because he needed allies in his quarrel with the German Emperor. Anna Comnena, *Alexiad*, 58, 61; Runciman, *The Eastern Schism*, 59.

<sup>299</sup> Runciman, *The Eastern Schism*, 59; Augustin Fliche, *Saint Grégoire VII* (Paris: J. Gabalda et fils, 1928), 29-30.



assumed the throne in 1081. It is possible that Gregory still hoped for the restoration for Michael VII, but if this is so, it backfired on him horribly. Alexius proved to be an able and strong emperor, and a breach with him brought little benefit to the papacy, as the new emperor responded by closing all the Latin churches in Constantinople.<sup>300</sup> Finally, in 1089, Pope Urban II lifted the excommunication and the churches were reopened, but the episode had roused great animosity on both sides.<sup>301</sup>

Few Byzantines or Latins probably took much notice of the schism of 1054 itself. During the great German pilgrimage of 1064, Bishop Gunther of Bamberg is described as more vexed by Byzantine arrogance rather than any religious doctrine or practice.<sup>302</sup> When Peter Damian wrote to Constantine Lichoudes, the patriarch of Constantinople, in 1062, not ten years after the calamitous encounter, he makes no mention of Humbert, Cerularius, or any open schism between the two churches.<sup>303</sup> Although the purpose of the letter was to persuade Lichoudes to embrace the *filioque* clause, Peter maintains a very conciliatory tone, referring to the patriarch as “venerable father” and hoping he will pursue the matter in good faith.<sup>304</sup> As to the reaction of the Byzantine court, Anna Comnena testifies that the Byzantines were more scandalized by the excommunication of the emperor and the pope’s good relations with the Normans and Germans than with anything else, showing that theological debates remained a largely secondary concern. It is thus questionable to date the modern schism between Catholic and Orthodox Churches

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<sup>300</sup> Runciman notes that Venetian churches in Constantinople remained open, Runciman, *The Eastern Schism*, 59-61.

<sup>301</sup> Runciman suggests that, with the reconciliation between Alexius and Urban, any supposed schism between the churches was effectively closed. *Ibid.*, 62.

<sup>302</sup> Annalist of Nieder-Altach, “The Great German Pilgrimage of 1064-65,” trans. James Brundage, *Internet Medieval Sourcebook*, <[www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/1064pilgrim.html](http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/1064pilgrim.html)> (accessed 2 May 2009), para. 3.

<sup>303</sup> Blum, *The Letters of Peter Damian, Vol. 1, 1-30*, 13.

<sup>304</sup> Peter Damian, *Letter 91*, in *Peter Damian: Letters 91-120, vol. 4*, trans. Owen J. Blum (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1998), 17.

to the conflict between Cerularius and Humbert.<sup>305</sup> It is certain, however, that at some level, envoys between East and West were at least vaguely aware of liturgical differences. They saw the different forms of bread in the churches, heard a different language at services, and if they spoke to any clergy, became aware of different beliefs, such as the acceptance or rejection of the *filioque* clause. Many such envoys were themselves bishops or members of the clergy, and thus were probably aware of the particulars of the schism.

Religious differences were quite noticeable to Odo of Deuil during his journey east in 1147/8, and even appear to have offended him. “If our priests celebrated mass on Greek altars,” Odo explains, “the Greeks afterwards purified them with propitiatory offerings and ablutions, as if they had been defiled.”<sup>306</sup> Odo remarks further that the average crusader was given cause to distrust the Byzantines as differences of belief on the Eucharist and *filioque* became more apparent. Odo puts forth that “because of this they were judged not to be Christians, and the Franks considered killing them a matter of no importance.”<sup>307</sup> Such a harsh judgment would not have been possible unless the religious differences were clearly visible to the Latins in Byzantium. Even if Odo exaggerated in his description of perceived Greek religious errors, such as clerics purifying altars after the Latins had passed, we must assume that Latins traveling east quickly realized the religious differences that existed between them and their hosts, and it is very likely that their opinion of the Byzantines was negatively impacted.

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<sup>305</sup> Anna Comnena, *Alexiad*, 60-61; Mayne, “East and West in 1054,” 137; Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, 59; Runciman points to the friendly correspondence in 1120 between Constantinople and Peter the Venerable, abbot of Cluny, as proof that the two churches were not considered to be in schism. Runciman, *The Eastern Schism*, 114.

<sup>306</sup> *Si nostri sacerdotes missas super eorum altaria celebrabant, quasi essent profanata lustrando et abluendo postea expiabant.* Odo of Deuil, *De profectione Ludovici VII in orientem*, 54-55.

<sup>307</sup> *Ob hoc iudicabantur non esse Christiani, caedesque illorum ducebant pro nihilo.* Odo of Deuil, *De profectione Ludovici VII in orientem*, 56-57.

#### 4.6 Religious Debates between East and West

Many of the religious differences noted by Odo were discussed by Anselm of Havelberg and the Greek Archbishop Nicetas of Nicomedia in 1136.<sup>308</sup> The fact that the Byzantines were aware of a religious gulf is evident in such debates such as this, which occurred often in the twelfth century. Several Latin envoys were invited to take part in a theological debate with a Greek prelate in the hopes of resolving religious differences, usually in the presence of the emperor. Anselm was neither the first nor the last to do so. In 1113/14, Peter Chrysolan, archbishop of Milan, discussed the *filioque* clause and unleavened bread with theologians and Alexius I in the audience.<sup>309</sup> Hugh Etherian, a Latin first employed as a translator in the Byzantine court, engaged in a theological dispute with Nicholas of Methone in 1166.<sup>310</sup> Hugh was highly regarded for his knowledge of Greek learning, but he strongly warned his students and friends against being seduced by the unwholesome tendencies of the Greeks.<sup>311</sup> Such harsh criticism is not to be found in Anselm's debate with Nicetas.

Anselm's 1136 debate is exceptional due largely to the detailed account of the encounter he wrote at the request of Pope Eugenius III. In 1149, Eugenius had been visited by a Greek embassy that spoke at length about the religious differences between the Greek and the Latins.<sup>312</sup> Knowing that Anselm had discussed such subjects in 1136, Eugenius applied to him to write the *Dialogi* in an attempt to understand better the

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<sup>308</sup> This was only Anselm's first debate, he was involved in another in 1154 with Archbishop Basil of Orchrida. Runciman, *The Eastern Schism*, 119.

<sup>309</sup> Runciman explains that Alexius likely feared the animosity produced by the debate, as he was deeply invested in close relations with Rome. *Ibid.*, 108.

<sup>310</sup> Kenneth Meyer Setton, *The Byzantine Background to the Italian Renaissance*, (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1956), 27.

<sup>311</sup> Ciggaar, *Western Travellers to Constantinople*, 90-91; Setton, *The Byzantine Background to the Italian Renaissance*, 26.

<sup>312</sup> Lees, *Anselm of Havelberg*, 85.

position of the Greeks.<sup>313</sup> While his account is essentially concerned with religious matters, there are numerous bits of information one can glean from Anselm about diplomacy during his mission. Otto of Freising explains that Anselm was sent to Constantinople to negotiate an alliance against the Normans.<sup>314</sup> Anselm himself does not mention the purpose of his mission, but one can imagine that the alliance against the Normans gave him some pause during the debate with Nicetas, as any offense caused would endanger the Italian policy of his principal, Lothar III.

Anselm begins his account by referring to Emperor John II as “most pious,” and insisting that he had come not to dispute, but “for inquiry and understanding of your faith and mine.”<sup>315</sup> Not only does the arrogance exhibited by envoys such as Liudprand come forth nowhere in Anselm’s account, his praise for the Emperor, as well as his conciliatory attitude towards his opponents, suggests benevolence at least partially due to his treatment at the Byzantine capital.<sup>316</sup> If so, it would appear that the usual display of wealth customarily given to foreign ambassadors had its desired effect upon Anselm.

Even more relevant to this discussion is Anselm’s depiction of the arguments of his opponent, Nicetas. Since he was writing the *Dialogi* many years later, one might expect Anselm to portray his opponent as incompetent and incapable of defending the Orthodox position. The fact that he did no such thing lends credence to the accuracy of Anselm’s account, as well as to his continuing respect for the Byzantines. Of course, such embellishments may not have been necessary, as Nicetas would likely have taken a

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<sup>313</sup> Lees notes, along with the fact that Anselm waited some thirteen years to record the events of the 1136 debate, that Anselm’s chosen title for the work was *Antikeimenon*, but scholars have generally referred to it as *Dialogi*. Lees, *Anselm of Havelberg*, 8, 85.

<sup>314</sup> Otto of Freising, *The Deeds of Frederick Barbarossa*, II.11.123-24; Lees, *Anselm of Havelberg*, 44.

<sup>315</sup> Anselm of Havelberg, *Libri Dialogorum*, trans. Raymond Eugene Bierlein (unpublished translation, Western Michigan University, 1969), II.1.5, col. 1163A, II.1.6, 1163C.

<sup>316</sup> Lees suggests that Anselm’s conciliatory tone was due to a genuine attempt to heal the breach between the two churches, Lees, *Anselm of Havelberg*, 47.

conciliatory stance similar to Anselm's.<sup>317</sup> No Byzantine emperor was about to risk allowing his foreign policy being compromised by a religious debate, and thus Nicetas must have been regarded as the least belligerent Greek cleric available to debate Anselm.<sup>318</sup> His harshest comments came only in regard to what he saw as the despotic rule of the popes:

If the Roman Church holds something different, or teaches that it is to be held, it does only what pleases it, and according to its own judgment it chooses what it wishes, abandons what it wishes, approves what it wishes, disapproves what it wishes, decrees what it wishes, changes what it wishes, writes what it wishes, deletes what it wishes, only commands what it wishes, forbids what it wishes.<sup>319</sup>

It has been noted that Nicetas belonged to the more conciliatory wing of the Byzantine clergy, a group of Byzantines who wanted to maintain strong links with Rome. But even he could not have resisted criticizing the pope's constant claims to leadership in the entire Christian Church.<sup>320</sup>

#### 4.7 Church Schism in the Fourth Crusade

Quarrels over the authority of the pope have been regarded by some as one of the primary reasons for the schism.<sup>321</sup> It was the lack of respect for the authority of Rome, Robert of Clari claimed, which the Latin clergy sailing with the Fourth Crusade put forth as justification for the attack on Constantinople:

Finally the bishops and clergy of the host consulted together and gave judgment that the battle was a righteous one and that they were right to attack them. For anciently they of the city had been obedient to the law of Rome, but now they were disobedient to it, saying that the law of Rome was worth nothing and that all

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<sup>317</sup> Lees suggests that Nicetas was depicted as a strong character on purpose, as a useful instrument for Anselm to put forth his own criticism of the Western Church. *Ibid.*, 237.

<sup>318</sup> *Ibid.*, 46-47.

<sup>319</sup> Anselm of Havelberg, *Libri Dialogorum*, III.3.4-5, col. 1212B-C.

<sup>320</sup> Runciman, *The Eastern Schism*, 116.

<sup>321</sup> Dvornik, *Byzantium and the Roman Primacy*; Runciman, *The Eastern Schism*.

who believed in it were dogs. And the bishops said that on this account they were right to attack them, and that it was not at all a sin, but rather a righteous deed.<sup>322</sup>

Geoffrey of Villehardouin also relates how the clergy spoke against the errors of the Greeks, explaining that “by this the barons and pilgrims were greatly comforted,” as some on the crusade had previously complained about attacking a Christian city.<sup>323</sup>

Clearly, the crusaders who attacked Constantinople in 1204 had come to consider the Byzantines as schismatics because of their refusal to acknowledge papal supremacy.

The schism of the churches, while certainly based on religious differences, was exacerbated by inadequate and indirect diplomacy. Little or no progress could be made at addressing such differences, as church reunion remained a secondary concern to political objectives, often on the Italian peninsula. Byzantine emperors were unwilling to allow divisive religious issues to endanger alliances with the pope or with the Western emperor, most often aimed at either pulling support away from, or beginning an offensive against, the Normans.<sup>324</sup> As the events of 1054 have shown, however, religious issues could no longer be ignored after the reformed papacy began to reassert its influence. The increased traffic from the West to Constantinople made the religious differences visible to all, as Odo of Deuil attested, and thus contributed to the increasingly negative perception of the Byzantines characteristic from of the period 962 to 1204. The inability of Byzantine diplomacy to cope with the schism left the empire open to the criticisms related by Geoffrey of Villehardouin and Robert of Clari, who explained that their attack on

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<sup>322</sup> Robert of Clari, *The Conquest of Constantinople*, 94.

<sup>323</sup> Though he had many opportunities to do so, this is one of the rare instances in which Geoffrey of Villehardouin points out one of the religious differences between the Greeks and Latins. However, his description of the city’s churches and people suggests that he was at least aware of more differences and simply refrained from mentioning them. Geoffrey of Villehardouin, *Chronicle of the Fourth Crusade*, in *Memoirs of the Crusades*, trans. Frank T. Marzials (London: M. Dent, 1965), 56.

<sup>324</sup> Runciman holds the Normans as the main culprits in souring East-West relations. Runciman, “Byzantium and the Crusades,” 213.

Constantinople was justified by the Byzantines' failure to submit to Rome. Instead of addressing the schism, diplomats from East and West procrastinated in favor of more pragmatic, short-term agendas.

## CHAPTER 5

### EAST-WEST DIPLOMACY AND THE CRUSADES

The religious differences noted by crusaders like Robert of Clari and Geoffrey of Villehardouin are only a few of the unique challenges the crusades posed for the Byzantine diplomatic machine. The strain produced by the thousands of soldiers and pilgrims marching to Jerusalem severely taxed the empire's resources, as well as threatened the empire's security. The very idea of the crusade – in that it involved foreign armies moving largely unrestricted in Byzantine territory – was counter to the objectives of Byzantium's diplomatic efforts, which sought to secure the empire's frontiers, and created a crisis for foreign policy. Every instance in which a crusader army traversed Byzantine territory constituted a traumatic event, and the fact that imperial officials were able to cope with them and that major debacles were usually averted is a testament to Byzantium's diplomatic abilities. The methods employed by the Byzantines during the crusades were much the same as those employed by the empire for centuries previously, and with much success. The First and Second Crusades passed with only minor incidents. The Third Crusade, however, illuminates what this study already has argued was the trend of Byzantine diplomacy from the period between 972 to 1204. Diplomatic practices that had served the Byzantines well for hundreds of years came to be interpreted as arrogance as the German crusaders under Frederick Barbarossa took an intolerant stance towards perceived Byzantine duplicity. By the time of the Fourth Crusade this arrogance



was understood as betrayal and became part of the Latin reasoning for their attack on Constantinople.

Relations between crusaders and Byzantines were strained as much by economic demands as anything else. The enthusiasm aroused by Pope Urban II's plea at Clermont in 1095 has been well documented by historians as bringing about a dramatically large number of both soldiers and peasants.<sup>325</sup> Laiou explains that the vast armies of *militia Christi* marching across the empire posed unique logistical problems, but also provided Byzantine emperors with another tool of diplomacy, as food provision was tied to the good behavior of the crusader armies.<sup>326</sup> The continued breakdown of diplomacy between East and West, foreshadowed by Liudprand's *Legatio*, was fully realized by the Third crusade. Byzantine diplomacy would prove adaptable to some problems caused by the crusades. Still, attempts to secure their own interests, especially through the oaths required from passing Crusaders, would complicate matters far more than the Byzantines intended, leading to more unforeseen problems and further damaging Byzantium's image in the West. As early as the First Crusade Byzantium was portrayed as the villain, rather than as carrying out God's will. A sense of entitlement to Byzantine resources to further the crusading movement led to the Fourth Crusade and the tragic events of 1204.

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<sup>325</sup> Steven Runciman, *A History of the Crusades, Vol. I, The First Crusade and the Founding of the Kingdom of Jerusalem* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1951), 96; Treadgold, *A History of the Byzantine State and Society*, 620; Bury, *The Cambridge Medieval History, Vol. IV*, 333; Robert Browning, *The Byzantine Empire* (New York: Scribner, 1980), 161.

<sup>326</sup> Angeliki E. Laiou, "Byzantine Trade with Christians and Muslims and the Crusades," in *The Crusades from the Perspective of Byzantium and the Muslim World*, ed. Angeliki E. Laiou and Roy P. Mottahedeh (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 2001), 164.

## 5.1 Byzantium before the Crusades

For the origins of the crusading movement, one must look to the Byzantine defeat at Manzikert at the hands of the Seljuk Turks in 1071. The importance of Manzikert is hard to exaggerate, as most of the Byzantine army was scattered and the emperor Romanus IV Diogenes was captured.<sup>327</sup> The resulting political turmoil allowed the Turks to move into Anatolia.<sup>328</sup> “The Turks had established their superiority,” Anna Comnena relates, “Roman prestige had fallen; the ground was giving way, as it were, beneath their feet.”<sup>329</sup> The Byzantines were able to recover slightly under the Comneni emperors Alexius I, John II, and Manuel I from 1081 to 1180, but Anatolia was their primary source of manpower, and they were forced to rely more on foreign mercenaries, especially from the Latin West.<sup>330</sup> A contingent of Latins was employed by Alexius I in his battle with the Normans in 1081. Within a year of returning from a pilgrimage to Jerusalem in 1090, Count Robert I of Flanders dispatched 500 cavalry to serve under the Eastern emperor, having discussed the matter with him at Thessalonica on his return trip.<sup>331</sup> Recruitment efforts had become a central theme in Alexius’s relations with the West.

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<sup>327</sup> Treadgold, *A History of the Byzantine State and Society*, 601-604; Harris suggests that the Norman invasion in 1081 was just as destructive to the Byzantine Empire as was the defeat at Manzikert. Harris, *Byzantium and the Crusades*, 34.

<sup>328</sup> Browning, *The Byzantine Empire*, 122-23; Harris, *Byzantium and the Crusades*, 147. Brand suggests that the collapse of Byzantine Anatolia was not complete until an even greater defeat of Manuel I Comnenus and his army at Myrioccephalum in 1176. Brand, *Byzantium Confronts the West*, 30, 223. In contrast, Treadgold downplays the importance of Myrioccephalum, and points to Byzantine recovery after the battle. Treadgold, *A History of the Byzantine State and Society*, 649.

<sup>329</sup> Anna Comnena, *Alexiad*, 32.

<sup>330</sup> Kazhdan, “Latins and Franks in Byzantium: Perception and Reality from the Eleventh to the Twelfth Century,” 88. Choniates praises the Latin mercenary’s “rigid discipline in battle,” Nicetas Choniates, *Historia*, IX.338. Anna Comnena notes that “a mounted Kelt [Latin] is irresistible; he would bore his way through the walls of Babylon.” Anna Comnena, *Alexiad*, 163.

<sup>331</sup> Anna Comnena, *Alexiad*, 229, 232, 252; Harris, *Byzantium and the Crusades*, 37.

## 5.2 Gregory VII and Byzantium: An Ideological Conflict

Byzantium's military needs became a primary concern for Pope Gregory VII, who made church reunion, along with clerical reform, the central focus of his papacy.<sup>332</sup> In a 1075 letter to Hugh of Cluny, Gregory wrote that he was "overcome with immense pain and infinite sadness because, at the devil's instigation, the Eastern Church has strayed from the Catholic faith."<sup>333</sup> Augustin Fliche explains that Gregory was moved by a 1073 letter from Michael VII, expressing his desire to heal the schism.<sup>334</sup> Gregory responded by sending an embassy to Constantinople, which convinced him that the best way to achieve reunion of the churches was to free the Byzantines not only from the threat of the Seljuk Turks, but from the Normans as well.<sup>335</sup> Gregory succeeded in putting together an alliance against the Normans, including the Tuscan Countesses Beatrix and Matilda and Gisulf of Salerno, but the army fell apart as Gisulf quarreled with the Pisan elements of the Tuscan force, and Gregory's grand plan came to nothing.<sup>336</sup> Still, Gregory continued to lobby for "aid to the Christian [Greek] Empire," in the hopes of uniting the churches.<sup>337</sup>

Whether what Gregory VII was planning could be called a crusade remains debatable, but for the purpose of this study it is important to note two developments under his papacy.<sup>338</sup> The first was that, as a product of the reformed papacy, Gregory

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<sup>332</sup> Fliche, *Saint Grégoire VII*, 30.

<sup>333</sup> *Ibid.*, 29.

<sup>334</sup> *Ibid.*, 29-30.

<sup>335</sup> Fliche, *Saint Grégoire VII*, 45; Erdmann disagrees with Fliche that Michael VII made military aid a precondition of reunion. Carl Erdmann, *The Origin of the Idea of Crusade* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1977), 164.

<sup>336</sup> Erdmann, *The Origin of the Idea of Crusade*, 161-62.

<sup>337</sup> *Gregory VII's Call for Assistance to the Greeks*, in *The Crusades, a Reader*, trans. S.J. Allen and Emilie Amt (Peterborough, Ont: Broadview Press, 2003), 34-35.

<sup>338</sup> Erdmann views Gregory's proposed Eastern campaign as a crusade, in that it advocated war against non-Christians for the succor of the Byzantine Empire. Erdmann, *The Origin of the Idea of Crusade*, 168;

likely supported bringing military aid to Byzantium in order to further papal influence over the Eastern Church.<sup>339</sup> Although the Byzantine emperors might use the prospect of submission to the pope to garner their support for centuries to come, such an outcome was unlikely and indeed proved impossible to implement.<sup>340</sup> Also, as previously discussed, the role that Gregory, and later Urban II, was attempting to assume was already taken by the emperor himself in the East. The Byzantine belief in *translatio imperii* – the idea that by founding Constantinople the emperor Constantine had made the city both the inheritor of Rome and the most important city in the Christian world – did not allow room for the pope as a military or secular leader.<sup>341</sup> Anna Comnena espouses this principle, suggesting that the authority of the pope was subordinated to the emperor, and perhaps even to the patriarch of Constantinople, “when power was transferred from Rome to our country and the Queen of Cities [Constantinople].”<sup>342</sup> Gregory’s and later Urban’s actions directly challenged the Byzantine belief that the emperor was the God-appointed guardian of that Christian empire and therefore was owed complete allegiance from all Christians, whether they lived in the empire or not.<sup>343</sup>

The relationship between Byzantium and the papacy included the possibility of military assistance. The mechanism that Urban II would employ to send armies of *militia*

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Fliche argues the opposite, that Gregory’s campaign is a different entity than what modern scholars call the Crusades, especially because Jerusalem was never the objective. Fliche, *Saint Grégoire VII*, 45.

<sup>339</sup> Fliche, *Saint Grégoire VII*, 45.

<sup>340</sup> For difficulties in reunion of the Churches after 1204, see Deno John Geanakoplos, *Byzantine East and Latin West: Two Worlds of Christendom in Middle Ages and Renaissance; Studies in Ecclesiastical and Cultural History* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1966),

<sup>341</sup> Harris, *Byzantium and the Crusades*, 12.

<sup>342</sup> Anna Comnena, *The Alexiad*, 62.

<sup>343</sup> Harris, *Byzantium and the Crusades*, 13; H.E.J. Cowdrey, “The Gregorian Papacy, Byzantium, and the First Crusade,” in *Byzantium and the West, c. 850-c. 1200: Proceedings of the XVIII Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies, Oxford 30th March - 1st April 1984*, ed. J.D. Howard-Johnston (Amsterdam: Hakkert, 1988), 150.

*Christi* to the East was already in place.<sup>344</sup> This mechanism would be called on at the Council of Piacenza in 1095, at which an embassy from Alexius requested additional military support. The question of what exactly transpired at Piacenza has caused some debate among historians, but it can be argued with some certainty that Byzantine emissaries indeed arrived at the gathering and requested that the pope use his influence to further Alexius's recruitment efforts in the West.<sup>345</sup>

### 5.3 The Council of Clermont, 1095

As noted in the previous chapter, the educated elite in Constantinople appear to have been largely unaware of papal reforms in the eleventh century and thus were likely taken off guard when Pope Urban II used Alexius I's requests to further the reform agenda. The educated elite of Byzantium, entirely devoted to the idea of *translatio imperii*, were therefore guided by two priorities: securing the *Oikoumene*, especially the capital of Constantinople, and seeking the recognition of their emperor as the supreme overlord of the Christian world.<sup>346</sup> In launching the First Crusade at Clermont in 1095, however, Urban made his own goals paramount, while making no mention of the Byzantine Empire or the emperor in Constantinople.<sup>347</sup> No account of Urban II's sermon mentions the Byzantine emperor. Of the four accounts of Urban's speech at Clermont,

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<sup>344</sup> Harris suggests that vital flaw in Byzantine foreign policy came when the pope was asked to use his moral authority to raise mercenaries to fight under the emperor. Harris, *Byzantium and the Crusades*, 51.

<sup>345</sup> Harris wonders why Alexius would continue to request military aid in 1095, as most of the Empire's attackers had been turned back by that time, but he concludes that the emperor required more troops before he could go on the offensive. Harris, *Byzantium and the Crusades*, 47; Runciman, *A History of the Crusades, Vol. I*, 86; Nicol, *Byzantium and Venice*, 68. Riley-Smith suggests that Urban II had been contemplating sending an army east for some time before Piacenza. Riley-Smith, *The Crusades: A Short History*, 3. Jacoby, however, doubts that any request for more mercenaries was ever made at Piacenza. David Jacoby, review of *Byzantium and the Crusades*, by Jonathan Harris, Institute of Historical Research, 1 April 2004, <[www.history.ac.uk/reviews/paper/jacobyD.html](http://www.history.ac.uk/reviews/paper/jacobyD.html)> (accessed 1 June 2009).

<sup>346</sup> Harris, *Byzantium and the Crusades*, 23.

<sup>347</sup> *Ibid.*, 43,

three are thought to have been written by persons actually present, but even these were written years later.<sup>348</sup> Fulcher of Chartres does mention the plight of the Eastern Christians as a primary concern of Urban's speech. "Your brethren who live in the east are in urgent need of your help," as Fulcher quotes Urban, "and you must hasten to give them the aid which has often been promised them."<sup>349</sup> Even Fulcher, however, makes no mention of the emperor's request, and the other accounts put forth the Holy Sepulcher and Jerusalem as the prime objectives of the expedition, not Constantinople.<sup>350</sup>

By making Jerusalem the expedition's goal, Urban appears to have consciously been putting the crusade under his own authority.<sup>351</sup> In a letter giving instruction to the crusaders, Urban makes it very clear that his representative on the expedition, Bishop Adhemar of Le Puy, was to be the acknowledged leader, adding that the goal of the crusade was to "free the churches of the East" and "the Holy City of Christ."<sup>352</sup> From their very inception, therefore, the security of the Byzantine Empire was at best only a secondary concern. Byzantine foreign policy goals did not include wresting Jerusalem from Muslim control, and thus the Byzantines themselves appeared unsympathetic to the crusader cause.<sup>353</sup>

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<sup>348</sup> The three accounts of those present at Clermont are Fulcher of Chartres, Robert the Monk, and Baldric of Dol, the fourth account is that of Guibert of Nogent, who was probably not at Clermont. Allen and Amt, *The Crusades, a Reader*, 39.

<sup>349</sup> "Aid which has often been promised them" may refer to Gregory VII's efforts. Fulcher of Chartres, in Allen and Amt, *The Crusades, a Reader*, 39.

<sup>350</sup> *Ibid.*, 40-47.

<sup>351</sup> Harris, *Byzantium and the Crusades*, 51.

<sup>352</sup> Urban II, *Letter of Instruction to the Crusaders, December 1095*, trans. August C. Krey, *Internet Medieval Sourcebook*, <[www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/urban2-5vers.html](http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/urban2-5vers.html)> (accessed 2 June 2009).

<sup>353</sup> Harris, *Byzantium and the Crusades*, xvii.

#### 5.4 Anna Comnena and the Crusaders – friend or foe?

That the Byzantines themselves realized this is evident in the *Alexiad* of Anna Comnena, the best Byzantine source for the First Crusade.<sup>354</sup> Anna explains her belief that “the simpler folk were in truth led on by a desire to worship at Our Lord’s tomb and visit the holy places,” but she was less assured about the motives of the crusade leaders, especially Bohemond, whom she suspected of plotting to capture Constantinople.<sup>355</sup> Therefore, it was prudent, from Anna’s perspective, that Alexius had messages between the crusade leaders intercepted regularly and their armies escorted by Byzantine troops, to prevent them from coordinating action against Constantinople.<sup>356</sup> One can surmise Anna’s dismay as she records that Godfrey of Bouillon, one of the first crusader princes to arrive at Constantinople, openly quarreled with Alexius. One member of the imperial retinue standing very near the emperor, she explains, was struck by a crusader arrow.<sup>357</sup> According to Anna, Alexius calmly responded by ordering his archers to disperse the attackers, insisting that they purposely miss to avoid killing any of the crusaders.<sup>358</sup> This incident doubtlessly convinced Anna that the crusaders represented a threat, not relief. They appeared just as happy to attack their fellow Christians as they were to fight the Turks. Indeed, Anna goes on to implicate all the crusading princes in a plot to “dethrone

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<sup>354</sup> Though Anna Comnena is often criticized for her many biases, usually portraying her father Alexius I in the best possible light, it is difficult to discount her as a reliable guide to the outlook and attitudes of the Byzantine court. *Ibid.*, 56.

<sup>355</sup> Anna’s concerns over Bohemond appear to be justified, as he had joined his father, Robert Guiscard, in his attack on Byzantium in 1080, and would lead his own crusade against the Byzantines in 1108, Anna Comnena, *The Alexiad*, 311.

<sup>356</sup> *Ibid.*, 319.

<sup>357</sup> *Ibid.*, 320.

<sup>358</sup> *Ibid.*, 321.

Alexius and seize the capital,” largely convinced by what she observed as reluctance to take the oath of allegiance.<sup>359</sup>

### 5.5 The Oath in Crusader-Byzantine Relations

The oath Alexius required of the crusader princes has remained something of a mystery because its precise details have not come down to us. Asbridge suggests it formed two parts, the first being that any territory taken by the crusaders should be handed over to the Byzantines.<sup>360</sup> The second appears to have been some form of an oath of vassalage, creating a bond of peace and mutual friendship and, as is to be expected from the Byzantines, forcing the crusaders into a subjugating relationship.<sup>361</sup> After Godfrey finally accepted the oath, the other crusade leaders followed suit, though this may largely have been due to the favor Alexius showed once they agreed to his terms. Anna relates that once Godfrey took the oath “he received generous largess, was invited to share Alexius’ hearth and table, and was entertained at a magnificent banquet.”<sup>362</sup> Once again we see the traditional diplomatic tool of gifts and wealth used to disarm potential enemies of the empire.<sup>363</sup> In an indication that he was very much playing his own game, Bohemond acquiesced to the oath almost immediately.<sup>364</sup> Only Count

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<sup>359</sup> Ibid., 319.

<sup>360</sup> Thomas Asbridge, *The First Crusade: A New History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 111.

<sup>361</sup> Asbridge, *The First Crusade*, 111; Harris, *Byzantium and the Crusades*, 58-59.

<sup>362</sup> Anna Comnena, *The Alexiad*, 323. Harris points out that, not only did the leaders of the Crusade of 1101 who took the oath receive numerous gifts, many were given titles in the imperial family. Harris, *Byzantium and the Crusades*, 58.

<sup>363</sup> Albert of Aix suggests that Alexius’s gifts to Godfrey were purely a result of the emperor’s fear of the crusaders. *Albert of Aix: Godfrey of Bouillon*, trans. August C. Krey, *Internet Medieval Sourcebook*, <[www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/cde-atcp.html#albert1](http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/cde-atcp.html#albert1)> (accessed 2 June 2009).

<sup>364</sup> Asbridge suggests that this was part of Bohemond’s attempt to take control of the entire expedition. Asbridge, *The First Crusade*, 111.



Raymond of Toulouse continued to refuse, but even he finally agreed to a modified oath.<sup>365</sup>

This oath, however, failed to secure Byzantine gains through the crusades. The crusaders accused the emperor of failing to provide reinforcements as promised in the agreement, and thus refused to surrender lands conquered as a result of their efforts.<sup>366</sup> On the surface, the incidents at Nicaea and Antioch appear to disprove this trend, but upon further inspection they actually verify it. Though Nicaea fell as a result of the crusader siege, the city only surrendered to Alexius himself.<sup>367</sup> The crusaders, having been robbed of the opportunity to sack the city, felt cheated by the Emperor out of much expected booty.<sup>368</sup> Antioch would at times acknowledge Byzantine suzerainty, but this was accomplished only by the personal presence of the Emperor himself, accompanied by a large force.<sup>369</sup>

Furthermore, Byzantine military support was indeed present during much of the First Crusade. The military commander, Taticius, was ordered to accompany the crusaders with a force of two thousand men during their march across Anatolia.<sup>370</sup> According to Anna Comnena, his orders were “to help and protect them [the crusaders] on all occasions and also to take over from them any cities they captured.”<sup>371</sup> Taticius

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<sup>365</sup> Asbridge insists that the good relationship between Alexius and Raymond, based largely on Anna Comnena’s glowing report of the old count, is a result of hindsight, both by modern historians and by Anna, who recalled her father’s dealings with him only decades later. Asbridge, *The First Crusade*, 112; Anna Comnena, *The Alexiad*, 329-30.

<sup>366</sup> Asbridge notes an implied measure of the emperor’s support to the expedition in return for taking the oath. Asbridge, *The First Crusade*, 111. Harris notes that the Crusade of 1101 delivered the city of Ancyra to the Emperor. Harris, *Byzantium and the Crusades*, 59.

<sup>367</sup> Runciman, *A History of the Crusades, Vol. I*, 149; Harris, *Byzantium and the Crusades*, 64-65.

<sup>368</sup> Runciman, *A History of the Crusades, Vol. I*, 150; Harris, *Byzantium and the Crusades*, 65.

<sup>369</sup> For more on the expeditions of John II and Manuel I to enforce their claims on Antioch, see Kinnamos, *Deeds of John and Manuel Comnenus*, I.8.23-24, IV.20.141-42; Nicetas Choniates, *Historia*, I.16-18, II.3.61-62.

<sup>370</sup> Runciman, *A History of the Crusades, Vol. I*, 152.

<sup>371</sup> Anna Comnena, *The Alexiad*, 341.

may have been an unusual choice to guide the crusaders. Asbridge points out that Taticius was a eunuch whose nose was cut off early in his military career, forcing him to wear a metal prosthetic.<sup>372</sup> Anna notes that his father was a Muslim captured during a raid by her grandfather, John Comnenus, and that he commanded a unit of Turkish mercenaries.<sup>373</sup> It is conceivable that there were many crusaders who disliked following a half-Turk and his band of Turkish troops into Turkish-held lands. That possibility makes Anna's explanation for Taticius's departure from the crusade more likely. Anna relates that Bohemond, not wishing to turn over Antioch to the Byzantines, suggested to Taticius that many of the crusade leaders were planning on killing him, at which point he departed the crusader camp, saying he was going to forage for supplies.<sup>374</sup> Taticius would have been on alert to the dangers Bohemond suggested if he had previously been given reason to believe his ethnicity alarmed the rank and file crusader.

The actions of Taticius were not the only complaint lodged against the Byzantines – who appeared to the Crusaders as non-participants in the First Crusade. Many resented the fact that Alexius failed to succor the crusaders during their difficult siege of Antioch. According to William of Tyre, Alexius and the Byzantine army were on their way to reinforce the crusader siege at Antioch when they were intercepted by Stephen of Blois at

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<sup>372</sup> Asbridge explains that, in theory if not in practice, Taticius was the official commander-in-chief of the First Crusade in Alexius's absence. Asbridge, *The First Crusade*, 120, 123.

<sup>373</sup> Anna Comnena, *The Alexiad*, 141.

<sup>374</sup> Anna Comnena, *The Alexiad*, 343. Asbridge notes that Taticius even left his belongings in the camp so not to raise suspicion that he was abandoning the expedition. Asbridge, *The First Crusade*, 179. Harris emphasizes that the crusaders accused Taticius of cowardice in the face of enemy reinforcements, and adds that, whatever his motivations for departing, the Emperor Alexius was not displeased with him for doing so. Harris, *Byzantium and the Crusades*, 64, 66. Riley-Smith notes that, although Taticius withdrew from the expedition, many Byzantine troops and clergy remained. Riley-Smith, *The Crusades: A Short History*, 24.

Philomelion.<sup>375</sup> Rather than urge the emperor forward, Stephen painted a picture that made the matter appear hopeless:

The mind can scarcely conceive the vast number of that besieging host, for, to put it briefly, their ranks covered the entire country round about the city like locusts, so that there seemed to be scarcely room for their tents. Our people, on the other hand, have been so diminished by famine, by cold and heat, by massacre and death, that the entire host now concentrated in Antioch seems barely sufficient for its defense.<sup>376</sup>

This report convinced Alexius that the siege of Antioch was a hopeless venture and that to pursue it would risk the security of his empire, and so he left the crusaders to their fate.<sup>377</sup> William himself does not appear to blame the emperor; rather he accuses Stephen of depriving “the Christians of the aid they so vitally needed, aid which the emperor was preparing to bring in fulfillment of the treaty.”<sup>378</sup> William’s comrades were not so forgiving, and often pointed to Alexius’s failure to arrive at Antioch as a breach of their agreement and reason for them to deny Byzantine claims to the city.

## 5.6 Anti-Byzantine Propaganda in the West

In the end, the Byzantines were unable to enforce effectively their authority over Antioch. Even the oaths they required from the passing crusaders brought little benefit to the empire, although that did not stop the emperor from insisting on the oaths before ferrying the crusader armies across to Asia. The continuous attempts to implement Byzantine hegemony over the crusaders, while, from the crusader perspective, providing little or no military assistance, provoked a negative backlash in the West.<sup>379</sup> Bohemond

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<sup>375</sup> William of Tyre, *A History of Deeds Done Beyond the Sea*, VI.11.275.

<sup>376</sup> William quotes Stephen’s report to Alexius. *Ibid.*, VI.11.276.

<sup>377</sup> Harris, *Byzantium and the Crusades*, 68.

<sup>378</sup> William of Tyre, *A History of Deeds Done Beyond the Sea*, VI.11.278.

<sup>379</sup> Harris, *Byzantium and the Crusades*, 64.

returned to Western Europe in 1105 and promptly toured through France raising troops for a crusade against the Byzantines.<sup>380</sup> Harris notes that Bohemond's deeds while on the First Crusade were already well known in the West, and he was greeted there as a conquering hero; the king of France even offered him his daughter in marriage.<sup>381</sup> Bohemond's fame in the West is likely due to the *Gesta Francorum*, an account of the First Crusade likely written by someone in his service.<sup>382</sup> The *Gesta* reports that, while in Constantinople, Alexius had promised Bohemond "land in extent from Antioch fifteen days journey, and eight in width."<sup>383</sup> The suggestion that Alexius reneged on his promise brought sympathy for Bohemond and contempt for the deceitful Byzantines.

Bohemond was able to convince Pope Paschal II to give the proposed expedition his blessing by presenting some non-Christian mercenaries employed by the empire in Rome. Anna Comnena relates that Bohemond "exhibited his captured Scyths, as if providing concrete evidence that the Emperor Alexius, of all people, was hostile to the Christians because he set against them barbarian infidels."<sup>384</sup> Bohemond's invasion of Byzantium failed due to Alexius's judicious application of money to tempt away his supporters, and the two signed the Treaty of Devol in 1108.<sup>385</sup>

Alexius's victory in arms, however, did not bring about similar advantages in public opinion. Byzantine diplomacy, which had awed and cowed countless foreigners in Liudprand's time, was now provoking conflict and encouraging Western Europeans to attack the Byzantines in hope of easy loot. Latin powers once pacified by a show of

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<sup>380</sup> Ibid., 78.

<sup>381</sup> Ibid.

<sup>382</sup> Allen and Amt, *The Crusades, a Reader*, 61.

<sup>383</sup> *Gesta Francorum*, trans. August C. Krey, *Internet Medieval Sourcebook*, <[www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/gesta-cde.html#bohemand2](http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/gesta-cde.html#bohemand2)> (accessed 2 June 2009).

<sup>384</sup> Anna Comnena, *The Alexiad*, 390.

<sup>385</sup> Harris, *Byzantium and the Crusades*, 78.

wealth now expected the Byzantines to use that wealth in the common cause of Christendom and were alarmed when this did not come to pass. Anti-Byzantine propaganda, spearheaded by Bohemond after his return to the West, began to gain support all over Latin Europe.<sup>386</sup> In 1138, Pope Innocent II issued an edict declaring John II a schismatic and encouraging all Latin mercenaries in the Byzantine army to desert.<sup>387</sup> In 1147, the French bishop Godfrey of Langres argued that the Byzantines were Christians in name only and called for an attack on Constantinople.<sup>388</sup> Polemics against the Byzantines and their conduct during the crusades became linked with the schism between the Churches, as Western Christians began to wonder whose side the Byzantines were on.<sup>389</sup>

An often noted piece of anti-Byzantine propaganda conveys what can only be described as a lack of faith in Byzantine power and authority. A letter supposedly from Alexius to the count of Flanders, asking for military aid is largely held to be a forgery, likely authored by someone in Bohemond's circle.<sup>390</sup> The letter entreats the Latins to come to Constantinople and save it from the forces of Islam, but portrays the Byzantines themselves as helpless against their enemies, while extolling the collection of jewels and treasures in the city.<sup>391</sup> The Byzantium presented in this letter is one ripe for pillage, not

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<sup>386</sup> Ibid., 89.

<sup>387</sup> Ibid., 90.

<sup>388</sup> Ibid., 91.

<sup>389</sup> Individuals such as St. Bernard of Clairvaux, Suger of St. Denis and Peter the Venerable supported the idea of a crusade against Byzantium after the failure of the Second Crusade. Ibid., 89.

<sup>390</sup> Erdmann notes that the letter warns that the Holy Sepulcher will be lost if aid is not forthcoming, which could only have been an objective of the letter's author if written after 1099. Erdmann, *The Origin of the Idea of Crusade*, 358; Einar Joranson, "The Problem of the Spurious Letter of Emperor Alexius to the Count of Flanders," *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 55, No. 4 (July 1950): 811-832.

<sup>391</sup> *Alexius's (Supposed) Letter of Appeal to the West*, in *Byzantium: Church, Society, and Civilization Seen Through Contemporary Eyes*, trans. Deno John Geanakoplos (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984), 200, 359-60.

the one feared and respected by Liudprand. It gives no sense of the emperor as the “vice-gerent of God on Earth.”

### 5.7 Provisions as a Tool of Byzantine Diplomacy

In the face of declining prestige and influence abroad, the Byzantines were forced to cope with ever-larger crusader armies traversing their lands. As Laiou explains, provisions for the marching crusaders, usually supplied by the Byzantines at an open market, put an enormous burden on the Byzantine economy and agricultural infrastructure.<sup>392</sup> Anna Comnena describes the Peoples’ Crusade under Peter the Hermit as “outnumbering the sand of the sea shore or the stars of heaven.... Like tributaries joining a river from all directions they streamed towards us in full force.”<sup>393</sup> The crusaders placed an unprecedented toll on Byzantine production, but also presented a grand opportunity for Byzantine diplomacy.<sup>394</sup> With the crusaders almost entirely dependent on their temporary hosts for basic necessities, the Byzantines were able to barter supplies and foodstuffs for the crusaders’ good behavior. Albert of Aix relates that, once they were reconciled, Alexius saw to it that all Godfrey’s men were given sustenance.<sup>395</sup> When the Crusade of 1101 was delayed in crossing over to Asia, Alexius

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<sup>392</sup> Laiou, “Byzantine Trade with Christians and Muslims and the Crusades,” 161-62.

<sup>393</sup> Anna Comnena, *The Alexiad*, 309.

<sup>394</sup> Laiou gives approximations for the size of the different crusader armies in the hopes of clarifying their impact on local food production. She puts the Peasant Crusade at twenty thousand, the First Crusade at fifty to sixty thousand, the Crusade of 1101 at over sixty thousand, the Second Crusade at over sixty thousand, and the army of Frederick Barbarossa in the Third Crusade at one hundred thousand. Laiou even gives estimates for the duration each army stayed in Byzantium territory. While most remained from two to two and a half months, armies like those of Raymond of Toulouse and Bohemond took five to six months, while Barbarossa’s huge army took nine months to cross Byzantine lands. Laiou, “Byzantine Trade with Christians and Muslims and the Crusades,” 161-62.

<sup>395</sup> Albert of Aix, *Historia Hierosolymita*, trans. August C. Krey, *Internet Medieval Sourcebook*, <[www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/albert-cde.html#godfrey1](http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/albert-cde.html#godfrey1)> (accessed 2 June 2009).

withheld their provisions, and the troops reacted with violence.<sup>396</sup> The leaders of the Crusade of 1101 were so embarrassed that they promptly agreed to cross the Bosphorus.<sup>397</sup>

A severe problem with using provisions as a means of controlling the crusader armies was that it provoked, along with so many of Byzantium's policies during the crusades, a negative image among Westerners. Not only were the Byzantines taking advantage of the situation to secure their own ends, they were threatening to end the movement aimed at doing God's work. Often the difficulties in getting provisions to the crusaders were not even a problem the Byzantine state could solve. Laiou points out that few Byzantine citizens, with their long and sustained tradition of gold coinage, would have been willing to accept Frankish silver coins in trade as their purity and value could not be proven.<sup>398</sup> If they were willing they likely offered only the steepest of exchange rates. On crossing the border into Byzantium during the Second Crusade, Odo of Deuil complained frequently about the unfair exchange of currency.<sup>399</sup> Odo was also upset that most Greek towns did not provide a market, but insisted on lowering foodstuffs down from the city walls by rope.<sup>400</sup> Nicetas Choniates condemned many of his fellow Byzantines who, on receiving a certain sum from the crusader customer, simply lowered down whatever the merchant thought fair.<sup>401</sup> Many, Choniates charges, simply took the money and sent down nothing in return.<sup>402</sup>

As the Greek merchants were accused of taking advantage, Odo excuses certain members of his party who, "unwilling to endure want in the midst of plenty, procured

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<sup>396</sup> Riley-Smith, *The Crusades: A Short History*, 35.

<sup>397</sup> Ibid.

<sup>398</sup> Laiou, "Byzantine Trade with Christians and Muslims and the Crusades," 168.

<sup>399</sup> Odo explains that the exchange rate shifted against the Crusaders even more sharply once they reached Constantinople. Odo of Deuil, *De profectioe Ludovici VII in orientem*, 41, 67.

<sup>400</sup> Ibid., 41.

<sup>401</sup> Nicetas Choniates, *Historia*, II.1.38.

<sup>402</sup> Ibid., II.1.39.

supplies for themselves by plunder and pillage.”<sup>403</sup> That the common Byzantine merchant was weary of the visiting crusaders is understandable due to the fact that, at that very moment, the Normans under Roger II were attacking the empire, and it was a real concern that the crusaders might join with their fellow Latins and take Constantinople for themselves.<sup>404</sup> Odo adds that the Byzantines slowly withdrew the market provided for the crusaders once they reached Constantinople, possibly to encourage them to move along and cross the straits and prevent them from joining with Roger II.<sup>405</sup>

All of this suggests that the Byzantines were not afraid to use food supply to force many crusaders to capitulate when conflicts arose. Choniates’s concern about merchants taking advantage of the foreign pilgrims and soldiers shows that at least some elements within the Byzantine government realized how this tactic was being interpreted by the crusaders, but this realization did not cause enough pause to persuade the Byzantines to stop withholding food from ill-behaved Westerners. Laiou notes that often local governors were ordered to provide food at fair prices for the crusaders, and officials from Constantinople sometimes accompanied them to ensure that the order was being observed.<sup>406</sup>

Laiou does not consider, however, that these officials may have accompanied the crusaders to perform the opposite function – to see to it that food was withheld in the event the crusaders disobeyed the emperor’s directive or wantonly rampaged through the

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<sup>403</sup> *In rerum abundantia penuriam non ferentes, praedis et rapinis sibi necessaria conquirebant.* Odo of Deuil, *De profectione Ludovici VII in orientem*, 40-41. Laiou points out that only three methods of acquiring food were available to the crusaders, buying food, imperial donation of food, or plunder. She adds that some plundering was permitted by both the crusade leaders and the Byzantine officials when no food could be purchased. Laiou, “Byzantine Trade with Christians and Muslims and the Crusades,” 163-65.

<sup>404</sup> Kinnamos, *Deeds of John and Manuel Comnenus*, II.12.58; Odo reports that the conquest of Constantinople was frequently proposed to Louis VII by his closest advisors. Odo of Deuil, *De profectione Ludovici VII in orientem*, 69; Harris, *Byzantium and the Crusades*, 95.

<sup>405</sup> Odo of Deuil, *De profectione Ludovici VII in orientem*, 96.

<sup>406</sup> Laiou, “Byzantine Trade with Christians and Muslims and the Crusades,” 166.



countryside. Nicetas Choniates comments more than once that the officials Isaac II sent to escort the army of Frederick Barbarossa, John Doukas and Andronikos Kantakouzenos, caused more trouble than they prevented. Even though they ensured Barbarossa of the Byzantines' good faith and promised provisions for the journey, "through ignorance of their obligations and their unmanliness.... they provoked the king's [Barbarossa's] anger against the Romans."<sup>407</sup> Isaac II's own disdain for the German crusaders is also indicated by Choniates's account.<sup>408</sup> With this attitude in mind, it is easy to see how Isaac II might have instructed his officials to withhold food, even to the point of provoking the crusaders to plunder.

#### 5.8 Diplomatic Breakdown between East and West in the Crusades

While Odo of Deuil had good reason to be upset about price-gouging merchants, he was even more upset at the Byzantines for what he considered to be their support for the Turks against the crusaders. Almost as soon as the French crusaders crossed over to Asia they were met by the remnants of the German army under Conrad III, which had gone ahead of them. Odo accuses the guide provided to them by Manuel I of leading the Germans into a trap and abandoning them, then alerting the Turks to their presence so they could be destroyed:

Led farther astray by their leader (nay, rather, their bleeder), they suffered from morrow to morrow until the third day, and they pushed farther into the pathless mountains. Finally, believing that the army had been buried alive, the traitor fled at night by certain shortcuts which he knew, and he summoned a huge crowd of Turks to the prey.<sup>409</sup>

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<sup>407</sup> Nicetas Choniates, *Historia*, V.2.221.

<sup>408</sup> *Ibid.*, V.2.222.

<sup>409</sup> *Tamen a duce (immo a truce) suo seducti, amplius de crastino in crastinum usque in tertium patiuntur, et in montes invios longius intruduntur. Tandem credens adhuc vivum exercitum iam sepultum, proditor ille*

Odo is further convinced of Manuel's plotting against the crusaders when he relates a Turkish ambush lead by Greeks during the march through Anatolia: "Thereby the emperor transformed himself from a wily traitor to an avowed enemy."<sup>410</sup> Whatever Manuel's true actions, Odo's account conveys a Latin belief in Byzantine duplicity and a feeling that the Byzantines were unworthy of their city.<sup>411</sup> Rather than supporting the crusade, Odo suggests that the emperor of Constantinople was doing everything in his power to subvert it, even to the point of allying with the Turks.<sup>412</sup>

After the Second Crusade, Manuel appears to have realized the negative image that Byzantine diplomacy was creating among the Latins. While some have called Manuel a Latinophile, Harris suggests that Manuel simply modified the language he used when dealing with Muslim powers, to make him sound more like a crusader, and he made an attempt to address the religious schism.<sup>413</sup> Manuel maintained Byzantium's foreign policy goals, while making them appear more palatable to the Latins.<sup>414</sup> He frequently ransomed captured crusaders from their Muslim captors to gain favor and influence both in Antioch and the Kingdom of Jerusalem.<sup>415</sup> When Raymond of Poitiers visited Constantinople in 1145, Manuel was able to exchange military support for his

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*nocte per compendia sibi nota fugit, et ad praedam Turcorum maximam multitudinem convocavit.* Odo of Deuil, *De profectioe Ludovici VII in orientem*, 90-91.

<sup>410</sup> *In quo ille de doloso proditore se in apertum transtulit inimicum.* Ibid., 111-13.

<sup>411</sup> Macrides, "Constantinople: the Crusader's Gaze," 197.

<sup>412</sup> Harris explains that Manuel's agreement with the Turks amounted only to a truce, not an alliance, and it was in fact entirely prudent for the Byzantines' to free up resources to better handle the incoming crusaders. Harris, *Byzantium and the Crusades*, 97.

<sup>413</sup> Although Manuel's 1166 church council in Constantinople brought no resolution to matters such as the *filioque* clause and unleavened versus leavened bread, it did give him the image of one who was attempting to reach a resolution. Ibid., 102-104.

<sup>414</sup> Ibid., 104.

<sup>415</sup> In 1180, Manuel gave one hundred and fifty thousand dinars and one thousand Muslim prisoners to secure the release of Baldwin of Ibelin. In 1164, he paid one hundred thousand dinars to free Bohemond III. Ibid., 107.

submission.<sup>416</sup> King Amalric's appeals to Constantinople brought Byzantine fleets for attacks on Egypt in 1169 and 1177.<sup>417</sup> All of these efforts improved Byzantium's image as a friend of the crusading movement.

Harris notes that Manuel's acumen in dealing with the Latins was not shared by his successors, who were unable to maintain good relations with the crusaders.<sup>418</sup> As already explained, the seizure of Venetian citizens and property in 1171 and the massacre of the Latins in Constantinople in 1182 greatly impacted Latin perceptions of Byzantium and negated the progress made under Manuel. Moreover, the Byzantines at this time were likely less inclined to desire the Latins' goodwill, due to the devastating Norman attack on Thessalonica in 1185. Eustathius of Thessalonica relates the brutality of the scene:

The streets took on the sorrowful look of cemeteries and the sun witnessed what it should not. Nor could those who remained in their houses leave them. It was not possible to find a house in which any person might have been spared.... Yet I can say one good thing of the barbarians – that some of them who rushed to kill the faithful as they stood in the churches, first carried them outside and killed them there, thus rendering the evil less wicked.<sup>419</sup>

With these atrocities fresh in their mind, the Byzantines were understandably alarmed when they learned that Frederick Barbarossa had taken the cross. Not only had Manuel done his best to curtail Barbarossa's Italian policies, but the Byzantine emperor likely viewed the 1155 crowning of the new Western emperor as a direct opposition to his claims as heir to the Romans.<sup>420</sup> In addition, Barbarossa had already shown his

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<sup>416</sup> Kinnamos, *Deeds of John and Manuel Comnenus*, II.2.36.

<sup>417</sup> The 1177 expedition did not engage in an attack in Egypt because many crusaders, such as Count Philip of Flanders, refused to join. Harris, *Byzantium and the Crusades*, 109; Kinnamos, *Deeds of John and Manuel Comnenus*, VI.10.209.

<sup>418</sup> Harris, *Byzantium and the Crusades*, 110.

<sup>419</sup> Eustathius of Thessalonika, "Norman Atrocities and Devastation in Thessalonika," from *The Conquest of Thessalonika*, in *Byzantium: Church, Society, and Civilization Seen Through Contemporary Eyes*, trans. Deno John Geanakoplos (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984), 367.

<sup>420</sup> Harris, *Byzantium and the Crusades*, 129; Choniates is disdainful of Manuel's Italian policies, pointing out that "the lavish and huge sums of money poured into [Italy] served no useful purpose to the Romans,

belligerence to the Byzantines during the Second Crusade, when he accompanied his uncle, Conrad III, to the East. Frederick had burned down a monastery in response to the killing of a German noble by some disgruntled Greeks, giving him a reputation for brutality.<sup>421</sup>

It is not difficult to imagine that a distrust of the crusading multitudes was prevalent in the Byzantine court during Barbarossa's march across the Balkans. The crusaders, for their part, were understandably concerned about Isaac II's relationship with Saladin, whose conquest of Jerusalem in 1187 had provoked the Third Crusade.<sup>422</sup> Isaac's negotiations were embarrassingly revealed when, in 1192, the Venetian ship carrying Byzantine and Egyptian envoys, along with Saladin's gifts to Isaac, were captured near Rhodes by the Genoese pirate Guglielmo Grasso.<sup>423</sup>

Barbarossa had only begun his march through the empire when Isaac, clearly alarmed by the crusaders' past actions and rumors that the Western emperor planned to capture Constantinople, broke diplomatic negotiations and stopped all supplies of food to the German army, thus forcing them to pillage to sustain themselves.<sup>424</sup> Nicetas

Choniates notes the agreements made between Isaac and Barbarossa before the German

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nor did they bring lasting benefits to succeeding emperors." Also, Choniates constantly refers to Barbarossa as "king" as opposed to "emperor," signifying the offense felt by the Byzantines at Barbarossa's claims to the imperial title. Nicetas Choniates, *Historia*, II.2.58, V.2.221.

<sup>421</sup> Choniates suggests Barbarossa's actions were dictated by orders from Conrad III. Nicetas Choniates, *Historia*, II.1.37; Kinnamos, *Deeds of John and Manuel Comnenus*, II.13.61. Ciggaar thinks it likely that Barbarossa met with Bertha-Irene, the sister of his aunt Gertrude, Conrad III's wife, during the Second Crusade. Ciggaar, *Western Travellers to Constantinople*, 228.

<sup>422</sup> Harris suspects that any agreement between Isaac and Saladin amounted to little more than erecting a mosque in Constantinople in exchange for Byzantine administration of the Holy Sepulcher. Harris, *Byzantium and the Crusades*, 131; Laiou suggests that the negotiations between Isaac and Saladin, though they were certainly aimed at mutual defense, inevitably against the West, fell apart when Saladin became disillusioned with Byzantine military capabilities. Laiou, "Byzantine Trade with Christians and Muslims and the Crusades," 159.

<sup>423</sup> Laiou, "Byzantine Trade with Christians and Muslims and the Crusades," 157. Brand notes the considerable wealth of the gifts seized by the pirates, Brand, *Byzantium Confronts the West*, 211.

<sup>424</sup> Harris notes that Isaac had already promised supplies to Barbarossa's envoys. Harris, *Byzantium and the Crusades*, 132-33.

army's arrival, but blames John Ducas and Andronicus Kantakouzenos, two officials sent by Isaac to greet the German emperor at the border, with allowing matters to deteriorate.<sup>425</sup> "Through ignorance of their obligations and their unmanliness," Choniates explains, "they provoked the king's [Barbarossa's] anger against the Romans and induced the emperor to look upon the king as an enemy."<sup>426</sup> Choniates was even more appalled when Isaac refused to allow Barbarossa's envoys to depart, instead holding them as hostages.<sup>427</sup>

Choniates's concerns were proven justified when Barbarossa reacted violently to Isaac's intransigence.<sup>428</sup> The situation was resolved only after Barbarossa defeated a Byzantine army at Philippopolis and occupied the city of Adrianople, forcing Isaac to capitulate.<sup>429</sup> Isaac was forced to agree to the terms of the Treaty of Adrianople in 1189.<sup>430</sup> The terms imposed by Barbarossa were not entirely unjustified; many reflect problems the crusaders had been having in Byzantium since the First Crusade, such as open markets and fair exchange rates. But the severity of the treaty is not as important as the fact that Isaac was compelled to sign it.<sup>431</sup> Gone were circumstances in which the

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<sup>425</sup> Nicetas Choniates, *Historia*, V.2.221.

<sup>426</sup> Choniates explains that Isaac's fear of the German crusaders may have stemmed from the prophesy of the Patriarch Dositheos, who declared that Barbarossa would seize Constantinople through the Xylokerkos gate. Isaac promptly had the gate blocked in. Nicetas Choniates, *Historia*, V.2.221-22; Harris, *Byzantium and the Crusades*, 32.

<sup>427</sup> Nicetas Choniates, *Historia*, V.2.221. Magoulias identifies the envoys as Bishop Hermann of Münster, Count Heinrich of Dietz, Count Ruppert of Nassau, Count Walrab, and the imperial chamberlain Markward von Neuenburg. Magoulias, *O City of Byzantium, Annals of Niketas Choniates*, 397, notes 1132. Brand suggests that Isaac may have ordered the German envoys imprisoned because of the presence in Constantinople at the same time of an embassy from Saladin, undoubtedly there to pressure the Emperor to hold off the crusaders. Brand, *Byzantium Confronts the West*, 178, Harris, *Byzantium and the Crusades*, 133-34.

<sup>428</sup> Brand suggests that by imprisoning the envoys, Isaac had committed himself to hostility towards Barbarossa. Brand, *Byzantium Confronts the West*, 178.

<sup>429</sup> Harris, *Byzantium and the Crusades*, 135.

<sup>430</sup> A detailed account of the treaty is given in Brand, *Byzantium Confronts the West*, 185-87.

<sup>431</sup> One stipulation of the Treaty required Dositheos to sign as well, as he was known to have encouraged the Emperor against the crusaders. *Ibid.*, 187.

Byzantine Emperor could force the crusaders to do his bidding, either by withholding provisions or offering lavish gifts and presents. The Byzantines were not even equal to the crusaders as a military power, and Barbarossa appears to have realized his tactical advantage in subduing Isaac.<sup>432</sup>

The encounter between Isaac and Barbarossa represented the end of Byzantine supremacy in matters concerning the crusades. No longer were crusaders willing to tolerate Byzantine indifference or even duplicity, but insisted on Byzantium's assistance in the effort to seize Jerusalem. The arrogance of the ambassadors from Barbarossa's son, Henry VI, at the court of Alexius III, has already been noted. In addition to Henry's demands, however, he also required, after taking the cross in 1195, that Byzantine ports be made ready to receive him and that a Byzantine fleet be prepared to join his forces.<sup>433</sup> Alexius III had no choice but to acquiesce. A new tax, the *Alamanikon*, was implemented to raise the one thousand pounds of gold that Henry demanded to fund the expedition.<sup>434</sup>

### 5.9 Diplomacy in the Fourth Crusade

No amount of titles or gifts, marriages or provisions could prevent Henry VI from making his demands. Fortunately for Alexius III, Henry died before departing on his projected crusade, but the propaganda against the Byzantines, as well as the Byzantine mistrust of the motives of crusaders reached a boiling point in the events of 1204. The Third Crusade had shown to the Latin West that the Byzantines must be forced into

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<sup>432</sup> Harris, *Byzantium and the Crusades*, 147.

<sup>433</sup> Harris, *Byzantium and the Crusades*, 148-49. Brand supposes that the main reason Henry VI did not anticipate the Fourth Crusade and take Constantinople himself was the restraint of the pope. Brand, *Byzantium Confronts the West*, 191.

<sup>434</sup> Harris, *Byzantium and the Crusades*, 149. Choniates laments that even the tombs of Emperors were raided to raise the required sum, only Constantine the Great's remains were left alone, per imperial decree. Nicetas Choniates, *Historia*, VI.I.263.

joining the crusades, ensuring that their vast resources could be put to good use. The more the Byzantines tried to purchase the crusaders' goodwill with gifts, money and titles, the more certain the crusaders became that Constantinople had become indolent in its defense. The breakdown of diplomacy between Byzantine and crusader was complete, as Byzantine methods brought forth exactly the opposite effect that was desired. To see this during the Fourth Crusade, one must look to Geoffrey of Villehardouin.

Though certainly a partisan account, as an eyewitness to key meetings and important negotiations Villehardouin stands as the most informative source on the Fourth Crusade.<sup>435</sup> On first arriving at Constantinople, Villehardouin relates that Alexius III dispatched his envoy – Nicholas Roux, a Lombard in the service of the Byzantine court – to treat with the crusaders in the first diplomatic engagement.<sup>436</sup> Nicholas attempted to buy them off with the promise of food and gifts. Villehardouin depicts him as giving great praise to the crusader leadership:

The Emperor Alexius would have you know that he is well aware that you are the best people uncrowned, and come from the best land on earth. And he marvels much why, and for what purpose, you have come into his land and kingdom. For you are Christians, and he is a Christian, and well he knows that you are on your way to deliver the Holy Land oversea.<sup>437</sup>

The crusade leaders brushed aside the Byzantine offer of food and gifts, insisting that Alexius III was a usurper and that they had come to put his nephew on the throne.<sup>438</sup> The degradation in diplomatic benefit is clear in this response. Whereas, only some fifty years

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<sup>435</sup> Queller and Madden explain that Villehardouin was less than eager to put forward his own shortcomings in his account of the crusade. Queller and Madden, *The Fourth Crusade*, 48. Macrides notes Villehardouin's tendency to tout his own horn. Macrides, "Constantinople: the Crusader's Gaze." 198-99.

<sup>436</sup> Geoffrey of Villehardouin, *Chronicle of the Fourth Crusade*, 34. Harris points to Roux's employment in the Byzantine court as a classic example of the Emperor's preference for hiring Latins, even after the events of 1182. Harris, *Byzantium and the Crusades*, 155-56.

<sup>437</sup> Geoffrey of Villehardouin, *Chronicle of the Fourth Crusade*, 34-35.

<sup>438</sup> Alexius III had deposed his brother, the Emperor Isaac II, father to the future Alexius IV, who sought the aid of the Fourth Crusade in regaining his inheritance. After the crusader's first assault on Constantinople Alexius III fled the city, and Isaac II was reinstated. *Ibid.*, 35.

earlier, some food and a little money would have enabled Odo of Deuil to pursue his entire journey across the Balkans, by the Fourth Crusade it is seen as a meager offer. The crusaders had come to feel that they were entitled to more.

The second diplomatic contact took place shortly after the crusaders' first attack on the city, when Villehardouin himself went with a delegation to the court of the newly reinstated Isaac II.<sup>439</sup> Villehardouin remarks that when they entered the court, they observed Isaac II "so richly clad that you would seek in vain throughout the world for a man more richly appareled than he."<sup>440</sup> The Byzantines appear still to have relied on a show of wealth to awe foreigners, but the result this time would be very different. When the crusader envoys requested a private audience with the emperor it was quickly granted, an event unthinkable during Liudprand's mission, in which the envoy was required to speak to the Emperor Constantine VII only through a third party during most of their discussions. Isaac II was forced to agree to the outrageous payments promised by his son, Alexius IV, which had been offered in exchange for the Crusaders' help against Alexius III.

When these payments ceased Villehardouin again joined a delegation of crusaders to the Byzantine court, once more to demand the promised payment. When they heard this, Villehardouin reports, the Byzantines were "amazed and greatly outraged."<sup>441</sup> They vehemently retorted that "never had any one been so hardy as to dare defy the emperor of

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<sup>439</sup> Queller and Madden point out that the Crusaders were likely horrified when they realized that, by putting Isaac II back on the throne, the Byzantines considered themselves free of the obligations agreed upon by his son to fund and support their expedition, Queller and Madden, *The Fourth Crusade*, 132.

<sup>440</sup> Geoffrey of Villehardouin, *Chronicle of the Fourth Crusade*, 46.

<sup>441</sup> *Ibid.*, 54.



Constantinople in his own hall.”<sup>442</sup> Villehardouin even suggests that violence broke out, as the Crusader envoys were forced to depart quickly to avoid great peril.<sup>443</sup>

Byzantine diplomacy, which for centuries had worked so well to secure the Empire and the *Oikoumene*, failed utterly to pacify the soldiers of the Fourth Crusade. Promises of gifts, decades of marriage alliances and the bestowal of titles, instead of winning the Latins to their cause, stirred these Western Europeans against Byzantium. The Latins resented centuries of Byzantine inactivity in the quest to liberate the Holy Sepulcher and had determined that any means necessary was acceptable to bring Byzantium’s power and resources into the fray. The breakdown in negotiations, of which Villehardouin was a part, brought about the crusaders’ final attack on the capital and the establishment of the Latin Empire in Constantinople in 1204.

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<sup>442</sup> Ibid.

<sup>443</sup> Ibid.

## CHAPTER 6

### CONCLUSION

This study began with an examination of Liudprand of Cremona for a presentation of graduate student work in medieval history and art history at the University of North Texas in January of 2009. From there the focus grew to include general diplomacy between the East and West from 962 to 1204. Originally the thesis was to include a chapter on cultural exchanges between the two, but that gave way as the center of the thesis came to hinge on how the Fourth Crusade's diversion to Constantinople came to be possible. While this is not intended to be the primary focus of this study, the events of 1204 were constantly in mind during the research. Whether the Fourth Crusade was the result of a random convergence of events or the conclusion of one or more persons' long thought out scheme, the mounting hostility between East and West in the period appears from a modern perspective to lead directly to the conquest of Constantinople by Christian crusaders.

Beginning with Liudprand in 968, this study has traced a growing frustration among Latins in the face of continued Byzantine arrogance and perceived self-interest. As Western Europe erupted into a new aggressive posture toward the non-Christian world, exemplified best in the crusades, the Byzantines were expected to contribute to this singular effort. This factor, along with their failure to embrace the leadership of the pope in religious matters, created a resentful attitude clearly visible in diplomatic

encounters. It was this attitude in relations that made the conquest of Constantinople possible.

## 6.1 Problems

Several problems plagued this research. Although the personnel at the UTA library were consistently helpful, a lack of resources caused constant frustration. With no access to the *Patrologia Latina*, I was forced to utilize resources off campus. In addition to depending largely on interlibrary loan, I am grateful to have been given access to the library resources at the University of Dallas and Texas Christian University. Even by casting this wider net, however, many sources were difficult to identify. A variety of terminology caused numerous omissions. For example, Telemachos Lounghis's "Ambassadors, Embassies and Administrative Changes in the Eastern Roman Empire" never appeared on a search for "Byzantine diplomacy," even though the work appears entirely pertinent.

Even though this study included a thorough examination of marriage alliances for the period of 962 to 1204, there is no way to be certain that all examples of such marriages have been included. Unknown sources may remain that refer to marriage negotiations between East and West, and still more sources may have gone unexamined. Although the research for this study has isolated marriage as a tool of diplomacy, other methods, such as titles and gifts, warrant further research. In addition, relations between Byzantium and the West in this study have been dominated by German, Italian, and papal considerations, due largely to the greater number of sources from these areas. Few references have been made to English, French, or Spanish interactions with

Constantinople.<sup>444</sup> Other groups, such as the Hungarians or Slavs, were omitted from this study as they can more easily be categorized as northern neighbors of the Byzantines, even though they had substantial ties to the Latin West.

## 6.2 Final Remarks

This study has proven that persons and powers from the West that had been intimidated into compliance by the Byzantine diplomatic machine before 962 were emboldened by the Empire's apparent decline in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. The very attempt on the part of the Byzantines to regain their former initiative exacerbated problems in diplomatic encounters. To be sure, numerous encounters between Byzantines and Latins during the period of our focus did go amicably, leading neither to schism nor conflict, and reinforcing the Byzantine mentality of faith in the emperor as the elect of God. Such incidents, however, were overshadowed by a growing disdain among Western Europeans for their Byzantine neighbors – not only for their arrogant stance in diplomacy, but for their society, culture, and religion as well. Marriages into the Byzantine imperial family – once a method to pacify possible enemies – instead developed to give Latins a foot into the door of the Empire. The schism of 1054 was symptomatic of the many differences between Latin and Byzantine, and the crusades brought those differences into the light of day for all to see. The inability of the Byzantines to cope with shifting diplomatic challenges created a general animosity for the Greeks on the part of Western Europeans that festered and grew over time. This standpoint permeated all Latin dealings with Byzantium, even with western powers that had close kinship or commercial ties to the Empire, and made possible the once

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<sup>444</sup> For more on this subject, see Ciggaar, *Western Travellers to Constantinople*.

unthinkable act of Christian crusaders sacking Constantinople – the city that Liudprand had once regarded as the center of the Christian world in the Mediterranean.

APPENDIX A

MARRIAGES AND MARRIAGE NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN EAST AND WEST  
BEFORE 1204<sup>445</sup>

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<sup>445</sup> Question marks denote marriages and marriage negotiations for which a date could not be identified.

1. Negotiations 765, Leo IV and Gisela, daughter of Pippin III.
2. Negotiations 771, Constantine VI and Rotrud, daughter of Charlemagne.
3. Married after 788, Euanthia, granddaughter of St. Philaretus and Grimoald, duke of Benevento.
4. Negotiations 802, Irene and Charlemagne.
5. Negotiations 811/12, Theophylact, son of Michael I and a Frankish princess.
6. Negotiations 853, a daughter of Theophilus and Louis II of Italy.
7. Negotiations 869, Constantine, son of Basil I and Ermengard, daughter of Louis II of Italy.
8. Married c. 900, Anna, daughter of Leo VI and Louis III of Provence.
9. Negotiations 930, a son of Romanus I and a daughter of Marozia.
10. Married 943, Romanus II and Bertha-Eudocia, daughter of Hugh of Italy.
11. Negotiations 952, Romanus II and Hadwig, daughter of Henry I, duke of Bavaria.
12. Married 972, Theophano, niece of John Tzimiskes and Otto II.
13. Negotiations 988, Hugh Capet of France writes to Basil II asking for a Byzantine princess for his son Robert.
14. Negotiations 996, Zoe and Otto III.
15. Married 1006, Maria, possible sister of Romanus III Argyrus and John, son of Doge Peter II Orseolo.
16. Negotiations 1025, Henry III, son of Western Emperor Conrad II, asked for a *porphyrogenita*, was offered only a sister of Romanos III Argyros.
17. Married 1070s, Theodora, sister of Michael VII Ducas and Doge Domenico Silvio, sealed the *chrysobull* of 1082.
18. Negotiations 1074, Constantine, son of Michael VII Ducas and Olympias-Helen, the daughter of Robert Guiscard.
19. Negotiations ???, Alexius, nephew of Alexius I [his heir before the birth of John II] and a member of the family of Western Emperor Henry IV.
20. Married ???, Maria, daughter of John II, and John Roger, half-Norman made *caesar*.
21. Married 1146, Manuel I and Bertha-Irene of Sulzbach, sister-in-law of Conrad III.
22. Married 1148, Theodora, niece of Manuel I and Henry of Babenberg, cousin of Frederick I Barbarossa.
23. Married 1158, Theodora, niece of Manuel I, daughter of his brother Isaac, the *sebastokrator*, and Baldwin III of Jerusalem.
24. Married 1161, Manuel I and Maria-Xena of Antioch, daughter of Raymond of Poitiers.
25. Married 1167, Maria, grandniece of Manuel I, daughter of the *protosebastos* John Comnenus, and Amalric I of Jerusalem.
26. Negotiations ???, Maria Porphyrogenita, daughter of Manuel I, and Henry II of England.
27. Negotiations ???, Maria Porphyrogenita, daughter of Manuel I, and William II of Sicily, son of Barbarossa.
28. Married 1177, Theodora, niece of Manuel I, daughter of the *protosebastos* John Comnenus, and Bohemond III.

29. Married 1179, Eudocia, niece of Manuel I, daughter of his brother Isaac, the *sebastokrator*, and William VIII of Montpellier, originally intended for Alfonso II of Aragon.
30. Married 1180, Maria Porphyrogenita, daughter of Manuel I, and Renier-John of Montferrat.
31. Married ???, Alexius II and Agnes-Anna of France, daughter of Philip II.
32. Married 1187, Theodora, sister of Isaac II and Conrad of Montferrat.
33. Married 1192, Irene-Maria, daughter of Isaac II, and Roger III, co-ruler of Sicily, widowed 1193, captured by Henry VI and married to his brother and successor Philip of Swabia.



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