THE FORMATION AND EVOLUTION OF THE IMAGE OF THE TURKS IN BYZANTINE HISTORIOGRAPHY

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ABSTRACT

The Formation and Evolution of the Image of the Turks

in Byzantine Historiography

This study explores the representation of the Turks in middle and late Byzantine historiography. It features a corpus covering the 11th to the 15th centuries, comprising the works of Attaleiates, Skylitzes, Anna Komnene, Kinnamos, Niketas Khoniates, Akropolites, Pakhymeres, Gregoras, Kantakouzenos, Palamas, Doukas, Khalkokondyles, Kritoboulos, and Sphrantzes. The Turkic peoples were known to the Byzantines from Late Antiquity. However, in the 11th century, both at their eastern and northern frontiers, the Byzantines encountered a rapid expansion of the Turkic populations. This new encounter made the Turkic peoples an indispensable object within Byzantine historiography.

The representation of the Turkic peoples in Byzantine historiography bears both the remnants of the tradition of *mimesis*, in which the reuse of ancient ethnonyms, models, and, *topoi* was an indispensable condition for a respectable literary work, as well as vivid reflections based on the recent encounter of the Byzantines with the Turks. The image of the "barbarian" was already present in Antiquity, in various forms, employed for several foreign populations by the authors of the Greco-Roman world. In the representation of the "barbarians", different ethnonyms such as "Persian", "Skythian" or "Hun" referred to the varying cultural memory of the Byzantine authors. These authors left a rich corpus on the different Turkic states, their rulers, customs, warfare, and the different aspects of the lifestyle of the Turkic peoples. This dissertation investigates the formation and evolution of the representation of the Turkic peoples using this material.

ÖZET

Bizans Tarihyazımında Türk İmgesinin Oluşum ve Evrimi

Bu çalışma orta ve geç dönem Bizans tarihyazımında Türklerin temsilini incelemektedir. 11. ve 15. yüzyıllar arasında eser vermiş Attaleiates, Skylitzes, Anna Komnene, Kinnamos, Niketas Khoniates, Akropolites, Pakhymeres, Gregoras, Kantakouzenos, Palamas, Doukas, Khalkokondyles, Kritoboulos, and Sphrantzes bu çerçevede Türki halkların tarihsel temsili açısından çalışılmıştır. Bizanslılar Türki halklara Geç Antikite'den beri aşinaydılar. Ancak, 11. yüzyılda, hem kuzey hem doğudan Türki halkların hızlı bir genişleme hareketiyle karşılaştılar. Bu yeni karşılaşma, Bizans tarihyazımında Türki halkları olmazsa olmaz bir konu haline getirdi.

Bizans tarihyazımında Türki halkların temsili, hem eski etnonim, model ve toposların saygıdeğer bir edebi eser vermek için olmazsa olmaz olduğu mimesis geleneğini, hem de Bizanslıların Türki halklarla güncel karşılaşmalarına dair ilginç yansımaları içerir. "Barbar" imajı antik çağdan beri mevcuttur, çeşitli şekillerde Yunan-Roma dünyasının yazarları tarafından yabancı topluluklar için kullanılmıştır. "Barbarlar"ın temsilinde, "İskit", "Hun" ve "Pers" gibi değişik etnonimlerin kullanımı Bizanslı yazarların çeşitli kültürel hafıza katmanlarına işaret eder. Bizanslı yazarlar Türki devletler, bu devletlerin hükümdarları, adetleri, savaş yöntemleri ve hayat tarzlarının değişik yönleri üzerine zengin bir külliyat bırakmıştır. Bu tez sözkonusu materyali kullanarak Türki halklarının Bizans kaynaklarındaki temsilinin oluşum ve evrimini incelemektedir.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION 1

1.1 The presentation of the subject 1

1.2 A note on the terminology: Which Turks, which Turkic peoples? 5

1.3 The presentation of the sources 6

1.4 The current state of the scholarly literature regarding the subject 26

1.5 Methodology and key concepts 32

1.6 Ideological geography and frontiers 36

CHAPTER 2: THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND UP TO THE 11TH CENTURY 40

2.1 Early Arab expansion into Byzantine territory 40

2.2 The formation of a permanent frontier between the Byzantines and Arabs 44

2.3 The Byzantine offensive 52

2.4 The Byzantine confrontation with Turkic peoples 56

2.5 The appearance of Seljuk Turks in the Eastern frontier 61

CHAPTER 3: OLD MEMORIES, NEW BARBARIANS: TURKIC "BARBARIANS" IN BYZANTINE HISTORIOGRAPHICAL IMAGINATION 69

3.1 The many faces of the eternal barbarian 69

3.2 Classifying the barbarians 75

3.3 The Turks and Türkmen 79

3.4 The Huns: The uses of a late antique ethnonym 84

3.5 Persians between the Skythians and Saracens 91

3.6 Pagans or Muslims: Turks, religion, and religiosity 98

3.7 Mongols and Timurids in Byzantine sources 107

CHAPTER 4: BYZANTINE NARRATIVES ABOUT THE ORIGINS OF THE TURKS 117
4.1 The genre of *origo gentis*: An overview 117
4.2 *Origo gentis* narratives about the Seljuks 122
4.3 *Origo gentis* narratives about the Ottomans 130
4.4 Slaves as rulers: Aristotelian thought and the representation of Turkic rulers 139
4.5 Conclusion 147
CHAPTER 5: "BARBARIAN" POLITIES THROUGH BYZANTINE EYES 149
5.1 The place of barbarian polity in the Byzantine worldview 149
5.2 Archons and sultans: How the Byzantines saw the Turkic rulers? 152
5.3 The formation and early conquests of Anatolian *beylik*s in Byzantine sources 159
5.4 Family intrigues and usurpers: Byzantine commentators on succession and dynastic struggles in the Turkic states 164
CHAPTER 6: THE MECHANISMS OF CO-EXISTENCE: ANTAGONISM, ACCULTURATION, ASSIMILATION 173
6.1 A conceptual introduction 173
6.2 The entry of the Turks into Byzantine service: Pechenegs and Seljuks 174
6.3 Tzachas and Syrgiannes Palaiologos: Two case studies 192
6.4 Evangelization as a way of integration 199
6.5 The place of Turks in Byzantine society 212
6.6 The Turcopoles and Mixobarbarians: A look into the grey areas 214
6.7 An unsuccessful integration? 221
6.8 Conclusion 223

CHAPTER 7: TRICKSTERS, MONSTERS, AND INVISIBLE WOMEN 226
7.1 The tricksters at war: The Byzantine narratives about Turkic warfare..... 226
7.2 The representation of Turkic women in Byzantine literature 238
7.3 Intemperate and lustful: Turks and sexuality 248
7.4 Wild customs of the freaks: On the way of being dehumanized 261
7.5 Conclusion 264
CHAPTER 8: CONCLUSION 267
APPENDIX: LE RÉSUMÉ DE THÈSE 273
REFERENCES 325

NOTE ON TRANSLITERATION

The transliteration of Byzantine names is a challenging task and there is no universal standard. I used the standard transliteration of the Byzantine proper names, but the names of people in common use in English (such as John, Michael etc.) are left as they are. For Greek toponyms, I prefer the spellings with “k” instead “c”, for example, I opted to use Kilikia instead of Cilicia. The spelling from the *Encyclopedia of Islam* is used for Islamic names.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 The presentation of the subject

This dissertation examines the representation of the Turkic peoples in late Byzantine historiographic literature, roughly between the 11th and 15th centuries. It aims to explore various aspects of the formation and evolution of the image of the Turkic peoples in the Byzantine texts of the abovementioned period. It offers an analysis of the representation of Anatolian or Seljuk Turks that the Byzantines encountered from the mid-11th century; and also of the Turkic peoples dwelling in the Pontic steppes and Northern Balkans of the same period, namely the Pechenegs, Cumans, and Oghuz. This study is not limited only to Anatolian Turks because Byzantine authors were well aware of the ethnic ties between the Turkic populations in their eastern and northern borderlands. More importantly, the formation of the image of the Turks in Byzantine literature is closely related to the ethnographic digressions about the Turkic populations of the north that were written long before the arrival of the Seljuk Turks in the Armenian highlands. Thus, the comparison between the "Eastern" (i.e., Seljuk and Ottoman) and "Northern" Turks constitutes one of the important issues of this dissertation. How were these two groups first perceived and how did their image evolve in the eyes of the Byzantine authors? How were these populations defined and located in the Byzantine mind map of "us and barbarians"? What was the relationship between earlier ethnographic digressions about the Turkic or non-Turkic steppe peoples and post-11th century descriptions of the Turks? What were the differences between the representations of "Anatolian" Turks and "Northern" Turks and what role did religion play in this differentiation? How did Byzantine authors

perceive the origins, the state foundation and succession in the Turkic states, and how did they define their rulers? What were the mechanisms of assimilation and acculturation for the individual Turks in Byzantine society? Finally, how did Byzantine authors comment on various aspects of Turkic people, including their warfare, women, and sexuality? This dissertation seeks to answer these questions.

In the last two centuries of the time frame of this dissertation, the Mongols take the place of the Pechenegs and Cumans in the comparative analysis with the Anatolian Turks. Although the Mongols were neither a Turkic nor a Turkophone people, they shared many sociocultural traits with the Turkic populations of Central Asia. They preserved the ancient traits of the nomadic-pagan lifestyle of the steppes, they were not fully Islamized, and their position in the geopolitics of the Near East did not put them in an antagonistic position to the Byzantines. Their particular place in Byzantine historiography does merit attention and is a useful subject to compare with the Seljuk and Ottoman Turks.

In the present chapter, I offer an overview of my corpus and my methodology. I have limited my corpus to works of historiographical character, in other words, the histories and chronicles written by Byzantine authors from the works of Michael Attaleiates and John Skylitzes in the last quarter of the 11th century to the *Histories* of Laonikos Khalkokondyles that ends around the year 1467. The only work of non-historiographic character that has been included in my corpus is the *Diegesis* of Gregory Palamas, which narrates his days of captivity at the hands of the early Ottomans. This work is unique and illuminates so well both the early Ottomans and the Byzantine intellectual stance toward them that omitting it would have made this dissertation incomplete.

In Chapter 2, I give an account of the historical background, from the early Islamic conquests until the fall of Constantinople. This chapter also pays special attention to the frontier as the fluid space where the encounter with the "other" happens. It shows that the shock of the military encounter with the "barbarian other" was simultaneous with real-life coexistence.

In the third chapter, I analyze the notion of the barbarian as the "other" of the civilized self since the ancient Greeks and Romans. The ethnographic digressions about the Persians, Egyptians, and Skythians in the *Histories* of Herodotus created many *topoi* about the populations considered barbarian. These *topoi*, passing through the prism of the Christian worldview, formed the basic lines of the representation of the barbarian in Byzantine literature. This representation was not limited to the dichotomy of barbarian and civilized. Rather, it was composed of a complex system of ethnonyms which reflects a very large classification of barbarian populations according to their geographical location, lifestyle, and ethnic origin. Moreover, the elaborate Byzantine system of using archaic ethnonyms for contemporary populations makes it necessary to find the place of Turkic peoples on the socio-political map in the mind of Byzantine authors.

The next chapter focuses on the narratives about the origin of the Turks in the Byzantine texts. These narratives reflect an effort to locate these peoples in the familiar environment of Byzantine historiography, which itself was based on the material of ancient Greek historiography and ethnography. The association of Turkic peoples with the notion of slavery had a particular influence on the formation of the image of the Turks in Byzantine literature. The same chapter also includes a brief discussion of Aristotelian political thought and its place in the Byzantine worldview, which contributed to this association.

In Chapter 5, I examine three aspects of the Byzantine-Turkic interaction in the light of the literature: assimilation, acculturation, and antagonism. Many members of Turkic societies, both from the north and the east, entered Byzantine service in the 11th century. These individuals were generally fully assimilated into Byzantine society; however, this did not change their general perception as outsiders. On the other hand, their conversion to Christianity was the key factor in the process of their integration into Byzantine society. Many families of Turkic origin existed in Byzantine society; some were members of the aristocracy, who maintained their patronymics demonstrating their ethnic roots.

Chapter 6 deals with the place of the barbarian entities in the Byzantine worldview and then analyzes the Greek titulature used for Turkic rulers and the idea of hierarchy behind it. This is followed by an examination of the Turkic state foundation and its relationship with conquest, according to the Byzantine authors.

In Chapter 7, I focus on four particular aspects of the Turkic populations as presented in our corpus: Turkic warfare, Turkic women, the sexuality of Turkic peoples, and the cruelty attributed to them in the Byzantine texts. Finally, with a concluding chapter, I end my study.

In a chronological study of historiography, there exists the risk of representing the historiographic tradition as a linear and non-personal accumulation of the works. However, the authors who contributed to our corpus were members of the bureaucratic elite (such as Michael Attaleiates and Niketas Khoniates), members of the ruling dynasty (such as Anna Komnene) or members of religious-political movements (such as Gregory Palamas or Nikephoros Gregoras). Thus, their aim in their writing career was not merely writing for the sake of literature; their authorial

ambitions had obvious political goals. Accordingly, their works will be analyzed by underlining their personal aims and stances, political struggles and prejudices.

1.2 A note on the terminology: Which Turks, which Turkic peoples?

In this dissertation, the word Turkic is used as an umbrella term for all the contemporary and historical populations that speak Turkic languages. As it is well known, the Turkic languages are classified under two essential categories: Common Turkic and Oghur Turkic. The only extant representative of the Oghur Turkic languages is Chuvash, spoken in the Chuvash Republic in the Russian Federation, in the Volga region. All other living Turkic languages (Turkish, Azerbaijani, Kazakh, Turkmen, Kyrgyz, Uyghur, Uzbek, Yakut, etc.) are part of the Common Turkic group. Historically, the Old Bulghar language is considered an Oghur Turkic language. Pecheneg and Cuman, and most probably Khazar are considered Common Turkic languages. However, several historical Turkic populations of Western Eurasia could have been speakers of Oghuric Turkic, so the Oghur *sprachbund* may have been larger in the early Middle Ages.[1]

The word *Türk* appears as a term that designates the founding population of the Türk Khaganate, under the Ashina dynasty, centered in contemporary Mongolia, in the 6th century. This Khaganate was an important element of Eurasian politics until the 8th century, despite everlasting civil wars and Tang China's attempts of subjugation. The Türk Khaganate was not an ethnically homogeneous state and, just like similar political formations in the steppe region; included many Mongolian, Indo-European, and Uralic populations. The Soghdian language, which was once a very common language across the urban settlements in the Central Asian steppe

[1] Golden, *An Introduction to the History of the Turkic Peoples*, 17 and passim.

region and which belongs to the eastern branch of the Iranian language family, was used in the chancellery of the Türk Empire, along with the Old Turkic language.

The ethnonym Turk became widespread with the rise of the Türk Empire in the steppe region as a common term for all the nomadic populations. Particularly, Muslim geographers used this term persistently for such populations, sometimes even for peoples such as the Varangians and the Rus' who were non-Turkic. According to Peter B. Golden, this usage is similar to the usage of the ethnonym Skythian by the Byzantine writers as a generic category.[2]

I use the word Turkish only to refer to the Turkish-speaking population of the Sultanate of Rum and the later Ottoman Sultanate, as well as to the individual Turks of Anatolia and the Balkans. The Turkish-speaking dwellers of these regions had a certain process of acculturation and ethnogenesis that made them distinct from the other Turkic populations of the region. These Turks could be considered "Turks of Rum,"[3] using the geographical term which they themselves applied to the region of Anatolia.

1.3 The presentation of the sources

In this dissertation, I examine the Byzantine historiographical texts written between the late 11th and 15th centuries in order to understand the formation and evolution of the image of Turkic peoples in Byzantine literature. In this section, I shall present the details of the life and times of the authors because in my approach to my corpus, I follow Paolo Odorico's method and try to understand each author's aim and audience

[2] Golden, "Some Thoughts on the Origins of the Turks and the Shaping of the Turkic Peoples," 152.
[3] On this paradigm, see Kafadar, "A Rome of One's Own: Reflections on Cultural Geography and Identity in the Lands of Rum," 7-25; Necipoğlu & Bozdoğan, "Entangled Discourses: Scrutinizing Orientalist and Nationalist Legacies in the Architectural Historiography of the 'Lands of Rum'," 1-7.

to identify the goal of the author. As it has been argued by Odorico, Byzantine literature, including historiography, has an absolutely utilitarian character, for supporting an ideological position or for defending self-interest. Accordingly, the motivation of the author, the audience he is addressing, the purpose of the patron supporting the literary project are elements that are crucial for understanding and interpreting the text. Thus, Byzantine literature should be read as a manifestation of the personal and political conflicts of the empire. Furthermore, throughout this dissertation, special attention is given to the links between these texts because they cannot be studied as independent literary products; they are all part of the same cultural universe.[4]

Below, I offer a chronologically ordered list of the sources I used for my research. Each entry will discuss the context and personal aim of the authors of these sources and comment on their development of a particular aspect or "theme" in the Byzantine representation of the Turkic peoples. In my research, I only used historiographic works addressed to Constantinopolitan audiences. Hence, I omitted the works of Michael Panaretos, Leontios Makharias, and the anonymous chronicles of the Morea and Ioannina. The only exception is Gregory Palamas' narrative of captivity at the hands of Ottoman Turks. I used this non-historiographical text because of its particular character as the only autobiographical account of a Byzantine who encountered the Turks (under the most inappropriate circumstances). Other genres of Byzantine literature such as hagiographies, epistolography, poetry, or rhetorical works also present material useful for the study of history; however, works belonging to these genres are not part of my corpus. Also, the Byzantine

[4] Odorico, "Displaying la littérature Byzantine," 213-234, particularly 214-215. The articles in the book of the colloquium held in Paris in 2008 reflect the same approach: Odorico (ed.), *La face cachée de la littérature byzantine, le texte en tant que message immédiat*.

encyclopedic works are not included in my corpus, but I will refer to them in this thesis when they are relevant for explaining the "Byzantine notions" and the mind map of *homo byzantinus*.[5] In short, my corpus is limited to historiographic works of the middle and late Byzantine periods because history-writing, as a genre, presents a direct continuity with Classical Antiquity during which we see the beginnings of the representations of the images of various ethnic groups.

Before introducing the individual works in my corpus, it will be appropriate to briefly comment on the genres of historiography in Byzantium. Byzantine historiographic works are generally divided into two groups as histories and chronicles. This division is a product of 19th-century historiography. Chronicles are mostly works that have a "year by year" or "emperor by emperor" approach and they employ a simpler language and are often based on earlier works. They also often tend to begin with the Creation of the world. Histories are much more complex works that are characterized by a cause-and-effect approach rather than simple chronology, and they often use embellished language. They also deal with specific time frames. However, since the Byzantine audience did not have a conception of such categories, I chose not to apply such a division of genres to my corpus.[6]

1.3.1 *Historia* by Michael Attaleiates

This work covers the period between the years 1034 and 1080. The author is a bureaucrat from the city of Attaleia (Antalya) who seems to be a rather erudite

[5] This conceptualization has been proposed by Alexander Kazhdan and Giles Constable, in their 1982 book *People and Power in Byzantium: An Introduction to Modern Byzantine Studies.* In this groundbreaking study, which deals with various aspects of the Byzantine individuals' lives and the Byzantine mentality, the authors conceptualize *homo byzantinus* as a concrete personality inside his material and spiritual environment, busy with his daily occupations. See, particularly, the introduction that deals with earlier historiography and chapters 1 and 5. Kazhdan & Constable, *People and Power in Byzantium: An Introduction to Modern Byzantine Studies*, 1-36 and 96-116.
[6] Odorico, "What's in a Name? The Byzantine Chroniclers," 85-86 .

person who studied law in the mid-11th century in Constantinople. He then became a judge and became a part of the political elite of the empire. He was a member of the faction that supported the young Anatolian aristocrat Romanos IV Diogenes to rise to the throne. When the latter became emperor, Michael had the position of judge of the army (κριτὴς τοῦ στρατοπέδου). He was very active during the reign of Romanos IV. He participated in his campaigns, including the Battle of Manzikert (1071). His chapters dealing with the campaigns and other military matters are lively and worthy of attention. After the fall of Romanos IV and the eruption of civil war, Attaleiates aligned himself with Nikephoros III Botaneiates, to whom he dedicated his history. The work ends with a laudatory description of the domestic policies of Nikephoros III, who lost the throne the following year. The author died around the year 1085.

Unlike his near-contemporary Skylitzes, Attaleiates is not an invisible author. He has a powerful personal voice and integrates some autobiographical material into his *History*. This fact is particularly visible in his chapters dealing with the campaigns of Romanos IV. As already mentioned, he also does not hide his political sympathies for certain figures, most importantly for Nikephoros III. Furthermore, Attaleiates' earlier chapters coincide with the narrative of Skylitzes on the same period, which permits a comparative reading of the two texts.

Apart from his *History*, Attaleiates authored two other works: the *Ponema Nomikon*, a treatise on law, and the *Diataxis*, the foundation document of his monastery in Constantinople and poorhouse in Raidestos (Tekirdağ). The latter text also contains some autobiographical details of the author.

Attaleiates' *History* has survived only in two manuscripts (Coislianus gr. 136 and Scorialensis T.III. 9.) The text was put together in both manuscripts with the

Synopsis Historion of Skylitzes. The text commonly called "the Continuation of Skylitzes" reproduces several passages of Attaleiates.[7]

1.3.2 *Synopsis Historion* by John Skylitzes

John Skylitzes' *Synopsis Historion* was written at the end of the 11th century and it covers the events from 811 to 1057. This work is essentially a compilation and re-writing of earlier historical sources. The author seems to be in the shadows and does not manifest a personal tone in his text. He uses and sometimes mentions some of the sources that he used, such as the work of Joseph Genesios, Theophanes Continuatus, George Synkellos and the *Vita Basilii.* His narrative of the events is simple, not always chronologically accurate, and divided into chapters according to the reigns of the emperors. It still reflects some personal views, especially in the case of his moral comments about the deeds of the emperors or other statesmen; such are the generally positive narratives of the emperors of the Macedonian dynasty. He is very favorable of the reign of Basil II and sees the beginning of the Byzantine decline in the reign of Constantine IX Monomachos.[8]

His digressions about the Seljuks and Pechenegs are worthy of attention. They seem to be based on now lost material. The digression dealing with Seljuks is reproduced almost word by word by Nikephoros Bryennios.[9] However, Skylitzes

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[7] Editions: Attaleiates' text was first published as part of the Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae (CSHB), the so-called "Bonn Corpus." Recently Inmaculada Perez Martin prepared a new critical edition with Spanish translation: *Miguel Ataliates: Historia*, Madrid, 2002. The most recent edition of the text is the bilingual edition of Dumbarton Oaks Medieval Library: Attaleiates-Kaldellis-Krallis, *The History*. I will use this most recent bilingual edition. Secondary literature: Krallis, *Serving Byzantium's Emperors: The Courtly Life and Career of Michael Attaleiates.*

[8] Skylitzes-Wortley, *A Synopsis of Byzantine History*, xxviii.

[9] A notable exception is that Bryennios does not identify the Seljuk Turks with the Huns. For a commentary on the representation of Byzantium's enemies in the work of Bryennios, see Neville, *Heroes and Romans in Twelfth-Century Byzantium: The Material for History of Nikephoros Bryennios,* 82.

does not have a particular interest in ethnography and these digressions reflect political features or scenes of war, yet not the ethnographical details. Skylitzes' *Synopsis Historion* was reproduced frequently in later centuries. Hans Thurn, who prepared the first modern edition of the work, used nine manuscripts of the text written between the 12th and 14th centuries. Moreover, George Kedrenos' *Chronographia* includes the entire text of Skylitzes. The manuscript commonly known as "Madrid Skylitzes" (Codex Matrit. Bibl. Nat. Vitr. 26. 2.) has a particular importance as it contains very important illustrations. Finally, the *Synopsis Historion* can be considered as a work representing the historical knowledge of the average Byzantine literati. Skylitzes' work is used as a standard reference for mid-Byzantine history until the 15th century.[10]

1.3.3 *Alexiad* by Anna Komnene

Anna Komnene's *Alexiad* can be considered one of the most personal historiographic works of entire Byzantine literature. It is also the first history written by a woman in European literature, so this unique feature makes it very important for the point of view of gender relationships in the literature. Anna was the daughter of emperor Alexios I Komnenos (r. 1081-1118) and her history primarily narrates the life and deeds of her late father, and it has a distinct laudatory tone. She depicts her father as a heroic and religious emperor. It covers the period 1081-1118, coinciding exactly with the tumultuous reign of Alexios I. However, the chapters dealing with Alexios' early reign are much more detailed than the later ones.

[10] Skylitzes-Thurn, *Ioannis Scylitzae Synopsis Historiarum* is the critical edition of the work by Hans Thurn. English translation: Skylitzes-Wortley, *A Synopsis of Byzantine History*. Secondary literature: Neville, *Guide to Byzantine History Writing*, 155-160.

Anna's husband, Nikephoros Bryennios (known as Nikephoros Bryennios the younger), also wrote a historiographical work called *Hyle Historias*, which is an incomplete and arguably less important work than the *Alexiad*. Anna also used this book and integrated many of its materials into her own history. Being a Byzantine princess, Anna had access to imperial archives, and she used them for her history.

The reign of Alexios I does not have multiple sources like other periods, and the *Alexiad*, despite its panegyrical tone, gives us many insights into this very tumultuous period. Anna's access to the imperial archives makes possible the preservation of many minor persons or events of the reign of Alexios I. For my study, Anna Komnene's work is of utmost importance because it gives an account of the early history of the presence of Seljuk Turks in Asia Minor and the activities of Turkic warlords in the chaotic situation of the peninsula. Many Turkic warlords of this period could only be known today because they were referred to in the *Alexiad*.

Anna was an intellectual woman of her period and her writing style reflects both an elegant style and her erudition. However, her chronology is sometimes ambiguous, and she constantly omits events which were not important for the career of Alexios I. Her text is an almost unique work for a crucial period in the history of the Byzantine Empire.[11]

1.3.4 *Epitome* by John Kinnamos

John Kinnamos' work is of the utmost importance in understanding the Komnenian period. Little is known about his historical personality. Charles M. Brand defines him

[11] Editions: *Alexiad* was first published in the CSHB series. Its most recent critical edition has been prepared by Dieter Reinsch and Athanasios Kambylis, as part of the CFHB collection: Komnene-Reinsch-Kambylis. *Annae Comnenae Alexias*. *Alexiad*'s standard English translation is the revised edition of the translation of E. R. A. Sewter. Komnene-Sewter-Frankopan, *The Alexiad*. Secondary literature: Gouma-Peterson (ed.), *Anna Komnene and Her Times*; Neville, *Anna Komnene: The Life and Work of a Medieval Historian.*

as an "ordinary Byzantine bureaucrat," and although his knowledge in the area of the classics and religion was unquestionable, he has the simple and straightforward approach of a bureaucrat.[12] He was a member of the entourage of the emperor Manuel I Komnenos (r. 1143-1180). He was present at some of the emperor's campaigns including the Battle of Myriokephalon. His work covers the period from the beginning of the reign of John II Komnenos (r. 1118-1143) and ends unexpectedly in 1176, before the battle of Myriokephalon. Although his account of the reign of Manuel I was mostly based on his eyewitness observations, his account of the rule of John I is taken from oral sources. It is basically a political and military history of the late Komnenian Empire. The author's interest in the diplomacy and politics of the period deserves attention. Being a supporter of Manuel Komnenos, the author gives very rich details about the ethnic composition of the Byzantine army and ruling classes. The latter parts of the *Epitome* cover the periods narrated in the work of Khoniates. This fact gives us a chance to take a comparative look at what these two authors wrote about the same events. A remarkable aspect of Kinnamos' history is his anti-Latin approach.[13]

1.3.5 *Chronike Diegesis* by Niketas Khoniates

Niketas Khoniates' *Chronike Diegesis* covers the period between the years 1118 and 1207. However, his later chapters are much more detailed than the earlier chapters. Khoniates was a man of the province from the town of Khonai (Honaz) in Western Asia Minor. Harry J. Magoulias, who translated the *Annals* of Khoniates, speculates

[12] Kinnamos-Brand, *Deeds of John and Manuel Komnenos*, 2.
[13] Editions: It was first published in the CSHB series in a single volume together with the history of Nikephoros Bryennios: *Ioannis Cinnami Epitome rerum ab Ioanne et Alexio (sic) Comnenis gestarum*. This volume was edited by August Meineke (Bonn, 1836). Charles M. Brand translated the work into English: Kinnamos-Brand, *Deeds of John and Manuel Komnenos.* Secondary literature: Neville, *Guide to Byzantine Historical Writing*, 186-190.

that he most likely came from the provincial lesser nobility. Michael Khoniates, the brother of Niketas, served as the archbishop of Athens during 1182-1204. Niketas had a bureaucratic career, even reaching the post of *logothetēs tōn sekretōn*. As demonstrated in his work, he was a member of the imperial court in the late 12th and early 13th century. He lost his office and his ostentatious palace during the Crusader occupation of Constantinople in 1204 and fled first to Selymbria, then to Nicaea. However, in his later years, he could not obtain a bureaucratic position in the empire in exile.

As a writer, he is considered a master of Byzantine prose. His work is rich in details and descriptions. His comments about the events of his time are also worthy of attention. His history is particularly anti-Latin or anti-Western, which is not surprising for a Byzantine intellectual who experienced the trauma of the Latin occupation of Constantinople of 1204. Apart from his historical writings, he wrote about religion: he was the author of *Panoplia Dogmatike*, a polemical text against heresies.[14]

1.3.6 *Chronike Syngraphe* by George Akropolites

George Akropolites (1217-1282) was the author of a historical work that deals with the history of the Empire of Nicaea. The author belongs to a Constantinopolitan family that served in the Byzantine upper bureaucracy since the late 12th century. After the fall of Constantinople into the hands of Crusaders, the author's family took refuge in the domain of the Laskaris-Vatatzes family in western Anatolia. His father was logothete Constantine Akropolites. The author had a good education; he studied

[14] Edition: Khoniates-Van Dieten, *Nicetae Choniatae Historia*; English translation: Khoniates-Magoulias, *O City of Byzantium: The Annals of Niketas Khoniates*. Secondary literature: Neville, *Guide to Byzantine Historical Writing*, 219-225.

philosophy with Nikephoros Blemmydes, the illustrious philosopher of the 13th century. Similar to his father, the author was appointed *megas logothetes* of the Empire of Nicea. After the conquest of Constantinople by Michael VIII Palaiologos (r. 1259-1282) in 1261, the author was appointed as teacher at the University of Constantinople. He also served in Byzantine diplomatic missions during which his most important function was to be part of the delegation sent to the Council of Lyon in 1274. He died in 1282.

He wrote a brief historical work called *Chronike Syngraphe.* This work gives us rich details about Byzantine-Seljuk relations in the first half of the 13th century. It could be considered a relatively balanced work, which is usually based on personal observations. His main goal is presenting the Empire of Nicaea as the legitimate successor of the Byzantine Empire. His work is very illuminating for the Seljuk-Nicene relationships in the mid-13th century, which is a period where there was no other historiographical work written in Greek. Moreover, *Chronike Syngraphe* is a unique work that represents the perspective of the Empire of Nicaea.[15]

1.3.7 *Syngraphikai Historiai* by George Pakhymeres

The great intellectual and cleric George Pakhymeres (1242-1310) was the author of a history of the early Palaiologan period. His history, covering the period between the years 1261 and 1307, is called *Syngraphikai Historiai.* As a man of rich cultural and intellectual erudition, George Pakhymeres was not only a historian, but he also wrote treatises on philosophy and theology. He was born in Nicaea, but his family origins were Constantinopolitan. He was a member of the clergy and attained high positions

[15] Akropolites-Bekker, *Georgi Acropolitae Annales*; English translation: Akropolites-Macrides, *History.* Secondary literature: Neville, *Guide to Byzantine Historical Writing*, 226-231

in the Patriarchate. He held many important clerical functions, such as *protekdikos* and *dikaiophylax*. The author, who wrote his work after the death of Michael VIII Palaiologos, has a somewhat critical approach to the emperor.

As an author, Pakhymeres uses a rich and archaizing prose. His voluminous historiographical work is especially important for early Ottoman history because it is the first source in which ʿOthmān I, the founder of the dynasty, is attested by name. He also gives other interesting details of the early 14th-century Turkish expansion in Western Asia Minor. He is also an important source for Byzantine-Mongol relations and the Seljuk sultan Kaykāʾūs II's (r. 1246-1262) life in Constantinopolitan exile.[16]

1.3.8 *Rhomaike Historia* by Nikephoros Gregoras

Nikephoros Gregoras was a famous theologian and writer of the 14th century. He was born in Herakleia Pontika, where he was educated by his uncle who was the metropolitan of that district. Then he went to Constantinople and entered the ranks of high clerics. He had a turbulent political life; first, he was a member of the entourage of patriarch John XIII Glykis; then he was known as a partisan of Andronikos II and then John VI Kantakouzenos. Apart from his religious duties, he was also engaged in diplomatic activities. After 1347, he fell out of favour because of his anti-Palamist positions, and from 1351 until his death in 1360 he lived under house arrest. Apart from his historical work, he was the author of many other important works, including treatises on astronomy and calendar reform proposals, various religious and philosophical works, and hagiographies.

[16] Pachymeres-Failler-Laurent, *Relations historiques*, 5 vols. Secondary literature: Neville, *Guide to Byzantine Historical Writing*, 237-242.

His account of contemporary history, known as *Rhomaike Historia* (Roman History), is a vast historical study comparable to the work of Pakhymeres. In this monumental work, Gregoras covers the period 1204-1359 and gives special attention to religious matters. His interest in the early Ottoman expansion is also noteworthy.[17]

1.3.9 The works of Gregory Palamas

Gregory Palamas (1296-1357) was not a historiographer but a churchman who generally wrote about religious issues. He was associated with hesychasm (ἡσυχασμός), a mystical tradition in Orthodox Christianity that gives special importance to constant contemplation and inner prayers. Although the practices associated with hesychasm already existed before his time, Gregory Palamas' teachings made it into a doctrinal synthesis as Palamism. Gregory Palamas had family origins in Asia Minor; his father was a senator and died in about 1303, leaving his son as an orphan boy in the imperial court. Palamas received great support from the emperor Andronikos II Palaiologos (r. 1282-1328) and had a very good education. He turned to monastic life at a relatively young age and lived on Mount Athos. Starting in 1341, Palamism gained the support of John VI Kantakouzenos, who was the leader of a faction in the Byzantine civil war of 1341-1347.

He wrote intensely on religious and philosophical themes. In 1354, he was captured by Turkish pirates and remained for nearly one year in captivity, in Lampsakos (Lapseki), Pegae (Biga), Brusa (Bursa) and Nicaea (İznik), among which, the last two cities are important urban centers of the early Ottoman state.

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[17] Gregoras-Schopen-Bekker, *Nicephori Gregorae Byzantini Historia*; Gregoras-Van Dieten, *Rhomäische Geschichte.* Secondary literature: Neville, *Guide to Byzantine Historical Writing*, 243-248.

There he engaged in theological discussions with the Muslim clergy and an enigmatic group of men called the *Xionai* (Χιόναι), who appear to have been members of a Judaizing religious movement, recently converted to Islam. In his captivity, he also met Prince Ismail, the grandson of Orkhan (r. 1324-1362), the second ruler of the Ottomans. His account gives some insight into the mentality of both the Byzantines and Turks of the 14th century.

Anna Philippides-Braat prepared an edition of the correspondence and narrative of the theological discussions concerning the captivity of Palamas, with a textual and historical commentary. Palamas' narrative of captivity gives us a lively account of the early Ottoman socio-cultural milieu from the point of view of a Byzantine intellectual. Because of this unique feature, I have added this text to my corpus even though it is not historiographic in nature.[18]

1.3.10 *Historiai* by John Kantakouzenos

As an emperor and scholar, John Kantakouzenos (c. 1295-1383) was one of the most predominant personalities of 14th-century Byzantium. He came from an aristocratic family whose members attained administrative positions in the 12th century. He appears to be a close collaborator of Andronikos III Palaiologos, who rebelled against his grandfather Andronikos II Palaiologos, and was appointed *megas domestikos* by the emperor. He continued to hold this office until Andronikos II's death in 1341. After the death of the emperor, he became the regent to the emperor's son John V (r.1341-1376 and 1379-1390), and this fact triggered a civil war (1341-

[18] Philippides-Braat, "La captivité de Palamas chez les Turcs: dossier et commentaire,"109-221. There is also a recent English translation of these texts: Russell, *Gregory Palamas: The Hesychast Controversy and the Debate with Islam*. For a biography of Palamas, see Meyendorff, *A Study of Gregory Palamas.*

1347) between the faction of John Kantakouzenos and the faction of empress Anna of Savoy and *megas doux* Alexios Apokaukos. In this war, the faction of John Kantakouzenos was allied with the adherents of the hesychasm movement. At the end of the war, John Kantakouzenos was proclaimed co-emperor as John VI. He reigned until 1354 and then renounced the throne and became a monk. In his monastical life, he wrote his History, which could be considered his Memoirs.

His work is made up of four books and demonstrates the influence of Thucydides. This work is particularly important for the representation of the Turks because of his personal initiative in the relationship with the Turks, including the first marriage alliance between the Byzantines and Ottomans: his daughter Theodora Kantakouzene married the Ottoman ruler Orkhan in 1346.[19]

1.3.11 *Historia Turco-Byzantina* by Doukas

Doukas is a historian of the transition period. This transition does not only mean the transition from the Byzantine Empire to the Ottomans but also the formation of the Ottoman domination in Muslim Anatolia. His text covers the period from the mid-14th century up to 1466. Doukas, whose first name is unknown, was probably related to the house of Doukai, who played an important role in Byzantine history during the 11th century. However, when the author was born, his family had already left the Byzantine capital and migrated to the city of Ephesus, which was under the domination of Aydinids in that period. The author's grandfather, Michael Doukas, was a member of the entourage of İsa, the Aydinid ruler of Ionia. The author spent

[19] Kantakouzenos-Schopen, *Ioannis Cantacuzeni eximperatoris Historiarum*; Kantakouzenos-Fatouros-Krischer, *Johannes Kantakuzenos: Geschichte*. Secondary literature: Neville, *Guide to Byzantine Historical Writing*, 266-272; Kaldellis, *A New Herodotos*; Nicol, *The Reluctant Emperor: A Biography of John Kantakouzenos, Byzantine Emperor and Monk c. 1295-1383.*

the majority of his life outside of the Byzantine capital. In his youth, he appears to have lived in New Phokaia as the secretary of the Genoese podestà Giovanni Adorno of this tiny city. Then, he went into the service of the Gattilusio dynasty, the rulers of Lesbos. He undertook some diplomatic missions on behalf of the Genoese rulers of Lesbos and personally visited various former Byzantine cities which were now part of the Ottoman Empire.

As demonstrated in his career, he was a dedicated supporter of the Genoese. Hence, he could even be considered the most "pro-western"[20] author in our corpus. His takes reflect a very strong agony for the loss of the former heartland of the Byzantine world to the Ottomans.

His history roughly covers the same period as the *Historiai* of Laonikos Khalkokondyles; however, their focus is very different, and Doukas' work lacks the digressions about early Ottoman history in the text of Khalkokondyles. However, Doukas' text particularly merits attention for his non-Constantinople-centric view of events and his rich details about western Asia Minor, such as his narratives about the rebellion of Börklüce Muṣṭafā and the downfall of Junaid Beg, the last independent ruler of the Aydin Emirate.[21]

1.3.12 *Apodeixis Historion* by Laonikos Khalkokondyles

Laonikos Khalkokondyles (c. 1430 – c. 1490), who presents himself as "Laonikos the Athenian" in his *Apodeixis Historion* (Demonstration of Histories), was the author of one of the most important works on the history of the 15th-century Ottoman

[20] For a study dealing with late Byzantine political attitudes toward the Ottomans and Westerners, see Necipoğlu, *Byzantium Between the Ottomans and the Latins: Politics and Society in the Late Empire.*
[21] Doukas-Grecu, *Historia Turcobyzantina*; English translation: Doukas-Magoulias, *Decline and Fall of Byzantium to the Ottoman Turks*. Secondary literature: Neville, *Guide to Byzantine Historical Writing*, 298-301; Grecu, "Pour une meilleure connaissance de l'historien Doukas," 128-141.

state. His literary first name Laonikos was probably an amalgam of his personal name Nikolaos. Like Doukas, his near-contemporary, he was born in an ex-Byzantine territory ruled by the Latins, in the Duchy of Athens under the Acciaiuoli family. His family was part of the political élite of this tiny state; however, his father was forced to leave Athens to the Despotate of Morea because of his unsuccessful political intrigues. The author grew up in the fragmented and vanishing world of these last Christian strongholds in the southern Balkans.

Khalkokondyles, reflecting the zeitgeist of the 15th century, was more interested in ancient Greek civilization rather than the contemporary Byzantine Orthodox tradition. He was a member of the entourage of Gemistos Plethon, the neo-Platonist Byzantine philosopher who sought a revival of Hellenic culture.

He clearly follows the narrative model of Herodotus. His history deals with the rise of the Ottomans as Herodotus' narrative of the rise of the Persians. Although it was centered on the narrative of the rise of the Ottomans, Khalkokondyles seems to be interested also in the rest of the world, and his narrative includes geographical digressions about Western and Eastern Europe and the Arab world. His account gives the impression that he had some relationship with the Ottoman ruling classes of the 1460s, very likely for the most part with those of a Greek *devşirme* origin. According to Anthony Kaldellis, who translated and edited his work and wrote a monograph about the *Histories*, Khalkokondyles' intended audience was probably Constantinopolitan Greeks after the city's fall. This view was recently challenged by Aslıhan Akışık-Karakullukçu. According to her, the author's intended audience was made up of western literati who were educated in classical Greek.[22]

[22] For the discussion about Khalkokondyles' audience see Kaldellis, *A New Herodotos*, 199; Akışık-Karakullukçu, "A Question of Audience: Laonikos Chalkokondyles' Hellenism," 1-30.

His later life is a matter of discussion: he may have migrated to Italy like his relative, the Renaissance humanist Demetrios Khalkokondyles, but it seems that there is no solid evidence about such a fact.

In brief, Khalkokondyles gives us a balanced narrative of the rise of the Ottomans without a particularly biased regard.[23]

1.3.13 *Historia* by Kritoboulos of Imbros

Michael Kritoboulos was a scholar and statesman from the island of Imbros. Similar to Laonikos Khalkokondyles, he adopted the pen name Kritoboulos by changing his original surname Kritopoulos. He seems to be erudite in classical culture and served as the governor of Imbros under the reign of Mehmed II. These qualities make the author one of the exceptional figures of the Byzantine-Ottoman transition period.

His work survived in only one manuscript, the Topkapı Manuscript, which seems to be his autograph text. Another copy of the text, published in Germany in the 19th century, is now lost.

The particular feature of the work of Kritoboulos is its political position. His history starts with a dedication addressed to the Ottoman ruler Mehmed II. The text could be considered the most pro-Turkish of all the works in the corpus. This fact is closely related to the political alignment of the author. This pro-Turkish attitude does not reflect only Kritoboulos' approach, but also a good portion of the Byzantine elite in the 15th century, such as Gennadios Scholarios, George Amiroutzes, and, many others. The collaboration with the Ottomans was a survival strategy for an important faction of Byzantine statesmen and clergy. *Historia* covers a relatively short period

[23] Khalkokondyles-Kaldellis, *Histories*. Secondary literature: Neville, *Guide to Byzantine Historical Writing*, 312-318; Kaldellis, *A New Herodotos.*

of time, it narrates the events of the years 1451-1467, hence its narrative centers on the reign of Mehmed II. The author also mentions his will to write another work on the Ottoman past, a dynastic history that covers the totality of Ottoman history in *Historia*, but it seems that this project was not undertaken.

Kritoboulos was very faithful to ancient literary models and wrote his work in an Atticizing language. His numerous comparisons between ancient history and the rise of Ottomans, as well as associations between Alexander the Great and Mehmed II are worthy of attention. In brief, Kritoboulos offers his solution to the ideological crisis in Greek society after the fall of Byzantium by presenting the Ottomans as the legitimate successors of the Roman Empire.[24]

1.3.14 *Chronicon Minus* by George Sphrantzes

George Sphrantzes was a Byzantine statesman and author who wrote a work that could be considered both the autobiographical text of a Byzantine diplomat and an annalistic chronicle about the Byzantine-Ottoman transition in the 15th century. Sphrantzes was closely related to the Palaiologan court, he served as a diplomat for the Palaiologan rulers on various occasions. He was a member of the entourage of Constantine XI, the last emperor of Byzantium. He was also an eyewitness of the conquest of Constantinople by the Turks, where he was taken prisoner along with his family. After his captivity, he mostly lived in Greece, in Mistra and Corfu. He spent his last years as a monk and died toward the end of the 1470s.

[24] Kritovoulos-Reinsch, *Critobuli Imbriotae Historiae*. English translation: Kritovoulos-Riggs, *History of Mehmed the Conqueror*. There is a recent Turkish edition that includes the facsimile of the manuscript with a Turkish translation: Kritovoulos-Çokona, *Kritovulos Tarihi*. Secondary literature: Neville, *Guide to Byzantine Historical Writing*, 308-311.

Despite his work lacking ethnographical material, Sphrantzes presents some valuable material about the 15th -century Turco-Byzantine coexistence, mostly based on personal anecdotes. Despite the suffering of his family in the hands of Ottomans, his account has generally a milder style. His narrative is important for the history of Byzantine diplomacy, particularly for the relations with the Turks. His *Chronicon* is also noteworthy because of the use of the Greek language; the author uses a language closer to colloquial Greek. This fact represents also a departure from the older literary models.

The work of Sphrantzes, known as *Chronicon Minus*, survived in three manuscripts. All three manuscripts are held in Italian libraries. A more comprehensive text that repeats the content of *Chronicon Minus* is the *Chronicon Maius*, which once was attributed to Sphrantzes. However, now it is well understood that *Chronicon Maius* was written by Makarios Melissenos, the metropolitan of Monemvasia.[25]

In concluding this sub-chapter on my sources, I present Table 1 below, in which the authors whose works I examined are categorized according to their social backgrounds, geographic origins, and political positions. Although such a categorization is far from expressing the complexity of the characters of these authors, methodologically it helps us understand and interpret them better.

[25] Sphrantzes-Maisano, *Georgii Sphrantzae Chronicon*. English translation: Sphrantzes-Philippides, *The Fall of the Byzantine Empire. A Chronicle by George Sphrantzes, 1401-1477*. Secondary literature: Neville, *Guide to Byzantine Historical Writing*, 302-307.

Table 1. The Authors

Author	*Profession*	*Region of Origin*	*Political stance*
Attaleiates	High-level bureaucrat	Attaleia	Pro Nikephoros III
Skylitzes	High-level bureaucrat	Thracesion Theme	Pro-Macedonian dynasty
Komnene	Imperial princess	Constantinople (Paphlagonia?)	Pro Alexios I
Kinnamos	Mid-level bureaucrat	?	Pro-Komnenian (generally), anti-western
Khoniates	High-level bureaucrat	Khonai (Phyrgia)	Critical of late Komnenian emperors, anti-western
Akropolites	High-level bureaucrat	Constantinople	Pro-unionist
Pakhymeres	Cleric, theologian	Constantinople	Anti- Michael VIII
Gregoras	Cleric, theologian	Herakleia Pontika	Pro-unionist
Kantakouzenos	Soldier, emperor	Constantinople	Anti-unionist
Palamas	Cleric, theologian	Constantinople	Anti-unionist
Doukas	Mid-level bureaucrat	Ephesus	Pro-Unionist, pro-western
Khalkokondyles	Mid-level bureaucrat	Athens	Slightly pro-Ottoman
Kritoboulos	Mid-level bureaucrat	Imbros	Pro-Ottoman
Sphrantzes	Diplomat	Constantinople	Anti-unionist, anti-Ottoman

As seen in Table 1, the majority of the authors in my corpus belong to the upper segments of Byzantine society; they were either high-ranking officials or men of the church. There is only one woman (Anna Komnene) among them. Two of them (Anna Komnene, Kantakouzenos) are directly linked with the imperial throne, and a third (Doukas) possibly has descent from an imperial dynasty. None of the authors had a non-Greek ethnic origin. Three of them were born and raised in the frontier region (Khoniates, Gregoras, Doukas) and this experience was slightly reflected in their works.

1.4 The current state of the scholarly literature regarding the subject

There exists a rich and growing literature about the history of the Late Middle Ages in Anatolia. From a broader perspective, in recent years there have been flourishing discussions about individual and group identities, as well as the contemporary waves of migrations to developed countries from the less developed parts of the world, and there are questions concerning the integration of the foreign and immigrant populations to where they moved. Studies focusing on identity have recently become widespread in academia, and this concept bears a strong influence on the Anglo-Saxon approach to the social sciences. These discussions naturally influence and shape the social sciences; mostly political science and sociology, yet also history. In short, the debates about identities make both the communities formed around these identities and the "others" excluded by them very current topics in social sciences.

A review of the scholarly literature on the subject of this dissertation must begin with Gyula Moravcsik's monumental two-volume work about the Byzantine sources dealing with the history of Turkic peoples (and the Hungarians and Mongols), which is still of utmost importance for any researcher interested in the

topic. Despite advances in the fields of Byzantine Studies and Turcology, no book has yet been written to replace this precious work, which was first published in 1942.[26] The author's meticulous attention to marking every reference to a Turkic group or individual of Turkic origin is very helpful for any study concerning the people of Turkic origin in Byzantium. However, because of its date of publication, it does not contain any edition or research published in the last seventy years. Its bibliography is, therefore, very old and must be supplemented with contemporary works.

Among major works that deal with the Byzantine-Turkish encounter in Anatolia, there are two comprehensive studies that stand out, namely *The Decline of the Medieval Hellenism in Asia Mino*r by Speros Vryonis, published in 1971, and *La Turquie pré-ottomane* by Claude Cahen, published in 1988, but based on an earlier English edition without footnotes dated 1968.[27] As their titles indicate, the former book is centered on the declining Byzantine world and the latter on the formation of Turkish polities in Anatolia. These two works must, therefore, be used together to have a comparative picture of the Byzantine-Turkish political and social dynamics in late medieval Anatolia. Michel Balivet is another scholar who has made significant contributions to this field. In contrast to the generalist approach of Cahen and Vryonis, Balivet treated many specific issues regarding the interactions between the Byzantine and Turkish domains in his numerous articles.[28] In a short article published in 1993, Nicolas Oikonomides examined the Turkish image in Byzantine

[26] Moravcsik, *Byzantinoturcica I: Die byzantinischen Quellen der Geschichte der Türkvölker*; Moravcsik, *Byzantinoturcica II: Sprachreste der Türkvölker in den byzantinischen Quellen.*
[27] Vryonis Jr, *The Decline of Medieval Hellenism in Asia Minor and the Process of Islamization from the Eleventh Through the Fifteenth Century*; Cahen, *La Turquie pré-ottomane*; Cahen, *Pre-Ottoman Turkey*.
[28] For two volumes containing his collected articles, see Balivet, *Byzantins et Ottomans: Relations, interaction, succession* and Balivet, *Mélanges byzantins, seldjoukides et ottomans.*

orations recited in the presence of the emperor by 12th-century writers. More recently, in an article that appeared in 2011, Angeliki Papageorgiou also discussed several aspects of the representation of the Turks in the mid-12th century. These two short articles complete each other.[29]

A particular work, which I envision myself to be in dialogue with, is the seminal study of Rustam Shukurov: *The Byzantine Turks, 1204-1461*.[30] In this work of monumental character, which was published in 2016, Shukurov touches on several questions that are explored in this dissertation. These include, first, the issue of the categorization and classification of barbarians – the *genoi* and *ethnoi* – and, secondly, the question of the presence of the Turks in the Byzantine Empire, or with more accurate terminology, in the Byzantine spaces. The first chapter of Shukurov's book is dedicated to the Byzantine classification of the Turks. In the second chapter, the author presents his database of oriental names in the Byzantine cultural space that belonged to people of presumably Turkic origin. Then, in the following chapters, Shukurov meticulously investigates the demographic, social, and cultural implications of the Turkic presence within the Byzantine borders. The sixth chapter of his book is particularly important for this dissertation as it discusses the tools of assimilation for integrating the people of Turkic origin into Byzantine society. Shukurov introduced with this work several novelties to the field of Byzantine studies. Firstly, he is the first scholar who dedicated a monograph to the question of the presence of Turks in Byzantium. Apart from a few articles, these individuals were mostly overlooked by modern historiography. A second contribution is

[29] Oikonomides, "The Turks in the Byzantine Rhetoric of the Twelfth Century," 149-155 and Georgiou, "οί δέ λύκοι ώς Πέρσάι: The Image of the "Turks" in the Reign of John II Komnenos (1118-1143)," 149-161.
[30] Shukurov, *The Byzantine Turks, 1204-1461.*

Shukurov's use of antroponymics as a tool to research his subject. The use of *praktika*, chrysobulls, and various religious or private documents has made possible a new perspective on the prosopography of the Turkic people in Byzantium. *The Byzantine Turks, 1204-1461* and the present dissertation touch sometimes on the same questions regarding both the Byzantine classification of the Turkic people and their assimilation into Byzantine society, but the methodologies and aims of these two works are totally different. Whereas Shukurov enquires about the situation of the Turkic people in the Byzantine space as a subject of social history, the approach of this dissertation is the discussion of the representation of the Turkic people in Byzantine historiography.

The works of Anthony Kaldellis, on the other hand, should be cited as examples of a new approach to Byzantine ethnographic literature.[31] His methodology is based on discourse analysis and the re-contextualization of texts according to the circumstances in which they were written and their intended audience(s). This approach has been a major source of inspiration for the development of my dissertation's methodology. Also, the unpublished Ph.D. thesis of Roman Shliakhtin, *From Huns into Persians: The Projected Identity of the Turks in the Byzantine Rhetoric of Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries* (2016),[32] has recently put a new light on the question of the identity of the Seljuk "other" in the early part of the period with which my dissertation deals. Shliakhtin's work, like this dissertation, utilizes the theoretical framework offered by François Hartog. Shliakhtin includes, besides historiographical narratives, poetry as well as rhetorical works in his corpus and

[31] Kaldellis, *Le discours ethnographique à Byzance: Continuité et rupture*; Kaldellis, *Romanland: Ethnicity and Empire in Byzantium.*
[32] Shliakhtin, *From Huns into Persians: The Projected Identity of the Turks in the Byzantine Rhetoric of Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries*.

presents a detailed and persuading analysis. Nevertheless, two shortcomings of his work are its focus on a relatively short time frame and its lack of a comparative perspective with the representations of other Turkic populations in the Byzantine sources. This dissertation has some common themes with Shliakhtin's work, such as the lack of Turkish women's visibility in Byzantine literature. On this point, however, the conclusions of the two dissertations are different.

Andrew Peacock, Alexander Beihammer, and Dimitri Korobreinikov represent a new generation of researchers focusing on late medieval Anatolia. Peacock's two books on the Great Seljuks are essential for understanding the early Seljuk state and its policy toward the West. His examination of the autonomous role of Türkmen groups in the Turkish conquest of Anatolia also illuminates a period for which the sources are very scarce.[33] Beihammer's recent book on the formation of Turco-Muslim Anatolia between the second half of the 11th and first quarter of the 12th century completes the studies of Peacock and gives us a new, more accurate chronology of the early period of the Seljuk Sultanate of Rum and other Turkish polities of Anatolia.[34] Two earlier articles by Beihammer on the role of Komnenian propaganda on ideological changes in the representation of the Turks in Byzantine literature and on defection and apostasy between the Byzantines and Seljuks have considerably improved our understanding of the nature of the relationship between these two societies.[35] Dimitri Korobreinikov's book on 13th-century Byzantine-

[33] Peacock, *Early Seljuk History: A New Interpretation*; Peacock, *The Great Seljuk Empire*; Peacock, "From the Balkhān-Kūhīyān to the Nāwakīya: Nomadic Politics and the Foundations of Seljūq Rule in Anatolia," 55-80.
[34] Beihammer, *Byzantium and the Emergence of Muslim-Turkish Anatolia, ca. 1040-1130*.
[35] Beihammer, "Defection across the Border of Islam and Christianity: Apostasy and Cross-Cultural Interaction in Byzantine-Seljuk Relations," 597-651 and Beihammer, "Orthodoxy and Religious Antagonism in Byzantine Perceptions of the Seljuk Turks (Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries)," 15-36.

Seljuk relations also enabled us to understand better the actual situation of the frontier region between these two powers.[36]

Gill Page's study about the evolution of the self-image of the Byzantine people is a work of utmost importance for the socio-cultural history of the period.[37] Buket Kitapçı Bayrı's work on the representation of warriors, martyrs, and dervishes in the narratives of the Byzantine-Turkish frontier merits particular attention for its original approach and meticulous treatment of the subject.[38] The papers from the Fourth International Sevgi Gönül Byzantine Studies Symposium, edited by Koray Durak and Ivana Jevtić, focus on the notions of identity and the "other" in Byzantium.[39] The volume also includes a very useful introduction by the editors, with references to earlier works on the subject.

Finally, there are several individual studies to cite on particular topics: two articles dealing with the nomadic peoples by Elisabeth Malamut,[40] three articles about the Byzantine ethnic terms employed for the Turks – two of them by Alexios Savvides[41] and one by Koray Durak[42] – and an article dealing with the 12th-century Byzantine representation of Seljuk Turks by Aleksandar Jovanović.[43] Furthermore, some recent studies have appeared in Turkish that treat subjects covered by this

[36] Korobeinikov, *Byzantium and the Turks in the Thirteenth Century*.
[37] Page, *Being Byzantine: Greek Identity Before the Ottomans.*
[38] Kitapçı Bayrı, *Warriors, Martyrs, and Dervishes. Moving Frontiers, Shifting Identities in the Land of Rome (13th-15th Centuries).*
[39] Durak & Jevtić (eds.), *Identity and the Other in Byzantium: Papers from the Fourth International Sevgi Gönül Byzantine Studies Symposium.*
[40] Malamut, "L'image byzantine des Petchénègues," 105-114; Malamut, "Les peuples étrangers dans l'idéologie impériale. Scythes et Occidentaux," 119-132.
[41] Savvides, "Some Notes on the Terms Agarenoi, İsmailitai and Sarakenoi in Byzantine Sources," 89-96 and Savvides, "Byzantines and the Oghuz (Ghuzz). Some Observations on the Nomenclature," 147-155.
[42] Durak, "Defining the Turk: Mechanisms of Establishing Contemporary Meaning in the Archaizing Language of the Byzantines," 65-78.
[43] Jovanović, "Imagining the Communities of Others: The Case of the Seljuk Turks," 239-273.

dissertation, including a book by Adem Tülüce[44] and an article by Hasan Çolak.[45] However, it is difficult to say that these studies in Turkish have made a new contribution to the subject.

In concluding this review of the secondary literature, I would like to add that my dissertation is a study of literary representation and follows the path of the above-mentioned works in the field of Byzantine studies. But there are also aspects of my research that differ greatly from the studies I have mentioned. Firstly, my study aims to interpret the representation of the Turkic peoples in a broader time frame: from the 11th to the 15th century. Thus, it explores the evolution of the Byzantine representation of Turkic peoples in the *longue durée*. Apart from the work of Shukurov, all the abovementioned studies focus primarily on the Anatolian Turks, yet I also examine the Byzantine representation of the non-Anatolian Turkic peoples who have so far occupied a marginal place in Byzantine studies. Finally, my aim has been to explore the representation of the different Turkic populations in a comparative manner in order to understand the evolution of the image of these populations, in other words, their differentiation from each other in the course of the centuries in the context of a greater Turkic world.

1.5 Methodology and key concepts

The modern historiography of the Byzantine Empire took shape under two strong influences: the classical philological tradition dealing with Greek literature and the positivist historiography of the 19th century. This background made the field called "Byzantine studies" or "Byzantinistik" somewhat conservative and very faithful to

[44] Tülüce, *Bizans Tarih Yazımında Öteki - Selçuklu Kimliği*.
[45] Çolak, "Bizans Tarih Yazıcılığında Dönüşüm: Laonikos Chalkokondyles'te Bizanslı ve Osmanlı İmajı (1299-1402)," 333-352.

empiricist and positivist models.[46] However, my goal in this study is to put forward a more interdisciplinary approach. As already mentioned, this dissertation focuses on the formation and evolution of the image of Turkic peoples in Byzantine historiography, so I basically offer an anthropological reading of the abovementioned sources. Despite the fact that these sources were written as the narration of historical events, and therefore have a historiographical character, they must also be considered literary texts. Moreover, in Byzantine literature, the differences between the genres are fluid. Thus, as I already noted, there are even important differences among texts of the same genre: Anna Komnene's *Alexiad* and John VI Kantakouzenos' *History* are essentially memoirs. John Skylitzes' *Synopsis of History* is a compilation of various historical works, while Gregoras' *History* has an annalistic character.

In my opinion, the essential idea of structuralism can help us in our context. There is a binary antagonism between Byzantine and Persian, sedentary and nomad, and Christian and non-Christian in our texts. In the case of Byzantine literature, these categories are mutually exclusive. François Hartog, who studied the representation of the other in the *Histories* of Herodotus, particularly focusing on the representation of the Skythians, created a new approach to the study of ancient literature. He questioned the objectivity and truthfulness in Herodotus' representation of the Skythians and defined his study as a study of "Herodotus' Skythians." Thus, according to him, "we may read the text (Herodotus' *Histories*) with the assumption that this or that Skythian practice may be interpreted concerning its correspondent in the Greek world. When Herodotus speaks of sacrifice among the Skythians, he sets up an implicit opposition with Greek sacrifice[...]"[47] However, my inspiration from

[46] For a general discussion of methodology in the field of Byzantine studies, see Haldon, "'Jargon' vs. 'the Facts'? Byzantine History-Writing and Contemporary Debates," 95-132, particularly 109-122.
[47] Hartog, *Le miroire d'Hérodote*, 28.

Hartog's work is only partial in the context of this dissertation. Hartog was dealing with only one author, Herodotus, but I am dealing with a range of authors whose works spanned four centuries. Moreover, the relationship between the practices attributed to barbarians and Byzantine realities is only one dimension in this dissertation. However, I think that this binary opposition is a general *leitmotiv* in the works of these Byzantine authors. Thus, Hartog's approach, which has its roots in structuralism, especially in the anthropology of Claude Lévi-Strauss, is a useful instrument for my study. Furthermore, the linguistic approach of Ferdinand de Saussure has also inspired me.[48]

Encounter and alterity are two of the key notions of this dissertation: Encounter means the first act of confrontation between two populations, in this case, the Byzantines and Turkic peoples. However, this encounter is not the first encounter and the image of the Turkic peoples was not drawn on a *tabula rasa*. The Byzantines had recourse to the centuries-old *logos* of the Skythians and Persians. Thus, the Byzantine description of the Turkic other does not always represent the actual encounter, but it is mostly a consequence of the constant evolution of an image. Nevertheless, there are still very lively depictions of the actual Turks, located in the literary tradition in the *longue durée*. To understand it, one must take a look into the author's life and question whether he experienced a real encounter with the individuals belonging to Turkic populations or whether his text was based on another written or oral historiographical material. Secondly, even an actual encounter with the Turkic other does not necessarily suggest that the descriptions are accurate. It is

[48] Structuralist methods have been used in the field of Byzantine studies since the 1970s. An important scholar who introduced this methodology to the field was Évelyne Patlagean. See her works, particularly Patlagean, *Pauvreté économique et pauvreté sociale à Byzance*, and Patlagean, *Un Moyen Âge grec: Byzance, IXe - XVe siècle*, particularly 83-162.

well known that in Byzantine literature even the events eyewitnessed by the authors were narrated by utilizing ancient texts as models, such as in the case of the narration of the black death by John Kantakouzenos.

On the other hand, the notion of alterity (otherness) represents the essential differentiation between the self and the other. Saussure explained the notions of difference and opposition in language as a situation which has a negative character in itself. According to him, if *a* is different from *b*, this essentially means that an *a* is not a *b*, regardless of the degree of non-coincidence; but as soon as a relationship exists elsewhere between a and b, they are now part of the same system, and their difference becomes the opposition.[49] In our case the foreign peoples, regardless of their ethnicity, were alien to Byzantine society. Hence, they are others (ἄλλοι).[50] The Turkic peoples, who were perceived as the steppe nomads at first, were of course foreigners, but only a subgroup of foreigners. This subgroup had the features that not only distinguished them from the Byzantines but also from other non-Byzantines. Moreover, the Byzantines already had an idea of a steppe nomad because of their familiarity with ancient and late antique literature, and they could easily substitute the old *logos* of the Skythians with the recently appeared Turkic populations. So the formation of the Turkish image in Byzantine literature was shaped by the accumulation of various strata of cultural memories.

Finally, what I have to explain is the progressive formation of the image of Turkic peoples during the four centuries from the 11th to the 15th century. There is a continuing process of formation resulting from the representation of such an image. I underline the notion of representation which I consider also very crucial because, as I

[49] His essential work is Saussure, *Cours de linguistique générale*.
[50] Malamut, "Les peuple étrangers dans l'idéologie impériale," 120.

already explained, the difference between "what actually happened" and fiction was particularly fluid and ambiguous in Byzantine literature. Thus, in every text dealing with the Turkic peoples, one must understand the context and the writer's aim.

1.6 Ideological geography and frontiers

The Byzantines considered their empire and the world around it through an ideological lens. Their empire was the center of the *oikoumene*, the civilized world, if not constituting the civilized world itself. The frontiers were the key space to understand this mentality because they constituted the lines that separated the world of Romans and Barbarians. After the invasions of Muslim Arabs in the 7th century, the Byzantine boundaries were limited to the Northern Balkans, Crimea, Eastern Anatolia, and Taurus mountains. These territories were essentially frontier regions. In this dissertation, the aim is to deal with two frontiers where the Byzantines encountered the Turkic peoples: the eastern and northern frontiers. The eastern border is where the Byzantines confronted the eastern enemies; the Persians, Arabs, and ultimately Turks. However, they confronted mostly the "Skythian" peoples in the northern frontier. In other words, Turkic peoples have a special position in Byzantine history; they are the only ethnolinguistic group to have been neighbors in two different regions on both ends of the empire at the same time as the Byzantines. However, there was an essential difference between these frontiers: in the east, the border has an ideological meaning, firstly, between the Romans and their archenemy, the Persians, and then between the Christian Romans/Byzantines and Muslim Arabs.

Both of the borders underwent changes through the centuries. In the north, the river Danube (Istros) constitutes the essential frontier between the Byzantine and steppe worlds. This river was surpassed frequently by the nomadic populations that

ravaged the Balkan provinces of Byzantium, such as Avars, Bulgars, and Pechenegs. However, the river maintained its symbolic and ideological function as a frontier. Until the Late Middle Ages, it was also a frontier between Christianity and paganism. However, just like any other border during the Middle Ages, these borders were often oversimplifying. The entire frontier areas should be seen as a continuous space between these two parts of the world.

Just like the ideological meaning of the eastern frontier, the Danubian frontier had a "lesser" ideological meaning, particularly under the Macedonian dynasty. In parallel with the military expansion in that period, the Byzantine rhetoricians, such as John Geometres, pointed out the ideological significance of the empire's natural borders and underlined the importance of the "mighty Ister."[51] Furthermore, it seems that the southern shores of the Crimean Peninsula, which constituted another border between the Byzantine Empire and peoples of the steppe, had still less ideological importance.

On the other hand, the eastern border, according to Hélène Ahrweiler, "has always separated constituted worlds, carrying different messages, each aspiring to impose its will on the other one, while the other frontiers of the empire have been erected facing the barbarians, facing the *gentes* that have access to political forms and become aware of their personality by and against Byzantine action."[52] Thus, the empire was confronted with an entity of equal ideological weight on the eastern front. The meaning and evolution of this ideological weight will be discussed in the later chapters of this dissertation. However, the northern frontier was not totally devoid of an ideological meaning, but this meaning was far simpler: it was a frontier

[51] Stephenson, *Byzantium's Balkan Frontier: A Political Study of the Northern Balkans*, 82.
[52] Ahrweiler, "La frontière et les frontières de Byzance en Orient," 225.

between the civilized Roman *oikoumene* and the barbarian world of the Eurasian steppes. Attaleiates' complaint about the Danubian region's becoming a hub of *mixobarbaroi* was not groundless; this space became an area of interaction between the Byzantines and the so-called "barbaric" populations who were mostly of Turkic origin.

This difference is coherent with the main arguments of my dissertation. The "Skythian" and "Persian" alterities were two different types of alterity, and the Byzantine authors gave them different levels of ideological meaning. Thus, my argument is that the antagonism between the Byzantines and Skythians, which forms a secondary antagonism, is built mostly on a difference between the notions of civilization and barbarity, sedentary life and nomadism. On the other hand, the Byzantine-Persian antagonism is the reflection of a much more fundamental issue: It was the continuity of an experience that made up a very strong influence on the Greek intellectuals and then all the Western world, namely the Persian Wars (499 BC- 449 BC). As it was explained by François Hartog, "*Le Barbare, c'est avant tout, plus que tous et pour longtemps le Perse*."[53] The image of the Turk in Byzantine literature is constructed antagonistically from nearly the beginning, as the Turks are ultimately treated as enemies on the battlefield. However, the nature and degree of this antagonism will enable us to understand the position of the Turks in Byzantine historiography. Moreover, it should never be forgotten that this differentiation in the antagonism could also be connected with the political-cultural evolution of the Turkic polities. If the Islamic element overtook the aspects attributed to "Skythians" in the ideology of these polities in the historical process, and, for example, if an approach of religiously motivated war based on an anti-Christian antagonism gained

[53] Hartog, *Altérité, diversité, différence*, 2.

prominence, this would lead to a change in the Byzantine perception of the Turks. This dissertation leaves out of the focus the century-long debates about the role of Islam on the Turks' expansion against the Byzantines, namely Paul Wittek's "ghaza thesis" and its opponents, but the question of the role of Islam in changing the Turkish image in Byzantine historiography will be discussed in different contexts.[54]

[54] For the "ghaza thesis" see Wittek, *The Rise of The Ottoman Empire*. For a discussion of the historiographical trends about the early Ottomans see Kafadar, *Between Two Worlds: The Construction of the Ottoman State*, 29-59.

CHAPTER 2

THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND UP TO THE 11TH CENTURY

2.1 Early Arab expansion into Byzantine territory

In this chapter, I will give a historical background to better understand the context of this study, in which the representation of the alterity and the formation of the Turkish image will be discussed. This chapter is not written as a linear history of the Byzantine Empire but rather as a history of the Byzantine frontiers from the 7th to the 11th century. The reason I put the concept of the border in the center is because I see it as a place of encounter with the other. Thus, I wanted to include the history of the border regions, the place where empirical knowledge of Turkic peoples is produced, which I see as an element that feeds the literary *topoi*, into the context of the thesis.

The eastern frontier of the Byzantine Empire was the space of the military confrontation between Orthodox Byzantines and Muslim Arabs from the mid-7th century to the mid-11th century, a roughly 400 years period before the arrival of Seljuks to this region. The Byzantine-Arab confrontation succeeded a long history of opposition and antagonism between the Greeks and Romans and the Persians under the Achaemenid, Parthian and Sassanid dynasties. Since the times of Herodotus, the archetype of the Persian was the embodiment of the eastern barbarian for the Greeks.

Sassanid Iran was dramatically weakened after the long war against the Byzantines (602-628) and it was destroyed by the unexpected Arab invasion after the birth of Islam. In the middle of the 7th century, nearly all Persia was annexed by the Muslim invaders, excluding several areas in the northern and eastern edges of the Sassanid Empire that continued to resist them still for a while.

The penetration of Arab armies into Byzantine soil started in 634 with the capture of the city of Bostra in the southern margins of the Syrian Desert. In half a century, all Syria, Palestine, Egypt and North Africa fell into the hands of the Arabs.[55] These territories were Arabized and Islamized in the course of centuries and lost the cultural basis of their former allegiance to the Roman/Byzantine Empire.

As early as the last quarter of the 7th century, the Muslim raids started to affect Anatolia. Arabic traditions regarding the earliest memories concerning the Arabo-Byzantine wars and the takeover of the cities of Rum are collected in al-Balādhurī's compilation "*Futuh al-Buldan*"(The conquests of the realms).[56]

In the early 8th century, there appeared the first signs of the formation of a permanent frontier between the Arabs and Byzantines. This frontier passed roughly through the Taurus Mountains. This range of mountains was the natural border between Anatolia and Northern Syria since Antiquity, and it could be protected easily by the fortifications and border guards.[57]

The Umayyads, the first dynasty of the Muslim Caliphate, were centered in Syria and according to H. A. R. Gibb, the great historian of medieval Muslim civilisation, represented "in several respects […] a succession-state to the East Roman Empire, notwithstanding the ideological oppositions involved in the sphere of religion."[58] He further argues,

> The Umayyad Caliphate however in its attitude to the Empire, was much more than a provincial succession-state. The two facets of its policy, the military assault and the administrative adaptation, point clearly to the real ambition of the first-century Caliphs, which was nothing less than to establish

[55] Standard modern study about the early Muslim conquests and its impact on the Byzantine Empire is Kaegi, *Byzantium and the Early Islamic Conquests.*
[56] Al-Baladhuri, *The origins of the Islamic state: being a translation from the Arabic, accompanied with annotations, geographic and historic notes of the Kitâb futûḥ al-buldân of al-Imâm Abu-l 'Abbâs, Aḥmad ibn-Jâbir al-Balâdhur.*
[57] Lilie, "The Byzantine-Arab Borderland from the 7th to the 9th Century," 14.
[58] Gibb, "Arab-Byzantine Relations under the Umayyad Caliphate," 232. For a comprehensive work about various features of the Umayyad Caliphate see Marsham (ed.), *The Umayyad World*.

> their own imperial dynasty in Constantinople. Seen in this light, their administrative imitations and adaptations take on a different character; they are not merely the tribute paid by raw and parvenu princes to the achievements of their predecessors, but an almost deliberate effort to learn the ropes and fit themselves to assume the imperial destiny.[59]

Gibb also argues that the unsuccessful siege of Constantinople in 718 led the Arabs to a new cultural and ideological stand to adopt more and more the Persian traditions. Starting with the caliph Hishām (r. 724-743), the Caliphate designed itself as a successor to the Sassanid Empire.

In that very period, the Byzantine Empire was faced with the Iconoclast crisis; the first wave of Iconoclasm lasted from 726 to 787. Despite the climate of unrest in the Empire, the emperors of the Isaurian dynasty managed to organize a remarkable resistance on Anatolian soil against the invaders. To discuss the theological dimensions of Iconoclasm is far beyond the limits of this dissertation, but it is useful to remember Ahrweiler's remarks on the political evolution of the Byzantine Empire under the iconoclast emperors. According to her, this period is important for the phenomenon of the militarization of Byzantine society, which could be traced back to the earlier origins of important Byzantine aristocratic families as the military leaders of this period. Secondly, it was an epoch of the formation of some kind of Byzantine nationalism, different from the imperial universalism and expansionist ambitions of earlier emperors; it was embodied in forming the Byzantine army as a people's army. The soldiers from modest origins were fighting not for the ancient ideals now, but for their country and their faith. Moreover, this new national sentiment was clearly identified with Christianity and the will to defend the homeland against the unbeliever enemies.[60]

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[59] Gibb, "Arab-Byzantine Relations under the Umayyad Caliphate," 232.
[60] Ahrweiler, *L'idéologie politique de l'Empire byzantine*, 30-35.

In 750, the Umayyad dynasty was destroyed by a large coalition of dissidents including the Shi'ite factions led by the charismatic Khorasanian warrior Abū Muslim and, as the result, a new caliphal dynasty emerged: the Abbasids. The Abbasid Caliphs continued the tendency of later Umayyad Caliphs to bring the center of the Caliphate from the Levant to Mesopotamia and they adopted Persian imperial customs. The early Abbasid period is marked also with a renewal of *jihad* against the Byzantine territories. Almost every year there were Abbasid raids through the Byzantine territory; these attacks devastated the urban network and agrarian production. At the end of the 8th century, Empress Irene was obliged to sign a peace treaty with the Abbasid Caliph Hārūn al-Rashīd that forced the Byzantine Empire to pay a considerable amount of money two times a year.[61]

The caliphs Hārūn al-Rashīd (r. 786-809) and his sons and successors, al-Maʾmūn (r.813-833) and al-Muʿtaṣim (r.833-842), personally led their armies into the Byzantine territories of Anatolia. Particularly the 830s was a decade of continuous war between the Arabs and Byzantines, in eastern and central Anatolia. In this decade Anatolia saw many dramatic events which were further remembered in the religious traditions, such as the "Forty-two Martyrs of Amorion," which was the execution of 42 people belonging to the religious/military élite of the empire who were executed after the orders of Caliph al-Muʿtaṣim.[62]

The mid-9th century could be considered the decisive end of Arab predominance in the Byzantine-Muslim conflict.[63] In the two subsequent centuries, the Byzantines were on the attack and the Arabs on the defence. In the most difficult

[61] Vasiliev, "Byzantium and Islam," 311.
[62] For this event see Kolia-Dermitzaki, "The Execution of the Forty-Two Martyrs of Amorion: Proposing an Interpretation," 141-162.
[63] Traditionally, the destruction of the invading army of the amir ʿAmr of Melitene in 864 is considered the turning point of Byzantine- Arab wars. See Shepard, "Constantine VII, Caucasian Openings and the Road to Aleppo," 19.

periods of the Arab invasion, the Byzantines managed to save their core lands in Asia Minor, but they lost their other Mediterranean provinces to different Arab emirates: Cyprus was already fallen in 650, but later became an Arabic-Byzantine condominium, Crete fell in 824 (to be reconquered by Nikephoros Phokas in 961), and the cities of Sicily started to fall in 831.

These campaigns left a vivid ideological impact both on Byzantine and Muslim sides. The persons, places, and events identified with the early Arabo-Byzantine wars continued to live both in the literature and peoples' collective memory. Therefore, this early period (c. mid-7th- c. mid-9th century) could be considered as the formative period of both the ethos and antagonism of the Byzantine-Muslim border.

2.2 The formation of a permanent frontier between the Byzantines and Arabs

The Umayyads organized their northern border regions with the Byzantines under two distinct administrative units: *awasim* and *thugur*. The term *awasim* is the plural of the word *al-asima*, which means the protectress. This region of "the protectresses" covered Northern Syria, plus Antioch and Kilikia. Its military center was Kinnasrin. *Awasim* continued to exist as a region of internal frontier alongside the *thugur* that constitutes the outer or real frontier where the Byzantines and Muslims confronted each other periodically.[64]

Thughur's meaning in Arabic is "gap, breach, opening". Although *awasim* was a merely administrative term, *thugur* was a more ideological term and it was used for all the frontier zones between *dar al-Islam* and *dar al-harb*; several *thagrs*[65]

[64] Canard, "al-ʿAwāṣim," 761.
[65] It is the singular form of *thugur*.

are mentioned against the Oghuz, Georgians, Alans, Nubians, and Franks (in Spain) around the Muslim world. While the *awasim* covers the cities of Northern Syria, *thugur* lies from the Taurus Mountains (on the westernmost edge, river Lamos constituted a natural border between the caliphal and imperial territories) up to the Northern Mesopotamia. The Arab geographers like al-Istakhri and Ibn Hawkal count Tarsus, Sis, Adana, Germanikeia (Maraş), Samosata, Melitene (Malatya), and Kamacha (Kemah) among the important cities of the *thugur* region.[66]

The Byzantine key concept of the border was the notion of *kleisourarchia*. The word κλεισούρα means "defile," and these *kleisoura*s were small, fortified boundary districts that existed since at least the 6th century. As the name suggests, these fortifications are founded mostly on the mountain passes on the invasion routes. Perhaps strategically most important of them was the *kleisoura* at the Kilikian Gates.[67] However, there were other *kleisoura*s, such as Seleukeia, Sebasteia, and Koloneia in the eastern borders. Many of these districts evolved into little themes (μικρὰ θέματα) in the mid-10th century. This was the umbrella term for small, Armenian populated themes in the east.[68]

There is a paradoxical position of religion and religiosity in the border regions where both of the imperial states designed themselves as the defenders of their faiths, Orthodox Christianity and Islam, respectively. Thus, the border was also a *grosso modo* religious border, and religion had central importance. Sometimes

[66] Bosworth and Latham, "al-Thughūr," 446-447.
[67] Honigmann, *Bizans İmparatorluğunun Doğu Sınırı*, 40-41; Haldon and Kennedy, "The Arab-Byzantine Frontier in the Eighth and Ninth Centuries: Military Organisation and Society in the Borderlands," 83-87. Furthermore, the Kilikian frontier was not only a military region but also an important route for commercial and diplomatic purposes, as demonstrated by Durak, "Traffic across the Cilician Frontier: Movement of People between Byzantium and the Islamic Near East in the Early Middle Ages," 141-154.
[68] Ahrweiler, "La frontière et les frontières de Byzance en Orient," 217-218.

there were religious persecutions, but there also existed a mixed and culturally heterogeneous society that is echoed in the literary sources.[69]

The borderlands were ethnically and religiously heterogeneous regions. Although the Muslim cities in the borderlands appear as Arab garrison cities, the social and demographic realities of these cities are further complicated. An Arab garrison city was not an Arab colony but rather a surprising anagram of different elements, such as a high population of slave-soldiers and the volunteers, known as *muttatawwi*s,[70] who immigrated to *thugur* from the far-away provinces of the Caliphate to involve in jihad against the Byzantines. A striking element of the *thugur* cities were the *ribat*s. The *ribat*s were the guesthouses where the volunteers from different countries could live during brief periods, and there could be involved in the ascetic-mystical ways of the religious warriors. Thus, the cities of the *thugur* were not only military but also religious centers. There is also evidence about the circulation and settlement of religious scholars and preachers in the region, thus it could be speculated that these men were coming to *thugur* to preach a more militant form of Islam that stressed the importance of jihad against the unbelievers. However, at the same time, the existence and the activity of unorthodox sects of Islam echoed the complaints of the religious scholars.[71] Thus, the frontier cities were not free from socio-religious tensions of the core parts of the respective countries.

The formation of the permanent frontier region also created the main pillars of an ideological geography, many cities that bear a particular symbolism in the eyes

[69] Lilie, "The Byzantine-Arab Borderland from the 7th to the 9th Century," 20.
[70] According to Deborah Tor, in the mid-8th century, large-scale Muslim expeditions into Byzantine territory were ceased. The *jihad* was privatized, so smaller-scale raids by independent volunteer groups became frequent events in the border regions. Tor, "Privatized Jihad and Public Order in the Pre-Seljuq Period: The Role of Mutatawwi'a," 558.
[71] Brown, "Christians, Muslims and Heretics: Religion and the Arab Byzantine Frontier c. 750-934," 95.

of Arabs or Byzantines. These cities identified with the saints, religious figures, legendary warriors or rulers created the spatial representation of the frontier ethos.

Tarsus was perhaps the most famous of the frontier cities. As the city of St. Paul, it had a very particular religious significance in the eyes of the Christians. Tarsus fell into the Muslim sphere of influence in the 7th century and then experienced a tumultuous history of raids, takeovers, and lootings. In the early Abbasid period, it was an important military center, in which a significant number of Khurasani troops were stationed. With its *ribat*s and volunteers, it represented the microcosmos of the *thugur*. When he died during a campaign in Kappadokia, Caliph al-Maʾmūn's body was also buried in this city. The city decisively passed to the Byzantines during the Kilikian campaign of Nikephoros Phokas in 965.[72]

Melitene was another city identified with the memories of the Byzantine-Muslim wars. As already stated, it was the center of a tiny Muslim emirate involved in extensive raid campaigns against Byzantine Kappadokia. It was conquered by John Kourkuas in 934. In the subsequent centuries, this city became the center of a hero cult around the legendary figure of Seyyid Battal Gazi. The Arabs and Turks wrote chivalric romances about this figure: *Sirat Delhemma* and *Battalname*, respectively. The fictional personality of Seyyid Battal Gazi is based on the memory of ʿAbdullāh al-Baṭṭāl, a general (bearing the title "al-Antaki," "the Antiochian," so a man from the *awasim* region) serving the dynasty of Umayyads who was killed in battle in 740 at Akroinon.[73] This obscure historical figure's deeds are enriched with many details of 9th-century Byzantine-Arab wars involving the Emirate of Melitene.

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[72] Eger, *The Spaces Between The Teeth: A Gazetteer of Towns on the Islamic-Byzantine Frontier*, 183-190; Bosworth, "The City of Tarsus and the Arab-Byzantine Frontiers in Early and Middle Abbasid Times,"268-286.

[73] Grégoire, "Comment Sayyid Battal, martyr musulman du VIIIe siècle, est-il devenu, dans la légende, le contemporain d'Amer (†863)?" 571-575.

Henri Grégoire does not hesitate to call this epic cycle the "Geste de Meliténé" because of its particular affiliation with this frontier city.

A town near Melitene, called Sozopetra by the Greeks and Zibatra by the Arabs, was another symbolic space between the Arabs and Byzantines.[74] Skylitzes states that Sozopetra "was the homeland of the Caliph" (πατρίδα τυγχάνουσαν τοῦ ἀμερμουμνῆ), in a point of his narrative where the Caliph is al-Mu'tasim. However, there is no evidence of such a relationship between that city and the Caliph, and this detail seems like an ideological invention to balance the ideological impact of the sack of Amorion; indeed, emperor Theophilos (r. 829-842) conquered this city in 837 in a campaign presented as the revenge of Amorion. Zibatra's fortifications were destroyed and reconstructed at least four times between the years 742 and 872 by the Arabs and Byzantines who took and retook the city without a permanent control.[75] In 872, the city was permanently annexed by the Byzantine Empire under Basil I.[76]

The religious groups that were seen as heretical were the ever-present elements of borderlands: Already, Syriac, Coptic or Armenian speaking Christians who remained in the territories that the Empire lost to the Caliphate in the 7th century were members of the non-Chalcedonian Churches that were officially seen as heretical by the Patriarchate. Moreover, there existed other religious movements in the border regions, such as the Paulicians that appeared in the 8th century, a Christian sect that was considered Manichean and, therefore, heretical by the Byzantines; it was centered in the city of Tephrike in the frontier region. Paul Lemerle defines Paulicianism as the "frontier religion" that belongs to the Syro-Armenian

[74] Today the subdistrict Doğanşehir in the province of Malatya.
[75] Skylitzes-Thurn, *Ioannis Scylitzae Synopsis Historiarum*, 74; Skylitzes-Wortley, *A Synopsis of Byzantine History, 811-1057*,75.
[76] For a general overview of the history of Melitene and Sozopetra, see Eger, *The Spaces Between The Teeth: A Gazetteer of Towns on the Islamic-Byzantine Frontier*, 118-123, 197-198.

borderlands and has some non-negligible ethnic aspects.[77] Many leaders of the Paulicians were Armenians. The Paulicians were permanently allied with the Arabs and played the role of the fifth column in the Arab invasions of Anatolia. They were annihilated by the armies of Basil I that retook Tephrike in 878 and this victory gave the emperor a long-needed image of the defender of Orthodoxy. The memories of the war against the Paulicians are perhaps present in the epic of *Digenis Akritas*.

The Khurramites, on the other side, could be considered a religious movement that played a similar role in the Caliphate. How the Paulicians were a sect based on Armenians, the Khurramites were basically a Persian religious movement. This movement was centered on western Iran and Azerbaijan; their founder Babek (d. 838) launched a rebellion against the Abbasids. However, after their defeat at the hands of the caliphal army in 833 and Babek's execution, one of their leaders, Nasr (d. 842), went to Constantinople with his Persian followers. There he converted to Christianity and married the sister-in-law of Emperor Theophilos. His new name Theophobos demonstrates his alliance with the Byzantine emperor. The followers of Theophobos formed a Persian division serving in the Byzantine army. They served the Byzantines in the eastern campaigns of Theophilos until the rebellion they committed in Sinope in 838; then, they fell from imperial grace, and their leader was imprisoned and killed. Skylitzes refers to Theophobos as a leader who comes from the royal bloodline of Persia.[78] Just like the representation of the Paulicians in the Epic of *Digenis Akritas*, Babek appears as one of the villains in the Turkish chivalric novel *Battalname*. In that romance, Babek was a heresiarch and became the Emperor

[77] Lemerle,"L'histoire des Pauliciens d'Asie Mineure d'après les sources grecques," 134.
[78] Skylitzes-Thurn, *Ioannis Scylitzae Synopsis Historiarum*, 66; Skylitzes-Wortley, *A Synopsis of Byzantine History, 811-1057,* 68.

of Byzantium![79] The reminiscence of these groups in the epic literature shows that these popular-religious movements left a deep impact on the collective memory of both Christian and Muslim populations. The Khurramite and Paulician movements/rebellions shared a common feature that can help us to understand the realities of the Arabo-Byzantine border. These populations from different ethnicities who followed a different interpretation of their state's main religions were living in the margins of their states and were the most appropriate candidates for collaboration with the enemies.

Besides these populations, there were also several less populous communities that played a certain role in the demographic formation of the region. The first of them is the Mardaites or *Djaradjima,* as the Arabs called them. They were Christian, either Monophysite or Monothelite, and had special relations with the Patriarchate of Antioch. The Mardaites seem to be talented in irregular warfare; they collaborated with both sides and enjoyed a high degree of autonomy. Their clothing was similar to the Muslims, and they were exempted from the *jizya* and despite their Christian creed they had the right to get a share of the booty in the wars they were involved with the caliphal army. However, their situation worsened during the reign of the zealot Caliph al-Mutawakkil (r. 847-861). Apart from the ones living in Syria, there was a Mardaite diaspora in the Byzantine Empire, particularly in Pamphylia.[80]

Another enigmatic population of the borderlands was an ethnic group named al-Zutt by the Arabs. They appear as a community from Northern India, perhaps related to Jats in contemporary India. They seem to be converted to Islam and

[79] *Battalname*, ed. Yorgos Dedes, 592.
[80] Canard, "D̲jarād̲j̲ima," 456-458. Honigmann identifies them with the Maronites (of Lebanon).

transferred from their ancestral lands to several places, including Kilikia and the Amik plain.[81]

The Armenians themselves were a population that preserved a degree of autonomy by following a balance policy between the Byzantines and Arabs. They were both populous in *thugur* and Armenia proper, which was organized as a province of the Caliphate. This province was administered by Arab governors called *ostikan*s by the Armenians. In 885, the *prince of princes,* Ashot Bagrationi, was crowned as the King of Armenia with the permit of Caliph al-Muʿtamid.[82] For the Abbasids, the creation of an independent Armenia would serve as a buffer state between the Arabs and the Byzantine Empire. However, now an independent kingdom that was situated in their ancestral lands, the Armenians continued to be an important ethnic element in Byzantium. Bagratid Armenia, on the other hand, over the years, disintegrated into small principalities controlled by several local dynasties. When the Byzantine Empire had completely established its dominance in the areas surrounding the Armenian highlands in the 11th century, they started to annex the tiny Armenian principalities of Kars, Ani, and Vaspurakan. On the other part, in upper Mesopotamia, there were many Muslim emirates governed by Arab or Kurdish emirs, namely Bitlis, Bergiri, Manzikert, and the Marwanids of Amida and Mayyafarikin. This annexation policy weakened the Byzantine defenses in the eastern frontiers of the Empire and left Asia Minor defenseless against the Seljuk invasion.[83]

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[81] Bosworth, "al-Zuṭṭ," 574-575.
[82] Grousset, *Histoire de l'Armenie*, 394-395.
[83] For a discussion of the impact of the annexation of the Armenian principalities on the defense of the eastern and southern borders of the Byzantine Empire, see Peacock, *Early Seljuk History: A New Interpretation*, 129-139.

The demographic evolution of the frontier region is highly marked by many state-sponsored transfers and deportations of population. Various populations according to their possible allegiances with the imperial regimes were transferred to the inner parts of the states. For example, there was a continuous westward immigration movement of Christians of the Orient, regardless of their ethnic identity. The Byzantine Empire tried to repopulate the recently conquered cities with Christians from the other provinces of the Empire. Needless to say, just like the *dhimmi*s in Muslim countries, there were small Muslim communities that continued to live under the imperial administration. For example, after the conquest of Tarsus by Nikephoros II Phokas, the emperor allowed all Muslims to leave the city, but for the ones who did not want to leave, apart from conversion to Christianity, there was also the option of paying the poll-tax (similar to *jizya*) in order to remain within Byzantine territories.[84]

2.3 The Byzantine offensive

By the late 9th and early 10th century, it could be clearly seen that the Byzantine Empire regained its strong position in military matters. This revival is generally identified with the Macedonian dynasty that ruled the empire from 867 to 1056. Mid-9th-century is the beginning of the disintegration of the Abbasid Caliphate and the rise of various local dynasties, particularly in Africa, Persia, and Transoxiana: Tulunids, a *ghulam* dynasty of Turkic origin, now became de-facto independent rulers of Egypt, Yaʿḳūb b. al-Layth founded the independent Saffarid Emirate in Persia, Aghlabids established themselves as an independent emirate in Tunisia. In the 10th century, the Sunni Muslim world entered into a deeper ideological crisis, which

[84] Bosworth, "The City of Tarsus," 279.

is marked by the rise of Isma'ili Sh'ia and the formation of the Fatimid Caliphate, the peasant and slave revolts, and the gradual disintegration of the Abbasid Caliphate and several Muslim territories' reconquest by the Byzantine Empire. Patricia Crone summarizes the symptoms of this crisis as "Contemporaries lamented the enfeeblement and disappearance of Islam…The Triumph of the Byzantines over the Muslims, the disruption of pilgrimage, the absence of holy war, the unsafety and disruption of the roads, and the establishment of independent power by every leader. Prognostications, such as that a man will come and restore the domination of Zoroastrianism … and put an end to the power of the Arabs' were rife."[85]

This crisis coincided with a period of Byzantine revival under the Macedonian dynasty. The reign of Basil I (r. 867-886), who was nicknamed "the Macedonian" as the eponymous founder of the dynasty, was the humble beginning of this regeneration of the imperial power. In his campaigns against the Paulicians, he managed to re-establish imperial rule in the eastern portion of the theme of Charsianon that, for three decades, had become the center of a de-facto Paulician state. It seems that their leader Chrysoheir is the model of the personality of Chrysoberges in the epic of *Digenis Akritas*. During Basil I's reign also Armenia became independent, so Arab military presence diminished in the frontier regions of the Empire.

However, the two emperors identified most with this aggressive military policy and expansionism in the east were Nikephoros II Phokas (r. 963- 969) and John I Tzimiskes (r. 969-976). These warrior emperors drastically changed the geopolitical situation in Armenia and Northern Syria. Nikephoros, who was already a famous commander before his coronation as the emperor, having the public image of

[85] Crone, "The Rise of Islam in the World," 29.

the "warrior monk," conquered Crete in 960-961 and launched a series of attacks against the Hamdanids in Kilikia and Northern Syria. After becoming the emperor in 963, he restarted his Kilikian expedition, which resulted in the conquest of Tarsus and Mopsuetia. In 969, when he was in Constantinople, his armies led by Michael Bourtzes took Antioch and turned the Hamdanid Emirate of Aleppo into a vassal of the Empire. He was murdered after a palace conspiracy. Although during his reign Nikephoros II was "hated and abominated by everybody"[86] because of his maltreatment of his subjects for extra taxes and his permanent pressure on religious institutions for the same cause, he would be remembered as one of the most successful military commanders of the Empire.

John I Tzimiskes, who was the relative of the great commander John Kourkouas, after organizing the murder of Nikephoros II, personally led two campaigns against the Arabs. The second campaign's ultimate goal was to retake Jerusalem from the Arabs and re-establish Byzantine rule in the Holy Land, but he could not reach his goal. However, he could impose tribute on the city of Damascus and obtained a real hegemony over the Muslim tribes of Syria. After his unexpected death, his energetic policy was continued by one of his generals, Michael Bourtzes. Yet the rebellions in the late 10th century, committed by Bardas Skleros and Bardas Phokas, gradually stopped the Byzantine military activities in Syria.[87]

Basil II (r. 976-1025), who was known as the Bulgarslayer (Βουλγαροκτόνος) for his vicious campaigns in the Balkans, was the last of these emperors that pushed the Byzantine-Muslim frontier southwards and eastwards for a century. Although he

[86] Skylitzes-Thurn, *Ioannis Scylitzae Synopsis Historiarum* 278-279, Skylitzes-Wortley, *A Synopsis of Byzantine History, 811-1057,* 262-263.
[87] Garrood, "The Illusion of Continuity: Nikephoros Phokas, John Tzimiskes and the Eastern Border," 27-28.

turned his attention to the Balkans, unlike his predecessors, he had occasional political moves in the east. Basil II's eastern policy was based on the diplomatic annexations of the small independent principalities extending on the eastern frontier of Byzantium.

As it was remarked, Armenia was no more a united realm but an amalgam of tiny principalities. Among the important ones there were the Kingdom of Vaspurakan that was the hereditary realm of the House of Ardzruni, and the Kingdoms of Kars and Ani which belonged to the different branches of the Bagratid royal family.[88] The Byzantines annexed these tiny principalities without involving any military conflict but using diplomatic measures. They first annexed Taik (Tao), whose ruler, David the Kuropalates, declared Emperor Basil II as his heir in 1000. Then they annexed the Kingdom of Vaspurakan in 1022 and the Kingdom of Ani in 1045. Finally, after the annexation of the Principalities of Bgni and Kars, the Byzantine Empire became the possessor of the near totality of all Armenian lands. All the Armenian rulers, namely Senacherim of Vaspurakan, Gagik of Kars, Gregory Pahlavuni of Bgni and their heirs, had new estates in inner parts of the Empire, in Kappadokia, Charsianon, Kilikia and Mesopotamia. These rulers did not leave their ancestral fiefs unaccompanied, yet they were followed by thousands of people that were their subjects on their way to new lands. This immigration caused new secessionist movements in these provinces, especially in Kilikia, in the years that followed the Byzantine defeat at Manzikert (1071).[89]

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[88] For medieval Armenia, the work of René Grousset is still of utmost importance. His survey, *Histoire de l'Arménie des origines à 1071)*, encompasses the period from Antiquity until the Seljuk invasion. See ibid, 483-484 for the internal divisions of the Armenian territories.
[89] Charanis, *The Armenians in the Byzantine Empire*, 48-53.

2.4 The Byzantine confrontation with Turkic peoples

The first Turkic people that encountered the Romans were probably the Huns. It is likely that the ruling élite of the Huns was Turkic speaking, while the rest of this tribal confederation was made up of Slavic, Germanic, and Iranian peoples of Western Eurasia. After the dissolution of the Hunnic Federation, there remained certain tribal groups in the Pontic steppes: Saragurs, Akatzirs, Sabirs, Onogurs, Utigurs, Kutrigurs, and finally the Bulgars. These populations probably spoke a Turkic language, which was not Common Old Turkic but may have been a language belonging to the subgroup known as Oghuric, whose only known successor today is Chuvash.[90]

The very limited knowledge about these peoples usually comes from Byzantine sources. In Agathias' *Histories* and Jordanes' *Getica*, there are brief passages that list and locate these peoples. However, a part of the Bulgars, these populations left very little trace in Byzantine historiography.[91] As stated melancholically by Agathias, "[they] were well-known right upon the time of Emperor Leo and were considered a force to be reckoned with, but whom we in our day and age neither know nor, I imagine, are likely to, since they have either perished or migrated to the ends of the earth."[92] Both of the authors underline that these populations are originally Huns or somewhat connected with the Hunnic Confederation.

In the mid-6th century, in today's Mongolia and Altai region, there formed a new Turkic state called Göktürk, or Celestial Turks. I shall follow the naming convention in the seminal work of Peter B. Golden and call them the Türk

[90] Golden, *An Introduction to the History of the Turkic Peoples*, 97.
[91] Golden, *An Introduction to the History of the Turkic Peoples*, 98.
[92] Agathias, *The Histories*, 146.

Khaganate.[93] This entity substituted the nomadic confederation of Rouran-Rourans, and expanded itself through the west and had a military presence both in Central Asia and western Eurasian steppes, including Crimea. The Türk Khaganate also had diplomatic relations with the Byzantine Empire, and the earliest Byzantine digression about Central Asia, the itinerary of Zemarchus, was the narrative of a Byzantine embassy to the court of the Türk Khaganate. Zemarchus, who was *magister militum per Orientem* under the reign of Justin II (r. 565-578), accompanied Maniakh, the Türk ambassador of Sogdian origin, who voyaged to the heartland of the Türk Khaganate. There he met Silziboulos (Istämi), the ruler of the Türk Khaganate.[94] The Byzantine Empire and the Türk Khaganate had common interests against the Sassanids of Iran. Hence, they became allies in the late 6th century. In this way, the Turks were able to organize raids in regions, such as the Crimea and the Caucasus, which were far west of their own lands. The Türk Khaganate continued to exist until the mid-8th century as a vassal of Tang China.

Avars also appeared in the mid-6th century in the Northern Balkans. They were also a heterogeneous group of steppe nomads; their federation probably included several Turkic, Mongol and Iranian tribes. They raided the Byzantine territories in Europe in the 580s, and for the next half century, they constituted a threat to Byzantine domination in the Balkans. In 626, they besieged Constantinople with the help of their Slavic and Persian allies. After this unsuccessful siege, they left the Balkans gradually. However, until the end of the 8th century, the Avars still dominated the Pannonian plain.[95]

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[93] Golden, *An Introduction to the History of the Turkic Peoples*, 127.
[94] Dobrovits, "The Altaic World through Byzantine Eyes: Some Remarks on the Historical Circumstances of Zemarchus' Journey to the Turks (AD 569–570)," 388-389.
[95] Golden, *An Introduction to the History of the Turkic Peoples*, 112.

Bulgars were another Turkic population that appeared in the late 7th century in the Danubian frontier of the Byzantine Empire. The Bulgars -with the help of several Slavic tribes- defeated the Byzantine Empire in the Battle of Ongal (680) and occupied today's Romania and Bulgaria. Under the khans Asparukh (r. second half of the 7th century) and Tervel (r. first quarter of the 8th century), they founded an independent monarchy in the eastern Balkans. Bulgars experienced a rather complex process of ethnogenesis and cultural shift, and they became Slavic-speaking Bulgarians.[96]

Khazars founded a successor state of the Türk Khaganate in the Pontic steppe. They continued the pro-Byzantine policies of the Türk Khaganate and had even closer relationships with the Byzantines. The Byzantines and Khazars had two matrimonial alliances, which is truly exceptional in the context of Byzantine diplomacy with a non-Christian entity. First, Justinian II, after his dethronement and exile to Crimea, went to the Khazar court as an asylum, where he married Theodora (she took this name as part of her baptism, her original name is unknown), the sister of Busir, khagan of Khazaria. Then, Constantine V (r. 741-775) took the Khazar princess Tzitzak as a spouse.[97] Their son Leo IV is known as Leo the Khazar (Λέων ὁ Χάζαρος) because of his mother's ethnicity. A key event in the history of Khazars is their conversion to Judaism. They must have converted to Judaism in the 830s at the latest.[98] Moreover, the Khazars, because of their unique position as a result of the religion they chose, managed to remain outside the ideological impact of both the Byzantines and Muslim Arabs. The khaganate vanished in the 10th century because of the expansion of Kievan Rus', Pechenegs, and Oghuz.

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[96] Golden, *An Introduction to the History of the Turkic Peoples*, 246-253.
[97] Howard-Johnston, "Byzantine Sources for Khazar History," 168.
[98] Golden, "The Conversion of Khazars to Judaism," 156.

Pechenegs were another Turkic nomadic group that appeared in the Pontic steppes in the late 9th century. The Byzantines were aware of them since their earliest westward movements; in Constantine Porphyrogennetos' *De Administrando Imperio,* there is an ethnological digression about them. These sections that deal with the Pechenegs were possibly based on authentic Pecheneg material and give interesting information about the internal structure of this Turkic population. This text locates the Pechenegs close to the Byzantine city of Kherson. This nation expanded their authority in the Balkans in the mid-11th century. Particularly in the last quarter of the 11th century, the Pechenegs posed a real threat to the empire. However, during the reign of Alexios Komnenos, the Byzantine-Cuman alliance defeated the Pechenegs at the battle of Levounion (1091); afterwards these people ceased to exist as an independent entity.[99]

In the mid-11th century, an important agitation occurred between various nomadic groups in the steppes. This agitation triggered a westward migration of these nomads. The Armenian historian Matthew of Edessa explains this fact as follows:

> And there took place days that breathed enormous carnage and bitterness because of the carrion-eating, godless, unclean people of the Pechenegs, the mad, blood-drinking beasts. Then the "people of the snakes" (possibly Qay, a Mongolic population of Eastern Eurasia) drew near and attacked the "pale ones" (i.e., Cumans) and the "pale ones" were driven out and attacked the Uz (i.e., Oghuz) and Pechenegs and in concert they were fired up against the Romans.[100]

Thus, the Pecheneg, Oghuz, and Cuman invasions of the Balkans were the results of a common migration movement, similar to what happened in the Migration period.

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[99] For an extensive study of the history of Byzantine-Pecheneg relations, see Malamut, "L'image byzantine des Petchénègues," 105-147.
[100] Golden, *An Introduction to the History of the Turkic Peoples*, 274.

There was also a brief Oghuz invasion in the northern Balkans in 1064. These Oghuz were a less populous branch of the Oghuz of Central Asia. These tribes appear in the Byzantine texts as Οὔζοι. After a series of raids against the princedom of Pereyaslavl, they were defeated by the prince Vsevolod Yaroslavich (r. 1054-1073) and were repelled to the Balkans. Then, they briefly raided the Byzantine frontier on the Danube. Afterwards, they were defeated both by the Byzantines and Hungarians and then were entered into the service of Kievan Rus. In the Russian chronicles, this population was known as *Tork*s.[101] These Oghuz' activities in the Byzantine territories were narrated in the accounts of Attaleiates and Anna Komnene.

Finally, the Cumans were the final Turkic population of the Balkans that confronted the Byzantines. They were originally a union of three different groups: Cumans proper, Kypchaks, and Kangli. However, their westernmost ethnic element was Cumans. Thus, in Greek and Latin, they were known as Κουμάνοι and Cumani. They were called "Polovtsy" in the Slavic languages, which means "the pale ones." In medieval Muslim geographical literature, they were generally referred to as Kypchaks. In any case, our knowledge of their ethnogenesis and internal evolution is very scarce. This population was at the height of its political and military activity at the end of the 11th and beginning of the 12th century. The Cumans played an important role in the formation of the Bulgarian and Wallachian states in the 14th century, and they also served the Kingdom of Hungary. After the Mongolian invasions in the 13th century, they lost their political influence in the steppe region; however, because of the presence of a huge number of Cuman-Kypchak slaves in the Crimea, Khwarizm and, later, Egypt, they preserved an important political network,

[101] Agacanov, *Oğuzlar*, 234-238.

especially in the Muslim world. Many early Mamluk sultans of Egypt, such as Baibars (r. 1260-1277) and Qalawun (r. 1279-1290) were of Cuman-Kypchak origin.

In concluding this subchapter, I should underline some important points: The Turkic populations who dwelled in the Balkans, Pontic steppe, and Crimea remained outside the ideological impact of Islam. They were generally pagans, and when they converted to a monotheistic religion, they were evangelized. (The Khazars' conversion to Judaism is a unique event.) Secondly, apart from the Khazars and Bulgars, they could not form an organized state structure. Thirdly, in Byzantine historiography, these populations (with the exception of the Türk Empire) were more or less associated with the Skythians because of the geographical location of their habitat and their lifestyle. This association with the Skythians reflects a long tradition of historiography, which began with the *Histories* of Herodotus.

2.5 The appearance of Seljuk Turks in the Eastern frontier

While the permanent enemies in the eastern borders of the Byzantines were the Arabs, it is possible to see occasional references to the Turks in Byzantine historical accounts of 9th-century events.[102] For example, in a passage concerning the Battle of Dazimon (838) in the *Synopsis Historion*, John Skylitzes mentions the presence of Turks among the forces in the army of the "amermoumnes" (i.e., the caliph al-Muʿtaṣim) that affronted the imperial army led by Emperor Theophilos:

> His thinking was that if the son got the better of the emperor, victory would surely follow for the father. If the son failed, it were better to stay where he was. Having considered that advice and come to this decision, he despatched

[102] The ethnonym Turk (Τοῦρκος) was not unfamiliar to the Byzantines. It was used appropriately for the Eastern Turks (Göktürks) and its earliest attestation is in the *History* of Agathias in the 6th century. During the 8th and 9th centuries, this ethnonym was utilised mainly for the Magyars who were following a nomadic lifestyle that was similar to the Altaic populations of the Eurasian steppes. For a chronological list of the use of this ethnonym, see Moravcsik, *Byzantinaturcica*, vol. 2, 320-327.

> his son, who took with him Amr, the then emir of Melitene, ten thousand Turks, the entire army of the Armenians and their commander-in-chief.[103]

Skylitzes further writes that "by incessant use of their bows, the Turks deterred the Romans from pursuing them, which caused the battle to take on a different character. Unable to withstand the continuous hail of the Turkish arrows, the Romans did an about-turn and abandoned the emperor."[104]

There is no reason to believe that these passages demonstrate an improper use of the ethnonym Turks, projecting the 11th-century realities that John Skylitzes himself encountered to the narration of the events of the 9th century. In the Abbasid armies of the 9th century, there was an important presence of slaves (*ghulams*) of Turkic origin. These people were enslaved and brought to Iraq, where they were recruited as slave-soldiers. They gradually became the king-makers of the Abbasid capital. Skylitzes' description of their warfare seems also quite accurate for the medieval Turks.

In the "Lay of the Emir," the first part of the epic of *Digenis Akritas*, the author lists the populations recruited as soldiers by the Emir, who subsequently will be converted to Orthodox Christianity and become the father of Digenis, as "Turks and Daylamites (Διλεβίτας), Arabs and Troglodytes (Τρωγλοδύτας)."[105] Leaving aside the last ethnonym, which was a mere repetition of the name of a legendary

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[103] Skylitzes-Thurn, *Ioannis Scylitzae Synopsis Historiarum*, 75; Skylitzes-Wortley, *A Synopsis of Byzantine History, 811-1057*, 77.
[104] Skylitzes-Thurn, *Ioannis Scylitzae Synopsis Historiarum*, 76; Skylitzes-Wortley, *A Synopsis of Byzantine History, 811-1057*, 78.
[105] The Daylamites that were a warlike population of Northern Persia were the founders of the ruling dynasty of Iran prior to Seljuk invasion, the Buyids. There are occasional references to Daylamites in Byzantine historiography. A passage in Skylitzes concerning the ethnic groups in Ṭoghrîl Beg's army is interesting: "Καὶ δὴ λαόν ἐπίλεκτον συστησάμενος ἔκ τε Τούρκων καὶ Καβείρων καὶ Διλιμνίτων περὶ τὰς ἕκατον χιλιάδας…" In this passage the Διλιμνίτοι are also identified as the Daylamites by John Wortley. The ethnonym Καβείροι seems mysterious. Skyliztes-Thurn, *Ioannis Scylitzae Synopsis Historiarum*, 514. Skylitzes-Wortley,*A Synopsis of Byzantine History, 811-1057*, 422.

people attested in Herodotus, these ethnonyms refer to the main ethnicities of the soldiers combatting in the pre-11th century Muslim armies against the Byzantines. In the Grottaferrata version of the text, the author adds the Γουλαβίους, an enigmatic name that could be explained only with the word Μαγούλιοι (that is attested in the reconstructed version Z) which designates the enemies of the emperor. According to Henri Grégoire and George Huxley, this word Μαγούλιοι is a metathetic form of the word Γουλάμιοι; *ghulams*, and Γουλάβιοι is the incorrect form of the same word.[106] Thus, in the epic universe of Digenis Akritas, among the oldest strata of the reminiscences of the wars against the Arabs, which were mixed with the experiences of the confrontation vis-à-vis Seljuks in the later periods, there was that name designating the slave-soldiers, mostly of Turkic stock, placed in the frontier regions. Actually there were such commanders in the *thugur*, just like Yazaman al-Khadim, the eunuch of Turkic origin who was the emir of Tarsus in the mid-9th century.

In the 11th century a new power appeared in the steppes of Central Asia: the Seljuks. The founder of the dynasty, Seljuk, was an Oghuz in the service of either the ruler of the Khazars or the Oghuz,[107] who left his country because of his conflict with this ruler, and migrated southward with his tribesmen and followers. There, his tribesmen and followers (who will be called the Seljuks) established themselves and gained power, engaging in conflicts between the Samanids and Kara-Khanids. Seljuk's grandsons, Ṭoghrůl Beg and Čaghrů Beg, after decades of struggles, managed to dominate Khorasan and adjacent areas. In the mid-11th century, after

[106] *Digenes Akrites*, ed. and tr. Mavrogordato, 4; Grégoire, "L'épopée byzantine et ses rapports avec l'épopée turque et l'épopée romane," 481-482; Huxley, "Antecedents and Context of *Digenes Akrites*," 329.

[107] I am convinced by Peacock's view that Seljuk was in the service of the Khazar Khagan, not the Oghuz Yabghu. See Peacock, *Early Seljuk History: A New Interpretation*, 27-31.

their victory over the Ghaznavids at Dandanaqan (1040), they became the dominant power in the territories extending from Transoxiana to Mesopotamia.[108]

Earliest Türkmen raids on the eastern edges of Byzantium were dated to 1029,[109] although the details of this campaign are obscure. The scarce information about these campaigns –the only goal of which seems to be pillage- comes basically from Armenian and Syriac authors. The Seljuks seriously came to the attention of Byzantine authors in the accounts of the reign of Constantine IX Monomakhos (r. 1041-1055) after their victory over the Byzantines and their Georgian allies at the Battle of Kapetron in 1048. In this small-scale war, the Seljuk prince and commander Ibrāhīm Yinal (appears in Skylitzes as Ἀβράμιος Ἀλείμ) captured the Georgian nobleman Liparites who commanded the Christian armies. Liparites was brought to the city Rayy in Persia and delivered to Ṭoghrůl Beg. He could be ransomed by the Byzantines in exchange for extravagant gifts and a peace treaty between the two powers. This episode is mentioned in the chronicles of both John Skylitzes and Michael Attaleiates.[110]

As it was mentioned above, the early Seljuk state had a strong tribal and nomadic element. The Türkmen groups such as Yinaliyan, Nawakiya and Iraqiya had a certain degree of autonomy from the Seljuk government. They had also close relations with several members of Seljuk ruling family, such as Ibrāhīm Yinal and Sulaymānshāh I of Rum. These groups also played a crucial role in the Seljuk activity in the west.[111]

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[108] Peacock, *Early Seljuq History: A New Interpretation*, 16-46.
[109] Cahen, "La première pénétration turque en Asie Mineure (seconde moitié du XIe s.)," 5-67. For the earliest campaigns, see 7-10.
[110] Attaleiates, *The History*,78-81 and Skylitzes-Thurn, *Ioannis Scylitzae Synopsis Historiarum*, 447-455; Skylitzes-Wortley, *A Synopsis of Byzantine History, 811-1057*, 421-426.
[111] For these tribal groups see Peacock, *Early Seljuq History: A New Interpretation*, 47-71 and particularly, Peacock, "From the Balkhān-Kūhīyān to the Nāwakīya:Nomadic Politics and the Foundations of Seljūq Rule in Anatolia," 55-80.

The encounter of the Byzantines with the Seljuks was a new encounter. The Seljuks were a new population in the Byzantine *oikoumene*, so the authors wrote a narrative of *origo gentis* to propose or invent a historical origin for the new populations and so fulfil this need.[112] Of course the need for the production of new narratives on the newly appeared populations was not limited to the ones regarding their origin and the re-use of older literary models inherited from Antiquity was also frequent.[113] The creation of such narratives could be interpreted by an explanation by Christopher Mallan. When he discusses the signification of the narrative about Ṭoghrůl Beg and Liparites, he demonstrates that these narratives follow an older model closely, the episode of the aftermath of the Battle of Hydaspes (326 BC) between Alexander the Great and King Porus of India, in which Alexander asks how should he be treated by the Indian ruler in captivity and he responds "Like a king." Attaleiates repeats the narrative putting "Sultan" and Liparites in the places of Alexander and Porus, respectively. Mallan interprets this narrative as a literary invention that aims to assimilate the alien Turkish leader into the familiar Roman worldview.[114]

The Byzantine defeat at Manzikert (1071) concludes this period and starts a new political conjuncture that will be radically different from the geopolitics of the 10th and 11th centuries. The invasion of Asia Minor by the Seljuks was quite unexpected, and the image of these Turks from Persia was not quite different than the steppe nomads whom the Byzantines were habituated to dealing with since the invasion of the Avars in the 7th century. However, these new Turks were gradually

[112] I shall treat such narratives in detail in Chapter 4. For the evolution of this literary genre, see Wolfram, "Le genre de l'*Origo gentis*," 789-801.
[113] *Mimesis* was a predominant literary technique in Byzantium. The classical introductory text on the subject is Hunger, "On the Imitation (Mimesis) of Antiquity in Byzantine Literature," 15-38.
[114] Mallan, "A Turkish Alexander? Michael Attaleiates, Porus and Alexander the Great," 101-107.

influenced by the Muslim culture they adopted in the Islamic countries they conquered, and they started to play the old role of the antagonist against the Byzantines. Unlike the religious zeal that played a negligible role in the Seljuk invasion of Asia Minor, the deeds of the Türkmen warriors are considered to fulfill the ideals of the Arab warriors of long times ago. The adoption of such an ethos probably helped the cultural integration of the recently Islamized Turks into the greater Muslim world. There could be further speculation that the *ghulam*s or mercenaries of Turkic origin played a certain role in this process, acting as cultural mediators. The works *Battalname* and *Danişmendname* reflect a cultural milieu and a military subculture of the persons involved in the war against the Byzantines. The Seljuks who entered Baghdad in 1055, there encountered a military élite of Turkic roots. For example, Arslan Besasiri, the last Buyid military governor of Baghdad, was originally a Turkic slave. This milieu could have perfectly played the role of a cultural mediator between the old Muslim warrior communities who embraced the old frontier ethos of *thugur* and the newly Islamized Turkic warriors that were aliens in this new environment and searching new values different than their tribal ones.

In the aftermath of Manzikert, the invasion of Anatolia by the Turks was not the result of Seljuk state policy. Alp Arslan was not interested in a westward expansion into the Anatolian plateau. However, the swift disorganization of the Byzantine state authority in the eastern borders of the empire and sporadic rebellions and civil wars between 1071-1081 left defenseless the eastern border. Taking advantage of the chaotic situation, various Turkish warlords and Türkmen groups invaded these territories. The Armenian nobility who were reluctant to accept the Byzantine suzerainty in the 11th century had also separatist tendencies and created

several breakaway statelets in the last quarter of the century. The combination of all these element made the invasion of Anatolia possible.

In conclusion, the main aspects of this historical introduction can be summarized as follows:

i. The early Byzantine-Arab wars resulted in the permanent Arab domination and subsequent Arabization and Islamization of the oriental provinces of the Byzantine Empire. However, Asia Minor resisted such an invasion; the formation of a frontier space between two powers created both an ethos on two sides and a strong antagonism. The Arab (Saracen/Hagarene/ Ismaelite) figure substituted the archetype of the Persian as the antagonist of the Byzantine Empire, and even of Greco-Roman identity. Thus, this period until the 9th century was the formative period of the frontier ethos and antagonism.

ii. The invasions by nomadic peoples in the Balkan borders of the empire, at first glance, had a less significant ideological impact compared to the ideological effect of the invasions in the east. However, the invasions by Bulgarians and Slavs had a strong demographic impact in the Balkans and this fact triggered several socio-political changes, but discussing them falls far beyond the remit of this thesis. However, the different waves of the "barbarian" invasions both contributed to the evolution of the image of the "Skythian" peoples and created social osmosis between the people of the steppes and Byzantines. This process was decisive for the ethnogenesis of several Balkan nations, such as modern Bulgarians.

iii. The Byzantine eastward and southward expansion in the 9th and 10th centuries gave a new dimension to the already existing conflict. It inspired new hopes and new fears that created a new relationship with the (non-Chalcedonian) Christians of the East and the Byzantines and a new geopolitical system that included the Byzantine cooperation and alliance with the smaller Muslim entities of the region. Politically, after the conquests of Nikephoros II and John I, there was no more a *thugur* region. This zone was incorporated into Byzantine realms.

iv. Both the ideological geography and the cultural ethos of the Byzantine-Muslim frontier region predate the arrival of the Seljuk Turks to the Near East. Thus, the Turks did not create but inherited this ethos from the Arabs. This fact demonstrates the cultural continuity between the Arab warriors in the *thugur* and their Turkic successors. Finally, the Seljuk invasion of Anatolia ended the 10th-11th centuries' Byzantine dominance in the Near East and transferred the Byzantine-Muslim frontier to the heart of Asia Minor.

CHAPTER 3

OLD MEMORIES, NEW BARBARIANS: TURKIC "BARBARIANS" IN BYZANTINE HISTORIOGRAPHICAL IMAGINATION

3.1 The many faces of the eternal barbarian

As it was mentioned before, the Byzantine literary conventions including the historiographical literature were based on the *mimesis* of the classical Greek texts. Cyril Mango called it "a ritualized ballet" in which the contemporary nations and tribes appear under the names of ancient peoples mentioned in classical texts and contemporary personalities paraphrase the rhetorical speeches of Classical Antiquity.[115] However, in the Byzantine thinking, there are notions which were not merely a repetition of ancient clichés, but were inherited from the classical past and survived in both the collective memory and historiography. Thus, the barbarian (βάρβαρος) is an archetype which was inherited from classical literature. The etymology and semantics of this word have been discussed since classical antiquity, and because of the influence of this subject for our study, hereby I summarize this semantic evolution as an introduction to this chapter.

Although there is still some discussion on the etymology of the word, it seems that it is an onomatopoeic word that reflects a notion which exists in other Indo-European languages. The word essentially indicates an outsider who had a linguistic barrier with a society where he/she does not belong. A second word which appears as early as in the *Iliad* of Homer and seems closely related to barbarian is *barbarophonos* (βαρβαρόφωνος). Homer uses this word to describe the Carians in

[115] Mango, "Discontinuity with the Classical Past in Byzantium," 50.

the Trojan War, a people of South-western Asia Minor who spoke Greek poorly.[116] Strabo also discusses the meaning of the word *barbarophonos* and defines it in onomatopoeic terms as any stranger who speaks or pronounces Greek in an improper or inappropriate way. However, the notion also had a moral dimension. This moral element which indicates the essential difference between a Greek and a non-Greek was explained in the *Politics* of Aristotle. According to Aristotle, the barbarians had no natural ruling class, hence they were societies of slaves and a barbarian was the same as slave.[117] Since Aristotle was widely read in the intellectual circles of Byzantium and had a certain influence on Byzantine political thinking, it may not be incorrect to assume that his thinking was one of the sources of the Byzantine approach to barbarians. In this case, the approach of Paolo Odorico is also very helpful to understand these dichotomies: Odorico; cites the following statement from Aristotle's *Metaphysics*; *"*τὸ δὲ διάφορον τινὸς τινὶ διάφορον, ὥστε ἀνάγκη ταὐτό τι εἶναι ᾧ διαφέρουσιν," i.e. "that is different from anything is different in some respect, so that there must be something identical whereby they differ"[118]. So "difference" and "diversity" are distinct notions. The difference of two objects implies the existence of other aspects which are identical, but the diversity between them means an ontological diversity. Diversity can lead to situations such as the early encounters of Spaniards with the American Indians, which created discussions questioning the humanity of American Indians.[119]

The category of the "barbarian" in the eyes of ancient Greeks covers all the non-Greeks, thereupon it is not a part of the antagonism of "civilized versus

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[116] *À la rencontre de l'étranger: L'image de l'Autre chez les Anciens*, 8-10. This word appears in the *Iliad* only once, in the verse: Νάστης αὖ Καρῶν ἡγήσατο βαρβαροφώνων (Iliad, II, 867).
[117] *À la rencontre de l'étranger: L'image de l'Autre chez les Anciens*, 16.
[118] Aristotle, *The Complete Works of Aristotle - The Revised Oxford Translation*, vol. 2, 141.
[119] Odorico, "Différence non diversité: Les Grecs du Moyen Âge faux aux autres Européens," 1.2.-1.4.

uncivilized" or "sedentary versus nomad." The antagonism was simply between the "Greeks" and "Non-Greeks." Thus, Persians, Phoenicians, and even the Egyptians, who were exceedingly respected by the Ancient Greeks, were still considered barbarians. To call someone a barbarian is never a neutral approach. It is a pejorative naming that reflects the construction of a civilized self that obviously claims a certain feeling of superiority over the one who is called a barbarian. The meaning of this superiority was somewhat shifted between Antiquity and the Middle Ages, but its social function remained unchanged.

Following the Christianization of the Roman Empire, the old Greco-Roman model was somewhat changed, but the antagonism between the "Romans" and "barbarians" continued to exist. After the fall of the Western Roman Empire, the Eastern Roman Empire continued to survive as the stronghold of Christianity and Greco-Roman culture. Justinian I's imperial project represented its ambition to reclaim the Empire's lost lands in the West, particularly the Italian peninsula. However, the imperial restoration was no more than a short-lived success. A century later the Byzantines lost even their oriental provinces, namely Syria, Palestine, and Egypt, to the Arabs.

The evangelization of Roman society naturally affected people's opinions about the ones who were considered "others." Basil of Caesarea (330-379), one of the Kappadokian fathers, wrote a homily called "On Baptism" which stresses the importance of baptism as a rite that gives the people a new dignity as "to be dressed of Christ." He cites the New Testament passage "Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Skythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all." (Colossians 3:11) and states that whoever baptized, despite he/she was Jew, Greek, male, female, slave or free, Skythian, Barbarian or from another

race, he stripped up old man from old practices and becomes of the blood of Christ.[120]

Ahrweiler states that after the 9th century the Byzantine Empire adopted the idea of the "chosen people" that has a historical role of being the pioneer of the project of an Orthodox Christian empire. According to her, it was an ideology that originated in the collective superiority feeling that often takes the form of a "*racisme sui generis.*" The evangelization of the barbarians (such as the Bulgarians and the Serbs) and their further situation in the eyes of Byzantine authors is also a problematic issue. These peoples converted to Orthodox Christianity thanks to Byzantine missionaries, such as Saint-Cyril and Saint-Methodius. However, they could not gain the status of civilized peoples in the eyes of the Byzantines. While the rulers of these nations were styled as "very Christian" rulers in the documents prepared in the imperial chancellery, the same nations could appear as a "barbarian race" or a "corrupted race" in private correspondence.[121] This claim of superiority was not directed only against the recently Christianized Balkan peoples, but also the populations of Western Europe that were commonly named "Frangoi" by the Byzantines. A rhetorical work cited by Anthony Kaldellis supports her position: after the evangelization of the Bulgarians, they say, "we do not want to be called Skythian or barbarian or by another name anymore; we are now all Christians and children of God."[122] However, even in the 11th and 12th centuries, there were Byzantine sources with a hostile tone and barbarizing discourse against the Bulgarians.[123] The Byzantines did not see any people equal to them unless they embraced "*Romanitas*"

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[120] *À la rencontre de l'étranger: L'image de l'Autre chez les Anciens*, 306.
[121] Ahrweiler, *L'idéologie politique de l'Empire byzantin*, 51.
[122] Kaldellis, *Le discours ethnographique à Byzance: Continuité et rupture*, 155. He attributes this text to Theodore Daphnopates.
[123] Kaldellis, *Le discours ethnographique à Byzance: Continuité et rupture*, 162-163.

and adopted Byzantine culture itself. In the Byzantine worldview, the center was always Constantinople and the capital always represented the real culture of "*Romanitas*". Even the provincials were considered inferior to them in this respect and non-Greek peoples who converted to Christianity had a rather negative status.[124]

In that case the situation of the ethnic groups, such as Bulgarians, Armenians and Vlachs, merits special attention. These three ethnic groups were Christianized in different periods. The Armenians were one of the peoples who embraced the Christian religion earlier in the 4th century along with the Georgians, yet they were generally non-Chalcedonian Christians who had their own Armenian Apostolic Church. However, there was a large number of Armenians in the Byzantine political élite who were embraced the Chalcedonian creed.

The Vlach people were the socially marginalized post-Roman inhabitants of the Balkan peninsula who spoke a language of Latin origin and lived a semi-nomadic life in various parts of the Balkans. They were Christians and, despite their socioeconomic marginalization, they were remnants of the Latin-speaking inhabitants of the Roman Empire in the Balkan peninsula. So, theoretically, they could claim the legacy of "Romanitas" as much as the Byzantine Greeks. However, probably because of their social marginalization, they were still considered inferior and *quasi-barbarian*.[125]

The abovementioned Bulgarians were for a long time considered Skythian by origin[126] and created troubles for the Empire, particularly until their conversion to

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[124]Tremblay, "L'identité romaine est-elle exclusive à Constantinople? Dichotomie entre Byzance et les Balkans à l'époque médiobyzantine (vie–xiie siècles)," 25-40.

[125] For their ethnogenesis and early literary representation, see Charanis, "John Lydus and the Question of the Origin of the Vlachs in the Greek Lands," 103-107. For the sources concerning the Dacians and Vlachs see *Fontes Historiae Daco-Romanae*, 4 vols.

[126] Even in the 14th century; when the ethnonym Skythian was employed only for the Mongols, Nikephoros Gregoras states that the Bulgarian people are indeed of the Skythian stock and they took their name from a river basin north of Danube (sic) called *Bulga.* This name could be a Greek

Christianity. However, their ruler Boris I (r. 852-889) received the holy baptism in 864 and this event created new expectations for the Byzantine side. For the Byzantine ruling élite, the signification of this baptism was the subordination of Bulgars to the empire because the Bulgarian ruler had the Byzantine emperor Michael III (r. 842-867) as his godfather. However, the event's outcome did not happen as the Byzantines had wished and Boris I created his own Bulgarian Orthodox Church, while his son, Simeon of Bulgaria (r. 893-927) even had the ambition of becoming emperor. After that point, the Byzantine authors adopted a hostile anti-Bulgarian tone. There was a hierarchy between the two entities and the Bulgarian ruler could be only a son of the emperor. Although there was a spiritual link between them, a Bulgarian ruler could not wear the imperial crown. Even if there was a marital link between the Macedonian dynasty of the Byzantine Empire and the Dulo dynasty of Bulgaria, Bulgarian rulers were considered somewhat inferior to Byzantine emperors.[127]

A striking expression of this difference between the Byzantines and other "Orthodox barbarians" can be found in John Kanaboutzes' *Commentary to Dionysius of Halicarnassus*. The 15th-century author states that the Greeks considered the Trojans barbarians even though they believed in the same gods, and the contemporary Byzantines (the author addresses them proudly as "we") consider the Bulgarians, Vlachs, Albanians, and Russians barbarians, because to be a barbarian is not a matter of religion, but of race, language, life-style, and culture.[128]

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rendering of the Slavic hydronym Volga. Gregoras-Schopen-Bekker, *Nicephori Gregorae Byzantina historia*, 26 and Gregoras-Van Dieten, *Rhomäische Geschichte*, 75.

[127] Malamut, "Les peuples étrangers dans l'idéologie impériale," 128-130. See also Page, *Being Byzantine: Greek Identity before the Ottomans*, 53-55.

[128] Odorico, "Identité et craintes. Théodore Pédiasimos à Serrès au XIVe siècle," 171.

Apart from the socio-political change of the perception of the notion of the barbarian, the historical lexicology of the word "barbarian" in Byzantine cultural history is still worthy of attention. In the *Lexicon* of Patriarch Photios I (810-893) the word βάρβαρος was not present, yet there is the verb βαρβαρίζω which is defined as "to be minded like barbarians."[129]

On the other hand, it would be wrong to say that the Byzantine identity remained static in history.[130] As Gill Page puts it, the Fourth Crusade is an important turning point for *Romanitas*. As early as the 12th century, a new insulting language began to be used to describe western Catholics. Latins residing in the Byzantine Empire were massacred from time to time, especially during the reign of Andronikos I Komnenos. The trauma of 1204 triggered changes in Roman identity.[131] In the 13th century, the differences between the Byzantines and the westerners were emphasized, while in the next century, Gregoras and Kantakouzenos began to emphasize their Christian identity. The issue of which identity will be established against which community also determines which elements of identity will be underlined.

3.2 Classifying the barbarians

As mentioned previously, Byzantine authors hardly used the contemporary names of foreign nations. Their commonly accepted literary convention was using ancient ethnonyms for contemporary populations. This usage of ancient ethnonyms was never arbitrary and these terms were organized within a complex system of

[129] Photios, *Photii Patriarchae Lexicon: A-D*, 326.
[130] See Stouraitis, "Roman Identity in Byzantium: A Critical Approach," 175-220; Stouraitis, "Reinventing Roman Ethnicity in High and Late Medieval Byzantium," 70-94.
[131] Page, *Being Byzantine: Greek Identity before the Ottomans*, 69-70.

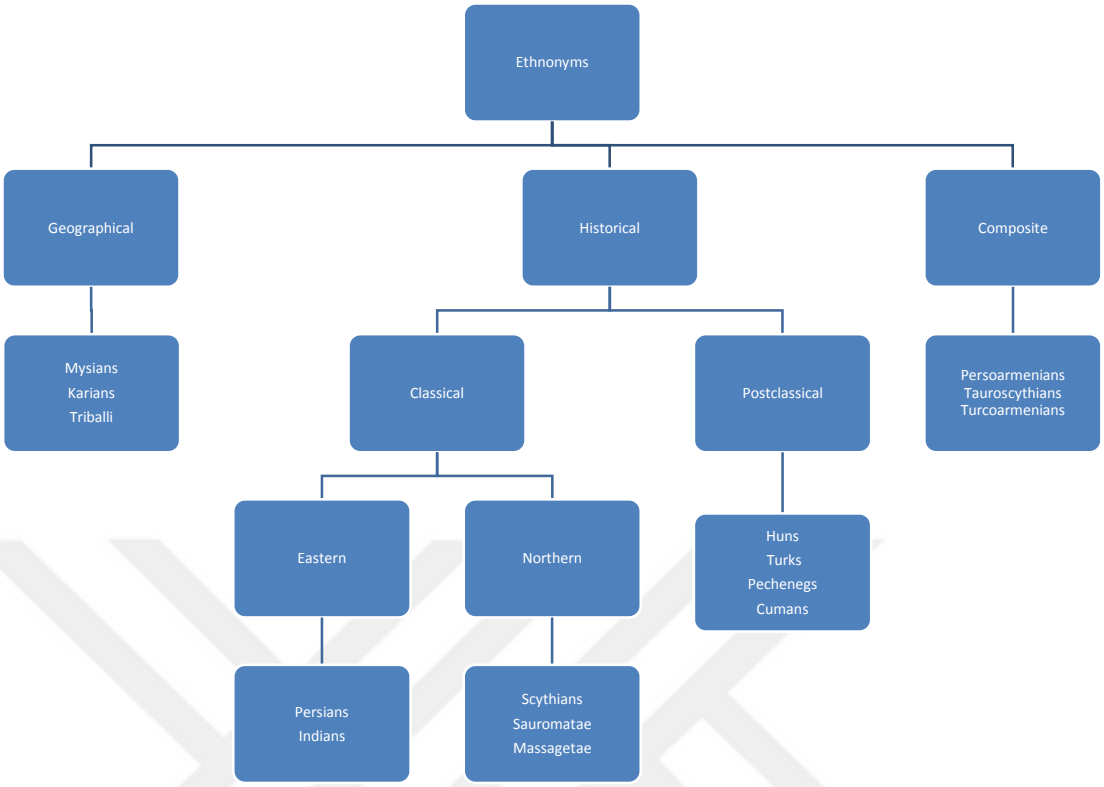
interrelations based on the prior representations of the peoples, which corresponded to "predecessors" of the contemporary populations. Moreover, the current political conjunctures also had a certain role in the attribution of ancient ethnonyms to contemporary nations. Kaldellis, who criticizes the over-use of *mimesis* to explain the usage of ancient ethnonyms only as an archaizing literary effort, further claims that thinking these nations had one "true" or "authentic" and one "false" or "exotic" name is misleading. According to him, all these names could be true and any objectivity about this question is impossible because in the Middle Ages there were no universally accepted official names.[132]

These ethnonyms could be perceived as *signifier*s (a term coined by Ferdinand de Saussure) used by the Byzantines to define any foreign *ethnos*. The cause of their divergence from the actual names of the populations to whom they refer is the difference between the literary language, examples of which could be found in written texts, and non-written language. In this context, the works written in Greek that are closer to the spoken language can give some idea about the Greek names used in the spoken language or even these populations' endonyms in their proper language. A good example of such a work is *De Administrando Imperio*.

The first step to understanding the formation of the image of the Turks in Byzantine literature is to classify and analyze these ethnonyms. The ethnonyms can be categorized under three main groups as chronological/historical, geographical, and composite ones (see Table 2).

[132] Kaldellis, *Le discours ethnographique à Byzance: Continuité et rupture*, 126-127.

Table 2. Ethnonyms



The two chronological categories of ethnonyms were the ones inherited from classical antiquity and those that appeared later. The most important source of classical ethnonyms is the *History* of Herodotus. The Persian (Πέρσης), Skythian (Σκύθης), Egyptian (Αἰγύπτιος), and Indian (Ἰνδικός) are the most frequent examples of classical ethnonyms.

The group of post-classical ethnonyms is made by the terms which were first attested in Late Antiquity. Turk (Τοῦρκος), Slav (Σκλάβος), Goth (Γότθος), and Hun (Οὖννος) could be considered examples of this second category. Finally, there were contemporary ethnonyms, the words used during the lifetime of Byzantine authors, terms which were possibly the endonyms of such peoples. The terms, such as Pecheneg/Patzinak (Πατζινάκος), Oguz (Ὀγούζιος), and Turcoman (Τουρκομάνος) were the contemporary names of these populations.

There were also ethnonyms that did not reflect a clear ethnicity, yet only a geographical indication. The words, such as Mysoi (used for the Bulgarians) and Triballoi (used for the Serbs), are examples of such terms. These terms are basically derivatives of geographical regions. However, it would be wrong to say that these ethnonyms did not have a particular semantic weight because they were the names of the ancient imperial provinces, and such an appellation could legitimize the reincorporation of these lands into the Empire.[133]

Still, a final –and a hybrid– category is constituted by composite ethnonyms, which were constituted by two elements like the Perso-Armenian, Tauro-Skythian and Perso-Turks. The first ethnonym, used by Khoniates for the Danishmendids, could imply the possible Armenian origin of the dynasty.[134] In the second case, the term is constituted by one geographical indication and one ethnonym; it was used for the Crimean Tatars. The third term is constituted with the same formula and it was used to describe the Akkoyunlu Türkmen and emirate of Erzincan in Eastern Anatolia.[135] An even rarer composite ethnonym, Perso-Skythian, is found in a text outside the corpus of this thesis, an oration by George Tornikes dated 1192-1193.[136] This word was used for Türkmen. Furthermore, a striking feature of these ethnonyms is that they never reflect a linguistic family. Even the generic ethnonym Skythian, which was used for the "northern barbarians," does not reflect the direct representation of the Altaic peoples; it was also used for the Russians and Goths. Kaldellis explains this usage with the formula "the geography rules the

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[133] Kaldellis, *Le discours ethnographique à Byzance: Continuité et rupture*, 133.
[134] Khoniates-Bekker, *Nicetae Choniatae Historia*, 27; Khoniates - Magoulias, *O City of Byzantium*, 12.
[135] Tauro-Skythian and Turko-Persian (Perso-Turk) were both used by Doukas. See Doukas-Grecu, *Historia Turcobyzantina*, 91 and 89, 163, 281; Doukas-Magoulias, *Decline and Fall of Byzantium to the Ottoman Turks*, 90 and 127.
[136] Oikonomides, "The Turks in the Byzantine Rhetoric of the Twelfth Century," 150-151.

ethnography."[137] In the lack of ethnographic information about these peoples, their ethnonyms were determined by their homeland. According to him, also the ethnonym Hun is used –more or less- interchangeably with Skythian; however, I shall deal with the unique semantic baggage of this word in the next section.

3.3 The Turks and Türkmen

The ethnonym Turk (Τοῦρκος) also merits some attention for its rather unique position. It could be considered a late antique ethnonym. It was first used in the 6th century for the Türk Khaganate, which was allied with the Byzantine Empire against Sassanid Iran. The itinerary of Zemarchus into the court of the Türk khagan is preserved in Theophylactus Simocatta.[138] In later centuries, the ethnonym Turk is used for the Khazars and Hungarians. It is easy to understand its use for the Khazars: The Khazar were a Turkic population. However, the use of the same ethnonym for the Hungarians poses some problems; the Hungarians are a Finno-Ugric, not a Turkic ethnic group. There are various theories that try to explain this situation. According to one theory, the Byzantines called the Hungarians as Turks because they were originally nomads in the region between Don and Caucasus. Thus, they had a "Turkish" lifestyle. Other theories explain the fact by arguing that the use of the ethnonym Turk for the Hungarians is an archaizing literary convention or by asserting that this ethnonym was attached to Hungarians because of their tribal union with some Turkic groups, such as Kabars. Gyula Moravcsik explains it by arguing

[137] Kaldellis, *Le discours ethnographique à Byzance: Continuité et rupture*, 135.
[138] These fragments are translated and analyzed in Dobrovits, "The Altaic World through Byzantine Eyes: Some Remarks on the Historical Circumstances of Zemarchus' Journey to the Turks (AD 569-570)," 373-409.

that in the late 9th century, the Hungarians were calling themselves as Turks, so the word Turk was their endonym.[139]

After the Seljuk invasions of the 11th century, this ethnonym is also used for the Seljuk Turks. The chronicle of Skylitzes is a striking example of the different uses of the same ethnonym in the same work. The author uses the term for the Turkic slaves/mercenaries in the Abbasid armies, for the Hungarians, and, in the end, for the Seljuks.[140] Attaleiates uses the terms Huns and Turks interchangeably for the Seljuks.[141] Anna Komnene generally refers to the Seljuks as Turks; however, she sometimes employs the term Persian, but generally in the context of the "sultanate of Persia," i.e., Great Seljuks.[142] In her work, the term Persia reflects a political entity, not the homeland of an ethnic group. Yet she seems to be aware of the difference between the Turkish and Persian languages: when she speaks of Abu'l Qasem, the Seljuk governor (and regent) of Nicaea, she points out that he was "commonly called a satrap by the Persians and emir by the Turks who are now masters of the Persian lands."[143] However, in this context, beyond the difference between the two languages, the term satrap is used anachronistically and was part of the lexicon about Antiquity. Finally, she also uses the ethnonym Turk for the Vardariote Turks, a people that could either the Hungarians or the remnants of the Western Oghuz settled in Byzantine Macedonia.[144]

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[139] Constantine Porphyrogenitus, *De Administrando Imperio*, commentary, 13-14.
[140] Skylitzes-Thurn, *Ioannis Scylitzae Synopsis Historiarum*, 75-76 (Turkish slave soldiers in the Abbasid army), 176-177 (Hungarians), 484-485 (Seljuks); Skylitzes-Wortley, *A Synopsis of Byzantine History 811-1057*, 77-78, 170-171 and 451-453.
[141] Attaleiates, *The History*, 142-143, 252-255 and 436-439.
[142] Komnene-Reinsch-Kambylis, *Annae Comnenae Alexias,*11 and 186; Komnene-Sewter-Frankopan, *The Alexiad*, 9 and 169.
[143] Komnene-Reinsch-Kambylis, *Annae Comnenae Alexias,* 222*;* Komnene-Sewter-Frankopan, *The Alexiad*, 202.
[144] Komnene-Reinsch-Kambylis, *Annae Comnenae Alexias,* 126-127 *;* Komnene-Sewter-Frankopan, *The Alexiad*, 115.

The ethnonym Turk was closely related to Skythian. Khalkokondyles brings some explanation to the semantic relation between the terms Turk and Skythian:

> I do not know by what ancient name to call the Turks that would not fall short of the truth about the matter. Some believe that the Turks are descendants of the Skythians, which is quite a reasonable conjecture about them, given that their customs are not all that different and that their languages are even now closely related... Even today, so they say, it is possible to see numerous offshoots of this people roaming about in many parts of Asia, who tend to follow the ways and customs of the nomadic Skythians and have clearly not settled down in any particular part of Asia. And they also add that the barbarian nations of the Turks who live in Asia Minor, I mean in Lydia, Karia, Phrygia and Kappadokia, speak the same language and have the same dress as the Skythians who roam the lands from the Don into Russia.[145]

Khalkokondyles then gives two more theories about the origin of the Turks; one relates them with the Parthians, the other with the Arabs, which I shall deal with in the next chapter on the *origo gentis* narratives about the Seljuk and Ottoman Turks. However, in this passage, there is one of the rare cases that gives some details about the relationship between the actuality and historical tradition. The author clearly states that Turk is the contemporary name given to this population, so any other appellation reflects a narrative strategy or origin theory about Turks.

An ethnonym closely related to Turk, the Turkomanoi (Τουρκομάνοι), is also attested in Byzantine texts. This ethnonym was used only for the Türkmen, the tribal populations which acted somewhat independently from the court of Seljuks of Persia or Rum. The origin of this term is still a matter of dispute: According to Maḥmūd al-Kashgari, the author of the 11th-century compendium of Turkic dialects, the word *Türkmen* is a deformation of the Persian expression *Türk manand* that means "(those who are) similar to Turks."[146] However, this etymology is far from being

[145] Khalkokondyles, *The Histories*, 10-13.
[146] Kaşgarlı Maḥmūd, *Divanü Lügati't Türk*, ed. Erdi - Yurteser, 608.

satisfactory. Modern scholarship gives preference to the possible etymology Türk + "man", where the suffix "man" strengthens the meaning.[147]

In the 11th century, this word was mostly used for the Oghuz who converted to Islam. Afterwards, the words' meaning changed and was used to refer to the Oghuz nomads who acted outside the authority of the Seljuks or any other centralized state in the region. It seems that when the Turks settled in Asia Minor, the meaning of the ethnonym was as such.

The different uses of the words Turks and Türkmen in the early Ottoman chronicles also merit some attention. In Aşıkpaşazade's *Tevarih-i Ali Osman*, the Christians always refer to the Ottomans as the Turks, thus suggesting that in the 15th century, the standard Greek exonym for the Ottoman (and other Anatolian) Turks must have been Τοῦρκοι. Moreover, although Aşıkpaşazade asserts that the Ottomans are of Türkmen origin, he uses this word only to define Turkic nomads outside of the Ottoman state authority, and, generally, with negative connotations.[148]

This term is first attested in the *Epitome* of John Kinnamos, when he describes them as "those who lay beneath his [Qiliç Arslān II] authority, but who are clever at living by thefts and customarily are called Turkomans."[149] George Akropolites, carefully distinguishes the Turcomans from the Persians and describes them as "this is a people who occupy furthest boundaries of the Persians and feel implacable hatred for the Romans, delight in plundering them, and rejoice in booty from wars; this especially at the time when Persian affairs were agitated and thrown into confusion by the Tatar attacks."[150] In this account, the Türkmen are depicted as a

[147] Golden, *An Introduction to the History of the Turkic Peoples*, 212-213. For their social organization see Peacock, *The Great Seljuk Empire*, 28-29.
[148] Mengüç, "The Türk in Aşıkpaşazâde: A Private Individual's Ottoman History," 59.
[149] Kinnamos, *The Deeds of John and Manuel Comnenus*, 158.
[150] Akropolites-Heisenberg, *Georgi Acropolitae Opera*, 136; Akropolites-Macrides, *The History*, 315.

destabilizing force on the edges of the Seljuk sultanate of Rum. Doukas uses the term twice for the rulers of the Anatolian emirates: İsfendiyar the Turcoman (Σφεντιὰρ τοῦ Τουρκομάνου) and [Meḥmed] of Dulkadir, the man who rules the Türkmen of the upper side of Kappadokia (Τουργατὴρ ἀνδρὸς ἀρχιγοῦ τῶν ἐκεῖσε παρακοιμομένον Τουρκομάνον ὑπεράνω Καππαδόκων).[151] Thus, the Byzantine system of ethnonyms was based mostly on the geographical position of the real or imaginary homelands of the related populations. However, the lifestyles of the peoples also had a certain role in determining their location in this system. Thus, an ethnonym as Skythian, which is identified with "north", could be used for the Seljuk Turks that came from the "east".

The association of the barbarian populations with geographical regions, or more generally with the cardinal directions, is not limited to either the ancient Greek or the Byzantine historiographical tradition. The same pattern is present in Chinese historiography and traditional worldview: in ancient China, all the barbarians considered non-Chinese were referred to as *Yi*. The eastern barbarians were called *Dongyi*, the western barbarians *Xirong*, the northern barbarians *Beidi*, and the southern barbarians were called *Nanman.* Despite China's distance from the Greco-Roman world, a similar phenomenon of the formation of a civilized central area that distinguished itself from the various groups they considered not civilized has created similar patterns of the classification of the "barbarians".[152]

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[151] Doukas-Grecu, *Historia Turcobyzantina*, 123, 279; Doukas-Magoulias, *Decline and Fall of Byzantium to the Ottoman Turks*, 105, 186. In the translation of Magoulias, the word Turcoman was also used for Uzun Hasan, the ruler of Akkoyunlu. However, this seems to be an addition by the translator, because in the original Greek text published in the CSHB series, this ethnonym does not appear in that passage: Doukas-Bekker, *Historia Byzantina*, 339; cf. Doukas-Magoulias, *Decline and Fall of Byzantium to the Ottoman Turks*, 257.

[152] Drocourt, "Des simples sauvages aux redoutables étrangers: la notion de «barbares » en Chine ancienne, à travers leurs dénominations," 18-19.

3.4 The Huns: The uses of a late antique ethnonym

The Huns were a nomadic population whom the Romans saw in Late Antiquity. Like many nomadic tribal confederations, they had no ethnic homogeneity; they were formed by several Turkic, Slavic, Iranian, and probably Germanic clans. The Hunnic invasion of Eastern Europe in the 4th and 5th centuries was especially disastrous for the later Roman Empire, both its eastern and western branches, and left strong traces for the European imagination of the Barbarians. Particularly their ruler Attila's (r. 434-453) campaigns triggered the ultimate downfall of the Western Roma Empire. Although the Huns proper no longer played an important role in European politics after the Battle of Nedao (454), their invasion left a long-lasting effect on the historical memory of both the Roman and Germanic peoples. According to Denis Sinor, the name Hun "has become synonymous with that cruel, destructive invaders," and it "has been used pejoratively to stigmatize any ferocious, savage enemy."[153]

The ethnonym Οὖννοι appears in the Greek texts since -at least- the late 4h/early 5th century. According to Gyula Moravcsik, the earliest text in which the term was attested was the fragmentary remnants of the lost history of Eunapius.[154] Because of the Huns' crucial historical role in late antique European history, the ethnonym Hun continued to survive in the later centuries. Moreover, many possibly Turkic nomadic tribes of western Eurasia were defined as Huns by the Byzantine historians of Late Antiquity. According to Agathias, "All these peoples were referred to by the general name of Skythians or Huns, whereas individual tribes had their own particular names, rooted in the ancestral traditions, such as Kutrigurs, Utigurs,

[153] Sinor, *The Cambridge History of Early Inner Asia*, 177.
[154] Moravcsik, *Byzantinoturcica*, vol. 2, 231-237.

Ultizurs, and Burugundi."[155] Jordanes, defines the Huns as "like a fruitful root of bravest races, sprouted into two hordes of people." He called these two hordes as Altziagiri and Sabiri.[156] The ethnonym Hun was synonymous with the nomadic barbarians, although it was not an ethnonym inherited from Classical Antiquity and it was not part of Herodotus' lexicon; it was used frequently for many nomadic nations, such as Bulgars, Avars, Turks, and Cumans, until the 13th century.[157]

Another population that was associated with the Huns were the Hephthalites (Ephtalitae) who founded a kingdom in the historical Bactria region. This population seems to be a multi-ethnic tribal federation that contains both Turkic and Indo-Iranian elements. Hephthalites were also referred to as the White Huns. Furthermore, there were also Red Huns: Kermichiones (Κερμιχιῶνες) were another obscure population attested in Theophanes. Their name seems to be a Greek rendering of the Armenian expression "Karmir Hiyon," which means Red Huns.[158] While recording these names, it should also be remembered that the ancient Turkic peoples had a geographical nomenclature system that identified cardinal directions with colors.

These "Hunnic" populations furthermore adopted Buddhism and ruled parts of contemporary Afghanistan until the Arab invasions. One of the last local dynasties of the region, distinguished by their resolute resistance against the Muslim invaders, was known as Turk-Shahis. Their dynastic name demonstrates the possible interchangeable use of the ethnonyms Hun and Turks in a socio-cultural circle very

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[155] Agathias, *The Histories*, 146. The Burugundi referred to in the text could be either Bulgars or Germanic Burgundians (Burgundi). If they were Burgundians, this fact suggests how these nomadic confederations were heterogeneous.
[156] Jordanes, *Gothic History*, 60.
[157] Moravcsik, *Byzantinoturcica*, vol. 2, 234-235.
[158] Theophanes, *Chronicle*, 351. The author presents the ruler of Kermichiones as "Askel, king of the Hermichiones, who dwell inland of the barbarian nation near the Ocean." For further information about the Turkic peoples in the 6th-century Byzantine sources, see Macartney, "On the Greek Sources for the History of the Turks in the Sixth Century," 266–75.

far from the Byzantine Empire, in the frontiers of the Eastern Iranian – Indian worlds.

In a passage from the *History of the Wars* (Ὑπὲρ τῶν Πολέμων Λόγοι), Procopius of Caesarea describes the Ephtalitae Huns as follows:

> The nation of the Ephthalitae Huns, who are called White Huns (Οὔννων τῶν Ἐφθαλιτῶν ἔθνος, οὕσπερ λευκοὺς ὀνομάζουσι), gathered an imposing army and marched against them. Ephthalitae is of the stock of the Huns in fact as well as in name; however, they do not mingle with any of the Huns known to us […]. Because they are not nomads like the other Hunnic peoples, but for a long period have been established in a goodly land (ἀγαθῆς χώρας).[159]

In this passage, nomadic lifestyle and Hunnic identity were bounded inseparably. Thus, nomadism is the *sine qua non* condition for being a Hun. Consequently, the unique situation of the Ephtalitae Huns, who were isolated from the other branches of the Huns and settled down on a "goodly land," made them different from the other Huns.

This differentiation from the main body of the Hunnic *genos* brought other positive aspects to the Ephtalitae:

> As a result of this, they never made any incursion into the Roman territory except in company with the Median army. They are the only ones among the Huns who have white bodies and countenances which are not ugly. It is also true that their manner of living is unlike that of their kinsmen, nor do they live a savage life as they do; but they are ruled by one king, and since they possess a lawful constitution, they observe right and justice in their dealings both with one another and with their neighbours, in no degree less than the Romans and the Persians.[160]

Procopius, thus, provides significant information on the perception of the Huns in the Byzantine imagination of the 6th century, which can be summarized as follows:

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[159] Procopius of Caesarea, *History of the Wars*, vol. 1, books 1-2, (Persian War), 13-15.
[160] Procopius of Caesarea, *History of the Wars*, vol. 1, 15.

i. The Ephthalitae are ethnically Huns, but culturally not, because they are sedentary people. Their differentiation in lifestyle and isolation (endogamy?) from the other Huns make them less ugly and dark-skinned than their other kinsmen. Even the word "white" could be understood as a marker of differentiation which could possibly have a positive meaning for the Byzantines.

ii. The nomadism (νομάδες) and savage (θήριον) are the social aspects which make a population free from civilized life. To have a lawful constitution and a monarchy (contrary to nomadic confederations ruled by multiple archons) is another aspect of the social life that differentiates Ephthalitae from the other Huns.

iii. A population which is not nomadic meant that it was less dangerous and hostile to the Romans; the sedentary peoples do not engage in pillage campaigns toward imperial territories. They only appear as invaders or looters as allies or mercenaries ("in the company of the Median army").

Another passage from the *History of the Wars* can complete the image of the Huns. In this passage, the Huns are referred to the Massagetae (Μασσαγέται), which is the name of a Skythian nation attested in Herodotus. This passage from Procopius deals with a trial for a murder committed by two Hunnic mercenaries in the Byzantine army, which is concluded with their execution by order of the commander Belisarius. The scene is very well-constructed with a literary taste; the narrative touches on the marginal position of the Hunnic mercenaries in the Roman army, the anxiety of soldiers, and the wisdom of Belisarius as a judge-soldier.

Procopius writes that "two Massagetae killed one of their comrades who was ridiculing them, in the midst of their intemperate drinking; for they were intoxicated. For of all men, the Massagetae are the most intemperate drinkers." Belisarius

punishes the mercenaries in a way which evokes the barbarians: they are impaled on a hill near Abydos. The Hunnic elements in the army dissent by saying that "it was neither to be punished nor to be subject to the laws of the Romans that they had entered into an alliance (for their own laws did not make the punishment for murder, such as this, they said)." Belisarius makes a speech to all soldiers of the army in which he says that "if any barbarian who has slain his kinsman expects to find indulgence in his trial on the ground that he was drunk, in all fairness he makes the charge so much the worse by reason of the very circumstance by which, as he alleges, his guilt is removed."[161]

The passage above shows that, according to Procopius, the Huns have also a law, but it is such a barbarian law that could permit that if a drunken man kills him, comrade-in-arms could have impunity. The drunkenness of the barbarians stressed by Procopius demonstrates another aspect of the perception of the Huns: that they were regarded as intemperate persons, unlike Greco-Roman people who are moderate.

Procopius' text was re-elaborated by Michael Attaleiates six centuries later in his chapter, which deals with the rise of the Seljuks. I shall deal in detail with that account in the next chapter, as an example of *origo gentis* narrative; however, a brief summary of its first passage will be given here. The ethnonym Ephtalitae Huns in Procopius' *History of the Wars* now became the rather mysterious Nepthalite Huns (Οὖννοι Νεφθαλῖται).[162] According to Attaleiates, although the Romans started formal diplomatic relations and exchanged embassies and gifts with them, they did not stop raiding the Byzantine territories because the Huns had a "rapacious nature". For this fact, even the Sultan (Ṭoghrůl Beg) "excused himself by saying that not even

[161] Procopius of Caesarea, *History of the Wars*, vol. 2, Books 3-4. (Vandalic War), 113-115.
[162] Attaleiates, *The History*, 80-81.

he knew the identity of these plunderers who, like wild wolves, were making the raids."[163] Later, Attaleiates also described them as "Nephtalite Huns, that is to say the Turks" (Νεφθαλιτῶν Οὔννων, ἤτοι τῶν Τούρκων),[164] which clearly demonstrates that Huns and Turks were basically the same people in the eyes of an 11th-century Byzantine intellectual. Nevertheless, he states that the *ethnarch* of the Huns is called "sultan" in the Persian language and refers to the Seljuk forces that sacked Neokaisereia in 1068 as "the Persians, who are now called Turks."[165] He calls the forces of the rebellious Seljuk prince, "the Turks of Koutloumous (οἱ Κουτλούμουσιοι Τοῦρκοι) who were encamped at Chrysopolis with the Hunnish host," and writes that their leaders are called "emirs" and "selarioi" (σελάριοι) in the Turkish language.

A similar narrative also appears in the *Synopsis Historion* of John Skylitzes, who defines the Seljuk Turks as "τὸ τῶν Τούρκων ἔθνος γένος μέν ἐστιν Οὐννικόν," i.e. "the Turkish nation which is Hunnic by race."[166] Skylitzes uses the same ethnonym a second and last time, when he narrates the deeds of the Pecheneg warlord Kegenes, by writing that he "on many occasions routed and repelled the Oghuz (a Hunnic people)" [γένος δὲ Οὐννικὸν οἱ Οὖζοι].[167] These Oghuz were not the tribes who were engaged in Seljuk state formation in Transoxiana. Instead, they were another branch of the Oghuz who left their homeland earlier in the 9th century

[163] This passage refers to the Turcoman tribes and other centrifugal forces inside the Seljuk realm that were hard to control and, contrary to the will of their sultan, insisted on plundering Byzantine territories. The metaphor of wild wolves is also noteworthy because of the role of the wolf in Turkic mythology as a totem. On the usage of animal metaphors for the representation of Turks, see Shliakhtin, *From Huns into Persians: The Projected Identity of the Turks in Byzantine Rhetoric of Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries*, 192.
[164] Attaleiates, *The History*, 142-143.
[165] Attaleiates, *The History*, 78-79, 192-193.
[166] Skylitzes-Thurn, I*oannis Scylitzae Synopsis Historiarum*, 442; Skylitzes-Wortley, *A Synopsis of Byzantine History, 811-1057*, 416.
[167] Skylitzes-Thurn, *Ioannis Scylitzae Synopsis Historiarum*, 455; Skylitzes-Wortley, *A Synopsis of Byzantine History, 811-1057*, 427.

and migrated westward into the Pontic steppes and stayed untouched by the influence of Islam. Then, they migrated further to the Balkans in the 11th century and interacted with the Byzantines. Thus, as these passages demonstrate, Hunnic identity was not considered to be limited within the boundaries of nationhood; rather it was regarded as a *genos* (γένος), a race which is based on a nomadic lifestyle, savagery, and a roughly Asiatic provenance. As was mentioned, before the peoples or nations (ἔθνοι) are constructed as the branches of a *genos*, as demonstrated in the relationship between the identities, such as Ephtalitae, Massagetae, Oghuz and Seljuks and the Huns. This model could explain the Byzantine worldview regarding the classification of the foreign peoples according to their lifestyles. Neither ethnic identity in a modern sense nor linguistic vicinities did play any significant role in that classification. Another point to be noted is that the Huns had no a permanent fatherland and in every narrative their region of origin is different. Although there is a Persia of Persians and even a Skythia of Skythians, there is no Hunnia. Thus, in every narrative, the place of origin of the Huns varies: from the misty Lake Maeotis to the banks of the Ganges River.[168] The Huns possessed a special situation as being a non-territorial and non-geographical nation.

In later sources like the histories of Niketas Khoniates and John Kinnamos, the abovementioned ethnonym Οὖννοι is used persistently for the Hungarians. The new identification of the term firstly with the Hungarians (Magyars), who were a Finno-Ugric tribal confederation that was settled in the Pannonian Basin (Alföld) in the 10th century where the Huns had settled there roughly four centuries earlier, and

[168] Lake Maeotis is proposed by the late antique authors Priscus and Ammianus Marcellinus as the homeland of the Huns, and Attaleiates put the Hunnic homeland in a country "separated from the land of Persia by the Ganges River."

then with the Turkic Cumans, who were closely related to the Hungarian crown, demonstrates a new mechanism based on the standard principle of geography.

3.5 Persians between the Skythians and Saracens

As I already cited Kaldellis, the ethnonym Skythian was semantically close to Hun, and these two words could be used interchangeably. Both of the ethnonyms reflected the pastoral and nomad outsiders of the Greco-Roman *oikoumene*. Since the 7th century, the ethnonym Skythian has been employed to refer to various Turkic populations engaged in a nomadic life and looting activities, mostly in the Balkan frontier of the Byzantine Empire.

As mentioned before, Skythian is one of the oldest ethnonyms; thus its semantic connotations can be traced back deep in history. This ethnonym is employed originally to define an Iranian nomadic population of the Pontic Steppe, the population known as *Saka* by Persians. Skythians occupy an important part of the *Histories* of Herodotus as the barbarian nomads whose lifestyles were in contrast both with Greeks and Persians.

The moral connotations of the Skythians were bad as the Huns. Michael Attaleiates describes the Skythians (in this case, the Pechenegs) as follows:

> But the Skythians, who are popularly called Pechenegs, crossed the Danube with all their people and soon established themselves on Roman territory. This race practices armed raids more than any other skill or art and makes its living by continuous use of the sword, bow, and arrow. They are loathsome in their diet and the other aspects of their life, and do not abstain from eating foul foods. By some evil chance, they poured over the Roman borders and later on caused many hardships that it would not be possible to enumerate in detail here.[169]

[169] Attaleiates, *The History*, 52-53.

The ethnonym Skythian will be further used for the Cumans and Mongols in Byzantine historiography in later centuries. Still, it should be noted that Skythian is the ethnonym which has created the biggest problem for researchers because of the excessive use of the word for all the steppe peoples. It is not easy to distinguish between a Pecheneg or Cuman in the 12th century or a Mongol or Cuman in the 14th century Balkans.[170]

Skythia is the country of Skythians. Since Herodotus, it was represented as a realm of the wilderness without well-defined borders. It corresponds very roughly to the Eurasian steppes. As it was stressed by François Hartog, it is "the land of ἐρημία and ἐσχατιά," in other words, it is the desert (and wilderness) and the edge. Σκυθῶν ἐρημία (Skythian Desert) was an expression used for rough persons without social relations.[171] This usage is attested in Aristophanes. However, in the late 13th-early 14th century George Pakhymeres employed this term to indicate the territories ruled by the Golden Horde. Thus, Skythia and Skythian Desert are terms indicating unknown, quasi-mythical lands with mostly negative connotations.

A frequently attested subgroup of the Skythian is the Sauromatae. The Sauromatae or Sarmatians were originally a population of Skythian origin dwelling in today's Ukraine in Late Antiquity. Their homeland, Sarmatia, was also called Skythia Minor (Little Skythia) by the Romans. This ethnonym was later employed for the Hungarians, Pechenegs, and Oguz.[172] It has a mixed geographical and social character. Thus, being a branch of the Skythians, it indicates a nomadic way of life. However, it only contains the nomadic populations that appeared in the northern

[170] This confusion is particularly remarkable in the work of Kinnamos, which covers the period 1118-1176, in which Pechenegs and Cumans were present together in the Balkans. The author still insists – nearly always- on classical ethnonyms.
[171] Hartog, *Le miroir d'Hérodote: Essai sur la représentation de l'autre*, 31
[172] Beyond the limits of the timeframe and corpus of this thesis, but it should be noted that some minor sources of later periods employ this term also for Seljuks and Ottomans.

frontiers of the Byzantine Empire, i.e., the regions close to the ancient Sauromatae homeland.

The abovementioned ethnonym Persian used for the Seljuk Turks reflects the idea that the Seljuks took over a well-defined realm that existed since Herodotus' times and became the new rulers of this country. Thus, this identification puts the Seljuks on a geographical field and makes them related to a country/state that had existed since Classical Antiquity. This could be further formulated as a *translatio imperii* in which the imperium of Persia, once governed by the Medes, Achaemenids, Parthians, and Sassanids, and even by the Arabs after the Muslim invasion of Persia, was now taken over by the Turks. However, the ethnonym Persian is employed to design the Great Seljuks that ruled over Persia and for the Seljuk Sultanate of Rum based on Ikonion. Rustam Shukurov explains this situation as an exception that the term is used for a population not based in Persia. The term Persian acquires an ambivalent status after the Byzantine loss of Asia Minor, and it becomes a generic term for all the Turks in the Muslim Near East.[173] However, slightly before using the term Persians for the Seljuk Turks in Asia Minor, which became a convention; an author like Anna Komnene could carefully separate the Grand Seljuks and Seljuks of Rum by employing the term Persian for the first and Turk for the second.[174]

It should be still noted that the Seljuks, even its branch in Rum, was a Persianate state that embraced the Persian culture and used Persian as the language of the court and bureaucracy; then self-identified with the ancient Persian heroes whose

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[173] Shukurov, *The Byzantine Turks, 1204–1461*, 43.
[174] Durak, "Defining the 'Turk': Mechanisms of Establishing Contemporary Meaning in the Archaizing Language of the Byzantines," 59, 76. Shliakhtin calls the Byzantine use of the term Persian for the Seljuks in the 12th century as the "persification" of the Turks in the Byzantine discourse. Shliakhtin, *From Huns into Persians: The Projected identity of the Turks in the Byzantine Rhetoric of Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries*, 57-69

deeds Firdausi narrated in his *Shāhnāmah*. Moreover, they used the titles and symbols of the ancient Persian monarchy as an instrument of dynastic legitimacy.

The figure of the arch-rival Persian could also regenerate the memories of a distant past. These memories could be expressed even as a prophecy: when Constantine Monomachos deployed the Macedonian forces on the eastern front, according to Skylitzes, the Turks were rumoring that they would "be overturned by a force similar to that with which Alexander the Macedonian overturned the Persians."[175] Gregory Palamas refers to the earthquake of Gallipoli in 1354 which caused the Ottoman takeover of the city by saying: "This earthquake brought this city into the hands of the Achaimenids (Ἀχαιμενίδαι) that we now call Turks."[176] This phrase clearly draws a historical parallelism between the Persian crossing of Dardanelles and the invasion of Thrace and the early Ottoman expansion into the Thracian territories of Byzantium.

However, this ethnonym implies not only a geographical belonging but also a moral connotation; as it was told in the *Strategikon* attributed to the emperor Maurice (r. 582-602): "Persians are perverted, dissembling and slavish, but they love their country and are also obedient."[177]

An ethnonym closely related to the Persians, the Parthians (Πάρθοι) was also sometimes employed to refer to the Turks. They were an Iranian nomadic ethnic group that successfully invaded Iran in the 2nd century BC and founded there a dynasty that ruled this country until the rise of the Sassanids.[178] The dynasty that ruled the Parthian Kingdom was the Arsacid dynasty. Niketas Khoniates presents

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[175] Skyliztes-Thurn, *Ioannis Scylitzae Synopsis Historiarum*, 479, Skylitzes-Wortley; *A Synopsis of Byzantine History 811-1057*, 447.
[176] Philippides-Braat, "La captivité de Palamas chez les Turcs - Dossier et commentaire," 138.
[177] Odorico, "L'étranger et son imaginaire dans la littérature byzantine," 66.
[178] Moravcsik, *Byzantinoturcica*, vol. 2, 247. In Chapter 4, I shall deal with Laonikos Khalkokondyles' *origo gentis* narrative that relates the Ottoman Turks with Parthians.

Danishmend Gazi, the eponymous founder of the Danishmendid dynasty, as Περσαρμένιος Ταϊσμάνιος and affiliates the Danishmendid rulers with this dynasty.[179] The Armenian branch of the dynasty, called Arshakuni, ruled this country until the 5th century AD. Leaving apart the theory of the Armenian origin of Danishmendids, which was claimed by the Armenian historian Matthew of Edessa,[180] who was contemporary of Danishmend Gazi, this ethnonym probably indicated a symbolism similar to Persian, with further emphasis on nomadism. However, the Islamic religious affiliation of the Seljuks was putting them on new ground: on a religious identity. In fact, the Byzantines never used the word Persian (or Median) for the Arabs. They were always Saracens (Σαρακηνοί), Agarenes (Ἀγαρηνοί) or Ismaelites (Ἰσμαηλῖται).[181] The first ethnonym's etymology is not clear, however it is a term used for different groups of Arabs since Late Antiquity. Agarenes and Ismaelites are terms related to the biblical genealogies, in which the Arabs descend from Abraham's son Ismael, who was not born from the legitimate wife of the biblical patriarch but her slave Agar.[182]Saracen is an ethnic term for the Arabs, which is never used for the Turks, as Koray Durak brilliantly demonstrated it in his article that challenges Moravcsik's claim that it was a term that is used to indicate the Turks. The sporadic use of the other two ethnonyms for the Seljuk and Ottoman Turks is attested after the 12th century; this use seems related to an ideological change in the motivations of the Seljuk-Byzantine conflict in Asia Minor.

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[179] Khoniates-Bekker, *Nicetae Choniatae Historia*, 27; Khoniates-Magoulias, *O City of Byzantium*, 12.
[180] Mathieu d'Édesse, *Chronique de Mathieu d'Édesse,* 256: "Danishmend, grand émir du pays des Romains, et Arménien d'origine, cessa de vivre."
[181] Durak, "Defining the 'Türk': Mechanisms of Establishing Contemporary Meaning in the Archaizing Language of the Byzantines," 72. See also Savvides, "Some Notes on the Terms Agarenoi, Ismailitai and Sarakenoi in Byzantine Sources," 89-96.
[182] Savvides, "Some Notes on the Terms Agarenoi, Ismailitai and Sarakenoi in Byzantine Sources," 90-95.

Still, one can speculate that there could be imagined a possible antagonism between Persians and Skythians as the one between the Romans and Skythians according to their ways of life. While the Skythian identity reflected pastoral/nomadic society, Persia implies an established "imperial" order, not similar but somewhat parallel to the Roman/Byzantine Empire. Thus, the naming change from Skythian to Persian also indicated a passage from the nomadic federation to the sultanate (see Table 3).

Table 3. Persians and Skythians

Persian	*Skythian*
Sedentary	Nomad
Empire	Tribal Federation
Eastern	Northern

Byzantine sources hardly mention any king, ruler or monarch of the peoples called Skythian. They have archons (ἄρχων) or hegemons (ήγεμών). It is not the result of the *mimesis* of the ancient sources. Indeed, the nomadic steppe societies generally do not have a centralized authority, yet every tribe has their *beg*s who govern over them. This social structure –according to Skylitzes: "they are divided into thirteen tribes all of which have the same name in common, but each tribe has its own proper name inherited from its own ancestor and chieftain"[183]- creates the appearance of a deeply fragmented and even chaotic society in the eyes of Byzantine authors and it fits perfectly the image of a barbarian society.

[183] Skylitzes-Thurn, *Ioannis Scylitzae Synopsis historiarum*, 455; Skyliztes-Wortley, *A synopsis of Byzantine history*, 811-1057, 426

Another social aspect of Skythians is whether they have a law or not. In the eyes of Byzantines, the presence of a law (νόμος) is a sine qua non-feature of people that makes them barbarian or non-barbarian. As it was seen in the passage from Procopius, in which the difference between Ephalitae and other Hunnic peoples was discussed, the author stressed the presence of law and a king ("but they are ruled by one king, and since they possess a lawful constitution") as the aspects that differentiated them from the rest of the Huns. The notion of law is also related to the affiliation to a monotheistic, i.e., non-pagan religion. In the texts studied for this dissertation, there is a correlation between the law and monarch as the institutions of the civilized nation.

In concluding this section, a final remark should be made on the relationship between toponyms and ethnonyms. By definition, Skythia is the land of the Skythians, and Tourkia is the land of the Turks. However, especially after the 12th century, the use of the Persian ethnonym for Seljuk Turks in Byzantine texts becomes widespread. But the Sultanate of Rum corresponds to a different place than Persia. Central Anatolia is not Persia geographically. However, the cultural geography perception of Byzantine intellectuals was not shaped by strict boundaries. The Seljuks came from Iran and the geographical location of the Sultanate of Rum is in continuity with Iran. In a sense, this overlaps with cultural memories from Antiquity, the Achaemenid and Sassanid era, like a palimpsest. Moreover, as Shukurov indicates, the language widely spoken in the city centers of Anatolia during the Seljuk period was Persian.[184] According to an anecdote quoted by Shukurov from Eustathios of Thessaloniki, so many Anatolian Turkish prisoners were settled in Thessaloniki in 1178 that this region began to be called "New

[184] Shukurov, *The Byzantine Turks*, 40.

Persia".[185] In short, calling the Turks in Anatolia Persians does not completely repeat the pattern mentioned, but is understandable in terms of wider cultural geography.

3.6 Pagans or Muslims: Turks, religion, and religiosity

The Islamization of the Oghuz Turks is still a subject of scholarly debate. However, the sources agree that the 11th century was the period when the Oghuz Turks' conversion to Islam became a massive phenomenon.[186]

The formation of the Seljuk proto-state and their conversion to Islam were probably related. Seljuk, the eponymous founder of the dynasty, was a *subashi* in the court of an Oghuz or Khazar ruler that could be Jewish or pagan. The early dynastic narrative about the formation of the Seljuk Sultanate stresses a religious conflict between Seljuk and his ruler. This tradition echoes a possible political conflict in the élite of the abovementioned state which results in the self-exile and later conversion of the dissidents and their later memory of this moment as a retrospective ethos.[187]

The Seljuk Turks, independently from the level of their religious zeal, entered into the classical Islamic *oikoumene* as the saviour and allies of the Abbasid Caliphs who were disturbed by the military control of Iraq by Buyids. Starting with Ṭoghrůl Beg, who was their first sultan to rule Persia and Iraq, they presented themselves as the devout Sunnis. According to Arabic traditions in the earliest phase of the Byzantine-Seljuk relations, in negotiation between Constantine IX Doukas and Ṭoghrůl Beg, the latter stipulated the renovation of the mosque of Constantinople and the nomination of the name of the Abbasid Caliph (instead of Fatimid Caliph) in the

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[185] Shukurov, *The Byzantine Turks*, 245.
[186] Here, the Oghuz Turks in question were the ones who were involved in the Seljuk state apparatus. Before the 11th century, there were earlier conversions of the Volga Bulgars and Karluks.
[187] Peacock, *Early Seljuq History: A New Interpretation*, 16-47 for their early history, .99 ff. about the Seljuks and religion. He argues basically that the zealous Sunni image of the Seljuks was a mechanism of political legitimization, not the reality itself.

Muslim prayers in that mosque. Whether they were pious Sunnites or not, the Seljuks paid special attention to giving the impression of their affiliation to Sunnism, in order to enforce their authority and legitimacy in their recently-conquered territories.[188]

In the early Byzantine depictions of the Seljuk Turks, however, there is no clear reference to their adherence to the Muslim faith. Furthermore, there is no reference to a Muslim holy war that the Byzantines knew of it since the early Arab invasions. Seljuk raids are depicted as standard looting campaigns of the nomads; there is hardly any mention of either religious motivation or religious zeal.

In Attaleiates' history, the author stresses the similarity and near-equality between the lifestyle of Seljuks and Pechenegs although the former are Muslims and the latter are still faithful to their ancient pagan beliefs despite the evangelization of some of their leaders. According to Attaleiates, "The Skythian mercenaries, moreover, resembled the Turks in all respects."[189]

Furthermore, this resemblance could nourish Byzantine doubts on possible defection to Seljuk's side on the battlefield: "That same day, a band of Skythians commanded by a certain Tamis went over to the enemy, which threw the Romans into some real consternation because they suspected that the rest of those people, whose way of life was so similar to that of the Turks, might join them and fight on their side."[190] Furthermore, when he narrates the battle of Hierapolis[191] (1068) between the Byzantines and Syrian Bedouin dynasty Mirdasids that were allied to Seljuks, he points out the Arabs' motivation to combat by saying, "They (Saracens) fought in their traditional way for the defense of their religion and city but were

[188] Beihammer, "Orthodoxy and Religious Antagonism in Byzantine Perceptions of the Seljuk Turks (Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries)," 15-36, here 9.
[189] Attaleiates, *The History*, 284-285.
[190] Attaleiates, *The History*, 286-287.
[191] Today, it is the city of Manbij in Syria.

unable to hold out forever."[192] This particular emphasis on religiously motivated war was never employed for Seljuks in his work.

Thus, as it was already mentioned before, the lifestyle is the strongest way that binds the different nations (or tribes) that were members of the same *genos* to each other and this affiliation to the same genos can provoke defections between these populations during the times of war.

This passage demonstrates that although they were converted to Islam, the general view of the Seljuk army resembles more a Pecheneg horde that practiced Turkic paganism than the armies of the Caliphates which were present in Byzantine historical memory, or Syrian Arab Emirates, such as the Hamdanids of Aleppo, conflicts with whom constituted a recent layer of history.

Alexander Beihammer also stresses the similar perception of Seljuk Turks shared by Michael Attaleiates and Armenian and Syriac writers who wrote on the early Seljuk raids on the eastern border of the empire and explains their common tendency to represent the Seljuk Turks as "first and foremost as fierce barbarians, not as representatives of a new Muslim threat. We may safely assume that the Islamic faith of the Turkish warriors that the Byzantines were confronting in the first phase of the conquest period, at least from the perspective of outside observers, was not very visible, nor a determining factor of their behavior."[193]

This representation began to change in the 11th century. Anna Komnene sometimes used the terms Agarenoi or Ismaelitai for the Turks. However, in general terms, it does not differ from earlier texts, those of Skylitzes and Attaleiates, which pre-date this period by half a century. Like many Byzantine authors, Anna Komnene

[192] Attaleiates, *The History*, 200-201.
[193] Beihammer, "Orthodoxy and Religious Antagonism," 20-21.

did not have a clear idea of Islam. The Byzantine intellectuals, generally perceived Islam as a kind of heresy. However, she also attributes to them the aspects associated with Greco-Roman paganism. According to her, "Ismaelitai" are "slaves to drunkenness, wine and Dionysos," "dominated by Dionysos and Eros" and "nothing more than slaves of the vices of Aphrodite."[194]

John Kinnamos, whose history starts off where Anna Komnene's *Alexiad* ends, tends to see the Pechenegs' lifestyle (he calls them Skythians) as the way of life that Persians (Seljuk Turks) used to live: "Since they (Persians) were still untrained in agricultural labours, but gulped milk and devoured meat, like Skythians and were always uncamped in scatterings on the plain, they were ready prey to whoever wished to attack them. Thus, the Persians had previously lived."[195] He states the actual lifestyle of Pechenegs was a level of civilization that Seljuks recently got through. However, this depiction says nothing about the religious beliefs or practices of Seljuks. Kinnamos still explains the religion of Seljuks by noting its similarities to the beliefs of other steppe people. The author mentions "Halisians" (Χαλισίοι), an ethnoreligious group among the Christian Huns (i.e., Hungarians) who practice "Mosaic Law,"[196] and says that they agree on the same doctrine as the Persians. According to the author Halisians' Judaism and Seljuks,' Islam is basically the same

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[194] Komnene-Reinsch-Kambylis, *Annae Comnenae Alexias,* 298*;* Komnene-Sewter-Frankopan, *The Alexiad*, 276. For an overview of Byzantine ideas about Islam, see Meyendorff, "Byzantine Views of Islam," 115-132. Meyendorff stresses that there are two Byzantine approaches on Islam, the first views it as paganism, the second views it as a heresy that shares the basic Monotheist aspects of Christianity. It seems that the latter view is much more common.

[195]Kinnamos-Meineke, *Rerum ab Ioanne et Alexio Comnenis Gestarum*, 9, Kinnamos-Brand, *Deeds of John and Manuel Komnenos*, 17. I slightly changed Brand's translation because the translator employs contemporary ethnic and geographical terms and sometimes loses the nuances between the notions.

[196] Kinnamos-Meineke, *Rerum ab Ioanne et Alexio (sic) Comnenis Gestarum*, 10; Kinnamos-Brand, *Deeds of John and Manuel Komnenos*, 86,

belief, and it is a heterodoxy.[197] However, Kinnamos was also aware that the Caliphate was a source of spiritual authority for the Muslim world, which also covers the Sultanate of Rum. He notes that in the correspondence between Manuel I and Qiliç Arslān II, when the former asks the cause of the latter's infidelity to their treaty and hostile military actions against Byzantium, the sultan responds by saying that the Caliph (Kinnamos defines him as μέγας ἀρχιερεύς, the high priest) was angered to him because of his amicable relations with Byzantium.[198] This reference demonstrates that the religious antagonism between the Seljuks and Byzantines resulted from an exterior factor, rather their own zeal.

To see a more obvious and religiously antagonistic depiction of Islam as the religion of the Anatolian Turks, one must wait until the 14th century; first, the letters of the captivity of Gregory Palamas, then the *Historia Turco-Byzantina* of Doukas provide us with some more detail about the evolution of this image. Doukas' history is the text that emphasizes most on the religion's role in the Turkish military expansion. Particularly before the 14th century, there was no significant reference to the visible symbols of Islam. No Byzantine authors mention Islamic rituals; neither is there any reference to the segregation of sexes which was frequent in classical Muslim societies.

Gregory Palamas, who was a prominent theologian himself, after falling captive to Turkish pirates in the Aegean Sea, as was narrated in chapter 1, experienced a short-time stay at the Ottoman court. There he first meets Ismail, the grandson of Orkhan, a young Ottoman prince who seems quite interested in

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[197] Kinnamos-Meineke, *Rerum ab Ioanne et Alexio (sic) Comnenis Gestarum*, 247; Kinnamos-Brand, *Deeds of John and Manuel Comnenus*, 186 "και εισιν ἑτερόδοξοι, καθάπερ ᾔδή ἔφην, πέρσαις ταυτοφρονοῦντεσ".
[198] Kinnamos-Meineke, *Rerum ab Ioanne et Alexio (sic) Comnenis Gestarum*, 289, Kinnamos-Brand, *Deeds of John and Manuel Comnenus* 216.

theological discussion. Then, he was brought to Nicea and engaged in theological debates with the Danişmends and a group of enigmatic religious men called Χιόναι[199] whom the author presented as "the men who studied and learned nothing else than blasphemy and impudence against Jesus-Christ by (their teacher) Satan." He carefully differentiates the Χιόναι and the Danişmends who seem to be Muslim scholars. He knows that the Islamic faith is a branch of Abrahamic religions and – although he never uses this word- he sees it as a heresy created by a false prophet whom Christians cannot accept. Palamas never uses the word "Agarene" or "Musulman" but constructs the religious antagonism between the Christians and Turks.

Furthermore the author's opinion about the Xionai is more negative than his opinion about the Turks: "After what I heard about them (Xionai) and what they said, they are obviously Hebrews and me, under these circumstances I do not speak to Hebrews." Thus, Palamas' anti-Semitism is stronger than his defiance against the Turks.[200]

Doukas, who wrote roughly in the 1460s, stresses the Muslim identity of the Ottomans. When he describes the Ottoman sultan Bāyazīd I, one of the villains of his *History*, he presents him as "a feared man, precipitate in deeds of war, a persecutor of Christians as no other around him, and in the religion of the Arabs a most ardent disciple of Muhammed, whose unlawful commandments were observed to the

[199] The identity of Χιόναι is still a matter of discussion. G. G. Arnakis identified this word with the Turkish word "ahi" and Paul Wittek with "hoca;" however, both J. Meyendorff and G. M. Prohorov stressed that this group is not considered really Muslim by Palamas and must be a heretical Jewish sect. Anna Phillipides-Braat interprets other sparse references to this group and defines them as a Jewish group who converted to Islam. According to Michel Balivet, this word is the Greek rendering of kühhan (the plural of kâhin=oracle): Balivet, "Byzantins judaïsants et Juifs islamisés. Des 'Kühhân' (Kâhin) aux 'Xiónai' (Xiónos)," 24-59. For an overview of the discussion, see Phillippides-Braat, "La captivité de Palamas chez les Turcs: Dossier et commentaire," 214-218.

[200] Phillipides-Braat, "La captivité de Palamas chez les Turcs - Dossier et commentaire," 170.

utmost, never sleeping, spending his nights contriving intrigues and machinations against the rational flock of Christ."[201]

This description, which re-elaborates Procopius' portrait of Justinian II in his *Historia Arcana*, has remarkable details to interpret. Firstly, Doukas does not build up the antagonism on the duality between the barbarians and Greeks. However, he stresses the persecution of Christians (similar to the persecutions of Christians in the hands of the pagan Roman emperors). Secondly, although the sultan is "the ruler of the Turks" (ἀρχηγὸς τῶν Τούρκων), he practices the "cult of the Arabs" (τῶν Ἀράβων θρησκεία). Thus, Islam is the religion of the Arabs, which –in its deepest roots– is identified with another population that lives in the countries very far from the vanishing Byzantine world. However, the Ottoman Turks appear as the spearheads of this faith, which is still the "cult of the Arabs." Thus, Doukas clearly distinguishes religion and ethnicity.

Khalkokondyles, who wrote roughly in the same decade as Doukas, gives even a brief digression of early Islamic history. It seems that, despite sometimes making factual errors on the subject, he has satisfactory knowledge of the tenets of Islam and the geography of the Arabian Peninsula. [202] However, Khalkokondyles employs a much milder language both on the religion, and the empire of the Ottomans. He was a student of the Athenian philosopher Plethon and interested much more in the antiquity of Greeks than Byzantine and Christian culture. His history was based on the Herodotean model, and the history of the Ottomans covers the central part of the text, just like the Persians in the *History* of Herodotus. One can furthermore dare to say that as an early Greek example of renaissance,

[201] Doukas-Grecu, *Historia Turcobyzantina*, 39; Doukas-Magoulias, *Decline and Fall of Byzantium to the Ottoman Turks*, 62.
[202] Khalkokondyles *The Histories*, 193-205.

Khalkokondyles' approach to the Ottoman world was beyond the antagonisms of the Byzantine worldview.

The following passage in the work of Sphrantzes also merits attention:

> Lord Manuel was greatly admired by the Anatolian Turks in the retinue of Prince Mustafa, who thought that in appearance he resembled Mohammed, the founder of their faith. Bayazid, Manuel's enemy, had once remarked that even if one did not know the emperor, Manuel's appearance would make: "This man must be emperor."[203]

This passage sheds light on the 15th-century Turks' imagination of the prophet Muhammad. Sphrantzes clearly mentions the attitudes of "Anatolian Turks in the retinue of prince Mustafa," so these soldiers are not janissaries or soldiers of Greek or other origins that recently converted to Islam who still had respect for the Byzantine emperor. However, the association of a Christian ruler with the prophet, even for his physical characteristics, is unusual. The passage probably demonstrates that these "Anatolian Turks" lacked religious fanaticism and had a fluid religious approach.

In brief, the Turks' affiliation with the Islamic faith becomes more visible, especially after the 14th century and this fact could be followed closely in Byzantine historiography dealing with the Turks. It is obviously related to a deeper appropriation of the institutions and rituals identified with Islam by the Turks. However, the evolution of the Byzantine-Seljuk conflict must not be understood independently from the internal evolution of the Seljuk polity, which once had a more "Hunnic" or "Skythian" structure, at least in the eyes of the Byzantine authors, but later had a more "Persian" administration; I use the term to describe a well-established, Islamic, Persianate court organization. Thus, as I already mentioned, the

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[203] Sphrantzes-Maisano, *Georgii Sphrantzae Chronicon*, 22; Sphrantzes-Philippides, *The Fall of the Byzantine Empire. A Chronicle by George Sphrantzes 1401-1477*, 28.

ethnonym Persian hardly indicates any ethnicity but a geographical and socio-cultural association with the country, culture, and political heritage of Persia. The 12th-century poet John Tzetzes (d. 1180) wrote a poem in which he employed phrases from seven different languages, which also included verses in Persian (Old Anatolian Turkish) and Skythian (Cuman or Pecheneg), employing expressions in the Turkish vernacular, not in Persian itself.[204] However, it should be noted that the Byzantines were never too interested in others' religions. They were not interested in an ethnographic depiction of the others' religion. They hardly give any hint on a particular religious practice or a belief of a foreign nation. This fact does not permit us to understand or to reconstruct the real nature of the "idolatry" and "polytheism" of the barbarians. However, they were much more aware of Islam. Although they generally regarded it as a kind of paganism, it could be used as an *ex nihilo* argument to the religious character of the 11th century Turks. However, as it was pointed out by Shukurov, in the Byzantine canonical literature, the epithets "heathen" and "Hagarene" were very often used together. The fact that the Turks were Muslim or pagan did not mean much to the Byzantines. They were non-Christian barbarians, they adhered to a "barbarian doctorine."[205]

Now, a question that should be asked is, under these circumstances, how did religion differentiate the Seljuk Turks in Anatolia from Turkic pagan nomads in the Balkans in the eyes of Byzantine authors?

[204] The abovementioned verses of Tzetzes' poem are cited in Moravcsik, *Byzantinoturcica*, vol. 2, 19. A new interpretation is offered in Shukurov, *The Byzantine Turks, 1204-1461*, 49-51.
[205] Philippides-Braat, "La captivité de Palamas chez les Turcs: Dossier et commentaire," 140.

3.7 Mongols and Timurids in Byzantine sources

The Mongols were a nomadic ethnic group that, until their unexpected expansion in the 13th century, lived outside the borders of Byzantine geographical knowledge. So until the 13th century, there was no reference to Mongols in Byzantine sources. The Mongol invasion of Western Asia was one of the key events that determined the human landscape of the whole region, particularly Asia Minor. It triggered new waves of Turkic migration to Anatolia. The decline of the Seljuk Sultanate of Rum after the defeat at the battle of Kösedağ (1243) at the hands of the Mongols also loosened the sultanate's authority on the various Türkmen groups in the southern and western edges of Turco-Muslim Anatolia and permitted the corrosive looting of Byzantine territories by the Türkmen.

The Mongol monarchy of Persia, called the Ilkhanate, was the suzerain of the Seljuks of Rum. Their early rulers Hulagu (r. 1256-1265), Abaqa (r. 1265-1282), Arghun (r. 1284-1291), and Gaykhatu (r. 1291-1295) were not Muslim and they had somewhat revoked the traditional privileges of Sunni Muslims in Iraq and Persia. Furthermore, there were also Mongols in the Balkans, Eastern Europe, and Crimea. This subdivision of the Mongol Empire was known as D̲joči Ulus by their contemporaries and today it is commonly called the Golden Horde. The authority of Mongols in the northern Balkans was also very strong. The principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia and the Kingdom of Bulgaria were the tributary states of the Golden Horde. Even a Mongol prince of the imperial dynasty of Borjigin, Chaka (r. 1299-1300), once became the king of Bulgaria. In the following chapters, I shall also address in detail the close relationship of Kaykāʾūs II, Sultan of Rum in exile, with the khans of the Golden Horde. The Golden Horde was fragmented as a result of its internal crises in the mid-15th century, and there formed several entities that

claim the legacy of this state. The Khanates of Crimea and Kazan were the most important successors of the Golden Horde. Apart from Djoči Ulus and Ilkhanate, the other successor states of the Mongol Empire were the Khanate of Chagatai in Transoxiana and the Yuan Empire in China. In the early 14th century, all of these monarchies were still ruled by the khans of Genghisid descent.

Secondly, similar to the western expectations about the future role of the Mongols as a force that balanced the Muslims in the east, also the Byzantines expected that the Mongols could be appropriate allies against the Muslims. The early Mongol rulers' rather sympathetic approach to Christianity probably contributed to these hopes. Some Mongol (or Turco-Mongol) nomadic groups in Central Asia adopted Nestorian Christianity in the 12th and 13th centuries. Sartaq Khan, the second ruler of the Golden Horde (r. 1256-1257), was a staunch follower of Orthodox Christianity. However, the Ilkhanate rulers subsequently converted to Islam and the country's native Persian culture took over Mongolian institutions.

The first news about the Mongols appears in the work of Akropolites: he uses the ethnonym Ταχάριοι, a word that echoes both Τόχαροι and Τάταροι, Tocharians, and Tatars (see Table 4). The Tocharians are an ancient Indo-European people whose name is attested in ancient geographical sources. They were living in the Tarim basin and the cities along the Silk Road, until their assimilation by the Turkic nomads, particularly by Uyghurs. Tatar is the name of a Mongolian tribe of the Pre-Genghisid era. The use of the ethnonym Tocharian demonstrates the classicizing approach, yet the word Tatar is probably a Turkish loanword in Byzantine Greek.

The second Byzantine text dealing with the Mongols is the work of Pakhymeres. Pakhymeres wrote his text in a period where the Byzantine-Mongol alliance seems to be a possible survival strategy. Pakhymeres explains the emperor

Michael VIII's strategy regarding the Mongols with two principles: use the "Persians" (i.e. Seljuk Turks) as a barrier against the Mongols and conclude a marriage alliance with the latter. The emperor succeeds in these two policies: the Turks in Western Anatolia constitutes a buffer zone between the Byzantines and Mongols in Asia Minor and he sends his illegitimate daughter Maria Palaiologina to the court of Ilkhanate as a bride. The princess marries with Abaqa Khan.[206] Then the Byzantine Empire makes a second marriage alliances with the Mongols, this time with the Golden Horde by marrying another illegitimate daughter, Euphrosyne with the de-facto ruler of this polity, Nogai. However, this policy of rapprochement did not lessen the Byzantine people's fear of the Mongols. The ordinary Byzantines do not see the Mongols as an ally. The rumors of a Mongol raid to Nicaea creates a terrible wave of panic in the Bithynian city.

However, when Pakhymeres evaluates the history of the Mongols in a retrospective way, he could interpret their past using historical concepts and figures familiar to Byzantine intellectuals: Their first lawgiver (νομοθέτης) was neither Solon, Lycurgus or Draco, because the Mongols are not Athenians or Lacedaemonians. Despite they are brave at war, they are still the savages and they live in a barbarian way. However, their lawgiver Genghis Khan -the author stresses that he remembers his name- commanded them justice and truth, and they are faithful to his legacy and they live without intrigues and deception.[207]

The Mongols were referred to as Μουγούλιοι, Τόχαροι and Ἄταροι (probably a misspelling of Τάταροι, Tatars) in Pakhymeres (see Table 4). The use of this ethnonym demonstrates the ideological function associated with the Northern Turkic

[206] Pachymeres, *Relations Historiques*, 234-235.
[207] Pachymeres, *Relations Historiques*, 444-447.

nomads passed to Mongols. Finally, Pakhymeres knows well the internal divisions of the Mongol Empire, and refers the Ilkhanate as the Eastern Tocharians (Ἀνατολικοί Τόχαροι) and the Golden Horde as Northern Tocharians (βόρειοι Τόχαροι). Pakhymeres stresses on the unclean nutrition habits of the Tatars, similar to the description of Pechenegs by Attaleiates.

Gregoras gives an ethnographic digression about the Mongols whom he calls Skythians. This digression is based completely on ancient literature. He states that the Skythians are originally from the furthest northern parts of the world and they do not eat anything but meat, blood, and milk. He identifies them with the Cimmerians, Cimbri, and Teutons which are mentioned by the ancient authors. The Cimmerians are an ancient Iranian people, and the Cimbri and Teutons are Germanic tribes that fought the Romans in the first century B.C. However, the author speaks without precision, he complains that the ancient authors gave them Greek names and arbitrarily used them.[208] He then gives an account of the 13th-century Mongol conquests, mentions Σιτζισχᾶν (Genghis Khan) and his sons Χαλαοῦ (Hulagu) and Τελεπουγᾶς (Talabuga) and their victories against other Skythians, Huns, and Cumans in Central Asia.[209]

His comment about the acculturation of the Mongols in the territories they conquered also merits attention: "Later they abandoned the irreligion they inherited from their ancestors and converted to the religion of Assyrians, Persians, and Chaldeans. And they adopted also the luxuries of clothing, food and drink and other aspects of these people's lifestyles and customs."[210] This approach is not only an

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[208] Gregoras-Schopen-Bekker, *Nicephori Gregorae Byzantina historia,* 32 and Gregoras-Van Dieten, *Rhomäische Geschichte*,78-79.
[209] Gregoras-Schopen-Bekker, *Nicephori Gregorae Byzantina historia,* 35-36 and Gregoras-Van Dieten, *Rhomäische Geschichte,*80-81.
[210] Gregoras-Schopen-Bekker, *Nicephori Gregorae Byzantina historia,* 40 and Gregoras Van Dieten, *Rhomäische Geschichte,* 83.

interpretation of the cultural and administrative "Persianization" of the Ilkhanids but also the reflection of the Byzantine mentality about the acculturation of "barbarian" populations: their conversion to monotheism and adoption of the various aspects of the culture of the population of the country where they settled.

Kantakouzenos' observations about the Mongols were shorter and because of the work's date of composition, they were generally limited with the Golden Horde Tatars whom the author defines as the Skythians from Hyperborea. By the middle 14th century, when Kantakouzenos wrote his work, the might of the Mongols in the Balkans was somewhat waned. He portrays the them as mostly the raiders that devastate the imperial territories in Thrace.

In Doukas and Khalkokondyles' works, there is information about Tamerlane (r. 1370-1405) and the state he founded. This polity, centered in Transoxiana, could be considered a successor of the Mongol Empire in Persia and Central Asia. Tamerlane, being a Turco-Mongol warlord from the Barlas tribe, used the nominal suzerainty of Khanate of Chaghatai in Central Asia for his legitimacy. As an aggressive conqueror, he engaged in war with the Ottomans in the early 15th century. He defeated the Ottomans in 1402 at the battle of Ankara and triggered a period of dynastic struggles of the Ottoman State, commonly known as the Ottoman Interregnum (1402-1413). Doukas refers to him as the "sultan of Persia and Babylon" and his "nation" as the Skythians. But he occasionally uses adjective Persian to describe Timur's army.[211] He mentions the Tatars of Crimea once, as the Tauro-Skythians. It must be said that, despite the semantic function of the ethnonym Skythian, the identification of Timur as the "sultan of Persia and Babylon" directly

[211] Doukas-Grecu, *Historia Turcobyzantina*, 87, 99,101; Doukas-Magoulias, *Decline and Fall of Byzantium to the Ottoman Turks*, 88, 94, 95

evokes the Persian alterity and a cultural memory going back to the time of the Abbasids. However, in Doukas' text, Timurids do not represent the primary antagonism. The primary antagonism is reserved for the Ottomans.

In Khalkokondyles' *Histories*, Tamerlane was occasionally presented as the "king who subjugated Asia" or "king of Samarkand" and his ethnic origin is defined as "from the race of Massagetae". However, the author uses neither the ethnonym Skythian, nor Persian to refer to the polity of Tamerlane. Khalkokondyles is well-informed about the geopolitics of post-Genghisid Eurasia. He has a noteworthy knowledge about the Golden Horde which he calls simply Horde (Οὐρδάς) by using the original Turco-Mongol term. He also knows that it is a political, not ethnic term and he gives his Greek translation as "ἀγορά", i.e. an assembly.[212] Furthermore, he defines the population of the Golden Horde as the "Skythians of the assembly". He describes them as follows:

> The rest of the Skythians are united and are ruled by one king; they have their court at the so-called assembly of the Horde; and they appoint as their king a member of the most ancient royal family. There is a branch of them elsewhere in Europe, toward the [Crimean] Bosporos; it is quite large and they are dispersed throughout the land, subject to a king from the royal family, whose name is Ἀτζικερίης.[213]

The "branch" referred to here is obviously the Khanate of Crimea. However, although he does not give the information at a similar level, he also mentions another branch of this population, namely Chaghatai.[214]

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[212] Khalkokondyles, *The Histories*, 206-207.
[213] Khalkokondyles, *The Histories*, 210-211. Ἀτζικερίης is Ḥādjdjī I Girāy (r. 1441-1466) of Crimea.
[214] In the *Histories* of Khalkokondyles, the Greek rendering of the name Chaghatai is Τζαχατάϊδες (as nominative plural). However, he uses the word once as Σαχαταῖοι; in the phrase Σαχαταῖοι ἐκλήθησαν, ὑπὲρ τὴν τῶν Περσῶν χώραν ἐς τοὺς Σάκας τε καί Καδουσίους. So it seems that Khalkokondyles links the ancient name Σάκαι that refers to a group of Skythians with the contemporary term Chaghadai that has nothing to do with this ancient ethnonym. The word Chaghadai comes from a personal name, one of the sons of Genghis Khan. Khalkokondyles, *The Histories*, 208-211, 236-237.

Khalkokondyles' ethnographic observations, clearly based on ancient literary material, repeat the description of the Skythians in older texts such as Attaleiates. His Skythians of Bosporos, indeed, are not very different from Attaleiates' Pechenegs: they dwell in wagons and they do not eat wheat or barley, but millet and rye. However, Khalkokondyles adds three other elements to his description: they wear linen clothes and they are rich in gold. So, Khalkokondyles stresses the impact of luxury, just like Gregoras. Finally, another phrase by the Athenian author merits attention. He says: "They use bows, barbarian swords, and shields like those of the Dacians. They usually wear felt hats, but not like those who live around Sarmatia, nor garments made of wool because they do not use linen."[215]

In conclusion, the Byzantine representation of the Mongols is far from negative. In Akropolites' narrative the Mongols only had a marginal role. Pakhymeres, despite his evoking the legends about cannibalism among the Mongols, uses a balanced language regarding the Mongols, also because of the political context of the early 14th century: He was writing in a period in which the Byzantine Empire sought an alliance with the Mongols, against the Turks in Asia Minor and the Serbian and Bulgarian Kingdoms in the Balkans.[216] Gregoras and Kantakouzenos did not have the same approach, because in the mid-14th century, the Mongols constituted neither a threat, nor the potential of an important ally any more. Doukas was not interested in the Mongols, except the Anatolian campaign of Tamerlane which triggered the Ottoman interregnum. Finally, Khalkokondyles' interest in the contemporary Eurasian world can be interpreted regarding two factors: Firstly, the author takes the historiographical model of Herodotus as an example to his *Histories*.

[215] Khalkokondyles,*The Histories*, 222-223. I slightly changed Kaldellis' translation by replacing the words Wallachians and Russia with Dacians and Sarmatia.
[216] Pachymeres, *Relations historiques*, vol. 1, 186-187.

Secondly, the Crimean Khanate formed as a successor state of the Golden Horde in 1441 as its territory consisted of the Crimean peninsula. This new polity lacked the greater human resources of the Golden Horde and it had to rely on stronger alliances. After the death of Ḥādjdjī I Girāy (1466), the Crimean princes engaged in interal struggles to seize the throne. Subsequently, the Ottomans intervened there to put Mengli Girāy I on the throne. This intervention made the Crimean Khanate a vassal or a protectorate of the Ottoman Empire. Hence Khalkokondyles' interest in Crimea, probably demonstrates the Ottoman political projects toward this country in the mid-15th century. It may well be that the author was not far from the circles where these issues were discussed.

Table 4. Ethnonyms Used for Mongols

Author	*End date of the text*	*Ethnonym used for Mongols*
Akropolites	1261	Ταχάριοι
Pakhymeres	1308	Tocharians, Mongolians
Gregoras	1359	Skythians
Kantakouzenos	1465	Skythians
Doukas	c. 1463	Skythians, Tatars (for Timurids) Tauroskythians (for Golden Horde)
Khalkokondyles	c. 1469	Skythians (for Golden Horde/Khanate of Crimea) Massagetae (for Timurids)

In conclusion, this chapter presented the formation of the grand categories to understand the configuration of the Turks in the Byzantine mentality, and my findings can be summarized as follows:

i. When the Seljuk Turks first appeared on the eastern borders of the empire in the mid-11th century, their image was indistinguishable from any other nomadic invader who created troubles in the Balkan frontier. They were pastoral nomads that belonged to the *genos* Hun/Skythian. This *genos* is considered the most representative example of the barbarian in classical and Byzantine literary traditions.

ii. The main branch of the Seljuk dynasty conquered Persia in the mid-11th century and established a Persianate sultanate there. This context triggered the use of the ethnonym Persian for the Great Seljuks and then for the Seljuk Sultanate of Rum. Persian was an ethnonym that had a completely territorial character. The Seljuks acquired this ethnonym due to a *translatio imperii* after their conquest of Persia. Byzantine authors were aware of the dynastic ties between the Seljuks of Rum and Persia.

iii. In the eyes of the Byzantine authors, visible aspects of the religious affiliation of the early Seljuks were indistinguishable from the other Turkic populations that remained faithful to their ancestral beliefs. However, in the course of time, the Seljuk-Byzantine conflict acquired a more religious outlook. This fact could be explained both by the ideological evolution of the Byzantine Empire under the Komnenoi and a possible stronger self-identification of the

Seljuks with the Muslim faith. Starting in the 14th century, with the rise of the Ottomans, the religious element became a *sine qua non* element of Turkish identity in the eyes of the Byzantine authors.

iv. Finally, the Seljuks had a particular ideological function for the Byzantines. Since they were settled in Central Anatolia, they started to play a double ideological role. They substituted both the ancient Muslim enemy in the borderlands and the ancient Persian rival of the Byzantine Empire in the centuries before the arrival of Islam. The Ottomans represent somewhat the continuation of this image. They are still occasionally called Persians. However, the relationship with the Byzantine literati, as it can be understood from what the authors wrote, suggests a completely new situation. There is no more the antagonism of two ancient rivals of somewhat equal strength; instead, a bygone world has been swallowed by a new Empire that has taken the place of the old one.

CHAPTER 4

BYZANTINE NARRATIVES ABOUT THE ORIGINS OF THE TURKS

4.1 The genre of *origo gentis*: An overview

In this chapter, I will analyze several aspects of the representation of the Turks in Byzantine sources. Firstly I shall focus on *origo gentis* narratives about the Seljuk and Ottoman Turks. Then I shall discuss the narratives about two aspects of Turkic polities in Byzantine texts: the social base of the ruling classes and the notion of dynasty, dynastic patrimony, and ruler succession among the states ruled by Turkic populations.

To begin, what is an *origo gentis* narrative? *Origo gentis* means "origin of people," so it is a historical/meta-historical text that deals with the alleged origin of a people. This origin narrative could be based on legends or could be entirely fictional. It serves basically to introduce a recently appeared population into an established historiographical tradition.

This genre has long existed as a sub-element of ethnographical texts since Antiquity. Starting with the works of Julius Caesar dealing with the populations and tribes of Gallia, a visible interest in the traditions of autochthonous peoples who were subordinated under the *interpretatio romana*,[217] and simultaneous to their subordination to the victorious Roman legions, was occasioned. Tacitus' monumental work *De origine et situ Germanorum* (commonly known as *Germania*), which deals with the ethnography of the Germanic tribes dwelling beyond the limes of the empire, is another key text that has many themes in common with *origo gentis* texts.

[217] *Interpretatio romana* means "Roman translation" and indicates the identification of foreign gods with Roman deities.

By the fourth century, new populations appeared at the eastern frontier of the Roman world. These new invading hordes were Germanic (as Vandals or Goths), Iranian (as Sarmatians and Alans) or, at least, predominantly Altaic (like the Huns). These populations contributed to an important change in the ethnic and linguistic landscape of Europe in the subsequent centuries. This fact caused a new necessity to produce *origo gentis* texts in order to demonstrate and locate the primordial history of such peoples in a long-established Greco-Roman world. Consequently, Late Antiquity was a period of revival for this genre. Beginning with Cassiodorus (in the 6th century), who wrote an *Origo Gothica* on the origins of Goths, in Western Europe several texts were produced to fulfill this aim. Here I mention the *Getica* of Iordanes (which deals not with the *Getae* or the Gets, who were a Daco-Thracian folk of Antiquity, but with the Goths), *Gesta Saxonica* of Saxo Grammaticus, and *Res Gestae Saxonicae* of Widukind.[218]

Cassiodorus is considered the foremost writer who redefined the rules of the genre. Being a Roman by birth, his *Origo Gothica* in Latin provided legitimization to the Gothic kings of Italy in the 6th century. In his text, he even attributes a phrase to the child king Athalaric (r. 526-534) that "he (Cassiodorus) raised (the narration of) the Gothic origins to the rank of Roman History."[219]

Prior to the 6th century, all the narratives of *origines gentium* were exclusively written from a civilized point of view, so in these accounts there is always an obvious opposition between the Roman and the barbarian. The Roman world occupies the civilized part of the earth, whereas the world of barbarians is a realm of chaos without a history. However, the revival with Cassiodorus was the result of a new

[218] Wolfram, "Le genre de l'*Origo gentis*," 789-791.
[219] Wolfram, "Le genre de l'*Origo gentis*," 791.

conjuncture in which the Roman Empire fell and the barbarians established their new kingdoms on the ruins of the Empire. As it was mentioned before, Cassiodorus himself was the subject of the Gothic Kingdom of Italy. Although the victorious and conquering barbarian societies were reluctant to a *métissage* with the remnant population of the Empire, still there was the need for a compromise between the two worlds.

These texts, being written generally in Latin, contain also fragments of barbarians' own traditions regarding their legendary history, but these traditions are generally reworked. Herwig Wolfram, in his article "Le genre de l'*Origo gentis*," identifies three *faits primordials* as the events worthy of remembering which are regular components of an *origo gentis* narrative. These are:

i) Military victory against strong enemies

ii) The crossing of a river

iii) Conversion to a new religion[220]

These events (together or separately) fulfill the necessary condition for the legitimization of a core of traditions and create a new *gens* by providing the attraction of new elements to them. Military victory could be interpreted as the founding event which gives enormous prestige to the groups who were on the winning side. The defeated enemies, just like the Huns in the aftermath of the Battle of Nedao (454) or the Alemanni in the Battle of Tolbiac (496), could easily come to a point of dissolution. In such a case, many tribes that had once belonged to the defeated party could easily pass to the winning side.

River crossing could be a symbolic narrative of massive immigration in a world where rivers constitute the visible geographic borders between the worlds. For

[220] Wolfram, "Le genre de l'*Origo gentis*," 800.

example, the rivers cited in the *origines gentium* narratives about the Goths, Lombards, and Saxons –such as the Danube, Rhine, and Elbe– marked different levels of frontiers between the Roman and barbarian worlds. This recurring theme has obviously biblical origins: the crossing of the Red Sea by Moses and the Jordan River by Joshua. It can be furthermore assumed that this act reflects both a political and a spiritual meaning: the exodus from Egypt and the arrival to the land of Canaan are the stages of the formation of a common identity among the Israelites. So, the themes of crossing the sea/river, the military successes against the Canaanites, and the Mosaic covenant constitute the *origo gentis* story of the Israelites. It can be assumed that in the *origo gentis* stories of Christian writers, these biblical narratives were always present as a model. The biblical inspiration in the Frankish and Lombard *origo gentis* accounts, written by Gregory of Tours and Paul the Deacon respectively, was underlined by Walter Goffart.[221]

Lastly, converting to a new religion, always Christianity in this case, represents a new step into the civilization or even the entrance into a new symbolic cosmos where new values prevail. This fact also indicates a break with legendary time or the heroic age. Thus, conversion to Christianity constitutes a chronological milestone between real history and legendary history.

There are other typical elements in the *origo gentis* narratives such as the deeds of brave men, the existence of social mobility in the population with which the text deals, and the lack of obstacles in the warrior career for those that have different ethnic or social origins. These elements could be interpreted as the motifs that demonstrate the basic difference between the well-established hierarchies of the Greco-Roman world and the bellicose nature of the barbarian tribal populations, in

[221] Goffart, *The Narrators of Barbarian History (A.D. 550-800)*, 220, 380.

which social mobility was relatively easy and closely related to success on the battlefield. Therefore, such societies permited men from humble social origins to obtain high positions because of their distinctions in war.

Byzantine history followed a different path. In the eastern part of the empire, both the institutions and military power were more resistant to the waves of invasions. Throughout the centuries, Byzantium suffered similar invasions by the Slavs, Arabs, and Bulgarians, but the Empire managed to preserve the Byzantine core lands from the invaders. In Byzantine literature, there are partial and generally short narratives dealing with these populations that could be considered their *origo gentis* accounts. Digressions from some of these narratives survived in *De Administrando Imperio*, such as the chapters dealing with the history of Dalmatia, the early history of Serbs and Croats, and their conversion to Christianity, all of which demonstrate the characteristics of an *origo gentis* narrative.[222] It is true also for the account of the origins of the Turks (Hungarians) in the same work.[223] There is also a similar narrative about the origins of the Bulgarians, which survived in the chronicle of Theophanes the Confessor and in the *breviarium* of patriarch Nikephoros I.[224] However, the loss of Asia Minor to the Seljuks was a trauma that cannot be compared with these earlier experiences.

Secondly, as it was pointed out by Christopher Mallan, there is a strong need to assimilate the new populations into the familiar Greco-Roman worldview. So reading the Byzantine historiographical texts, it should be remarked carefully on each passage that relates the deeds of a Turkic ruler with a person of Antiquity. In that case, in the episode between an unnamed Seljuk sultan and the Georgian

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[222] Constantine Porphyrogenitus, *De Administrando Imperio*, 138-165.
[223] Constantine Porphyrogenitus, *De Administrando Imperio*, 170-174.
[224] Todorov "Byzantine Myths of Origins and Their Function," 66.

commander Liparites, in which the clemency of the sultan is underlined, Attaleiates' parallelism between the sultan and Alexander the Great is crucial. On the other hand, this fact could be thought of as a reflection of the author's criticism of the Byzantine emperor, notably against Constantine IX Monomachos. However, Attaleiates deals with many other aspects of the "barbarian" invasions, particularly those by the Seljuks. So this passage has an introductory function to upcoming events.[225]

4.2 *Origo gentis* narratives about the Seljuks

In this section, I will analyze two Byzantine *origo gentis* narratives about the Seljuks, both written in the second half of the 11th century. The first narrative constitutes a part of the account of John Skylitzes about the reign of Constantine IX Monomachos (r. 1042-1055). This period coincided with the earliest Seljuk raids that targeted the oriental frontiers of the Empire, resulting in the devastation of the easternmost theme of the Empire, the *katepanate* of Vaspurakan. Skylitzes gives a rather detailed narrative of Seljuk origins as a historical introduction to the appearance of the Seljuks on the borders of Iberia:

> I will now explain who the Turks are and how they came to fight against the Romans. The Turkish people are Hunnic by race, living to the north of the Caucasus mountains, populous and autonomous, never enslaved by any nation.[226]

This introduction is the typical beginning of an *origo gentis* narrative. The author first gives the context of his narrative, then defines the race of the Turks (Hunnic), their ancestral homeland (a region north of the Caucasus mountains), and their national characteristics (populous, autonomous, never enslaved by any nation).

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[225] Mallan, "A Turkish Alexander? Michael Attaleiates, Porus, and Alexander the Great,".106–107.
[226] Skylitzes-Thurn, *Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae*, 442; Skylitzes-Wortley, *A Synopsis of Byzantine History, 811-1057*, 416.

As already seen in the previous chapter, there is a common consensus on the idea that the Turks were included in the Hunnic *genos*. Skylitzes' reference to an ancestral land "north of the Caucasus mountains" is worthy of attention. In the 6th century, there are numerous references both in Byzantine (Procopius, Theophanes, Malalas) and Armenian texts to a Hunnic population living in the same area. Peter Golden cites an Armenian text (Pseudo Moses-Xorenac'i) which states that "North of Darbant is the Kingdom of the Huns." Other oriental sources of the 6th and 7th centuries give us some more information about this population. A Syriac source gives notice of a successful Armenian missionary effort among the North Caucasian Huns in 535 or 537. Furthermore, the narrative of a bishop from Caucasian Armenia, preserved in the chronicle of Moses Dashuranc'i, describes the Huns of North Caucasia as a barbarian population that practiced paganism. These Huns sacrificed horses to a "gigantic savage monster," which they called "Tangri Xan". So the author probably deals with a Turkic population who were remnants of the once glorious nomadic federation of Attila.[227] The choice of "north of Caucasia" as the homeland probably reflects the reminiscences of these old narratives or is taken from Skylitzes' oriental sources.

Moreover, a region that could be defined as "north of Caucasia" was also the heartland of the territories of Khazars, who are called "Turks" in several Byzantine texts. The relationship between the early Seljuks and the ruling dynasty of the Khazar Khaganate was a theme that existed in some earlier Muslim sources but has since disappeared. In the lost dynastic history of the Seljuks, the *Malik-name*, Dukak, the father of Selçuk, was a counselor at the court of the Khazar ruler. His son Selçuk was subsequently appointed a commander by the ruler. The Khazar connection disappears

[227] Golden, *An Introduction to the History of the Turkic Peoples*, 107-108.

in the official Seljuk historiography after the 12th century but has survived in several works written outside of the Seljuk court circles. According to Andrew Peacock, the nomenclature of the second generation of the members of the Seljuk dynasty could possibly reflect a Khazar influence. Names from the Old Testament, such as Mikail, İsrail, and Musa, could be a reflection of the impact of Khazar Judaism. However, these names were also used among the Muslims. Peacock concludes as follows:

> Given the dubious nature of the sources associating the Seljuks with the Oghuz Yabgu, the lack of any obvious reason to invent the Khazar story, and the names of Selçuk's sons, we must conclude that the extant evidence suggests that the origin of the Seljuks did indeed lie in the Khazar Empire. (...) Most probably Selçuk or Dukak was a local chief who perhaps split away from the empire around the time of its collapse, in the late tenth century, which shortly preceded the migration of the Seljuks to Transoxiana.[228]

The fact that Skylitzes put the original homeland of the Seljuks in the Caucasus may be a reflection of this Khazar connection. Skylitzes' source about the early Seljuks may have been an oriental Christian text that utilized the *Malik-name* as a source.

The idea of the independence of the Turks is still a manifestation of the ethos attributed by Byzantines to Hunnic/Skythian nomads. However, Skylitzes' statement that the Turks were "never enslaved by any nation" contradicts the general historical narratives which stress the *ghulam*s and Turkish military slavery in the medieval Muslim world. This expression is surprisingly compatible with Ibn Hassul's (d. 1058) comparison of the Seljuks with the Ghaznavids: "As for the genealogy of this sultan [Ṭoghrůl]; its honor does not go back to a low slave and someone completely obscure, as other's [Ghaznavids] do."[229]

Skylitzes' account continues as follows:

> Once domination of the Persians had passed to the Saracens, the Saracens went on to rule over not only Persia and Medea and Babylon and Assyria but

[228] Peacock, *Early Seljuq History: A New Interpretation,* 34-35.
[229] Peacock, *Early Seljuq History: A New Interpretation*, 29.

> also Egypt and Libya and a considerable part of Europe. Then it came about in various circumstances that they rose up against each other and that one great empire was torn into many segments. Spain had one ruler, Libya another, likewise Egypt, Babylon, and Persia. And these neighbors did not share a common mind but rather waged war on each other. He who was the ruler of Persia, the Khwarizmians, the Oretanes,[230] and the Medes (ἀρχηγὸς Περσίδος καὶ Χωρασμίων καὶ Ὡρητανῶν καὶ Μηδίας) in the time of the emperor Basil was Mouchoumet (Μουχούμετ), son of Imbrael. Waging war against the Indians and Babylonians and getting the worst of it in battle, he decided that he should treat the ruler of Tourkia, requesting some allied forces from that source.[231]

Here the author gives a rather ambiguous narrative of the early territorial expansion of the Caliphate and its later disintegration. The ruler of Persia, whom Skylitzes presents as the contemporary of Emperor Basil II, must be Maḥmūd of Ghazni (r. 999-1030). Furthermore, in this passage, there is an interesting reference to the "ruler of *Tourkia*". The information –and the usages of the names– demonstrates that this account is based on some oriental sources. The use of the topoynm *Tourkia* (Τουρκία) to refer to a place in Asia was rare in Skylitzes' time. In middle Byzantine historiography the word *Tourkia* always refers to Hungary, but in the same period Arab and Syriac authors used the ethnonym Turk frequently for the Turkic populations of Asia. It is thus hard to identify the person referred to as the "ruler of *Tourkia*". As already mentioned, *Tourkia* is a rarely attested geographical indication in the Byzantine sources of the period. Here the "ruler of *Tourkia*" may refer to either the Karakhanids or the petty rulers of Transoxiana. However, the most likely candidate is Shah-Melik of Jand, the Ghaznavid vassal in Transoxiana who had a rather complex relationship of suzerainty with the early Seljuk rulers.[232]

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[230] Oretanes is probably a misspelling of Oreitans, who were an ancient Indian population that lived in the region of Oreitis, in the contemporary region of Makran in Pakistan. Their name is attested in Arrian's *Anabasis* of Alexander. See Arrian, *Alexander the Great - Anabasis and Indica*, tr. Martin Hammond, 185, 187.
[231] Skylitzes-Thurn, *Ioannis Scylitzae Synopsis historiarum*, 442-444; Skylitzes-Wortley, *A Synopsis of Byzantine History, 811-1057*, 416-417.
[232] Barthold, *Moğol İstilasına Kadar Türkistan*, 313-314.

After Maḥmūd's request for auxiliary forces from the ruler of *Tourkia*, the latter sent him, according to Skylitzes, "three thousand men under the command of Tangrolipex Moukalet, son of Mikael, to Mouchoumet". This Tangrolipex Moukalet (Ταγγρολίπηκα Μουκάλετ) must be Ṭoghrïl Beg, whose Muslim name was Muhammad. Skylitzes then continues with an explanation of why the ruler of *Tourkia* agreed to help Maḥmūd:

> He did this in the hope that, if they succeeded in repelling the enemies of the Saracens, they would quite easily render passable the bridge on the river Araxes (which was preventing the Turks from entering Persia since it had guard-towers at either end and it was always watched by guards). After doing away with its garrison, they could subject the land of the Persians to his rule.[233]

In this passage, one sees first the image of the river as the boundary between the barbarian and civilized worlds. In this case, the river which divides the worlds is the river Araxes in Southern Caucasia. However, the country of *Tourkia* must be located somewhere in Central Asia in this context, so there is the possibility that there is confusion between the two hydronyms and Araxes is used for the Oxus or most probably for the Jaxartes, which lay on the historical route that the Seljuks used for their early invasion of Khorasan in the mid-11th century.

The insistence of Maḥmūd to his soldiers to cross the river Araxes triggers an unexpected mutiny among the Seljuk mercenaries in the "Saracen" army and these bands pillage and loot the "Saracen lands." After Maḥmūd sent an army of about twenty thousand men "under the command of ten of the most noble and wise Saracens," they were defeated in the hands of the mercenaries. Following this event,

> [Tangrolipex] no longer conducted his raids surreptitiously like a refugee and a thief, but openly disputed possession of fortified positions. Some of those criminals who feared for their lives, some slaves and some of those who took

[233] Skylitzes-Thurn,*Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae,* 448; Skylitzes-Wortley, *A Synopsis of Byzantine History, 811-1057*, 417.

> pleasure in robbery with violence joined his camp; in very short time a large force of about fifty thousand congregated around him.[234]

As seen here, despite the Turks being a "never enslaved" nation, Ṭoghrůl's army was made of thieves, criminals, slaves, and riff-raff. After this battle Ṭoghrůl defeats again the Ghaznavid army, "an army of about fifty thousand by arming Saracens, Persians, Kabirs and Arabs." In Skylitzes' account of this battle at a place called Aspachan,[235] Maḥmūd himself dies falling from his horse. In the aftermath of this battle,

> Tangrolipex was universally declared to be king of Persia. Once he was proclaimed, he sent and eliminated the guard on the crossing of the Araxes, giving free access into Persia to any Turk who wanted it. Freed of this impediment, the entire host of them rushed in (except for those who preferred their own homeland) killing Persians and Saracens. Thus [the Turks] became masters of Persia, naming Tangrolipex Sultan; that is, absolute ruler and king of kings.[236] He relieved all the indigenous governors of their commands and transferred them to Turks, among whom he divided out the whole of Persia, entirely crushing and humiliating the people of the land.[237]

This narrative may be interpreted as a distorted version of the Seljuk-Ghaznavid wars of 1038-1040.[238]

The second Byzantine text that could be called an *Origo gentis* narrative is Michael Attaleiates' text about the origins of the Seljuks:

> During those same years, the Nephtalite Huns, neighbors of the Persians, who are separated from the land of Persia by the Ganges River, which is four and half miles wide, crossed the river at its narrowest crossing point, when their leader showed them the way. This man, though he had previously been a

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[234]Skylizes-Thurn, *Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae*, 444; Skylitzes-Wortley *A Synopsis of Byzantine History, 811-1057*, 418.

[235] As noted by Wortley (419, n. 113), this toponym must refer to the city of Isfahan. However the battle of Dandanaqan (1044), in which the Seljuks defeated the Ghaznavids, did not take place near Isfahan as Wortley claims, and not even in Iran but in actual Turkmenistan. Skylitzes has probably confused this event with the Seljuk occupation of Isfahan, which happened seven years later in 1051. Neither was Maḥmūd present in the battle of Dandanaqan; he died in 1030. The Ghaznavid ruler who commanded against the Seljuks was Masʿūd I, the son of Maḥmūd. Despite his defeat, he was not killed on the battlefield but survived.

[236] This recalls the historical Iranian title, *shahanshah*, which was used by Achaemenid and Sassanid rulers.

[237] Skylizes-Thurn, *Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae*, 445; Skylitzes-Wortley *A Synopsis of Byzantine History, 811-1057*, 419.

[238] Peacock discusses in *Early Seljuq History: A New Interpretation,* 79-81.

> captive and came from a humble and servile origin, became the lord of Persia after the death of its ruling despot. Making a display of their unconquerable strength tho all the people in that part of the east, they approached the borders of Iberia.[239]

In this passage, Attaleiates locates the ancestral homeland of the Seljuks on the eastern coast of the Ganges River, i.e. in Northern India. However, the Ganges River does not constitute a frontier of Persia; even in its largest borders. The Ganges River originates from the Himalayas and flows into the Indian Ocean in the Bay of Bengal. So it is placed in the eastern part of India. It could be speculated that Attaleiates used the hydronym Ganges for the river Indus. According to the classical texts, the river Indus constitutes the border between the lands of Persia and India. Alexander the Great crossed the river Indus on his way to conquer the land of India. Thinking about the parallelisms of the anecdote of Alexander and Porus with the Seljuk ruler and Liparites, it may be safe to assume that Attaleiates confused the names of the rivers known from the classical texts because of his lack of real geographical information about India.

If we leave aside the question of the river, there is another reference worthy of analysis: the bizarre ethnonym "Ounnoi Nephtalitai" (Οὖννοι Νεφθαλῖται) which is possibly a misspelling of Οὖννοι Ἐφθαλῖται (Ounnoi Hephtalitai), i.e. Hephtalite Huns. In Chapter 3, information was given about this ancient Hunnic population of Asia, which is described by Procopius[240] as the only civilized branch of this *genos*.[241] This population vanishes from Byzantine literature after the mid-7th century, with the

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[239] Attaleiates, *The History*, 76-77.

[240] Shliakhtin claims that Attaleiates' source of inspiration is the *Strategikon* rather than the works of Procopius. Shliakhtin, *From Huns into Persians: The Projected Identity of the Turks in the Byzantine Rhetoric of Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries*, 50.

[241] As it was expressed earlier, it is wrong to identify the ancient populations, particularly the nomadic federations that were made up of different tribes, with contemporary linguistic groups. The Ephtalites, although considered to be a part of the Hunnic *genos*, were probably a mixture of Iranian, Tocharian, and Altaic tribes. The names of their rulers were almost totally of Iranian origin.

downfall of their kingdom located in contemporary Afghanistan and Northern India. Moreover, the misspelling "Nephtalitai" could not be a simple coincidence, because it seems not to be a ghost word. It is a biblical demonym that indicates one of the twelve tribes of Ancient Israel: the tribe of Naphtali, who descended from Jacob's son Naphtali. This tribe is frequently referred to in the Old Testament. Therefore, this misspelling could be related to a linguistic confusion hard to illuminate.

The second part of Attaleiates' *origo gentis* narrative is based on the account of a raid by the Seljuks into the west and their victory over a Byzantine-Georgian army under the leadership of the Georgian noble Liparites:

> That nation then made continual raids on an annual basis, doing no small damage to Roman territory. The Romans in charge of the borders tried to resist them but were defeated because the enemy knew well how to use the bow and hit targets accurately, which made their opponents fear the wounds inflicted by bows. (…) At one point, a large army was assembled by imperial order on the border of Iberia, having as its joint commander a famous man named Liparites. A fierce battle was joined between it and the Huns and for a while the outcome hung in the balance, but in the end the opposing side prevailed and defeated the Romans, capturing Liparites alive and taking him, like some kind of splendid prey, to their ethnarch. He is called sultan in the Persian language. But when he saw him and learned of his family –for the fame of the man's bravery had preceded him –he asked him how he thought he should be treated. And he said, "Royally."[242]

This passage sets out another common theme of *origo gentis* narratives. Here –as was demonstrated by Christoph Mallan[243]– the narrative perfectly fulfills the aim of such a narrative: by giving to the sultan the role of Alexander the Great, it locates the Seljuks in a known historiographical tradition. As in Cyril Mango's "ritualized ballet," new barbarians wear the costumes of ancient heroes (or villains), henceforth becoming familiar.

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[242] Attaleiates, *The History,* 78-81.
[243] Mallan, "A Turkish Alexander," 107.

Finally, there is also the third criterion of *origo gentis*: the conversion to a new religion. This motif is not present in these narratives about the Seljuks, because in old *origo gentis* stories, the barbarian populations converted to Christianity, so they share the same religion with Greco-Roman authors who wrote their origin stories. The Seljuks changed their religions two generations before the foundation of the sultanate, but they converted to Islam. As I have already mentioned, Byzantine authors were not interested in the religion of foreign peoples, so the conversion to Islam of nomad Turkic pagans was not a noticeable fact for Byzantine authors.

In conclusion, the digressions on the origins of the Seljuk Turks in the accounts of Skylitzes and Attaleiates were certainly based on material from different *origo gentis* stories. It may be assumed that the two authors used different oriental sources. Thus, the differences in their narratives come not from their political function, but from their sources.

4.3 *Origo gentis* narratives about the Ottomans

Byzantine *origo gentis* narratives about the Turks are not limited to those that deal with the Seljuks. Byzantine historiographers also produced the same type of narratives about the Ottomans. The early formation of the Ottoman *beylik* happened in the border regions of Bithynia, so several events of the early development of the Ottomans were realized under Byzantine eyes. George Pakhymeres (1242-1310) gives us the only contemporary depiction of the deeds of ʿOthmān I, the first *beg* of the Ottomans. However, his account regarding ʿOthmān can hardly be described as an *origo gentis* narrative. Pakhymeres introduces ʿOthmān (as Ἀτμᾶν) as one of the Persian chiefs who attacked and devastated Byzantine territory. The other two chiefs named by him are Lamises (Λαμίσης) and Amourios (Ἀμούριος). This is the earliest

reference to the founder of the Ottoman dynasty in any known historiographic text. Then he narrates the battle of Bapheus (1302) and in the next chapter counts ʿOthmān among the chiefs who invaded and pillaged the upper parts of Bithynia, Mysia, Phrygia, and Lydia. Nevertheless, there is no narrative of the origin of the Ottomans and the author focuses only on the military deeds of ʿOthmān.[244]

The Seljuks formed their sultanate first in Transoxiana and Persia, in the territories far from the borders of the Byzantine Empire. Their history before their first raids into the Byzantine *oikoumene* reached the Byzantine authors as rumors from the Orient, probably via Armenian or Syriac interlocutors. However, the Ottoman *beylik* developed under the eyes of the Byzantines. This difference explains the absence of the Byzantine *origo gentis* narratives about the Ottomans in the 14th century.

Doukas is totally silent about the origins of the Ottoman dynasty and its early history, yet he narrates a rather strange prophecy about the historical parallelism between two dynasties, Ottomans and Palaiologoi:

> While still a youth I learned from old and venerable men that the end of the Ottoman tyranny would take place with the extinction of the Palaiologan dynasty. These two began together, ʿOthmān in tyranny and Michael Palaiologos in sovereignty. Michael's reign ended shortly after ʿOthmān's began. ʿOthmān's tyranny coincided with the reign of Michael's son, Andronicus Palaiologos. ʿOthmān ruled as a tyrant in the latter days of Michael but he was also a brigand. According to this prophecy, the end of the emperors and of the City (Constantinople) was to occur first, followed by the cessation of the Ottoman reign.[245]

Although this narrative does not present us with any legendary or ethnographic explanation of the early Ottomans, in a symbolic space it equalizes them with the Palaiologan dynasty. Because Michael VIII, the first emperor of the Palaiologan

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[244] Pachymeres, *Relations historiques*, vol. 4, 346 and 358-369.
[245] Doukas-Grecu, *Historia Turcobyzantina*, 399-401; Doukas-Magoulias, *Decline and Fall of Byzantium to the Ottoman Turks,* 244.

dynasty was a usurper who blinded the legitimate heir John Laskaris, he and ʿOthmān represent the same vileness in the eyes of Doukas. The former, despite the fact that he is Greek and Christian, has usurped the imperial throne, and the latter is a tyrant who originally was a brigand (ληστικός).

However, the most extant account of *origo gentis* about the Ottomans was written by Laonikos Khalkokondyles in the 1460s. Khalkokondyles' interest in the early history of Ottomans and their historiographical traditions was not a coincidence. He lived in a vanishing once Byzantine world now dominated by the Ottomans. As pointed out in Chapter 1, in his *Histories*, Ottoman history is the center of the narrative and the work itself constitutes a transition between Byzantine and post-Byzantine historiography.

Khalkokondyles offers four *origo gentis* explanations about the Turks. The first one ascribes a Skythian origin to them:

> Some believe that the Turks are descendants of the Skythians, which is quite a reasonable conjecture about them, given that their customs are not all that different and that their languages are even now closely related.[246]

Here he uses an argument based on the similarities of the customs and the languages of the Turks of Asia Minor and the Turkic populations of the Eurasian steppes. He continues with a historical explanation and remarks that the Skythians conquered Asia, including territories ruled by the Parthians and even Asia Minor, where they subjugated "specifically Phrygia, Lydia, and Kappadokia."[247] He then adds,

> Even today, so they say, it is possible to see numerous offshoots of this people roaming about in many parts of Asia, who tend to follow the ways and customs of the nomadic Skythians and have clearly not settled down in any particular part of Asia. And they also add that the barbarian nations of the Turks who live in Asia Minor, I mean in Lydia, Karia, Phrygia, and

[246] Khalkokondyles, *The Histories*, 10-13.
[247] Khalkokondyles, *The Histories*, 12-13.

> Kappadokia, speak the same language and have the same dress as the Skythians who roam the lands from the Don into Russia.[248]

In this narrative, there are several remarkable points. Firstly, Khalkokondyles constructs a parallelism between language and way of life. This seems to be a completely new idea. As it was seen in the account of Attaleiates, the Seljuks were Huns but spoke the Persian language. Also, Anna Komnene clearly distinguishes *genos* from language. These are intersectional but not forcefully corresponding categories. Khalkokondyles makes a break with the medieval historiographical tradition to which he belongs and interprets nationhood and language with an approach that echoes early modern European ideas. Secondly, when he lists the regions in which the barbarians settled, he does not count Bithynia, Mysia, or even Paphlagonia, even though these regions sheltered an important Türkmen population.[249] He distinguishes the Anatolian space belonging to the *beylik*s and the territories that witnessed the early Ottoman expansion. However, it should be remarked that Khalkokondyles uses careful words to indicate the source of this knowledge. He implies that these are not his own opinions, yet these are the ideas that were circulating.

Khalkokondyles' second origin story makes the Turks the "descendants of the Parthians" who were "pursued by the nomadic Skythians and moved down into Asia Minor." Furthermore, he adds, "turning to a more nomadic way of life, they became dispersed among the cities there, and since then these people have been known as the

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[248] Khalkokondyles, *The Histories*, 12-13.
[249] The region around Kastamonu, which correponds to Byzantine Paphlagonia, harbored 100,000 Turcomans according to the Arab author Ibn Said. See Cahen, "Questions d'histoire de la province de Kastamonu au XIIIeme siècle," 146.

nomadic Turks."[250] The relationship with the Parthians, the Iranian nomadic group that ruled post-Seleucid Persia, merits a little more attention.

Khalkokondyles' third origin story is as follows: "Others again say that this people had its origin in *Tourke*, a large and prosperous city of the Persians. They affirm that they left it for Asia Minor and became scattered there, maintaining control over Asia."[251] Here *Tourke* seems to be an imaginary toponym, which is probably a derivation of the ethnonym Turk. However, this *origo gentis* story presents a distant relationship with the Ottoman narrative of origins which claims that the ancestors of the Ottomans were the *padishah*s of the city of Mahan in Persia.[252]

Khalkokondyles' last narrative of Ottoman origin is the most striking one:

> There are some, however, who would have it that the Turks came to this land from Koile Syria and Arabia, rather than from the Skythians, and that they did so in the company of 'Umar, who succeeded as lawgiver, and so established their realm in Asia; when they had been left behind there by him, however, they turned to a more nomadic way of life.[253]

The *origo gentis* tradition which relates the Ottomans with Omar and the Arabs was strange, yet common for a brief period in the mid-15th century.[254] This story's origin could be traced back to the historical/biographical work *Anba al gomr fi Abna al omr* of the Egyptian religious scholar and chronicler Ibn Hajar al-Askalani (1372-1449). In this work, Ibn Hajar al-Askalani states that the lineage of the rulers of Rum, i.e House of Ottomans (Ibn ʿOthmān), comes from the Arabs of Hejaz.[255] The 15th-century chronicler and poet Enveri, who compiled the *Düsturname* (c. 1466), a world chronicle in verse, elaborates this story and states that the ancestor of the Ottomans

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[250] Khalkokondyles, *The Histories*, 12-13.
[251] Khalkokondyles, *The Histories*, 12-13.
[252] This tradition is preserved in the history of Oruç Bey: "Oruç Beğ Tarihi" (ed. N. Atsız), in *Üç Osmanlı Tarihi*, 21. Mahan is located in the Kerman province, in Central Iran.
[253] Khalkokondyles, *The Histories*, 12-15.
[254] Imber, "The Legend of Osman Gazi," 73-75.
[255] İnalcık, "İbn Hâcer'de Osmanlı'lara Dair Haberler," 189-191.

was a certain Ayaz (or Iyaz) from the tribe of Quraish. This Ayaz was a warrior of Caliph Umar who was serving in the army of commander Sa'd ibn Vaqqas. After the Arab victory over the Persians at Ctesiphon, Sa'd and Ayaz encounter a group of Oghuz nomads. The beautiful daughter of the ruler of pagan Oghuz, Turunç Khatun, falls in love with Ayaz and they have a son called Oghuz or Suleiman. Oghuz (Suleiman) has six sons and twenty-four grandsons, so he realizes the deeds attributed to Oghuz Khan in the *Oghuznama* tradition. (Here Enveri tries to make the Oghuz and Arab stories compatible.) His father Ayaz dies around the cities of Homs and Hama of Syria, and the descendants of his son Oghuz become the ancestors of Ertoghrul Ghazi after years of rivalry with the Seljuks.[256]

Khalkokondyles' last digression clearly comes from the same source with the *Düsturname*, as indicated by the common references to Omar, Koele Syria (Hama and Homs), and Turkification/nomadization of the descendants of Arab ancestors. Having an ancestry from the House of the Prophet (*Ahl-al bayt*) or from the first generation of Muslims (*sahaba*) was a typical legitimization instrument of the Islamic Middle Ages. Of course, this approach reflects a much simpler legitimization strategy in comparison to the elaborate references to the reminiscences of Oghuz Khan legends of the steppe world. This way of legitimacy could exist in the mid-15th century as an alternative to the regular usage of the symbols identified with the Qayi tribe as a legitimacy tool during the reign of Murād II. Moreover, these legitimacy tools should be interpreted within the heated ideological debates of the reign of Meḥmed II. But it seems that this story circulated for a short time and disappeared quickly. Kaldellis points out this situation, by remarking that Enveri's patron was the

[256] *Fatih Devri Kaynaklarından Düsturname-i Enveri: Osmanlı Tarihi Kısmı, 1299-1465,* ed. Öztürk , 5-13.

Ottoman grand-vizier Mahmud Paşa Angelović, whose deeds are recounted in the work of Khalkokondyles.[257] So there could be an intersecting network here: since Mahmud Paşa was a Byzantine aristocrat from the Balkans, just like Laonikos Khalkokondyles, these ideas could be associated with a certain circle to which the grand-vizier also belonged.

After giving these four *origo gentis* stories, Khalkokondyles concludes his discussion as follows:

> I am not able to say with certainty how much truth each of these views contains or to what degree one should trust in each. But this much, at least, can be said, that it would be better to side with those who ascribe a Skythian origin to these people because the Skythians who even now remain in the eastern parts of Europe in the so-called Horde have no difficulty in understanding the Turks of Asia. Both nations have the one and the same way of life and use the same dress even now, because the Skythians prevailed throughout Asia. Anyway, the name Skythian itself obviously designates anyone who follows a nomadic way of life and spends most of his time doing this.[258]

Khalkokondyles' conclusion demonstrates that he also chose the linguistic explanation of the existence of a greater Skythian nationhood. The entity which he designates as "Horde" (ἀγορά) is obviously the Khanate of the Golden Horde, the most powerful successor of the Genghisid Empire in the Pontic steppes.

In order to interpret these explanations of origin, there is a need to contextualize the milieu in which Khalkokondyles lived. He was a noble Athenian by origin, who lived at least in his youth in the Principality of Athens; therefore he did not share the lived experiences of the Greeks of Asia Minor during the early Ottoman expansion. He had a certain access to the inner circles of the Ottoman powerhouse; for example, he cites some information about the Ottoman budget that came from the

[257] Kaldellis, *A New Herodotos*, 134
[258] Khalkokondyles, *The Histories*, 14-15.

accountants of Meḥmed II.[259] Although there is not much information about his adult life apart from what can be traced in his *Histories*, he seems to have accepted the Ottoman domination of the post-Byzantine world.

At this point, it is possible to do a more advanced analysis of the provenance of Khalkokondyles' *origo gentis* stories. It seems that the Skythian theory, which was supported also by the author himself, is a "Byzantine" theory, because, in spite of the mid-15th century revival in the interest of Oghuz genealogies in the court of Murād II, the Ottomans did not have friendly sentiments toward the Mongols, who are called "Tatars" by them. Early Ottoman historiographical material demonstrates a clear hostility against Tatars. As has been demonstrated by Rudi Paul Lindner, in early Ottoman chronicles the Tatar tribes were the arch-rivals of the Ottomans.[260] Apart from this, the invasion of Anatolia by Tamerlane and the defeat of Ankara (1402) were the biggest traumas of the Ottoman ruling class. During Khalkokondyles' lifetime, it is very possible that the anti-Tatar feelings were still strong, despite the vassalization of the Khanate of Crimea in 1475. Consequently, it seems that such a "pro-Mongol" origin story could have hardly come from Ottoman sources.

Finally, Kritoboulos gives some hints of a narrative about the origin of the Ottomans. These passages, however, cannot be considered proper *origo gentis* accounts. In his first narrative, Kritoboulos states that Murad II was "the sixth of the brilliant line of the Ottomans, a nobleman of noblemen."[261] He explains the origin of

[259] Vryonis, "Laonicus Chalcocondyles and the Ottoman Budget," 423-432.
[260] Lindner, *Explorations in Ottoman Prehistory*, 90-101.
[261] Kritovoulos-Reinsch, *Critobuli Imbriotae Historia*, 15; Kritovoulos-Riggs, *History of Mehmed the Conqueror*, 13.

this noble line as the descendants of Achaemenes and Perses, and hence from the royal line of all Persian kings. He gives a further account:

> So too the Greeks are descended from Danaus and Linges, who were in origin Egyptians, from the town of Chemis, situated in the marsh land. They migrated into Greece. Ages afterwards, the descendants of these people, who were called Achaemenidae and Persidae, crossed over into Asia and settled at first in Persia. And when they died, they left their race and name to that place.[262]

So in the world of Kritoboulos there is no longer the antagonism between the Persians and the Greeks. These two elements are reconciled with each other in a common historical narrative. According to him,

> [The] rule has gone from nation to nation and from place to place in succession, always changing and passing, now to the Assyrians, the Medes, the Persians, and then to the Greeks and Romans, according to the times and epochs establishing itself in a place and never returning to the same.[263]

The second passage concerning the origin of the Ottomans is the scene where Mehmed II visits the ruins of Troy. According to Kritoboulos, the sultan said:

> God has reserved for me, through so long a period of years, the right to avenge the city and its inhabitants. For I have subdued their enemies and have plundered their cities and made them the spoils of the Mysians. It was the Greeks and Macedonians and Thessalians and Peloponnesians who ravaged this place in the past, and whose descendants have now through my efforts paid the just penalty, after a long period of years, for their injustices to us Asiatics at that time and so often in subsequent times.[264]

The attribution of Trojan origins to a certain people or dynasty is a common genealogical motif since Antiquity. Vergilius' great epic *Aeneid* connects Rome and Troy through the figure of Aeneas. In the chronicle of Fredegarius, a Trojan origin of

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[262] Kritovoulos-Reinsch, *Critobuli Imbriotae Historia*, 15-16; Kritovoulos-Riggs, *History of Mehmed the Conqueror*, 13.
[263] Kritovoulos-Reinsch, *Critobuli Imbriotae Historia*, 16; Kritovoulos-Riggs, *History of Mehmed the Conqueror*, 13.
[264] Kritovoulos-Reinsch, *Critobuli Imbriotae Historia*, 170; Kritovoulos-Riggs, *History of Mehmed the Conqueror*, 181-182.

the Franks is also mentioned. Moreover, Geoffrey of Monmouth attributes a Trojan origin to the Britons, through Brutus, the grandson of Aeneas.[265] The narrative of Kritoboulos seems similar, except for a little modification of the motif. According to the author, the Ottomans are not the offspring of Trojans, but they are descendants of the royal line of Persians. The feature which connects the Ottomans and Trojans is their common Asiatic belonging. Kritoboulos' stress on Asian vs Greek is a Herodotean motif. This dichotomy substitutes the antagonism between Christianity and Islam and offers a new antagonism. However, this new antagonism, as the sultan's alleged statement demonstrates, is already over: the Asian power has won and their superiority will be continued until an undefined future.

Thus, Kritoboulos' approach reflects his aim in writing his *History*. His goal was to legitimize the takeover of the Byzantine space by the Ottomans. This task could be achieved by using the models of Antiquity. The instrumentalization of Antiquity not only fit his political goals but also fit the intellectual pursuits of his time.

4.4 Slaves as rulers: Aristotelian thought and the representation of Turkic rulers

In this sub-chapter, the formation of the image of the Turkic peoples in the *origo gentis* narratives in the Byzantine texts will be discussed. This time another founding element of the image of the Turks will be analyzed: their social origin and its relationship with a well-known notion of the medieval world; slavery.

Here the starting point is still in Antiquity. To understand the genealogy of the thought which relates the barbarians and slavery one must go back to the ancient

[265] MacMaster, "The Origin of Origins: Trojans, Turks and the Birth of the Myth of Trojan Origins in the Medieval World," 1-12.

Greek philosopher Aristotle (384-322 BC), who stated that barbarian societies had no real ruling class and were societies of slaves. Aristotle was widely read during the Byzantine era. Along with Plato, he was one of the rare ancient philosophers whose works continued to be appreciated in Christian intellectual circles. Both Patriarch Photios and Michael Psellos extensively studied the works of Aristotle. When Psellos was teaching at the University of Constantinople, he gave lectures on his philosophy. One can even talk of a Byzantine school of Aristotelianism to which several intellectuals belonged, such as Nikephoros Blemmydes, Theodoros Metokhites, and George Pakhymeres. The latter wrote an "Epitome of the Philosophy of Aristotle," consisting of twelve books on Aristotelian subjects, in which he directly copied or summarized several passages from the works of Aristotle.[266] Although they probably did not go as deep as Pakhymeres, other authors belonging to the corpus of this dissertation were also influenced by Aristotelian thought. A near contemporary of Psellos, Michael Attaleiates referred to Aristotle twice in his history.[267]

Furthermore, Anna Komnene was an avid reader of Aristotle. She was part of a circle of scholars interested in Aristotelian philosophy in the early 12th century and even commissioned commentaries on several works of Aristotle.[268] Even Kinnamos, who generally deals with more concrete aspects of military and political issues, states that he frequently discussed the works of Aristotle with emperor Manuel I Komnenos. So it is possible to state that Aristotelian thought had definitive importance and formative role in the worldview of the Byzantine intellectual class. Moreover, in the Komnenian period, which roughly coincides with the first century

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[266] Oehler, "Aristotle in Byzantium,"138-139. Pachymeres, *Relations historiques*, vol. 1, xxi. Only the first book of the *Epitome* survived as an extant text. For slavery in Aristotle's thought, see also Heath, "Aristotle on Natural Slavery," 243-270.
[267] Attaleiates, *The History*, 394-395, 566-567. He cites *Meteorology* and commentary of *Rhetorics*.
[268] Komnene-Sewter-Frankopan, *The Alexiad*, xiii.

of the time frame of this dissertation, there is a strong interest and appreciation for the works of Aristotle.

As a social phenomenon, slavery was not unknown in the Byzantine Empire, though in a lesser frequency than in Antiquity. The Byzantine Empire, particularly its capital and most important port Constantinople, was an important center of the slave trade in the Middle Ages. Although generally the captives of war constituted the biggest source of slaves, this fact was not true in the cases of the Byzantine Empire and the Abbasid Caliphate that constantly waged war against each other, because between the two entities there were often treaties for the exchange of prisoners of war. So, in the Byzantine Empire, it seems that an important part of the slaves came from the North of the Black Sea, i.e. the Skythian slaves who could be of Slavic or Turkic stock. These slaves were also employed in agriculture in the rural parts of the Empire.[269]

In Byzantine Greek, the generic term that means the slave is δοῦλος. But after the 11th century, a new term appears: σκλαυος. This term existed in Byzantine Greek as an ethnonym since the 6th century, it means the Slav. This word passed to the Arabic language as *saqaliba,* as a term for people of Slavic origin or generally white slaves. The word gained the meaning of slave, probably with the impact of the Arabic language. This word σκλαυος is the origin of the words for slave in certain European languages: such as slave in English, *esclave* in French, and *schiavo* in Italian.

Thus, in Byzantine society there was a visible presence of slaves, who generally came from the world commonly known as Skythia. This Skythia could sometimes coincide with the Slavic homeland. On the other hand, slavery in the Islamic world is also very important. There is a voluminous scholarly corpus about

[269] Rotman, "The Medieval Mediterranean Slave Trade," 129-142.

the different aspects of slavery in medieval Islamic societies. Slavery was a socioeconomic status that was determined by religion, and in medieval Islamic societies there are three types of slavery: domestic (which includes concubines), field labor, and military slavery. All three categories were frequent, but the latter is a phenomenon particularly identified with medieval Muslim societies.[270]

The Turkic populations of Central Asia were the abundant sources of slaves for the Caliphates for centuries. Thus, long before the entry of the Seljuks into the core lands of the Abbasid Caliphate, slave troops of Turkic background were present in the Muslim armies that the Byzantines encountered in the *thugur* region. I already cited the passages of John Skylitzes concerning the Turks in the Abbasid army in the Battle of Dazimon (838). The existence of Turkic slaves in the Abbasid armies is also echoed in the epic of *Digenis Akritas*.

So the very first Muslim Turks that the Byzantines knew were the slave warriors in the service of the Caliph. In the eyes of Byzantine historiographers, the Turks were identified with slavery. However, it is doubtful whether this identification comes from real and direct contact with these people or from the oriental sources used as materials for Byzantine historical texts. The Turks' identification with slavery constitutes not only a social, but also a moral category.

If one focuses on the Turkic state formations after the 9th century, two dominant models can be seen. The first one is the tribal-state formation, which repeats old patterns under a new narrative of legitimization. The Karakhanids, Seljuks, and Anatolian *beylik*s could be considered examples of the first model. In this case, there is a clear source of legitimacy based on dynastic prestige and tribal

[270] For the evolution of this institution, see Crone, *Slaves on Horses: The Evolution of the Islamic Polity*, 74-91.

origins. This legitimacy is empowered by new means of legitimization taken from Islamic culture. The second model is the *mamluk* or "slave sultans" model. This model has a long past in the Islamic *oikoumene*; since the early Abbasid Caliphate, slave warriors from different origins played an important role in the Muslim armies. The warriors of slave origins such as Aḥmad b. Ṭūlūn (r.868-884) and Muḥammad b. Ṭughdj (r.935-946) became the provincial governors of the caliphal state that managed to establish their secessionist sultanates in Egypt and Syria. Even though their short-lived states soon vanished, after the 11th century several dynasties of Turkic *mamluk* origin –such as Ghaznavids, Khwarazmians, the Mamluks of Egypt, and the Mamluks of India– represented a similar state formation model. In such a model, the warrior of slave origin, a self-made man who takes the power, could establish his dynasty (such as Alptigin r. 962-963, the founder of the Ghaznavid dynasty) or could form a kind of military oligarchy (such as the Mamluks of Egypt). If there was no established dynasty, a new *amir* of slave origin, generally from the close entourage of the late sultan, took power.

Here I can offer a generalization about these processes tof state formation. The tribal model was prevalent in the territories where the nomadic lifestyle and Turkic populations were dominant, and the "mamluk" model was dominant where the sedentary lifestyle and non-Turkic populations were dominant. Still, it could be said that the Seljuk state represented a hybrid of these two models. Although the founders of the state were not slaves, they were part of the nomad élite of the society to which they belonged, and they founded the nucleus of their state in Khorasan, a country where the majority of the inhabitants were Persian. So they adopted the customs of Persianate state administration; they had a Persian chancellery, adopted the bureaucratic traditions of the earlier Muslim states of Iran, and organized *ghulam*

troops. However, these facts triggered tension between the ruling élite and nomad Türkmen, as well as between the members of the ruling dynasty where the non-ruling princes allied to the Türkmen or other non-sedentary warbands against their central authority. This fact is a founding event of the immigration policy on the margins of the Great Seljuk Sultanate which also triggered the formation of the Sultanate of Rum.

So slavery is a well-established institution in the Islamic world and the phenomenon of slave soldiers was quite an authentic feature of Muslim societies. However, these facts should not be considered unique features of the Muslim world. The easy social ascension in the barbarian societies, as mentioned above, was a cliché. Naturally, it was a Byzantine (or more correctly a Greco-Roman) idea and it does not demonstrate that social mobility is unknown in the Byzantine world. There is no need to mention that emperors like Basil I and Michael IV (r. 1034-1041) were men of very humble origins. The former was the son of a poor Armenian family settled in Macedonia and the latter came from the peasantry of Paphlagonia. Basil I, a poor young man from Macedonia, could enter the entourage of Michael III because of his talent in wrestling, and then could become the emperor's *parakoimomenos*. By assassinating the emperor, he could take the throne. Michael IV could marry Empress Zoe and become the emperor because of his brother John Orphanotrophos, who was an influential court eunuch. In brief, seeing men of humble origins in higher positions was not very strange to Byzantines.

However, there is still a striking difference between the upward social mobility of a peasant and a slave. A journey from slavery to the throne was a strange destiny in the eyes of the Byzantines. It seems that, at least in the mid-to-late 14th century, they had information about this institution of Mamluks because George

Pakhymeres states that: "the sultan of Ethiopians is from Cuman origin and he was one of those who were sold as slaves (εἷς τῶν εἰς δουλείαν ἀποδεδομένων)."[271] He furthermore adds that because of the effects of climates on the human characters, the Ethiopians revere so much the Skythians, so they buy them as slaves and employ them in military matters. So when a Skythian takes the power, he searches for Skythians to compose his army.[272] In this explanation, there is an echo of the Aristotelian theory of the climates.

As it was seen in the narrative of Attaleiates, if there is a Turkic ruler of Persia, he must be an ex-slave of the sultan of Persia. However, Skylitzes stresses that "(they were) never enslaved by any nation."

These two different approaches regarding early Seljuk history demonstrate the co-existence of two contradictory narratives about their social origin. Attaleiates' version could be understood as a continuation of tradition and Skylitzes identified them with free men. Still according to Attaleiates, when a family of servile origin becomes a ruling dynasty, it becomes noble. When he presents the nephews of sultan Alp Arslan, he calls them two nobles from Persia (εὐπατριδῶν τῆς Περσίδος) and indicates that they are from the royal lineage (γένους ὄντες βασιλικοῦ).[273]

Among the later narratives dealing with the same issue, Anna Komnene's representation of the Seljuks merits attention because, as it was already said, she clearly differentiates two Seljuk entities, the sultanates of Rum and Persia (Great Seljuk Sultanate), and she indicates the tumultuous relations of suzerainty and vassalage between them.[274] However, she seems to be quite unaware of the dynasty's

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[271] Pachymeres, *Relations historiques,* vol. 3, 236.
[272] Pachymeres, *Relations historiques,* vol. 3, 236.
[273] Attaleiates, *The History*, 484-485.
[274] Komnene-Reinsch-Kambylis, *Annae Comnenae Alexias*, 186; Komnene-Sewter-Frankopan, *Alexiad*, 169. "I must now describe how Emir Solymas (Sulaymānshāh), having left Nicaea, appointed this Apelkhasem governor of the city; how Pouzanos was sent by the Persian sultan to Asia…"

early history. John Kinnamos seems also unaware of such an issue, and he never mentions the early roots of the dynasty. Niketas Khoniates is also silent about the early Seljuks.

A dialogue between the emperor Manuel I Komnenos and a Turkish warrior gives a detail about the Byzantine imaginary regarding the Seljuks. In this passage (which is probably fictional) the emperor sends an ultimatum to sultan Masʿūd I (r. 1116-1156) via a Turkish soldier on the battlefield and he complains that the sultan is being withdrawn into the inner parts of Asia Minor by saying he "fled continually, like runaway slaves."[275]

The Byzantine exonym employed for the Muslims, *Agarene*, has an implied reference to slavery. The Arabs (and generally Muslims) were not considered as the legitimate descendants of the patriarch Abraham by his wife Sarah, yet they were considered his descendants of the inferior status of her Egyptian slave Agar. Ismael, the progenitor of the Arabs, is Abraham's less respected son.[276] This word originally signifies an ethnic Arab, but later became a pejorative term used for all the Muslim populations. In that context, it could be assumed that the term Ismaelitai has also a very indirect reference to slavery because Ismael's mother was a slave.

Niketas Khoniates, who was among the first Byzantine authors that employed the word *Agarenoi* for the Seljuk Turks, reflects the agony of being prevailed over by a community that they see as inferior to themselves:

> O Lord of vengeance, thy taking revenge? How long shall these calamities follow one another and the descendants of the bondwoman Agar continue to subjugate those of us who are free and destroy and kill thy holy nation which above every name has called upon thine? How long shall we endure this long-continued servitude and suffer the reproaches and buffetings of these

[275] Kinnamos-Meineke, *Rerum ab Ioanne et Alexio Comnenis Gestarum,* 58; Kinnamos-Brand, *Deeds of John and Manuel Comnenus,* 52.
[276] Savvides, "Some Notes on the Terms Agarenoi, Ismailitai and Sarakenoi in Byzantine Sources," 94-95.

> accursed foreigners? Let the affliction of those in fetters, O Master, lover of goodness, come before thee at last. Let the blood shed by your servants cry out to you, o merciful God, as did Abel's blood in the beginning.[277]

In short, the reference to Agar is not a random reference. The use of this term implicitly indicates a nobility-slavery tension. This expression takes on an even more bitter meaning as the nobles weaken against those who are attributed to them as slaves. The discourse of alterity is based on this tension.

In concluding this sub-chapter, I want to stress that the identification with slavery constitutes a partially independent part of the pejorative rhetoric used for Turkic peoples. It is closely related to the general discourse against the northern barbarians but has a distinct moral meaning. Secondly, the issue of Agarenoi adds a new dimension to this discussion, because Agar's servile origin is a theological issue.

4.5 Conclusion

In this chapter, I dealt with some questions regarding the representation of the mythic, historical, and social origins of the Ottoman and Seljuk ruling élites and populations. Above all, I discussed the *origo gentis* narratives about the Seljuks and Ottomans, because these narratives had two important functions. Firstly they located new populations in the human geography of an already known world. So they made them familiar to Byzantines. Secondly, the explanation of the origin introduced these peoples into a general historiographical narrative that included later events related to them.

Aristotelian thought is still very important to understand the Byzantine intellectual world. As was stressed above, his texts were read in the Byzantine

[277] Khoniates-Van Dieten, *Nicetae Choniatae Historia*, 117; Khoniates-Magoulias, *O City of Byzantium*, 66.

intellectual circles and had a strong influence on the Byzantine worldview. The slavery issue is also related to the abovementioned explanation of origins. The existence of a servile origin or any reference to it demonstrates a lack of valor attached to an individual in the Byzantine worldview. The image of the Skythian is closely related to this approach. There was an abundance of "Skythian" slaves in the Byzantine Empire and these rulers could be potentially considered contradictory to the Byzantine concepts of nobility.

The last subchapter tried to complete the question of slavery with an analysis of ruler succession and dynastic conflicts in Turkic entities, as they were reflected in the Byzantine texts. These narratives are important for a better understanding of how the Byzantines perceived these entities, their internal structure, and the sources of their legitimacy.

CHAPTER 5

"BARBARIAN" POLITIES THROUGH BYZANTINE EYES

5.1 The place of barbarian polity in the Byzantine worldview

In this chapter, I will focus on several aspects related to the literary representation of the political hierarchy between the Byzantines and Turkic peoples whom Byzantines considered barbarians. Byzantine civilization, very much like the other great civilizations of the medieval world, was a self-centered civilization. As was already discussed in Chapter 2, the dichotomy between the Byzantines and "barbarians" indicated a cultural hierarchy between the two groups. Similar to this cultural hierarchy, there also existed a political hierarchy between the Byzantine Empire and the rest of the world. The Byzantines called their state *Βασιλεία τῶν Ῥωμαίων* - The Empire of Romans. The other entities surrounding the Byzantine Empire were considered hierarchically inferior by the Byzantines. The title "emperor" (βασιλεύς) was generally employed to define the Byzantine emperor because the Byzantine Empire was considered not a successor of the Roman Empire, but the empire itself. Unlike modern historiography, Byzantine historians believed in an uninterrupted continuity between the ancient Romans and medieval Byzantines. The Byzantine Empire considered itself the only legitimate empire in the world and did not want to share this title with the western monarchies that saw themselves as the inheritors of the Roman heritage, such as the Carolingian dynasty in France. In 800, when Charlemagne was crowned by Pope Leo III, the Frankish king's coronation as the emperor of Romans was perceived as an offense by the contemporary Byzantine empress Irene (r. 797-803). Additionally, the Byzantine emperor had a spiritual

dimension in his duty, and his authority over the people was believed to be divinely ordained.[278]

George Ostrogorsky explains this notion in the Byzantine model of international relations as the "Byzantine hierarchy of states." He further defines the imperial office as such:

> The emperor and omnipotent ruler of the Romans will be the leader of all the world and the guardian and protector of the Christian faith, because he is the only legitimate emperor on earth, being the Chosen of God and the successor of Roman emperors. The idea that there may be only one single legitimate empire is the basic principle, the alpha and omega of all Byzantine political doctrines.[279]

However, this traditional approach was criticized recently by a new generation of researchers such as Anthony Kaldellis. Kaldellis argued that the Byzantine Empire was essentially a republic. Yet, it was a republic not in a contemporary sense, but in a strictly Roman sense. According to him, the Byzantine Empire was a *politeia*, not a *basileia*, and the legitimacy of Byzantine emperors was deeply connected with popular support, i.e., the support of the Roman masses.[280]

In any case, it should be admitted that the emperor (βασιλεύς) occupied the central role in the Byzantine worldview. The Greek title βασιλεύς was used mostly for the Byzantine rulers until the late Byzantine era, its most important exception being the Persian shahs. But the same title was also claimed by Bulgarian and Serbian kings who sought the expansion of their authority in the Balkans, and this challenge was perceived as a threat by the Byzantine ruling class. Yet these rulers used titles such as "*basileus* of Romans and Bulgarians" or "*basileus* of Romans and Serbs" in their official titulature. In the 12th century, the Byzantine exclusivity about

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[278] Ostrogorsky, "The Byzantine Emperor and the Hierarchical World Order," 1–14.
[279] Ostrogorsky, "The Byzantine Emperor and the Hierarchical World Order," 5.
[280] Kaldellis, *The Byzantine Republic: People and Power in New Rome,* 6-8.

the imperial title was relaxed, and authors like Niketas Khoniates and George Akropolites employed this title for foreign Christian rulers. This change was closely related to the evolution of the imperial idea throughout the centuries. The Byzantine emperor no longer represented the same authority he used to represent through the 11th and 14th centuries. The political ethos of the Komnenian dynasty was far different from that of the Palaiologans.

Another ideological feature that accompanied this Byzantine superiority was the diplomatic language which put the Byzantine emperor into a spiritual kinship with the rulers of neighboring countries. Christianity further strengthened these ties. For example, when the Bulgarian prince Boris converted to Christianity, he recognized the Byzantine emperor as his spiritual father.[281] According to Khoniates, Manuel I honored Qiliç Arslān II by adopting him as a son. In their official correspondence, the sultan addressed the emperor as his father, and the emperor addressed the sultan as his son.[282] There is a similar reference in Akropolites' work, dealing with the baptism of Izz al-Dīn Kaykāʾūs I: "The said Iathatines had escaped from the hands of his brother Azatines, then ruler of the Muslims, and had fled to the city of Constantine; he was received by the emperor Alexios and was baptized by him and adopted." [283] So, the dichotomy between the father and the son was the Byzantine expression of vassalage.

[281] Malamut, "Les peuples étrangers dans l'idéologie impériale," 128.
[282] Khoniates-Van Dieten, *Nicetae Choniatae Historia*, 121; Khoniates-Magoulias, *O City of Byzantium*, 68.
[283] Akropolites-Heisenberg, *Georgii Acropolitae Opera*, 14; Akropolites-Macrides, *History*, 124.

5.2 Archons and sultans: How the Byzantines saw the Turkic rulers

In this sub-chapter, I shall deal with the Byzantine perception of the Turkic rulers. As I already mentioned, the barbarian rulers were perceived as inferiors in the Byzantine worldview. So, a Turkic ruler, just like any ruler from a non-Byzantine background could never be equal to an emperor and always has a lower reputation than the Byzantine emperor. A most useful way to understand this relationship is to focus on the titulature for the foreigners in the Byzantine texts. Here I shall offer a systematic study of these titles through the centuries.

In the early centuries; the title used for the rulers of Turkic people is "khagan" (χαγάνος).[284] This ancient term is used for the supreme rulers of steppe nomads since Late Antiquity and it could be traced back to the fragment about the voyage of Zemarchus to the court of the Türk Khaganate which has survived in the chronicle of Theophylactos Simocatta. In this text, the Türk khagan Silziboulos was referred to also as " the ruler of so many peoples" (ὥτοσούτων ἐθνῶν ἡγεμών).[285] The title khagan was used to designate the rulers of Avars, Turks, Khazars, and Bulgars in the later centuries. The Mongol expansion in the 13th century revived the use of this title. Interestingly, the Byzantines never used this word to refer to the rulers of Mongolian states. Furthermore, this title was never used by Seljuks and the Byzantines never used this title to designate their rulers. Khan (χάν, χάνης, κανάς)[286] is a derivative form of khagan which was part of the titulature of the Ottomans and Genghisid states of Eurasia, such as Ilkhanate and Khanate of Crimea. Khagan, in its

[284] For an etymological discussion of the title, see Clauson, *An Etymological Dictionary of Pre-Thirteenth-Century Turkish*, 611.
[285] Dobrovits,"The Altaic World Through Byzantine Eyes: Some Remarks on the Historical Circumstances of Zemarchus' Journey to the Turks (AD 569-570)," 388.
[286] Moravcsik, *Byzantinoturcica*, vol. 2, 339.

original context, was an equivalent of the title emperor in the world of steppe, hence it represents a claim of universality.

However, starting with Seljuks, the most common titles to define the leaders of the Turks were "sultan" and "amir".[287] These Arabic titles were adopted by the Turks themselves with Islamization. In Byzantine use, the term "sultan" is generally employed to define the ruler of Seljuks and Ottomans, while "amir" designates any petty ruler. Interestingly, the traditional Turkish title "beg", which designates whoever rules a *beylik*, appears very scarcely in the Byzantine texts. The terms *archon* and *hegemon* are frequently used instead of the title "beg". When this word is used, it appears nearly always as a part of a personal name, such as Χασάνμπεγις. A composite title that is derivative of the title "beg", "atabeg" (ἀταπάκας, ἀτάπακος), seems to be more frequent in the Byzantine texts. This title is a composition of two words, "ata" (which means father in Turkish) + "beg" and it represents a rather original institution of Seljuks. The "atabeg"s were tutors of the Seljuk princes who were employed with the provincial governorships in their youth. Many times, the atabegs got rid of their princes and became independent rulers, such as the atabegs of Aleppo and Mosul, respectively ʿImād al-Dīn Zangī (r.1127-1146), the founder of the Zangid dynasty of Syria, and Badr al-Dīn Luʾluʾ(r.1234-1249). A third title frequent among Muslim Turks was "melik" which means literally "king" in Arabic. This title is also found in the Byzantine sources under the form of μελίκης. The last title that should be mentioned here is the title "shah". It is a Persian title that was familiar to Byzantine authors also before the arrival of the Turks. In the Byzantine

[287] As it was seen earlier, it is a generic term employed to designate the Muslim petty rulers by the Byzantines. The form ἀμερμουμνῆς (amīr al-muʾminīn) was used to refer to the Caliphs.

texts related to the Turks, this title is attested rarely, in the form of σάχ or σιάχ, and always as part of a personal name.

There also should be briefly mentioned the feminine forms of these titles. In the traditional Turkic titulature, the feminine form of Khagan is Khatun. However, because of the scarcity of mentions of Turkic women in the Byzantine texts, there is not much reference to this title by the Byzantine authors. There is one exception: Doukas speaks about Fatma Khatun (Φατμάκατουν), who is the daughter of Emir Süleymān and the sister of Demetrios-Yusuf. In concluding this introduction, I must remark that the Byzantine writers were never eager to use authentic titles of foreign populations and apart from the sultan and beg, the use of these titles was particularly rare.

Attaleiates calls the ruler of the Seljuks as the ethnarch who became the ruler of Persia (δεσπότου τῆς Περσικῆς) and he is called sultan in the Persian language.[288] He always refers to the Seljuk ruler (both Ṭoghrıl and Alp Arslan) as the sultan and never explicitly mentions their names. When he mentions the army of the sons of Kutlumus (Sulaymānshāh I and Alp-İlek?) he states that the leaders of the army were called "emirs" and "selarioi" in the Turkish language.[289] The title *salar*, as it was already seen in the text of Skylitzes, was a Persian military title which designates generally a military governorship, similar to *strategos* in the Byzantine Empire. The *salar*s were generally referred to with the province which they were charged, such as Chorosalaris (salar-e Khorasan).[290]

In Anna Komnene's *Alexiad* there is a more detailed panorama of the Seljuk world: in Asia Minor; the rulers from the cadet line of the Seljuks, the descendants of

[288] Attaleiates, *The History*, 76-79.
[289] Attaleiates, *The History*, 504-505.
[290] Attaleiates, *The History*, 142-143.

Kutlumus; were called sultans. (Sulaymānshāh, Qiliç Arslān I and Shāhinshāh) However, the author also differentiates the Seljuk Sultanate of Rum and the Great Seljuk Sultanate; by designing the latter as the Sultanate of Khorasan.[291] Their capital Nicaea is *soultanikion*.[292] The Great Seljuk sultanate soon declined and became unable to intervene in Anatolian politics and remained out of sight of Byzantine historians. In the history of Kinnamos, there is no reference to this entity.

The title of sultan was widely known and used by Byzantine authors. This term was used often for the Seljuk rulers. In the medieval Muslim world, the rulers could not use the title of sultan without the confirmation of the caliph. However, after the 14th century this situation changes a bit: In the work of Pakhymeres, the title of sultan was used both for the sultans of Rum and the sultans of the Ethiopians, which means the Mamluk sultans of Egypt. He also designates the Mamluk sultans as the "sultans of Babylon". He never uses the title of sultan for the descendants of Izz al-Dīn Kaykāʾūs II, but rather designates them as satraps. The title satrap is indeed a common title to designate the Turkish petty rulers of Asia Minor. Shliakhtin traces the first use of the term back to the poetry of Theodore Prodromos in the 1130s and 1140s. According to him, the use of this word refers not to Classical Antiquity, yet to the Old Testament and the Greek version of the *Romance of Alexander*.[293] The term satrap remains in use until the 15th century. Kantakouzenos and Doukas use these terms to refer to different people. Kantakouzenos refers to the Anatolian *beg*s (such as Saruhan, satrap of Lydia and Umur, satrap of Ionia) by using

[291] Komnene-Reinsch-Kambylis, *Annae Comnenae Alexias*, 196; Komnene-Sewter-Frankopan, *The Alexiad*, 179-180.
[292] Komnene-Reinsch-Kambylis, *Annae Comnenae Alexias,* 196-197*;* Komnene-Sewter-Frankopan, *The Alexiad*, 180.
[293] Shliakhtin, *From Huns into Persians: The Projected Identity of the Turks in the Byzantine Rhetoric of Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries*, 144.

this term, but Doukas uses it exclusively for the governors (Musa's satraps, Meḥmed's satraps) of the Ottoman state.

I think that the title of satrap has an interesting meaning in terms of otherness. It reflects a perfectly Persian image of the Turks, but this Persian image is not antagonistic, it is so out of time that it could be considered exotic. Moreover, it has always a certain ambiguity: it could refer to both a subordinate or an autonomous ruler.

The Türkmen dynasties of Anatolia, such as the Danishmendids minted their coins in the Greek language.[294] Following closely the Byzantine model; in these coins, there were the Byzantine style visual representations of the rulers and the writings in Greek. This fact is particularly worthy of attention because of the representation of the Melik Danishmend Ghazi, the eponymous founder of the Central Anatolian dynasty as the most excellent ghazi in the epic romance dedicated to him, the *Danişmendname*. However, despite the existence of the historical material in the *Danişmendname*, this work is neither a contemporary work (it was written in the 14th century as a new version of a now lost romance), nor was it commissioned by the Danishmendid dynasty; aiming to present their self-image. In these coins, the Danishmendid rulers define themselves always as *megas melikis* or *megas amiras*, they use neither the title of sultan, nor *basileus*. The only exception is the *Alexiad* of Anna Komnene in which, Danishmend Ghazi was mentioned as Sultan Tanisman.[295]

[294] See the article by Oikonomides "Les Danishmendides, entre Byzance, Bagdad et le sultanat d'Iconium."
[295] Komnene-Reinsch-Kambylis, *Annae Comnenae Alexias*, 331; Komnene-Sewter-Frankopan, *The Alexiad*, 305.

The toparch is another similar notion: Emir Saltuq of the Saltuqids in Chaldia was designated as toparch (τοπάρχης) of that region. The term toparch is a composite word made by *topos* and *archôn*; it means the lord of a region, a locality. It was used not only for the Turkic or other foreign rulers but also for the Byzantine provincial magnates. The word *topos* indicates the locality; thus this title was employed for the local and non-independent rulers. Jean-Claude Cheynet compares this title with ethnarch and phylarch and points out that the title toparch is mostly employed by the rulers of the entities at the imperial periphery or former Byzantine territories. The territories ruled by a toparch are somewhat modest in terms of size. So in our context, this title was mostly used for the Turkish *beg*s of Asia Minor.[296]

Tyrant (τύραννος) is another title employed to designate the rulers of Turkic states; differently than the toparch; it does not imply a lower degree in a so-called hierarchy of rulers, but moral inferiority of the barbarians to the Romans. As it was already pointed out, in the Aristotelian thinking there is an obvious parallelism between barbarism and tyranny. The tyrannical governments are appropriate for the barbarians, by their very nature. However, the issue of tyranny and the rule by tyrants could not be reduced only to barbarians. There exist not only the Byzantine usurpers but also the emperors who are described as tyrants. For example, according to Khoniates, Andronikos I Komnenos is a tyrant. As I mentioned above, tyranny has also a moral dimension independent from politics. A tyrant typically commits sadistic acts against innocents and has very bad sexual morals.

Interpreting the titulature employed by the Byzantine authors for Turkic rulers; one must first distinguish the Greek titles and the titles of Turkish/Arabic/Persian origin.

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[296] Cheynet, "Toparque et topotèrètès à la fin du 11e siècle," 215-216.

Another interesting point is the Byzantine use of honorifics in place of the names of Seljuk sultans. For example, when the Byzantines refer to various Seljuks sultans named Ghiyāth al-Dīn Kaykhusraw, they always refer to them as Iathatines (Γιαθατίνης or Ἰαθατίνης); however, the sultan's real name was Kaykhusraw, and Ghiyāth al-Dīn is only a Muslim honorific title, that means the protector of the religion. The same is true for the uses of the honorifics such as Azatines and Alatines, to refer to the sultans Kaykāʾūs and Kaiḳobād.

How much did the Byzantines know what these titles mean to the Turks, and the hierarchical relationship between them? They were obviously aware of the general hierarchy of the titulature, if not of the finer nuances. They utilized this titulature as accurately as possible for a culture to which they were unfamiliar.

The use of the title *basileus* for a foreign ruler demonstrates the degree of equivalence between this ruler and his state and the Byzantine Empire. In our context, the most significant example of such usage is the persistent use of the title *basileus* for the Ottoman rulers by Laonikos Khalkokondyles. Khalkokondyles' work could be considered a post-byzantine work because of the date of its composition. This usage demonstrates clearly its context. The Byzantine Empire was over, and the title of *basileus* now passed to the Ottomans, the new rulers of post-Byzantine space. However, this may be a too hasty judgment. Khalkokondyles' utilized the same title also for Tamerlane who was perceived as the dynasty's arch-nemesis in the early Ottoman chronicles. The use of the same title for both the Ottoman rulers and Tamerlane could not be explained with a projected pro-Ottoman approach to him. Despite the use of the title autocrator (αὐτοκράτωρ) for the Holy Roman Emperors whom normally a Byzantine author would not use. He uses once the title for the King Sigismund (r. 1387-1437) of Hungary, as "the emperor and autocrator" of the

Romans. So, it may be more reasonable to interpret this as the absence of the old imperial hierarchy in the post-Byzantine world. So there is no more only one *basileus*. Furthermore, Khalkokondyles was personally part of the circle of Plethon, and as he demonstrated in his work, he defined the Byzantines as Hellenes, not as Romans. So the word *basileus* did not give him the sense of uniqueness it represented to other Byzantine writers.

5.3 The formation and early conquests of Anatolian *beylik*s in Byzantine sources

The role of the banditry and free bands of warriors in the Turkish conquest of Anatolia was already mentioned. Now it is possible to focus more on the historical outcome of such activities in the ex-Byzantine space. In this case, I shall deal with the narratives about the formation of the Turkish *beylik*s, in Byzantine historiography.

Until the end of the 12th century, it is possible to speak of a certain anti-Seljuk resistance by the centrifugal policies in Turco-Muslim Anatolia. Naturally, the Seljuks of Rum were always the most dominant force in this region and, because of being a branch of the prestigious dynasty in Iran and had a somewhat *primus-inter-pares* position in the political reality of the late medieval Anatolia. However, Danishmendids established themselves in a relationship with the *ghaza* tradition of Anatolia and the followers of the tradition of Sayyid Battal Ghazi. They were not less prestigious than the Seljuks, particularly in the early 12th century.

One can assume that several Turkish warlords present in Western Anatolia such as Karatikes or Elchanes in the *Alexiad*, could probably form a statelet in the territories under their domination (such as Kyzikos and Sinope), but the vicinity of the Rum Seljuk powerbase and Alexios I's reconquest of these cities has prevented

such a formation. Yet, there are also Mengujekids and Saltuqids of the Eastern Anatolia which were out of the focus of the Byzantine authors.[297]

After the destruction of these principalities by Seljuks and Ayyubids; until the mid-13th century, there was a consolidation of Asia Minor under the Seljuks of Rum. However with the gradual disintegration of the Seljuk sultanate, there was a new wave of the centrifugal forces in Turkish Anatolia: in the last quarter of the 14th century, several Anatolian *beylik*s appeared in the margins of the territories ruled by Seljuks.

The formation of the *beylik*s in Asia Minor is a theme found in four Byzantine historiographical texts (Pakhymeres, Gregoras, Doukas, Khalkokondyles). The end of the 13th century and the beginning of the 14th century is the period of both the total disintegration of Seljuk authority in Central Anatolia and the Byzantine loss of Western Anatolia. The Seljuk Sultanate was already a puppet state, the vassal of the Mongols of Persia, and was unable to control the Türkmen of frontier regions. In the last quarter of the 14th century, there appeared some statelets that were called *beylik*s, in these regions.

Germiyan and Karaman were the first *beylik*s formed, during the power vacuum because of the decline of the Seljuks. Differently from the later *beylik*s, both seem to have a tribal origin. Karaman, the eponymous founder of the beylik, was depicted as a brigand in several Seljuk sources.[298] Germiyan whose capital is Kütahya (Kotayeion) in the Phrygia, appears to be suzerain of the other beyliks of the western Asia Minor in the beginning.

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[297] For their history, see Sümer, *Doğu Anadolu'da Türk Beylikleri.*
[298] Hopwood, "Peoples, Territories, and States: The Formation of the Beğliks of Pre-Ottoman Turkey," 132.

The Ottomans annexed these emirates, starting with the annexation of Karasi in Mysia in 1345-1346. The Ottoman expansion toward Muslim Anatolia took a century and a half. In the early 16th century, the Ottomans integrated the emirates of Dulkadir and Ramazan, the last independent Türkmen *beylik*s in southern Anatolia and they consolidated their rule in the whole region.

Pakhymeres' account is chronologically the first narrative of these events. His narrative is rather detailed and contains information absent from the other sources. In his account, it is possible to see the Turkish warlords' entry to the scene, not as the founders of the dynasties, but as simple warlords:

> The higher regions of Bithynia and Mysia, of Phrygia and Lydia, and of famous Asia, with the only exception of the strongholds, had completely ruined them. The perpetrators of these acts were the Amourios and the Osmans, the Atines and the Alisher, the Menteshe, the Salampaxis, the Alaïs, the Ameramanes, the Lamises, the Sphondyles, and the Pagdines, and any other with a fatal and cursed name. Excited in their audacity by an extraordinary arrogance and terrible, like a wildfire they occupied everything and devoured it, prevented by this sea alone from advancing even further.[299]

Nikephoros Gregoras depicts the events as follow:

> The Turks agreed and divided afterwards, the country in Asia under Roman rule by lot. Karmanos Alisurios (Germiyan) received most of the Phrygian inland and also the territory of Antiochia on the Meander to Philadelphia with the entire environs. All country from this region to Smyrna, and the Ionian coast in between, was given to another who was named Sarchanes; the area around Magnesia, Priene and Ephesus, had previously been taken away by another satrap, Sasan. The territory from Lydia and Aeolia to Mysia on the Hellespont was given to Kalames and his son Karases, that around Olympus and all of Bithynia again another one, Atman (ʿOthmān), and the territories between the river Sangarios and Paphlagonia was distributed by the sons of Amourios among themselves.[300]

[299] Pachymeres, *Relations historiques*, 424-425.
[300] Gregoras-Schopen-Bekker, *Nicephori Gregorae Byzantina historia*, 214-215; Gregoras-Van Dieten, *Rhomäische Geschichte,* vol. 1, 174.

Doukas' account is rather short:

> During his (Andronikos II's) reign Ephesus, the metropolis of Asia, and the province of Caria fell to Menteshe. Lydia as far as Smyrna was taken by Aydın. Magnesia as far as Pergamon and the entire province of Magedon fell to Saruchan. All Phyrgia fell to Germiyan. Phrygia Magna, extending from the city of Assos to the Hellespont, fell to Karasi. All Bithynia and part of the land of the Paphlagonians fell to Osman. All were Turkish leaders.[301]

Finally, Khalkokondyles narrates these events in the context of the re-foundation of these statelets by Tamerlane:

> When Basileus ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn died and his leading men started disputing among themselves, ʿOthmān is said to have entered into negotiations with them, and they among themselves. He managed to forge a mutual military alliance with them and took an oath that he would wage war in common with them all. They would subjugate as much territory as they possibly could, and however much land they conquered they would divide among themselves in accordance with their common agreements. And so he marched out with them and subjugated a large area, performing great deeds and amassing much money, so that in a short time he acquired a considerable realm. There were seven leaders and after this, they divided among themselves whatever territory had come into their power. Karaman was allotted interior of Phrygia all the way to Kilikia to Philadepheia, and Saruhan the coast of Ionian region as far as Smyrna. Kalamshah and his son Karasi were allotted Lydia as far as Mysia, while Mount Olympos and Bithynia were given to ʿOthmān and Teke. The sons of Umur were allotted the lands toward the Black Sea and Paphlagonia. They say that Germiyan was not among the original seven but had already become the King of Iconion, a city in Karia, where they used to have their court for a long time. But when he was driven out from there, he went to Ionia, where he lived a peaceful private life. So these seven were the ones who together subjected this whole land to themselves. However, there is no point in concerning oneself with whether each acted on his own or in agreement with someone else in some other way, when each obtained his realm.[302]

He later turns again on this subject, now adding two more principalities: Turgut[303] and Metin.[304]

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[301] Doukas-Grecu, *Historia Turcobyzantina*, 33; Doukas-Magoulias, *Decline and Fall of Byzantium to the Ottoman Turks,* 59.
[302] Khalkokondyles, *The Histories*, 18-21.
[303] Turgut was a small *beylik* in the Taurus mountains; it was a vassal polity under the suzerainty of Karaman.
[304] This name is impossible to identify. According to Kaldellis, it is a deformed version of the name *Hamid.* So this is the principality of this name in Pamphylia.

> After that, he moved against the remaining rulers (hegemons) in Asia, namely Aydın, Saruhan, Menteşe, Teke and Metin. He stripped them of their realms, driving them out, and appropriating their territory. Driven from their own lands, they went off to King Timur, in Skythia. (…) I should add that Saruhan, who governed the coast of Ionia, Menteşe who was the descendant of Kalemşah; and Teke, who held Mysia, were descended from the seven rulers who jointly assisted Osman in conquering the realm of Asia, and they are said to have been servants of Basileus ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn. I have no specific information as to how Metin and Aydin obtained their realms. It is said only that Aydin ruled the land from Kolophon to Karia. I know clearly, however, that the subjects of Turgut, Karaman, Metin and Aydın are Turks and are called that.[305]

Khalkokondyles saw the Turkish conquest of Western Asia Minor as a result of a coalition of several Turkish *hegemon*s who jointly invaded the region. So he projects anachronistically such an alliance of seven rulers against the Byzantine Empire in early 13th century. The last phrase is also interesting: "the subjects of Turgut, Karaman, Metin and Aydın are Turks and are called that". What could it possibly mean? It probably refers the ethnic composition of these *bey*liks: in the first three of these emirates; there were a high number of nomadic populations in their territories.

Returning to our subject, the conquest of western Anatolia by Turkish *beylik*s, it could be said that the idea found in the texts of Gregoras and Khalkokondyles, a coalition of the Turkish warlords that allocated western Asia Minor to each other, is a Byzantine historiographical myth. The work of Pakhymeres, the earliest of all four accounts, does not provide such a piece of information.

Also in Doukas' narrative the message is clear: there is no common strategy or alliance among these Turkish leaders; every leader acted independently and occupied former Byzantine regions. Among these four writers, Doukas was the one who knew the recent history of western Anatolia the best. Thus, it seems that starting

[305] Chalkokondyles, *The Histories*, 104-105.

with the work of Gregoras, Byzantine authors created such a teleological account to explain the early expansion of the Anatolian *beylik*s.

5.4 Family intrigues and usurpers: Byzantine commentators on succession and dynastic struggles in the Turkic states

In pre-modern monarchies, the event of ruler succession is a critical process that is closely related to dynastic legitimacy. In medieval western societies, there were several succession rules, such as primogeniture, tanistry or agnatic seniority, which were used to make the order of succession predictable. On the other hand, in eastern societies, the order of succession was not based on a generally accepted rule or an official text like the *Lex Salica*. This often provoked succession crises.

In both Turkic and Muslim states, the same problem occurred as there was not a universally accepted rule of succession. In Turkic states, there was another important aspect, which was that all the state's territory was considered the domain of the royal family. So as the territory belonged to the dynasty, any member of the dynasty could claim the throne. This kind of succession without strict rules can be called "open succession". In this system, the prince who manages to gain the support of the different factions of the court and eliminate his brothers can inherit the throne. It may be speculated that in such situations the older brothers were slightly more advantageous because of their experience and possibly larger networks, but the outcome was not always in favor of them. Such are two cases in Ottoman history; when Bāyazīd I eliminated Prince Yakub and Selim I eliminated Prince Ahmed. In the case of the Ottomans, the historian Doukas explained this principle as follows:

> The new ruler need only be a descendant of ʿOthmān. The Janissaries looked upon the Ottoman rulers as their patrons and the latter treated them as their own freedmen. When it concerned the succession of one Ottoman ruler to

> another or of father to son or of brother to brother, the regiment of slaves faithfully served him whom Fortune favored.[306]

Below, I offer an overview of the evolution of succession, taking into account the usurpers and rebellions in Turkic states, from the eyes of Byzantine authors who were familiar with similar crises within their society in which succession crises were not rare.

Since the earliest apparition of Seljuks in the *Synopsis Historion* of Skylitzes, the Byzantine authors were aware of that notion of patriarchal state of the Turks, and they remarked the lack of common consensus in their royal families and their endless intrigues to get a higher part of royal authority.

In Skylitzes' narrative, when the Seljuk Prince Ibrāhīm Yinal took Liparites captive and brought him to the city of Re (Reyy) where his brother Tughril was ruling as sultan, the latter gives "the appearance of rejoicing and gladness" but he was jealous of his brother's achievement and looks for some pretext to get rid of his brother.[307]

A while after, Ibrāhīm Yinal notices the Sultan's plots against him and rebel against his authority with his nephew Koutloumous. However, Ṭoghrůl defeats the insurgents and Ibrāhīm Yinal is executed. Afterwards, the other dissident escapes with 600 men and with Melech, the son of Ibrāhīm Yinal.[308]

Skylitzes' *Synopsis Historion* concludes with the end of the reign of Michael VI Stratiotikos in 1057, but it is possible to follow the aftermath of the rebellious

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[306] Doukas-Grecu, *Historia Turcobyzantina*, 81; Doukas-Magoulias, *Decline and Fall of Byzantium to the Ottoman Turks*, 136.
[307] Skylitzes-Thurn, *Ioannis Scylitzae Synopsis Historiarum*, 454; Sklitzes-Wortley, *A Synopsis of Byzantine History, 811-1057*, 426.
[308] Skylitzes-Thurn, *Ioannis Scylitzae Synopsis Historiarum*, 474; Skylitzes-Wortley, *A Synopsis of Byzantine History, 811-1057*, 442.

Seljuk Prince Koutloumous in other sources. According to the Seljuk sources, he was killed in 1063 by his cousin Alp Arslan after another rebellion.

In Attaleiates, it is possible to see other dissident Seljuk nobles. Chyrsoskoulos, Sultan Alp Arslan's brother-in-law who arrives at the Byzantine court, is one of them. The two "nobles of Persia" who "had inherited the name of Koutloumous from their father" meet Nikephoros Botaneiates in Nicaea. The two brothers who set a nucleus of state in the city - what will later become the Sultanate of Rum - bend their knee before Nikephoros Botaneiates.[309] As it was already mentioned, the author emphasizes their Seljuk royal lineage. The author calls this cadet branch of the dynasty "Κουτουλμούσιοι" and notes that their commanders call these princes "ἀμηράδες" and "σελάριοι" in the Turkish language. These titles are obviously "*amir*" and "*salar*", military titles of Arabic and Persian origin.[310]

These two brothers were Sulaymānshāh and Mansur who immigrated westward after the execution of their father with a group of Türkmen nomads, called *Nawakiya* collectively. As mentioned in Chapter 2, Sulaymānshāh operated in Anatolia in the 1080s and became the ruler of the Anatolian branch of Seljuks.

It is possible to follow later exploits of Sulaymānshāh in the *Alexiad*. Anna Komnene, though she presents Sulaymānshāh's operations in the Asia Minor as the career of a warlord, carefully notes that he had the title "Amir" in the beginning, and later promoted to sultanate. She seems aware of the internal divisions within the Great Seljuk Empire and their dynastical struggles. Anna draws the portrait of Τουτουσης (Tutush), the Seljuk sultan of Syria, as an ambitious and arrogant man who has killed Sulaymānshāh in battle and sought to overtake the Seljuk throne. For

[309] Attaleiates, *The History*, 484-485.
[310] Attaleiates, *The History*, 504-505.

this purpose, he summons "twelve bloodthirsty individuals called in the Persian dialect Χάσιοι (the assassins) and send them at once as envoys to him (Malik-Shāh). He gave them instructions as to the killing: Go, he said, and first of all make an announcement that you have certain secret information for the sultan, and when you are granted the right of entry, approach as if you desire to speak with him privately and massacre my brother then and there."[311]

The assassins go to the court of sultan and during a festive occasion, they get over his guards and cut sultan to pieces. The author concludes the scene by writing "The Χασιοι delight in that sort of bloodshed, their idea of pleasure is merely the plunging of a sword into human entrails. Furthermore, should anyone happen to attacks them at the very same moment and cut them up into mincemeat, they regard such a death as an honour, passing on these bloody deeds from one generation to another like some family heritage."[312]

Sulaymānshāh's sons were hostages at the court of Malik-Shāh, and after the murder they left the court and fled to Nicaea, their father's capital. According to Anna, "Poulkhases (Πουλχάσες) handed over the town to them as if it were a family inheritance (πατρῷον κλῆρον). The elder son, Qiliç Arslān by name, received the title of sultan (προχειρίζεται δε σουλτᾶν)." The plots in the House of Seljuk continue with the next generation. After the death of Qiliç Arslān, his son Saisan (Shāhinshāh) takes his place. However, his "bastard brother Masout,"[313] who is "jealous of his brother and plots to murder him," gets support from a group of his satraps. Saisan who is described as a "fool" by Anna, is then dethroned and blinded.

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[311] Komnene-Reinsch-Kambylis, *Annae Comnenae Alexias*, 196; Komnene-Sewter-Frankopan, *Alexiad*, 179.
[312] However Malik-Shāh was not murdered as depicted by Komnene; he was poisoned.
[313] This reference to bastardism could imply that Masʿūd was a son born by a concubine and Saisan was born by the principal wife of Qiliç Arslān.

Thus, Anna suggests that the Seljuks perceived their state as a dynastic patrimony which belonged to all the members of the branch of the family. However, the ruler title generally passed to the elder son, hinting at a light system of primogeniture. She also implies that the throne naturally belonged to the legitimate son of the sultan, and not to the bastard. Her account is at times less accurate, for she confuses the names of the rulers, but it is very illuminating for a reading which focuses on the representation of the alterity. She presents the Seljuks as barbarians who tended to be cruel and violent, yet who had a system of dynastic legitimacy and succession.

John Kinnamos describes Qiliç Arslān II's voyage to Constantinople where he signs a peace treaty with Emperor Manuel I. According to this treaty, the Sultan becomes an ally of the emperor, therefore, he is obliged to punish Türkmen tribes that pillage Byzantine territories. However, the rumors of the treaty spreads "from Europe to Asia", and the tribal leaders (φύλαρχοι) become discontented of the deal. Therefore, the leaders of the Türkmen tribes challenge the authority of the Sultan.[314]

Kinnamos' narrative about the preparations of Manuel I of an unrealized Anatolian campaign against Seljuks demonstrates that the Byzantine ruling élite knew the inter-family conflicts in the ruling dynasty and how to use it for their strategy to reconquer their lost land:

> He (Manuel) wrote to his brother Shāhinshāh who governed Gangra and Galatian Ancyra and to his son-in-law Yaghi-Basan who ruled both Kaisereia and Amasia and other outstanding cities which are situated in Cappadocians' land. After he rendered them suspect to the sultan, he was in a short time ready for war.[315]

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[314] Kinnamos-Meineke, *Ioannis Cinnami Epitome rerum ab Ioanne et Alexio Comnenis gestarum*, 208; Kinnamos-Brand, *The Deeds of John and Manuel Comnenus*, 158.
[315] Kinnamos-Meineke, *Ioannis Cinnami Epitome rerum ab Ioanne et Alexio Comnenis gestarum*, 200; Kinnamos-Brand, *The Deeds of John and Manuel Comnenus*, 151.

Yaghi-Basan mentioned by Kinnamos in this passage was the Danishmendid emir of Sivas. Danishmendids, particularly the later ones, had a complex relationship with the Seljuk rulers of Konya. The two states were rivals who both wanted to dominate Turco-Muslim Asia Minor, yet at times were allied via dynastic marriages. The Byzantines knew not only the internal tensions within the Seljuks but also the Danishmendids. According to Niketas Khoniates,

> Yaghi-Basan assembled his troops and drew up his forces in battle order, but he was checked in his eagerness by death. Since Yaghi-Basan's throne was vacant, Dhul'Nun (Δανούνης) secretly entered the satrapy of Amaseia. There he was repulsed and there he was the cause of the death of Yaghi-Basan's wife, who had secretly made Dhul'Nun ruler by marrying him; after he had sent for her, the Amaseians rebelled and killed her. Dhul'Nun, whom they held in contempt as a ruler, they expelled.[316]

As the passage demonstrates, the legitimacy of the succession was so important for the Turkic states that even satrapies, as named by the author, and a usurpation attempt could provoke urban rebellions.

Khoniates also discusses the Seljuk Sultan Qiliç Arslān II's dividing of his realms into small portions for his sons. After he counts which territory passed to which prince, he narrates the civil war between the princes:

> Ruknaddin (Sulaymānshāh II) who was more clever by nature and exulted exceedingly in warfare, outdistanced his brother (Masʿūd, the ruler of Amasya and Ankara) and rival and carried off the victory. Since Masʿūd submitted and agreed to a covenant of friendship, the more powerful Ruknaddin took possession of only a portion of Masʿūd's toparchy and allowed him to govern there as before. He was especially maddened, however by Kaykhusraw and suffered a burning passion for Ikonion, the paternal seat of government; he also loathed him for having a Christian mother. Through envoys, he advised Kaykhusraw to withdraw form Ikonion and remove himself from all power if he wished to perform a good service and spare the cities and the individuals and nations therein from the horrors of war. Thus did the barbarian boast, unsurpassed in his arrogance, his eyebrows raised

[316] Khoniates-Van Dieten, *Nicetae Choniatae Historia*, 122; Khoniates-Magoulias, O City of Byzantium, 69.

> above the clouds in scorn, as he poured out and scattered his deadly venom in many directions.[317]

Later, Kaykhusraw accepted the defeat and fled to Constantinople where he would remain until the death of his brother Sulaymānshāh II in 1204. He would soon return to Konya and take power.

The activities of the members of the Seljuk dynasty who were in exile can be further traced in the *Syngraphikai Historiai* of George Pakhymeres. After the death of Kaykhusraw II (1246), his three sons were proclaimed co-rulers by the Ilkhanate that was the sultanate's suzerain. His youngest son Kayqubad III died in childhood, and then the Mongols divided the sultanate in two; they made Kaykāʾūs II the sultan of western provinces and the frontier regions and Qiliç Arslān IV the sultan of Eastern Anatolia. However, the conflict occurred between Kaykāʾūs II and the Mongols, and after a military defeat, he fled to Constantinople with his family and entourage. Pakhymeres provides a detailed narrative of Kaykāʾūs II's life in exile and the aftermath of his sons. After he gives a brief and ambiguous narrative of the Mongol invasion of Iraq and Anatolia, he states that the Sultan, whom Pakhymeres calls *Αζατινεσ* using only his first name İzzeddin, came to Constantinople with his wives, children, sister, and his mother who was an "excellent Christian." Emperor Michael VIII Palaiologos receives Kaykāʾūs II in such a friendly way that he even permits him to comport as a ruler in the Byzantine capital. The sultan was seated next to the emperor in imperial stands with guards around him and used royal insignia peculiar to Seljuks, such as wearing red shoes.[318] Kaykāʾūs II spent the rest

[317] Khoniates-Van Dieten, *Nicetae Choniatae Historia*, 521; Khoniates-Magoulias, *O City of Byzantium*, 286.
[318] Pachymeres, *Relations historiques*, 184. The use of red shoes as regalia in the Sultanate of Rum is also noted in Oriental sources.

of his days in Constantinople "feasting and drinking," resembling the Festivals of Dionysus.[319]

As was seen in the abovementioned passages, the image of the members of the Seljuk dynasty evolved in the eyes of Byzantine authors. The two authors of the 11th century –Skylitzes, who possibly based his account on oriental sources, and Attaleiates, who presented the Kutlumusioi as leaders of a band of mercenaries that managed to invade Nicaea, a city very close to the imperial capital– had very superficial information about the inner mechanisms of the Seljuk Sultanate. Anna Komnene's representation had some similarities to theirs, but she accepted the existence of a sultanate in Asia Minor.

Kinnamos remains silent about the inter-family relations within the Seljuk dynasty, but as was demonstrated in the case of the Türkmen chieftains, he viewed the sultan of Rum as a ruler of the federation of tribes who shared his authority with the Türkmen chieftains.

Khoniates' approach to the dynastic relations of the Sultanate of Rum was also similar to that of Kinnamos, but he was clearly more informed on the political realities within the Sultanate of Rum. As was stated in the previous chapter, the Islamic allegiance of the Seljuks was slightly more emphasized in the *History* of Khoniates. Being the brother of Michael Khoniates, the archbishop of Athens, Niketas Khoniates seems to be more interested in religious issues.

Pakhymeres' text demonstrates the ultimate image of a Seljuk sultan in the eyes of a Byzantine intellectual: the ruler of a well-defined domain (Persia) that was vanished and became a vassal of the Mongols, a tired and heavy drinking man who unsuccessfully intrigues to recapture his throne, and who was unlike other Persian

[319] Pachymeres, *Relations historiques*, 284.

brigands in Asia Minor that would later evolve into the founders of Anatolian *beylik*s. Despite the pitiful tone in the representation of the sultan in exile, his vitality and *ressentiment*, which ultimately brought him to treason against the emperor Michael VIII, was demonstrated in a lively way in the *Syngraphikai Historiai* of Pakhymeres. After his plot in 1264, in which he provoked the Bulgarians and Tatars to attack Byzantine soil, the sultan was given to Tatars who transferred him to Crimea.[320]

In Gregoras' text, there are some observations on succession in the Ottoman state: while the author mentions Prince Khalīl, the son of Orkhan, he makes some statements about the mechanism. According to Gregoras, Khalīl inherited the area around the bay of Nikomedeia from his father and ruled there in an autonomous way. This description is consistent with the Ottoman practice of appanage. The author then mentions the death of Prince Süleymān (d. 1357) and states that he was the eldest son and successor. However, Prince Khalīl was the son of Orkhan and Theodora Kantakouzene and betrothed to one of the daughters of John V Palaiologos. So his Byzantine imperial descent and the marriage alliance with the Palaiologoi made him a more adequate successor to the Ottoman throne for the Byzantines. The author mentions that the emperor wanted Orkhan to proclaim Khalīl as the official heir; nevertheless, Gregoras' *History* ends before the death of Orkhan and there could not be read the conclusion of this unsuccessful project.[321]

[320] Pachymeres, *Relations historiques*, 300-312. The details of Kaykāʾūs II's plot are discussed in Vásáry, *Cumans and Tatars: Oriental Military in the Pre-Ottoman Balkans, 1185-1365*, 72-79.
[321] Gregoras-Schopen-Bekker, *Nicephori Gregorae Byzantina historia*, vol. 3, 558-566, 501-510; Gregoras-Van Dieten, *Rhomäische Geschichte,* vol. 6, 171-187.

CHAPTER 6

THE MECHANISMS OF CO-EXISTENCE:

ANTAGONISM, ACCULTURATION, ASSIMILATION

6.1 A conceptual introduction

This chapter will examine the entry of people of Turkic origin into Byzantine society and their further interactions with the Byzantines. As an introduction to the three major concepts I will be dealing with –namely, integration, assimilation, and acculturation– I would like to begin with a brief semantic discussion of them. Integration is a modern sociological term that generally implies the successful entry of migrants or outsiders into contemporary societies. Integration comes from the Latin root *integrare*, which means to fuse or to merge. It implies a group of people's fusion with another group of people, of whom the latter seem to be more populous or dominant. The terms integration and assimilation must be distinguished. The word assimilation etymologically comes from the Latin root *similis*, and according to *The Cambridge Dictionary of Sociology* it means "the process in which outsiders (especially migrants) give up their distinctive culture and adopt the cultural norms of the host society."[322] However, the term integration indicates a relationship where the identity and culture of the "integrated" are still the original. Today generally integration has a positive, but assimilation a negative meaning. Moreover, the processes of assimilation and integration cannot be considered mutually exclusive, and assimilation generally follows a successful process of integration. Acculturation is semantically closer to assimilation, but it refers to a dynamic process rather than an event or a situation. It is a term strongly associated with American sociology, and it

[322] Ray, "Assimilation," 24.

was used primarily for the social evolution of the immigrant communities in the United States.

6.2 The entry of the Turks into Byzantine service: Pechenegs and Seljuks

Turkic peoples offered occasional mercenary service to the Byzantine Empire at least since the 6th century. As it was already seen in Chapter 3, there were Hunnic mercenaries in the army of Justinian II. In later centuries, the Byzantines employed Avars, Bulgars, and Khazars for various military services. In the 11th century, the Pecheneg warriors are attested among the Byzantine ranks; they served faithfully even at the Battle of Manzikert. It is possible to speculate that this "barbarian manpower" was dependent on the Turkic nomads who occupied various parts of the Balkan peninsula throughout the early medieval centuries. This usage of foreign manpower in wars secured the service of the "barbarian populations" to the Byzantine Empire. As it was seen before, *De Administrando Imperio* demonstrates that the Byzantine Empire was the most dominant power in its region because of its rather complex diplomatic policy toward its neighbors, particularly with the steppe peoples dwelling beyond its northern borders. This diplomacy included both an elaborate system of alliances with these populations (which involved the use of a population or tribal group against the other) and the use of their military forces as a source of military manpower.

However, before dealing with this question, the terminology regarding these acts should be explained. To enter into service and to defect have slightly different meanings: The latter term implies an antagonism between two parties. This antagonism could be the reflection of an ideological antagonism (as it was seen in earlier chapters; such as the antagonism between the Christians and Muslims) or the

harshness of a momentary confrontation. Furthermore, it indicates a member of the ruling family or elite's act of passing to the other side. However the former term has a much lighter signification, and I use the verb for the individuals who were not part of the ruling élites of their societies. In our case, many active Turkish warlords in Asia Minor in the 11th century did not have any important ties, either with the Great Seljuks or the emerging Sultanate of Rum. In my conceptualization of the primary antagonism and secondary antagonism, they represented the secondary antagonism, in their confrontation with the Byzantines. As I have already mentioned, this attribute is also suitable for the pagan Turkic populations in the steppe region, such as the Pechenegs.[323]

Both John Skylitzes and Michael Attaleiates demonstrate to us the essential patterns of this imperial effort to integrate Pechenegs into the Empire. These patterns were not fundamentally different from Byzantium's earlier experiences with other nomadic groups.

Skylitzes gives a rather detailed narrative of the internal conflicts of Pecheneg tribes who were dwelling in the north of the Danubian frontier of the Byzantines. He presents two Pecheneg leaders as the protagonists; Tyrach (Τυράχ) and Kegenes (Κεγένης). Kegenes is described as a self-made man, a man who does not belong to a noble house but is known for his warlike qualities. On the other hand, Tyrach is "highly distinguished by birth, but otherwise unremarkable."[324] So Tyrach was a member of the Pecheneg tribal nobility. Among the Pechenegs, although Tyrach

[323] There are several studies focusing on coexistence and fluidity of identities between the two sides. The most important ones are: Brand, "The Turkish Element in Byzantium, Eleventh-Twelfth Centuries;" Necipoğlu, "Turks and Byzantines (Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries);" Beihammer, "Defection across the Border of Islam and Christianity: Apostasy and Cross-Cultural Interaction in Byzantine-Seljuk Relations."

[324] Skylitzes-Thurn, *Ioannis Scylitzae Synopsis Historiarum*, 455; Skylitzes-Wortley, *A Synopsis of Byzantine History, 811-1057*, 427.

attained respect for his family origins, Kegenes was much more popular. While Tyrach was trying to get rid of his rival, Kegenes started a rebellion with the support of a small portion of Pecheneg society. However, Kegenes lost the first round of war and fled to Constantinople. Skylitzes gives an account of this event:

> Kegenes came to the capital where he was generously and graciously received in audience by the emperor. On promising to accept baptism himself and to persuade his followers to do likewise, [Kegenes] was raised to the dignity of patrician; he received three of the fortresses standing on the banks of the Danube and many hectares of land. Finally, he was inscribed among the friends and allies of the Romans, all this because he and his followers accepted baptism (as he promised). Euthymios, a devout monk, was sent to administer the sacred bath by the Danube river, giving them all holy baptism.[325]

So basically Kegenes, who came from modest roots, goes back to the frontier region where his people were dwelling, after having obtained a Byzantine noble title and administrative authority. In return, he leaves his ancestral paganism and converts to Christianity. This return could have threatened the traditional Pecheneg society on three different grounds. Firstly, obtaining the *patrikios* title was a challenge to the traditional nomadic aristocracy of the Pechenegs. Secondly, the conversion to Christianity represented a challenge to the Pecheneg religious landscape, which appears to be similar to other versions of Tengrism or paganism practiced by Turkic peoples. His settlement of unnamed castles on the banks of the Danube, however, was the greatest threat. It marks the passage to sedentary life and it is a challenge to the traditional nomadic social order of Pechenegs.

Some twenty years later, Attaleiates described this region as "the region of the *mixobarbaroi* (μιξοβάρβαροι) who dwell by the Danube," adding that "[t]here are numerous and large cities by its shores whose inhabitants constitute a multilingual

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[325] Skylitzes-Thurn, *Ioannis Scylitzae Synopsis Historiarum,* 457; Skylitzes-Wortley, *A Synopsis of Byzantine History, 811-1057*, 428.

crowd and support a large number of soldiers. To those cities the Skythians who had previously crossed the river have introduced their ways of life."[326] So the Danubian frontier region is a zone of passage between the Byzantine *oikoumene* and the steppe world. I dealt with this frontier in Chapter 2 and presented a comparison with the empire's eastern/south-eastern frontier where the confrontation with the Muslims happened.

According to Skylitzes, Kegenes, who once settled in the frontier zone, now started to engage in raids with his 2,000 men against the Pechenegs who remained with Tyrach, and "they would slaughter the men they encountered, but enslave the women and children and then sell them to the Romans." So Tyrach sent a delegation to emperor Constantine IX Monomachos and requested the ending of these incursions. The Byzantine refusal of this request triggered a Byzantine-Pecheneg war. Although in the early stages of the war Tyrach's horde made some gains, they surrendered in the end.

When the Pechenegs surrendered, Kegenes advises to kill all men who could bear arms, but this advice was seen as barbaric and impious. In conclusion, Tyrach's Pechenegs were told to settle in Bulgaria, in the plains of Sardike, Naissos, and Eutzapolis. As described by Skylitzes: "They were all well spread out and completely stripped of weapons to guard against uprisings." The author concludes his narrative by saying: "as for Tyrach and his hundred and forty followers, these were brought to the emperor who received them benevolently, had them baptized and awarded them highest honors, entertaining them in luxury."[327] This policy also divided Pecheneg society in two: while the followers of Kegenes were quartering in the Danubian

[326] Attaleiates, *The History*, 372-373.
[327] Skylitzes-Thurn, *Ioannis Scylitzae Synopsis Historiarum*, 459; Skylitzes-Wortley, *A Snopsis of Byzantine History, 811-1057*, 430.

frontier, Tyrach's Pechenegs settled in Central Bulgaria.[328] Moreover, the emperor formed a Pecheneg division of 15,000 men, aiming to use them mostly on the eastern borders. He appointed four Pecheneg warriors to command them: Soultzous (his name appears as an accusative: Σουλτζοῦν), Selte (Σελτέ), Karamas or Karaman (his name appears as an accusative: Καραμᾶν) and Kataleim (Καταλείμ). Although the author only states that the emperor "then showered them with gifts, providing them with first-rate weapons and excellent horses," it can be guessed that they also converted to Christianity.

However, this treaty did not secure the peace in the Balkans, inasmuch as the Pechenegs did not cease to make incursions on the Roman territories. Moreover, the Pechenegs are now dwelling in a region much closer to the Byzantine capital. Under these conditions the emperor Constantine IX called Kegenes to Constantinople, however before this meeting, he became the target of an assassination attempt by other Pechenegs. Strangely, Valtzar (Βαλτζάρ), the son of Kegenes takes the assassins as the prisoners, but he does not punish them right away. This fact garners the attraction of the emperor; Valtzar explains the impunity by saying "because they were invoking your name." After this answer, Constantine IX questions the would-be assassins by asking them why they wanted to kill a patrician and they state: "Because he was evilly disposed towards your reign and to the city; he was intending to enter the city at dawn, to slaughter everybody in it, pillage the city and return to the Pechenegs." At this point, Skylitzes makes a moral comment that he expresses rarely in his work and criticizes the emperor for his lack of good willingness: "He ought to have examined these statements to find out the truth, but that is not what he did; he

[328] See Florin Curta's comments on the Byzantine attempts to settle Pechenegs. Curta, *Eastern Europe in the Middle Ages (500-1300)*, 166-167.

put his faith in some irresponsible and inconsistent accusations."[329] Furthermore, he arrests Kegenes and his sons and releases the would-be assassins. The author describes this attitude as "a clear sign of malevolence." The same night, the would-be assassins leave Constantinople in secret and return to the Balkans, establish themselves at Aule, near Adrianople and begin to raid the region. Slightly later, these Pechenegs defeat the armies of Constantine Arianites near Dampolis and their insurgency becomes a great threat. Under these circumstances, the emperor decides to use Tyrach and his entourage to pacify the Pechenegs. However, during the new campaign against Pechenegs, Tyrach and his comrades leave the Byzantine army and join their compatriots.[330] Two more campaigns aimed to pacify the Pechenegs, ending with Roman defeat.

At this point, the emperor Constantine IX decides to set Kegenes free and utilize him against the Pechenegs. Kegenes helps the Byzantine to pacify the Pechenegs violently. He makes a treaty with the Pechenegs who "promise him with oaths to do whatever he wanted;" however, once the treaty is made, his compatriots do not honor it, and "he was promptly murdered and cut up into small pieces."[331] This murder triggers another Byzantine campaign to punish the Pechenegs and the commanders Nikephoros Bryennios and Michael the Akolouthos massacre large groups of Pechenegs. Skylitzes concludes the passage by stating: "This reverse put fear and caution into the Pechenegs; in the fourth and fifth years of indiction they no longer raided with impunity as before, but sporadically."

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[329]Skylitzes-Thurn, *Ioannis Scylitzae Synopsis Historiarum,* 466*;* Skylitzes-Wortley, *A Synopsis of Byzantine History, 811-1057*, 435.
[330]Skylitzes-Thurn, *Ioannis Scylitzae Synopsis Historiarum*, 468; Skylitzes-Wortley, *A Synopsis of Byzantine History, 811-1057*, 437.
[331]Skylitzes-Thurn, *Ioannis Scylitzae Synopsis Historiarum*, 472; Skylitzes-Wortley, *A Synopsis of Byzantine History, 811-1057,* 440.

This account gives us some insight into how a nomadic population could be integrated into Byzantium: Generally there is a difference between the imperial strategy in dealing with the tribal elite and commoners. The imperial strategy prioritizes the agreements with (at least a clique of) the notables. The Byzantine policymakers were never secure of the fidelity of the tribal chiefs and because of it, they never cease to use a faction against another. (As it was seen, firstly Kegenes against Tyrach, then an agreement with Tyrach, then another alliance with Kegenes, then using the faction of murderers against Kegenes, then Tyrach against the faction of murderers, then Kegenes against Tyrach and the faction of murderers.) The imperial authorities frequently call the leaders of factions to their capital and try to make them content with titles and gifts. The presence of the members of the notables of a nomadic society in Constantinople is useful for two reasons:

i) Their presence as refugees at the imperial capital makes them good candidates for a pro-Byzantine tribal leadership.

ii) Their presence as vassals (similar to the *foederati* of Late Antiquity) makes them easy to control and prevents them from revolting.

In this strategy, there was nothing related to the Pecheneg lower classes. They are only passive elements of society.

Despite Skylitzes only mentioning the baptism of the Pecheneg élite, this fact must not be limited to the nobility. Also, the lower classes of the Pecheneg nation must be evangelized to some point as a way to integrate into the Byzantine peasantry.

Michael Attaleiates gives an alternative narrative about these events. However, he mentions neither Tyrach nor Kegenes. Indeed, he does not give any narrative about the internal structure or struggles of Pechenegs. According to him, after the oppression of the first Pecheneg invasion of the Balkans (c. 1047), these

nomads started again to raid the Byzantine territories as "the snakes warmed up by the heat." Emperor Constantine XI Monomachos' resolution to this agitation was a rapprochement with the Pecheneg leaders: The emperor's plan was to send their leaders in the hope that they might bring their people to their senses. He had honored them with the rebirth of holy baptism and the greatest gifts, and hoping to use them to avert war, or so he thought, he spared their lives and restored them to their own clans.[332]

However, the Pecheneg warriors –evangelized or not- were not regarded without suspicion. Attaleiates says that "wanting to lift the suspicion that hovered over the Skythians, I myself advised the emperor to bind them an oath. He accepted my advice and right away appointed me to execute and oversee the matter."[333] So to secure the fidelity of the Pechenegs, there are always necessary extra measures such as the oaths.

In the *Alexiad*, there are some more references about the Byzantine policy toward the Turkic nomads. In this work, the Cumans, a Turkic population recently arrived at the Balkan frontier of the Empire, enter the narrative. It seems that there is an obvious hostility between Cumans and Pechenegs that creates sporadic wars. Anna Komnene narrates early wars between Alexios I Komnenos and the Pecheneg chieftain Tzelgou (Τζελγού). Then later these Pechenegs were ultimately defeated by Cumans who appeared beyond the northern frontiers and fled toward the Lake of Ouzolimne (Οὐζολίμνη).[334] According to Anna Komnene, the imperial strategy was

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[332] Attaleiates, *The Histories*, 54-55.
[333] Attaleiates, *The Histories*, 288-289.
[334] Anna Komnene explains its etymology with the ethnonym Oghuz: "It has been called Ozolimne, not because it emits an evil or unpleasant odour, but because an army of Huns once visited the lake (those who used to be called Huns are now commonly known as Ouzes) and camped by its banks. The name Ouzolimne was given to it, with the addition of the vowel 'u'. No congregation of Huns in that area has ever been mentioned by ancient historians, but in the reign of the Emperor Alexios there was a general migration there from all directions – hence the name. Komnene-Reinsch-Kambylis, *Annae*

"to make use of Scythians against the Cumans, if the latter again approached the Ister and tried to seize territory beyond it."[335]

Another Turkic population that appeared on the northern edges of the Balkan frontier of the Byzantine Empire were the Oghuz (Οὖζοι). I already mentioned these Oghuz who were the westernmost fraction of Oghuz nomads that were neither joined to the founders of the Seljuk state, nor remained in the ancestral pastures in Transoxiana, but followed the westward movement of Pechenegs and Cumans in the Pontic Steppe. They had also a limited presence in the region.[336] During the ill-fated Balkan expedition of the Norman prince Bohemond Hauteville (he had not become prince of Antioch yet), a certain man called Ouzas (Οὐζᾶς) is described by Komnene:

> (A man) who owed his name to his race, a man famed for courage and one who knew how to wiled the dried bull's hide to right and left, as Homer says, when he emerged from the pass, swerved slightly to the right, swiftly turned and struck at the Latin behind him. The man at once fell head first to the ground. Nevertheless, Bohemond chased them to the River Salabrias. In the flight, however, Ouzas, whom I mentioned already, speared Bohemond's standard-bearer, snatched the insignia from his hands, waved it around a little, and then pointed it towards the ground.[337]

The same Ouzas appears again during a battle against the Pechenegs; he is always described as a "Sarmatian" and his comrade Karatzas, another commander of the Byzantine Empire, a "Skythian". Ouzas could secure the place of his descendants in the Byzantine army; at the end of the *Alexiad*, the son of Ouzas appears in the description of a battle against the Seljuks of Rum. As it was stressed by the author, the name Ouzas seems to be identical to the demonym Oghuz.[338]

Comnenae Alexias, 217; Komnene-Sewter-Frankopan, *The Alexiad*, 198.

[335]Komnene-Reinsch-Kambylis, *Annae Comnenae Alexias,* 216; Komnene-Sewter-Frankopan, *The Alexiad*, 197.

[336]The majority of these Oghuz entered the service of princes of Kievan Rus and are collectively known as Torks or Cornije Klobuki in medieval Russian sources.

[337]Komnene-Reinsch-Kambylis, *Annae Comnenae Alexias,* 160 ;Komnene-Sewter-Frankopan, *The Alexiad*, 145.

[338]Komnene-Reinsch-Kambylis, *Annae Comnenae Alexias,* 476 ;Komnene-Sewter-Frankopan, *The*

Naturally, the background or exact way to enter into Byzantine service of every soldier of Turkic origin is not known in detail. However, the essential patterns of entry can be seen as

i) the members of the ruling élite of their nomadic populations/tribes

ii) the leaders of independent war bands/mercenary groups.

The entry of the persons who were once members of Seljuk society into Byzantine service follows basically the same patterns. In the moment of a political conflict, the ones who want to seek an alliance with the empire or provide Byzantine assistance to his cause could easily approach the empire. Nonetheless, an essential difference between Pechenegs and Seljuks should be mentioned: The Pechenegs were a tribal federation. There was no real "Pecheneg State". This Pecheneg polity which appears as a federation of multiple tribes could be defined only as a "proto-state" or "state nucleus". However, the Seljuks –which were a coalition of Türkmen warrior bands assembled around the charismatic warlords of the Seljuk family– could become a state in a few decades. Despite their tribal origins and early relations with the Turkic homeland, their state was developed rapidly into a sultanate, similar to Buyids or Samanids, and adopted traditional Islamic institutions.

Could religion also diminish the enthusiasm of Muslim Seljuks to enter Byzantine service? One can reject easily this argument. Regarding the cases of the 11th century, it is hard to associate any Seljuks with a deeper understanding of Islam, as it was already discussed in Chapter 3. The lifestyle of the early Seljuks was not very different from that of Pechenegs, as it was seen in the earlier chapters. In the subsequent centuries, although one can presume that Islam became much more established in Anatolia, these entries continued. Many members of the Seljuk ruling

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Alexiad, 446.

family went to exile in Constantinople or defected to Byzantium. Rustam Shukurov explains this fact with his "dual identity" hypothesis; he argues that an important part of the members of the ruling elite of the Seljuks of Rum, including the sultans, had a dual identity (Muslim-Christian) and because of this they could live comfortably in the Byzantine world. He explains it as follows: "Dual identity supposes that one of the two identities is in active mode while the other is in deferred mode when in a Christian environment, such persons would identify themselves as Christian, deferring their Muslim identity. They would, however, embrace their Muslim identity when in a Muslim space, in turn deferring their Christian self for the time being." So when they went to Constantinople, they behaved just like other Greek Orthodox Christians.[339]

The first Seljuk commander who entered Byzantine service was Chyrsoskoulos or Arisghi, who was the brother-in-law of Seljuk sultan Alp Arslan. His story is somewhat different from the later defections. Chyrsoskoulos defeats Manuel Komnenos in battle and then "had of its own accord decided to join the emperor and was bringing the general (Manuel Komnenos) along with him. He would rather be known as a servant of the emperor than the grand commander of the Huns." But then the author explains the real reason for Chrysoskoulos' defection: "He came to the Imperial City having left behind his own forces and made his decision to change sides, though it was not fully voluntary. The reason was that the sultan governing Persia (Alp Arslan) was ill-disposed toward him as though he were a traitor, and had sent out one of his captains with an army against him. He was seized with fear and could think no other way of escaping the danger than to seek

[339] Shukurov, "Harem Christianity: The Byzantine Identity of Seljuk Princes," 134.

refuge with the emperor of the Romans."[340] So his defection follows the same pattern as the early similar events. The difference between the way of the defection of Kegenes and Chrysoskoulos was related to the administrative system of their respective societies. Kegenes was part of a society in which a tribal aristocracy controlled the structures of power and he could gain support from a smaller portion of it. On the other hand, Chrysoskoulos came from a society where only one ruling family dominated central power and he was related to this family by the bond of marriage.

This defection of Chrysoskoulos was the beginning of a chain of defections from Seljuks to the Byzantine Empire. This defection reflects a pattern that will repeat in later generations: the individuals who do not possess the power to challenge successfully the central authority of the sultanate or those who feel themselves under a threat. In these times there was also always - at least one – pretender who was the ally of the Byzantines.

But even Chrysoskoulos had a precedent: Amertikes (Ἀμερτικῆς) a Turkish warrior who came as a refugee to the Byzantine court. Although Attaleiates presents him as "an energetic man...claimed to be of the imperial family of Persia," it seems that he is not a member of the House of Seljuk. Claude Cahen explains his name as Harun Ibn Khan. He was the leader of a Turkish war band that looted Kilikia. After talking about the atrocities of Amertikes' band in Kilikia, the author returns to the past and narrates his early moves: "He was very hostile to the Romans because he had been deceived in his dealings with them. He had formerly come to the emperor of the Romans, who was then the Old Man [i.e. Michael VI Bringas] and was

[340] Attaleiates, *The Histories*, 258-259.

splendidly received during his stay in the Reigning City. But he was accused before the emperor Konstantinos [X] Doukas of plotting to stab him and was condemned to exile." Even so, after his return from exile, he was employed to fight against the Seljuks, but he defected to the Mirdasid ruler of Aleppo because he could not get money for his soldiers' rations.[341] Amertikes appears a decade later in Northern Syria, as the commander of a Turkish contingent that was allied with the Mirdasids.[342] Amertikes was an one of the leaders of free war bands who had no indispensable tie with any political entity. Such warlords could easily move between different states or centers of power.

Furthermore, Anna Komnene's *Alexiad* gives us also several details of mechanics of entry of the Turks into Byzantine service. Among the three examples she has given, Elchanes (Ἐλχάνης), the satrap of Kyzikos, Skaliarios (Σκαλιάριος), and an unnamed comrade of arms of him were already mentioned.

She also mentions a certain Siaous (Σιαούς), who was the ambassador of the Seljuk sultan to the emperor Alexios I. His name could be both a Greek rendering of the Persian given name Siyavuş or the Turkish military rank çavuş. He was a Turk on his father's side and a Georgian on his mother's side. Being the ambassador of the Great Seljuks, he brought the letter of sultan Malik-Shāh to establish peace between two forces. After his meeting with the emperor at Constantinople, he went to Sinope and some other cities under the control of Turkish warlords (such as Karatekin, Χαρατικής, the ruler of Sinope) and "showing the sultan's order, removing the satraps and reinstating the emperor's satraps in their place." After his mission in Asia

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[341] Attaleiates makes a bitter comment about Amertikes' defection: "Now, whether it was prudent to send this barbarian against his own people, especially when he had been ill-treated and would not have even received the promised rations money, I leave to my readers to investigate." Attaleiates, *The History*, 172-173.
[342] Attaleiates, *The History*, 198-199.

Minor, he returned again to Constantinople, entered Byzantine service, converted to Christianity, and became the *doux* of Ankhialos.

In Kinnamos' work, there is rich material about the Turks who entered Byzantine service: The first of them is Prosuch (Porsuk), who could be the same person as the one referred to in the *Alexiad*.[343] The author describes him "as a Persian by birth, but who had enjoyed a Roman upbringing and education" and he appears as a commander who served in campaigns with John Kontostephanos. Another Turkish soldier who entered Byzantine service was Poupakes (Abu-Bakr?), who is also described as "a Persian by birth." He was employed for spying on the Turks near the Byzantine camp. The commanders who ordered Poupakes to fulfill this duty were the brothers John and Isaac Axouchos. There should be no doubt on the dangerous nature of this task. A person assigned to such a job must be free from any suspicion of treason. Axouchoi's choice demonstrates that they see him as totally trustworthy. It is possible to imagine that the Turkic origin of the Axouchoi may have created an affinity between them and Poupakes and there may have been an ethnically based solidarity of Turks in the Byzantine court. Kinnamos' description of Poupakes is totally positive; he states that he is a man who "possessed great courage and activity."[344] The same person also appears in the work of Khoniates, in the battle of Kerkyra between the Byzantines and Normans. In a difficult moment of the war, after the proclamation of "He who loves the emperor and is eager to distinguish himself in the face of danger, let him ascend," Poupakes impresses the emperor by ascending the ladder on the besieged citadel. He is described as a devoted and brave warrior,

[343] Kinnamos-Meineke, *Ioannis Cinnami Epitome rerum ab Ioanne et Alexio Comnenis gestarum*, 33-34; Kinnamos-Brand, *Deeds of John and Manuel Comnenos,* 35.
[344] Kinnamos-Meineke, *Ioannis Cinnami Epitome rerum ab Ioanne et Alexio Comnenis gestarum,* 47-48 ;Kinnamos-Brand, *Deeds of John and Manuel Comnenos,* 45.

without any reference to his barbarian origins. Afterward, he unintentionally helps the escape of Andronikos Komnenos and is publicly scourged for that crime. In front of the crowd, he defends himself by saying: "Let my shame be before every man who so wishes for not having betrayed my benefactor who came to me, for not having dismissed him harshly, but instead attending rightly to his needs and sending him rejoicing on his way."[345]

In the later part of the narrative, a Poupakes[346] appears again, possibly the same person as the former one who was presented as the nephew of a certain Süleymān who was the governor or chief of the westernmost territories of the Seljuk sultanate. This Poupakes serves as an envoy between the emperor Manuel I and his uncle.

Among the captives taken on the battlefield in 1146, he mentions a certain Pharkousas (Φαρκουσᾶς), who was the "cupbearer"[347] of the Seljuk sultan. Kinnamos describes him as "an outstanding man among the Turks," and even though he never mentions him again, the knowledge and positive statement about him could also imply that this Pharkousas also passed to the Byzantine side. Another Byzantine officer who appears to be of Turkic origin is Ishaq (Ἰσάχ), who was also in charge of a very intriguing task, to inform the emperor Manuel I Komnenos about the conspiracies of his cousin (later emperor) Andronikos Komnenos. However, before Ishaq arrived at the emperor, he became aware of the conspiracy. The author describes Ishaq as "a man of barbarian descent who was a particular favorite of the

[345] Khoniates-Van Dieten, *Nicetae Choniatae Historia*, 172; Khoniates-Magoulias, *O City of Byzantium*, 75.
[346] According to Brand, they are not same persons. See Brand, "The Turkish Element," 8.
[347] This must be a translation of the Seljuk/Ottoman court title *şarabdar*. Doukas uses the original Turkish title in his *History*, nearly three centuries later. Doukas-Grecu, *Historia Turcobyzantina*, 235; Doukas-Magoulias, *Decline and Fall of Byzantium to the Ottoman Turk*s, 164.

emperor."[348] We also learn that at a certain point this Ishaq converted to Christianity and took the baptismal name Michael.[349] Furthermore, Kinnamos cites Bayram (Παϊράμης) as "a man tried in battle" and "a Persian by race" who fought against the Normans of Sicily. Along with his comrade-in-arms John Kritoples and Georgian and Alan units, he managed to take a Norman standard and brought it to the Byzantine headquarters in Brindisi.[350]

Despite their conversion to Christianity, a typical accusation used against the Turks is sorcery. Michael Italikos, in his letters that addressed Tziknoglou, warned his friend of Turkish origin not to employ a sorcerer to practice Chaldean magic to heal his sick sister. The same accusation is echoed also in Kinnamos when he narrates the trial of Alexios Axouchos, who served as *protostrator* under Manuel I Komnenos. Among the crimes that Axouchos was accused to have committed, Kinnamos counts "he frequently invited into his presence a man, a Latin by birth but a magician and outstanding in wizardry, unfeignedly conversed with him, and communicated monstrous plots. These were as to how the emperor might always be unfortunate in lack of an heir; he used to receive many drugs from the wizard for the said purposes and the wretch did not leave off doing such things." Khoniates, who describes the emperor Manuel I's attitude against Alexios Axouchos as "wrongdoing and disgraceful", finds these accusations baseless.[351] According to him, these claims were fabricated by a group of people that includes Aaron Isaakios of Corinth and

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[348] Kinnamos-Meineke, *Ioannis Cinnami epitome rerum ab Ioanne et Alexio Comnenis gestarum*, 129 Kinnamos-Brand, *The Deeds of John and Manuel Comnenus*, 102

[349] Kinnamos always uses the term *barbaros* for Ishaq, he never states that he is Persian (or Turkish). His name is obviously Islamic, perhaps there is a possibility that he is Arabic or from another predominantly Muslim ethnicity.

[350] Kinnamos-Meineke, *Ioannis Cinnami epitome rerum ab Ioanne et Alexio Comnenis gestarum*, 167; Kinnamos-Brand, *The Deeds of John and Manuel Comnenus*, 128.

[351] Khoniates-Van Dieten, *Nicetae Choniatae Historia*, 187-188 ; Khoniates-Magoulias, *O City of Byzantium*, 82.

they "secretly induced to accuse Alexios of using his powers of witchcraft against the emperor, powers which were so illusory and efficacious that the sorcerer could fly in the air and remain invisible to those upon whom he wished to swoop down with sword in hand; their other buffooneries and vulgarities to which sound ears ought not to listen were such as those of which the Hellenes, fabricating fables, accused Perseus."[352]

This accusation of sorcery suggests that the Byzantines had some doubts about the Turks' dedication to their new religion, Orthodox Christianity. Although in the second case the wizard is a Latin (i.e. Italian), the Turks' connection with the fact is obvious.

Of course, though it was seen as a sin in Byzantine society, sorcery was ever-present in social life. In Byzantine society, as in other societies, generally, sorcery is identified with the alien populations, particularly with those who did not share the Orthodox religious practices of the majority. Also in the ancient Turkic religion, which is sometimes defined as shamanism, there were religious practices that could be defined as sorcery.[353]

However, Alexios Axouchos had committed two bigger crimes: in his mansion, there were paintings that depicted the martial deeds of Qiliç Arslān II and, more importantly, he bribed the Skythian mercenaries to assault the tent of the emperor during his campaign against the Hungarians.[354] These details are only found in Kinnamos' work. Apart from the accusations of sorcery, it is clear that both

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[352] Khoniates-Van Dieten, *Nicetae Choniatae Historia*, 187-188; Khoniates-Magoulias, *O City of Byzantium*, 82.
[353] Brand, "The Turkish Element," 7 (for the case of Tziknoglos) and 9 (for the case of Alexios Axouchos). Kinnamos-Meineke, *Ioannis Cinnami epitome rerum ab Ioanne et Alexio Comnenis gestarum*, 267-268; Kinnamos-Brand, *Deeds of John and Manuel Comnenus*, 200-201. For Turkic shamanism see İnan, *Tarihte ve Bugün Şamanizm*.
[354] Kinnamos-Meineke, *Ioannis Cinnami epitome rerum ab Ioanne et Alexio Comnenis gestarum*, 267-268; Kinnamos-Brand, *Deeds of John and Manuel Comnenus*, 200-201.

Alexios' alleged sympathies for the Seljuk ruler and his intrigues with the Skythian (i.e. Cuman) mercenaries were related to his Turkic origins. Alexios Axouchos, even though he was a second-generation member of an aristocratic family that had close ties with the imperial court, could not escape from such allegations. Independent from the degree of truth of such accusations, his Turkic background associated him with sorcery and collaboration with the Seljuks and Cumans.

There is a striking difference between the representation of the Turks in the histories of Kinnamos and Khoniates. Kinnamos always stresses the ethnic origin of the Byzantine officers he mentions, but Khoniates generally ignores it.[355] Brand interprets the different approaches of these authors as a sign of Kinnamos' anti-Turkish attitude. However, I can hardly see any particularly anti-Turkish comment of Kinnamos distinguishable from other Byzantine authors. So the passages concerning the trial of Alexios Axouchos must be read according to the methodology proposed in this dissertation. These authors had political aims for writing their histories: Kinnamos had sympathy for emperor Manuel I, so he chooses to narrate these accusations in detail, in order to convince the reader that Alexios Axouchos is the villain. However, Khoniates who was critical of Manuel I constructs his narrative on the arbitrary and unjust attitude of the emperor. So in Khoniates' narrative, the details of the trial of Alexios Axouchos were omitted, because they do not serve the aim of his work.

In summary, from the discussion above, the following patterns of the entry of the Seljuks (not only the members of the House of Seljuk, but all persons related to the Great Seljuks or the Sultanate of Rum) and Pechenegs into Byzantine service

[355] However, he mentions that John Axouchos is of Persian origin: Khoniates-Van Dieten, *Nicetae Choniatae Historia*, 14; Khoniates-Magoulias, *O City of Byzantium*, 7.

emerged.

i. The visibility of the Seljuks in the Byzantine ranks was much greater than the Pechenegs. Apart from the tribal leaders who had obtained aristocratic titles, there were no important officers of Pecheneg origin, nor were there any families such as the Axouchoi or Chalouphes who had important positions in Byzantine society for more than one generation.

ii. One can speculate that in the lesser military positions and among the peasantry there were more "Skythians". However, there is little concrete evidence about it. Because of the baptismal names used in the register, it is not easy to understand how many of the peasants were ethnic Greeks and how many belonged to recently converted foreign populations.

6.3 Tzachas and Syrgiannes Palaiologos: Two case studies

Çaka (Τζαχᾶς) is an interesting example of the Turks who entered Byzantine service. The only account of his life is found in the *Alexiad*. In addition to *Alexiad*, in *Danişmendname* a certain warrior called Çavuldur Çaka[356] is mentioned among the comrades of Danişmend Gazi. Çavuldur is the name of an Oghuz clan, one of the twenty-four clans that were considered descendants of the legendary Oghuz Khan in Turkic genealogical legends. However, *Danişmendname* gives no details of the deeds of Çavuldur Çaka.[357] Moreover, the personage of Çaka is totally absent in oriental sources dealing with Seljuk history.

[356] Melikoff, *La Geste de Melik Dānişmend: Étude critique du Dānişmendnāme*, vol. 1, 72-73, 85-88.
[357] Faruk Sümer put forth that Çavuldur Çaka is the same person as a certain Emir Çavuldur, attested in the Persian history of Zahir-al-Din Nishapuri (12th century), who captured the cities of Maraş and Sarız during the Seljuk invasion of Anatolia. So he does not identify him with Çaka of Smyrna. Sümer, *Oğuzlar (Türkmenler): Tarihleri-Boy Teşkilatı, Destanları*, 324.

Çaka appears in the *Alexiad* as a warlord/pirate who established himself in the city of Smyrna. He built a pirate navy there and then captured the towns of Phokaia, Klyzomenai, and Mitylene. Even though his family origins are obscure, his brother Galabatzes (Γαλαβάτζης)[358] is with him at Smyrna. In an interesting passage, Anna Komnene tries to give Çaka's own voice about his early life: "You should know that I am the young man who used to make incursions into Asia. I fought with great spirit, but because of my inexperience, I was deceived and captured by the famous Alexander Kabalikas. He offered me as a prisoner of war to the emperor Nikephoros Botaneiates. I was at once honored with the title of *protonobelissimos* and after being rewarded with liberal gifts I promised obedience to him. But ever since Alexios Komnenos seized power, everything has gone wrong."[359]

After he defeated Niketas Kastamonites, sent by the emperor to subjugate Tzachas, he became the controller of the region. Tzachas had thousands of Turks who were following him. He managed to control Smyrna, despite the imperial efforts to recapture the region. Emperor Alexios I sent two of his most distinguished generals, Constantine Dalassenos and John Doukas, but despite their initial successes, they could not subjugate Tzachas.

The author stresses the ambitious character of Tzachas. It seems that these ambitions were not only remarked by the emperor, but also by the sultan. Anna Komnene cites a letter written by Alexios I to sultan Qiliç Arslān I of Rum. The style gives the impression that it is a product of the Byzantine imperial chancellery. This letter distinguishes Qiliç Arslān as the "most illustrious sultan" and states that the sultanate is his right of inheritance. However, it designates Tzachas as a usurper who

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[358] It must be a Greek rendering of the Turkish word for envoy and prophet, *yalavaç*.
[359] Komnene-Reinsch-Kambylis,*Annae Comnenae Alexias*, 225; Komnene-Sewter-Frankopan, *The Alexiad*, 205.

claims the purple robe and warns the sultan by saying "the whole mischievous plan is directed against you." This letter convinces Qiliç Arslān to kill Tzachas. They meet in the city of Abydos in Thrace and after hours of heavy drinking at the banquet table, the sultan murders his father-in-law with a sword blow.[360] Tzachas' time on the stage is relatively shorter, but it leaves bitter traces in western Anatolia. Anna Komnene describes the dramatic effects of these years as follows: "When Tzachas had ravaged the Smyrna area, he had reduced it to rubble and wiped it out entirely."[361]

Why was Çaka's memory forgotten in medieval Seljuk historiography? As it was seen before, he was a major protagonist in the later 11th century Asia Minor. Furthermore, he was the father-in-law of Qiliç Arslān I, so he was a relative by marriage of the Seljuk dynasty. Three explanations can be offered for the silence of Seljuk sources about Çaka. Firstly, he was very probably converted to Christianity. This idea was first proposed by Charles M. Brand in his article, "The Turkish Element in Byzantium, Eleventh-Twelfth Centuries," in which he made the following argument:

> (Tzachas') pretension to the Byzantine throne would be unthinkable if he could not at least claim to be Christian. Without this primary qualification, he would have been unable to attract support; if he had taken Constantinople, he would have been utterly unacceptable to the Byzantines save as a Christian. Tzachas' Christianity was barely skin-deep, and the same is probably true for a good many others who entered Byzantine service as adults.[362]

So Tzachas could be qualified not even as a Turkish *beg*, but a Byzantine local magnate. However, it seems that he had a network in which both the Pechenegs and

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[360] Komnene-Reinsch-Kambylis, *Annae Comnenae Alexias,* 263*;* Komnene-Sewter-Frankopan, *The Alexiad*, 243.
[361] Komnene-Reinsch-Kambylis, *Annae Comnenae Alexias,* 326*;* Komnene-Sewter-Frankopan, *The Alexiad*, 398. The aftermath of the descendants of Tzachas is largely unknown. It was already mentioned that his daughter married Qiliç Arslān I. It seems that he had also a son.
[362] Brand, "The Turkish Element," 17.

Seljuks were included. Even his daughter was the wife of Qiliç Arslān I of Rum. He could be both converted from Turkic paganism or Islam. If he converted from Islam to Christianity, this could be the cause of a *damnatio memoriae*.

A second explanation could be his hostility with Qiliç Arslān I of Rum Seljuks and his assassination by his son-in-law. So he was perceived as an enemy of the Seljuk dynasty and the later historiographers related to Seljuks of Rum did not consider his memory worth remembering.

Thirdly it can be said that his area of activity was geographically far from the center of weight of Rum Seljuks. Nonetheless, this argument must be carefully examined. Sulaymānshāh I, whose deeds were recorded in Seljuk historiographical tradition, was based in Nicaea. This city was the capital of Rum Seljuks until the First Crusade. An important part of the raiding activity of the early Seljuks of Rum was realized in Northwestern Anatolia.

Ibn Bibi began his history by saying "how Sulaymānshāh I (Suleiman b. Kutlumus b. Israil) invaded the realm of Rum and the deeds of grand *amir*s such as Mengujek, Artuk, and Danismend were not very obvious,"[363] so he does not mention Çaka among these *beg*s. Indeed he begins his account with Qiliç Arslān II's choice of Kaykhusraw I as his heir. The *Anonymous Selçukname*, which deals more with the early history of Seljuks of Rum, also never mentions Çaka.[364]

As mentioned, in the *Danişmendname* a Türkmen commander called Çavuldur Çaka is referred to among the comrades of Melik Danişmend. However, he is mentioned only three times in the whole work, and there is no particular similarity to historical Tzachas. But the affiliation with the Çavuldur clan could be a reflection

[363] Ibn Bibi, *el-Evâmirü'l-Alâiyye fi'l-umûri'l-Alâiyye,* vol. 1, 43.
[364] *Anonim Selçukname*, ed. Coşguner-Gök.

of reality. The use of tribal names before the personal names was a custom among the medieval Turks, as the examples such as Salur Kazan, one of the main protagonists of the *Kitab-ı Dede Korkut* demonstrates. However, it should be remembered that he was not a "tribesman", Çaka lived all his adult life on Byzantine soil and his followers do not appear as the members of a clan or tribe, but as Turkish (and Greek) riff-raff who mingle in the chaotic Western Anatolia of late 11th century.

In conclusion, the brief and adventurous life of Çaka demonstrates the potential and the limits of the integration of a Turkish warrior into Byzantine society. Theoretically, after his conversion to Christianity and having a military force, he could dream of everything, even the purple robe. But he was still perceived as a barbarian. Even Çaka himself does not hesitate to acknowledge this fact while he announces his desire to form a marriage alliance between his family and Dalassenoi: "...let the marriage contract be committed to writing, agreeable to both parties, as is the custom of the Romans and of us barbarians."[365]

Syrgiannes Palaiologos Philantropenos[366] (d.1334) was a Byzantine statesman of Cuman origin born roughly two centuries and a half later than Tzachas. He was the son of a Cuman tribal chief called Sytzigan (Συτζιγάν), who entered Byzantine service, received holy baptism, and became part of the entourage of the Palaiologan emperors. Sytzigan then married a Byzantine noble lady, Eugenia Palaiologina.[367] His father was presented as "a remarkable man from to Cumans who came from the region of Hyperborean Skythians came to the emperor" by

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[365] Komnene-Reinsch-Kambylis,*Annae Comnenae Alexias*, 225; Komnene-Sewter-Frankopan, *The Alexiad*, 205.
[366] For his career see Kyriakidis, "The Portrayal of Syrgiannes Palaiologos Philanthropenos in the Historical Works of Nikephoros Gregoras and John Kantakouzenos," 221-238; Vasary, *Cumans and Tatars : Oriental Military in the Pre-Ottoman Balkans, 1185-1365*, 120-121.
[367] Kyriakidis, "The Portrayal of Syrgiannes Palaiologos Philanthropenos in the Historical Works of Nikephoros Gregoras and John Kantakouzenos," 221-238.

Gregoras[368] and "one of the noblest of the Cumans" by Kantakouzenos. So the nobility of the Cuman paternal descent of this Byzantine aristocrat was stressed by both authors.

Syrgiannes Palaiologos was the governor of Macedonia around the year 1315. He was considered a brilliant commander and became part of the faction formed around future emperor Andronikos III. His military role in the rebellion against Andronikos II, during the Byzantine Civil War 1321-1328 is emphasized by Gregoras, yet relatively underestimated by Kantakouzenos whose aim is to stress his role in these events.[369] During the civil war, Syrgiannes Palaiologos changes the sides and defects to the faction of Andronikos II. The old emperor promotes him to the office of *megas doux*. Furthermore, he was also appointed as strategos to the western provinces of the empire. He was known as a plotter, he was accused of treason several times, and there were further doubts that he wanted to establish an independent state in the Balkans. After many accusations and trials, he finally flees from Constantinople to the court of King Stefan IV Dušan of Serbia. Having the support of the Serbian king, Syrgiannes starts a rebellion in the western frontiers of the Byzantine Empire, however before his rebellion becomes a threat to the empire; he was murdered by Sphrantzes Palaiologos.

It seems that Syrgiannes Palaiologos had a long-lasting friendship with the Serbian kings of the Nemanjić dynasty, namely Stefan II Milutin and Stefan IV Dušan. Just before the rebellion of Andronikos III, Stefan II Milutin sends an envoy

[368] Gregoras-Bekker, *Nicephori Gregorae Byzantina historia*, 296; Gregoras-Van Dieten, *Rhomäische Geschichte*, 28.
[369] Kyriakidis, "The Portrayal of Syrgiannes Palaiologos Philanthropenos in the Historical Works of Nikephoros Gregoras and John Kantakouzenos," 234.

to the emperor Andronikos II to call back the Cuman mercenaries whom he borrowed him. The ambassador of Stefan II Milutin also meets the faction of Andronikos III and they negotiate an alliance. Kantakouzenos attributes the successful negotiation with the Serbians to the friendship of Syrgiannes with the king.[370]

Here I offer a hypothesis about the political project of Syrgiannes Palaiologos. Both Vasary and Kyriakidis underline the extraordinary military-political activity of Syrgiannes in the Byzantine-Serbians frontier regions, but they restrain themselves from commenting further. I think that Syrgiannes' real aim was forming an independent statelet in Macedonia. In Kantakouzenos' narrative, the references to the Cuman mercenaries in Serbia and Stefan II Milutin's alliance with the Byzantine rebels follow each other and the role of Syrgiannes in the latter was emphasized, yet there was no causality between the two episodes. In my opinion, it can be speculated that the network of Cuman mercenary bands played a certain role in the friendship of Syrgiannes with the rulers of Serbia and the same populations in the Macedonia region were the dynamic forces on which the state he envisioned would be based.

So it could be assumed that Syrgiannes Palaiologos Philantropenos aimed to form a secessionist statelet in Macedonia, similar to Tzachas' breakaway statelet on the western coast of Asia Minor. Syrgiannes, unlike Tzachas, had ties with the Byzantine aristocratic cycles, because his mother was a member of the Palaiologan dynasty. This fact gives him a bigger playground in Byzantine politics. Furthermore, Syrgiannes was a member of the Cuman aristocracy on his paternal side, yet Tzachas was an ordinary war prisoner of Turkish origin. As was demonstrated above, for all

[370] Kantakouzenos-Schopen, *Ioannis Cantacuzeni eximperatoris Historiarum Libri IV*, 35-38; Kantakouzenos-Fatouros, *Geschichte*, 33-34.

three authors (Komnene, Gregoras, and Kantakouzenos) the noble or non-noble origin of a barbarian is something to be remarked on. Finally, it should be noted that both of the secessionist projects ended unsuccessfully. This fact demonstrates that in the Byzantine regions with a presumably Greek majority, such as Macedonia and Ionia, the formation of an independent entity under a ruler of foreign origin was not easy.

6.4 Evangelization as a way of integration

The adoption of Orthodox Christianity was a *sine-qua-non* condition for integration into Byzantine society, as it was seen in the case of Tzachas. The imperial dignities and titles were exclusively available to Orthodox Christians. The unique and dominant position of Orthodox Christianity as a central feature of Byzantine identity is above any discussion. Byzantium was New Jerusalem, as much as it was New Rome. As already discussed above, one should distinguish conversion to Christianity from paganism or Islam. Because though paganism is the natural enemy of Christianity and Islam was seen basically as a version of paganism by some Byzantine theologians, this duality is slightly different for the Muslims. As it was already mentioned, the majority of Byzantine theologians considered Islam as an heresy. Islam, like other Abrahamic religions, gives a strong self-image to believers and makes it harder to convert the other religions. Furthermore, the conversion from Islam to Christianity –called *tanassur* in traditional Muslim religious literature- is an issue that merits careful examination. In Islamic jurisprudence (*fiqh*) the conversion of a Muslim to any other religion (i.e. the apostasy, *irtidad*)[371] is forbidden and it is a

[371] It is the Greek rendering of Arabic *mürted* (apostate). There are a number of references to *murtatoi* as military contingents, similar to Turcopoles.

crime punished by death. It is known that in the Muslim countries in our timeframe, such as Egypt under the Mamluks, such punishments were taken place. However, in the frontier regions where the identities were fluids, such as the borders, such punishments were probably less frequent. Furthermore, the punishment of such an act could be possible only by a decision of a Muslim court. So if the apostasy takes place after the person became a subject of a Christian state where in the moment of apostasy, there is no authority to punish it, it remains unpunished and possible.[372]

In the 10th century, during the heyday of the Byzantine reconquest toward Syria and Mesopotamia, the Empire managed to annex the cities such as Edessa and Antioch which were hosting an important Muslim population. In the sources of this period, there are several references to the fate of the Arab Muslim inhabitants of the region. Some of these inhabitants left their cities and immigrated to the core Muslim lands. On the other hand, other inhabitants remained in this region. In 941, some 10.000 members of the Arab tribe Banu Habib converted to Christianity with their families and slaves. In subsequent years they were followed by other tribesmen. These tribesmen have also obtained lands and gifts from the Empire.[373] It seems that similar conversions en masse were frequent in the cities conquered by the Byzantines; such as Melitene after the reconquest of John Kourkouas.

The medieval epic romances of the borderlands can throw light on the place of conversion in the social history of Anatolia. Both the story of the father of Digenis Akrites and a story of a Christian convert in *Danişmendname* could demonstrate that Muslims' conversion to Christianity –at least in early centuries or in conjunctures

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[372] For the general question of apostasy see Beihammer, "Defection across the Border of Islam and Christianity: Apostasy and Cross-Cultural Interaction in Byzantine-Seljuk Relations," 597-651. For an introduction to the notion of apostasy in Islamic jurisprudence, see the article *murtadd* (W. Heffening) in *Encyclopaedia of Islam* (2nd ed.), vol. 7, 635-636.
[373] Kaldellis, *Romanland*, 129.

where the Byzantines were dominating were frequent.[374] These sources of course were not historical, yet they still echo the vivid memories of such facts in the collective memory of the peoples of Asia Minor. The father of Digenis Akritas is an Arab *amir* from Syria ("Amir, servant of God and prince of Syria") who spoused a Greek noblewoman and defected to the Byzantine side ("I will become a Christian in Romania/and listen to the truth, by the great prophet"). [375] The name Digenis (two-genes) came from this very situation that the Byzantine epic hero belongs to two different and antagonistic origins. However, his mixed origins do not keep him from becoming a hero of Christianity.[376]

However, the most interesting personality of this kind was Artuhi, the close friend and comrade of Melik Danişmend in *Danişmendname*. Artuhi is depicted as both a warrior of faith and an interlocutor between two sides in the epic narrative of *Danişmendname*. His ethnic origin was Türkmen and he belongs to a tribe of 12.000 tents. He is portrayed as a Christian who was convinced to convert to Islam by Melik Danişmend, though there is always a doubt about the veracity of his dedication to Islam. As was both stressed by Iréne Melikoff[377] and Nicolas Oikonomides,[378] his name has a strong similarity with the name of Artuk, a contemporary Türkmen warlord from the tribe Döğer who is the eponymous founder of the Artukid dynasty (1102-1409) in Upper Mesopotamia. As it was pointed out the continuity of the frontier ethos, these conversions and reconversions could be reflected in the collective memory of the frontier regions as a historical reminiscence.

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[374] Also in the *Battalname*, though presented as a Muslim, there is a Turcoman nomad called Yuhanna b. Afshin. Yuhanna is a very frequent name among the Nestorian and Syriac Christians of Mesopotamia. *Battalname*, ed. Dedes, 632.
[375] *Digenis Akrites*, Mavrogordato, 20-21.
[376] *Digenis Akrites*, Mavrogordato, 9 and 21.
[377] Melikoff, *Le Geste de Melik Dānişmend: Étude critique du Dānişmendnāme,* vol.1*,* 122-125.
[378] Oikonomidès,"Les Danishmendides, entre Byzance, Bagdad et le sultanat d'Iconium," 195-196.

A striking scene in the *Alexiad* is the prayers of the Turkish soldiers besieged by the armies of Constantine Dalassenos in Chios. These Turks who were the followers of Tzachas, after they realized that the resistance to Byzantine forces is impossible, began to utter prayers "in the Roman tongue".[379] This scene merits attention: First of all, it is understood from here that the Turks did not go through an Islamic acculturation enough to pray in Arabic. Whether these people were Muslims throughout their lives, even if superficially, is extremely uncertain. Furthermore, this scene demonstrates that even the Turks who were razing the Anatolian and Aegean countryside had a certain familiarity with the Christian religion or they even attended church services. It can be said that the Turks around Tzachas were outside the shaping influence of the two great monotheistic religions in terms of upbringing, and perhaps the influence of Christianity was a little more on them due to the time they spent in Asia Minor.

Returning to our subject, it can be said that not only the Turks but all the foreigners who were successfully integrated into Byzantine society were baptized. It seems that there is no exception to this fact. This was the traditional pattern of Byzantine society. However late 10th-early 11th century the religious missionary activity in the Empire obtain a new zeal.

The reign of Alexios I Komnenos marks a turning point in the religious history of Byzantium. Alexios I who announces a reform edict in 1107, forms several new clerical offices regarding religious education. Among the positions he creates, there is an office called *didaskalon ton ethnon* (the teacher of the *gentile*). These *didaskaloi* were employed to convert the barbarians.[380] Of course, these efforts did

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[379] Komnene-Reinsch-Kambylis,*Annae Comnenae Alexias,* 223; Komnene-Sewter-Frankopan, *The Alexiad*, 203.
[380] Stone, "The missionaries of Manuel I," 253-254.

not begin with this edict, since centuries Byzantine Empire has a determined missionary agenda targeting the pagan populations, which managed to convert the Bulgarians and Russians among the other populations.

A traditional practice among the Turks of Asia Minor is also worthy of attention: The Turks, despite their adherence to Islam, were baptizing their children. This fact seems related to a popular belief that the non-baptized children could be possessed by demons or stank like dogs. The mothers of some of these children were Orthodox Christians. Despite they were baptized, the religious identity of these children is highly doubtful. The baptism became a part of the practices of their folk religion and do not reflect their devotion to Christianity.[381]

However, in the Komnenian period, there sparked new zeal for missionary activity. Needless to say, the Seljuk invasion of Asia Minor and the Crusades were two important events that triggered this renowned zeal. Anna Komnene states in the *Alexiad* –concluding his father's generosity towards the Seljuk officers Elkhanes and Skaliaros who contributed to their conversion to Christianity– "He (Alexios I) was an excellent teacher of our doctrine, with an apostle's faith and message, eager to convert to Christ not only the nomad Scythians but also the whole of Persia and all the barbarians who dwell in Egypt or Libya and worship Muhammad in their extraordinary ways."[382] The target of this activity was, without any doubt, the Turkic populations of Asia Minor and Persia.

This activity arrives at its zenith in the reign of Manuel I Komnenos who was personally very interested in religious matters. In the orations delivered by the

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[381] The source is Theodore Balsamon. The fact is recorded during the patriarchate of Loukas Chrysoberges (1157-1169/1170), see Brand, "The Turkish Element," 16.
[382] Komnene-Reinsch-Kambylis, *Annae Comnenae Alexias*, 199; Komnene-Sewter-Frankopan, *The Alexiad*, 182.

churchmen during his reign and even in his *epitaphio* delivered by Eustathios of Thessaloniki there were obvious references to this missionary effort and the evangelization of the Persians. According to Eustathios, Manuel I "brings together unto God what is alien to the faith and leads the rebellious into a familiarity with God" and "fills the court of God with sheep."[383] Euthymios Malakes states, "O Persian….that according to the habit of the Persians of old you renewed the practice of sending your children to shared schools to learn justice….It is well, that you look back to the true emperor of the earth and the Persians three days before…to enquire personally into the manger now placed by the Jordan…"[384]

Andrew Stone states that these missionaries could not be only related to the Turks in Byzantine territory, and they must have gone into Seljuk territories. There is no independent attestations of such a missionary activity there, but the population of the frontiers, particularly nomadic Türkmen who had a very superficial adoption of the Muslim religion, they could be an appropriate target for such an activity of proselytization. So the Komnenoi planned to integrate the Seljuk realms in Asia Minor and beyond, via a project of evangelization to Byzantine oikoumene, as they did with Russia and Bulgaria. This project could have tied the Seljuks to the Byzantine world pacifically.

This project triggered also a theological discussion in Constantinople. Already during Qiliç Arslān II's visit to Constantinople (1162), his entry to Saint-Sophia as an "infidel" disturbed the high ranks of clergy, including the patriarch Luke Chrysoberges. In the course of the reign of Manuel I Komnenos, to make the evangelization of Seljuks easier, he proposed a small change in the Orthodox

[383] Stone, "The Missionaries of Manuel I," 255-256.
[384] Stone, "The Missionaries of Manuel I," 256.

catechism, the removal of the anathema against the God of Muhammad. This anathema says that the God of Muhammad is "neither begat nor was begotten" and was a solid (*holosphyros*).[385] Manuel I must have thought that without such a formula he could imply that the Muslims and Christians believe in the same God and the Turks' conversion to Christianity could be easier. With the aim of removing the anathema, he summoned the holy synod with the members of the clergy. As it could be expected, this proposal made the patriarch Thedosios Boradiotes and other hierarchs discontent. As it was described by Khoniates, "they all shook their heads in refusal, unwillingly even to listen to his proposals, which they considered slanderous and detracting from the most true glory of God." According to these hierarchs, the God of Muhammad was not a God, but "a solid God fabricated by the deluded and demoniacal Muhammad." One of the champions of opposition against Manuel I's formula was Eusthatios of Thessalonike. With such a rigid opposition from the clergy, the tension between the emperor and the clergy has risen. However, in the end, the synod found a resolution, they did an agreement to remove the anathema of Muhammad's God from the catechism and put there the anathema of Muhammad and his teachings.[386]

Nonetheless, during the controversy and crisis in this holy synod, Manuel was already very ill. He died in 1180 and during the brief and tumultuous reigns of the latter Komnenian and Angelos emperors, the missionary zeal died out. The possible halt in the evangelization of the Turks, however, must be related to the political conjuncture, not to the theological formulas. The Byzantine Empire, under the

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[385] Khoniates-Van Dieten, *Nicetae Choniatae Historia*,213; Khoniates-Magoulias, *O City of Byzantium*, 121.
[386] Angold, *Church and Society under the Comneni*,108-113; Khoniates-Van Dieten, *Nicetae Choniatae Historia*, 213-214; Khoniates-Magoulias, *O City of Byzantium*, 121.

difficult conditions it encountered after 1185, could not support any more such an ambitious religious/political agenda.

In the later centuries, particularly the period 1261-1453 which was poetically called "a protracted death agony of the remnants of the Empire" by Gibb,[387] the dimension of the conversions was dramatically changed. However, in a very late period such as the 1410s it is possible to see an Ottoman prince in Constantinople, Yusuf, the son of Sultan Bāyazīd I, accepting the holy baptism. This conversion is ignored in Ottoman sources and it is attested only in the histories of Doukas and Khalkokondyles.[388] So though the dimension and the frequency of conversions were changed over time, there was no impassable barrier between the Muslim and Orthodox Christian identities. The absolute Ottoman domination of the region marks the definitive end of these conversions. As it was already said, according to fiqh the *irtidad* which in this case a *tanassur* is punished by death. The history of Ahmet the Calligrapher or St. Ahmet, the Orthodox neo-martyr who chose to convert to Christianity and was killed for this act in Constantinople in 1682 in the zenith of Islamic zealotry in the Ottoman Empire, was an example of which fate awaits such an act.

The individual evangelizations among the members of the Seljuk ruling family are also worthy of attention. The most famous member of the Seljuk dynasty who converted to Christianity was the founder of the monastery of Koutloumoussiou (Κουτλουμουσίου) at Athos. Both Byzantine and Seljuk sources are absolutely silent about the name and identity of this prince. The earliest mention of the monastery is a document from 1169. Here the name Kutlumus must be a patronymic rather than a

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[387] Gibb, "Byzantium and Islam," 323.
[388] Doukas-Grecu, *Historia Turcobyzantina*, 135-137; Doukas- Magoulias, *Decline*, 112; Khalkokondyles, *The Histories*, 292-293.

personal name. As it was already seen, since the 11th century the Byzantines were employing the term "Kutlumusians" (Κουτουλμουσίοι) for the branch of Seljuks who founded the Sultanate of Rum. According to Michel Balivet, the founder of the monastery could have defected to Byzantium in the early 12th century. If the conversion was realized in such an early period, before the frequent marriages between the members of the Seljuk dynasty and Greek women, it could hardly be the case of dual identity, but a simple conversion such as Chrysoskoulos. As was said above, it is very difficult to trace the apostates in Muslim sources.[389]

Another member of the Seljuk dynasty, who was called Ghiyāth al-Dīn, married Rusudan, queen of Georgia (r.1223-1245), and converted to Christianity. This prince does not belong to the main line of the dynasty which was ruling in Konya, yet a cadet branch of the Seljuks that was installed at Erzurum (Thedosioupolis) after the Seljuk conquest of this ancient capital of the local Türkmen dynasty Saltuqids. His father, Mughis al-Dīn Ṭoghrůl-Shāh (d.1225), governed Erzurum as the vassal of his nephew ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn Kaiḳobād I of Rum. The motivations of this arranged marriage were purely political; hence this branch of the sultanate must have the support of the Kingdom of Georgia which was at the zenith of its power in this period and expanded its territories toward the realms of Muslim emirates in the Armenian Highlands. There was no mention of this marriage in Seljuk sources; it is recorded only in the Georgian sources and Arabic sources of Ibn al-Athīr and Baybars al-Manṣūrī who were written outside of the Seljuk world and in the chronicle of Shihāb al-Dīn Muḥammad al-Nasawī who was the official chronicler of Djalāl al-Dīn Khwārazm-Shāh who was a rival of Seljuks.[390]

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[389] Balivet, "Deux monastères byzantins fondés par des Turcs: Koutloumoussiou/Kutulmuş et Dourachani/Turahan," 82-83.
[390] Turan, *Selçuklular Zamanında Türkiye*, 434.

Moreover, there is the curious case of the family and entourage of sultan Izz al-Dīn Kaykāʾūs II who after a number of dynastic struggles in Asia Minor left their country and went to Constantinople as refugees. Their religious identity is hard to define and perhaps this ambiguity could be considered an example par excellence of Shukurov's dual identity thesis. As it was already seen in the last chapter, their life in exile was documented well in the *History* of Pakhymeres. Surprisingly there is also a Turkish text about them: Yazıcıoğlu Ali's *Selçukname.* Despite its name, this work was compiled a century and a half after the vanishing of the Sultanate of Rum. This Turkish text acknowledges the sultan's entourage's evangelization. However, the situation of the sultan himself could be hardly considered a definitive conversion to Christianity, because when he escaped to Crimea, in the court of Berke Khan (r. 1257-1266), the first Muslim ruler of the Golden Horde, he returned to Islam. Kaykāʾūs II's alleged conversion to Christianity provoked a conflict among the Byzantine clergy because the sultan was attending religious ceremonies with the patriarch Arsenios. It is not considered appropriate for someone whose adherence to Orthodox Christianity is not certain to participate in such ceremonies. However, in the narrative of Gregoras, the sultan is presented as the son of Christian parents (χριστιανῶν τε ὑπῆρχε γονέων υἱός) and as a Christian who during his reign was observing his religious duties in secret. So the situation could be unusual. It could be further speculated that the very existence of the political ambitions of the ex-sultan made him even more untrustworthy to the Byzantines.[391]

The aftermath of the descendants of Kaykāʾūs II was carefully examined by

[391] Gregoras-Bekker, *Nicephori Gregorae Byzantini Historia,* v.1, 94 ; Gregoras-Van Dieten, *Rhomäische Geschichte*, v.1, 111. On the other hand, according to Shukurov, this expression means that the sultan is "a son of Christian ancestors." See the discussion in Shukurov, *The Byzantine Turks, 1204-1461*, 107.

Paul Wittek.[392] In the 14th century, these Christianized Seljuks seem to live in the city of Karaferye (Veria) in Greek Macedonia. According to *Selçukname,* these descendants of the Seljuk dynasty encountered also the Ottoman sultan Bayazid I, after the conquest of Karaferye. Despite Yazıcıoğlu Ali's slightly discontent tone about the Christianity of Rum's ancient rulers, he depicts them as noble men with dignity. Since the work of Paul Wittek, this Christian descendency (and possible Türkmen grouping around them) are considered the forefather of the Gagauz people, an Orthodox Christian Turkic ethnic group, now living in the Bessarabia.[393]

To return to our starting point, how Byzantine were considered these newly converted Turkish men? According to Kinnamos, despite the barbarity in their roots, they were still Byzantines, and according to Pakhymeres they were dubious Christians.

Now let us look closely at the conversion of the Ottoman prince, a son of Bayazid I, Yusuf Çelebi (called "Isa the younger" by Khalkokondyles) who converted to Christianity in the 1410s and received the baptismal name Demetrios. According to Doukas,

> (He) acquired a passion for Greek learning. He accompanied John, the emperor's son, to school, and there as a student he was introduced to intellectual matters. So absorbed was he by the love of learning when he attended school with John that he came to Emperor Manuel (Manuel II Palaiologos) and requested to be baptized according to Christian law. Daily he professed to the emperor that he was a Christian and not a believer in Muhammad's doctrines. The emperor did not wish to listen because it might cause scandal. Then when the dreaded disease continued to consume and destroy bodies, neither respecting nor sparing any age, it attacked to Bāyazīd's adolescent son. The stricken youth sent the following message to Emperor John, "O Emperor of the Romans, you who are both master and father to me, my end is near. Against my wishes, I must leave everything behind and depart for the Heavenly Tribunal. O confess that I am a Christian and I accuse you of not granting me the warmest of faith and the seal of the Spirit. Know, therefore, that as I must die unbaptized I shall bring accusations

[392] Wittek, "Yazijioghlu 'Ali on the Christian Turks of Dobruja", *BSOAS*, XIV/3 ,639-668.
[393] Wittek, "Yazijioghlu 'Ali on the Christian Turks of Dobruja", 667-668.

> against you before the Judgement Seat of the impartial God." Yielding finally to his plea, the emperor sent for him and as his godfather sponsored his baptism. He died the next day. The emperor buried him with great honor in a marble sarcophagus near the church and within the gate of the Stoudite Monastery of Prodromos.[394]

This narrative is quite striking in comparison with Khalkokondyles' brief and dry statement about the same Ottoman prince: "Isa, the younger of the Bayazid's sons, also came to the Greeks and even converted to the religion of Jesus, and died shortly afterward."[395] The same is true also for Sphrantzes: "Bayazid's five sons -Sülayman, Musa, Isa, Mehmed, and Yusuf- arrived in Europe; Yusuf converted and took the Christian name Demetrios."[396] However, both texts are dealing with essentially the same situation. During the bloodshed of the Ottoman Interregnum (1402-1413) the youngest of the Ottoman princes came voluntarily or as an asylum to Constantinople, where he was strongly influenced by Byzantine culture and Orthodox Christianity and in the middle of a plague, he decided to convert to Christianity. Doukas' stress on Manuel II's reluctance to such a conversion by an Ottoman prince is also comprehensible under the conditions of the delicate balance between the Ottomans and Byzantium. This example is remarkable and it serves as a reminder that one should not look at historical facts with a socio-political determinism. Such personal decisions could also be the result of an individual's faith crisis.

In conclusion, conversion to Orthodox Christianity appears to be the condition of utmost importance to be integrated into Byzantine society. Our sources generally accept the newly converted Christians as good Romans, though they never

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[394] Doukas-Grecu, *Historia Turcobyzantina*, 135-137; Doukas- Magoulias, *Decline and Fall of the Byzantium to the Ottoman Turks*, 112.
[395] Khalkokondyles, *The Histories*, 292-293.
[396] Sphrantzes-Maisano, *Georgii Sphrantzae Chronicon,7*; Sphrantzes-Philippides, *The Fall of the Byzantine Empire. A Chronicle by George Sphrantzes 1401-1477,* 22.

cease to stress their "barbarian" provenance, they do not have an exclusionary approach toward them. Only their approach turns negative in the cases of confessional ambiguity, such as in the case of Kaykāʾūs II and his sons. This fact must be considered perhaps with the phenomenon of Crypto-Muslims, in the periphery of Byzantine society.

This phenomenon was studied by Rustam Shukurov recently. His research demonstrates that in marginal areas of ex-Byzantine *oikoumene* (like Chaldia) there are a certain number of crypto-Muslims who were Christian in appearance, but continued secretly to adhere to Islam.[397] Shukurov tries to explain this phenomenon, by using an unpublished Persian geographical text of a well-known polymath and author Ḥāfiẓ-i Abrū (d. 1430). He was a Persian of Khorasan and spent his life in the Timurid court, so not a native of Asia Minor. Hafiz-i Abru, in a brief passage of his work, mentions a Frankish kingdom north of Western Armenia (Shukurov interprets it as the Empire of Trebizond), where there was a population that was Christian in appearance but practiced Islam in secret.

As it was mentioned before, both the ambiguities and spontaneous conversions *en masse* are typical features of frontier regions. The frequency of conversions in a region where different cultures and religions co-exist could be an explanation for the presence of the syncretic faiths and "heterodoxies" altogether. The Paulician creed was also the fruit of the same frontier atmosphere of the encounter and co-existence of Christianity and Islam. However, when this creed was transferred to the Balkans as a result of the imperial system of population transfers, it can find a powerful interaction with the Pechenegs who were recently Christianized. These new Christians supported Lekas' Paulician rebellion in Bulgaria with great

[397] Shukurov, "The Crypto-Muslims of Anatolia," 135–158.

enthusiasm. In the religious and hagiographical literature, there can be found further examples of co-existence and interaction between the religions in the frontier zones. But the details of such processes remain outside of my focus.

6.5 The place of Turks in Byzantine society

Between the 11th and 14th centuries, a certain number of Turks in Byzantine high offices are attested. Alexander Kazhdan has stated that the individuals of Turkic origin constitute 1% of the Byzantine aristocracy.[398] The Axouchos family, without any doubt, was the most successful family of Turkish origin in the Byzantine upper class; their presence in the Byzantine upper classes continued for three generations. As was stated by Brand, the Turks were more frequent in lesser ranks of the Byzantine army, so the Turks in Byzantine high society were only a minority of their community. Other Turks generally obtained more modest positions in Byzantine society. Many Turks were originally not from a particularly noble lineage and they were preferred by the emperors for their lack of social connections. This fact recalls the rise to prominence of the *devşirme*s in 15th-century Ottoman society, where they were preferred because they were representing an alternative to the old Turkish families who were leading figures in early Ottoman civil administration, such as Çandarlis.[399]

Finally, an unpleasant way to enter Byzantine society (or any other society in the Middle Ages) is slavery, such as in the cases of war captives or the other victims of similar incidents. Our historiographical texts are generally silent about this reality,

[398] He counts 23 individuals of Turkish (Seljuk) origin in a total of 2,300 aristocrats. So they are 1% of all the Byzantine aristocracy. Brand, "The Turkish Element," 19. He refers to Kazhdan's *Армяне в составе господствующего класса Византийской империи в XI-XII вв*. 5 as his main source.
[399] Brand, "The Turkish Element in Byzantium," 25.

however, in the cases of Tatikios and Tzachas, their captivity was the beginning of their career in the Byzantine Empire. Probably there were still more numerous people of Turkic origin, particularly women, employed as house servants and slaves.[400]

The Byzantine Empire was not a nation-state, yet it has the abovementioned strong national dimension. These Turks were integrated into society and they hold offices. During these centuries the Sultanate of Rum and the *beylik*s formed in its borderlands continued to have a sometimes antagonistic, sometimes friendly relationship with the Empire. There is no surviving first-person account of a Turk who was "integrated" into Byzantine society. However, the evidence in the Byzantine historiographical works demonstrates that in the second or at least third generation they became Byzantines proper. In other words, they were assimilated. However, they were still blamed for their Turkishness, in times of crisis, like John Komnenos the Fat. The communal character of the settlements could help to the preservation of the distinguished ethnic character of the populations in the countryside. The existence of Turkic personal names in Ottoman *tahrir defteri*s for Orthodox Christians in regions such as Bithynia could be reconsidered with this fact.[401] However, our material is insufficient to write an ethnic history of these communities.

6.6 The Turcopoles and Mixobarbarians: A look into the gray areas

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[400] This subject is treated excellently in Shukurov, *The Byzantine Turks, 1204-1461*, 244-249.

[401] Beldiceanu, "La population non-musulmane de Bithynie," 18. After citing a long list of Christian tax-payers who bear Turkic names in 15th century Bithynian countryside, she concludes as "Ce phénomène est amplement connu et a fait l'objet de plusieurs études. On sait également que les Byzantins ont christianisé les communautés turques venues soit par le nord de la Mer Noire, soit des parties de l'Asie Mineure dépendant de l'Etat Seldjoukide. Il ne faut cependant jamais perdre de vue que le passage au Christianisme était a Byzance soumis à des règles, très strictes et exigeait, entre autres l'abandon du nom "barbare". A cette catégorie appartiennent probablement les habitants du village Tchepni dont les noms sont tires du calendrier grec. Quant aux autres, il ne peut s'agir ni de populations autochtones grecques, ni de musulmans convertis. A en juger d'anthroponymes, nous avons affaire à une population turco-tatare (même si d'autres éléments ne sont pas à exclure), chrétienne de père en fils, mais dont le christianisme, voire parfois la religion, reste à définir."

Between the categories of the Greeks and Turks, there are hybrid identities of Mixobarbaroi (μιξοβάρβαροι) and Turcopoles (Τουρκόπουλοι). The terms Turcopole and Mixobarbaros are quasi-ethnic terms used in Byzantine historiography to denote the half-barbarians.

Turcopole means "son of Turk".This term was generally explained as the offspring of the unions of Turkish men and Greek women, moreover, it was used mostly to describe the Turkic origin military contingents in the Byzantine army. It can be speculated that the Turkish warbands who were dwelling in Asia Minor around the 11th century could be seen as the prototype of Turcopole contingents. Their leaders, such as Elkhanes in the *Alexiad*, could defect to Byzantium and these contingents (who once were gangs of freemen living by the sword) could become a part of the Byzantine army.

In the 12th century, the Turcopole units also appeared in the Crusader Armies. The Crusaders first encountered these warriors among the ranks of Byzantine armies. In 1101 there were 500 Turcopoles in the army of Raymond St. Gilles. These warriors were presented as a gift by Alexios Komnenos to the Frankish Nobleman. Anna Komnene talks about the destiny of this Turkish contingent, without using the term Turcopole: a big part of these soldiers were slaughtered by passing the province of Armeniakon. The commander of Turcopoles was a man called Tzitas (Τζιτας) who was probably a Turk.

These forces were organized autonomously, under a *Turcopolier* who commanded the Turks.[402] Nonetheless, in the next decades, the Crusader States started to recruit their own Turcopole forces in the Levant. They generally served as

[402] For their role in the Crusader Armies, see Harari, "The Military Role of the Frankish Turcopoles: A Reassessment," 75-116, particularly 76-79 and 102-114.

light cavalry units. However, the majority of the Turcopoles in Crusaders' forces were not of Turkic but of Arab (Muslim or Christian) origin. Though the Muslim-origin warriors generally converted to Christianity, there are rarer examples that demonstrate the presence of Muslims in the Crusader armies. Finally, the Turcopoles of the Levant do not seem the have a distinct ethnic identity; they were essentially native warriors combating in Crusader armies. On the other hand, it should be noted that there were also "non-Turcopole" native troops fighting for the Crusaders.[403]

Though its vernacular usage is certain, as it was demonstrated by its passage to Latin as a loanword from Greek; the term Turcopole is not attested in the Byzantine sources until the 14th century: it was first used by George Pakhymeres. However, its usage as a patronymic is attested as early as the 11th century: there is a certain Sergios the Turcopole attested in 1082.[404]

Mixobarbaros is generally translated as semi-barbarian, but this translation does not reveal the nuanced meaning of the word. Unlike the term Turcopole, which seems to appear in the last quarter of the 11th century, mixobarbaros is an older term. It was attested in Greek texts since Antiquity. Alexander Kazhdan, in his article in the *Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*, cites Hesychios of Alexandria (c. 6th century), according to whom the term refers to "men who were neither Hellenes nor barbarians but had qualities of both."[405] This citation can be a starting point. The terms "mixobarbaros" and "Tourkopoulos" both had the meaning of ethnic admixture. As it was seen before, Michael Attaleiates employed this term for the populations of the Danubian frontier. In the later Middle Ages, this term is used with special reference

[403] However, there are also Turks serving in the Crusader Armies of the Levant: For example, a "Bohemond the Turk" appears during the First Crusade; he was a Turkish warrior who took the baptismal name Bohemond after Bohemond I Hauteville, the Norman ruler of Antioch.
[404] Harari, "The Military Role of the Frankish Turcopoles: A Reassessment," 76.
[405] *ODB*, vol. 2, 1386.

to this region. Hélène Ahrweiler explains this fact as follows:

> The term Μιξοβάρβαροι refers to cultural issues, and is used for those who filtered across the Danube and whose nomadic way of life interacted with sedentary traditions. However, the terms Μιξέλληνες and Μιξοβάρβαροι used by Byzantine authors of the eleventh and twelfth centuries should be studied in connection with the practice of mixed marriages in that area, which was inhabited by Christianized nomadic groups.[406]

Interfaith marriages seem to be common in late medieval Asia Minor. However, the vast majority of these unions must be made between Muslim men and Christian women because Muslim law strictly forbids marriages between Muslim women and Christian men. However there are examples in Asia Minor where these restrictions were broken; Abu'l Fida, the Arabic geographer of the 14th century states that in the city of Melitene, Muslim women marry Christian men. Furthermore, it seems that in –at least some– interfaith marriages, the daughters could be considered of their mothers' religion or at least free to choose their religious identity.[407]

There are other similar terms used to denote specific situations. For example, the term Gasmuloi (Γασμοῦλοι) is employed for Latinized Byzantines or the offspring of Greek-Latin (mostly Italian) marriages.[408] Similar to Turcopole, Gasmuloi was not only an ethnic denomination, but implies military contingents who were employed both in the land army and navy, mostly in the 14th century.

Among these terms, Turcopole is the term that reflects a clearer ethnic character. It was used always for the Turkic mercenaries from the east, the ones that seem related to the Seljuks.

George Pakhyhmeres deals a lot with the Turcopoles in his work. He uses the

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[406] Ahrweiler, "Byzantine Concepts of the Foreigner: The Case of the Nomads," 13.
[407] Vryonis, *The Decline of Medieval Hellenism in Asia Minor and the Process of Islamization from the Eleventh Through the Fifteenth Century,* 228.
[408] According to *ODB*, its etymology is unknown and it generally implies the offspring of Latin men and Greek women. *ODB*, vol. 2, 823.

term first to denote the band of mercenaries used by the Byzantines c. 1305, remarking that the "Roman" army fears the defection of the Alan (mercenaries) and old Persian contingent which is also called Turcopoles (τὸ ἐκ παλαιοῦ Περσικόν, οὓς καὶ Τουρκοπούλους ὠνόμαζον).[409] The Alan and Turcopole troops were commanded by a Bulgarian prince called Vojsil, who was the brother of the late Bulgarian tsar Smilets (r. 1292-1298).[410] However, the Turcopoles have also their chiefs. Pakhymeres then mentions the Turcopoles in the case of the Battle of Hemeros where the Byzantines and their Alan and Turcopole allies fought against the Catalan Company. The first commander who is described as the commander of Turcopoles is Melik Isaak (Ἰσαὰκ Μελήκ); however, this war band, just like the Catalan and Alan bands, is very undisciplined and hard to control. Melik Isaak is presented as a Persian satrap.[411] The usage of the ethnonym Persian demonstrates that he is an Anatolian Turk and not a "Skythian". The author further mentions two other Turcopole commanders: Tzarapes (Τζαράπης) and Taghatziaris (Ταγχατζιάρις).[412]

Koutzimpaxis (Κουτζίμπαξις) is a rather enigmatic figure. He is presented as a Tocharian (Τόχαρος), i.e. a Mongol-Tatar, and he was among the most powerful magicians (περὶ ἐκεῖνον μάγων τὰ κράτιστα) of the Nogai Khan. But he was also "a believer in the cult of the Persians," so a Muslim. After the death of Nogai Khan, he tried to return to Asia Minor, but his ship drifted to Herakleia Pontika which was a Byzantine territory and after he landed, he converted to Christianity with all his family.[413] Then he became part of the emperor's entourage and was appointed

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[409] Pachymeres, *Relations historiques*, vol. 4, 572-573.
[410] Pachymeres, *Relations historiques*, vol. 4, 572.
[411] Pachymeres, *Relations historiques*, vol. 4, 650-651.
[412] Pachymeres, *Relations historiques*, vol. 4, 696-697.
[413] Pachymeres, *Relations historiques*, vol. 4, 378-379. Elizabeth Zachariadou interprets the name Koutzimpaxis as the Greek rendering of the Turkish name "Koca-Bahşi". Hence this is not a personal name, but a title. "Bahşi" is a frequent term in 13th-14th century Genghisid Eurasia to denote the shamans. Zachariadou, "Observations on Some Turcica of Pachymeres," 261-267.

governor of Nikomedeia. He was both occupied with the Turcopoles and the diplomacy with the Turkish *beylik*s of Asia Minor.

According to Pakhymeres, the Turcopoles were recently Christianized (τοῖς ἐξ ὑπογύου χριστιανοῖς Τουρκοπούλοις).[414] This remark contradicts the idea that the Turcopoles were sons of Turkish fathers and Greek mothers and they somewhat grew up as Christians. Interestingly these Turcopoles were not moving in the way a band of mercenaries must move, i.e. as a group of men, but brought with them their wives and children. So the identity of Pakhymeres' Turcopoles could be slightly different from the earliest examples and they could be for example a Christianized Türkmen (or Tatar) population.

These Turcopoles must be related to the military activity of Turks, directed to Byzantine Thrace. Their relationship with the *beylik* of Karasi is a matter of discussion. The legendary accounts of Sarı Saltuk, who was an Alevi-Bektashi saintly figure and posthumously considered a forbearer of Islam in pre-Ottoman Balkans, bore the memories both of the Seljuk immigration to Dobruja and Crimea in the 1260s and the later activities of the bands of Turcopoles in Thrace in the early 14th century.

The account in Nikephoros Gregoras' *Roman History* is slightly different. He identifies Turcopoles directly with the Seljuk sultan Kaykāʾūs II. According to him, the main body of Turcopoles emigrated to Byzantine territories with him. After he escaped to Crimea, the remaining Turcopoles were organized under the command of two Turks: Melik (Μελήκ) and Khalīl (Χαλήλ). These Turkish warriors – Gregoras mentions their conversion to Christianity twice – were active in Byzantine Macedonia, Thessaly, and Thrace in the first decade of the 14th century. Although

[414] Pachymeres, *Relations historiques*, vol. 4, 626-627.

they were first employed by the Byzantine emperor Michael VIII, they looted sporadically the region and had a sometimes friendly, sometimes hostile relationship with Catalans and Alans, other important mercenary groups in the region. Finally, the band of Melik allied with King Milutin of Serbia and the band of Khalīl, after many exploits, was massacred and enslaved by the Byzantine troops, before they attempted to cross the Dardanelles. It should also be remarked that Gregoras uses the terms Turks and Turcopoles interchangeably.[415]

The memory of the Turcopoles is also present in the History of Laonikos Khalkokondyles. However, he never uses the term Turcopole and confuses the events narrated in the works of Pakhymeres and Gregoras, with the Anatolian expedition of Catalan mercenaries and later exploits of Umur of Aydin. He describes the above-mentioned Turcopoles as follows:

> During his reign (of ʿOthmān I), eight thousand Turks crossed over into Europe at the Hellespont and seized a Greek fort in the Chersonese. They made it their base and advanced through Thrace all the way to the Danube, devastating the land as they overran it. They looted most of it and, taking as many prisoners as they could enslave, transported them over to Asia; and so they despoiled the Greeks and Serbs. At this point, however, a large contingent of Skythians advanced from Sarmatia to the Danube. They crossed the Danube and met the Turks in Thrace where they routed them in battle. Except for a few, they mercilessly slaughtered them all. Those who were not killed sought refuge in the Chersonese, and then they crossed over into Asia and never returned. (…) It was at this time that Prousa was besieged, starved out, and taken by ʿOthmān, and other cities of Asia were captured. Thus the Turks acquired great power in Asia and crossed over into Europe, where they caused trouble in Thrace. There were many of them, including Khalīl who was blockaded by the Greeks in a fort of the Chersonese and summoned Turks over from Asia. He defended himself against the attacks of the Emperor and then marched out and heavily plundered Thrace. (…) As these kings (of Greece and Serbia) had bad relations with each other over other matters, they did not make good use of the Turkish leaders who had defected to their side, such as Izz al-Dīn (Ἀζατίνης) and the others.[416]

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[415] Gregoras-Bekker-Schopen, *Nicephori Gregorae Byzantini Historia,* 229-232; Gregoras-Van Dieten, *Rhomäische Geschichte*. vol. 1, 182-183.
[416] Khalkokondyles, *The Histories*, 22-27.

He concludes his long narrative over Turcopoles by stating: "But then the Turks with Izz al-Dīn, however many there were, went over to the king of Serbs, while those from Asia turned around and went back on foot to the Chersonese with the intention of crossing straight over to Asia, in whatever way they could."[417]

In Khalkokondyles' account of events, which was written roughly in the 1460s under the rule of Meḥmed II (r. 1444-1446, 1451-1481), the tone and ethos of the deeds were changed. It differs clearly from Pakhymeres and Gregoras' tone, the memories of the massacres and sporadic violence of the mercenary bands are further away, and the appearance of these Turks in the Balkans is presented as an introduction to the later expansion of the Ottomans. In the narrative of Khalkokondyles, the confusing reminiscences of the 14th century were integrated into a teleological narrative of Ottoman ascension.

It should be furthermore remarked that the interaction between the various strata of the presence of Turkic elements in the Balkans; the Seljuks-in-exile under Kaykāʾūs II, the Mongols on the northern edge of the Balkans, the Second Bulgarian Empire under the domination of the Turco-Mongol elements, various Turkic mercenary bands and finally the military intervention of Turkish *beylik*s (Ottomans, Aydin, Saruhan) into the Byzantine Civil War of 1341-1347. In this period, these "barbarian" military elements were present in the margins of the declining Byzantine Empire, but the Empire was still a political and civilizational axis that bound all these elements.

A term that could be interpreted as the counterpart of "mixobarbaros" seems to be "*iğdiş*" or "*ikdiş*". This Persian origin term in contemporary Turkish means eunuch, but it seems that in medieval Muslim Anatolia, it had a different meaning.

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[417] Khalkokondyles, *The Histories*, 26-27.

Claude Cahen, discussing this term, remarks that it can mean any animal from interbreeding, for example, a mule. Therefore, in that case, it can imply men of mixed origins. For example, the children born of a union of a Muslim and non-Muslim (just like the Turcopoles) can be called *iğdiş*. But it can also basically mean the recently converted people, i.e. *mühtedi*s. Furthermore, there is an administrative position called *"iğdiş başı"* or *"emir ül-eğadişe"* in 13th-century Konya. The *iğdiş* had responsibilities in the urban administration. However, the semantic evolution of the word is not clear.[418]

6.7 An unsuccessful integration?

It is very hard to judge how successfully integrated the Turks were into Byzantine society because the criterion of such an integration is ambiguous. In this subchapter, I shall dare to speculate about the Byzantine grand strategy toward the Turks of Asia Minor. In ideal terms, the successful integration of Turkic populations into Byzantine society could be similar to the integration of the Slavs in the Balkans in the 8th and 9th centuries. These Turks must have been evangelized and must not have preserved an autonomous political structure. So they must not have *archon*s or ethnarchs. The aftermath of Pechenegs, Cumans, and Oghuz in the Balkans could be considered a successful integration. After their subjugation to the Byzantine authorities, they continued to exist as rural communities, mostly with a distinct ethnic identity, yet they lost their political vitality. They would be assimilated in the later centuries, mostly by the Bulgarians and Greeks in the region.[419] It should also be noted that the

[418] Turan, *Türkiye Selçukluları Hakkında Resmi Vesikalar,* 178; Cahen, *La Turquie Pre-Ottomane*, 151-152. Speros Vryonis speculates that they could not be the children of mixed marriages, but children of ghulams.

[419]However, the Cumans played a certain role in the Second Bulgarian Uprising (rebellion of Ivan and Asen), which demonstrates that they did not easily lose their political collective identity.

rural settlements, such as the ones where Pechenegs and Cumans settled in the Balkans, constituted small social units probably resistant to the cultural influences of the Byzantine center. In the mid-14th century, John Vatatzes gave arable land to the Cuman soldiers in Asia Minor and these soldiers formed military colonies there. Such military colonization has been an ancient custom of Roman administration since Antiquity. The formation of such military colonies was advantageous both for the state and "foreigners" for several reasons. According to Mark Bartusis, such colonies could accommodate the social needs of the Cumans (and other peoples such as Tzakones) and make them easier to administrate. Moreover, they were also preserving their social organization there.[420]

Acculturation is inseparable from social change. Hélène Ahrweiler interprets the acculturation of Turkic nomads in the Danubian region as a mechanism by which these nomads force the Byzantine Empire and society to try to control them. This fact creates the acculturation process and the osmosis between the nomads and the Byzantine settled population, and this interaction makes the nomads evolve into semi-nomads. Meanwhile, they became Christians.[421]

Another path could be the formation of a Persia or *Turcomania*, a Greek Orthodox Turkish state in Central Anatolia. Such an entity could be perceived as an autonomous unit of the Byzantine *oikoumene*. It is possible to speculate that the policy of establishing a position of *didaskalon ton ethnon* is aimed to convert the subjects of the Sultanate of Rum and the Türkmen population living in the frontier zone. I am making this comment based on the experience of Bulgarian and Serbian state formations. The nature of the political relations between the Byzantine Empire

[420] Bartusis, *The Late Byzantine Army: Arms and Society, 1204-1453*, 158-159.
[421] Ahrweiler, "Byzantine Concepts of the Foreigner: The Case of the Nomads," 15.

and Seljuks, particularly until the 13th century demonstrates a hierarchical structure where the emperor is a father and the sultan is his son. The strong Christian element around the Seljuk court and the dual identity of the sultans of Rum probably made this option more feasible for the Byzantine ruling elites. However, when the Sultanate of Rum started to dissolve, the Byzantine Empire had no more the power to ideologically dominate Asia Minor. Moreover, Turkish *beylik*s substituted the Seljuks in Turco-Muslim Anatolia with a more aggressive military agenda than Seljuks.

In the mid-14th century, the Byzantine Empire was already a rump state, surrounded by the Ottomans in the east and by the hostile Bulgarian and Serbian kingdoms in the north and west. The empire experienced a sharp decline in military power. The decline of military power and the lack of stability affected negatively the empire's ideological power. After the mid-14th century, the empire basically relied on western military aid against the Turkish advance. The Turkish troops continued to play a role in Byzantine politics, even in a later period such as the return of John V Palaiologos to Constantinople with the help of the troops of Murād I; however, Byzantium was no more a center of attraction for Turks or any other foreigners.[422]

6.8 Conclusion

In this chapter, the essential patterns of the Turks' entry into Byzantine service, Byzantium's potential to acculturate and assimilate, and the possibility of integration were discussed. My findings are summarized below:

i. The entry of different groups or individuals belonging to the Turkic peoples into

[422] Bartusis, *The Late Byzantine Army: Arms and Society, 1204-1453*, 102-107.

Byzantine service is a frequent phenomenon in the 11th and 12th centuries. It must be considered a continuum of traditional relations between the Byzantine Empire and Turkic nomadic populations in the past. Individuals from different social origins, both from the Seljuk and Pecheneg societies, entered into imperial service.

ii. From the beginning, the Byzantine world represented "a better life" for the Turks. The early Turkish expansion into Western Asia was driven not by religious zeal or a well-defined political project, but by the warlords' desire to pillage or take over new territories in a relatively civilized and prosperous, yet chaotic land. Even though the Seljuk army defeated the Byzantines at Manzikert, Alp Arslan did not demand territories in Asia Minor apart from three castles in the frontier region. Furthermore, the Seljuks' grand strategy for westward expansion was the reunification of the Muslim *oikoumene* which was divided into different caliphates and sultanates since the early Abbasid period. They did not seek the annexation of Byzantine Asia Minor, yet they aimed to defeat the Fatimids of Egypt and to invade Fatimid Palestine and perhaps Egypt. The campaign of Atsiz into Syria and Palestine and his capture of the city of Jerusalem (1073) from the Fatimids demonstrate this project. So the invasion of Asia Minor by Turks was largely a centrifugal and spontaneous event realized by independent warbands.

iii. In the Komnenian period, a new imperial project was launched: conversion of the Turks (and other Muslim peoples in the east) and the formation of a new model of political superiority not necessarily with military domination. Manuel I

Komnenos particularly dedicated himself to this project. However, the project ended with a failure, not only because the time of troubles started in the 1180s and later the Latin takeover of Constantinople in 1204, but also because of the reluctance of Byzantium's religious authorities to loosen the theological dogmas of Orthodox Christianity. This reluctance could not be explained only by a zealot approach about an abstract adherence to the religious fundaments, but also by the lack of will for the inclusion of these newcomers to their society.

iv. The Turks' entry into Byzantine service dropped off largely after the mid-14th century. This fact could be explained by the decline of the Byzantine Empire both as a political and spiritual center and its lack of power to attire new foreign populations. Using the words of Charles M. Brand, I can say that Byzantium lost its "power to attract and absorb."[423] Meanwhile, the Ottomans began to expand into the core territories of the Byzantine Empire. The Hesychast controversy and the Byzantine Civil War (1341-1347) further contributed to the socio-political dissolution of Byzantium. That was the beginning of the end.

[423] Brand, "The Turkish Element," 1.

CHAPTER 7

TRICKSTERS, MONSTERS, AND INVISIBLE WOMEN

7.1 The tricksters at war: The Byzantine narratives about Turkic warfare

In this chapter, I explore four elements that are considered to be the key elements forming the image of the Turks and Turkic peoples in Byzantine literature. These four elements are warfare, women, sexual behavior, and the violent practices attributed to the Turkic peoples.

A remarkable genre of Byzantine literature is military writing. Between the 6th and 11th centuries, Byzantine authors produced many treatises that explore military science. These texts reflect a serious understanding of military theory, and they follow the ancient Greek model of military writing. The deep-rooted tradition of military writing in which these texts were formed goes back to Aelian (2nd century BCE) and Onasander (1st century BCE). In addition to their value for the military history, Byzantine military manuals also contain important materials regarding the Byzantine representation of the "other" peoples. To summarize, it can be said that these texts are not only narratives of military art, but also ethnographic texts.[424]

However, just like in the other Byzantine literature genres, the use of *mimesis* is an important feature of military writing. These texts contain ancient material produced long before the period in which they were written. Many clichés were employed to describe the military tactics and methods of various nations throughout the centuries. For example, the Byzantine representation of Turkic warfare was full of previously written strata of a centuries old *topos* about the Skythian warfare. The nomadic populations of the Eurasian steppe were known for their dedication to

[424] McGeer, "Military Texts," 907-914.

mounted archery. This feature was noted in the military manuals since Late Antiquity. Taking a closer look at these works, it is possible to see that the military tactics and methods that were identified with the "Skythian" peoples were repeated constantly throughout the centuries. However, this repetition demonstrates how foreigners were unimportant in the Byzantine worldview.

Gilbert Dagron who studied the representation of the foreign *ethnoi* in military manuals, lists several different populations which had different martial features. He emphasizes the clarity and the descriptive value of the brief ethnological passages in these texts.[425] His approach inspired me to write this sub-chapter. Therefore, I will first discuss the representation of Turkic peoples in the tradition of military writing, and then examine the continuation of this representation in the texts in the corpus of this thesis.

The *Strategikon*, written around the year 600 and attributed to Emperor Maurice (r. 582-602), can be considered the first Byzantine military manual. Some later manuals repeated the contents of this treatise. It contains a chapter about the war tactics and attitudes of foreign nations and narrates the features of Persians, Skythians, Huns, "Fair-Haired Peoples" (i.e., Franks and Lombards), Slavs, and Antes. In the sub-chapter which bears the title "Dealing with the Skythians, that is, Avars, Turks and others whose way of life resembles that of the Hunnish peoples," the author describes and analyzes various war tactics of steppe nomads. As was already seen in Chapter 3 exploring the late antique ethnonym "Hun," this name was repeatedly used as an umbrella term for the steppe nomads. In Maurice's text, the ethnonym Turks (Τοῦρκοι) designates the population of the First Türk Khaganate (in the 6th and 7th centuries).

[425] Dagron, "Ceux d'en face: Les peuples étrangers dans les traités militaires byzantins," 207-232.

The author describes these nations as:

> The Skythian nations are one, so to speak, in their mode of life and in their organization, which is primitive and includes many peoples. Of these peoples, only the Turks and the Avars concern themselves with military organization, and this makes them stronger than the other Skythian nations when it comes to pitched battles. The nation of the Turks is very numerous and independent. They are not versatile or skilled in most human endeavors, nor have they trained themselves for anything else except to conduct themselves bravely against the enemies. The Avars, for their part, are scoundrels, devious and very experienced in military matters.[426]

He then narrates the military equipment used by the Hunnic nations as he counts, "mail, swords, bows and lances"[427] and their way of fighting: "They prefer battles at long range, ambushes, encircling their adversaries, simulated retreats and sudden returns, and wedge-shaped formations."[428] The author then makes an interesting distinction between Turks and Avars, stating that the former is an independent and populous nation that knows no other art than fighting bravely against its enemies, and the latter is very experienced in military matters, yet is a group of devious scoundrels.[429]

To gain an advantage over Turks on the battle pitch was also closely related to exploiting their moral weaknesses. The Turks are not homogeneous and loyal to their agreements, so they can easily defect and desert. The author of the *Strategikon* describes this fact as such: "They are seriously hit by defections and desertions. They are very fickle, avaricious and, composed of so many tribes as they are, they have no sense of kinship or unity with one another. If a few desert and are well received, many more will follow."[430]

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[426] *Maurice's Strategikon,* 116.
[427] *Maurice's Strategikon,* 116.
[428] *Maurice's Strategikon,* 117.
[429] *Maurice's Strategikon*, 116.
[430] *Maurice's Strategikon*, 118.

The author also emphasizes the relationship between climate, people's character, and warfare. This approach is basically a repetition and vulgarization of Aristotle's ideas. According to him, climate determines a people's character and their war methods. Turks "endure heat and cold, since they are nomadic peoples."[431] He describes the social order of Turks by asserting that they have a monarchical model of government and they are not governed by love, but by fear. He also underlines that "their rulers subject them cruel punishments for their mistakes."[432] This representation is antagonistic to the image of the Persians who are represented as wicked, obedient, and servile. However, he asserts that the Persians were also ruled by fear, just like the Skythians.[433] On the other hand, the "light-haired peoples" respect liberty, but they disobey their kings and lack the discipline in the battlefield.[434] Finally, the Slavic peoples lack a government and since they live in absolute freedom, they refuse to be enslaved or governed. However, they also have "many kings among them always at odds with one another."[435] The Slavs are also undisciplined in the battle, just like the Germanic and Turkic peoples.

These moral weaknesses make it difficult to reach agreements with Skythians, because "they scorn their oath, do not observe agreements, and are not satisfied by gifts."[436] Moreover, if they demonstrate themselves to get an agreement

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[431] *Maurice's Strategikon*, 116.
[432] *Maurice's Strategikon*, 116.
[433] *Maurice's Strategikon*, 113.
[434] The same theme appears, some five centuries later, in Anna Komnene's description of the Celtic "race" (i.e. the Crusaders from France and Belgium): "The truth is that the Celtic Race, among other characteristics, combines an independent spirit and imprudence, not to mention an absolute refusal to cultivate a disciplined art of war; when fighting and warfare are imminent, inspired by passion they are irresistible, evident not only in the rank and file, but in their leaders too, charging into the midst of the enemy's line with overwhelming abandon – provided that the opposition everywhere gives ground; bu if their foes chance to lay ambushed with soldier-like skill and if they meet them in a systematic manner, all their boldness vanishes." Komnene-Reinsch-Kambylis, *Annae Comnenae Alexias*, 339; Komnene-Sewter-Frankopan, *The Alexiad,* 313.
[435] For Germanic peoples, see *Maurice's Strategikon*, 119; for the Slavs, see 123.
[436] *Maurice's Strategikon*, 116.

and accept gifts, they can easily betray their pact anytime. It can be said that *Strategikon* became the model of military writing for later generations. It divides the foreigners into various groups by their ethnicity and lifestyle and asserts that there are certain relationships between the warfare and the social order, and the climate and the physical geography of the countries where these populations lived.

In the subsequent centuries, several military treatises were produced. The *Taktika*, attributed to emperor Leo VI, paraphrases the chapters concerning the foreigners of the *Strategikon*, yet it also adds a digression about Byzantium's new enemies: the Arabs. The *Taktika* does not say anything new or special about the Turks. However, the author employs the ethnonym Turk and uses the old material regarding Göktürks, and explicitly refers to Hungarians. Furthermore, he changes the ethnonym Avar with Bulgar. When he explains the difference between the Turks and Bulgars, he states that Bulgars converted to Christianity and adopted Roman customs while Turks remained pagans. He also adds that Turks fought against the Bulgarians on the Danubian shores. However, there is no striking difference between the methods of warfare of the 7th century Göktürks and the 10th century Hungarians.[437]

Another military manual is attributed to Emperor Nikephoros Phokas. This text is commonly known as *De Velitatione* (or *De re militari*) and is dated to the 10th century. It is a book dedicated exclusively to the military matters of the empire's eastern frontier, so it mentions only the Arabs and lacks a chapter concerning other *ethnoi*.[438] The last important military manual is the *Taktika* of Nikephoros Ouranos dated to the late 10th century. This work also lacks an ethnographic section.[439]

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[437] *The Taktika of Leo VI*, 452-453. For the evangelization and subsequent change of the Bulgars, see section 42.
[438] *Le Traité Sur La Guérilla (De Velitatione)*, ed. Dagron, Mihăescu, and Cheynet.
[439] McGeer, "Military Works," 912.

Having thus summarized the representation of Turkic peoples in Byzantine military manuals, I can return to the historiographical sources. In the *Synopsis Historikon,* Skylitzes makes a digression about the early Seljuk expansion, which has already been discussed. This digression is followed by an episodic narrative of the early Seljuk-Byzantine encounters. The author describes the early Seljuk army as a band of robbers, criminals, and riff-raff. He mentions a battle between Katakalon Kekaumenos and Hasan the Deaf, the nephew of Ṭoghrůl, near the river Stragna (Great Zab). The Byzantine commander, this time, deceives the Seljuks:

> At dawn Hasan emerged from his own encampment on the river Stragna and advanced ready to do battle. When he encountered nobody, he approached the Roman stockade. No guards could be seen, no voice was heard; it was completely devoid of forces. Thinking the Romans had taken to flight, he breached the fortification at several points and ordered the seizure of booty to begin. Towards evening, the Romans emerged from their hiding places and hurler themselves on the Turks, who were now scattered and disorganized. They were immediately routed, for they could not withstand the irresistible force of the Roman charge. Hasan was the first to fall, fighting in the front line; every stout-hearted man in the army fell too. The very few who survived the fray fled unarmed through the mountains and found refuge in the cities of Persarmenia.[440]

Michael Attaleiates defines the early Seljuk activities as a series of raids and gives no important military detail. On the eve of the Battle of Manzikert, he describes the Seljuk raid near the river Euphrates as "The barbarians, who were prepared to shoot form a distance, easily wounded them from afar while remaining untouched themselves, to the point where they forced them to go into the river and fight them there. At the same time, the enemy who stood on the banks kept shooting at the Romans, causing many casualties and forcing them to turn and run."[441] He also refers

[440] Skylitzes-Thurn, *Ioannis Scylitzae Synopsis Historiarum*, 449; Skylitzes-Wortley, *A Synopsis of Byzantine History,* 422.
[441] Attaleiates, *The History,* 171-172.

to Emperor Romanos IV's opinion that the Seljuks "were not strong enough to meet the Romans in close combat."[442]

In the case of the Battle of Manzikert, most probably the author's eyewitness account, the Turks are described as "wicked by nature and masters of deceit" for "they accomplish everything by trickery and unabashed reversals."[443] However, in the narrative of Attaleiates, there is a detail which contradicts the features attributed to Skythian peoples in the *Strategikon*. Just before the battle of Manzikert, the Byzantines became suspicious of the possibility that the Pechenegs might defect to the other side. However, the author himself made the Pechenegs swear oaths in their traditional manner and managed to lift the suspicion over them. The author was proud of his success: "I made them into firm guardians of the agreement. Nor did I fail in my purpose, for not one of them defected to the enemy during the battle."[444] I assume that the suspicion over the fidelity of the Pechenegs demonstrates that the stereotype about the attitudes of the Skythians were frequent among the Byzantine military officers.

The descriptions of the tactics in the military texts also shaped the Byzantine expectations in the battlefield. Emperor Romanos IV assumed that "the Turks would make an ambush and attack the unguarded camp" and if he continued his pursuit much longer "(they) would reverse their flight and shoot (arrows) from a distance."[445]

As it was seen, the author does not see a big difference between the military tactics of the Seljuks and the Pechenegs. They both followed a common model of

[442] Attaleiates, *The History,* 234-235.
[443] Attaleiates, *The History,* 284-285.
[444] Attaleiates, *The History*, 286-289.
[445] Attaleiates, *The History,* 292-293.

steppe warfare in which horse archery, tactical withdrawals, and various tricks played a key role. In harmony with this early material, Anna Komnene expresses her idea about the nature of the Turks, as the thoughts of Constantine Dalassenos, who was sent by Alexios I Komnenos against Tzachas: the Byzantine nobleman "knows" that the Turks are "of treacherous nature."[446] During a conversation with the crusader leader Count Baldwin of Bouillon, later King Baldwin I of Jerusalem (r. 1100-1118), Alexios I states, "I strongly recommend you not to take up position in the rear of the army, nor in the van; stand in the centre with the junior officers. I know the enemy's methods and have had much experience of combat with the Turks."[447]

Both John Kinnamos and Niketas Khoniates give us accounts of Byzantine military clashes against the Seljuk Turks in the 11th century. The depiction of Kinnamos follows the old model; the Seljuk Turks are tricksters. In Manuel Komnenos' campaign against the Seljuks in 1146, the Byzantine army did not find the chance to have a direct encounter with the Seljuk army on the battlefield. The emperor warned his soldiers: "Romans, do not let barbarian trickery turn your shrewdness to fear: while there is a lack of standards in the army visible in front of us, you should not imagine that they are elsewhere with another force."[448] During this campaign, the Seljuk ruler Masʿūd I escaped constantly from the Byzantine forces, so at one point the emperor humiliated him by saying to his ambassador, "Report this to your sultan (…) You, however, fled continually, like runaway slaves."[449] Apart from the Seljuks, there is one unique feature of the Pecheneg

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[446] Komnene-Reinsch-Kambylis, *Annae Comnenae Alexias*, 225; Komnene-Sewter-Frankopan, *The Alexiad*, 205.
[447] Komnene-Reinsch-Kambylis, *Annae Comnenae Alexias,* 317; Komnene, Sewter Frankopan, *The Alexiad*, 292.
[448] Kinnamos-Meineke, *Ioannis Cinnami epitome rerum ab Ioanne et Alexio Comnenis gestarum*, 43; Kinnamos-Brand, *Deeds of John and Manuel Comnenus*, 42.
[449]Kinnamos-Meineke, *Ioannis Cinnami epitome rerum ab Ioanne et Alexio Comnenis gestarum*, 58-59; Kinnamos-Brand, *Deeds of John and Manuel Comnenus*, 52.

warfare which was underlined by Khoniates: the use of wagons. These war wagons, similar to *tábor*s used by the Hussites of Bohemia in the 15th century, gave an advantage against the enemy infantry in the battlefield. However, when the ramparts of the wagons were destroyed, the Pecheneg troops could be scattered: "When the rampart of wagons had been demolished and the fighting had turned into hand-to-hand combat, the enemy was put to inglorious flight, and the Romans pursued them boldly."[450] The author even uses the expression "wagon-dwellers" (*hamaxobion*) to define the Pechenegs. This expression that reflects the nomadic life, evokes a similar epithet used for the nomads: σκηνῖται, which means "tent-dwellers."[451]

However, the next year, the German king who participated in the Crusade, King Konrad, risked being captured by the Turks:

> The Turks turned tail and pretended flight; but when their [the Germans'] cavalry was exhausted and they were far from camp, they [the Turks] made rapid charges and slew horses and men. The same thing which happened frequently cast them into immeasurable terror. Then it was possible to observe those who were formerly lash braggarts who attacked in the fashion of irresistible brutes, cowardly and ignoble and incapable of either doing or planning anything. Then Konrad[452] (for he was courageous in warfare) rushed against the Turks, lost the particularly swift horses which the emperor had presented to him, and came close to being captured by those barbarians.[453]

This passage is reminiscent of the warning of Alexios I to Count Baldwin: the Turks are particularly dangerous for the armies who do not have the experience of fighting them.

Khoniates' depiction of Turkish warfare fits the earlier standards. He underlines the barbarian customs of the Turks in his narrative about the aftermath of

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[450] Khoniates-Van Dieten, *Nicetae Khoniatae Historia*,16; Khoniates-Magoulias, *O City of Byzantium*, 11.
[451] Shukurov, *The Byzantine Turks, 1204-1461*, 28.
[452] Konrad III Hohenstaufen (r. 1138-1152) King of Germany and Italy.
[453] Kinnamos-Meineke, *Ioannis Cinnami Epitome rerum ab Ioanne et Alexio Comnenis gestarum*, 81-82; Kinnamos-Brand, *Deeds of John and Manuel Comnenus*, 68.

the battle of Myriokephalon: The Seljuk soldiers cut the phalluses of the corpses of the Byzantine soldiers on the battlefield. The author tries to offer a rational explanation about this act: "It was said that the Persians took these measures so that the circumcised could not be distinguished from the uncircumcised and the victory therefore disputed and contested since many had fallen on both sides."[454]

In the description of the first large scale battle between the Byzantines and Ottomans, the Battle of Bapheus (1302), Pakhymeres repeats basically the same narrative: ʿOthmān, the eponymous founder of the Ottoman state, ambushes Mouzalon and his troops and encircles them. ʿOthmān's troops, enforced with the Persian auxiliaries from the Meander region, defeat the Byzantines with their superior archers and make them withdraw.[455] The Ottomans who fought against the Byzantines in this battle employed the infantry forces among their troops. These very episodes document an important point of evolution of warfare among the Turks of Asia Minor. Moreover, it can be assumed that, at least in the early stages of the Seljuk invasion of Asia Minor, the difference in warfare and the technological superiority of Turkish mounted archery could have played a key role in the Byzantine loss of Anatolia. Further changes in the Byzantine military demonstrate that the empire tried to renew its armies to counter the mounted archery tactics of the Turks. However, interpreting the Seljuk conquest of Anatolia from a detailed military perspective is beyond the limits of this thesis.[456]

In Doukas' *Historia Turco-Byzantina*, although the author mentions various episodes of Ottoman wars, there is no particular emphasis on the cavalry and nomad

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[454] Khoniates-Van Dieten, *Nicetae Khoniatae Historia*, 190; Khoniates, *O City of Byzantium*, 107.
[455] Pachymeres, *Relations historiques*, 364-365.
[456] Kaegi, "The Contribution of Archery to the Turkish Conquest of Anatolia," 96-108, particularly 107-108.

warfare. The author is well informed about the Ottoman military; he demonstrates his knowledge about different Ottoman military units (janisseries, azabs) and he just does not repeat the old narrative of nomad archers. Such details were not present even in the first chapters of his work, he does not depict even the early Ottomans in that way.

Finally, in the *Histories* of Khalkokondyles it can be seen how the Turkish warfare has changed through the centuries. He never describes the contemporary Ottoman military by using the *topoi* in the military manuals and early military texts. Moreover, in a dialogue he invented, Bāyazīd says:

> My men, it seems as though you are afraid of their (Timurids') numbers, that is how I interpret it. (…) We too in Europe have often gone into battle and routed the most courageous races in the world, the French, and the Hungarians. Therefore, do not belittle our bravery or declare us to be worse and less significant than the Skythians and Chaghatai, who have never ever used swords but who only shoot with a bow and arrows, as they positively do not want to come to blows. [457]

In this passage, the typical feature of the nomadic barbarian –warfare based on horse archery– is identified exclusively with the Timurids, and the Ottomans are placed within the borders of the "civilized world."

Before ending this sub-chapter about the representation of Turkic warfare in Byzantine texts, it will be appropriate to add a brief section about Turkish seamanship in the Byzantine sources. Being a people from Central Asia, the Turks had no familiarity with the sea or seamanship when they first arrived in Asia Minor. However, in subsequent centuries, they progressively gained familiarity with this craft. As it was discussed in Chapter 5, Anna Komnene gives an account of the deeds of Tzachas, a Turkish-Byzantine warlord who ruled a maritime principality for a

[457] Khalkokondyles, *The Histories*, 250-253.

short period of time. She adds that he collaborated with the Greeks to construct his fleet.[458] As it was seen, Greco-Turkish cooperation was necessary when it came to seamanship.

The traces of Tzachas' model of the maritime emirate can be followed in later Turkish principalities of the 13th century formed along the western coast of Asia Minor. In that region, four principalities were formed from north to south: Karasi, Saruhan, Aydın, and Menteshe. All four of these *beylik*s possessed a fleet and were engaged with piracy activities, often against the commercial vessels belonging to Italian city-states and the Aegean islands ruled by Italian dynasties. Among the rulers of these emirates, Umur of Aydin was known to be the greatest seaman who was involved actively in "maritime ghaza." His life is also narrated in the *History* of Doukas, whose family took refuge in the emirate of Aydin in the 14th century. By the 15th century, Turkish seamanship was already taken for granted by the Byzantines. This led Khalkokondyles to attribute victories in unreal and anachronic sea battles to Ertoghrul, the ancestor of the Ottoman dynasty.[459] However, Turkish seamanship was not distinguishable from piracy in the eyes of the Byzantines.

In concluding this sub-chapter, the findings can be summarized thus:

i. First of all, in the medieval world, the battlefield is an important place to encounter the other. According to Byzantine authors, the "national traditions" in the art of war were mere reflections of the national character determined by climate, lifestyle, and social order which were also interrelated with one another.

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[458] Komnene-Reinsch-Kambylis, *Annae Comnenae Alexias,* 222; Komnene-Sewter-Frankopan,*The Alexiad*, 202.

[459] "(Ertoghrul) enjoyed success while fighting wars in many places and he even built ships in order to sail to the islands of Aegean, both those near Asia and those near Europe, and pillage them. He ravaged Europe: among other exploits, he even entered the river Tearos, the one by Ainos, and sailed his ships up a long stretch of it. He is also said to have made landings in at many other places in Europe, reaching the Peloponnese, Euboia and Attica, where he plundered the land and made huge profits by carrying off as many captives as possible as slaves." Khalkokondyles, *The Histories*, 16-17.

ii. The Byzantine representation of Turkic warfare reflects the Byzantine perception of the national character of the Turks. They were represented as faithless, treacherous, wild, cunning, deceitful, yet independent people. Their original element in warfare was fake withdrawal. This tactic was also in line with the "national character" of the Turks because it represented their general faithlessness and lack of morality according to Byzantine texts.

iii. Turkic armies were depicted as horse archer armies until the 14th century; however, as Turkish warfare evolved, later authors gave up repeating this traditional description.

7.2 The representation of Turkic women in Byzantine literature

A striking feature of the Byzantine narratives about the Turks between the 11th and the 14th centuries is the scarcity of narratives regarding women. As pointed out by many scholars who studied the history of women in the Muslim world, the representation of women was rather limited in the medieval historiography of that part of the world, because of the segregation of the sexes and the isolation of women from public life.[460] However, the full segregation of women and men in the Muslim world must also be considered a historical issue and cannot be generalized to all the Muslim societies of all times, ignoring the nuances.

Foreign women occupied a negligible place in Byzantine historiography, except as brides who came to Constantinople.[461] In that sense, the role of Turkic women did not differ. In this context, Islam could also be a factor in this invisibility.

[460] For an introduction, see Keddie, *Women in the Middle East: Past and Present* and Keddie & Baron, *Women in Middle Eastern History – Shifting Boundaries in Sex and Gender*.
[461] For a recent study which also deals with late Byzantine empresses of foreign origin, see Melichar, *Empresses of Late Byzantium: Foreign Brides, Mediators and Pious Women.*

Before moving on to the rare references to Turkish women in Byzantine texts, I will start by investigating Ibn Battuta's travel narrative, which displays the status of Turkish women before Islam.

The earliest references to the status of women in Turkic societies were the testimonies of Ahmad Ibn Faḍlān (877-960) of Baghdad, the Arab traveler of Turkic and Slavic lands in the 10th century. His travel narrative is of utmost importance both for the history and ethnography of Turkic peoples in the eve of Islamization and for the early settlements of Slavs and Vikings during the formation of the State of Rus'. He visited several Turkic peoples beyond the borders of Muslim *oikoumene* such as Khazars, Oghuz, Volga Bulgars, and Bashgirts.

Ibn Fadlan visited the Oghuz settlements along the Oxus River in 921. In that period, the Oghuz were still pagan, yet the influence of the Muslim traders along the river could be observed. The author narrates the following episode:

> The women hide no part of their body from anyone. One day, we descended on one of them (an Oghuz) and we sat together. The wife of that man was also among us. When we were chatting, she opened up her sexual parts and scratched them while we looked at her. We hid our faces with our hands and said 'May God forgive us.' Her husband laughed and said to our interpreter: 'Tell them, she opens up her sexual parts in your presence and you see them, but you look without reaching them. That is better than if she covers them but someone can reach them.'[462]

However, despite his lack of sympathy for the Oghuz, Ibn Fadlan does not interpret their lack of gender segregation as a moral inferiority. He underlines that among the Oghuz people, adultery is very rarely committed: "They do not know about adultery, but if they get to know an act of this nature, they split both adulterers in two."[463] Yet this passage regarding adultery can be read rather as a criticism of his contemporary

[462] Ibn Fadlan, *Voyage chez les Bulgares de Volga*, 38-39.
[463] Ibn Fadlan, *Voyage chez les Bulgares de Volga*, 39.

Muslim society than a sincere praise of the Oghuz tribes who were merely unbelievers in his eyes. Ethnography was frequently used for social criticism of similar issues that occur within the writers' society since Tacitus. Comparable to Ibn Fadlan's emphasis on the sexual morality of the Turks, Tacitus considered the sexual morals of Germanic peoples superior to that of the Romans.

Another Turkic people that surprised the Arab traveler with the coexistence of men and women in daily life were the Volga Bulgars. The author complains that the men and women of this nation go all naked in a river and bathe together. Yet, confessing that he could not be successful to remove these customs, he adds that they never commit the sin of adultery, and if any two of them do so, they kill both the woman and man brutally.[464] Ibn Fadlan's depiction of pre-Islamic Turkic societies is unique with its emphasis on the status of women and the gender relations in daily life. Therefore, this narrative can be compared with the Byzantine narratives concerning Turkic peoples.

I began this sub-chapter with these citations from an Iraqi traveler to portray an earlier encounter between the Turks, who converted to Islam later, and the Arabs. Eventually, it can be assumed that there is a certain change in the status of Turkish women after converting to Islam. Turks gradually adopted the social norms of Muslim societies that had institutionalized segregation of the sexes, obedience to men, and modest dress. These social norms of Islamic society limited women's public life. Nevertheless, this change was gradual, and it did not affect certain strata of the society, particularly the ones who continued the nomadic lifestyle of their ancestors. The representation of the women warriors in the Turkish epic narratives in the Middle Ages also demonstrate that the ancient ethos lived among Turks for a very

[464] Ibn Fadlan, *Voyage chez les Bulgares de Volga*, 65.

long time. Even in the Great Seljuk Sultanate, where the Persianate Muslim culture was gradually embraced by the ruling dynasty, the women of court were active in public life.[465]

The Byzantine sources remain silent about Turkic women; neither Skylitzes, nor Attaleiates mentions a single Turkish woman. One can expect Anna Komnene to include the deeds of women in her writing as a female author; however, she too remained silent about Turkic women. There are only scarce references to Turkic women in the *Alexiad*; she only refers to unnamed wives and daughters of Turkic rulers.

There are very brief references to Seljuk noblewomen in the context of the Byzantine campaign against Seljuks in Kinnamos' and Khoniates' texts (1146). In Kinnamos' work the unnamed wife of the Seljuk Sultan Masʿūd I appears. The existence of a correspondence between her and the emperor Manuel I Komnenos gives the impression that she was of Greek origin. In her letter to the emperor, she states that she has in readiness around two thousand sheep and a vast quantity of oxen and many other sorts of edibles to welcome the emperor, yet he will not be welcomed because of the Byzantine army's burning of the dwellings of the city.[466] However, Niketas Khoniates mentions an unnamed daughter of the Seljuk Sultan Masʿūd I. This princess was also the spouse of John Komnenos who is the cousin of Manuel I. Masʿūd I, as stated above, avoided direct encounters with the emperor and withdrew his army to the inner parts of Anatolia. Khoniates narrates the encounter at the gates of Ikonion by stating "one of his (Masʿūd's) daughters, reportedly married

[465] Peacock, *The Great Seljuk Empire*, 178. The author states: "Far from being restricted to the domain of the harem, Seljuk women played a much more public role than many of their counterparts in other contemporary Muslim dynasties."
[466] Kinnamos-Meineke,*Ioannis Cinnami epitome rerum ab Ioanne et Alexio Comnenis gestarum,* 46; Kinnamos-Brand, *The Deeds of John and Manuel Comnenus,* 44.

to the emperor's cousin, John Komnenos, the son of the sebastokrator Isaac who become some trifling vexation against his uncle, the emperor John I Komnenos, had fled and defected to Masʿūd, peered out from above the walls and delivered a persuasive defense on behalf of her father, the sultan."[467] Both of these narratives, whether they represent the reality or are merely fiction, reflect the Byzantine authors' thoughts of the Seljuk noblewomen having a public role.[468]

Moreover, Niketas Khoniates narrates a bloody episode which takes place in the Danishmendid city of Amaseia. After the death of Yağıbasan, the ruler of Danishmendid emirate, his wife marries his brother and rivals Zünnun in secret. However, the marriage provokes a rebellion in the city and the Amaseians kill the woman. The author does not mention the ethnic identity of these Amaseians, however by the brutality of the event, it can be supposed that they were barbarians.[469]

Finally, in Khoniates' Annals, in the context of Seljuk dynastic struggles after the reign of Qiliç Arslān II, it was stated that the title-claimant Rükneddin (Sulaymānshāh II) loathed his brother Kaykhusraw (later became the Sultan Kaykhusraw I), because the latter's mother was Christian.[470]

That being the case, there must also be distinguished the Turkish women born Muslim and who were supposedly ethnic Turks, from the women who have a Greek origin and a Christian background, who then became a part of the Seljuk society via

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[467] Khoniates-Van Dieten, *Nicetae Khoniatae Historia*, 53; Khoniates-Magoulias, *O City of Byzantium*, 31.
[468] Roman Shliakhtin explains the visibility or more precisely "the right to speech" of the princess by stating that she is half-Byzantine, because she married a member of the Komnenos dynasty. However, I do not share his opinion, because she is married to the son of a Byzantine dissident who escaped from Constantinople and took refuge in Ikonion. So, although her husband is a Byzantine noble, she is still talking in the name of the legitimacy of where she grow up. Shliakhtin, *From Huns into Persians: The Projected Identity of the Turks in the Byzantine Rhetoric of Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries*, 175.
[469] Khoniates-Van Dieten, *Nicetae Khoniatae Historia*, 122; Khoniates-Magoulias, *O City of Byzantium*, 69.
[470] Khoniates-Van Dieten, *Nicetae Khoniaiate Historia*, 521; Khoniates-Magoulias, *O City of Byzantium*, 286.

marriage or slavery. These women, therefore, had more access to Byzantine society, but as it was seen in the case of Kaikhusraw's mother, they can attire the hate of their new compatriots. In Pakhymeres' *Syngraphikai Historiai*, the description of the mother of Kaykāʾūs II is worthy of attention. The author describes this noblewoman of Greek origin as "an excellent Christian".[471] In Pakhymeres' work, there are other sporadic references to Turkic women: such as the kidnapping of the Turcopoles' women by the Almogavars, the Catalan mercenary band in the service of the Empire.

In Gregoras' *Roman History*, there is a narrative about a Skythian woman who converts to Christianity: A Skythian woman buys a Christian captive from Thrace and marries him. Then this man sees his ex-wife who was also a slave in the hands of Skythians and his new Skythian wife purchases her and makes her a maid. The woman converts to Christianity and, together with her husband and her husband's ex-wife, settles in Constantinople. When they settle, the maid complains to the Patriarchate about the Skythian woman by saying that she was unfair to her. Then the Skythian woman by her own will decides that she will release the maid and permit her to find her ransom in her native region of Thrace; however, there she will fall captive to Skythians again. The Skythian woman's personality is appreciated by the Patriarch. She acted in a noble and honest manner; therefore, she deserves to live happily with her husband.[472] The protagonist of this episode is similar to the extremely Christian mother of Kaykāʾūs II. If someone is a good Christian and an honest person, could be depicted in a positive light. However, as I have already mentioned, the scarcity of depictions of Turkic women makes it difficult to propose a general explanation about this situation.

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[471] Pachymeres, *Relations historiques*, 182-183.
[472] Gregoras-Bekker-Schopen, *Nicephori Gregorae Byzantina historia*, Gregoras-Van Dieten, *Rhomaïsche Geschichte*, 284-285.

Doukas narrates the Turks' interest to mingle with foreign women as such: "if they seize a Greek woman or Italian woman or a woman of another nation or a captive or a deserter, they embrace her as an Aphrodite or Semele, but a woman of their own nation or of their own tongue they loath as though she were a bear or hyena."[473]

This passage could be read as a reflection of the Turks' general attitude towards polygamy and exogamy. In early Ottoman chronicles, there are several references to *ghazi*s who marry the women of the town they conquered.[474] It can be assumed that polygamy among Muslims constituted the first and foremost difference between the Byzantines and the Muslim peoples. Furthermore, as it was demonstrated by the same sources, the 14th and 15th centuries were a period in which the Ottomans enslaved Christians massively. However, these arguments do not explain why the Turks loathed their own women. Moreover, what was the difference between "the woman of their own nation" and "the woman of their own tongue"?

In the *Historia Turco-Byzantina,* Doukas draws a distinction between the Turks, which included the Ottoman population and the Anatolian *beylik*s, and the speakers of Turkic languages, who were described with different ethnonyms. Doukas addresses the Akkoyunlu as "Persarmenian", and the Timurids as "Skythian", and underlines that they speak Turkish, but does not identify them as Turks. The author thinks that these populations spoke roughly the same language, but differed in terms of their nations. Doukas' Turks dislike not only the women of their own country, but also Turkic women from other lands. This statement could contain some exaggeration, yet it should be assumed that in a period when there was an influx of

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[473] Doukas-Grecu, *Historia Turcobyzantina*, 59; Doukas-Magoulias, *Decline and Fall of Byzantium to the Ottoman Turks*, 73.
[474] See the case of the conquest of Nicea in Aşıkpaşazade, *Tevarih-i Al-i Osman*, 313.

foreign women who were nothing but slaves, these men did not opt for Muslim women who even under the patriarchal structure of Islam, were requesting more responsibility.[475]

Finally, Kantakouzenos, in his history, when criticizing the empress Anna of Savoy, refers to a Turkish proverb to reinforce his own patriarchal and misogynistic approach to women: κἂν μέχρι νεφελῶν ἀφίκηται ἡ κεφαλὴ τῆς γυναικός, οὐδὲν ἔλαττον ἢ πρότερον ἐφάπτεται τῆς γῆς.[476] This proverb could be translated as "if the head of a woman could arrive as far as to the cloud, she is always attached to the ground."[477] As in many other cases in Byzantine literature, the context of the reference of such a saying is a critique directed at the internal politics of Byzantium. But, in a broader context, as a person who personally met the Turkish rulers and had a certain knowledge of the Turkish societies of his time, Kantakouzenos' use of such a proverb, could also demonstrate that he personally thinks the Turkish society is more patriarchal than the Byzantine one. At least, according to the context of Kantakouzenos' critique, this approach could have sense: during the life of Kantakouzenos, there was no Turkish female ruler. The woman closest to the position and prestige of Anna of Savoy in Turkish Asia Minor could be Nīlūfer Khātūn (d. first half of 1380s), the first consort of Orkhan, who was also a Greek noblewoman from Bithynia. More information about her will be given below.

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[475] In Doukas' *Historia Turco-Byzantina*, there are some more references to Turkish women: he mentions the wife and daughter of Junaid, the ruler of Smyrna, and her marriage with a certain Abdullah, of Albanian origin, who is a slave of him, the women of Junaid's family who obey Meḥmed I, he mentions also that though Murād II first married the daughter of Isfandiyar, "he longed more for this new wife (Mara Brankovic) who was beautiful in both body and soul." Murād II seems to follow the abovementioned pattern toward foreign women. Doukas-Grecu, *Historia Turcobyzantina*, 141, 143, 259-261; Doukas-Magoulias, *Decline and Fall of Byzantium to the Ottoman Turks*, 116, 117, 176.

[476] Kantakouzenos-Schopen, *Ioannis Cantacuzeni eximperatoris Historiarum*, vol. 2, 48; Kantakouzenos-Fatouros, *Geschichte*, vol. 3, 23.

[477] Despite the existence of several misogynistic proverbs in Turkish, I could not identify it.

In concluding this sub-chapter, it may be suggested that the situation of women among Turks deteriorated during Islamization and the adoption of the dominant social models of the Muslim *oikoumene*. Maybe a comparative approach between the two authors from different cultural backgrounds can enlighten the situation of the women among the Turks. In Palamas' narrative of his captivity, he does not mention any woman whom he saw or talked to in the Ottoman court. However, the Moroccan traveler Ibn Battuta (1304-1369), who visited the Ottoman territories some twenty years before the Byzantine theologian, mentions the Nilüfer Hatun, whom he saw and referred to as Bayalun, the wife of Orkhan in Bursa. This noblewoman of Greek origin was left as regent in the Ottoman capital, during a campaign of his husband. The author describes Nilüfer as a wise woman who helps them, without mentioning her Greek origin.[478] In this respect, it may be more revealing to pay attention to what the authors intended to see.

In Khalkokondyles' *Histories*, there are a few more women who are in our field of interest: His narrative about the rivalry between Bāyazīd I and Tamerlane gives not only some remarks on the wife of Tamerlane, but also some details about the authors' knowledge about Muslim marriage. Bāyazīd I already had a conflict with Tamerlane because of the latter's anger to the Ottoman annexation of Anatolian *beylik*s. During the correspondence between the two rulers, Bāyazīd I says: "if he does not come to fight against me now, let him renounce his wife three times." Khalkokondyles obviously refers to the Islamic practice of triple *talaq*.[479] The author explains this fact as follows: "This is an insult among this race, for Muhammad ordained that one should renounce his wife three times if she is not obedient. This

[478] Ibn Battuta, *The Travels of Ibn Battuta*, 453-454.
[479] Khalkokondyles, *The Histories*, 170-171.

happens because there is a law among them that prohibits a person who has rejected his wife from taking her back into his household, for this is considered improper. When a man has said that his marriage is dissolved *on three spleens* the law prevents him from entering again the same marriage, unless he does so after she has committed adultery with another man in the meantime who has also *thrown spleen* three times."

His messenger brings this insult to Tamerlane. However, the wife of Tamerlane whom the author introduced as such: "they say that (she was) an especially devout woman" would not allow her husband to attack Bāyazīd I's territories, because "he was a man who was worthy of praise in their religion and was fighting against the faction of Jesus."[480] Then, Tamerlane makes the messenger repeat this insult before his wife and asks her if it was right to allow the Ottoman ruler to say such things. Khalkokondyles states: "He made it clear that if, on the one hand, she still thought Bāyazīd right, he could no longer live with her in the future. If, on the other hand, she had changed her mind and would now favor war, she would be considered his wife and would assent to whatever it was that he was forced to do." Tamerlane's wife responds by saying that Bāyazīd is mad, and his husband would punish him justly. However, she adds that Bāyazīd still fights "on behalf of our hero" against "the Hellenes and other peoples on the other continent." Therefore it is not right to wage a war against him, yet it is enough to occupy Sivas (Sebasteia) as a revenge of his taking of the city Malatya (Melitene).

This narrative is interesting as it presents Tamerlane as a man who is ready to wage a war because of an insult targeting his conjugal honor and his wife as a devout noblewoman who is attached deeply to her religion and who insists her husband to

[480] Khalkokondyles, *The Histories*, 170-171.

wage a low-profile war against the Ottomans. In his depiction of events, Tamerlane represented a gentle husband who listens to his wife. However, the upcoming events were to be different and the Ottoman-Timur conflict would provoke a great war between two states.

In conclusion, as it was also stated by Roman Shliakhtin, Turkish women were almost invisible in Byzantine historiography.[481] Considering the abundance of references to individual medieval Turkish women in Persian and Syriac chronicles, and live depictions of upper-class Turkish women in hagiographies, and the ambitious patronage projects of Seljuk noblewomen, this fact is contradictory. Furthermore, despite the cultural change that came with Islam, which is increasingly internalized by society, it is difficult to say that women were isolated from daily life with strict gender segregation in Turkish Anatolia of the late Middle Ages. Bertrandon de la Broqiuére, the Burgundian pilgrim who traveled Anatolia in a late date as 1432-1433, remarked on the existence of women troops in the army of the Beylik of Dulkadir: "Surkadiroly (Dulkadiroglu) who was 30.000 armed Turcoman men and some 100.000 women brave and valiant as much as men..."[482] In the end, the scarcity of references to Turkic women in Byzantine texts can be only explained by lack of interest of the Byzantine authors.

7.3 Intemperate and lustful: Turks and sexuality

A significant element of the barbarian image is its lack of moderation in various aspects of life. The concept of moderation is closely related to civilized populations, and the barbarians are notoriously intemperate in life. Thus, sexual behavior is an

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[481] Shliakthin, *From Huns into Persians: The Projected Identity of the Turks in the Byzantine Rhetoric of Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries*, 172.
[482] Bertrandon de la Broquère, *Le Voyage d'Orient*, 115.

aspect of daily life in which moderation and intemperance could play a distinguishing role between the civilized and the barbarian. Since Herodotus, the representation of barbarian sexuality is both the demonstration of weirdness and inferiority from the civilized one.[483]

However, there is the need to contextualize this separation in an era in which sexuality was perceived differently than our contemporary standards, formed mainly in the 19th century, particularly in the Victorian Age. Michel Foucault's colossal *L'Histoire de la Sexualité* (1976)[484] started a wave of discussions about whether the seemingly extreme elements of sexuality were repressed or not. In this sub-chapter, I shall deal with the sexual behavior attributed by the Byzantine authors to the Turks, whom they consider perverse or deviant. Indeed, the Turks were identified with such behaviors in some later Byzantine texts.

Anna Komnene stresses that the Ishmaelites "are indeed dominated by Dionysos and Eros; they indulge readily in every kind of sexual license, and if they are circumcised in the flesh, they are certainly not so in their passions. In fact, the Ishmaelites are nothing more than slaves -trebly slaves – of the vices of Aphrodite. Hence, they revere and worship Astarte and Astaroth, and in their land, the figure of moon and the golden image of Khobar are considered of major importance."[485] This expression clearly reflects the idea about the origin of the Muslims in *De Administrando Imperio*. In the origin of the Muslim religion, there is a cult of Khobar, or Koubar, a female divinity of uncontrollable lust. Though in *De Administrando Imperio*, Islam was described as a heterodoxy, and the cult of Koubar

[483] Wenghofer, "Sexual Promiscuity of Non-Greeks in Herodotus' *Histories*," 515-534.
[484] Foucault, *Histoire de sexualité: La volonté de savoir*, vol. 1.
[485] Komnene-Reinsch-Kambylis, *Annae Comnenae Alexias,* 298; Komnene-Sewter-Frankopan, *The Alexiad*, 276.

– or Aphrodite – was reflected as a secondary trait of this religion; Anna Komnene directly put this cult in the center of her narrative. Furthermore, she explains the sexual aggressiveness of the Muslims as a result of their worshipping Astarte. As it was known, the goddess Astarte is a Syrian divinity of fertility and love who was identified with Aphrodite of the Greeks and Venus of the Romans.

One of the most striking Byzantine *topoi* about the Muslims is the attributed relationship between their religion and the cult of Aphrodite/Venus. As it was known, Aphrodite was the female divinity of love of Ancient Greeks. They considered the Ka'aba in Mecca as an ancient temple of Aphrodite in Arabia. This narrative first appears in the chapter about the origin of the Arabs and Islam in Constantine Porphyrogennetos' *De Administrando Imperio*:

> And they (Arabs) pray, moreover, to the star of Aphrodite, which they call Koubar (Κουβάρ), and in their supplication cry out "Alla wa Koubar", that is, "God and Aphrodite" (Θεὸς καὶ Ἀφροδίτη'). For they call God "Alla", and "wa" they use for the conjuction "and", and they call the star "Koubar", and so they say "Alla wa Koubar."[486]

This is an argument which was not invented by the author(s) of *De Administrando Imperio*; it reflects a tradition of anti-Muslim polemics going back to John of Damascus (d. 749) and Niketas of Byzantium (9th century) which alleges that inside the Ka'aba there was an idol of Aphrodite that was worshipped by the Arabs.[487]

A small trace of this idea can be found in Khalkokondyles' digression about the history of Islam, in which he describes the Islamic prayer (*sal'at*) as "their custom is to pray to God four times a day and they let nothing prevent them from praying. On the day of Aphrodite [Friday], they all go into the shrines together to pray." He adds that "this race is especially devoted to prayer and for no reason at all

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[486] Constantine Porphyrogenitus, *De Administrando Imperio*, 78-79.
[487] Meyendorff, "Byzantine Views of Islam," 118.

will they agree to neglect it."[488] The author implies yet again an obscure connection with Aphrodite but emphasizes the devotion and piety of the Muslims. However, he continues by stating: "In other matters in their way of life and overall conduct nothing is regarded as so reprehensible that it would prevent them from living pleasurably; thus, they do not curb nature in any way. For they marry more than one wife and have concubines from among their captives, however many as each man is able to support and feed." He then summarizes the Muslim marriage customs, erroneously saying that a man can take up to five wives and there is the tradition of bride price among them. He repeats the narrative of "the three spleens" which was mentioned above, in the episode with Tamerlane. However, he also describes Tamerlane as a man of sexual excesses:

> He (Tamerlane) appointed the eldest son Shāh Rukh (Σαχροῦχος) to be king after him, while he himself indulged in sex and died preoccupied with that. In fact, it is said that Tamerlane was tormented by his nature more than any other person, to such a degree that he ordered young men to copulate with women in front of him in order to become aroused enough himself to act. But when he set sex aside, he would immediately turn to war against his enemies, so that he was never at rest. It is said he committed offenses against his nature with his sexual habits.[489]

However, this explanation could be an ideological fabrication to explain the sexual aggression of Muslims. The centrality of polygyny in Islam was already mentioned. This kind of polygamy clearly brings an image of hypersexuality. However, such representations are very rare before the 13th century. For example, Niketas Khoniates, who condemns the sexual vices of Byzantine emperors such as Manuel I, Andronikos I Komnenos, and even accuses the sister-in-law of the Bulgarian King Asan of

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[488] Khalkokondyles, *The Histories*, 196-197.
[489] Khalkokondyles, *The Histoires*, 270-273. This representation of Tamerlane does not match with Khalkokondyles' first representation of the Mongol warlord as a "gentle husband."

adultery with a certain man called Ivanko, never constructs a sexual narrative of the Seljuk Turks.[490]

In Akropolites' *History*, the author condemns the Seljuk sultan Ghiyāth al-Dīn Kaykhusraw II of being licentious and incompetent:

> A son [Kaykhusraw II] of the sultan Azatines [Kaiḳobād I] a bad leader who was born of a good one. For he took pleasure in drinking and licentiousness, in strange and unnatural sexual intercourse, and was always in the company of creatures who no longer knew reason or indeed anything of human nature. His father was not this sort, although he did give way to licentiousness, but not very much.[491]

As it was seen, the author accuses also Kaiḳobād I of being involved in licentious sexual acts, however in a lesser level. Ruth Macrides, who prepared the present edition of work, states that the Byzantine representation of the Muslim rulers as persons who engage in the promiscuous sexual behavior is a literary cliché. Keeping this explanation in mind, I shall explore other similar depictions below.

In the 14th century, the issue of sodomy becomes the subject of even theological polemics. Particularly the mid-14th century is a period of ideological turmoil in the declining Byzantine world. The appearance of the movement of Hesychasm and the reactions against it, the Byzantine Civil Wars and the pro-Turk and pro-Latin fragmentation of the Byzantine society clearly demonstrate a deep ideological crisis. Nikephoros Gregoras, who was a staunch supporter of the pro-Latin, unionist faction, accuses his rival Gregory Palamas for being involved in sodomy with Turks when he had fallen captive to them. Despite the hesychast theologian who had fallen captive in 1354, after the zenith of the Hesychasm

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[490] Khoniates narrates the relationships of Manuel I with many different partners on p. 32, Andronikos I's relationship with his niece Eudoxia on pp. 59 and 80, Ivanko's adultery with the Bulgarian princess on p. 257. For a general narrative of sex in Byzantium see Laiou, "Le désir, l'amour et la folie: Les rapports sexuels vus par les Byzantins," 67–89.

[491] Akropolites-Heisenberg, *Georgii Acropolitae Opera*, 69; Akropolites-Macrides, *The History*, 220.

controversy, the inquietude in the society was still there. As it was expressed by Charis Messis, accusations of being a sodomite generally targeted the members of the pro-Turkish faction in late Byzantine society. In that context, the accusations of alleged sodomy were instrumental to denigrate people who supported pro-Turkish or anti-Latin groups. Indeed, the people who were denigrated with such arguments – Nikephoros Blemmydes (1197-1272),[492] Gregory Palamas, and Loukas Notaras (1402-1453) – were all anti-unionists. Hence, being a victim of sodomy appears to be a punishment for showing a pro-Turkish attitude.

Gregoras, who describes Palamas as an advocate of impiety, narrates what happened to his opponent in an obscene manner: Palamas is captured by pirates and taken to the eldest son of the satrap Hyrcanos (Orkhan). There he is mocked, stripped of his clothes, flogged and raped. It is hard to understand whether Gregoras' narrative about Palamas was entirely his invention or whether it was built on a rumor in Constantinople.[493]

Palamas does not confirm such an incident, but in his narrative states that: "These ungodly, infamous people who hate from the God (…) who live by the arrow, sword and debauchery, find pleasure in making slaves, enjoy murdering, pillaging, plundering, lust, adultery and love against nature."[494]

Another text of the mid 15th century, a satirical narrative written by John Argyropoulos -who was also a unionist- mocks a certain man of Serres called Katablattas, who came from a lower social origin and had a pro-Turkish attitude, also had "the barbarian customs" which included homosexuality. This person was

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[492] The anti-unionist theologian was accused of homosexuality during his residence at Smyrna. See Messis, "Lorsque la périphérie assiège et conquiert le centre: certains aspects des relations entre Byzantins et Turcs", XIIe et XVe siècles," 80.
[493] Gregoras-Schopen-Bekker, *Nicephori Gregorae Byzantina historia,* vol. 3, 228-234*;* Gregoras-Van Dieten*, Rhomaïsche Geschichte*, vol. 5, 175-178.
[494] Palamas, *La captivité de Palamas*, 142-143.

represented as someone who corrupted the Thessalonican youth and became a judge towards the end of the text.

However, Doukas is the author who stresses more the "perversion" of the Turks. He describes at least three Ottoman sultans with homosexual tendencies and attributes these acts to all Turks. In the passage where he mentions the marriage between the daughter of John Kantakouzenos and Orkhan, he uses the generalized discourse on the sexual behavior of Turks to explain Orkhan's will to marry the emperor's daughter: "This nation is intemperate and lustful as no other people, incontinent beyond all races and insatiate in licentiousness. It is so inflamed by passion that it never ceases unscrupulously and dissolutely from having intercourse by both natural and unnatural means with females, males and dumb animals."[495]

He describes Bāyazīd I's palace as a place wherein "boys and girls, selected for their unblemished bodies and beauty of countenance, were there young and tender youths, and girls outshone the sun" and the ruler's daily life as "(he lived) idly and wantonly, never ceased from lascivious sexual acts, indulging in licentious behavior with boys and girls."[496]

He narrates an even grimmer episode of Meḥmed II:

> After the tyrant had traversed most of the City, he celebrated by holding a banquet on the palace grounds. Full of wine and in a drunken stupor, he summoned his chief eunuch and commanded him, "Go to the home of the grand duke and tell him, 'The ruler orders you to send your younger son to the banquet.'" The youth was handsome and fourteen years old. When the boy's father heard this, his face turned ashen as though he had been struck dead. He protested to the chief eunuch, "It is not our custom to hand over my own child to be despoiled by him. It would be far better for me if the executioner were sent to take my head." The chief eunuch advised him to surrender his child or otherwise the tyrant would be wrathful.[497]

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[495] Doukas-Grecu, *Historia Turcobyzantina*, 59; Doukas-Magoulias, *Decline and Fall of Byzantium to the Ottoman Turks*, 73.
[496] Doukas-Grecu, *Historia Turcobyzantina*, 87; Doukas-Magoulias, *Decline and Fall of Byzantium to the Ottoman Turks*, 87-88.
[497] Doukas-Grecu, *Historia Turcobyzantina*, 385; Doukas-Magoulias, *Decline and Fall of Byzantium to the Ottoman Turks*, 234.

The episode ends with the execution of both the grand duke Notaras and his son. Doukas also states that, after the execution of the members of Byzantine aristocracy and high-ranking officials, "among their wives and children" the ruler selected "beautiful maidens and handsome boys and entrusted them to the watchful care of the chief eunuch."[498]

The emphasis on the eunuch merits also some attention. Eunuchs were present for centuries in the Byzantine palace. However, in Byzantine literature these people also have a very negative image.

In Laonikos Khalkokondyles' *Histories,* the same episode is presented without its sexual implications:

> When it was announced to the sultan that Notaras's son was a child of twelve years, he sent one of his wine pourers to request the child. When he heard the wine pourer's request, Notaras grew angry and considered it an insult, saying 'Wine pourer, it is utterly outrageous for the sultan to remove my children when he has nothing at present time for which to reproach us, given that he has forgiven our offenses by ransoming us himself. If that is what he intends to do with us, why does he not just order that we be delivered to a horrible death?' That is what Notaras said, and he said that he was himself blameless, he would never willingly surrender his son.[499]

Although their narratives are quite similar and both authors agree on the dignity and heroism of the late Loukas Notaras, there is a big difference between the tone of narration and allusions in the text. In Doukas' text the boy is fourteen years old and in Khalkokondyles' text he is twelve years old. Doukas underlines that he is handsome; however, the latter gives no detail about his physical appearance. The former openly alludes that the son of Notaras will go to Meḥmed II's banquet and "will be despoiled" by him; the latter leaves the purpose of the sultan's request

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[498] Doukas-Grecu, *Historia Turcobyzantina*, 387; Doukas-Magoulias, *Decline and Fall of Byzantium to the Ottoman Turks*, 235.
[499] Khalkokondyles, *The Histories*, 204-205.

unclear. One can also think that Meḥmed II wanted to take the boy to recruit him as a future bureaucrat, just like the officers of *devshirme* origin of the period. In the former text, the person who came to take the boy is a eunuch, and was mentioned before, the eunuchs' bad reputation in Byzantine literature. On the other hand, in Khalkokondyles' text the person is a wine pourer, so despite being a servant to the sultan, has an occupation without such a bad repetition as a eunuch. Finally, in Khalkokondyles' narrative, there is no allusion to the sultan's tyranny or perversion.

Doukas and Khalkokondyles wrote roughly in the same period (mid-15th century). The difference between the narratives could be explained by the context in which they were written. Doukas was a secretary under the Gattilusio family, the Italian rulers of the island of Lesbos, and was a member of the pro-Latin party in the post-Byzantine Greek world. He wrote his work in the Genoese dominions of the Aegean Archipelago. As for Khalkokondyles, he lived in the Duchy of Athens and later in the Ottoman Empire, and even though he cannot be considered a pro-Turkish author, he is not anti-Turkish either. But even in his text there was a reference to Meḥmed II's homosexual tendencies:

> The sultan spent that winter in his palace and summoned Vlad, the son of Dracul and the ruler of Wallachia, as he already had his younger brother at the court, keeping him as his lover and maintaining him. It happened that the sultan was almost killed by the boy when he had wanted to have sex with him. This was when he had first gained the throne and was preparing to campaign against Karaman. He was in love with the boy and invited him for conversation, and then as a sign of his respect he invited him for drinks to his bedchamber. The boy did not expect to suffer such a thing from the sultan, and when he saw the sultan approaching him with that intention, he fought him off and refused to consent to intercourse with him. The sultan kissed the unwilling boy, who drew a dagger and struck the sultan on his thigh. He then fled in whatever direction he could find. The doctors were able to thread the sultan's wound. The boy had climbed up a tree there and was hiding. When the sultan packed up and left, the boy came down from the tree, began his journey, and shortly afterward, and arrived at the Porte and became the sultan's lover. The sultan was used to having relations no less with men who shared his own inclinations. For he was always spending his time in close company of such people, both day and night, but he did not usually have

> relations with men who were not his own race, except for brief periods of time.[500]

This narrative is worthy of attention, because Khalkokondyles, despite his lack of anti-Ottoman fervor, still represents Meḥmed II as a homosexual. Yet his narrative is still different from Doukas' narrative of Turks because these events are presented not with a propagandist tone, but rather a calmer style. He also gives details about the events between Meḥmed II and Vlad III of Wallachia, as an explanation of the later Ottoman-Wallachian conflict. The final remarks also merit attention because the explanation of the sexual life of Meḥmed II is not written in a moral tone, nor for vilifying him. However, it should not be forgotten that these texts cannot be accepted as historical reality, and that Byzantine historiography is based on representation.

It could be assumed that these narratives build a dichotomy between the Christian Greeks and Muslims, considering that Christian values such as chastity and virtue are the norms, and the barbarians have the tendency to be perverts. Furthermore, it can be concluded that there is a correlation between martial violence and sexual violence since both seem to be the expression of uncontrollable masculinity and untamed barbarism according to the Byzantines. Therefore the Turkish invasion does not only target the territory of the Byzantines but also poses a threat to their bodies. At this point, I propose a conceptual discussion regarding the performance of sexuality.

These references, which I call homosexual hypersexuality, could be interpreted as "Persian" traits, rather than "Skythian". As was already seen in the earlier texts of Skylitzes and Attaleiates, extreme cruelty and sadistic acts were

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[500] Khalkokondyles, *The Histories*, 366-369.

generally presented as traits of the Skythians. To make a comparison, Doukas' description of Tamerlane should also be taken into account. He records Tamerlane's massacres and tortures in a cold-blooded way, but there is nothing sexual about these descriptions. This fact is understandable according to the cultural model he fulfills. However, I utilize the formula of "Persian" and "Skythian" traits as a conceptual model to understand these cultural elements. Here, these terms are not related with the use of the ethnonyms. Both Doukas and Khalkokondyles refer to the Ottomans as Turks.

Charis Messis interprets the Byzantine representation of the Turks as a reuse of the themes used in the past to identify the Arabs.[501] The Arabs and Muslims were already accused of sodomy and pederasty according to a long tradition of narratives that also reflects the characteristics of anti-Muslim polemics. A source of the 10th century, John Kaminiates' narrative of the sacking of Thessaloniki by Arab pirates in 904, clearly reflects how the Byzantines perceived the sexual behavior of the Arabs:

> What must they all have felt in such a situation, when they were being led off to slavery in a foreign land, where the worship of our faith is treated as an abomination and the most senseless passions are revered, where whoredom is held in high repute, where madness is honoured and shamelessness prized, where males are made to play the part of females and creation is violated, and everything is topsy-turvy, confused, distorted and directed towards evil?[502]

So this accusation of sodomy has its roots not in the Turkish lifestyle, but in the Byzantine imagination of the Arabo-Islamic world. This literary tradition goes back to the 8th century, to the writings of pseudo-Stephan of Alexandria, and identifies the Arabs with "uncontrollable masculinity."[503]

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[501] Messis cites a letter written in Latin by Alexios I Komnenos to count Robert of Flanders, in which the Turks are accused of sodomy and sexual aggression against all the elements of Byzantine society, including the monks. However, the author himself states that this letter is of dubious authenticity. For the citations from this letter, see Messis, "Lorsque la périphérie assiège," 78.
[502] Kaminiates, *The Capture of Thessaloniki,* 121.
[503] This expression is a formulation of Messis. Similarly Christian spaces such as monasteries and

The Byzantine authors construct the identity of the Byzantine man, *homo byzantinus*, based on sexual normativity and exclude the Turks. Finally, one must never overlook the existence of different gender relations between the Greeks and Turks. The Turks, particularly after their conversion to Islam, adopted a certain Islamic code of gender relations. In the medieval Islamic world, where gender segregation was a very common element of social life, homosexual relationships between men were frequent. There is abundant literary evidence about this fact. It seems that these relationships were more tolerated in the Persianate cultural sphere which included the Seljuks. In the 11th century, just before the rise of the Seljuks, the relationship between Maḥmūd of Ghazna and his slave Ayaz was a well-known episode of Persian literature. A Persian Mirror of Princes of the 11th century, the *Kabusname,* written by Kaykāʾūs B. Iskandar, suggests that having homosexual relationships with ghulams are legitimate acts for Muslim statesmen.[504]

Although Islamic law punishes homosexual relationships, called *liwāṭ* in Arabic, meaning sodomy,[505] it seems that these relationships were frequently seen and tolerated in the medieval Islamic world. The fact that such relationships were particularly frequent among the élite circles of the society in Medieval Islam could be compared with Classical Greece. It can be safely said that homosexual relationships were probably less condemned in Muslim Asia Minor, than in the Byzantine territories.

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nunneries were imagined as places of pleasure and licentiousness by medieval Arabic poets. See Wood, "Christians in the Middle East 600-1000: Conquest, Competition and Conversion," 23-51.

[504] The 15th century Anatolian Turkish translation of this book is considered as one of the first important works of Turkish prose. Keykavus, *Kabusname*, tr. Mercümek Ahmed, ed. Orhan Şaik Gökyay, 96.

[505] "Liwāṭ", *Encyclopaedia of Islam* (2nd ed.), vol. 5, 776-779. The authors conclude the article by stating: "It is indeed difficult to measure precisely the extent of the phenomenon, but it should be recognized that the separation of the sexes, which is a particular feature of Islam, has played a significant role in promoting it."

Nevertheless, one cannot equate the homosexual relationships attested among the elite circles of medieval Muslim Anatolia with the alleged sexual aggression of Turks, depicted by the authors mentioned above. Yet the contemporary differences in gender relations between the Byzantine and Muslim societies of the era could have made the attribution of the behavior identified with the 14th and 15th century Turks easier. However, even accepting this difference in gender relations, these accounts of private life could not be read as objective narratives of historical facts. Because as was stated before, the Byzantine historiography is totally based on representation and has a very large fictional component. So these scenes should be perceived mostly as the reflections of several aspects associated with Muslim Arabs on the Turks.

In conclusion, the formation of the narrative of aggressive sexuality could be summarized with the following strata:

i. There is an ancient narrative and belief regarding the Arabs and Islam based on the idea that Islam is interrelated with the cult of Aphrodite/Astarte, and the veneration of this cult is related to their unsatisfied lust and aggressive sexual behavior. It can be said that this cliché was already existing before the Byzantine-Turkish encounter in the 11th century and it had nothing to do with the Turks.

ii. This theme was rarely used for the Turks in the beginning, because particularly in the Byzantine literature of the 11th and 12th centuries regarding the Turks, there is no clear identification between the Turks and the Arabo-Islamic civilization. However, in the process of identification of Turks with the cultural attitudes the Byzantines related to Islam, such narratives started to appear.

iii. Finally, in the 14th and 15th centuries, the increase of narratives regarding sodomy could somewhat reflect a crisis of masculinity triggered by the

invasion. However, this scandalizing theme was instrumentalized as a part of the polemics by the Byzantine authors for the unionist cause. Hence, it may rather be a literary motive than an everyday phenomenon. Another simple but thought-provoking question is how an author like Doukas, who lived far from the Ottoman capital, could obtain objective information on such a private matter as the sultan's sexual life. One can think that this information source could be the Greek network around the palace. But this time, the problem arises of distinguishing between true or false rumors and literary models. This is an interesting but probably unsolvable question.

7.4 Wild customs of the freaks: On the way to being dehumanized

As seen above, some Byzantine narratives about sexual violence almost dehumanize the Turkic peoples, whom they consider barbarians. Other narrative elements of dehumanization could be further found in the Byzantine literature of our timeframe. In ancient Greek ethnography, uncanny realms are always associated with monsters, and this tradition also influenced Byzantine writers. For example the κυνοκέφαλοι of Pakhymeres was already mentioned by Herodotus, Ktesias, and Megasthenes.[506]

The individual persons of Turkic stock were not considered beautiful in the Byzantine sources: moreover, they were considered particularly ugly, even as freaks: Attaleiates describes Chrysoskoulos, Alp Arslan's brother-in-law who escaped to Constantinople, as "young, but almost a pygmy in height and his face was that of a Skythian and ugly because this people are of Skythian ancestry and have inherited their depravity and deformity."[507] Anna Komnene describes, still more strikingly, a

[506] For monsters in Ancient Greek literature see Mitchell, *Monsters in Greek literature: Aberrant Bodies in Ancient Greek Cosmogony, Ethnography, and Biology.*
[507] Attaleiates, *The Histories*, 258-259.

Pecheneg warrior who captured the cousin of Bohemond II of Antiochia: "It was indeed an extraordinary sight - this huge giant, a really monstrous man, the prisoner of a pygmy of a Scythian. (...) In came the Scythian leading this tremendous Kelt on a chain, barely as tall as his waist. Of course, there was an instant outburst of laughter from all. The rest of the counts were committed to prison."[508] In Khoniates' account, the ugliness and bad-looking body of sultan Qiliç Arslān II was remarked: "(he) was not a physically well-proportioned man but maimed in several of the vital parts of his body. His hands were dislocated at the joints, and he had a slight limp and traveled mostly in a litter." Andronikos Komnenos calls the sultan "Koutz-Arslan" (Güç-arslan?) because of his defects. Khoniates still underlines the sultan's energy and cunning, despite his physical problems.[509]

It seems that the Byzantine misrepresentation of the physical appearances of Turks could be explained by a mixture of prejudice and their odd feeling about the Asiatic appearance of the Turkic peoples. This theme is also not new, even in Jordanes' description of Attila (which was based on the narrative of Priscus) there are the same features: "He was short of stature, with a broad chest and a large head; his eyes were small, his beard thin and sprinkled with gray and he had a flat nose and a swarthy complexion, showing the evidence of his origin."[510] So the phantasm of the Asiatic barbarian is an existing *topos* in the Byzantine literary culture.

Another motif related to the dehumanization of the Turks has also been pointed out by Oikonomides, Papageorgiou, and Shliakhtin. Turks are often associated with wild animals, especially wolves. The depiction of a group as being

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[508] Komnene-Reinsch-Kambylis, *Annae Comnenae Alexias*, 402; Komnene-Sewter-Frankopan, *The Alexiad*, 374.
[509] Khoniates-Van Dieten, *Nicetae Khoniatae Historia*, 122; Khoniates-Magoulias, *O City of Byzantium*, 69.
[510] Jordanes, *Gothic History*, 102.

identical to an animal, especially a wild animal, is an indication that they are not considered human. The wolf figure also has a biblical meaning: wild wolves against the flock of Jesus. However, this parallelism may be a reference to the wolf totem among the ancient Turks, as emphasized by Papageorgiou, by the Byzantine authors, and may indicate a specific war cry of the Turks, as stated by Shliakhtin. Moreover, these two elements are most likely related: that is, the war cry of the Turks is a remnant of an ancient pagan ritual.[511]

The depiction of extreme cruelty completes this image. This feature is mostly the reflection of a Skythian trait. According to Attaleiates, the Pechenegs "are loathsome in their diet and the other aspects of their life, and do not abstain from eating foul foods."[512] Furthermore, on the battlefield they commit sadistic acts: when they captured Michael Dokeianos, the commander of the Byzantine army in the campaign against them, they cut him in pieces, slit open his belly, pulled out his guts and replaced them with his hands and feet.[513] As it was already seen, after the battle of Myriokephalon, the Seljuk warriors cut the penis of the fallen Byzantine soldiers. Pakhymeres reports that, before the start of diplomatic relations with the Mongols, the Byzantines thought that they were cannibals or dog-headed (κυνοκέφαλοι).[514]

At this point, I shall revisit an important article by Speros Vryonis Jr. which deals with the possible evidence for human sacrifice among the early Ottoman Turks. In his article, he analyzes several passages in *Contra Mohametem Apologia* of John Kantakouzenos and in the histories of Doukas and Khalkokondyles, arguing that in

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[511] See Oikonomides, "The Turks in the Byzantine Rhetoric of the Twelfth Century," 150; Papageorgiou, "οί δέ λύκοι ώς Πέρσάι: The Image of the "Turks" in the Reign of John II Komnenos (1118-1143)," 150-152; Shliakhtin, *From Huns into Persians: The Projected Identity of the Turks in the Byzantine Rhetoric of Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries*, 192-196.
[512] Attaleiates, *The History*, 52-53.
[513] Attaleiates, *The History*, 60-61.
[514] Pachymeres, *Relations historiques*, vol. 1, 186-187.

the early Ottoman period, there was a tradition of human sacrifice to honor the dead. Khalkokondyles states that after a battle in Isthmus Murād II buys about six hundred slaves and sacrifices them to his father performing as an act of piety.[515] Kaldellis states that this passage is problematic but not impossible.[516] However, in the account of Khalkokondyles, there is another reference to human sacrifice that Vryonis overlooked. When the author deals with the Khataians who seem to be the northeastern neighbors of Tamerlane, he argues that they sacrifice every year the children who reached the age of puberty to honor Artemis.[517]

As I already stated in the introduction, I am not interested in whether the data in these historiographical works are empirically true or false. Human sacrifice was a practice once common in different parts of the world. Since the time of Herodotus, the Skythians and other steppe peoples associated with the human sacrifice.[518] The Turks in Anatolia, perhaps, practiced the custom of human sacrifice in their new homeland, even though centuries had passed since their conversion to Islam. I do not consider myself competent to speculate on this. I am interested in the Byzantine mentality behind it. In my opinion, these passages demonstrate that there is a dehumanizing discourse against the barbarian populations. The discourse about the sexual aggressiveness and physical depictions as the freaks could not be imagined apart of this. However, the arguments like human sacrifice or cannibalism are the ultimate arguments to antagonize and dehumanize an alien population.

7.5 Conclusion

[515] Vryonis Jr, "Evidence of Human Sacrifice Among the Early Ottoman Turks," 145.
[516] Khalkokondyles, *The Histories*, 496.
[517] Khalkokondyles, *The Histories*, 268-269.
[518] Vryonis Jr, "Evidence of Human Sacrifice Among the Early Ottomans Turks," 141.

In this chapter, four features of the representation of the Turks in Byzantine historiographical narratives were discussed: warfare, status of women, sexuality, and cruelty. I have investigated these four elements as features that draw a distinction between the two populations.

The representation of warfare could be both realistic and full of *clichés*. Indeed, there is an ancient tradition of military writing, centering on warfare techniques. However, battlefields were also the places where an encounter between the Byzantines and foreigners happened. Some of the authors witnessed the battles against Turkic invaders, yet the ancient material was also widely used in the warfare narratives about the nomadic peoples.

As we have seen, Turkish women are nearly invisible in Byzantine historiography. The representation of sexuality in Turks has a similar paradoxical point as well. Several Byzantine sources represent both the Turkish commoners and the Ottoman rulers as pederasts. On one hand, this representation is an element of the polemics between the pro-Turkish and anti-Turkish factions within Byzantine society. Nevertheless, the Turks who had a much different culture and lifestyle were probably perceived as perverts by some Byzantines. It is also true that the abovementioned way of representation has its roots in the traditional representation of the Arabs noticed in Byzantine texts. So it can be said that the Byzantines reflected their impressions and ideas about the Arabs on the Turks to some extent.

It can be furthermore said that the literature about Turkish warfare is the most realistic part of the Byzantine accounts on the Turks, yet the accounts about sexuality are probably less realistic. This may be because the former can be considered a reflection of what was actually encountered in the battlefield, and the latter is mostly the reflection of a literary *topos*.

In conclusion, the Byzantine representation of the Turks is an amalgamation of testimony and fiction. It is very difficult to distinguish the so-called historical reality from fiction. The unique way to find a solution is to read these texts according to the alleged aims of the authors.

CHAPTER 8

CONCLUSION

This chapter will conclude our dissertation on the formation of the image of Turkic peoples in Byzantine historiography. My study had several limits, I omitted all non-historiographical works such as sermons, hagiographies, panegyrics, romances, etc., and limited my corpus to historiographical works, with only one exception – the narrative of the captivity of Gregory Palamas. I omitted the historiographical works written in the periphery of the Byzantine world, such as the works of Panaretos or the *Chronicle of the Morea*. Under ideal conditions, a research that aims to deal systematically with the representation of the Turkic peoples in Byzantine literature must contain also these materials.

Also, the time frame of the dissertation spans four centuries. However, the texts of my corpus did not contain these periods in equal detail. For example, the first part of the 13th century was only covered by the work of Akropolites, which, despite its rich material on the Seljuks of Rum, is not a very comprehensive text. The late 14th century poses the same problem as well. So the quality of the sources can determine the outcome of the sources. Furthermore, the passages dealing with the "northern" Turks are often dry and without details, in comparison to the materials on the Seljuks and the Ottomans.

My first important finding is that forming a collective image of a people or an ethnic group is closely related to cultural memory. The difference between the images of Northern (i.e., Skythian) Turks and Eastern (i.e., Persian) Turks was the result of their geographical location, which was the basis of the Byzantine nomenclature of foreign peoples, and of the Aristotelian viewpoint that correlates the

geographical region in which people live with their national character. However, these two points are meaningful only with the presence of cultural memory.

Byzantine literature had no direct relation to anything that could be called "objective reality." The basic concept of Byzantine historiography was representation. Hence, Byzantine historiography can only be understood through this notion. Byzantine authors followed Greek and Roman models and nourished an already created image of the Skythians and Persians. This image was a logos and was not an image that was fulfilled by an ordinary Byzantine man, but it had continuity and an ideological function. This ideological function was the logos' role in alterity. In the Byzantine worldview, Northern and Eastern Turkic peoples were presented as the "others" to the Byzantines.

However, real-life often does not follow the literary *topoi*. Beginning with Michael Attaleiates, Byzantine authors encountered Turkic individuals with different backgrounds. The authors from the frontier region, such as Niketas Khoniates or Doukas, experienced the agony of losing their ancestral lands. A great theologian such as Gregory Palamas experienced life in the Ottoman court as a captive.

Thus, Byzantine authors wrote their personal experiences with the Turks. These narratives were neither without an ideological aim nor were they independent of the earlier literature about Turkic peoples. It can be said that all the Byzantine literature regarding Turkic peoples was a dialogue with the ancient masters. The authors who contributed to this literature were not *hommes de lettres* who made a living by writing; they were bureaucrats or men of politics in its broader sense. Their political aims and views inevitably affected their approach to the Turks. Within the last centuries of Byzantium (c. 1350-1453), the essential axis of Byzantine politics consisted of taking position between the Turks and the Westerners.

A key variable in the representation of the Turks in Byzantine historiography is the role of Islam. Between the 11th and 15th centuries, the weight of the Islamic religion visibly increased in the Byzantine texts, and it shaped the image of the Turks, coinciding with the association of the Turks with the Persian people. Moreover, Islam assembled the contemporary representation of the Turks and the cultural memory of the Arab invasions. The "Skythian" nature of the Turks was forgotten by some, but was eventually brought to light by a skillful ethnographer, Laonikos Khalkokondyles.

After the fall of Constantinople and the destruction of the empire, the ordinary Byzantines continued their lives as the *Rum milleti*, the Christian subjects of the Ottoman Empire. The empire was at an end, and the secular institutions were destroyed. Yet, the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople enabled them to live in a certain sense of unity as a religious community.

Therefore, I can speak of some essential strata in the formation of the image of the Turks in Byzantine texts:

i. The first stratum is the cultural memory of Skythians and Persians. The ancient representation of both nations played a significant role in the formation of the image of the Turks. The genealogy of this representation goes back to the times of Herodotus. The images formed around these two signifiers represented two different levels of antagonism for the Byzantines. The Persians in the east represented the primary antagonism, and the Skythians in the north represented the secondary antagonism.

ii. The second stratum is the cultural memory of the Arabs and the early Muslim invasions. The associations of the Turks with Agarenes and Ismaelites are

iii. typical manifestations of the use of this cultural memory for Turks. The traces of this motive were seen firstly in the *Alexiad* of Anna Komnene.

iv. The third stratum consists of the remnants of the cultural memories of the Byzantine encounters with the "Northern Turks" in the regions of the Danube and possibly Crimea. This cultural memory should be considered as a continuation of the reminiscences of the Huns of Late Antiquity. Since the time of Constantine Porphyrogennetos, some knowledge about these populations existed, and the 11th-century encounters with the Pechenegs added new information to this stratum based on the experiences of the field.

v. The fourth stratum is the Byzantine literature regarding the Seljuk Turks, namely the works of Anna Komnene, John Kinnamos, Niketas Khoniates, and George Akropolites. The literary works produced during the period provide us with details not only on the history of Seljuk-Byzantine relations but also on the internal issues of Seljuks and other Turkish entities of Asia Minor. The heritage of the works of this period is also formative regarding the image of the Turks in Byzantine literature.

vi. The fifth stratum is the corpus regarding the Ottomans. This corpus starts with the work of George Pakhymeres, in which can be seen a nucleus of the Ottoman state, although it was yet another one of the Turkish warbands in Bithynia, and the phenomenon of "the rise of Ottomans" had not yet taken place. Authors such as Pakhymeres and Khalkokondyles represented the last generations of Byzantine historiography, and their representations of the Ottomans were based on personal experience and often biased because of the political aims of their authorship. The Turks were not newcomers anymore; since

the 11th century, there had been a Turco-Greek coexistence in Asia Minor. In addition to the biased attitude of the abovementioned authors, their representation of the Ottomans had traces of earlier strata.

Focusing on these findings about the process of the formation of the image of the Turks, some essential patterns can be observed:

The association of the Turks with Persian traits has several causes. Geographically, the Great Seljuk Sultanate was established in Iran and Khorasan. The Seljuk Turks, thus, took over the historical memory of the Persian Empire because of their geographical location, without being ethnically Persian. The rise of the Seljuks, though, they primarily defeated and annexed the Persian states of the "Iranian intermezzo", ultimately the Abbasids and the Syrian and Iraqi Arab states of the 11th century; so historically the Byzantine authors could have been indicating the rise of the Seljuks as the revival not of the ethnic Persians, but of the "Empire of Persia" over the Arabs. Particularly, the narrative of Skylitzes on the rise of the Seljuks and Komnene's stress on the "sultanate of Khorasan" demonstrate this idea.

The Persianization of Turks meant becoming antagonists of the Byzantine Empire which has two dimensions to underline; the first is the Turkish invasions and crusades after the rise of Islam, particularly after the 11th century. There was a growing sentiment over a religious antagonism between Christianity and Islam, and the religious identity of the Turks in Asia Minor became more visible to the Byzantines. The increased awareness caused the emergence of ideas such as the Komnenian project concerning the evangelization of the Turks. The association of the Turks with notions of the Ismaelitai and Agarenoi became frequent, and the difference between the Skythian and Persian Turks was now a matter of discussion. When the Turks began to be identified with the Persians, they were burdened with

the *topoi* associated with the Persians, such as sexual perversions.

It should also be added that there are always Skythians somewhere. If a group of people loses the socio-cultural aspects that make it "Skythian", a new population could be the new Skythians. The steppe region which is associated with these peoples is a very turbulent and culturally heterogeneous zone. Every time a new group of nomads came from some obscure part of innerAsia, they became the new Skythians, as it was seen with the Pechenegs, Cumans, and Mongols.

The historiography of the 14th century demonstrates the Byzantines' bitter agony of accepting the dominion of the Ottomans and other Turkish emirates. The texts written in this context may be considered narratives that demonstrate their authors' goal more directly, as in the case of Doukas and Khalkokondyles and, additionally, Kritoboulos and Sphrantzes, who focused on the 15th century. The Byzantine representation of the Turks as "the others" transformed into a narrative of self-victimization (in Doukas) and accepting the domination of Turks (in Khalkokondyles).

Finally, the frontier ethos and the martial culture of the Byzantines vanished, and the military ethos of the society gradually decreased after the 13th century. A frontier ethos has a function only in a society where there is a peaceful space in the center and a militarily active zone in the frontier. By the late 13th century, nearly all Byzantine territory became the target of the Turks and other nations, and the Byzantine Empire based itself more and more on mercenaries, until eventually there was no difference between the frontier and the center.

APPENDIX

LE RÉSUMÉ DE THÈSE

INTRODUCTION

Cette thèse a pour sujet la construction et l'évolution de l'image des divers peuples turciques dans la littérature historiographique byzantine. Les auteurs du XIe et XIVe siècle sont étudiés dans cette thèse doctorale. Cette recherche ne s'agit pas d'une étude du corpus de sources chronologiques, cependant elle constitue une enquête axée plutôt sur l'anthropologie, qui se concentre sur les différents thèmes et motifs qu'on retrouve dans les œuvres du corpus.

Cette thèse est composée de huit chapitres. Le premier chapitre est une tentative d'introduction, comprenant une revue détaillée de littérature et une discussion de la méthodologie. Le deuxième chapitre traite du contexte historique. Le troisième chapitre est consacré à la notion de « barbare » et de son usage dans l'historiographie byzantine. Le quatrième chapitre étudie les narratives sur l'origine des Turcs dans la littérature Byzantine. Dans le cinquième chapitre, on a étudié les modalités de coexistence des Turcs dans la société byzantine, et donc les thèmes comme l'assimilation, l'acculturation et l'antagonisme. Le sixième chapitre discute la place des états barbares dans le point de vue byzantin tandis que le septième chapitre discute divers aspects individuels de la représentation des Turcs. Finalement, le dernier chapitre propose une conclusion à notre recherche.

Quand on analyse les quatre siècles étudiés lors de cette recherche (du XIe au XIVe) on peut observer une défense contre la pression des différents pouvoirs par ses frontières. Les peuples turciques font partie éléments des plus importants qui ont

contribué à ce fait. Au milieu du XIe siècle, différentes populations turques apparaissent, presque simultanément, aux frontières impériales. Les tribus nomades des Petchenègues et Uzes sont apparus dans les confins nord-ouest de l'empire, plus précisément dans le bassin de Danube et les Balkans du nord. Dans le même temps, les Seldjoukides ont pris le pouvoir aux Perses. Les Seldjoukides appartiennent à la ligne des Oghuz : Ils sont conquis l'Asie Mineure à partir du dernier quart du XIe siècle et les Seldjoukides de Rum, une branche cadette de la dynastie des Seldjoukides de Perse, ont constitué un sultanat en Anatolie. Donc, à partir de ce point, les conflits et la coexistence avec les Seldjoukides sont devenus les sujets les plus courants dans l'historiographie Byzantine. Au XIIe siècle, les Coumans s'emparent des terres autrefois dominées par les Petchenègues et remplacent ce peuple. Après l'invasion mongole au XIIIe siècle, le sultanat Seldjoukide de Rum devient un état marionnette sous la suzeraineté des Mongols de l'Iran ; et les différents groupes Turcomans forment les émirats, dits beyliks, aux frontières occidentaux du sultanat. Donc, l'émirat Ottoman était un de ces petits émirats, qui à partir du milieu de XIVe siècle a réussi à s'étendre vers les territoires Byzantines en Europe.

Dans cette thèse, on utilise le mot "turcique" comme un terme générique pour toutes les populations contemporaines et historiques parlant des langues turques. Dans la littérature, les langues turques sont divisés en deux catégories essentielles : le turc commun et le turc oghour. Le seul représentant vivant des langues turques oghours est le tchouvache, parlé dans la République Tchouvache de la Fédération de Russie, dans la région de la Volga. Toutes les autres langues turciques vivantes font partie du groupe turc commun. Historiquement, la langue ancienne bulgare est considérée comme une langue turque de la branche oghour. Petchenègue et Couman,

et très probablement Khazar sont considérés comme des langues turques communes. Cependant, plusieurs populations turques historiques de l'Eurasie occidentale pourraient être des locuteurs du turc Oghuric, de sorte que le sprachbund oghour pourrait être gaspillé au début du Moyen Âge.

Le mot « Türk » apparaît comme un terme qui désigne la population fondatrice de Khaganat Türk, sous la dynastie Ashina, centrée sur la Mongolie contemporaine, au VIe siècle. Ce khaganat était un élément important de la politique eurasienne jusqu'au VIIIe siècle, malgré leurs guerres civiles et les tentatives d'assujettissement de la Chine sous la dynastie Tang. Khaganat Türk n'était pas un État ethniquement homogène et tout comme les formations politiques similaires de la région des steppes, c'était une fédération nomade qui contenait des nombreuses populations mongoles, indo-européennes et ouraliennes. La langue soghdienne, qui était autrefois une langue très courante dans les agglomérations urbaines de la région des steppes d'Asie centrale, qui appartient à la branche orientale de la famille des langues iraniennes, était utilisée dans la chancellerie dans le Khaganat Türk, avec l'ancien turc.

L'ethnonyme "Turc" s'est répandu avec la montée de l'Empire Turc dans la région des steppes comme terme commun à toutes les populations nomades. Les géographes musulmans en particulier ont utilisé ce terme avec persistance pour de telles populations, parfois même pour des peuples non turcs comme les Varègues et les Rus. Selon Golden, cet usage est similaire à l'usage de l'ethnonyme scythe par les écrivains byzantins en tant que catégorie générique.

Dans cette thèse on utilisera le mot turc uniquement pour désigner la population turcophone du sultanat de Rum et du futur sultanat ottoman, ainsi que les Turcs individuels d'Asie Mineure et des Balkans. Les habitants turcophones de ces régions

avaient subi un certain processus d'acculturation et d'ethnogenèse qui les distinguait des autres populations turques de la région. Ces Turcs pourraient être considérés comme des "Turcs de Rum" – en utilisant le terme géographique qui s'applique lui-même à la région de l'Asie Mineure.

Les historiens qui sont étudiés dans ce travail sont: Jean Skylitzès, Michel Attaleiatès, Anna Comnéne, Jean Cinnamus, Nicetas Choniatés, Georges Acropolite, Georges Pachymère, Nicéphore Gregoras, Jean Cantacuzène, Grégoire Palamas, Doukas, Laonicos Chalcondyle, Critobule d'Imbros et Georges Sphrantzès. Ces auteurs représentant presque tout le corpus historiographique byzantin, du dernier quartier de XIe siècle jusqu'à milieu du XVe siècle. Ces auteurs sont classifiés dans la thèse suivante selon leur provenance, métier et tendances politiques.

Selon Paolo Odorico, la littérature Byzantine a un fort caractère utilitaire, donc chaque texte doit être lu en regardant l'objectif de l'auteur et l'objectif du mécène qui soutient la composition de l'œuvre et l'audience. Ainsi, toute œuvre historiographique byzantine doit être pris en compte dans son contexte. La représentation est aussi l'un des concepts les plus centraux de cette thèse. La littérature Byzantine ne peut être lue comme un narrative objective d'une réalité, la fiction a toujours une place importante dans ce genre. En historiographie byzantine, toute la narrative est construite autour des représentations et parfois, cette narrative ne reflète pas la réalité. L'altérité est une notion philosophique qui décrit la relation entre soi et l'autre. La différence et la diversité son deux conceptions pour définir le degré d'altérité. Donc, la dichotomie entre la différence et diversité est aussi importante pour nos conceptualisations. La différence de deux objets signifie qu'il y a quelque chose de commun entre les deux, mais diversité indiques qu'ils sont divers, aussi dans un contexte ontologique.

Les Scythes et les Perses sont deux différentes catégories des barbares employées dans la littérature grecque, depuis l'antiquité. L'image de "Scythe" représente les populations nomades qui vivaient dans le nord du monde gréco-romain. Les Scythes historiques étaient une population indo-européenne, mais l'ethnonyme scythe est employé systématiquement pour les populations turco-mongoles d'Eurasie dans la littérature Byzantine. D'autre part, l'ethnonyme perse est aussi employé originairement pour les Perses Achéménides et Sassanides. Mais après la chute de l'Empire Perse, les écrivains byzantins ont continué à utiliser « perse » pour désigner les habitants de la région dans le Moyen Âge tardif ; ce mot (perse) est aussi fréquemment utilisé pour les Turcs d'Orient, c'est-à-dire les Seldjoukides. Il est employé plus rarement pour les Ottomans.

Les altérités "scythes" et "perses" étaient deux types différents d'altérité, et les auteurs byzantins leur ont donné différents niveaux de signification idéologique : ainsi, mon argument est que l'antagonisme entre les Byzantins et les Scythes (qui forme un antagonisme secondaire) se construit surtout sur une différence entre la civilisation et la barbarie, la sédentarité et le nomadisme. En revanche, l'antagonisme byzantin-persan est le reflet d'un enjeu bien plus fondamental : c'est la continuité d'une expérience qui a exercé une très forte influence sur les intellectuels grecs puis sur tout le monde occidental, les guerres médiques (499 avant JC - 449 avant JC). Comme l'a expliqué François Hartog : "Le Barbare, c'est avant tout, plus que tous et pour longtemps le Perse." L'image du Turc dans la littérature byzantine est de manière antagoniste depuis presque le début, car les Turcs sont finalement traités comme des ennemis sur le champ de bataille. Cependant, la nature et le degré de cet antagonisme permettront de comprendre la position des Turcs dans l'historiographie byzantine. De plus, il ne faut jamais oublier que cette différenciation dans

l'antagonisme pourrait également être liée à l'évolution politique et culturelle des politiques turques. Si l'élément islamique dépassait les aspects attribués aux « Scythes » dans l'idéologie de ces régimes politiques dans le processus historique, et, par exemple, si une approche de la guerre à motivation religieuse basée sur un antagonisme antichrétien gagnait en importance, cela conduirait à un changement dans la perception byzantine des Turcs.

LE CONTEXTE HISTORIQUE

Le rival historique de l'Empire Romain et de son continuateur, l'Empire Byzantine, était l'Empire Perse. L'Iran Sassanide et les Romains étaient les adversaires principales jusqu'à la destruction de l'Empire Sassanide par les Arabes Musulmans. La mémoire collective sur l'antagonisme avec les Perses, est un motif très fort dans l'historiographie gréco-romaine. Mais la naissance de l'Islam a changé dramatiquement le vieil ordre du Moyen-Orient. Après la guerre perso-byzantine de 602-628, tous les deux états ont épuisé leurs ressources, donc leurs territoires sont devenus les cibles de l'expansion arabe. Les Arabes ont rapidement conquis tous l'Empire Perse et les provinces Byzantines du sud-est (Syrie, Palestine, Égypte). Donc le pouvoir arabe a remplacé les Sassanides aux yeux des Byzantins. La formation d'un très grand espace de frontière entre les Byzantines et Arabes a causé de la formation d'une région de guerre sporadique entre les deux pouvoirs. Cette fois entre les Byzantines et Arabes un nouvel antagonisme avec une forte dimension religieuse est formé.

Dans la région de frontière entre les Byzantines et Arabes qui s'appelait « thugur » en Arabe, s'est formé une culture particulière et un ethos de frontière, qui

se sont préservés surtout dans les œuvres littéraires dit les “narratives de frontière” comme les épiques de Digenis Akritas et Sayyid Battal Ghazi. Ces narratives sont remarquables dans leur description de la réalité quotidienne et de l’idéologie de guerre. Donc la formation d’une telle frontière bâtit aussi une géographie idéologique, les villes de cette région (Tarse, Melitene, Sozopetra) ont une importance symbolique pour les deux partis.

Les premières guerres arabo-byzantines ont entraîné la domination arabe permanente et l’arabisation et l’islamisation subséquentes des provinces orientales de l’Empire byzantin. Cependant, l’Asie Mineure a résisté à une telle invasion ; la formation d’un espace frontière entre deux puissances a créé à la fois un ethos des deux côtés et un fort antagonisme. La figure arabe (sarrasine/agaréne/ismaélite) s’est substituée à l’archétype du persan comme antagoniste de l’empire byzantin voire de l’identité gréco-romaine. Ainsi, cette période (jusqu’au IXe siècle) a été la période de formation de l’ethos frontalier et de l’antagonisme. Mais dans Xe siècle, l’Empire Byzantine sous la dynastie macédonienne a commencé une offensive vers cette région de frontière. Les Abbassides qui étaient dans un processus de fragmentation, étaient très faibles pour pouvoir résister à expansion Byzantine. Les régions frontalières sont déjà laissées aux dynasties autonomes locales qui sont progressivement annexées par les Byzantines.

Ce processus est continu jusqu’à moitié de XIe siècle. L’Empire Byzantine a aussi annexé les principautés arméniennes aux confins orientales Byzantines. Cette annexion a engendrée une expansion des territoires Byzantines vers l’est, mais avec cela les frontières orientales sont devenues plus vulnérables. Les Seldjoukides d’origine Oghuz ont consolidé leur pouvoir dans la même période. Seldjouk, l’ancêtre de la dynastie Seldjoukide, était un notable dans le Khaganat Khazar. Il a

quitté son pays pour immigrer vers la Transoxiane, où ses descendants ont constitué un rassemblement tribal qui est devenu progressivement le plus grand pouvoir de monde musulman au XIe siècle. Les guerriers sous la direction de Tughrul et Çağrı, qu'étaient les petits-enfants de Seldjouk, ont réussi à contrôler la région de Khorasan. Cet état a facilement occupé le reste des domaines des Ghaznavides, Abbassides et Bouyides et leurs armées commençaient de faire des razzias aux territoires byzantines.

Le tournant dans les relations byzantines-seldjoukides fut la bataille de Manzikert (1071). La défaite Byzantine a entraîné un vide de pouvoir en Asie Mineure. L'absence d'autorité impériale, les révoltes des magnats locaux, les conflits entre les prétendants au trône ont rendu possible l'invasion turque en Anatolie. Dans les deux décennies l'empire a perdu presque tous les territoires anatoliens, à part des côtes et certaines villes fortifiés. Il faut dire que cette invasion n'était pas centralisée et dirigée par les Grands Seldjoukides, elle était généralement accomplie par les activités individuelles de différents individus et groupes qui ne reposaient pas sur une grande stratégie. Donc, au fil des siècles, les Turcs d'Anatolie ont repris la fonction idéologique de leurs anciens ennemis arabes.

Les invasions de peuples nomades aux frontières balkaniques de l'empire ont, à première vue, un impact idéologique moins important, car ces invasions n'ont pas un effet idéologique équivalent à celles de l'Est. Cependant, les invasions par les Bulgares et les Slaves ont eu un fort impact démographique dans les Balkans et ce fait a déclenché plusieurs changements sociopolitiques, mais les discuter dépasse largement le cadre de cette thèse. Pourtant, les différentes vagues d'invasions barbares ont contribué à la fois à faire évoluer l'image des peuples "scythes" et à créer une osmose sociale entre les peuples des steppes et les byzantins. Ce processus

a été décisif pour l'ethnogenèse de plusieurs nations balkaniques, comme les Bulgares modernes.

La géographie idéologique et l'ethos culturel de la région frontalière byzantine-musulmane sont antérieurs à l'arrivée des Turcs Seldjoukides au Proche-Orient. Ainsi, les Turcs n'ont pas créé, mais hérité cet ethos des Arabes. Ce fait démontre la continuité culturelle entre les guerriers arabes du thugur et leurs successeurs turcs. Enfin, l'invasion seldjoukide de l'Anatolie mit fin à la prédominance byzantine des Xe-XIe siècles au Proche-Orient et transféra la frontière byzantine-musulmane au cœur de l'Asie Mineure.

VIEUX MÉMOIRES, NOUVEAUX BARBARES: LES BARBARES TURCIQUES DANS L'IMAGINATION HISTORIOGRAPHIQUE BYZANTINE

Dans la littérature byzantine, le "barbare" est un archétype qui est hérité de la littérature classique. C'est un mot onomatopéique qui désigne les étrangers qui sont distingués par la langue qu'ils parlaient. Dans l'antiquité, la catégorie du "barbare" désigne les gens qui n'apparentent pas à la société gréco-romaine.

Lorsque les Turcs Seldjoukides sont apparus pour la première fois aux frontières orientales de l'empire au milieu du XIe siècle, leur image était indiscernable de tout autre envahisseur nomade qui a créé des troubles à la frontière des Balkans. C'étaient des nomades pastoraux qui appartenaient au genos Hun/Scythe. Ce genos est considéré comme l'exemple le plus représentatif du barbare dans les traditions littéraires classiques et byzantines.

Suite à la christianisation de l'Empire romain, l'ancien modèle gréco-romain est quelque peu modifié, mais l'antagonisme entre "Romains" et "barbares" persiste.

Après la chute de l'Empire romain d'Occident, l'Empire romain d'Orient a continué à survivre en tant que bastion du christianisme et de la culture gréco-romaine. Le projet impérial de Justinien II représentait son ambition de récupérer ses terres perdues à l'ouest, en particulier la péninsule italienne. Cependant, la restauration impériale ne fut qu'un succès de courte durée. Un siècle plus tard, les Byzantins perdirent même leurs provinces orientales, à savoir la Syrie, la Palestine et l'Égypte au profit des Arabes.

L'évangélisation de la société romaine a naturellement affecté les opinions des gens sur ceux qui étaient considérés comme « les autres ».

L'évangélisation des barbares (tels que les Bulgares et les Serbes) et leur situation ultérieure aux yeux des auteurs byzantins sont également problématiques. Ces peuples se sont convertis au christianisme orthodoxe grâce aux missionnaires byzantins, comme Saint-Cyrille et Saint-Méthode. Cependant, ils n'ont pas pu obtenir le statut de peuples civilisés aux yeux des Byzantins. Alors que les dirigeants de ces nations étaient qualifiés de dirigeants "très chrétiens" dans les documents préparés à la chancellerie impériale, les mêmes nations pouvaient apparaître comme une "race barbare" ou une "race corrompue" dans les correspondances privées.

Dans ce cas, la situation des groupes ethniques tels que les Bulgares, les Arméniens et les Valaques mérite une attention particulière. Ces trois groupes ethniques n'ont pas été christianisés en même temps. Les Arméniens étaient l'un des peuples qui ont embrassé la religion chrétienne plus tôt, comme au IVe siècle, avec les Géorgiens, mais ils étaient généralement des chrétiens non chalcédoniens qui avaient leur propre église apostolique arménienne. Cependant, il y a un grand nombre d'Arméniens dans l'élite politique byzantine qui ont adopté la croyance chalcédonienne.

Les Valaques étaient les habitants post-romains socialement marginalisés de la péninsule balkanique qui parlaient une langue d'origine latine et vivaient une vie semi-nomade dans diverses parties des Balkans. Ils étaient chrétiens et malgré leur marginalisation socio-économique, ils étaient des vestiges des habitants de langue latine de l'Empire romain dans la péninsule balkanique. Ainsi, théoriquement, ils pourraient revendiquer l'héritage des "Romanitas" autant que les Grecs byzantins. Cependant, probablement par leur marginalisation sociale, ils étaient encore considérés comme inférieurs et quasi-barbares.

Une expression frappante de cette différence entre les Byzantins et les autres "barbares orthodoxes" se trouve dans le Commentaire de Jean Kanaboutzes à Denys d'Halicarnasse. L'auteur du XVe siècle déclare que les Grecs considéraient les Troyens comme des barbares, bien qu'ils crussent aux mêmes dieux, les Byzantins contemporains considèrent les Bulgares, les Valaques, les Albanais et les Russes comme des barbares ; car la barbarie n'est pas une question de religion, mais de race, de langue, de style de vie et de culture.

Ces ethnonymes pourraient être perçus comme des signifiants (dans le sens inventé et employé par Ferdinand de Saussure) utilisés par les Byzantins pour définir toute ethnie étrangère. La cause de leur divergence avec les noms réels des populations qui les référaient est la différence entre la langue littéraire, dont on pouvait trouver des exemples dans les textes écrits et la langue non écrite. Dans ce contexte, les ouvrages écrits en grec proche du grec vernaculaire peuvent donner quelques idées sur les noms grecs utilisés dans la langue parlée ou encore sur les endonymes de ces populations dans leur propre langue. Un bon exemple d'un tel ouvrage est *De Administrando Imperio*.

La première étape pour comprendre la formation de l'image des Turcs dans la littérature byzantine consiste à classer et à analyser ces ethnonymes :

Les deux catégories chronologiques d'ethnonymes sont celles héritées de l'Antiquité classique et celles apparues plus tardivement. La source la plus importante d'ethnonymes classiques est l'Histoire d'Hérodote. Le Persan, le Scythe, l'Égyptien et l'Indien sont les exemples les plus fréquents des ethnonymes classiques.

Le groupe des ethnonymes postclassiques est formé par les termes qui ont été attestés pour la première fois dans l'Antiquité tardive. Turc, Slave, Goth et Hun pourraient être considérés comme des exemples de cette deuxième catégorie. Enfin, il y avait les ethnonymes contemporains, les mots utilisés du vivant des auteurs byzantins, terme qui était peut-être l'endonyme de ces peuples. Les termes, tels que Petchénègue, Oguz et Turcoman étaient les noms contemporains de ces populations.

Il y avait aussi les ethnonymes qui ne reflétaient pas une appartenance ethnique claire mais une indication géographique. Les mots, tels que Mysoi (utilisé pour les Bulgares) et Triballoi (utilisé pour les Serbes), sont des exemples de tels termes. Ces termes sont essentiellement des dérivés de régions géographiques. Cependant, il serait erroné de dire que ces ethnonymes n'avaient pas un poids sémantique particulier, car il s'agissait des noms des anciennes provinces impériales ; et une telle appellation pourrait légitimer la réincorporation de ces terres dans l'Empire.

Pourtant, une dernière catégorie –et hybride– est celle des ethnonymes composites, qui étaient constitués des deux éléments comme le tauro-scythe, le turco-arménien et le perso-turc. Dans le premier cas, le terme est constitué d'une indication géographique et d'un ethnonyme ; il a été utilisé pour les Tatars de Crimée. L'autre

terme est constitué avec la même formule et il a été utilisé pour décrire les Turcomans d'Akkoyunlu en Anatolie orientale.

Certains de ces ethnonymes sont très révélateurs pour notre objet d'étude. L'ethnonyme "scythe" par exemple – indépendamment des Scythes du temps d'Hérodote, employé pour différentes populations nomades et pastorales d'Eurasie. Ce terme est employé pour de nombreuses populations turciques et slaves, pour les Mongoles et même pour les Russes. Cet ethnonyme fait référence à un mode de vie et à une localisation géographique assez ambiguë où ces populations sont censées vivre.

La mémoire des Huns a également survécu dans la littérature byzantine en tant que stéréotype historiographique. L'ethnonyme "Hun" est apparu à l'antiquité tardive, mais a été utilisé au cours des siècles suivants pour, par exemple, les Turcs, les Hongrois et d'autres peuples des steppes. Comme on peut le voir dans cette thèse, Attaleiatès a également défini les Seldjoukides comme des Huns. Mais une fois qu'ils se sont installés en Iran et en Anatolie et ont entamé une vie sédentaire, l'ethnonyme utilisé pour les Seldjoukides s'est transformé à « persan ». Après la chute de l'empire perse, cet adjectif a été utilisé sur une base géographique, et les Seldjoukides étant appelés par ce nom peuvent également être considérés comme une sorte de translatio imperii. Mais il faut encore noter que les Seldjoukides (même sa branche à Rum) étaient un État persan qui embrassait la culture persane et utilisait le persan comme langue de la cour et de la bureaucratie et qui s'identifiait aux anciens héros perses dans la Shahnama. De plus, ils utilisaient les titres et les symboles de l'ancienne monarchie perse comme instrument de légitimité dynastique. La figure de "ennemi par excellence" persan pourrait aussi régénérer les souvenirs d'un passé lointain.

Dans ce chapitre, on traite aussi la représentation des Mongols dans la littérature byzantine: Les Mongols sont une population nomade qui, jusqu'à leur expansion inattendue au XIIIe siècle, vivait hors des frontières du savoir géographique byzantin. Ainsi, jusqu'au XIIIe siècle, il n'y avait aucune référence aux Mongols dans les sources byzantines. L'invasion mongole de l'Asie occidentale a été l'un des événements clés qui ont déterminé le paysage humain de toute la région, en particulier de l'Asie Mineure. Cela a déclenché de nouvelles vagues de migration turque vers l'Anatolie. Le déclin du sultanat seldjoukide de Rum après la défaite à la bataille de Kösedağ (1243) aux mains des Mongols a également relâché l'autorité du sultanat sur les divers groupes turkmènes des bords sud et ouest de l'Anatolie turco-musulmane et a permis la corrosion corrosive pillages des territoires byzantins par les Turcomans.

Les Mongols sont attestés dans les œuvres d'Acropolite, Pachymère, Gregoras, Cantacuzène, Doukas et Chalcondyle. Dans les deux derniers ouvrages, il y a un matériel très riche sur les affaires militaires et politiques du célèbre chef de guerre mongol Tamerlan.

Dans ces textes, la représentation byzantine des Mongols est loin d'être négative. Dans le récit d'Acropolite, les Mongols n'avaient qu'un rôle marginal. Pachymère, bien qu'il évoque les légendes sur le cannibalisme chez les Mongols, utilise un langage équilibré concernant les Mongols, également en raison du contexte politique du début du XIVe siècle : il écrivait à une époque où l'Empire byzantin cherchait une alliance avec les Mongols, contre les Turcs en Asie Mineure et les Royaumes Serbes et Bulgares dans les Balkans. Doukas ne s'intéresse pas aux Mongols, sauf la campagne anatolienne de Tamerlan qui déclenche l'interrègne ottoman. Enfin, l'intérêt de Chalcondyle pour le monde eurasien contemporain pourrait être

interprété selon deux facteurs. Premièrement, l'auteur prend le modèle historiographique d'Hérodote comme exemple pour ses Histoires. Deuxièmement, le Khanat de Crimée s'est formé en tant qu'État successeur de la Horde d'Or en 1441 car son territoire se composait de la péninsule de Crimée.

Aux yeux des auteurs byzantins, les aspects visibles de l'appartenance religieuse des premiers seldjoukides étaient indiscernables des autres populations turques restées fidèles à leurs croyances ancestrales. Cependant, au fil du temps, le conflit seldjoukide-byzantin a pris une tournure plus religieuse. Ce fait pourrait s'expliquer à la fois par l'évolution idéologique de l'Empire byzantin sous les Comnènes et par une éventuelle auto-identification plus forte des Seldjoukides à l'identité musulmane. À partir du XIVe siècle, avec la montée des Ottomans, le religieux devient aux yeux des auteurs byzantins, l'élément indispensable de l'identité turque.

Enfin, les Seldjoukides avaient une fonction idéologique particulière pour les Byzantins. Depuis leur installation en Anatolie centrale, ils ont joué un double rôle idéologique. Ils se substituaient, tous les deux, à l'ancien ennemi musulman dans les régions frontalières et à l'ancien rival perse de l'empire byzantin dans les siècles précédant l'arrivée de l'islam. Les Ottomans représentent un peu la continuation de cette image. Ils sont encore parfois appelés Persans. Cependant, la relation avec les lettrés byzantins, telle qu'elle peut être comprise à partir de ce que les auteurs ont écrit, suggère une situation complètement nouvelle. Il n'y a plus l'antagonisme de deux anciens rivaux de force à peu près égale, mais un monde révolu a été englouti par un nouvel Empire qui prend la place de l'ancien.

LES RÉCITS BYZANTINES SUR L'ORIGINE DES TURCS

Les narrations *origo gentis* sont les textes qui traitent l'origine d'un peuple. Ces narratives peuvent avoir des éléments historiques ou ils peuvent être totalement fictifs ou légendaires. Les textes origo gentis sont produits depuis l'antiquité classique, mais ils sont progressivement augmentés et diversifié au Haut Moyen-Age, pars que les invasions barbares ont changé la situation démographique de l'Europe et il fallait situer les histoires primordiales de ces nouveaux peuples dans le monde gréco-romain.

Dans cette période, Cassiodore, Jordanes, Widukind et Saxo Grammaticus ont écrit les œuvres pour le but susmentionné. Dans ces narratives c'est possible de voir trois motifs communs:

a) Victoire militaire contre des ennemis puissants

b) La traversée d'une rivière

c) La conversion à une nouvelle religion

Il y a deux récits byzantines d'origo gentis sur les Seldjoukides. La première narration se trouve dans l'histoire de Jean Skylitzés. Le deuxième récit se trouve dans le texte de Michel Attaleiatés.

Jean Skylitzès localise la patrie originale des Seldjoukides au nord du Caucase. Selon Skylitzès les Seldjoukides sont de race hunnique. Après cette introduction, il donne une brève digression sur la fragmentation du pouvoir abbasside et dit que un certain Mouchoumet était le souverain de la Perse et de ses environs. Ce souverain

demandait des soldats par le souverain de Tourkia (probablement les Karakhanides de Transoxiane) et il envoya un groupe des trois mille soldats. L'auteur donne les noms de ces soldats comme Tangrolipex Moukalet. L'auteur mentionne évidemment Tughrul Beg. Après avoir utilisé ces soldats contre ses ennemis sarrasins, il a voulu les envoyer dans leur pays d'origine. Mais les Turcs se rebellent et occupent la Perse. Les troupes Turcs massacrent les perses et les sarrasins, Tughrul devient sultan et partage le pays entre les commandants turcs.

Attaleiates construit un narratif diffèrent sur l'origine des Turcs: il dit que les Turcs sont les Huns Nephtalites. Leur pays origine est séparé du Perse par la rivière Gange. Le chef des Huns Nephtalites était un captif d'origine servile et devient le souverain de Perse, après la mort du "despote" au pouvoir. Ces Huns alors commencent des razzias annuelles aux territoires byzantines et battent les défenseurs romains. Donc, un commandant géorgien nommé Liparites va défendre ces territoires contre eux, mais il perd la guerre et il tombe captif entre les mains des Turcs. L'ethnarque des Turcs, dit sultan dans leur langue, voit le courage de ce commandant et le traite de manière très respectueuse et honorable.

Dans ces narrations il y a des différences intéressantes: Skylitzès localise le pays d'origine des Turcs en Caucase, mais Attaleiates le met dans l'Inde. Skylitzès est beaucoup plus informé sur l'histoire des Turcs tandis que la connaissance d'Attaleiates est beaucoup plus limitée. Skylitzès avait probablement utilisé des fonds orientaux que Attaleiatès ne pouvait pas accéder.

Dans ce chapitre, le deuxième thème étudié concerne les récits d'origine sur les Ottomans. Les premiers Seldjoukides se trouvaient dans les steppes asiatiques, loin des frontières byzantines, mais la formation du beylik ottoman s'est produite dans les régions frontalières de la Bithynie, de sorte que plusieurs passages du développement

des Ottomans ont été réalisés sous les yeux byzantins. Pachymère nous a donné la seule représentation contemporaine des actes d'Osman I, le premier bey des Ottomans. Cependant, son récit concernant Osman pourrait difficilement être qualifié de récit origo gentis. Pachymère le présente comme l'un des chefs persans qui attaquent et dévastent le territoire byzantin. Il s'agit de la première référence au fondateur de la dynastie ottomane dans un texte historiographique connu. Puis l'auteur byzantin raconte la bataille de Bapheus (1302) et dans le chapitre suivant, il compte Osman parmi les chefs qui ont envahi et pillé les parties supérieures de la Bithynie, de la Mysie, de la Phrygie et de la Lydie. Néanmoins, il n'existe aucun récit sur l'origine des Ottomans et l'auteur s'est concentré uniquement sur les faits et gestes militaires des Osman. Doukas est silencieux sur les origines de la dynastie ottomane et ses débuts, mais il transmet une prophétie plutôt étrange sur le parallélisme historique entre deux dynasties, les Ottomans et les Paléologues. Cette divination indique que la fin des dynasties paléologue et ottomane se succédera. Les règnes d'Osman Ier et de Michel VIII étaient presque contemporains. Le règne de Michel VIII a pris fin, lorsque le règne d'Osman I a commencé. Ainsi, les Paléologues cesseront d'exister d'abord, puis les Ottomans tomberont. On peut dire que les Chalcondyle, contemporain de Doukas sont plus intéressés par l'histoire des débuts des Ottomans. Cet intérêt donne également des informations sur les milieux ottomans dont Chalcondyle était proche. L'auteur, qui inclut des digressions ethnographiques dans son travail, fait quatre affirmations sur l'origine des Ottomans (plus précisément, des Turcs). La première d'entre elles est que l'origine des Turcs est les Parthes. Chalcondyle ne s'attarde pas trop sur cette affirmation. Le deuxième récit raconte que le pays d'origine des Turcs était une grande ville de Perse appelée Tourke. Une troisième histoire origo gentis prétend que les Turcs sont venus

d'Arabie et étaient des descendants du Calife Omar. Cette affirmation coïncide avec le chroniqueur égyptien Ibn Hajar et l'écrivain ottoman Enveri, qui ont déclaré que la patrie d'origine des Ottomans était l'Hedjaz. Le dernier récit est que les Turcs sont d'origine scythe. L'auteur est également le plus enclin à cette explication: Chalcondyle dit que, comme preuve de l'origine scythe des Turcs, les Scythes (c'est-à-dire les tribus turco-mongoles d'Eurasie) et les Turcs d'Anatolie avaient des coutumes et des traditions similaires et parlaient des langues qui étaient proches les uns des autres.

Donc les Seldjoukides ont d'abord formé leur sultanat en Transoxiane et en Perse, dans les territoires éloignés des frontières de l'Empire byzantin. Leur histoire avant leurs premières razzias dans l'oikoumene byzantin pourrait être parvenue aux auteurs byzantins sous forme de rumeurs venues d'Orient, probablement via des interlocuteurs arméniens ou syriaques. Cependant, le beylik ottoman se développe sous les yeux des Byzantins. Cette différence explique l'absence de récits byzantins origo gentis sur les Ottomans au XIVe siècle.

Une autre sous-section de ce chapitre est consacrée aux origines sociales des Turcs et à leur rapport à l'esclavage. Il sera résumé comment ce sujet a été perçu par les écrivains byzantins dans le cadre de leurs propres visions du monde. L'esclavage, sous ses diverses formes, est l'une des institutions les plus répandues du monde médiéval. Cette institution existe aussi bien à Byzance que dans le monde islamique. Bien que généralement, les captifs de guerre constituent la plus grande source de ces esclaves, ce fait n'était pas vrai dans le cas de l'Empire byzantin et du califat abbasside qui se faisaient constamment la guerre, car entre les deux entités il y avait souvent des traités d'échanges de prisonniers de guerre. Ainsi, dans l'Empire byzantin, il semble qu'une partie importante des esclaves sont venus du nord de la

mer Noire, c'est-à-dire ils sont des esclaves scythes qui pouvaient être de souche slave ou turque. Ces esclaves étaient également employés dans l'agriculture dans les parties rurales de l'Empire.

En grec byzantin, le terme générique désignant l'esclave est δουλος. Mais après le XIe siècle, un nouveau terme apparaît : σκλαυος. Ce terme existait en grec byzantin en tant qu'ethnonyme depuis le VI siècle, il signifie le slave. Ce mot est passé à la langue arabe sous le nom de saqaliba, en tant que terme désignant l'origine slave ou généralement les esclaves blancs. Le mot a pris le sens d'esclave, probablement avec l'impact de la langue arabe. Ce mot σκλαυος est à l'origine des mots pour esclave dans certaines langues européennes : comme slave en anglais, esclave en français et schiavo en italien.

Ainsi, dans la société byzantine, il y avait une présence visible des esclaves qui venaient généralement du monde communément appelé Scythie. Cette Scythie pouvait parfois coïncider avec la patrie slave. D'autre part, l'esclavage dans le monde islamique est également très important. Il existe un corpus scientifique volumineux sur les différents aspects de l'esclavage dans les sociétés islamiques médiévales. L'esclavage était un statut socio-économique déterminé par la religion et dans les sociétés islamiques médiévales. İl existe trois types d'esclavage : l'esclavage domestique (qui comprend les concubines), le travail des champs et l'esclavage militaire. Les trois catégories étaient fréquentes. Mais ce dernier est un phénomène particulièrement identifié aux sociétés musulmanes médiévales. Ici, je peux proposer une généralisation de ces processus à la formation de l'État ; le modèle tribal est prédominant dans les territoires où le mode de vie nomade et les populations turques étaient dominants et le modèle "mamelouk" était dominant là où le mode de vie sédentaire et la population non turque étaient dominants. Pourtant, on pourrait dire

que l'État seldjoukide représentait un hybride de ces deux modèles. Bien que les fondateurs de l'État n'étaient pas des esclaves, ils font partie de l'élite nomade de la société à laquelle ils appartenaient, ils ont fondé le noyau de leur État au Khorasan, un pays où la majorité des habitants étaient persans. Ils ont donc adopté les coutumes de l'administration de l'État persan; ils avaient une chancellerie persane, adoptaient les traditions bureaucratiques des premiers États musulmans d'Iran et organisaient des troupes de ghulam, c'est-à-dire les guerriers esclaves. Cependant, ces faits ont déclenché des tensions entre l'élite dirigeante et les Turcomans nomades, ainsi qu'entre les membres de la dynastie au pouvoir où les princes prétendants se sont alliés aux Turcomans ou à d'autres bandes de guerre nomades contre leur autorité centrale. Ce fait est un événement fondateur de la politique d'immigration aux marges du Grand Sultanat seldjoukide qui a également déclenché la formation du Sultanat de Rum.

Dans ce chapitre, j'ai traité certaines des questions relatives à la représentation des origines mythiques, historiques ou sociales des élites dirigeantes et des populations ottomanes et seldjoukides. J'ai surtout évoqué les récits origo gentis sur les Seldjoukides et les Ottomans, car ces récits avaient deux fonctions importantes : Premièrement, ces récits situent de nouvelles populations dans la géographie humaine d'un monde déjà connu. Ils les ont donc rendus familiers aux Byzantins. Deuxièmement, l'explication de l'origine introduit ces peuples dans un récit historiographique général qui inclut des événements ultérieurs liés à ces populations.

La pensée aristotélicienne est très importante pour comprendre le monde intellectuel byzantin ; comme cela a été souligné ci-dessus, ses textes ont été lus dans les cercles intellectuels byzantins et ont eu une forte influence sur la vision du monde byzantine. La pensée aristotélicienne définit les gens dans certaines sociétés du

monde comme sujets à l'esclavage. La question de l'esclavage est également liée à l'explication des origines susmentionnée. L'existence d'une origine servile ou toute référence à celle-ci démontre un manque de valeur attaché à un individu dans la vision du monde byzantine. L'image du Scythe est étroitement liée à cette approche. Il y a une abondance d'esclaves "scythes" dans l'Empire byzantin et ces dirigeants pourraient être potentiellement considérés comme contradictoires avec les concepts byzantins de noblesse.

Dans le dernier sous-chapitre, j'ai tenté de compléter la question de l'esclavage par une analyse de la succession des souverains et des conflits dynastiques dans les entités turques tels qu'ils étaient reflétés par les textes byzantins. Je pensais que ces récits étaient importants pour comprendre comment les Byzantins percevaient ces entités, leur structure interne et les sources de légitimité.

LA PLACE DES ÉTATS BARBARES DANS LA VİSİON DU MONDE BYZANTINE

Les autres entités entourant l'Empire byzantin étaient considérées comme hiérarchiquement inférieures par les Byzantins. Le titre "empereur" (βασιλεύς) était employé exclusivement pour définir l'empereur byzantin, car l'empire byzantin n'était pas considéré comme un successeur de l'empire romain mais comme l'empire-même. Contrairement à l'historiographie moderne, les historiens byzantins croient en une continuité ininterrompue entre les anciens Romains et les Byzantins médiévaux.

Dans le centre de la vue du monde byzantine, il y avait l'empereur. Ce titre était utilisé exclusivement pour les dirigeants byzantins jusqu'à la fin de l'ère byzantine,

son exception la plus importante étant les shahs persans. Mais le même titre était également revendiqué par les rois bulgares et serbes qui cherchaient à étendre leur autorité dans les Balkans et ce défi était perçu comme une menace par la classe dirigeante byzantine. Pourtant, ces souverains utilisaient des titres tels que “basileus des Romains ou des Bulgares” ou “basileus des Romains et des Serbes” dans leur titulature officielle. Au XIIe siècle, l’exclusivité byzantine sur le titre impérial a été assouplie; les auteurs comme Nicetas Choniatés et George Acropolite ont employé ce titre pour les dirigeants chrétiens étrangers. Ce changement était étroitement lié à l’évolution de l’idée impériale à travers les siècles. L’empereur byzantin ne représentait pas la même autorité qu’il représentait aux XIe et XIVe siècles. L’éthos politique de la dynastie Comnène était très différent de celui des Paléologues.

Donc les rois barbares étaient perçus comme des inférieurs dans la vision du monde byzantine. Ainsi, un dirigeant turc, comme tout dirigeant d’origine non byzantine, ne peut jamais être égal à un empereur et a toujours une réputation inférieure à celle de l’empereur byzantin.

C’est une tendance courante dans les sources byzantines de voir la formation des principautés turques comme l’activité d’un groupe de bandits. La formation des beyliks en Asie Mineure est un thème que l’on retrouve dans quatre byzantins textes historiographiques. (Pachymère, Gregoras, Doukas, Chalcondyle) Cet événement est simultané à la dissolution de l’État seldjoukide. Germiyan et Karaman ont été les premiers beyliks formés, pendant la vacance du pouvoir à cause du déclin des Seldjoukides. Contrairement aux derniers beyliks, les deux semblent avoir une origine tribale. Karaman, le fondateur éponyme du beylik, a été décrit comme un brigand dans plusieurs sources seldjoukides. Germiyan dont la capitale est Kütahya (Kotayeion) en Phrygie, apparaît comme suzerain des autres beyliks de l’ouest de

l'Asie Mineure à l'origine. Pachymère, témoin de l'époque, raconte l'invasion de l'Anatolie occidentale par les beys turcs, comme une simple activité de bandits. Son récit est assez détaillé et contient des informations absentes des autres sources. Dans son récit, il est possible de voir l'entrée en scène des seigneurs de guerre turcs, non pas en tant que fondateurs de dynasties, mais en tant que simples seigneurs de guerre. Cependant, dans les sources ultérieures Pachymère et Gregoras, il y a un récit selon lequel cet événement a eu lieu en tant que coalition, dans le cadre d'un certain plan stratégique. Sans aucun doute, ce récit est une légende historiographique. Toujours dans le récit de Doukas, le message est clair : il n'y a pas de stratégie ou d'alliance commune entre ces dirigeants turcs ; chaque chef a agi de manière indépendante et a occupé d'anciennes régions byzantines. Parmi ces quatre écrivains, Doukas était celui qui connaissait le mieux l'histoire récente de l'Anatolie occidentale. Il semble donc qu'à partir des travaux de Gregoras, les auteurs byzantins aient créé un tel récit téléologique pour expliquer l'expansion rapide des beyliks anatoliens. XIIIe siècle est un siècle des beyliks en Asie Mineur. Mais les Ottomans occupent ces émirats, à commencer par l'annexion de Karasi en Mysie en 1345-1346. L'expansion ottomane vers l'Anatolie musulmane a duré un siècle et demi. Au début du XVIe siècle, les Ottomans ont intégré les émirats de Dulkadir et de Ramazan, les derniers beyliks turkmènes indépendants du sud de l'Asie Mineure et ils ont consolidé leur domination dans toute la région.

Dans les sociétés occidentales médiévales, il existait plusieurs règles de succession, comme la primogéniture, qui serve à rendre prévisible l'ordre de succession. Mais, dans les États turcs et musulmans, il n'y avait pas de règle de succession universellement acceptée. Dans les États turcs, il y avait un autre aspect important, à savoir que tout le territoire de l'État était considéré comme le domaine

de la famille royale. Ainsi, comme le territoire appartient à la dynastie, tout membre de la dynastie peut revendiquer le trône. Ce type de succession sans règles strictes pourrait être appelé “succession ouverte”. Dans ce système, le prince qui parvient à gagner le soutien des différentes factions de la cour et à éliminer ses frères peut hériter du trône. On pourrait supposer que dans de telles situations, les frères aînés sont légèrement plus avantagés en raison de leur expérience et éventuellement de réseaux plus importants, mais le résultat n’est pas toujours en leur faveur.

Ci-dessous, j’ai donné un aperçu de l’évolution de cette succession, en tenant compte des usurpateurs et des rébellions dans les États turcs, du point de vue d’auteurs byzantins qui connaissaient des crises similaires au sein de leur société dans laquelle les crises de succession n’étaient pas rares.

Depuis la première apparition des Seldjoukides dans l’œuvre de Skylitzès, les auteurs byzantins étaient conscients de cette notion d’état patriarcal des Turcs, et ils ont remarqué l’absence de consensus commun dans leurs familles royales et leurs intrigues sans fin pour obtenir une plus grande partie de l’autorité royale. Dans le récit de Skylitzès, lorsque le prince seldjoukide Ibrahim Yinal a pris Liparites en captivité et l’a amené à la ville de Reyy où son frère Tughrul régnait en tant que sultan, mais il est devenu jaloux de son l’exploit de son frère et cherche un prétexte pour se débarrasser de son frère. Peu de temps après, Ibrahim Yinal remarque les complots du sultan contre lui et se rebelle contre son autorité avec son neveu Koutloumous. Cependant, Tughrul bat les insurgés et Ibrahim Yinal est exécuté. Par la suite, l’autre dissident s’échappe avec 600 hommes et avec Melech, le fils d’Ibrahim Yinal.

Synopsis Historion de Skylitzès se termine avec la fin du règne de Michel VI en 1057, mais il est possible de suivre les séquelles du prince rebelle seldjoukide

Koutloumous dans d'autres sources. Selon les sources seldjoukides, il fut tué en 1063 par son cousin Alp Arslan après une autre rébellion.

Dans l'histoire d' Attaleiatès, il est possible de voir d'autres nobles seldjoukides dissidents. Chyrsoskoulos, le beau-frère du sultan Alp Arslan qui arrive à la cour byzantine, est l'un d'entre eux. Les deux "nobles de Perse" qui "avaient hérité le nom de Koutloumous de leur père" rencontrent Nicéphore Botaniates à Nicée. Les deux frères qui établirent un noyau d'État dans la ville - ce qui deviendra plus tard le Sultanat de Roum - fléchirent le genou devant Nicéphore Botaniates. Comme il a déjà été mentionné, l'auteur insiste sur leur lignée royale seldjoukide. L'auteur appelle cette branche cadette de la dynastie "Κουτουλμουσίοι" et note que leurs commandants appellent ces princes "αμηράδασ" et "σελαριοι" en langue turque. Ces titres sont évidemment "amir" et "salar", les titres militaires d'origine arabe et persane.

Les deux frères étaient Süleyman et Mansur qui ont immigré vers l'ouest après l'exécution de leur père avec un groupe de nomades turkmènes, appelés collectivement Nawakiya. Süleyman est ensuite devenu le fondateur de la branche anatolienne des Seldjoukides. C'est possible de suivre les exploits ultérieurs de Süleyman dans L'Alexiade. Anna Komnene, bien qu'elle présente les opérations de Süleyman en Asie Mineure comme la carrière d'un chef de guerre, note soigneusement qu'il portait le titre d'émir au début, puis promu sultanat. Elle semble consciente des divisions internes au sein du Grand Empire seldjoukide et de leurs luttes dynastiques. Anna dresse le portrait de Toutuche, le sultan seldjoukide de Syrie, comme un homme ambitieux et arrogant qui a tué Süleyman au combat et a cherché à s'emparer du trône seldjoukide.

Cinnamus est resté silencieux sur les relations interfamiliales au sein de la dynastie seldjoukide, mais comme cela a été démontré dans le cas des chefs turkmènes, il considérait le sultan de Rum comme un dirigeant de la fédération de tribus qui partageait son autorité avec les chefs turkmènes.

L'approche de Choniatès vis-à-vis des relations dynastiques du sultanat de Rum était également similaire à celle de Cinnamus, mais il était clairement plus informé des réalités politiques au sein du sultanat de Rum. Comme indiqué dans le chapitre précédent, l'allégeance islamique des Seldjoukides a été légèrement plus soulignée dans l'Histoire des Choniatès. Donc, étant le frère de Michel Choniatès qui était l'archevêque d'Athènes, Nicetas Choniatès semble plus intéressé par les questions religieuses.

Le texte de Pachymère montre l'image ultime d'un sultan seldjoukide aux yeux d'un intellectuel byzantin : le sultan d'un domaine bien défini (la Perse) qui a disparu et est devenu un vassal des Mongols, un homme fatigué et buveur qui intrigue sans succès pour reprendre son trône, et qui était à la différence d'autres brigands persans en Asie Mineure qui évolueront plus tard les fondateurs des beyliks anatoliens. Malgré le ton pitoyable de la représentation du sultan en exil, sa vitalité et son ressentiment qui l'amenèrent finalement à trahir l'empereur Michel VIII, furent démontrés de manière vivante dans l'œuvre de Pachymère. Après son complot de 1264 où il provoqua l'attaque des Bulgares et des Tatars sur le sol byzantin, le Sultan fut livré aux Tatars qui le transférèrent en Crimée.

Dans le texte de Gregoras, il y a quelques observations sur la succession dans l'État ottoman : tandis que l'auteur mentionne le prince Halil, fils d'Orhan, il fait quelques déclarations sur le mécanisme. Selon Gregoras, Halil a hérité de la région autour de la baie de Nicomédie de son père et y régnait de manière autonome. Cette

description est conforme à la pratique ottomane de l'apanage. L'auteur mentionne ensuite la mort du prince Süleyman (né en 1357) et déclare qu'il était le fils aîné et le successeur. Cependant, le prince Halil était le fils d'Orhan et de Theodora Cantacuzène et fiancé à l'une des filles de Jean V Paléologue. Ainsi, sa descendance impériale byzantine et l'alliance de mariage avec les Paléologues font de lui un successeur plus adéquat au trône ottoman pour les Byzantins. l'auteur mentionne que l'empereur voulait qu'Orhan proclame Halil comme héritier officiel; Néanmoins, l'Histoire de Gregoras s'achève avant la mort d'Orhan et on ne pouvait y lire la conclusion de ce projet infructueux.

LES MECHANISMES DE COEXISTENCE: ANTAGONISME, ACCULTURATION, ASSIMILATION

Ce chapitre traite l'entrée des Turcs dans la société byzantine. Pendant les quatre siècles de coexistence des états Turcs et l'Empire Byzantine, un nombre remarquable de Turcs passèrent du côté byzantin. La première manière de l'entrée des Turcs au Byzance, c'est emploi impérial des bandes de mercenaires turciques. Ce fait n'est pas commencé au 11ème siècle. Les peuples turciques ont offert un service mercenaire occasionnel à l'Empire byzantin au moins depuis le 6ème siècle. Comme on l'a déjà vu dans le troisième chapitre, il y avait des mercenaires hunniques dans l'armée de Justinien II. Au cours des siècles suivants, les Byzantins employèrent des Avars, des Bulgares et des Khazars pour divers services militaires. Au 11ème siècle, les guerriers Petchénègues étaient attestés parmi les rangs byzantins, ils ont servi fidèlement même à la bataille de Manzikert. Il est possible de supposer que cette «main-d'œuvre barbare» dépendait des nomades turcs qui occupaient les différentes

parties de la péninsule balkanique tout au long des premiers siècles médiévaux. Cette utilisation de la main-d'œuvre étrangère dans les guerres assura le service des "populations barbares" à l'Empire byzantin.

Une variation de cette manière de l'usage des peuples Turciques c'était l'utilisation des différents éléments des sociétés nomades comme allies contre les autres éléments de leur société. Un exemple de cette politique c'était la diplomatie byzantine en regard la société petchénègue en XIe siècle. Comme on a déjà dit, les tribus Petchénègues occupaient les territoires Byzantines dans le bassin de Danube. Deux chefs petchénègues rivalisaient pour diriger leur société: Tyrach et Kegenes (ou Kegen).

Dans un sous-chapitre on discute deux individus d'origine turcique qui sont abordés dans la société byzantine: Tzachas et Syrgiannes Paléologue Philantropene. Tzachas était un captif de guerre turc qui dans la situation chaotique d'Asie Mineur après la bataille de Mantzikert, il a réussi de former un principauté dans la cote Égéenne d'Anatolie. Il était honoré avec le titre "protonobellisimos" par l'empereur Nicephore III, mais après Alexis I Comnene devenu l'empereur, il devient un rebelle et forme une principauté séparatiste sur les rives de la mer Égée.

Alexis I le décrit comme un usurpateur qui veut gagner le trône byzantin dans une lettre qu'il a écrit au sultan Kılıçarslan I qui est aussi le gendre de Tzachas. L'empereur byzantin convainc Kılıçarslan que Çaka désire non seulement le trône byzantin, mais aussi le trône du sultanat de Rum. En conclusion, le sultan tue son beau-père. Tzachas, malgré il vient de société Seldjoukide, il cherchait son futur politique dans l'Empire byzantin.

Un deuxième exemple similaire a Tzachas, c'est Syrgiannes Paléologue Philantropene qui est le fils d'un noble coumane et une fille de la dynastie

paléologue. Il est connu comme un commandant compétent qui est aussi devenu le gouverneur de Macédoine. Il est devenu un des principaux acteurs de guerre civile byzantine 1321-1328. D'abord partisan du Andronic III, en pleine guerre civile, il devient un partisan du Andronic II. Il a été promu *mégas doux* à cause de sa trahison envers sa faction. Il a eu une carrière politique mouvementée qui se termine par son évasion à la cour de Stefan Dusan, le roi de Serbie. Ayant le soutien du roi serbe, Syrgiannes déclenche une rébellion aux frontières occidentales de l'Empire byzantin, mais avant que sa rébellion ne devienne une menace pour l'empire; il a été assassiné par Sphrantzes Paléologue.

À mon avis, il y a des parallèles dans la vie politique et militaire de ces deux individus.Tous deux ont développé un projet d'État séparatiste basé sur certains éléments turciques avec lesquels ils ont coopéré. Tzachas et Syrgiannes Paléologue avaient des liens au sein de l'élite dirigeante byzantine et ils voulaient réaliser ce projet politique sur les terres byzantines. Finalement, tous deux n'ont pas réussi à réaliser le projet politique qu'ils visaient.

L'adoption du christianisme orthodoxe était une condition indispensable pour l'intégration dans la société byzantine, comme on l'a vu dans le cas de Tzachas. Les dignités et titres impériaux étaient réservés exclusivement aux chrétiens orthodoxes. La position unique et dominante du christianisme orthodoxe en tant que caractéristique centrale de l'identité byzantine est au-dessus de toute discussion. Byzance était la Nouvelle Jérusalem, combien elle ressemble à la Nouvelle Rome. Comme il a déjà été discuté ci-dessus, il faut distinguer la conversion du christianisme du paganisme ou de l'islam. Parce que si le paganisme est l'ennemi naturel du christianisme et que l'islam était essentiellement considéré comme une version du paganisme par certains théologiens byzantins, cette dualité est légèrement

différente pour les musulmans. Comme cela a déjà été mentionné, la majorité des théologiens byzantins considéraient l'islam comme une hérésie. L'islam, comme les autres religions abrahamiques, donne une forte image de soi aux croyants et rend plus difficile la conversion des autres religions. En outre, la conversion de l'islam au christianisme est une question qui mérite un examen attentif. Dans la jurisprudence islamique, la conversion d'un musulman à une autre religion est interdite et c'est un crime puni de mort. On sait que dans les pays musulmans de notre époque, comme l'Égypte sous les Mamelouks, de telles punitions ont eu lieu. Cependant, dans les régions frontalières où les identités étaient fluides, comme les frontières, de telles punitions étaient probablement moins fréquentes. De plus, la punition d'un tel acte ne pourrait être possible que par une décision d'un tribunal musulman. Donc, si l'apostasie a lieu après que la personne est devenue un sujet d'un État chrétien où, au moment de l'apostasie, il n'y a aucune autorité pour la punir, elle reste impunie et possible.

Au Xe siècle, lors des grandes heures de la reconquête byzantine vers la Syrie et la Mésopotamie, l'Empire réussit à annexer des villes telles qu'Edesse et Antioche qui abritaient une importante population musulmane. Dans les sources de cette période, on trouve plusieurs références au sort des habitants arabo-musulmans de la région. Certains de ces habitants ont quitté leurs villes et ont immigré vers les principales terres musulmanes. Par contre, d'autres habitants sont restés dans cette région. En 941, quelque 10 000 membres de la tribu arabe Banu Habib se sont convertis au christianisme avec leurs familles et leurs esclaves. Au cours des années suivantes, ils ont été suivis par d'autres membres de la tribu.

Le règne d'Alexis Ier Comnène marque un tournant dans l'histoire religieuse de Byzance. Alexis I qui annonce un édit réformateur en 1107, forme plusieurs

nouveaux offices cléricaux concernant l'enseignement religieux. Parmi les postes qu'il crée, il y a un bureau appelé *didaskalon ton ethnon* (l'enseignant des gentiles). Ces didaskaloï furent employés pour convertir les barbares. Bien sûr, ces efforts n'ont pas commencé avec cet édit, depuis des siècles Empire byzantin a un programme missionnaire déterminé ciblant les populations païennes, qui ont réussi à convertir les Bulgares et les Russes parmi les autres populations.

Une pratique traditionnelle chez les Turcs d'Asie Mineure mérite également l'attention : les Turcs, malgré leur adhésion à l'Islam, baptisaient leurs enfants. Ce fait semble lié à une croyance populaire selon laquelle les enfants non baptisés pourraient être possédés par des démons ou « puer comme des chiens ». Les mères de certains de ces enfants étaient chrétiennes orthodoxes. Bien qu'ils aient été baptisés, l'identité religieuse de ces enfants est très douteuse. Le baptême est devenu une partie des pratiques de leur religion populaire et ne reflète pas leur dévotion au christianisme.

Cependant, à l'époque comnénienne, un nouveau zèle pour l'activité missionnaire a émergé. Inutile de dire que l'invasion seldjoukide de l'Asie Mineure et les croisades ont été deux événements importants qui ont déclenché ce zèle renommé. Anna Komnene déclare dans Alexiad - concluant la générosité de son père envers les officiers seldjoukides Elkhanes et Skaliaros qui ont contribué à leur conversion au christianisme - "Il (Alexis I) était un excellent enseignant de notre doctrine, avec la foi et le message d'un apôtre, désireux de se convertir à Christ non seulement les Scythes nomades mais aussi toute la Perse et tous les barbares qui habitent en Égypte ou en Libye et adorent Mahomet dans leurs manières extraordinaires." La cible de cette activité était –sans aucun dout – les populations turques d'Asie Mineure et de Perse.

Cette activité atteint son apogée sous le règne de Manuel I Comnène qui s'intéressait personnellement beaucoup aux questions religieuses. Dans les oraisons prononcées par les ecclésiastiques pendant son règne et même dans son épitaphe prononcée par Eustathios de Thessalonique, il y avait des références évidentes à cet effort missionnaire et à l'évangélisation des Perses.

Ce projet a également déclenché une discussion théologique à Constantinople. Déjà lors de la visite de Qiliç Arslān II à Constantinople (1162), son entrée à Sainte-Sophie comme "infidèle" dérangea les hauts gradés du clergé, dont le patriarche Luc Chrysoberges. Au cours du règne de Manuel I Comnène, pour faciliter l'évangélisation des Seldjoukides, il proposa un petit changement dans le catéchisme orthodoxe, la suppression de l'anathème contre le Dieu de Mahomet. Cet anathème dit que le Dieu de Mahomet c'est un Dieu qu'il "n'a jamais engendré, n'a pas été engendré non plus" et était un solide (holosphyros). Manuel I a dû penser que sans une telle formule il pourrait laisser entendre que les musulmans et les chrétiens croient au même Dieu et que la conversion des Turcs au christianisme pourrait être plus facile. Dans le but de lever l'anathème, il convoqua le saint synode avec les membres du clergé. Comme on pouvait s'y attendre, cette proposition fait le mécontentement du patriarche Thedosios Boradiotes et d'autres hiérarques. Comme il a été décrit par Khoniatès, "ils ont tous secoué la tête en signe de refus, même à contrecœur pour écouter ses propositions, qu'ils considéraient comme calomnieuses et portant atteinte à la plus vraie gloire de Dieu". Selon ces hiérarques, le Dieu de Mahomet n'était pas un Dieu, mais "un Dieu solide fabriqué par le trompeur et démoniaque Mahomet". L'un des champions de l'opposition à la formule de Manuel I était Eustathe de Thessalonique. Avec une opposition aussi rigide du clergé, la

tension entre l'empereur et le clergé a augmenté. Cependant, à la fin, le synode a trouvé une résolution : ils ont conclu un accord pour retirer l'anathème du Dieu de Mahomet du catéchisme et y mettre l'anathème de Mahomet et ses enseignements.

Néanmoins, pendant la controverse et la crise de ce saint synode, Manuel était déjà très malade. Il mourut en 1180 et pendant les règnes brefs et tumultueux des derniers empereurs Comnéne et Ange, le zèle missionnaire s'éteignit. L'arrêt possible de l'évangélisation des Turcs doit cependant être lié à la conjoncture politique, non aux formules théologiques. L'Empire byzantin, dans les conditions difficiles qu'il rencontra après 1185, ne pouvait plus soutenir un programme religieux/politique aussi ambitieux.

Dans les siècles suivants, en particulier la période 1261-1453 qui a été poétiquement appelée "une agonie prolongée des restes de l'Empire" par Gibb, la dimension des conversions était radicalement changée. Cependant, dans une période très tardive comme les années 1410, il est possible de voir un prince ottoman à Constantinople, le prince Yusuf qui est le fils du sultan Bāyazīd I accepte le saint baptême. Cette conversion est ignorée dans les sources ottomanes et elle n'est attestée que dans l'Histoire des Doukas et des Chalcondyle.

En conclusion, la conversion au christianisme orthodoxe apparaît comme la condition de la plus haute importance pour s'intégrer dans la société byzantine. Nos sources acceptent généralement les chrétiens nouvellement convertis comme de bons Romains, bien qu'elles ne cessent de souligner leur provenance "barbare", elles n'ont pas une approche d'exclusion à leur égard. Seule leur approche devient négative dans les cas d'ambiguïté confessionnelle, comme dans le cas de Kaykāʾūs II et de ses fils. Ce fait doit être considéré peut-être avec le phénomène des Crypto-musulmans, à la périphérie de la société byzantine.

Comme il a été mentionné précédemment, les ambiguïtés et les conversions spontanées en masse sont des caractéristiques typiques des régions frontalières. La fréquence des conversions dans une région où coexistent différentes cultures et religions pourrait expliquer la présence des croyances syncrétiques et des "hétérodoxies". Le credo paulicien était aussi le fruit de la même atmosphère frontalière de la rencontre et de la coexistence du christianisme et de l'islam. Cependant, lorsque ce credo a été transféré dans les Balkans à la suite du système impérial des transferts de population, il peut trouver une puissante interaction avec les Petchénègue récemment christianisés. Ces nouveaux chrétiens ont soutenu la rébellion paulicienne de Lekas en Bulgarie avec beaucoup d'enthousiasme. Dans la littérature religieuse et hagiographique, on trouve d'autres exemples de coexistence et d'interaction entre les religions dans les zones frontalières. Mais les détails de ces processus restent en dehors de mon objectif.

Entre les catégories des Grecs et des Turcs, il existe des identités hybrides de Mixobarbaroi (μιξοβάρβαροι) et de Turcopoles (Τουρκόπουλοι). Les termes Turcopole et Mixobarbaros sont des termes quasi-ethniques utilisés dans l'historiographie byzantine pour désigner les demi-barbares.

Turcopole signifie "fils de Turc". Ce terme était généralement expliqué comme la progéniture des unions d'hommes turcs et de femmes grecques, de plus, il était principalement utilisé pour décrire les contingents militaires d'origine turque dans l'armée byzantine. On peut supposer que les bandes de guerre turques qui vivaient en Asie Mineure vers le XIe siècle pourraient être considérées comme le prototype des contingents turcopoles. Leurs chefs, comme Elkhanes dans Alexiad, pourraient faire défection à Byzance et ces contingents (qui étaient autrefois des gangs d'hommes libres vivant par l'épée) pourraient faire partie de l'armée byzantine.

Au XIIe siècle, les unités Turcopole apparaissent également dans les armées croisées. Les croisés ont d'abord rencontré ces guerriers dans les rangs des armées byzantines. En 1101, il y avait 500 turcopoles dans l'armée de Raymond Saint-Gilles. Ces guerriers ont été présentés en cadeau par Alexis Komnenos au noble franc. Anna Komnene parle du destin de ce contingent turc, sans utiliser le terme Turcopole : une grande partie de ces soldats ont été massacrés en passant la province d'Armenikon. Le commandant des Turcopoles était un homme appelé Tzitas (Τζιτασ) qui était probablement un Turc.

Ces forces sont organisées de manière autonome, sous la direction d'un Turcopolier qui commande les Turcs. Néanmoins, au cours des décennies suivantes, les États croisés ont commencé à recruter leurs propres forces turcopoles au Levant. Ils servaient généralement comme unités de cavalerie légère. Cependant, la majorité des Turcopoles dans les forces des croisés n'étaient pas turques mais d'origine arabe (musulmane ou chrétienne). Bien que les guerriers d'origine musulmane se soient généralement convertis au christianisme, il existe des exemples plus rares qui démontrent la présence de musulmans dans les armées croisées. Enfin, ces Turcopoles du Levant ne semblent pas avoir une identité ethnique distincte et ce sont essentiellement des guerriers indigènes combattant dans les armées croisées. D'autre part, il faut remarquer qu'il y avait aussi des troupes indigènes "non-turcopoles" combattant pour les croisés.

Bien que son usage vernaculaire soit certain, comme il a été démontré par son passage au latin comme emprunt au grec ; le terme Turcopole n'est attesté dans les sources byzantines qu'au XIVe siècle : il fut d'abord utilisé par Georges Pachymère. Cependant, son usage comme patronyme est attesté dès le XIe siècle : il existe un certain Sergios le Turcopole attesté en 1082.

Mixobarbaros était généralement traduit par semi-barbare, mais cette traduction ne révèle pas le sens nuancé du mot. Contrairement au terme Turcopole qui semble apparaître dans le dernier quart du XIe siècle, mixobarbaros est un terme plus ancien. Elle est attestée dans les textes grecs depuis l'Antiquité. Alexander Kazhdan, dans son article de l'Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium, cite Hésychios d'Alexandrie (c. VIe siècle) en déclarant "les hommes qui n'étaient ni Hellènes, ni barbares, mais avaient les qualités des deux" . Cette citation pourrait être un point de départ : les termes "mixobarbaros" et "tourkopoulos" avaient le sens de mélange ethnique. Comme on l'a vu précédemment, Michel Attaleiates employait ce terme pour désigner les populations de la frontière danubienne. À la fin du Moyen Âge, ce terme est utilisé avec une référence particulière à cette région. Hélene Ahrweiler explique ce fait ainsi : "Le terme Μιξοβάρβαροι fait référence à des enjeux culturels, et est utilisé pour ceux qui ont filtré sur le Danube et dont le mode de vie nomade interagissait avec les traditions sédentaires. Cependant, les termes Μιξέλληνες et Μιξοβάρβαροι utilisés par les auteurs byzantins des XIe et XIIe siècles doivent être étudiés en relation avec la pratique des mariages mixtes dans cette région, qui était habitée par des groupes nomades christianisés".

Les mariages interconfessionnels semblent être courants à la fin du Moyen Âge en Asie Mineure. Cependant, la grande majorité de ces unions doivent se faire entre hommes musulmans et femmes chrétiennes car la loi musulmane interdit strictement les mariages entre femmes musulmanes et hommes chrétiens. Cependant, il existe des exemples en Asie Mineure où ces restrictions ont été enfreintes ; Abu'l Fida, le géographe arabe du XIVe siècle déclare que dans la ville de Melitene, les femmes musulmanes épousent des hommes chrétiens De plus, il semble que dans les mariages interconfessionnels –du moins certains–, les filles pourraient être

considérées comme appartenant à la religion de leur mère ou au moins libres de choisir leur identité religieuse.

Il existe d'autres termes similaires utilisés pour désigner des situations spécifiques : par exemple, le terme Gasmuloi (Γασμουλοι) est employé pour les Byzantins latinisés ou la progéniture de mariages gréco-latins (principalement italiens). Semblable à Turcopole, les Gasmuloi n'étaient pas seulement une dénomination ethnique, mais cela impliquait des contingents militaires qui étaient employés à la fois dans l'armée de terre et dans la marine, principalement au XIVe siècle.

Parmi ces termes, la Turcopole était le terme qui traduisait un caractère ethnique plus marqué. Il a toujours été utilisé pour les mercenaires turcs de l'Est, ceux qui semblent apparentés aux Seldjoukides.

Idéalement, l'intégration réussie des populations turques dans la société byzantine pourrait s'apparenter à l'intégration des Slaves dans les Balkans aux VIIIe et IXe siècles. Ces Turcs doivent avoir été évangélisés et ne doivent pas avoir conservé une structure politique autonome. Ils ne doivent donc pas avoir d'archontes ou d'ethnarques. Les séquelles de Petchénègue, Coumans et Oghuz dans les Balkans pourraient être considérées comme une intégration réussie. Après leur assujettissement aux autorités byzantines, ils ont continué à exister en tant que communautés rurales, la plupart avec une identité ethnique distincte, mais ils ont perdu leur vitalité politique. Ils seront assimilés dans les siècles suivants, principalement par les Bulgares et les Grecs de la région. Il convient également de noter qui les établissements ruraux, tels que ceux où Petchénègue et Coumans se sont installés dans les Balkans, constituaient de petites unités sociales probablement aux influences culturelles du centre byzantin. Au milieu du XIVe siècle, John Vatatzes a

donné des terres arables aux soldats Couman en Asie Mineure et ces soldats y ont formé des colonies militaires. Une telle colonisation militaire est une ancienne coutume de l'administration romaine depuis l'Antiquité. La formation de telles colonies militaires était avantageuse à la fois pour l'État et les «étrangers» pour plusieurs raisons. Selon Mark Bartusis, de telles colonies pourraient répondre aux besoins sociaux des Coumans (et d'autres peuples tels que les Tzakones) et les rendre plus faciles à administrer. De plus, ils y préservaient aussi leur organisation sociale.

Dans ce chapitre, les schémas essentiels de l'entrée des Turcs dans le service byzantin, le potentiel d'acculturation et d'assimilation de Byzance et la possibilité d'intégration ont été discutés. Je vais résumer mes conclusions ainsi :

1. L'entrée de différents groupes ou individus appartenant aux peuples turciques dans le service byzantin est un phénomène fréquent dans les XIe et XIIe siècles. Il doit être considéré comme un continuum de relations traditionnelles entre l'Empire byzantin et les populations nomades turques dans le passé. Les individus d'origines sociales différentes, à la fois des sociétés seldjoukide et péchenègue, sont entrés au service impérial.

2. Dès le début, le monde byzantin représentait "une vie meilleure" pour les Turcs. La première expansion turque en Asie occidentale n'était pas motivée par le zèle religieux ou un projet politique bien défini, mais le désir des seigneurs de la guerre de piller ou de s'emparer de nouveaux territoires dans une terre relativement civilisée et prospère, mais chaotique. Bien que l'armée seldjoukide ait vaincu les Byzantins à Manzikert, Alp Arslan n'a pas demandé de territoires en Asie Mineure à l'exception de trois châteaux dans la région frontalière. De plus, la grande stratégie des Seldjoukides pour l'expansion vers l'ouest était la réunification de l'oikoumene musulman qui était divisé en différents califats et sultanats depuis le début de la

période abbasside. Ils ne cherchent pas l'annexion de l'Asie Mineure byzantine, mais ils visaient à vaincre les Fatimides d'Égypte et à envahir la Palestine fatimide et peut-être l'Égypte. La campagne d'Atsiz en Syrie et en Palestine et sa prise de la ville de Jérusalem (1073) aux Fatimides témoignent de ce projet. Ainsi, l'invasion de l'Asie Mineure par les Turcs a été en grande partie un événement centrifuge et spontané réalisé par des bandes de guerre indépendantes.

3. A l'époque Comnène, un nouveau projet impérial est lancé : la conversion des Turcs (et d'autres peuples musulmans de l'Est) et la formation d'un nouveau modèle de supériorité politique sans nécessairement la domination militaire. Manuel Ier Comnène s'est particulièrement consacré à ce projet. Cependant, ce projet se termina par un échec, non seulement parce que le temps des troubles commença dans les années 1180 et plus tard la prise de contrôle latine de Constantinople en 1204, mais aussi à cause de la réticence des autorités religieuses de Byzance à assouplir les dogmes théologiques du christianisme orthodoxe. Cette réticence ne s'expliquait pas seulement par une approche fanatique d'une adhésion abstraite aux fondements religieux, mais aussi par le manque de volonté d'inclusion de ces nouveaux venus dans leur société.

4. L'entrée des Turcs dans le service byzantin a chuté en grande partie après le milieu du XIVe siècle. Ce fait pourrait s'expliquer par le déclin de l'Empire byzantin en tant que centre politique et spirituel et son manque de pouvoir pour attirer de nouvelles populations étrangères. En utilisant les mots de Charles M. Brand, je peux dire que Byzance a perdu son "pouvoir d'attirer et d'absorber." Pendant ce temps, les Ottomans ont commencé à s'étendre dans les territoires centraux Empire Byzantin. La controverse hésychaste et la guerre civile byzantine (1341-1347) ont encore contribué à la dissolution socio-politique de Byzance.

LES AUTRES ASPECTS DE LA REPRÉSENTATION DES TURCS

Dans ce chapitre, on discute les autres aspects de la représentation des Turcs: la guerre, les femmes, les comportements sexuels et la violence extrême. Les Byzantins ont rencontré les Turcs, premièrement dans les champs de bataille. La littérature militaire byzantine est important, du point de vue ethnographique, pour les peuples étrangers. Donc, dans les manuels de guerres Byzantines, il y a des riches matériaux en regard de l'image des Turcs. Dans le manuel de guerre attribué à l'empereur Maurice, Strategikon, les Turcs (le Khaganat Türk) sont présentés comme une des nations scythes. Selon l'auteur, les Turcs sont une nation peuplée et indépendante, ils combattent avec l'armure, épées, arcs et lances. Ces gens réussissent à la guerre mais sont moralement faibles. Ils peuvent être trompés par des cadeaux et rompre leurs vœux.

Le même narratif sur les Turcs est employé aussi dans le Taktika, attribué à Leo IVe. Une caractéristique intéressante de ce texte est le suivant : l'auteur utilise l'ancien récit et parle des Turcs, mais cependant il s'agit des Hongrois. Il y a aussi les manuels militaires plus tardifs comme De Velitatione qui est attribué à Nicéphore Phocas et un autre Taktika attribué à Nicéphore Ouranos, mais dans ces œuvres les digressions ethnographiques concernant les Turcs sont plus rares. Donc, la représentation byzantine de la guerre turque reflète la perception byzantine du caractère national des Turcs. Ils étaient représentés comme des gens infidèles, traîtres, sauvages, rusés, trompeurs, mais indépendants. Leur élément original dans la guerre était le faux retrait. Cette tactique était également conforme au "caractère national" des Turcs, car elle représentait selon les textes byzantins, l'infidélité générale et le manque de moralité des Turcs. De plus, les armées turques étaient

représentées comme les armées d'archers à cheval jusqu'au XIVe siècle, mais à mesure que la guerre turque évoluait, les auteurs ultérieurs avaient renoncé à répéter cette description habituelle.

Dans la littérature byzantine, il y a très peu des références aux femmes turques. En fait, cela est compréhensible, car dans cette littérature il y a très peu de références aux femmes étrangères en général. Dans ce cas, la ségrégation spatiale des hommes et des femmes, qui est courante dans les sociétés musulmanes, peut également jouer un rôle. Mais les Turcs du Moyen Âge, même après qu'ils soient devenus musulmans, ne peuvent être considérés comme des sociétés dans lesquelles ces règles islamiques ont été appliquées strictement. Avant l'Islam, lorsque les Turcs étaient encore un peuple païen, il n'il n'y avait pas de tels tabous dans le domaine de la vie des femmes et des hommes dans la société. Le carnet de voyage d'Ibn Fadlan le montre clairement. L'évolution après l'islamisation est également restée relative. On voit que les femmes de la classe supérieure jouaient un rôle plus important dans la vie publique à l'époque seldjoukide que dans les États musulmans contemporains.

Finalement, on peut supposer qu'il y a un certain changement dans le statut des femmes turques après la conversion à l'İslam. Les Turcs ont progressivement adopté les normes sociales des sociétés musulmanes qui avaient institutionnalisé la ségrégation des sexes, l'obéissance aux hommes et la pudeur vestimentaire. Ces normes sociales de la société islamique limitaient la vie publique des femmes. Néanmoins, ce changement a été progressif et n'a pas affecté certaines couches de la société, en particulier celles qui ont continué le mode de vie nomade de leurs ancêtres. La représentation des femmes guerrières dans les récits épiques turcs au Moyen Âge démontre également que l'ethos ancien a vécu parmi les Turcs pendant très longtemps. Même dans le sultanat seldjoukide d'Iran où la culture musulmane

persane a été progressivement adoptée par la dynastie au pouvoir, les femmes de cour étaient actives dans la vie publique. Dans les textes étudiés, on voit un certain nombre des femmes turques, elles ne sont généralement pas nommées. Si l'on considère l'abondance de références à des femmes turques médiévales dans les chroniques persanes et syriaques, les représentations vivantes de femmes turques de la classe supérieure dans les hagiographies, et les ambitieux projets de mécénat des femmes nobles seldjoukides, ce fait est contradictoire. Donc ce fait peut-être expliqué par le manque d'intérêt des auteurs byzantins.

Un élément significatif de l'image barbare est son manque de modération dans divers aspects de la vie. Le concept de modération est étroitement lié aux populations civilisées, et les barbares sont notoirement intempérants dans la vie. Ainsi, le comportement sexuel est un aspect de la vie quotidienne dans lequel la modération et l'intempérance pourraient jouer un rôle distinctif entre le civilisé et le barbare. Depuis Hérodote, la représentation de la sexualité barbare est à la fois la démonstration de l'étrangeté et de l'infériorité par rapport à la civilisée.

Cependant, il est nécessaire de contextualiser cette séparation à une époque où la sexualité était perçue différemment de nos normes contemporaines, formées principalement au XIXe siècle, en particulier à l'époque victorienne. L'Histoire de la Sexualité (1976) de Michel Foucault a lancé une vague de discussions sur la question de savoir si les éléments apparemment extrêmes de la sexualité étaient réprimés ou non. Dans ce sous-chapitre, je traiterai de l'attribution aux Turcs du comportement sexuel des auteurs byzantins, qu'ils jugent pervers ou déviant. En effet, les Turcs ont été identifiés avec de tels comportements dans certains textes byzantins ultérieurs.

L'homosexualité, ou plutôt la sodomie, est associée aux Turcs dans les sources byzantines. Ces pratiques attribuées aux Turcs sont en fait une répétition de certaines

de leurs accusations contre les Arabes, bien plus anciennes et plus courantes dans la littérature byzantine. Comme l'identité musulmane des Turcs est devenue évidente au fil des siècles, ces accusations ont également été utilisées contre eux. Ces références se multiplient au XIVe siècle et la question de la sodomie devient l'objet de polémiques même théologiques. Le milieu du XIVe siècle, en particulier, est une période de troubles idéologiques dans le monde byzantin en déclin. L'apparition du mouvement de l'hésychasme et les réactions contre lui, les guerres civiles byzantines et la fragmentation pro-turque et pro-latine de la société byzantine démontrent clairement une profonde crise idéologique. Nicéphore Gregoras, qui était un fervent partisan de la faction unioniste pro-latine, accuse son rival Gregory Palamas d'avoir été impliqué dans la sodomie avec des Turcs alors qu'il était devenu captif d'eux. Malgré le théologien hésychaste qui était tombé en captivité en 1354, après l'apogée de la controverse de l'hésychasme, l'inquiétude dans la société était toujours présent. Comme l'a exprimé Charis Messis, les accusations de sodomie visaient généralement les membres de la faction pro-turque de la société byzantine tardive. Dans ce contexte, les accusations de sodomie présumée ont contribué à dénigrer les personnes qui soutenaient des groupes pro-turcs ou anti-latins.

Gregoras, qui décrit Palamas comme un partisan de l'impiété, raconte ce qui est arrivé à son adversaire de manière obscène : Palamas est capturé par des pirates et conduit au fils aîné du satrape Hyrcanos (Orhan). Là, il est moqué, dépouillé de ses vêtements, fouetté et violé. Il est difficile de comprendre si le récit de Gregoras sur Palamas était entièrement imaginé ou bien construit sur une rumeur à Constantinople. On pourrait supposer que ces récits établissent une dichotomie entre les Grecs chrétiens et les musulmans, considérant que les valeurs chrétiennes telles que la chasteté et la vertu sont les normes, et que les barbares ont tendance à être des

pervers. De plus, on peut conclure qu'il existe une corrélation entre la violence martiale et la violence sexuelle puisque les deux semblent être l'expression d'une masculinité incontrôlable et d'une barbarie indomptée selon les Byzantins. Par conséquent, l'invasion turque ne vise pas seulement l'espace de vie des Byzantins, mais constitue également une menace pour leur corps.

La déshumanisation est un autre aspect frappant de la représentation byzantine des Turcs. Il y a des récits dans l'historiographie byzantine qui mettent l'accent sur la laideur physique, disent que la nourriture que les Turcs mangent n'est pas propre et comestible, et qui attribuent un comportement sadique à ce peuple, surtout pendant la guerre. De plus, ils les accusent même de sacrifice humain. Les références susmentionnées à la sodomie doivent être comprises aussi comme un aspect de cette représentation qui dépeint les Turcs comme des monstres aux limites de l'humanité.

Comme nous l'avons déjà mentionné dans l'introduction, notre objectif n'st pas de savoir si les données de ces travaux historiographiques sont empiriquement vraies ou fausses. Le sacrifice humain était autrefois une pratique courante dans différentes parties du monde. Depuis l'époque d'Hérodote, les Scythes et d'autres peuples des steppes étaient associés au sacrifice humain. Les Turcs d'Anatolie pratiquaient peut-être la coutume du sacrifice humain, dans leur nouvelle patrie, même si des siècles se sont écoulés depuis leur conversion à l'islam. On ne spéculera pas ci-dessus. Dans cette thèse on s'intéresse plutôt à la mentalité byzantine qui se cache derrière ces recits. Ces passages démontrent qu'il y a un discours déshumanisant contre les populations barbares. Le discours sur l'agressivité sexuelle et les représentations physiques en tant que monstres ne pouvait être imaginé en dehors de cela. Cependant, les arguments comme le sacrifice humain ou le cannibalisme sont les arguments ultimes pour contrarier et déshumaniser une population étrangère.

La représentation de la guerre pouvait être à la fois réaliste et bourrée de clichés. En effet, il existe une ancienne tradition d'écriture militaire, centrée sur les techniques de guerre. Cependant, les champs de bataille étaient aussi les lieux où se produisait une rencontre entre les Byzantins et les étrangers. Certains des auteurs ont été témoins des batailles contre les envahisseurs turcs, mais le matériel ancien est également largement utilisé dans les récits de guerre sur les peuples nomades. Comme il a déjà été mentionné, les femmes turques sont presque invisibles dans l'historiographie byzantine. La représentation de la sexualité chez les Turcs a également un point paradoxal similaire. Plusieurs sources byzantines représentent à la fois les roturiers turcs et les dirigeants ottomans comme des pédérastes. D'une part, cette représentation est un élément de la polémique entre les factions pro-turques et anti-turques dans la société byzantine. Néanmoins, les Turcs qui avaient une culture et un mode de vie très différents étaient probablement perçus comme des pervers par certains Byzantins. Il est également vrai que le mode de représentation mentionné ci-dessus trouve ses racines dans la représentation traditionnelle des Arabes relevée dans les textes byzantins. On peut donc dire que les Byzantins reflétaient dans une certaine mesure leurs impressions et leurs idées à propos des Arabes sur les Turcs. On peut, en outre, dire que la littérature sur la guerre turque est la partie la plus réaliste des récits byzantins sur les Turcs, mais les récits sur la sexualité sont probablement moins réalistes. Car le premier peut être considéré comme le reflet de ce que l'on rencontre réellement sur le champ de bataille et le second est surtout le reflet d'un topos littéraire.

En conclusion, la représentation byzantine des Turcs est un amalgame de témoignage et de fiction. Il est très difficile de distinguer la soi-disant réalité

historique de la fiction. L'unique façon de trouver une solution est de lire ces textes en fonction des prétendues visées des auteurs.

CONCLUSION

Dans cette section de conclusion, je résume mes découvertes. Ma première découverte importante est que la formation d'une image collective d'un peuple ou d'un groupe ethnique est étroitement liée à la mémoire culturelle. La différence entre les images des Turcs du Nord (c'est-à-dire les Scythes) et des Turcs orientaux (c'est-à-dire les Persans) résultait de la situation géographique, qui était à la base de la nomenclature byzantine des peuples étrangers, et du point de vue aristotélicien qui corrèle la région géographique dans laquelle les gens vivent avec leur caractère national. Cependant, ces deux points n'ont de sens qu'avec la présence de la mémoire culturelle.

La littérature byzantine n'avait aucun rapport direct avec ce que l'on pourrait appeler la "réalité objective". Le concept de base de l'historiographie byzantine était la représentation. L'historiographie byzantine ne peut donc être comprise qu'à travers cette notion. Les auteurs byzantins suivaient les modèles grecs et romains et nourrissaient une image déjà créée des Scythes ou des Perses. Cette image était un logos et n'était pas une image remplie par un homme byzantin ordinaire, mais elle avait une continuité et une fonction idéologique. Cette fonction idéologique était le rôle du logos dans l'altérité. Dans la vision du monde byzantine, les peuples turciques du nord et de l'est étaient présentés comme les autres aux Byzantins.

Cependant, la vie réelle ne suit souvent pas les topoï littéraires ; à commencer par Michael Attaleiates, les auteurs byzantins ont rencontré des individus turcs

d’horizons différents. Les auteurs de la région frontalière, tels que Nicetas Khoniates ou Doukas, ont connu l’agonie de perdre leurs terres ancestrales. Un grand théologien tel que Grégoire Palamas a vécu la vie à la cour ottomane en tant que captif.

Ainsi, les auteurs byzantins ont écrit leurs expériences personnelles avec les Turcs. Ces récits n’étaient ni sans but idéologique ni indépendants de la littérature antérieure sur les peuples turciques. On peut dire que toute la littérature byzantine concernant les peuples turciques était un dialogue avec les anciens maîtres. Les auteurs qui ont contribué à cette littérature n’étaient pas des hommes de lettres vivant de l’écriture ; ils étaient des bureaucrates ou des hommes politiques au sens large. Leurs objectifs et opinions politiques ont inévitablement affecté leur approche des Turcs. Au cours des derniers siècles de Byzance (c. 1350-1453), l’axe essentiel de la politique byzantine consistait à prendre position entre les Turcs et les Occidentaux. Ainsi, à cette époque, toute la vie politique byzantine prend sens selon cet axe.

Il existe une variable clé dans la représentation des Turcs dans l’historiographie byzantine - le rôle de l’islam. Entre le XIe et le XVe siècle, le poids de la religion musulmane s’est visiblement accru dans les textes byzantins, et il a façonné l’image des Turcs, coïncidant avec l’association des Turcs avec le peuple persan. De plus, l’Islam a réuni la représentation contemporaine des Turcs et la mémoire culturelle des invasions arabes. La nature "scythe" des Turcs a été oubliée par certains, mais elle a été soulignée par un ethnographe-historien comme Chalcondyle.

Je peux expliquer la formation de l’image des Turcs dans les textes byzantins dans cinq strates:

1. La première strate est la mémoire culturelle des Scythes et des Perses. L'ancienne représentation des deux nations a joué un rôle important dans la formation de l'image des Turcs. La généalogie de cette représentation remonte à l'époque d'Hérodote. Les images formées autour de ces deux signifiants représentaient deux niveaux différents d'antagonisme pour les Byzantins. Les Perses à l'est représentaient l'antagonisme primaire, et les Scythes au nord représentaient l'antagonisme secondaire.

2. La deuxième strate est la mémoire culturelle des Arabes et la première invasion musulmane. Les associations des Turcs avec les Agarénes et les Ismaélites sont des manifestations typiques de l'utilisation de cette mémoire culturelle pour les Turcs. Les traces de ce motif ont été vues d'abord dans l'Alexiade.

3. La troisième strate est constituée des vestiges de la mémoire culturelle des rencontres byzantines avec les "Turcs du Nord" dans les régions du Danube et peut-être de la Crimée. Cette mémoire culturelle doit être considérée comme une continuation des réminiscences des Huns de l'Antiquité tardive. Depuis l'époque de Constantine Porphyrogenitus, certaines connaissances sur ces populations existaient, et les rencontres du XIe siècle avec les Petchénègues ont ajouté de nouvelles informations à cette strate basées sur les expériences de terrain.

4. La quatrième strate est la littérature byzantine concernant les Turcs seldjoukides, à savoir les œuvres d'Anna Comnène, Jean Cinnamus, Nicetas Choniates et George Acropolite. Les œuvres littéraires produites au cours de la période nous fournissent des détails non seulement sur l'histoire des relations entre

les seldjoukides et les byzantines, mais aussi sur les problèmes internes des Seldjoukides et d'autres entités turques d'Asie Mineure. L'héritage des œuvres de cette période est également formateur quant à l'image des Turcs dans la littérature byzantine.

5. La cinquième strate est le corpus concernant les Ottomans. Ce corpus commence par l'œuvre de Georges Pachymère, dans laquelle on peut voir un noyau de l'État ottoman, même s'il s'agissait encore d'une autre des bandes de guerre turques en Bithynie, et le phénomène de "la montée des Ottomans" n'avait pas encore eu lieu. . Des auteurs tels que Pachymère et Chalcondyle représentaient les dernières générations de l'historiographie byzantine, et leurs représentations des Ottomans étaient basées sur une expérience personnelle et souvent biaisées en raison des objectifs politiques de leur paternité. Les Turcs n'étaient plus des nouveaux venus ; depuis le XIe siècle, il y avait eu une coexistence turco-grecque en Asie Mineure. Outre l'attitude biaisée des auteurs susmentionnés, leur représentation des Ottomans avait des traces de strates antérieures.

En se concentrant sur ces découvertes sur le processus de formation de l'image des Turcs, on pourrait trouver quelques modèles essentiels :

- L'association des Turcs aux traits persans a plusieurs sources : géographiquement, le Grand Sultanat seldjoukide s'est formé en Iran et au Khorasan. Dès lors, les Turcs seldjoukides se sont emparés de la mémoire historique de l'Empire perse, du fait de leur situation géographique, sans être ethniquement persans.

La persanisation des Turcs signifiait devenir antagonistes a l'Empire byzantin, ce qui a deux dimensions à souligner : le premier est les invasions turques et les

croisades après la montée de l'islam - en particulier après le XIe siècle. Il y avait un sentiment croissant sur un antagonisme religieux entre le christianisme et l'islam, et l'identité religieuse des Turcs en Asie Mineure est devenue plus visible pour les Byzantins. La prise de conscience accrue a provoqué l'émergence d'idées telles que le projet Comnène concernant l'évangélisation des Turcs. L'association des Turcs avec les notions d'Ismaelitai et d'Agarenoi est devenue fréquente, et la différence entre les Turcs scythes et persans était maintenant un sujet de discussion. Lorsque les Turcs ont commencé à être identifiés aux Perses, ils ont été accablés par les topoï associés aux Perses, comme les perversions sexuelles.

Il faut aussi ajouter qu'il y a toujours des Scythes quelque part. Si un groupe de personnes perd les aspects socioculturels qui le rendent "scythe", une nouvelle population pourrait devenir les nouveaux Scythes. La région steppique associée à ces peuples est une zone très turbulente et culturellement hétérogène. Chaque fois, un nouveau groupe de nomades venu d'une partie obscure de l'Asie intérieure pouvait devenir les nouveaux Scythes, comme on l'a vu dans le cas des Pechenegs, Coumans et Mongols.

L'historiographie du XIVe siècle démontre l'amère agonie des Byzantins d'accepter la domination des Ottomans et d'autres émirats turcs. Les textes écrits dans ce contexte pourraient être considérés comme des récits qui démontrent plus directement le but de leurs auteurs, comme dans le cas de Doukas et Chalcondyle, car ils se concentraient au XVe siècle. La représentation byzantine des Turcs comme "les autres" s'est transformée en un récit d'auto-victimisation (dans l'œuvre de Doukas) et d'acceptation de la domination des Turcs (dans l'œuvre de Chalcondyle).

Enfin, l'ethos frontalier et la culture martiale des Byzantins ont disparu, et l'ethos militaire de la société a progressivement diminué après le XIIIe siècle. Un ethos

frontalier n’a de fonction que dans une société où il y a un espace pacifique au centre et une zone militairement active à la frontière. À la fin du XIIIe siècle, presque tout le territoire byzantin est devenu la cible des Turcs et d’autres nations, et l’Empire Byzantin s’est de plus en plus basé sur des mercenaires jusqu’à ce qu’il n’y ait finalement plus de différence entre la frontière et le centre.

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