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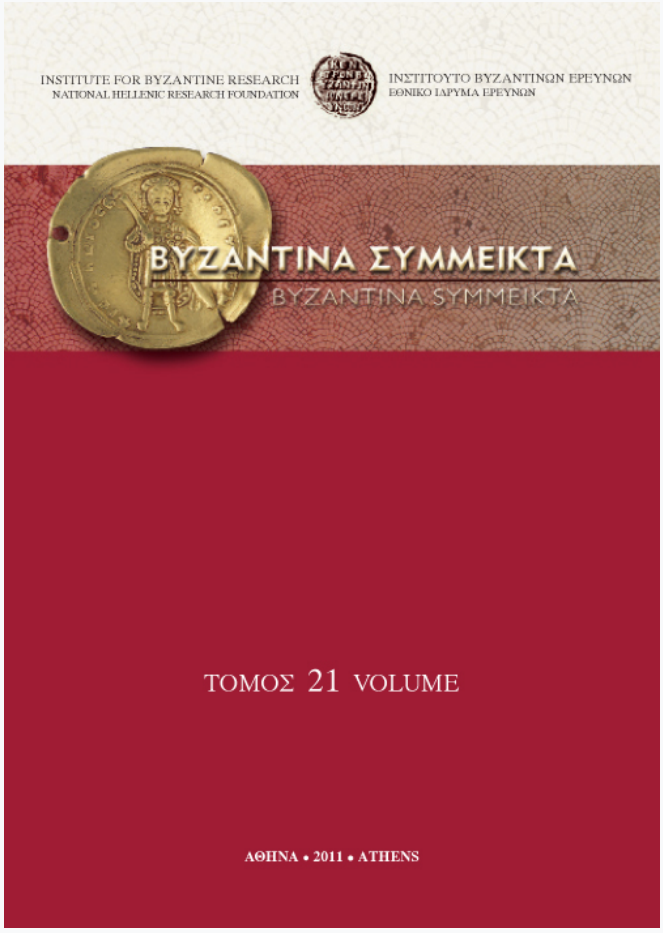

Jihād and Crusade: Byzantine positions towards the notions of "holy war"

Ioannis STOURAITIS

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Ioannis Stouraitis

Jihād and Crusade: Byzantine Positions Towards the Notions of 'Holy War'*

My latest contribution to the debate about the (non-)existence of a Byzantine notion of 'holy war' focused on the methodological argument that the concept of 'holy war' is defined and distinguished by two core ideas: First, by the idea that warfare is arbitrarily justified as divine order, i.e. command; second, that warfare is perceived and propagated as a means of religion employed against infidels or heretics, thus granting the believer-warriors absolution and sanctification[1]. The main aim of the current

* The current paper presents partial results of the research project "Holy war? Byzantine ideas and concepts of war and peace in the period from the late 11th to the early 13th century" (Project Nr. 21096), supported by the Austrian Science Fund (FWF). The use of the term 'holy war' in brackets relates here to my understanding of the term as a modern analytical concept which is employed to help to distinguish wars, the cause and the justification of which was a principally religious one, from wars, the justification of which was not based on the arbitrary will of a divine power, but was principally motivated by a natural-law cause.

1. I. Stouraitis, Methodologische Überlegungen zur Frage des byzantinischen "heiligen" Krieges, *BSl* 67 (2009) 269-290. On the various arguments about the issue of 'holy war' in Byzantium see: M. Canard, La guerre sainte de la monde islamique et dans le monde chrétien, *Revue Africain* 79 (1936) 605-623; V. Laurent, L'idée de guerre saint et la tradition byzantine, *RHSEE* 23 (1946) 71-98; H.-G. Beck, *Nomos, Kanon und Staatsraison in Byzanz* [Sitzungsberichte der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Philosophisch-Historische Klasse 384], Wien 1981, 20-39; G. Dagron, Byzance et la modèle islamique au Xe siècle. À propos des *Constitutions Tactiques* de l'Empereur Léon VI, *Comptes rendus de séances de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles Lettres* 127 (1983) 219-243; A. Kolia-Dermitzaki, *Ο βυζαντινός «ιερός πόλεμος». Η έννοια και η προβολή του θρησκευτικού*

Επιμέλεια έκδοσης: Χρηστος Μακρυπουλιας, Πανεπιστήμιο Ιωαννίνων

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study is to re-approach and elaborate this argument through scrutinizing Byzantine attitudes towards the concept of *crusade*. The main focus is set, here, on a comparison of Byzantine reactions towards the concept of *jihād*, which scholars of medieval studies almost unanimously categorize as a medieval notion of 'holy war'[2], with Byzantine reactions to *crusade*, which

πολέμου στο Βυζάντιο [Ιστορικές Μονογραφίες 10], Athens 1991; A. Laiou, On Just War in Byzantium, in: *To Hellenikon. Studies in Honor of Speros Vryonis Jr.*, New Rochelle 1993, 153-177; eadem, The Just War of Eastern Christians and the 'Holy War' of the Crusade, in: *The Ethics of War. Shared Problems in Different Traditions*, ed. R. Sorabji – D. Rodin, Oxford 2006, 30-43; N. Oikonomides, The concept of 'holy war' and two tenth-century Byzantine ivories, in: *Peace and War in Byzantium. Essays in Honor of G. T. Dennis S. J.*, ed. T. S. Miller – J. Nesbitt, Washington, D. C. 1995, 62-86; T. M. Kolbaba, Fighting for Christianity. 'Holy war' in the Byzantine Emire, *Byz* 68 (1998) 194-221; G. T. Dennis, Defenders of the Christian People: 'Holy war' in Byzantium, in: *The Crusades from the Perspective of Byzantium and the Muslim World*, ed. A. Laiou – R. P. Mottahedeh, Washington, D. C. 2001, 31-39; A. Carile, La guerra santa nella Romania (Impero Romano d'Oriente) secoli VII-XI, in: *Guerra santa, guerra e pace dal vicino oriente antico alle tradizioni ebraica, cristiana e islamica*, ed. M. Perani, Bologna 2005, 251-261; N. Bergamo, *Expeditio Persica* of Heraclius: 'Holy war' or Crusade? *Porphyra* 12 (2008) 94-107; I. Stouraitis, *Krieg und Frieden in der politischen und ideologischen Wahrnehmung in Byzanz (7.-11. Jahrhundert)* [Byzantinische Geschichtsschreiber, Ergänzungsband 5], Wien 2009, 304-361; P. Stephenson, Imperial Christianity and Sacred War in Byzantium, in: *Belief and Bloodshed. Religion and Violence across Time and Tradition*, ed. J. K. Wellman, Jr., New York 2007, 83-95; Idem, Religious services for Byzantine soldiers and the possibility of martyrdom, c. 400-1000 C. E., in: *Just Wars, Holy Wars, Jihads*, ed. S. Hashmi, Oxford University Press 2012 (in press). M. Nichanian, De la guerre «antique» à la guerre «médiévale» dans l'empire romain d'orient. Legitimite imperiale, ideologie des la guerre et revoltes militaires, in: *Guerre et Société au Moyen Âge, Byzance – Occident (VIIIe – XIIIe siècle)*, ed. D. Barthélemy – J.-Cl. Cheynet [Monographies 31], Paris 2010, 33f.

2. On *jihād* see E. Flaig, "Heiliger Krieg". Auf der Suche nach einer Typologie, *Historische Zeitschrift* 285/2 (2007) 283-294; M. Bonner, *Jihad in Islamic History: Doctrines and Practice*, Princeton, N. J. 2006, 1ff.; D. Cook, *Understanding Jihad*, Berkeley-Los Angeles-London 2005, 32-48; P. L. Heck, Jihad Revisited, *Journal of Religious Ethics* 32 (2004) 95-128; R. Firestone, *Jihad. The Origin of 'Holy War' in Islam*, New York 1999, 43ff.; R. Parviz Mottahedeh – Ridwan al-Sayyid, The Idea of the Jihād in Islam before the Crusades, in: A. E. Laiou – R. Parviz Mottahedeh eds., *The Crusades from the Perspective of Byzantium and the Muslim World*, Waschington, D.C. 2001, 23-29; C. Hillenbrand, *The Crusades: Islamic Perspectives*, Edinburgh 1999, 89-99; R. G. Hoyland, *Seeing Islam as others saw it. A Survey and evaluation of Christian, Jewish and Zoroastrian writings on early Islam*, Princeton, N. J. 1997; A. Th. Khoury, *Was sagt der Koran zum Heiligen Krieg?*,

is generally regarded as the western Christian notion of 'holy war'[3]. Since the issue of Byzantine positions towards the Muslim perception of religious warfare has already been subject of analysis[4], it will be summarily presented here and will function as a starting-point for a comparative exploration of Byzantine attitudes towards the 'holy war' aspect of *crusade* in order to highlight similarities or differences with regard to the Byzantine reaction in each case.

Although a great number of studies have dealt with the issue of Byzantine policies and attitudes towards the Crusades[5], the question of

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Gütersloh 1991; S. A. Schleifer, Understanding Jihad: Definition and Methodology, *The Islamic Quaterly* 27 (1983) 118-131; A. Noth, *Heiliger Krieg und heiliger Kampf in Islam und Christentum* [Bonner Historische Studien 28], Bonn 1966, 13-61; M. Khadduri, *War and Peace in the Law of Islam*, Baltimore 1955, 57-62. Cf. also L. Steffen, *Holy War, Just War. Exploring the Moral Meaning of Religious Violence*, New York 2007, 218-229.

3. On the ideology of the Crusades see: C. Erdmann, *Die Entstehung des Kreuzzugsgedankens* [Forschungen zur Kirchen- und Geistesgeschichte 6], Stuttgart 1935; H. E. Mayer, *Geschichte der Kreuzzüge*, Stuttgart 1965, 15-46; E. O. Blake, The formation of the 'Crusade Idea', *JEH* 21 (1970) 11-31; A. Becker, *Papst Urban II. (1088–1099), Teil 2: Der Papst, die griechische Christenheit und der Kreuzzug* [Monumenta Germaniae Historica 19, II], Stuttgart 1988, 272ff.; J. Riley-Smith, *The First Crusade and the idea of Crusading*, Philadelphia 1986; E.-D. Hehl, Was ist eigentlich ein Kreuzzug? *Historische Zeitschrift* 259 (1994) 297-336; H. E. J. Cowdrey, The Reform Papacy and the Origins of the Crusades, in: *Le concile de Clermont de 1095 et l'appel à la croisade* [Collection de l'ecole française de Rome 236], Rome 1997, 65-83; R. Hiestand, *"Gott will es!" – Will Gott es wirklich? Die Kreuzzugsidee in der Kritik ihrer Zeit* [Beiträge zur Friedensethik, Bd. 29], Stuttgart – Berlin – Köln 1998, 5-16; J. Møller-Jensen, War, Penance and the First Crusade. Dealing with a 'Tyrannical Construct', in: *Medieval History Writing and Crusading Ideology*, ed. T. M. S. Lehtonen – K. V. Jensen [Studia Fennica Historica 9], Tampere 2005, 51-63; N. Jaspert, *The Crusade*, New York-London 2006, 13-34.

4. Stouraitis, *Krieg und Frieden*, 332-338.

5. R. Grousset, *Histoire des croisades et du royame franc de Jèrusalem I*, Paris 1934, 14-27, 110-116; S. Runciman, *A History of the Crusades II: The Kingdom of Jerusalem and the Frankish East, 1100–1187*, Cambridge 1951 (reprint 1995), 266-277; P. Lemerle, Byzance et la croisade, in: *Relazioni del X Congresso Internazionale di Scienze Storiche, III: Storia del Medioevo*, Firenze 1955 (= Idem, *Le Monde de Byzance: Histoire et Institutions*, London 1978); J. Harris, *Byzantium and the Crusades*, London-New York 2003, 53-71; R.-J. Lilie, *Byzanz und die Kreuzfahrerstaaten. Studien zur Politik des Byzantinischen Reiches gegenüber den Staaten der Kreuzfahrer in Syrien und Palästina bis zum vierten Kreuzzug (1096–1204)* [Poikila Byzantina 1], München 1981, 275-284; Idem, *Byzanz und die*

Byzantine understanding of those western ideas that made *crusade* a notion of 'holy war', i.e. the ideas of *deus vult* and *remissio peccatorum*, has not been yet thoroughly explored[6]. The central aim of the study is therefore to clarify the Byzantine position towards the western Christian idea that the waging of warfare can be justified as divine will and that death or killing in battle against infidel enemies can be perceived as a means *per se* to achieve absolution and sanctification[7]. This question concerns not only the issue of the Byzantine understanding of *crusade* but also the issue of the existence of a Byzantine type of 'holy war', which differs in its special characteristics from *crusade* as well as from *jihād*.

1. Byzantine positions towards the concept of *jihād*

First, a short overview of the Byzantine positions towards the concept of *jihād* is necessary in order to highlight the antithesis between the Byzantine and the Muslim perception of the relation between religion and warfare. Byzantine polemic is directed against the two core ideas that enable the categorization of *jihād* as a species of 'holy war': the idea that God commanded the subjugation or annihilation of the infidel and the idea that the believer could gain eternal life in Heaven and become a martyr through his participation in divinely ordained warfare. The first polemical mention of a Byzantine source against the Islamic concept of *shahīd* (i.e. warrior-martyr)[8] is found in the work of Theophanes the Confessor, written in the beginning of the 9th century. The author defines Mohammed's religion as a heresy and emphasizes the absurdity of the idea that the killing of the enemy

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Kreuzzüge, Stuttgart 2004; P. Magdalino, *The Empire of Manuel I Komnenos 1143-1180*, Cambridge 1993 (reprint 2002), 27-34, 44-53.

6. To my knowledge only T. M. Kolbaba addresses this particular issue without, however, attempting an in-depth analysis of the source material; cf. Kolbaba, Fighting for Christianity, 211ff.

7. For the development of the idea of *remissio poenitentiae* (remission of penitential chastisements imposed by the church), which seems to have been the initial idea of Pope Urban II and the council at Clermont, into the idea of *remissio peccatorum* (remission of sins/absolution) see Mayer, *Geschichte der Kreuzzüge*, 39-46; Becker, *Papst Urban II.*, 406-407.

8. A. J. Wensinck, The oriental doctrine of the Martyrs, *Mededdelingen der Koninklijke Akademie van Wetenschappen, Afdeeding Letterkunde, Deel 53, ser. A,* 6 (1921) 147-174.

or being killed by the enemy in warfare can be spiritually meritorious[9]. A few decades later, during the reign of Michael III, Nicetas Byzantius rejects in his answering letter to a Muslim theologian the Islamic idea that the killing of men could be legitimated as divine will. The Byzantine author, based on a rationalized Christian ethic, argues that killing and, consequently, warfare can by no means be perceived as a religious task, since God cannot wish and favour the destruction of his noblest creation, i.e. man[10]. Within the framework of this idea Leo VI blames the Arabs in his military treatise "Tactica" for being impious, since they believe God to be the cause of every evil deed and to rejoice in war, whereas God disperses the warmongering nations[11]. Finally, Constantine VII Porphyrogennetos refers to the Muslim concept of absolution through participation in warfare in two passages of his political treatise "De administrando imperio" and denounces it. In the first passage, he characterizes Mohammed as madman and deluded because of his teachings that killing the enemy or being killed by the enemy will bring his followers to Heaven[12]. In the second, he copies out word for word Theophanes' polemic[13].

In view of the source evidence which shows that the Byzantines had no understanding for, but were rather hostile towards the Muslim perception that war could be divinely motivated and justified, becoming thus a means of plenary remission of sins, it is important to emphasize that the theological dispute between Byzantines and Muslims referred to the common God of the monotheistic tradition of the Scriptures. This is

9. *Theophanis chronographia*, ed. C. de Boor, vol. 1, Leipzig 1883 (Hildesheim 1963), 334, 17-26; cf. Stouraitis, *Krieg und Frieden*, 337-338.

10. *Niketas von Byzanz, Schriften zum Islam I*, griechisch-deutsche Textasusgabe von K. Förstel [Corpus Islamo-Christianum], Würzburg-Altenberge 2000, 192, 334-345. Cf. D. Krausmüller, Killing at god's command: Niketas Byzantios' polemic against Islam and the Christian tradition of divinely sanctioned murder, *Al Masaq* 16 (2004), 165-167; Stouraitis, *Krieg und Frieden*, 333-335.

11. *Leonis VI Tactica*, ed. G. T. Dennis, *The Taktika of Leo VI. Text, translation and Commentary* [CFHB XLIX, Series Washingtonensis], Washington, D. C. 2010, 476, 105; cf. Stouraitis, *Krieg und Frieden*, 332-333.

12. *Constantine Porphyrogenitus. De administrando imperio*, ed. G. Moravcsik – R. Jenkins, 2nd edn. [CFHB, Series Washingtonensis 1], Washington, D.C. 196714.30-34; cf. Stouraitis, *Krieg und Frieden*. 337-338.

13. *De administrando imperio* 17.16-23 (Moravcsik).

made clear in Theophanes' mention of Islam as heresy, which is adopted by Constantine Porphyrogennetos, as well as in the case of Nicetas Byzantios, in which the theological debate refers to the differentiated interpretation of the one God. This means that the negative Byzantine attitude towards the ideas of divinely ordained warfare and spiritually meritorious death in battle cannot be simply attributed to the political and cultural animosity caused by the otherness of the Muslims and their God. Byzantine rejection of the Muslim notion of 'holy war' was formulated on an ideological – theological level that concerned also their own religion, since it referred to the differentiated Byzantine perception of God's relation to warfare. In this light, all aforementioned statements demonstrate a negative Byzantine attitude towards the core ideas of the 'holy war' concept in the period before the First Crusade and stand in clear contradiction with present-day theories which highlight Byzantine religious rhetoric in wars fought against infidel enemies as an indication of a Byzantine type of 'holy war'[14].

Although there is no reason to believe that the Byzantine position towards *jihād* changed after the replacement of the Arabs by the Seljuk-Turks as the main enemy of the Empire in the East[15], the initiation of the Crusade movement towards the end of the eleventh century raises the question of a possible influence of the western Christian notion of war against the infidel as a divinely ordained means of absolution on Byzantine mentality and, consequently, on Byzantine war ethic. My working hypothesis is that a negative Byzantine reaction to the Latin ideas of *deus vult* and *remissio peccatorum* will demonstrate an ideological continuity with regard to Byzantine rejection of the core ideas of the 'holy war' concept and verify that this concept never became predominant within Byzantine society. On

14. Ch. Diehl, *Les grands problèmes de l'histoire byzantin*, Paris 1943, 13-14; P. Rousset, *Les origines et les charactères de la première croisade*, Geneve 1945, 27-31; Crousset, *Histoire des croisades* I-XXII; H. Hunger, *Reich der neuen Mitte. Der christliche Geist der byzantinischen Kultur*, Graz-Wien-Köln 1965, 193-195; Kolia-Dermitzaki, *Ο βυζαντινός «ιερός πόλεμος»*, 146-310; Kolbaba, Fighting for Christianity, 199-211; G. Regan, *First Crusader. Byzantium's Holy Wars*, New York 2003, 75ff., 233ff.

15. On the employment of the idea of *jihād* by the justification of the Seljuk expansion in Asia Minor see: C. Cahen, La première pénétration turque en Asie Mineure, *Byz* 18 (1946-1948) 14-15; A. Beihammer, Feindbilder und Konfliktwahrnehmung in den Quellen zum Auftreten der Seldschuken in Kleinasien (ca. 1050-1118). *Byz* 79 (2009) 55-56.

the contrary, a positive Byzantine reaction would mean a turning point in comparison to the Byzantine positions towards *jihād* and, consequently, give ground for a reconsideration of the aforementioned evidence.

2. Byzantine positions towards the concept of *crusade*

Most of the scholars who have explored Byzantine attitudes towards the Crusades tend to the conclusion that the Byzantines had little or no understanding for the Crusaders and their movement. However, a clear line must be drawn between Byzantine attitudes towards the political and the ideological aspect of the Crusades. Most of the Byzantine authors' negative comments – especially of the three main historians of that period, Anna Comnena, Ioannis Cinnamus and Nicetas Choniates[16] – about the movement concern its political aspect which clearly contradicted Byzantine political interests. Moreover, these authors may emphasize the political and cultural differences between the Byzantines and the Latins[17], but do not object to the central aim of the Crusades, i.e. the protection or liberation of fellow Christians and their lands from the Muslims. T. M. Kolbaba highlights this

16. The criticism of all three historians regarding the emergence of the First and Second Crusades focuses on the threat posed by the Crusaders to the existence of the empire; *Annae Comnenae Alexias*, ed. D. R. Reinsch – A. Kambylis [CFHB, Series Berolinensis XL/1], Berlin 2001, X 5, 10, X 6, 7, X 9, 1; *Ioannis Cinnami epitome rerum ab Ioanne et Alexio Comnenis gestarum*, ed. A. Meineke [CSHB], Bonn 1836, 67, 3-10 (Meineke); *Niceta Choniatae historia*, ed. J. L. Van Dieten [CFHB 11, Series Berolinensis], Berlin 1975, 60, 45-48.

17. On the image of the Latins by the Byzantines during the period of the Crusades see P. Gounaridis, Η εικόνα των Λατίνων, in: *Η τέταρτη σταυροφορία και ο ελληνικός κόσμος*, ed. N. G. Moschonas [EIE/IBE, Το Βυζάντιο σήμερα 5], Athens 2008, 43-60; R.-J. Lilie, Anna Komnena und die Lateiner, *BSl* 54 (1993) 169-182; D. R. Reinsch, Ausländer und Byzantiner im Werk der Anna Komnene, *Rechthistorisches Journal* 8 (1989) 257-274; J. Koder, Das Bild des ‚Westens' bei den Byzantinern in der frühen Komnenenzeit, in: *Deus qui mutat tempora. Menschen und Institutionen im Wandel des Mittelalters. Festschrift Alfons Becker*, ed. D. Hehl – H. Seibert – F. Staab, Sigmaringen 1987, 191-201; D. Abrahamse, Byzantine Views of the West in the Early Crusade Period: The evidence of Hagiography, in: *The Meeting of Two Worlds. Cultural Exchange between East and West during the Period of the Crusades*, ed. V. P. Goss – C. V. Bornstein [Studies in Medieval Culture XXI], Kalamazoo 1986, 189-200; C. Asdracha, L'image de l'homme occidentale à Byzance: la temoignage de Kinnamos et de Choniatés, *BSl* 44 (1983) 31-40.

plausible argument in the second part of her paper on religious warfare in Byzantium[18]. Starting with the argument that "Byzantines were familiar with the idea of God commanding a war against the infidel and promising his soldiers rewards in the hereafter", she points out that Anna Comnena, first and most important source about Byzantine attitudes towards the First Crusade, "never says that the Latins were wrong to launch a war against the infidel for the recovery of the holy land"[19]. In this way, Kolbaba tries to emphasize the differentiated Byzantine attitude towards the political and the ideological aspect of the Crusades and to show that modern scholars are misled by Byzantine statements against the political aspect of the movement, when they declare that the Byzantines were hostile towards the religious dimension of the Crusades. From this point of view, her argument is justified and partly correct. Therefore, it is exactly this distinction between the political and the ideological aspect of the Crusades that we should focus on in order to clarify the Byzantine perception of the western Christian species of religious warfare.

The first and main question related to this matter that needs an answer pertains to how the Byzantines perceived war against the infidel in that period. In this respect Kolbaba's analysis is problematic as she takes for granted that Byzantines had their own species of 'holy war' and consequently they could comprehend and accept the Latin notion. For this opinion, she capitalizes on a present-day theory about the Byzantine 'holy war'[20]. Two problems arise with regard to this methodological approach. First, it ignores, or at least downplays, the evidence from the sources of the middle Byzantine period as reflected through the Byzantine polemic against *jihād*, which demonstrate an explicitly negative Byzantine attitude towards the ideas that warfare could be justified as divine order and perceived as a means for plenary remission of sins. Second, she accepts as her main evidence for a Byzantine notion of 'holy war' the employment of religious

18. Kolbaba, Fighting for Christianity, 211-216.

19. Kolbaba, Fighting for Christianity, 212.

20. Kolbaba, Fighting for Christianity, 198-200 uses as a starting-point for her argumentation the theory of A. Kolia-Dermitzaki. For objections raised to this theory see Laiou, Just war, 153-154; Oikonomides, The concept of 'holy war', 62-68; Stouraitis, Methodologische Überlegungen, 269-274.

rhetoric and symbolism in Byzantine wars[21]. By doing so, she ignores the complexity of the set of ideas and beliefs which defined the relation of religion with imperial warfare against all enemies in Byzantium and enabled the Byzantines to differentiate themselves and be critical towards the Muslim or the Latin perception of religious warfare.

The theoretical statements of Leo VI's military treatise "Tactica"[22] demonstrate the main ideas which defined the relation between religion and warfare in Byzantine thought. The author of the text devotes three paragraphs to the clarification of the concept of *dikaios polemos* (just war). In those, he makes clear that a just cause for war was explicitly defined by the natural need of defense, which was identifiable with the integrity of Roman territory and the protection of its inhabitants against foreign attack (indifferently whether the enemy was Christian or infidel)[23]. In the last constitution (20) as well as in the epilogue of his treatise, he then clarifies the role of God within the Byzantine conception of just war. Among other things he says:

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21. Kolbaba, Fighting for Christianity, 209 differentiates her position from that of A. Kolia-Dermitzaki when she argues that, based on the evidence of religious rhetoric and symbolism in Byzantine wars, there is no reason to narrow the Byzantine notion of 'holy war' down to wars which were offensive from a political point of view. From Kolbaba's standpoint, defensive Byzantine wars with a strong religious rhetoric and symbolism could as well qualify as 'holy wars'. However, this approach fails to explain the employment of religious rhetoric and symbolism in wars fought against other Christian peoples, who were not heretics, or in Byzantine 'civil' wars. Should these wars also be considered 'holy wars'? If not, how can we then interpret the employment of the religious element in those cases? Cf. the discussion of these matters in Stouraitis, Methodologische Überlegungen, 270-273; Idem, Bürgerkrieg in ideologischer Wahrnehmung durch die Byzantiner: Die Frage der Legitimierung und Rechtfertigung, *JÖB* 60 (2010) 149-172.

22. On the religious aspect of the Byzantine conception of just war according to the evidence of the "Tactica" see Stouraitis, *Krieg und Frieden*, 306-308; Idem, Methodologische Überlegungen, 278-282.

23. *Leonis VI Tactica* 34, 29-31 (Dennis); Cf. G. Michailides–Nuaros, *Ο βυζαντινός δίκαιος πόλεμος κατά τα Τακτικά του Λέοντος του Σοφού* [Symmikta Seferiadou], Athens 1961, 422; Laiou, Just War 167-8; Stouraitis, *Krieg und Frieden*, 273-276; Idem, Legitimierung und Rechtfertigung von Krieg und Frieden in byzantinischer Zeit, in: *Krieg im mittelalterlichen Abendland*, ed. A. Obenaus – Ch. Kaindel, Wien 2010, 340-342.

Constitution 20:

57. I believe it is right that the beginnings of war must be just. A person defending himself against others who are acting unjustly is truly just himself and he has divine justice for support and as an ally in campaigning against the unjust. The person who first begins injustice has his victory taken away by divine justice itself.

169. Certainly justice must be at the beginning of every action. More than other actions however, the beginnings of war must be just. Not only must it be just but war must be conducted with prudence. For then God will become benevolent and will fight along with our armies. The men will be more enthusiastic (to fight) when they defend justice realizing that that they are not initiating injustice, but they are warding off those committing unjust acts[24].

Epilogue:

14. Preoccupy yourself with the stratagems and with the armament of the army lest not to act unjustly or to initiate an unjust war or to launch pillaging and unjust raids against people that have done you no wrong, but to live in piety and be at peace with the enemies, as far as it depends on you. Thus, if you act reverently and in a God-pleasing manner, you will have the weapons for defense against the unjust enemies.

15. If your pious life encompasses these things, I am sure that you will have God Himself campaigning with you along with justice.

16. The belief that one is not acting unjustly, but is being treated unjustly will have God as leader and general and is important to believe that God has obligated himself to bring a just war to a good conclusion, the same as an unjust one to the contrary.

17. Just as it is impossible for the unjust person not to suffer at some time the penalty for his injustice from God the Judge, so it is also impossible for one who defends himself and fights against

24. *Leonis VI Tactica* 556, 58, 594, 169 (Dennis): *νη΄. Καλὸν μοι δοκεῖ δικαία εἶναι τὴν ἀρχὴν τοῦ πολέμου. ὁ γὰρ τοῖς ἀδικήσασιν ἀνταμυνόμενος οὗτος δίκαιός ἐστιν καὶ τὴν θείαν ἔχει δικαιοσύνην βοηθόν τε καὶ σύμμαχον κατὰ τῶν ἀδίκων ἐκστρατευόμενος. ὁ δὲ πρῶτος κατάρξας ἀδικίας παρ' αὐτῆς τῆς θείας δίκης ἀφαιρεῖται τὴν νίκην.*

ρξθ΄. Μάλιστα μὲν μετὰ δικαιοσύνης παντὸς ἔργου ἀπάρχεσθαι χρὴ. πλέον δὲ τῶν ἄλλων τὰς ἀρχὰς χρὴ τοῦ πολέμου δικαίας εἶναι, καὶ μὴ μόνον δικαίας, ἀλλὰ καὶ φρονίμως προάγεσθαι τὸν πόλεμον. καὶ γὰρ τότε καὶ Θεὸς συναγωνιεῖται τοῖς στρατεύμασιν εὐμενὴς γινόμενος, καὶ οἱ ἄνθρωποι προθυμότεροι γίνονται τοῦ δικαίου προασπίζοντες καὶ εἰδότες ὡς οὐκ ἄρχουσιν ἀδικίας, ἀλλὰ ἀμύνονται κατὰ τῶν ἀδικούντων.

injustice not to obtain victory from God. For God is a just judge and will bring everything about with justice[25].

The information of the "Tactica" reveals a system of ideas and beliefs in which justice in warfare is explicitly defined by a natural-law cause. The pre-Christian rational principle of defense (which in the Byzantine case could also be distorted through the idea of reconquest) was the only reason that could legitimate Byzantine war action and secure God's favour for the cause of the war. Within this conception, God and religion can neither define the just character of warfare, nor motivate its initiation; they only become advocates of a justice which is based on human needs. The old-testamentary idea of God being the archetypal source of justice and judgment, which determines everything, i.e. also the outcome of wars[26], is in this case modified and subordinated to a rationalized concept of justification for the use of armed force. In Byzantine perception, it is not God's will that can be arbitrarily employed to define any war as just. Justice in warfare was explicitly predefined through the natural-law cause of the maintenance of the territorial integrity of the political entity "Roman Empire"[27]. Consequently,

25. *Leonis VI Tactica* 624, 14-17 (Dennis): *ιδ΄. Ἐπιμελοῦ δὲ καὶ τῶν στρατηγικῶν ἔργων καὶ τῶν πολεμικῶν ὅπλων, οὐχ ἵνα ἀδικήσῃς ἢ ἀδίκου πολέμου κατάρξῃς ἢ ληστείας τινὰς καὶ ἀδίκους κατὰ τῶν ουδὲν ἠδικηκότων ἐπιδρομὰς ποιήσῃς, ἀλλ' ἵνα σὺν εὐσεβείᾳ ζῶν, ἀλλὰ καὶ τοῖς πολεμίοις, ὅσον τὸ ἐπί σοι εἰρηνεύων, καὶ οὕτως εὐσεβῶς καὶ θεαρέστως πολιτευόμενος, ἔχῃς τὰ ὅπλα πρὸς ἄμυναν τῶν ἀδικούντων πολεμίων.*

ιε΄. Ἡ γὰρ εὐσεβής σου ζωὴ ταῦτα παραλαβοῦσα, εὖ οἶδ' ὅτι καὶ Θεὸν αὐτὸν μετὰ τῆς δικαιοσύνης ἕξει συνεκστρατεύοντα.

ις΄. καὶ ἡ πίστις τοῦ μὴ ἀδικεῖν ἀλλ' ἀδικεῖσθαι στρατηγὸν καὶ ἡγεμόνα τὸν Θεὸν ἕξει, καὶ ἀνάγκη πιστεύειν, ὅτι δικαίῳ πολέμῳ ἀπὸ Θεοῦ ὀφείλεται τὸ τέλος ἀγαθόν, ὥσπερ τῷ ἀδίκῳ τὸ ἐναντίον.

ιζ΄. Ὥσπερ γὰρ τὸν ἀδικοῦντα ἀδύνατον μὴ παθεῖν ποτε τὴν τῆς ἀδικίας ποινὴν παρὰ γε Θεῷ κριτῇ, οὕτως ἀδύνατον καὶ τὸν τὴν ἀδικίαν ἀμυνόμενον, καὶ ἀντιπολεμούντα, μὴ τῆς παρὰ Θεοῦ νίκης ἐπιτυχεῖν; ὁ γὰρ Θεὸς κριτὴς δίκαιος, καὶ σὺν δίκῃ ἐξάγει τὰ σύμπαντα.

26. Cf. Par. I, 29, 11, Mach. I, 2, 19-22, Mach. II, 10, 38 in: A. Rahlfs, *Septuaginta*, vol. 1, 9th edn, Stuttgart 1935 (repr. 1971). On this idea in western Christianity see R. Shieffer, Iudicium Dei. Kriege als Gottesurteile, in: *Heilige Kriege. Religiöse Begründungen militärischer Gewaltanwendung: Judentum, Christentum und Islam im Vergleich*, K. Schreiner – E. Müller-Luckner [Schriften des Historischen Kollegs 78], München 2008, 219-220, 222ff.

27. Steffen, *Holy War*, 213 observes with regard to the very essence of 'holy war': "Religion that turns demonic expresses itself through violence and killing. Human beings

the religious element in Byzantine warfare functions as an ideological amplifier of the ethical legitimation of an ideologically "restrained war action" that was motivated and justified by a rational cause, with rational goals thus assimilating to the life-affirming character of modern 'just war' conceptions[28]. That is why a Byzantine defeat in a just war fought for the Empire's defense/restoration was, on the one hand, perceived as a consequence of God's inscrutable judgment, i.e. as irrational, since God, in opposition to the rational expectations of the righteous fighters, had not helped them to accomplish their rationally righteous cause; on the other hand, it was not understood in retrospect as a sign that the cause of war had been unjust, since justice did not depend on God's will and therefore could not be doubted irrespective of the outcome of war[29].

The statements of the "Tactica" point thus to the discrepancy between Byzantine war ethic and the 'holy war' aspect of the ambiguous war ideology of the Old Testament. From a Byzantine standpoint, God or religion could not be perceived as wanting and commanding, i.e. causing, war but only as supporting just warfare by association within the framework of the interrelation between the empire and its institutionalized religion in order to ensure that justice would triumph over injustice in terms of a rationally

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who opt to be religious in the demonic mode pursue destructive ends under the self-deceptive ruse that they are enacting God's will and doing good by such acts, and of this they are certain. People who are religious in the demonic mode maintain this belief in the goodness and divine sanction for what they do even as their acts fail to manifest the luminosity of goodness, even as moral critique condemns their acts as unworthy of free persons acting in relationships of respect with others". Taking this statement into account, the absence of divine will as authorization for war actions in Byzantine war ideology means the absence of divine absolutism in the process of moral deliberation and evaluation in regard of such actions. The previously mentioned Byzantine reactions to the Muslim notion of 'holy war', especially the case of Nicetas Byzantius, demonstrate that in Byzantine religious thinking regarding war it was not God that defined what was good, but it was moral reasoning that defined the measure of goodness with which God was expected to correspond.

28. On the contradiction between life-affirming 'just war' and demonic 'holy war' see Steffen, *Holy War*, 182-263.

29. This rationalized relation of God to war is further highlighted in the *Tactica* when Leo VI, in order to condemn the concept of *jihād*, highlights the old-testamentary idea that God cannot rejoice in war, but on the contrary destroys the warmongering nations, see above n. 11; cf. Psalm 67, 31, in: A. Rahlfs, *Septuaginta*, vol. 2, 9th edn, Stuttgart 1935 (repr. 1971).

defined cause, i.e. defense/liberation[30]. This subordination of God and religion to the *raison d'état* enabled the Byzantines to employ a strong religious rhetoric and symbolism[31] not only in wars fought against infidel but also against Christian enemies, as well as in 'civil' wars in which both sides were considered to be Christian and Roman[32]. In view of these facts, it becomes obvious that the aforementioned argument about a positive Byzantine attitude towards the 'holy war' aspect of Crusade, based on the premise that the Byzantine society was familiar with the concept of God commanding a war against the infidel and promising his soldiers rewards in the hereafter, deserves reconsideration.

On a theoretical level, the employment of religious elements (rhetoric – symbolism) in a war motivated and legitimated by a natural-law cause, as evident in Byzantine warfare, raises the question of a distinction between a

30. In Byzantine thought, justice in terms of foreign policy was identifiable with peace based on the non-violation of territorial integrity. Thus, Byzantine sources consistently propagate the idea of defense or restoration/liberation of the empire's own territory in order to justify imperial warfare. This preponderant idea among the ruling elite was underpinned by the conception of the broader Roman Oikoumene, which enabled the propagation of all Byzantine warfare, defensive or offensive, within the territories of the former *Imperium Romanum* as an unavoidable means, which aimed at the restoration of peace, facilitating thus its legitimation as a means of politics within the framework of the new-testamentary Christian ethic, Stouraitis, *Krieg und Frieden*, 263-268, 304-306; J. F. Haldon, *Warfare, State and Society in the Byzantine World 565-1204*, London 1999, 25-26.

31. By ignoring the evidence from the *Tactica* which demonstrates that from a Byzantine standpoint war could not be motivated and justified by a divine authority many other statements in the book can be misinterpreted as an indication for a separate 'holy war' concept. Based on the ideas presented in the aforementioned passages though, it becomes obvious that religious references in the *Tactica* as well as in other Byzantine sources related to God's presence and aid in the battlefield were understood within the framework of a war ethic the principal norms of which were defined by a rationally just cause and not by an irrational religious concept; on this cf. Stouraitis, *Krieg und Frieden*, 306ff.; Idem, Methodologische Überlegungen, 278ff.

32. Oikonomides, The concept of 'holy war', 67-68, based on his in-depth knowledge of the Byzantine sources, was the first to indicate that Byzantines employed a religious rhetoric also in wars against other Christians or even in Byzantine civil wars. On the employment of religious rhetoric and symbolism in wars against other Christians as well as in Byzantine civil wars during the middle Byzantine period see Stouraitis, *Krieg und Frieden*, 322-327; Idem, Methodologische Überlegungen, 271-273; Idem, Bürgerkrieg, 153-172.

notion of the 'just war' concept, in which religion is employed to amplify a justification based on a natural-law cause, and the concept of 'holy war'[33] or war of religion (*Religionskrieg*), in which the justification stems arbitrarily from the will of a divine power[34]. If we consider the religious rhetoric and symbolism of Byzantine wars, the justification of which was principally defined by the need for defense or restoration of the Roman Empire's territory, as proof of a Byzantine notion of 'holy war', we should then reduce the concept of 'holy war' to an armed conflict in which the warriors appeal to and expect God's favour, even though they do not perceive religion to be the principal cause of the war[35]. In such a case, we should promote all

33. On the use of the term 'holy war' see F. W. Graf, Sakralisierung von Kriegen: Begriffs- und problemgeschichtliche Erwägungen, in: *Heilige Kriege. Religiöse Begründungen militärischer Gewaltanwendung: Judentum, Christentum und Islam im Vergleich*, ed. K. Schreiner – E. Müller-Luckner [Schriften des Historischen Kollegs 78], München 2008, 17-23.

34. According to C. Colpe, *Der »Heilige Krieg«, Benennung und Wirklichkeit, Begründung und Widerstreit*, Bodenheim 1994, 71: "die Unterscheidung zwischen heiligem Krieg und gerechtem Krieg führt zu der Frage, ob nicht einfach der heilige ein Religions- oder religiöser Krieg und der gerechte ein weltlicher Krieg sei. Hier ist Vorsicht geboten, besonders wenn man Deutsch spricht. Ein Religionskrieg ist ein Krieg, der im Namen einer institutionalisierten Religion geführt wird. Ein religiöser Krieg ist ein Krieg, der in jedem Falle Elemente natürlicher Religion, manchmal auch noch Elemente institutionalisierter Religion in sich hat". On the use of the term war of religion (*Religionskrieg*) see Graf, Sakralisierung von Kriegen, 13-17.

35. I am afraid that such a theoretical approach makes an employment of the term 'holy war' extremely flexible, enabling thus practically almost every war in which the warrior appeals to divine favour within the framework of his religion as an integral part of his culture to be viewed as 'holy'. R. H. Bainton, *Christian attitudes toward war and peace. A historical survey and critical re-evaluation*, Nashville 1960 (reprint 1983), 44-45 has argued that God's help was the main characteristic that made the wars of the Jews 'holy wars' and differentiated them therefore from *crusade* which he views as a concept of war that went beyond the concept of Jewish 'holy war' (with exception of the wars of the Maccabees), because it became a war "fought not so much with God's help as on God's behalf, not for a human cause that God may bless but for a divine cause which God might command". This theory reduces the Jewish concept of 'holy war', which is normally used as a basis for a comparative study of 'holy war' notions in other societies, in order to promote *crusade* to an archetypal of 'holy war' (see the criticism on Bainton's views by D. Little, 'Holy War' Appeals and Western Christianity: A Reconsideration of Bainton's Approach, in: *Just War and Jihad. Historical and Theoretical Perspectives on War and Peace in Western and Islamic Traditions*, ed. J.

Byzantine wars, offensive or defensive, against all enemies (Christians or non-Christians) as well as civil wars to 'holy wars', since the Byzantines did not go to war without appealing to and believing in God's help, as the source evidence clearly shows. Moreover, the fact that in the Byzantine concept of just war God did not arbitrarily command the waging of warfare, but was simply aiding the Byzantines when they were acting righteously within the framework of a natural-law cause, granting thus warfare a religious dimension by association and not by nature, demonstrates the divergence of Byzantine war ethic from Saint Augustine's ideological tradition. The latter's work does not preclude the idea that God could ordain and arbitrarily justify the waging of warfare[36], thus reflecting the influence of the Old Testament on the western medieval perception of war.

Consequently, the case-study of Byzantine war ethics raises two theoretical issues with regard to the applicability of the 'holy war' concept to medieval societies. First, within a medieval society with a form of state organization and an institutionalized religion closely connected to it, religion could be employed to further underpin the ideological – ethical justification of warfare, the launching of which was rationally motivated and justified through a natural-law cause[37]. Second, the modern theoretical approach that defines the medieval and late medieval 'holy war' theory as

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Kelsay – J. T. Johnson, New York 1991, 127-128). Although a debate exists, whether the term 'holy war' should be used to describe the biblical wars of the Jews (on this debate with modern bibliography see Graf, Sakralisierung von Kriegen, 25-26; Little, 'Holy War' Appeals, 127), it is a fact that these wars provide the two fundamental elements on conceptual level that define the Christian and Muslim notions 'holy war' in medieval times, i.e. the idea that God inspires and commands the devastation of the enemy and the idea of martyrdom; see A. Oppenheimer, Heilige Kriege im antiken Judentum. Monotheismus als Anlass zum Krieg?, in: *Heilige Kriege. Religiöse Begründungen militärischer Gewaltanwendung: Judentum, Christentum und Islam im Vergleich*, ed. K. Schreiner – E. Müller-Luckner [Schriften des Historischen Kollegs 78], München 2008, 31-42; Flaig, "Heiliger Krieg", 276-283.

36. *Sancti Aurelii Augustini Quaestionum in Heptateuchum libri VII* [Corpus christianorum, ser. Lat. 33, pars 5], Turnholt 1958, VI 20; cf. R. Dyson, *St Augustine of Hippo. The Christian Transformation of Political Philosophy*, Norfolk 2005, 128-129; J. T. Johnson, *Ideology, Reason and the Limitation of War. Religious and Secular Concepts 1200-1740*, Princeton, N. J. 1975, 81; D. Tessore, *Der Heilige Krieg im Christentum und Islam*, trans. F. von Frihling, Düsseldorf 2004, 43.

37. Cf. the discussion on the meaning of 'holy war' in Firestone, *Jihad*, 14-16.

analogous rather than antithetical to just war thinking[38] applies to western Christian attitudes of just war (as developed from Saint Augustine's ideas of just war into the concept of *crusade*) but not to East-Roman Christianity (at least in the period before the emergence of the First Crusade). A closer look at the evidence about Byzantine positions towards the concept of the Crusade will enable us to further clarify whether this dichotomy of Christian attitudes with regard to the religious character of warfare between East and West continued after the emergence of the First Crusade.

2.1. Anna Comnena and the concept of *crusade*

The most important Byzantine source about the First Crusade, Anna Comnena[39], seems to me to present in the beginning of her narration a justification concept of the movement as an armed pilgrimage which was provoked by the problems that the Seljuks had caused to western pilgrims and in particular to the monk Peter the Hermit, one of the initiators of the movement:

> The reason of this upheaval was more or less the following. A certain Frank, Peter by name, nicknamed Cucupeter, had gone to worship at the Holy Sepulchre and after suffering many things at the hands of the Turks and Saracens who were ravaging Asia, he got back to his own country with difficulty. But he could not bear with having failed in his objective, and wanted to undertake the same journey again. However, he saw that he ought not to make the journey to the Holy Sepulchre alone again, lest worse things befall him, so he worked out a cunning plan. This was to preach in all the Latin countries that

38. L. Walters, The Just War and the Crusade: Antitheses or Analogies? *Monist* 57/4 (1973) 587-591.

39. Anna's reliability as a source for the First Crusade has been seriously doubted. It has been shown that her account has many defaults with regard to the chronology and presentation of events, a fact partly ascribed to her hindsight with the intention to glorify her father, Alexios I; see J. France, Anna Comnena, the Alexiad and the First Crusade, *Reading Medieval Studies* 10 (1984) 20-38; R.-J. Lilie, Anna Komnene und der erste Kreuzzug, in: *Varia II* [Poikila Byzantina 6], Bonn 1987, 49-148; R. D. Thomas, Anna Comnena's Account of the First Crusade. History and politics in the reigns of the emperor's Alexius I and Manuel I Comnenos, *BMGS* 15 (1991) 269-312. Nevertheless, she remains the only Byzantine source on which we can rely for a decoding of Byzantine attitudes towards and understanding of the First Crusade.

> "the voice of God bids me announce to all the Counts in France that they should all leave their homes and set out to worship at the Holy Sepulchre, and make haste wholeheartedly with hand and mind to liberate Jerusalem from the hand of the Hagarenes". And he really succeeded. For after inspiring the souls of all with this divine idea he managed to assemble the Franks from all sides, one after the other, with arms, horses and all the other military equipment[40].

Along these lines, Anna presents her view about the starting-point of the First Crusade. She claims that it was the will of one person, Peter the Hermit, to visit the Holy Sepulchre that had caused the movement[41]. She highlights the story about a God-sent vision ordering him to preach the liberation of Jerusalem from the Agarenoi[42], the authenticity of which she seems to doubt, if we consider the vocabulary that she uses (βουλὴν

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40. Anna Comnena X 5, 5 (297, 18-32 Reinsch – Kambylis): *Ἔσχε δὲ τὰ κατὰ τὴν τοιαύτην συγκίνησιν τὴν αἰτίαν ἐνθένδε ποθέν. Κελτός τις Πέτρος τοὔνομα, τὴν ἐπωνυμίαν Κουκούπετρος, εἰς προσκύνησιν τοῦ ἁγίου τάφου ἀπελθὼν καὶ πολλὰ δεινὰ πεπονθὼς παρὰ τῶν τὴν Ἀσίαν πᾶσαν ληξομένων Τούρκων τε καὶ Σαρακηνῶν μόγις ἐπανῆλθεν εἰς τὰ ἴδια. Καὶ διαμαρτὼν τοῦ σκοποῦ οὐκ ἔφερεν, ἀλλ' αὖθις ἠβούλετο τῆς αὐτῆς ἅψασθαι ὁδοῦ. Συνιδὼν δὲ ὡς οὐ χρὴ μόνον αὖθις τῆς πρὸς τὸν ἅγιον τάφον ὁδοιπορίας ἅψασθαι, ἵνα μὴ χεῖρόν τι γένηταί οἱ, βουλὴν βουλεύεται συνετήν. Ἡ δὲ ἦν διακηρυκεῦσαι εἰς ἁπάσας τὰς τῶν Λατίνων χώρας ὡς «Ὀμφὴ θεία παρακελεύεταί με πᾶσι τοῖς ἐν Φραγγίᾳ κόμησι κηρῦξαι, ἅπαντας τῶν ἰδίων ἀπᾶραι καὶ εἰς προσκύνησιν τοῦ ἁγίου τάφου ἀπελθεῖν καὶ σπεῦσαι ὅλῃ χειρὶ καὶ γνώμῃ τῆς τῶν Ἀγαρηνῶν τὰ Ἱεροσόλυμα λυτρώσασθαι χειρός». Καὶ μέντοι καὶ κατώρθωκεν. Ὥσπερ γάρ τινα θείαν ὀμφὴν ἐνθέμενος εἰς τὰς ἁπάντων ψυχὰς τοὺς ὁπουδήποτε Κελτοὺς ἄλλον ἀλλαχόθεν σὺν ὅπλοις καὶ ἵπποις καὶ τῇ λοιπῇ τοῦ πολέμου παρασκευῇ συναθροίζεσθαι παρεσκεύαζε.* Cf. E. A. Dawes, *The Alexiad of the Princess Anna Comnena. Being the History of the Reign of her Father, Alexius I, Emperor of the Romans, 1081–1118 A. D.*, London 1928, 248-249.

41. On the reasons for the total absence of any mention of Pope Urban's II role by the initiation of the First Crusade in *Alexias* see Thomas, Anna Comnena's Account, 273-276, 283-284; P. Stephenson, Anna Comnena's Alexias as a source of the Second Crusade? *JMedHist* 29 (2003) 50-54.

42. On the ambiguous role of Peter the Hermit by the initiation of the First Crusade see E. O. Blake – C. Morris, A Hermit goes to war: Peter and the origins of the First Crusade, in: *Monks, Hermits and the Ascetic Tradition. Papers read at the 1984 Summer Meeting and 1985 Winter Meeting of the Ecclesiastical History Society*, ed. W. J. Sheils [= *Studies in Church History* 22 (1985) 79-107]; C. Morris, Peter the Hermit and the Chroniclers, in: *The First Crusade: Origins and Impact*, ed. J. Philips, Manchester-New York 1997, 21-34.

βουλεύεται)[43]. However, it is obvious that she has no objection against the justice of the cause of the protection of the pilgrims and the liberation (λυτρώσασθαι) of former Christian (i.e. Roman) lands. It is particularly interesting though, that she does not emphasize the religion of the enemies as a reason for war. She refers to them as *Tourkoi, Sarakenoi* and *Agarenoi,* but not as infidels. Later, she makes a clear distinction between the political aspect of the Crusade, which contradicted Byzantine interests and therefore was clearly viewed negatively by the Byzantines, and the ideological aspect which she seems again to have no objection against:

> And such an upheaval of both men and women took place then as had never occurred within human memory, the simpler-minded were urged on by the real desire of worshipping at our Lord's Sepulchre, and visiting the sacred places; but the more astute, especially men like Bohemund and those of like mind, had another secret reason, namely, the hope that while on their travels they might by some means be able to seize the capital itself, looking upon this as a kind of corollary[44].

In this statement, it is once again evident that the Byzantine author differentiates between a just cause, i.e. free pilgrimage to the Holy Sepulchre, which she does not object to, and an unjust cause, i.e. an attack against Byzantium, which she clearly condemns[45]. By no means though is

43. Cf. Lilie, Anna Komnene und der erste Kreuzzug, 63.

44. Anna Comnena X 5, 10 (299, 76-82 Reinsch – Kambylis): *Καὶ γέγονε συγκίνησις οἵαν οὐδέπω τις μέμνηται ἀνδρῶν τε καὶ γυναικῶν, τῶν μὲν ἁπλουστέρων ὡς τὸν τοῦ Κυρίου προσκυνῆσαι τάφον καὶ τὰ κατὰ τοὺς ἱεροὺς ἱστορῆσαι τόπους ἐπειγομένων ἐπ' ἀληθείᾳ, τῶν δέ γε πονηροτέρων καὶ μᾶλλον ὁποῖος ὁ Βαϊμοῦντος καὶ οἱ τούτου ὁμόφρονες ἄλλον ἐνδομυχοῦντα λογισμὸν ἐχόντων, εἴ που ἐν τῷ διέρχεσθαι δυνηθεῖεν καὶ αὐτὴν τὴν βασιλεύουσαν κατασχεῖν καθάπερ πόρισμά τι ταύτην εὑρηκότες.* Cf. Dawes, *Alexiad*, 250. See also Anna Comnena X 6, 7 (301, 57-63 Reinsch – Kambylis) and Ioannes Cinnamus 67, 3-10, 67, 20-68, 3 (Meineke) for a similar reaction to the Second Crusade.

45. According to Lilie, Anna Komnene und die Lateiner, 173: Anna, apart form her view of the First Crusade as a threat for Constantinople, seems to recognize in her narration the just cause of the liberation of Christians and their lands. With respect to that, let us not forget that Anna wrote her book about the time of the Second Crusade. This means that her views about the First Crusade do not reflect the reaction of an eye-witness towards a foreign and strange phenomenon experienced for the first time. On the one hand, she is writing by hindsight and her opinion is biased by her intention to justify the actions of her father against a movement which in the time of the wirtting of her book was undoubtedly considered to have injured Byzantine political interests. Thus, she tries to downplay her

she demonstrating an understanding for a concept of divinely ordained warfare.

With respect to that, I think the following question needs an answer: Leaving the political aspect of the First Crusade aside, did the ideas of *deus vult* and *remissio peccatorum* or the idea of a just war, i.e. a war of a reconquest of Christian – Roman land, initially shape the ideological image of the movement by the Byzantines? Regarding the Latin doctrine of indulgence, Kolbaba makes the reasonable observation that "the full import of a Latin doctrine could remain unknown in the East for decades, especially when that doctrine was continually changing"[46]. In addition to that, it is important to say that the ideological image of the Crusades is a matter of discussion until the present day. Modern scholars have pointed out that the initial motive for the movement was the idea of a 'reconquista' in order to support the eastern Christians, the Byzantines, to regain their lands. The papal proclamations at Clermont, however, granted the movement the image of an armed pilgrimage towards Jerusalem among the masses, which gradually evolved into a perception of divinely ordained warfare, since the main motivation of the participants became to fulfill God's will and achieve plenary remission of sins through the killing of infidels[47].

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father's contribution to its emergence and to discharge him of the Latin accusations about the untrustworthy Byzantines. On the other hand, her positions in regard to the religious dimension of warfare also reflect her perception of the Second Crusade. For Anna's hindsight regarding the Crusade as well as for reflections of the concerns of mid-twelfth century in the *Alexias* see J. Shepard, Aspects of Byzantine attitudes and policy towards the West in the tenth and the eleventh centuries, *BF* 13 (1988) 112-115; Idem, Cross-purposes: Alexius Comnenus and the First Crusade, in: *The First Crusade: Origins and Impact,* ed. J. Philips, Manchester-New York 1997, 107-129; Thomas, Anna Comnena's Account, 293-294, 300ff.; P. Magdalino, The Pen of the Aunt: Echoes of the Mid-Twelfth Century in the Alexiad, in: *Anna Komnene and Her Times*, ed. Th. Gouma-Peterson, New York-London 2000, 15-44; Stephenson, Anna Comnena's Alexiad, 41-54.

46. Kolbaba, Fighting for Christianity, 216.

47. Erdmann, *Die Entstehung des Kreuzzugsgedankens*, 284-325; Becker, *Papst Urban II.,* 333-385; Mayer, *Geschichte der Kreuzzüge*, 15-45; Hiestand, *"Gott will es!"*, 6; J. Riley-Smith, Der Aufruf von Clermont und seine Folgen, in: *Die Kreuzzüge: Kein Krieg ist heilig*, ed. H.-J. Kotzur, Mainz 2004, 51-57. For a gradual development of the martyr-concept among the Crusaders see Idem, *The First Crusade*, 116; Blake, 'Crusade Idea', 11-31; Cowdrey, Reform Papacy, 65-83.

Keeping all that in mind, I believe that the absence of a Byzantine polemic against the core ideas of *crusade*, which made it a notion of 'holy war' and which were similar to the core ideas of *jihad*, was due to the fact that the idea of a just cause of liberation of Christian-Roman lands dominated the ideological image of the movement by the Byzantine elite. This seems to me to explain why Anna Comnena, although hostile towards the movement, had no objection against the justice of the initial cause, as argued above. However, the difference of attitude towards the religious dimension of warfare between Byzantines and Latins seems to be revealedby one reference of Anna Comnena to the Latin image of the warrior-priest, which she explicitly rejects in her text:

> For the rules concerning priests are not the same among the Latins as they are with us; For we are given the command by the canonical laws and the teaching of the Gospel, "Touch not, taste not, handle not! For thou art consecrated". Whereas the Latin barbarian will simultaneously handle divine things, and wear his shield on his left arm, and hold his spear in his right hand, and at one and the same time he communicates the body and blood of God, and looks murderously and becomes 'a man of blood', as it says in the psalm of David. For this barbarian race is no less devoted to sacred things than it is to war. And so this man of violence rather than priest wore his priestly garb at the same time that he handled the oar and had an eye equally to naval or land warfare, fighting simultaneously with the sea and with men[48].

48. Anna Comnena X 8, 8 (306, 9-307, 20 Reinsch – Kambylis): *Οὐ γὰρ κατὰ τὰ αὐτὰ ἡμῖν τε καὶ τοῖς Λατίνοις περὶ τῶν ἱερωμένων δέδοκται· ἀλλ' ἡμεῖς μὲν ἐντετάλμεθα παρά τε τῶν κανόνων καὶ νόμων καὶ τοῦ εὐαγγελικοῦ δόγματος «Μὴ θίξῃς, μὴ γρύξῃς, μὴ ἅψῃ ἱερωμένος γὰρ εἶ». Ὁ δέ τοι βάρβαρος Λατῖνος ἅμα τε τὰ θεῖα μεταχειριεῖται καὶ τὴν ἀσπίδα ἐπὶ τοῦ λαιοῦ θέμενος καὶ τὸ δόρυ τῇ δεξιᾷ ἐναγκαλισάμενος ὁμοῦ τε μεταδίδωσι τοῦ θείου σώματός τε καὶ αἵματος καὶ φόνιον ὁρᾷ καὶ αἱμάτων ἀνὴρ κατὰ τὸν Δαυιτικὸν ψαλμὸν γίνεται. Οὕτως ἐστὶ τὸ βάρβαρον τοῦτο γένος οὐχ ἧττον ἱερατικὸν ἢ φιλοπόλεμον. Οὗτος τοίνυν ὁ ῥέκτης μᾶλλον ἢ ἱερεὺς ὁμοῦ τε καὶ τὴν ἱερατικὴν στολὴν ἐνεδιδύσκετο καὶ τὴν κώπην μετεχειρίζετο καὶ πρὸς ναυτικὸν πόλεμον καὶ μάχην ἀφώρα κατὰ ταὐτὸν καὶ θαλάττῃ καὶ ἀνδράσι μαχόμενος.* Cf. Dawes, *Alexiad*, 256. See also the passage in Anna Comnene X 8, 9 (307, 24-308, 43 Reinsch – Kambylis) in which the author rounds out the image of the warlike Latin priest by reporting that he fought as a savage against a Byzantine opponent and threw even loaves of barley bread (implying the *azyma* used at the celebration of the Latin mass) at him after all his stones and arrows were exhausted; on a commentary

Although the Byzantines were aware of the existence of such a practice by Latin bishops already before the period of the Crusades[49], Anna's reference makes it clear that they had no understanding for a higher religious cause, a divine order, which could overshadow the canonical norms and justify the participation of priests in warfare.

Obviously, the main subject of controversy between the Byzantines and the Latins during the passing of the First Crusade was not the religious character of warfare. On the one hand, the Byzantines were more concerned about the political consequences of this new phenomenon and focused less on its ideological particularities, proven by the fact that Alexios was primarily concerned to bind the leaders of the Crusade with oaths of loyalty to the Byzantine emperor[50]. On the other hand, the main goal of the leaders of the

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to this passage see Thomas, Anna Comnena's Account, 277; Stephenson, Anna Comnena's Alexiad, 52.

49. Cf. the Byzantine complaint in the letter of Michael Keroularios to Peter of Antioch in 1054, *Cerularius, Encyclica*, in: J.-P. Migne, *Patrologiae cursus completus* [series Graeca] 120, Paris 1857-1866, 793-794.

50. Anna Comnena X 10, 5, X 11, 2, X 11, 5 (315, 66-68, 317, 32-318, 36, 318, 65-319, 70 Reinsch – Kambylis); Nicetas Choniates 61.73-77 (Van Dieten). The ideological background that motivated Alexios' policy and enabled an agreement for common action was clearly the Byzantine concept of a just war for the *restauratio imperii*. From the Crusaders' point of view, apart from the political and military conditions that forced them to agree to the oaths, there was also a similar ideological background that facilitated the consensus, for at least a part of the military leaders of the Crusade were ideologically motivated by the Pope not only to liberate Jerusalem but also to help the eastern Christians to restore their state, a task which had been one of the generating ideas of the movement; see Erdmann, *Die Enstehung des Kreuzzugsgedankens*, 306-312; Becker, *Papst Urban II.*, 420-424. On the oaths of the leaders of the First Crusade see Lilie, *Byzanz und die Kreuzfahrerstaaten*, 6-24; J. H. Pryor, The oaths of the leaders of the First Crusade to emperor Alexius I Comnenus: fealty, homage – pistis, douleia, *Parergon*, *Bulletin of the Australian and New Zealand Association for Medieval and Renaissance Studies*, n. s. 2 (1984) 111ff.; J. Shepard, When Greek meets Greek: Alexius Comnenus and Bohemond in 1097-1098, *BMGS* 12 (1988) 227-241. Manuel I employed the same policy as his father when he was faced with the Second Crusade, although the ideological and political circumstances had extensively changed due to the development of the First Crusade and the establishment of the Crusader States in the East; cf. F. Dölger, *Regesten der Kaiserurkunden des Oströmischen Reiches von 56 –1453, II. Teil: Regesten von 1025–1204*, zweite, erweiterte Auflage bearbeitet von P. Wirth mit Nachträgen zu Regesten Faszikel 3, München1995, 1348, 1349; Lilie, *Byzanz und die Kreuzfahrerstaaten*, 143-144.

Crusade on their way to the Holy Land was certainly not to manifest a full theory of the core crusade perception of war as a divinely ordained means of absolution (which by that time probably did not yet exist)[51], but to ensure that Byzantium was going to support or at least not hinder their mission. The image of the First Crusade as a war of liberation of Christian lands (which also happened to be former Roman lands) from the Seljuk-Turks[52] along with the idea of a pilgrimage, facilitated an ideological understanding between the Crusader leaders and the Byzantine elite that could help to mitigate the controversial political interests. Therefore, it is reasonable to assume that both sides highlighted this common idea, although from a different perspective and with different goals, in order to come to an agreement.

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51. According to Riley-Smith, *The First Crusade*, 116, "the conviction that dead Crusaders had achieved martyrdom once again seems to have dawned gradually on the participants with the crossing of Asia Minor, as they became certain that they were engaged in a divine enterprise". This gradual development of the idea of divinely ordained and spiritually meritorious warfare indicates that not even the Crusaders were in position to manifest a clear conception of a war of religion by their first contact with the Byzantines. Moreover, the image of *crusade* as a pilgrimage for penitence hindered from the outsiders point of view a direct connection between war and salvation, since all participants of the pilgrimage, also the ones that did not fight, could claim remission of sins; cf. Riley-Smith, *The First Crusade*, 114-116.

52. With respect to that, let us be reminded that the First Crusade – despite Anna's intention in retrospect to conceal it – was partly a response to Alexios' policy that aimed to involve the Latin West in his war against the Turks (cf. Shepard, Aspects of Byzantine attitudes, 114-115; Thomas, Anna Comnena's Account, 284-285; P. Stephenson, *Byzantium's Balkan Frontier, A Political Study of the Northen Balkans*, 900-1204, Cambridge 2000, 174-177). The diplomatic contacts between the Byzantine emperor and Urban II (the ideological and political generator of the movement) preceding the First Crusade prove that the former was not taken by surprise, although he had probably not wished for such a big movement the goals of which would go beyond the Byzantine policy of reconquest. This indicates that, leaving the political complications caused by the presence of politically ambitious western Lords with their armies on Byzantine territory aside, there was a common ideological ground, i.e. war of reconquest/liberation of Roman–Christian lands that could function as a common ideological starting-point for a political agreement; on the contacts between Alexios I and Urban II see Erdmann, *Die Entstehung des Kreuzzugsgedankens*, 296-303; P. Charanis, Byzantium, the West and the Origins of the First Crusade, *Byz* 19 (1949) 17-36; Becker, *Papst Urban II.*, 414-419; Harris, *Byzantium and the Crusades*, 47-51.

However, the presence of priests as warriors in a campaign so far away from their homeland[53] certainly raised questions among the Byzantines

53. The Latin Church and Pope Urban II himself principally neither accepted nor encouraged the participation of priests and monks as warriors in the Crusade; see Becker, *Papst Urban II.*, 376 and 390; E. Siberry, *Criticism of Crusading, 1095-1274*, Oxford 1975, 32-33; Kolia-Dermitzaki, *Ο βυζαντινός «ιερός πόλεμος»*, 57-58; J. A. Brundage, The transformed Angel (X 3.31.18): The Problem, of the Crusading Monk, in: *Studies in Medieval Cistercian History presented to Jeremiah F. O'Sullivan* [Cistercian Studies Series 13], Spencer, Mass. 1971, 55-62 [= Idem, *The Crusades, 'Holy War' and Canon Law* [Variorum], Norfolk 1991, XIII]. However, this position of the Latin Church could be considered contradictory to the perception of crusading warfare as a divinely ordained means of indulgence. Why should priests and monks be excluded from a task which was perceived as God's will and which was rewarded with plenary remission of sins, especially if we take into account that in the West a tradition of warrior-bishops already existed? In the Islamic notion of 'holy war', in which God principally commands the war, no strict distinction between priest and warrior exists. I think that this ideological contradiction resulted from the complicated ideological character of *crusade* and that we must look at the origins of the crusade idea by the council of Clermont in order to understand it. It has been argued that the initial intention of Pope and Church in Clermont has not been the proclamation of *crusade* as a means for a plenary remission of sins but rather for the remission of penitential chastisement imposed by the church. Nevertheless, the dynamic of the papal proclamation exceeded the ideological framework of the Church transforming thus a just war of reconquest and penitence into a 'holy war' of absolution, see Mayer, *Geschichte der Kreuzzüge*, 39-46; cf. Hehl, Was ist eigentlich ein Kreuzzug?, 311-317; J.A. Brundage, Holy War and the Medieval Lawyers, in: *The 'Holy War'*, ed. Th. P. Murphy. Columbus, Ohio 1976, 19 [= Idem, *The Crusades, 'Holy War' and Canon Law* [Variorum]. Norfolk 1991, X]; A. Bysted, Indulgences, Satisfaction and the Heart's Contrition in Twelfth-century Crusadind Theology, in: *Medieaval History Writing and Crusading Ideology*, ed. T. M. S. Lehtonen – K. V. Jensen [Studia Fennica Historica 9], Tampere 2005, 85-93. Taking into account that in Islam – as opposed to Christianity – the perception of war as a means of absolution and sanctification emerged from and was analogous to the ideological framework of the religion (cf. the discussion on 'holy war' authorized by the sources of religion in Steffen, *Holy War*, 192-198), the negative position of the Latin Church towards the matter of a fighting clergy reflects, in my view, the ideological incompatibility of the 'holy war' concept with the new-testamentary Christian principles which defined war and killing as antithetical to God and religion. Consequently, the position of the Latin Church towards the issue of a fighting clergy shows that the 'holy war' aspect of *crusade* was based on a rehabilitation of the old-testamentary relation between God and war. Thus, the concept of *crusade* formed an innovation in regard to the new-testamentary ideological framework of Christendom which defined war as a sin rather as a means of salvation (on the re-emergence of old-testamentary views of war during the eleventh century see Hehl, Was ist eigentlich ein Kreuzzug?, 305-308). Such an innovation never took place in Byzantium where the Church never took

regarding the motivation and the religious perception of crusading warfare. The fact that Latin priests were willing and felt legitimated to fight against the infidel as well as against Christians for the sake of their cause was fundamentally opposed to eastern Christian mentality according to which war was a sin and as such could not be the task of a servant of God[54]. Therefore, Anna's deprecatory reference to the participation of Latin priests as warriors in the First Crusade is a further indication of the principally negative Byzantine attitude towards a conception of warfare as a divinely ordained means of religion.

2.2. The particular case of Nicetas Choniates

Similarly to Anna Comnena, Nicetas Choniates seems to distinguish between the just cause of the reconquest of Christian land and the political

the initiative to declare a war on God's command and prevented emperor Nicephorus II Phocas from introducing the innovation of the soldier-martyr concept, when the latter tried to do so. That is why in the Byzantine war ethic participation in warfare was perceived as a sin which was exceptionally forgiven – in the framework of a religious *oikonomia* – explicitly for the ones that were obliged to fight, i.e. the soldiers; see Stouraitis, Methodologische Überlegungen, 274-275 and 283-285. Byzantine priests were not allowed to fight and were punished when they did so, as some exceptional cases of defensive warfare in the eastern provinces of the Empire make it evident; cf. Beck, *Nomos, Kanon und Staatsraison*, 23; P. Viscuso, Christian Participation in Warfare. A Byzantine View, in: *Peace and War in Byzantium. Studies in honor of G. T. Dennis*, ed. T. S. Miller – J. Nesbitt, Washington, D.C. 1995, 38-39; Stouraitis, *Krieg und Frieden*, 358-360. Instead, the crusade concept as developed in the Latin world after the papal proclamations in Clermont could not prevent a great number of clerics from fighting for the cause of God. The warrior-bishops as well as the orders of warrior-monks, which were created after 1095 (cf. N. Heutger, Die Ritterorden im Hieligen Land: Die Hospitäler und Ordensgemeinschaften, in: *Die Kreuzzüge: Kein Krieg ist Heilig*, ed. H.-J. Kotzur, Mainz 2004, 138-153), were a result of the fact that the prohibition of fighting, while coinciding with the ideological basis of the new-testamentary Christian religion, stood in clear contradiction with the core ideas of *deus vult* and *remissio peccatorum* that promoted a perception of warfare as God's will and a vehicle that led to eternal life. This shows that, when a perception of divinely ordained warfare exists, it motivates all believers, i.e. also the members of the clergy, to fight on God's command and legitimizes ideologically their participation in warfare.

54. On the ideological background that prevented Byzantine priests from participating in war see Kolia-Dermitzaki, *Ο βυζαντινός «ιερός πόλεμος»*, 375-377; Kolbaba, Fighting for Christianity, 214-215; Eadem, *The Byzantine Lists. Errors of the Latins*, Urbana - Chicago 2000, 48-51; Stouraitis, *Krieg und Frieden*, 357-360.

aspect of the Crusade that posed a threat to the empire[55]. Most interesting regarding his narration though is a speech that, according to Choniates, the French king Louis VII held before a battle against the Turks at the river Meander in Asia Minor in the course of the Second Crusade. The speech is dominated by a strong religious rhetoric which goes beyond the image of the Crusade as a just war of reconquest:

> Even though we be concerned about our going straight to the eternal mansions (for God is not so unjust that he does not see the cause which had led us on this course and therefore not admit us into the virgin meadows and shady resting places in Eden, for we have abandoned our country and have chosen to die for him rather than to live)... now stand bravely and fight stoutly[56]...
>
> ... As we are a sacred host and a God-chosen army, let us not ignobly love our lives more than a Crusade-loving and everlastingly remembered death. If Crusade died for us, how much more justified are we to die for him? Let a noble end attend such a noble venture. We shall fight with confidence in Crusade and in the full knowledge that we shall crush the enemy; the victory will not be difficult, for none will be able to sustain our onslaught, but rather they shall all give way before our fit charge. Should we fall in battle, God forbid, to die for Christ is a fair winding sheet. Let a Turkish archer strike me down for Christ's shake; one must fall asleep with fairer hopes in such a death and ride the arrow like a chariot to the resting place in the beyond. May we be spared an inglorious and sinful death[57].

55. On the one hand, he presents the Crusaders as *nephos polemiōn* (cloud of enemies) which moved against the Empire. On the other hand, he says that the proclaimed goal of their movement, i.e. the reconquest of Jerusalem, was proven to be true in retrospect, acknowledging in this way the just aspect of their cause; Nicetas Choniates 60, 45-48, 61, 56-65 (Van Dieten).

56. Nicetas Choniates 69, 91-4 (Van Dieten): *Εἴπερ οὖν τῆς εὐθὺ τῶν ἀθανάτων μονῶν πορείας μέλον ὑμῖν (οὐδὲ γὰρ ἄδικος ὁ θεός, ὡς μὴ τὸ τῆς ὁδοῦ ταύτης ὁρᾶν αἰτιώμενον, μηδ' ἀκηράτων μεταδιδόναι λειμώνων καὶ σκιερῶν ἐν τῇ Ἐδὲμ καταπαύσεων οἳ τὰ οἴκοι καταλιπόντες ἀνθειλόμεθα τοῦ ζῆν τὸ ὑπὲρ αὐτοῦ θανεῖν) ... στῆτε γενναίως ἄρτι καὶ ἐρρωμένως διαγωνίσασθε.* Cf. H. J. Magoulias, *O City of Byzantium. Annals of Niketas Choniates*, Detroit 1984, 40.

57. Nicetas Choniates 69, 8-19 (Van Dieten): *Ἐπεὶ οὖν παρεμβολὴ ἁγία ἡμεῖς καὶ στρατὸς θεόλεκτος, μὴ δὴ φιλοψυχήσωμεν ἀγεννῶς πρὸς φιλόχριστον καὶ ἀείμνηστον τελευτήν. εἰ Χριστὸς ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν ἀπέθανε, πόσῳ ἡμεῖς τεθνάναι δι' αὐτόν ἐσμεν δικαιότεροι; ἀγαθῆς ταυτησὶ πορείας ἀγαθὸν ἔστω καὶ τέλος ἐφομαρτοῦν. μαχεσώμεθα*

In these lines, the author reports on the full ideological concept that motivated the Crusaders. Here, war is not perceived as a just cause within the framework of liberation – reconquest, but as a means that ensured direct access to Heaven. This reference, made through a speech attributed to one of the leaders of the Second Crusade, demonstrates that Choniates was aware of the crusade concept of indulgence by the time he was writing his book[58]. H. Hunger has argued that this speech should not be viewed as authentic but rather as one of the author's various rhetorical exercises which he liked to enrich his narration with[59]. This fact makes the ideological statements of the speech particularly interesting with respect to the question of the author's understanding of *crusade*. Hunger's argument cannot be doubted, since no evidence of such a speech exists in the Latin sources of the Second Crusade[60]. Moreover, some similar rhetorical forms that Choniates uses in another part of his narration about the death of Frederick Barbarossa[61] during the Third Crusade strengthen the argument that the author employed his own rhetorical qualities to create the speech.

μετὰ τῆς ἐν Χριστῷ πεποιθήσεως καὶ τοῦ εὖ εἰδέναι ὡς τοὺς ἐχθροὺς τροπωσόμεθα, ὅτι μηδὲ δυσχερὴς ἡ νίκη γένοιτο οἷα μηδένων ὑποστησομένων τὴν προσβολήν, ἀλλὰ πάντων ἐνδωσόντων καὶ πρὸς τὴν πρώτην ὁρμήν. εἰ δ', ὅπερ ἀπείη, πεσούμεθα, καλὸν ἐντάφιον τὸ ὑπὲρ Χριστοῦ τελευτᾶν. βαλέτω με τοξότης Πέρσης ὑπὲρ Χριστοῦ· ἀφυπνωτέον μετ' ἐλπίδων χρηστοτέρων εἰς θάνατον καὶ ὅσα ὀχήματι τῷ βέλει χρηστέον πρὸς τὴν ἐκεῖ κατάπαυσιν, ἀλλὰ μὴ θανὴ προαρπασάτω ἴσως ἀκλεὴς καὶ ἐφάμαρτος. Cf. Magoulias, *O City of Byzantium*, 40.

58. Choniates, who is the first Byzantine historian to report on the Latin concept of indulgence, began writing his book in the eighth decade of the twelfth century and did not finish it until after 1204, see J. A. Van Dieten, *Nicetae Choniatae Historia* [CFHB XI/1], Berlin 1975, XCIII-XCIV; H. Hunger, *Die hochsprachliche profane Literatur der Byzantiner*, Bd. I-II, München 1978 [= *Βυζαντινή Λογοτεχνία. Η λόγια κοσμική γραμματεία των Βυζαντινών*, τόμ. Β΄. Athens 1997] 268-269; A. Karpozilos, *Βυζαντινοί ιστορικοί, τόμος Γ΄ (11ος-12ος αι.)*, Athens 2009, 703-705.

59. Hunger, *Βυζαντινή Λογοτεχνία* Β΄ 276-277.

60. For instance, Odo of Deuil who accompanied the French King and who depicts with heroic colors the battle against the Turks by the river Meander makes no mention of such a speech, see *Odo of Deuil, De profectione Ludovici VII in orientem*, ed. V. G. Berry, New York 1948, 108-111.

61. Compare the part of King Louis' speech in Nicetas Choniates 68, 16-26 (Van Dieten) with the comments on Barbarossa in Nicetas Choniates 416, 32-40 (Van Dieten).

However, two questions need to be answered in order to clarify the author's position towards the ideological concept of indulgence: First, does Choniates present his personal ideological position in the speech or is he echoing Crusader ideas which he had become familiar with through written or oral information? In the second case, a further question is raised: Should this echoing of the crusade concept of indulgence within the framework of a religious rhetoric that is similar to the religious rhetoric employed in Byzantine warfare[62] be considered proof that the author shared the same perception of warfare as a divinely ordained means of indulgence?

With respect to the first question, I think that there are some elements in the speech which show that Choniates was based on a historical core of Crusader positions. One of them is certainly the deprecatory reference about the Romans being tolerant towards the infidel Seljuks and not determined to fight against them and reconquer their own lands[63]. This reference implicates an accusation against the Byzantine emperor Manuel I and corresponds with the general Crusader attitude towards the Byzantines as unwilling to fight the infidel. In particular though, it seems to reflect the Crusaders' dissatisfaction at the time with the fact that Manuel had concluded a peace agreement with the sultan shortly before the arrival of the Second Crusade; an action that had been regarded as treacherous towards the Christian cause of the Latins[64]. Although Choniates is considered to be critical towards Manuel's reign[65], his positions towards the emperor's actions against the Second Crusade are contradictory. On the one hand, he views almost all measures taken by the emperor to control the Crusade and protect the

62. The speech is full of a religious rhetoric about a war fought with the aid and on behalf of God the goal of which is to avenge on the infidel for the occupation of the Holy Sepulchre and to protect it from them; Nicetas Choniates 68, 74-70, 42 (Van Dieten). Considering that religious rhetoric was inherent in the Byzantine concept of just war and that it served to highlight the justice of the cause of defense or liberation of Roman territories (cf. Stouraitis, *Krieg und Frieden*, 304-322), it is not strange that Nicetas uses that kind of religious rhetoric by the reproduction of Crusader positions.

63. Nicetas Choniates 70, 26-30 (Van Dieten).

64. Odo of Deuil 54 (on Manuel's peace agreement with the sultan) and 68-70 (on the image of the Byzantines as enemies who prefer to fight against Latin Christians than against the infidel); cf. Runciman, *Crusades II*, 265-266.

65. Cf. P. Magdalino, Aspects of twelfth-century Byzantine *Kaiserkritik*, *Speculum* 58 (1983) 326-346 [=Idem, *Tradition and Transformation in Medieval Byzantium* [Variorum Collected Studies], Norfolk 1991, VIII].

capital as precautious and necessary[66]. Furthermore, he is excusing Manuel for not being so keen to reconquer Byzantine territories from the Seljuks by saying that the emperor was occupied facing the Norman danger from the west[67]. On the other hand, a certain criticism is traceable in his text, which corresponds with the Latin accusations against the Byzantines. He condemns the behavior of the Byzantine population towards the Crusade, for which, he says, it is not certain whether the emperor was to blame or not, whereas he directly accuses Manuel for ordering the use of a debased silver coin in the trade with the Latins as well as for sending letters to the Turks and encouraging them to take action against the Crusade[68]. This contradictory attitude points out that Choniates probably drew his material from different sources some of which were reproducing Latin positions. Considering this along with the fact that the author presents the idea of indulgence through war coming out of the mouth of a Crusader King, avoiding thus to present it as his own, I think that the reference to the crusade concept of indulgence in the speech (which finds no equal in his whole work) does not reflect his personal ideas but is rather echoing the Crusader attitude[69]. Consequently,

66. Nicetas Choniates 61, 66-62, 9, 69, 41-44 (Van Dieten); cf. Lilie, *Byzanz und die Kreuzfahrerstaaten*, 282.

67. According to Nicetas Choniates 72, 82-89 (Van Dieten), while the Crusaders on their way to Jerusalem were crossing territories, which were once subject to the Romans and now ruled by the Barbarians, who had conquered them thanks to the remissness of the Roman rulers who had been unwilling to undertake pains and dangers for the lands entrusted to their safekeeping, Manuel was thinking about how to face the Norman danger of Roger II Guiscard who had attacked Corfu (1147). In this case, the author puts the blame for the loss of Roman territories to the Seljuk Turks on the Emperors that were reigning when these territories were lost, while he clearly excuses Manuel for not being in position to devote himself to the war against the Turks, since the latter had to face the danger of the Normans in the west.

68. Nicetas Choniates 66, 32-67, 40 (Van Dieten); cf. O. Kresten, review of S. Kindlimann, *Die Eroberung von Konstantinopel als politische Forderung des Westens im Hochmittelalter. Studien zur Entwickling der Idee eines lateinischen Kaiserreichs in Byzanz* [Geist und Werk der Zeiten. Arbeiten aus dem Historischen Seminar der Universität Zürich 20], Zürich 1969, in: *JÖB* 20 (1971) 324-325.

69. A. Kolia-Dermitzaki, Die Kreuzfahrer und die Kreuzzüge im Sprachgebrauch der Byzantiner, *JÖB* 41 (1991), 187, n. 90 also observes that Choniates' report on the indulgence concept through a speech attributed to a Crusader King should only be considered a reproduction of Latin attitudes and therefore not representative of the author's personal ideas.

Choniates' willingness to reproduce that concept has to be further clarified in relation to his understanding of the Crusade as a just war of liberation of Christian (Roman) lands from the Muslims as well as to the Byzantine perception of just war as a sin which was exceptionally forgiven by God and therefore could not exclude a good Christian soldier from Heaven.

Choniates' praise for Fredrick I Barbarossa in his narration of the latter's deeds on his way to the Holy Land verifies the author's positive position towards the idea of the liberation of Christians and their lands from Muslim rule[70]. Particularly informative of his understanding of *crusade* are the comments that Nicetas makes about Frederick's death in June 1190 by the river Saleph near Seleucia. He emphasizes that this King was praiseworthy not only for his noble descent and because he ruled over many people:

> Setting aside fatherland, royal luxury and repose, the worldly happiness of enjoying the company of his loved ones at home, and his sumptuous way of life, he chose instead to suffer affliction with the Christians of Palestine for the name of Christ and due regard for his life-giving tomb. Thus he preferred a foreign land to his own and never slackened his rapid pace at the long distances, the grievous way, and the dangers posed by the foreign nations through which he had to pass[71].
>
> Thus the man's zeal was apostolic, his purpose dear to God, and his achievement beyond perfection. Those who lift their minds to the

70. Nicetas Choniates 412ff. (Van Dieten). The positive image of Barbarossa stands in clear contradiction with Choniates' negative depiction of the Byzantine emperor Isaac I Angelos. Unlike his positive evaluation of Manuel I' actions towards the Second Crusade, Choniates is being very critical towards Isaac and the way he dealt with the Third Crusade; cf. Lilie, *Byzanz und die Kreuzfahrerstaaten*, 282-283. For the policy of Isaac I Angelos towards the crusader army of Frederick Barbarossa see Ch. M. Brand, *Byzantium Confronts the West 1180-1204*, Cambridge, Mass. 1968, 176-188.

71. Nicetas Choniates 416, 32-40 (Van Dieten): ... *ἀλλ' ὅτι τῷ τοῦ Χριστοῦ πόθῳ πυρούμενος ὑπὲρ τοὺς ὁπουδήποτε τῶν τότε Χριστιανῶν αὐτοκράτορας πατρίδα καὶ χλιδὴν βασίλειον καὶ ἀνάπαυλαν καὶ τὸν οἴκοι μετὰ τῶν φιλτάτων ὄλβον καὶ τὸν ὑπερήφανον βίοτον παρωσάμενος εἵλετο συγκακουχεῖσθαι τοῖς κατὰ Παλαιστίνην Χριστιανοῖς ὑπὲρ τοῦ ὀνόματος τοῦ Χριστοῦ καὶ τῆς τοῦ ζωοπαρόχου τάφου τιμῆς, τὴν ἀλλοτρίαν τῆς οἰκείας προκρίνας, μηδ' ὑποχαλασθεὶς τῆς ὁρμῆς τοῖς παρασάγγαις τῆς πολλῆς καὶ πάσης ἀργαλέας ὁδοῦ καὶ τοῖς ἐκ τῶν ἐθνῶν κινδύνοις, δι' ὧν παρέρχεσθαι ἤμελλεν*. Cf. Magoulias, *O City of Byzantium*, 229.

higher life as loftily expressed in the Gospels and strive earnestly to attain it ignore mundane cares as so much refuse[72].

Choniates adjusts in this case the Homeric motif of Achilles (who had chosen the pains and the glorious death at the battlefield instead of a long and luxurious life at home) to Christian morality in order to demonstrate the heroic character of Barbarossa. The author's religious rhetoric focuses on Barbarossa's objective to undertake the same labours with the Christians of Palestine who suffered under the foreign rule. In this way, Choniates emphasizes the element of liberation/defense, the basic element of the Byzantine just war concept, for the Christians of Palestine were defending themselves and their lands against the Muslims who had occupied territories which were not theirs. Protection and liberation are the two key-ideas which in Choniates ideological system connect Barbarossa's campaign with a rationalized justice and, consequently, enable the author to characterize the latter's cause dear to God, i.e. pious. In Byzantine mentality, if the cause of war was pious, then the Christian soldier fighting the war also remained pious.

With respect to that, it is important to note that Choniates is partly using similar rhetorical arguments as the ones found in the speech of Louis VII[73]. The main difference though between the words of the Crusader King and his own comments on Frederick Barbarossa is that in the second case the author does not present war *per se*, i.e. the killing of infidels or death in war against infidels, as the means that enables Barbarossa to gain eternal life. Choniates states that the German Emperor gained eternal life because he had lived his life the way the gospels dictated, i.e. because of his piety. The reference to the gospels, that is, to the New Testament, in which no single statement can be found that relates the piety of a Christian with the waging of war and the killing of men, clearly demonstrates that within Choniates' set of ideas it was not the act of war against the infidel that ensured life in

72. Nicetas Choniates 417, 46-50 (Van Dieten): *οὕτως ἀποστολικὸς ἦν τοῦ ἀνδρὸς ὁ ζῆλος καὶ θεοφιλὴς ὁ σκοπὸς καὶ τῶν ὑπερτελῶν τὸ κατόρθωμα, οἱ πρὸς τὴν ἀνάντη πολιτείαν τῆς εὐαγγελικῆς ὑψηγορίας ὅλον τὸν νοῦν ἀνατείναντες καὶ πρὸς ταύτην ἅπαντα τὸν δρόμον συντείναντες τὰ κατὰ τὸν βίον ἁπαξαπλῶς ὡς σκύβαλα παρεβλέψαντο.* Cf. Magoulias, *O City of Byzantium*, 229.

73. Compare the part of King Louis VII's speech in Nicetas Choniates 68, 76-86 (Van Dieten).

Heaven for the Christian soldier, but it was the rational justice of the cause which allowed the pious Christian soldier to remain pious during an impious situation, such as warfare, and consequently gain the Kingdom of Heaven. His ideological understanding of *crusade* was defined within the framework of the Byzantine just war concept according to which a Christian that lived his life in the way of the gospels and died in a just war gained eternal life not because but despite of his participation in warfare.

Comparing Choniates' attitude towards Barbarossa's death with the speech of Louis VII, in which the crusade concept is echoed, the issue of a differentiated perception of the common religious elements which designated the Byzantine just war and the Latin *crusade* is raised. The religious rhetoric, which was consistently employed by the Byzantines to emphasize the just character of their warfare and to underpin the idea that the pious Christian soldier fighting for a just cause did not commit a sin, corresponded to a great extent with the religious rhetoric of *crusade* in terms of expression. The common religion and the common idea of defense/liberation, i.e. of a just cause favored by God, enabled the employment of the same religious symbols and similar rhetorical forms. However, the interpretation of the religious element was essentially different regarding the perception of war as a means of plenary remission of sins[74]. The ideas of *deus vult* and *remissio*

74. In this respect, another good example is a statement of emperor Alexios I Comnenos in his letter to Abbot Oderisius of Monte Cassino (1098): "among those (i.e. the participants of the Crusade) some have been killed and some died of other causes: may they be blessed for they met their end in good intent. Moreover, we must not regard them as dead but as living and transferred to an eternal and incorruptible life", *Epistula II Alexii I Komneni ad Oderisium I de Marsis abbatem Casinensem*, in: H. Hagenmeyer, *Die Kreuzzugsbriefe aus den Jahren 1088-1100. Eine Quellensammlung zur Gesschichte des ersten Kreuzzuges*, Innsbruck 1901, 153. In this case, the emperor expresses a wish that the ones that died in the course of the Crusade should gain eternal life because they ended their lives in good intent. Hagenmeyer, *Die Kreuzzugsbriefe*, 296-297 has drawn attention to the fact that Alexios explicitly says that not only the ones who died in battle against the infidels, but also the ones who died of other causes should be considered as living. This proves that he was not thinking within the framework of a concept that defined killing or death in battle as a means of absolution. The image of the Crusade as a pilgrimage to the Holy Sepulchre, in which warfare was viewed as a necessary means of defense against the Seljuks that occupied Christian-Roman lands, enabled the Emperor to see all pilgrims that died on their way as pious. Within this framework the warrior-participants of the First Crusade could also gain eternal life not because of, but despite the fact that they were waging war, since in Byzantine thinking that

peccatorum which motivated the Crusaders and which find no equals in the Byzantine sources[75] are the two key elements that caused this essential differentiation.

In order to make this point clear, let us examine Choniates' attitude towards Manuel I's campaign to Myriokephalon (September 1176) which has been characterized as a Byzantine Crusade, i.e. a 'holy war', by modern scholars[76]. This characterization is based on the religious rhetoric of a sermon addressed to the emperor by Euthymios Malakes (early 1176) to praise the rebuilding of the fortresses Soublaion and Dorylaion[77]. Two characteristic passages of the sermon which could be viewed as an indication for a crusade concept are the following:

> But, if I should die on the field of battle, it would be a good thing to die defending Crusade and to exchange the perishable earthly Kingdom for the unshakeable Kingdom of Heaven. In sum, it is either you will receive me again as a victorious and glorious emperor or you will call me an athlete of Christ and a martyr. This is what you said[78]...
>
> ... You said: soldiers, we labor to defend piety and go to war on behalf of God. We do not conquer Barbarian cities nor pursue what it is not ours. We do no injustice to others but fight for what is our own.

was a just war and therefore not a sin that would exclude them from Heaven. On a different approach to this statement see SHEPARD, Aspects of Byzantine attitudes, 109.

75. The only case in Byzantine sources, in which the ideological core of the 'holy war' concept is testified, is the case of Nicephorus Phocas who not only proposed to the Byzantine church to proclaim all fallen soldiers into martyrs, but was also motivated by the idea of a war of religion against the Muslims, the aim of which should go beyond the limits of the Roman Empire and be the desrtruction of Mecca and the complete subordination of all the infidel to the Christians. On Phocas' case see STOURAITIS, *Krieg und Frieden*, 346-351; cf. KOLIA-DERMITZAKI, *Ο βυζαντινός «ιερός πόλεμος»*, 130-140.

76. CHALANDON, *Les Comnène*, II 503-506; MAGDALINO, *Manuel I*, 95-98, 463; A. F. STONE, Dorylaion revisited, *REB* 61 (2003) 183.

77. MAGDALINO, *Manuel I*, 96.

78. K. MPONES, *Ευθυμίου Του Μαλάκη Μητροπολίτου Νέων Πατρών Τα Σωζόμενα, Β΄*, Athens 1937, 23, 9-13: *εἰ δ' ἄρα καὶ πεσοῦμαι μαχόμενος, ἀλλὰ καλὸν ὑπεραποθανεῖν τοῦ Χριστοῦ καὶ τῆς φθαρτῆς βασιλείας τὴν μὴ σαλευόμενην ἀλλάξασθαι. κεφάλαιον τοῦ λόγου ἢ βασιλέα νικηφόρον καὶ πάλιν ὑποδέξῃ με καὶ τρισαριστέα, ἢ ἀθλητὴν Χριστοῦ καλέσεις καὶ μάρτυρα. ταῦτα ἔφης.* For the emperor's willingness to die for Christ cf. also the anonymous poem for the rebuilding of Dorylaion in S. LAMPROS (ed.), Σύμμικτα, *NE* 5 (1908) 330.

For it is abominable that the inheritance of God is stolen and reduced by the impious[79].

Based on the second passage, it is evident that the main idea which motivated and legitimated Manuel's war was the just cause of restoration of Roman rule over former Roman territory, which in Byzantine thought was identifiable with defense[80]. The reason that Manuel fought against the infidel according to the author is not because they are infidel, but because they are barbarians (i.e. foreigners) who have occupied Roman land[81]. His goal is not to conquer the cities of the infidel on God's command but cities which formerly belonged to the Empire. Thus, he remains faithful to the just war concept of Leo VI's *Tactica* according to which the Byzantines had no justification to fight against nations which stayed in their own territory irrespective of their religion[82]. God and religion are here once more viewed neither as the source of motivation nor of justification for the launching of war. In this case, we deal with a reflection of the ideological concept according to which the role of religion in warfare was a secondary one attributing to Byzantine war a religious element by association within the framework of the Empire's relation to its institutionalized religion. Consequently, the question arising is: If the principal motive of Manuel's war was not a religious one, then what differentiates this war from any other Byzantine just war? The religious rhetoric about a war fought on behalf of God and his inheritance (which in this case clearly identifies with the Byzantines and their Empire) is not new and moreover it is similar to the rhetoric employed by the Byzantines also in

79. Μπονὲς, *Τα Σωζόμενα, Β΄* 31, 5-9: *ὑπὲρ εὐσεβείας λέγων, ὦ στρατιῶται, πονοῦμεν, ὑπὲρ Θεοῦ στρατευόμεθα· οὐ βαρβαρικὰς κατέχομεν πόλεις οὐδὲ διώκομεν τὰ ἀλλότρια· οὐχ ἑτέρους ἀδικοῦμεν, ὑπὲρ τῶν ἡμετέρων μαχόμεθα· δεινόν τὴν Θ(εοῦ) κληρονομίαν ὑπὸ τῶν ἀσεβῶν λωποδυτεῖσθαι καὶ περιτέμνεσθαι.*

80. The idea of a war of reconquest is being repeatedly highlighted in numerous passages in the text, a fact that proves beyond doubt that the author thought within the frames of Byzantine just war ideology, see Μπονὲς, *Τα Σωζόμενα, Β΄* 23, 18-20, 29, 20-27, 30, 13-20, 35, 3-6, 35, 17-23, 35, 30-36.1, 46, 7-8.

81. In the text, the Muslims are mostly referred to as Persians or Barbarians and not as infidel, a fact that demonstrates that within the ideological system of the author dominated the ideological contrast Roman – Barbarian and not Christian – infidel. On the ideological – political background of the campaign as a war of restoration of Byzantine power over former Byzantine territory see Lilie, *Byzanz und die Kreuzfahrerstaaten*, 202.

82. Cf. above, n. 23.

wars against Christian enemies[83]. Comparing the central idea of the sermon with the Byzantine understanding of just war as a war fought with the help of God to defend Roman territories there is no reason to assume that the author had religion as the main motive of the war in his mind.

However, objection to this argument could be raised based on the first of the above cited passages, in which Manuel wishes for himself the title of an athlete of Christ and a martyr in case he should die in battle against the Muslims. Certainly, this is not the only case in Byzantine texts in which the title of an athlete of Christ, i.e. of a martyr, is related to Byzantine soldiers[84]. However, the equation of the soldiers with the martyrs in all these cases is

83. Cf. the religious rhetoric in the sources about a war fought for the defense of the Christians (i.e. Byzantines) against the Christian Bulgars in the area near Constantinople in the time of Romanos I Lakapenos; *Theophanes Continuatus*, ed. I. Bekker, Bonn 1838, 402, 22-403, 8; *Ioannis Scylitzae synopsis historiarum*, ed. J. Thurn [CFHB, Series Berolinensis 5], Berlin 1973, 216, 40-46; *Georgii Monachi Vitae Recentiorum Imperatorum*, ed. I. Bekker [CSHB], Bonn 1838, 895, 3-12; *Symeonis Magistri et Logothetae Chronicon*, ed. St. Wahlgren [CFHB XLIV/1], Berlin 2006, 318, 164-174.

84. The most characteristic example is the oration of Heraclius to his soldiers during the Persian wars, in which the emperor says according to Theophanes 310, 26-311, 2 (De Boor) (cf. C. Mango – R. Scott, *The Chronicle of Theophanes Confessor. Byzantine and Near Eastern History AD 284–813*, Oxford 1997, 443): "May we win the crown of martyrdom so that we may be praised in the future and receive our recompense from God". Flaig, 'Heiliger Krieg', 295 makes the correct observation that the emperor in this case does not promise his soldiers the status of a martyr but simply expresses a wish in a rhetorical manner, a fact that raises the issue of Byzantine understanding of such rhetoric. Two more examples can be found in a speech of Constantine Porphyrogenitos addressed to the army of the eastern frontier as well as in an anonymous church ceremony, cf. *De contionibus militaribus* 8, 14-18, in: R. Vári, Zum historischen Exzerptenwerke des Konstantinos Porphyrogennetos, *BZ* 17 (1908) 82-83; Detorakis Th. – Mossay J., Un office byzantin inédit pour ceux qui sont morts à la guerre, dans le Cod. Sin. Gr. 734-735, *Le Muséon* 101 (1988) 196. On an interpretation of this source information as an indication of a Byzantine notion of 'holy war' see Kolia-Dermitzaki, *Ο βυζαντινός «ιερός πόλεμος»*, 243-2455 and 258-259. For an alternative interpretation cf. Stouraitis, *Krieg und Frieden*, 338-346. Finally, in an unpublished verse encomium of Manganeios Prodromos written for Manuel I's campaign of 1146 against Ikonion the author compares the flowing blood from the emperor's wound with the blood of martyrdom shed for the honour and salvation of the faithful; on the unpublished encomium cf. Magdalino, The Pen of the Aunt, 23-24. In this case, the employment of the martyr-concept in terms of rhetorical excessiveness, which related by no means to a religious belief, becomes more than evident, since the Emperor's minor wound to the heel could barely compare to a martyr's torture and death.

expressed as a wishful appeal to God and not as an affirmative recognition of a plenary remission of sins and a martyr-status explicitly for those who lost their life in battle against the infidel. This interpretation is further underpinned by the fact that, apart from the rarity of such references in the sources, neither a cult of soldier-martyrs is evident in Byzantium (in the period of the Comnenoi or previously) nor an echo of a martyr-image of the soldiers killed in all relevant battles can be found in the sources[85].

With respect to this last argument, Choniates' account of the Myriokephalon campaign contains no evidence of a crusade or a 'holy war' spirit, neither for the part of the preparation of the campaign in Constantinople (the total absence of a 'holy war' spirit for this part of the campaign is also evident in the work of Cinnamus) nor in the detailed account of the battle[86]. The only religious element regarding the campaign is a reference to the emperor praying for God's help in the church of 'Hagia Sophia' before leaving Constantinople:

> Now prepared for the expedition, he entered the Great Church which is named for the Divine and Ineffable Wisdom and there invoked the Divinity to be his ally and to grant him victory. But that He did not assent to these pleas was evident when at the war's end victory was given to the enemy according to the inscrutable judgment of God.[87]

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85. With respect to that, it must be emphasized that the cult of military saints in Byzantium was based on the idea that their sanctification took place despite and not because of the fact that they were soldiers; cf. Beck, *Nomos, Kanon und Staatsraison*, 23-24. Moreover, many soldiers chose to enter a monastery after the end of or by interrupting their military career; another strong indication that war was not perceived as a means of penitence and absolution. For military saints in Byzantium see H. Delehaye, *Les lègendes grecques des saints militaires*, Paris 1909. For soldiers choosing the life of a monk see J. F. Haldon, *Byzantine Praetorians. An administrative, institutional and social survey of the Opsikion and tagmata, c. 580-900* [Poikila Byzantina 3], Bonn 1984 326-328; Stouraitis, Methodologische Überlegungen, 286-287.

86. Nicetas Choniates 175-191 (Van Dieten).

87. Nicetas Choniates 178, 13-17 (Van Dieten): *Ἀμέλει τοι τὰ πρὸς τὴν ἔξοδον ἑτοιμασάμενος εἴσεισι τὸν Μέγαν Νεών, ὃς ἀπὸ τῆς θείας καὶ ἀρρήτου Σοφίας ὠνόμασται, καὶ τὸ θεῖον ἐπικαλεῖται συνέριθον καὶ τὴν νίκην αἰτεῖται μὲν ἐκεῖθεν, οὐ δέχεται δέ, ὡς τὸ τοῦ πολέμου πέρας ὑπέφηνε, μετατεθεῖσαν πρὸς τὸν ἀντίπαλον ἀνεφίκτοις ἡμῖν θεϊκοῖς κρίμασιν.* Cf. Magoulias, *O City of Byzantium*, 100.

In this case, we are obviously dealing with common religious practice in the preparation of every Byzantine just war irrespective of the religion of the enemy. The emperor tried to highlight the justice of his cause by appealing to God's help before going into battle, seeking in this way to strengthen the morale of his army. Choniates reports on the emperor's appeal, even though he knows that the outcome of the war had not been successful, which indicated – as the author himself points out – that God's judgment had not been favourable to the emperor.

The author's position regarding the ideological framework of this campaign is particularly important for two reasons. First, he is the only contemporary Byzantine historian who delivers a full report on the campaign and what followed it[88]. Second, his attitude towards the alleged Crusade of Manuel I will help us to further clarify the author's own understanding of the crusade concept of indulgence which he is echoing in his book. The fact that no sign of a crusading spirit is evident in his narration raises the following questions: If Choniates had a perception of war similar to that of *crusade*, why should he conceal the alleged crusading spirit that presumably designated Manuel's campaign according to Malakes' speech, rather than highlight the ideological concept of soldier-martyr like the latter did? The argument that the author avoids to manifest the 'holy war' character of a campaign, which ended as a failure, does not qualify in my view, if we consider that this failure did not prevent Choniates to report on the emperor's appeal to God for help. Moreover, why should defeat deprive the war of its religious character? From Choniates' standpoint, defeat certainly had not deprived the campaign of its just character. The author ascribes the defeat to God's inscrutable judgment but never says that the cause of the campaign was unjust.

The most important evidence though that Manuel's campaign does not represent a Byzantine Crusade or a 'holy war' and therefore does not reflect the preponderance of such a concept within Byzantine society is the total absence of a martyr-image for the numerous Byzantine soldiers who died by the hand of the infidel enemies in the Byzantine sources. According to the speech of Malakes, Manuel had said that he would either return victorious or die and become a martyr. If we accept that this statement was not only a

88. Cinnamus' account breaks up before the battle of Myriokephalon and therefore can be useful only as a source for the preparation and the first phase of the campaign.

wish, which the pious emperor expressed in terms of rhetorical exaggeration, but that it represented a social – religious practice which related to a broadly established perception of warfare as a means of indulgence and sanctification within Byzantine society, it is not victory that should have made the soldiers of Manuel's "Crusade" into martyrs but death, even if it had come by a defeat. However, no evidence of a martyr-image for the numerous fallen soldiers can be found in Choniates' account or in any other source. On the contrary, the latter reports only on the great frustration of the living soldiers after the battle, which was directed in an unusually disrespectful manner against the emperor himself and his policy by accusing him of greed for war and power[89]. Even if those accusations against Manuel, as presented by Choniates, do not refer to a real incident but to the author's attempt to put indirectly judgment on the Emperor's policies within the framework of *Kaiserkritik*, they still reflect a certain ideological starting-point. This starting-point was designated by the absence of a preponderant idea within Byzantine society which promoted a perception of warfare as a divinely ordained means of absolution and, consequently, an image of fallen soldiers as martyrs.

The ideological image of Manuel's campaign, as presented by Choniates, is also verified in anonymous poems, written to glorify the emperor's action at Myriokephalon[90], in which no concept of *crusade* or of soldiers-martyrs is evident. The total absence of a martyr-concept in all other Byzantine sources for the campaign of 1176 along with the fact that Malakes highlights the idea of *restauratio imperii* in his sermon demonstrate in my view that the religious rhetoric, which is presented by the author in his speech, should be interpreted within the framework of the Byzantine concept of just war rather than of an alleged crusade or 'holy war' concept. The imitation of Crusader attitudes by Manuel I may be suggestive of his political need to impress the Latin world[91] (which prepared at the time for a new Crusade),

89. Nicetas Choniates 185, 52-186, 78, 187, 93-18 (Van Dieten).

90. S. Lampros, Ὁ Μαρκιανὸς κῶδιξ 524, *NE* 8 (1911) 149.

91. Cf. Manuel I Komnenos' letter to pope Eugenios III (August 1146) in which the emperor characterizes the Second Crusade a task for the benefit of the Christians against their infidel enemies, in S. Lampros, Ἀυτοκρατόρων τοῦ Βυζαντίου χρυσόβουλλα καὶ χρυσὰ γράμματα ἀναφερόμενα εἰς τὴν ἕνωσιν τῶν Ἐκκλησιῶν, *NE* 11 (1914) 112, 4-113, 4; Lilie, *Die Kreuzfahrerstaaten*, 202-203 also argues that the campaign of Myriokephalon

but it is by no means indicative of a dominating ideological perception of war as a means of indulgence and sanctification within Byzantine society. As argued above, the perception of the reconquest of Christian – Roman lands as a God-favored cause, which was common in both the concept of Byzantine just war and the concept of *crusade* facilitated the employment of a similar religious rhetoric by the ideological underpinning of warfare. The perception of the relation between religion and war however remained different.

A condemnatory statement regarding the idea that war could be viewed as God's command in the concluding lines of Choniates' text further verifies the author's differentiation from the ideological core of *crusade*. Following his description of a sculpture which depicted two wild animals involved in a deadly fight[92], the author makes the following comment:

> This mutual destruction and killing has persuaded me to say that these death-dealing evils, ruinous to men, not only are portrayed in images and not only happen to the bravest of beasts but frequently occur among the nations, such as those which have marched against us Romans, killing and being killed, perishing by the power of Christ who scatters the warmongering nations, and who does not rejoice in bloodshed, and who causes the just man to tread on the asp and the basilisk and to trample underfoot the lion and the dragon[93].

This comment relates to the events of the Fourth Crusade. The biblical idea[94] that God destroys the warmongering nations is employed by the author as an implicit accusation against the Latins that had attacked and conquered Constantinople. Choniates says explicitly that God will help the righteous, who in his ideological system are clearly identifiable with the Byzantines, to

aimed to promote an image of Manuel in the West as a Crusader and to contribute to his political relations with the Pope.

92. Nicetas Choniates 653, 26- 654, 57 (Van Dieten).

93. Nicetas Choniates 654, 57-655, 65 (Van Dieten): *ἐμοὶ δ' ἔπεισιν εἰπεῖν ὡς τὸ φθείρεσθαι παρ' ἀλλήλων καὶ σὺν ἀλλήλοις ἀπάγεσθαι τὴν ἐς θάνατον τὰ τῶν κακῶν κηρεσιφόρα καὶ ἀνθρώποις ὀλέθρια μὴ μόνον ἐν εἰκόσιν εἴη διατυποῦσθαι ἢ καὶ τοῖς ἀλκιμωτέροις τῶν ζῴων τοῦτο ἐπισυμβαίνειν, ἀλλὰ καὶ παρ' ἔθνεσι συχνάκις γίνεσθαι, ὁποῖα τοῖς Ῥωμαίοις ἡμῖν ἐπεστράτευσε, φονῶντα κατ' ἀλλήλων καὶ ὑπ' ἀλλήλων, ὀλλύμενα δυνάμει Χριστοῦ τοῦ διασκορπίζοντος ἔθνη τὰ τοὺς πολέμους θέλοντα καὶ μὴ χαίροντος αἵμασιν, ὃς καὶ δίκαιον ἐπ' ἀσπίδα καὶ βασιλίσκον δείκνυσιν ἐπιβαίνοντα καὶ λέοντα καταπατοῦντα καὶ δράκοντα.* Cf. Magoulias, *O City of Byzantium*, 362.

94. Cf. Psalm 67, 31 (Rahlfs).

triumph eventually over the unrighteous because God rejects bloodshed and punishes the nations which cause wars. The accusation against the Latins in this case is the same that Leo VI made against the Muslims in the *Tactica*[95]. In both cases, the criticism concerns the idea that war could be perceived and justified as God's command, an idea that designated the ideological core of both *crusade* and *jihād*. Furthermore, Choniates' statement also corresponds with Niketas Byzantios' statement which rejects the Muslim idea of God as the source of justification for warfare[96]. The explicit repudiation of the Latin idea of *deus vult*, which was fundamental for the motivation and legitimation of the Crusades as wars of religion, in the final lines of Choniates' text concludes the image of the author's differentiated attitude towards one of the core ideas of the crusade concept. His partly positive attitude towards the Crusades was based on an understanding of the justice of their cause, which was defined from his point of view by the idea of liberation of Christian-Roman lands and not by the idea of a war against the infidel commanded by God. Certainly, the fact that the last part of Choniates' work was written after the sack of Constantinople in 1204 implies that his attitude had been negatively influenced by this development. However, his negative position towards one of the core ideas of the 'holy war' concept cannot be simply viewed as an overreaction towards the consequences of the Fourth Crusade, since from an ideological point of view it falls into a line of Byzantine statements from the 9th century onwards, which demonstrate consistency and continuity in respect to the rejection of the idea that war could be divinely ordained and become a means of absolution.

2.3. Constantine Stilbes' denouncement of the Latin concept of indulgence

This ideological continuity is further demonstrated and confirmed in the statements of Constantine Stilbes, which represent a direct and indisputable rejection of the religious dimension of crusading warfare. In his text on the errors of the Latins, written shortly after the fall of Constantinople (1204)[97],

95. Cf. above, n. 11.

96. Cf. above, n. 10.

97. On Stilbes' text see J. Darrouzès, Le mémoire de Constantin Stilbès contre les Latins, *REB* 21 (1963) 52-100. On Stilbes' accusations against the Latins see L. Isneghi, Konstatinos Stilbes und die Fehler der Lateiner. Gedanken zum Bild der westeuropäischen Christen in Byzanz, in: *Junge Römer – Neue Griechen. Eine byzantinische Melange aus*

the Byzantine author counts among the Latin religious errors the idea of war being a means of indulgence. From a total of seventy-five accusations against the Latins given by him, three of them are of great significance in regard to the question of Byzantine attitudes towards the 'holy war' aspect of *crusade*. In his thirty-eighth accusation, he raises the issue of the fighting priests, thus demonstrating an ideological alignment with Anna Comnena in this matter:

> 38. The high-ranking priests participate in warfare and fight and are killed or become the killers of men, the very ones that are pupils of the nonviolent Christ and use the same hands to sanctify the secret body and blood[98].

Furthermore, in accusations number sixty and sixty one he is referring directly to the matter of indulgence through war:

> 60. Their [i.e. The Latins'] high-ranked priests approve of the slaughter of Christians and claim salvation for the ones doing that.
>
> 61. They glorify those among them, who are killed in battle, as saved and say that they enter heaven directly, even if they lost their lives fighting because of avarice or bloodlust or some other excess of evil[99].

Here, we are dealing with a clear concept that rejects war *per se* as means of absolution. The author denounces in the first accusation (sixty) the idea that the killing of Christians could be rewarded with salvation. In this way, he explicitly condemns the Fourth Crusade that had turned against the Christians of Constantinople. In the following accusation, he makes clear that warfare in general cannot be considered a means of salvation. By

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Wien. W. Hörandner, J. Koder, O. Kresten und W. Seibt als Festgabe zum 65. Geburtstag, ed. M. Popovic – J. Preiser-Kapeller, Wien 2008, 73-88; cf. Kolbaba, *Byzantine Lists*; Gounaridis, Η εικόνα των Λατίνων, 48ff.

98. Stilbes 70.163-71.166 (Darrouzès): *λη΄. Οἱ ἀρχιερεῖς ἐν πολέμοις καὶ αὐτοὶ παραττάτονται καὶ προπολεμούσι καὶ ἀναιρούμενοι και ἀνθρωποκτόνοι γινόμενοι οἱ του πρᾳοῦ Χριστοῦ μαθηταί, οἱ ταῖς χερσὶν ἐκείνας και το μυστικὸν ἱερατεύοντες σῶμα καὶ αἷμα.* Cf. *Cerularius, Encyclica*, in: J.-P. Migne, *Patrologiae cursus completus* [series Graeca] 120, Paris 1857-1866, 793 A.

99. Stilbes 77.270-275 (Darrouzès): *ξ. Ταῖς σφαγαῖς τῶν χριστιανῶν ἐπευδοκοῦσιν οἱ τούτων ἀρχιερεῖς καὶ μᾶλλον ὁ Πάπας καὶ σωτηρίους τοῖς δρῶσιν αὐτὰς ἀποφαίνονται.*

ξα΄. Τοὺς ἐξ αὐτῶν ἐν πολέμοις κτεινομένους σεσωσμένους δοξάζουσι καὶ κατευθύ λέγουσιν ἐλάυνειν τοῦ παραδείσου, κἂν διὰ πλεονεξίαν ἢ μιαιοφονίαν ἤ τινα κακίας ἑτέραν ὑπερβολὴν μαχόμενοι ἔπεσον.

saying that, he does not refer again only to wars fought against Christians, because he has done that already above. He now focuses on and criticizes the concept of *crusade* which was mainly perceived as divinely ordained warfare leading to absolution. The words he uses are carefully chosen in order to distinguish the concept of *crusade* from that of a *just war*. As I have already pointed out, in Byzantine conception the participation in a war fought for the maintenance of the Roman Empire against any enemy, Christian or non Christian, was not considered a sin that would prevent the pious soldier from entering Heaven. From Stilbes' standpoint, the Latins are wrong because they consider war *per se* to be a means that enabled a Christian soldier to gain salvation, even if the cause of the war was not just. It is obvious here, that Stilbes not only rejects the idea that war *per se* could be a means of indulgence but he also doubts the piety of the Crusaders and the righteousness of their cause[100]. In that way, he presents a differentiated position towards the Crusade movement from that of the previous Byzantine authors. On the one hand, he demonstrates ideological continuity by denouncing the idea of war as means of indulgence; on the other hand, he goes a step further by refusing to recognize the just war aspect of the Crusades. This differentiation must be understood as a consequence of the Latin conquest of Constantinople that ultimately changed the image of the Latins by the Byzantines from Christian adversaries into impious enemies[101]. As long as the controversy between Byzantines and Crusaders referred to the controlling of the re-conquered territories of the East, the first continued to view the latter as fellow Christians and showed ideological understanding for the just aspect of their cause, the reconquest of Christian-Roman lands from the Muslims. However, as soon as the Crusaders attacked and conquered Constantinople they became impious enemies and therefore unworthy – from a Byzantine point of view – to serve a cause as just as the war against the Muslim occupation had been.

The argument that Stilbes' rejection of the idea of spiritually meritorious death in battle was simply an exceptional reaction caused by the impact of

100. For a different interpretation of this statement see Kolia-Dermitzaki, *Ο βυζαντινός «ιερός πόλεμος»*, 356.

101. H. Ahrweiler, *Η πολιτική ιδεολογία της Βυζαντινής αυτοκρατορίας*, trans. T. Drakopoulou, Athens 1977, 116-117.

the Fourth Crusade on Byzantine attitudes towards the Latin world[102] and therefore cannot be considered representative for a general negative Byzantine position towards the crusade concept of indulgence, seems to me to ignore the ideological alignment between Stilbes' statement and the statements of Theophanes the Confessor, Niketas Byzantios, Leo VI, Constantine Porphyrogennetos and Nicetas Choniates that unanimously reject the ideas that warfare could be justified as divine will and perceived as a means of absolution and sanctification. Taking this ideological line of continuity into account, it becomes obvious that the influence of the Fourth Crusade on the writings of Stilbes is not to be detected in his denouncement of the 'holy war' aspect of *crusade* but in the fact that he refuses to acknowledge the just war aspect of crusader warfare, which before the Fourth Crusade was generally acknowledged by the Byzantine elite.

3. Twelfth-century canonists' positions towards the soldier-martyr concept

In order to conclude the image of Byzantine positions towards the concept of war as a means of indulgence and sanctification during the period of the Crusade (until 1204) we have to review the positions of the canonists of the twelfth century towards Nicephorus Phocas' concept of soldier-martyr. Ioannis Zonaras is the only Byzantine author who seems to go against the stream in regard to the negative attitudes of Byzantine authors towards the perception of war as a means of salvation in the period from the ninth to twelfth century. The author's report on Nicephorus Phocas' concept of Byzantine soldiers-martyrs in his world chronicle gives the impression that he may had a positive attitude towards the idea of plenary remission of sins through the participation in warfare:

> It seems that he (Nicephorus Phocas) related everything to military deeds. For this reason, he promulgated a dogma that the soldiers who die in battle should be honored as martyrs and praised with similar anthems and be rewarded in the same way. And if it had not been for the patriarch and some high-ranking priests as well as some spokesmen of the senate, who opposed bravely by saying "how could those, who kill or die in war, be counted among the martyrs or viewed as equal to them, while the holy canons foresee a penance

102. Kolbaba, Fighting for Christianity, 217.

for them, not to receive for three years the tremendous and holy communion", that holy decree would have been approved[103].

Based on the last line of Zonaras' report, in which he speaks of a "θεσπέσιον ... θέσπισμα", the author's position towards Nicephorus Phocas' appeal could be considered positive and function as an additional argument that even though the Church did not gave its consent to Phocas' plan, the emperor's idea was popular within Byzantine society[104]. If we were to take Zonaras' positive attitude towards the idea of spiritually meritorious death in battle for granted, then two facts imply a possible influence of the crusade concept on his differentiated attitude towards warfare: First, the fact that he writes in the twelfth century after the Second Crusade[105]; and second, that his position towards this matter is different from Scylitzes' position, whose work was probably written before or about the time of the First Crusade[106] and served as Zonaras' source for the period of Nicephorus Phocas[107].

In order to clarify that, the first question that needs an answer pertains to Zonaras' position towards the First Crusade. The author's short report on the movement includes not a single word that could even imply that he had an understanding or sympathy for the Latin concept of war as a divinely ordained means of indulgence. His position corresponds more or less with that of all other authors of the twelfth century who view the Crusades as a negative and unwelcome event[108]. This fact should be considered at least as an indication that Zonaras' attitude towards Nicephorus Phocas' concept

103. *Ioannis Zonarae epitomae historiarum libri xviii*, vol. 3, ed. T. Büttner-Wobst [CSHB], Bonn 1897506.9-19: *ἐῴκει γὰρ τὸ πᾶν τῇ στρατιώτιδι μεταχειρίσει ἐπιγραφόμενος ὅθεν καὶ δόγμα ὅσον τὸ κατ' ἐκεῖνον ἐθέσπισε τοὺς ἐν πολέμοις ἀνῃρημένους στρατιώτας ἐπ' ἴσης τιμᾶσθαι τοῖς μάρτυσι καὶ ὕμνων ὁμοίων τυγχάνειν καὶ παραπλησίως γεραίρεσθαι. καὶ εἰ μὴ ὁ πατριάρχης καί τινες τῶν ἀρχιερέων, ἀλλὰ μὴν καὶ ἔνιοι τῶν λογάδων τῆς γερουσίας γενναίως ἀντέστησαν, λέγοντες "πῶς ἂν οἱ ἐν πολέμοις ἀναιροῦντες καὶ ἀναιρούμενοι λογίζοιντό τισι μάρτυρες ἢ τοῖς μάρτυσιν ἰσοστάσιοι, οὓς οἱ θεῖοι κανόνες ὑπὸ ἐπιτίμιον ἄγουσιν, ἐπὶ τριετίαν τῆς φρικώδους καὶ ἱερᾶς αὐτοὺς ἀπείργοντες μεταλήψεως," τάχ' ἂν τὸ θεσπέσιον ἐκεῖνο κεκύρωτο θέσπισμα.*

104. Cf. Kolia-Dermitzaki, *Ο βυζαντινός «ιερός πόλεμος»*, 136-137.

105. Karpozilos, *Βυζαντινοί ιστορικοί III*, 467.

106. Hunger, *Βυζαντινή Λογοτεχνία II*, 210-215; Karpozilos, *Βυζαντινοί ιστορικοί III*, 251; E.-S. Kiapidou, *Η Σύνοψη Ιστοριών του Ιωάννη Σκυλίτζη και οι πηγές της (811-1057)*, Athens 2010, 125-136.

107. Karpozilos, *Βυζαντινοί ιστορικοί III*, 482-3.

108. Ioannes Zonaras 742, 8-15 (Büttner – Wobst).

of indulgence, which dated almost two centuries earlier, was not influenced by the similar ideas of the crusade concept. Nevertheless, if that is the case, he remains the only Byzantine author of the period from the ninth to the twelfth century who seems to have a positive attitude towards the idea that warfare was a means of indulgence and martyrdom. Michael Glycas, who also writes in the twelfth century and who reports on Nicephorus Phocas' appeal, follows Scylitzes by being critical towards it[109], while there is no positive mention of the Crusades in his work.

In view of these facts, Zonaras' allegedly positive position towards Nicephorus Phocas' notion of 'holy war' deserves reconsideration. Elsewhere, I have already pointed out that his report on Phocas' appeal to the Church contains two controversial statements[110]: On the one hand, he characterizes Phocas' proposal as a *holy decree*, which at first look seems to be a positive reaction. On the other hand, he speaks of brave opposition from the patriarch and other clerics and laymen, which hindered the approval of a new dogma by the synod. If the expression "holy decree" (θεσπέσιον ...θέσπισμα) is considered to be positive, the same counts for the expression brave opposition (γενναίως ἀντέστησαν). That makes the report incomprehensible on an ideological level. The only way to solve this problem is to consider one of the two comments as ironic. From a linguistic point of view, the expression "θεσπέσιον ...θέσπισμα" is characterized by an excessiveness that could be understood as ironic. The most important evidence though, that Zonaras – who was a canonist – was not fond of Phocas' notion of spiritually meritorious death in battle is his comment on Saint Basil's canon in which he makes the following observations:

> The saint [i.e. Basil of Caesarea] claims not in a demanding but only counseling manner that those who kill at war should refrain from the holy communion; it seems though to be a burdensome counsel the possible consequence of which is that the soldiers will be never in position to receive the holy gifts, even though they are being courageous and brave; ... For what reason should the hands of those who fight on behalf of the state and their brothers in order to avoid captivity or to free those captured be judged unclean? ... Thinking in that way, the older fathers did not regard those who killed at war

109. *Michaelis Glycae annales*, ed. I. Bekker (CSHB). Bonn 1836 572, 5-10.

110. Stouraitis, Methodologische Überlegungen, 288.

> as murderers, forgiving them because, as this saint also said, they were defending prudence and piety; ... In his canonical letter to the monk Ammun, Athanasios who was great at sacred matters mentions explicitly the following: Murder is not allowed, but the killing of the enemy in battle is legitimate and praiseworthy. Therefore, I believe that the spiritual legacy of Basil of Caesarea never predominated; it lasted though through time as an ecclesiastical tradition. When the emperor Nicephorus Phocas demanded, as it has been narrated, that those who die in war be counted among the martyrs and dignified and praised as their equals, the high-ranking priests of the time argued that it is not correct to dignify them. Because they could not convince him, they used this canon as a last resort saying: How can we count among the martyrs those who die in war, whom Basil the Great forbade the receiving of the holy gifts for three years, because their hands were not clear?[111]

As a canonist, Zonaras knew well and acknowledged the ideological value of Saint Basil's canon which the church had employed to oppose the emperor's proposal. His main argument is that the canon had a counseling

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111. G. A. Ralles – M. Potles, *Σύνταγμα τῶν θείων καὶ ἱερῶν κανόνων τῶν τε ἁγίων καὶ πανευφήμων ἀποστόλων, καὶ τῶν ἱερῶν οἰκουμενικῶν καὶ τοπικῶν συνόδων, καὶ τῶν κατὰ μέρος ἁγίων πατέρων*, vol. IV, Athens 1854-1855, 131-132: *Οὐ κατ' ἐπιταγήν φησιν ὁ ἅγιος, τοὺς ἐν πολέμοις ἀναιροῦντας ἐπὶ τριετίαν ἀπέχεσθαι τῆς κοινωνίας, ἀλλὰ κατὰ συμβουλὴν· πλὴν φορτικὴ ἡ τοιαύτη δοκεῖ συμβουλὴ· συμβαίη γὰρ ἂν ἐκ ταύτης, μηδέποτε τοὺς στρατιώτας μεταλαβεῖν τῶν θείων δώρων, καὶ μάλιστα τοὺς θάρσος ἐνδεικνυμένους, καὶ ἀριστεῖς... Διατὶ δὲ τὰς χεῖρας οὐ καθαροὶ κριθεῖεν οἱ ὑπὲρ τοῦ πολιτεύματος καὶ τῶν αδελφῶν ἀγωνιζόμενοι, ἵνα μὴ ληφθεῖεν τοῖς πολεμίοις ἢ ἵνα αἰχμαλωτισθέντας ἐλευθερώσωσιν; ... ἃ καὶ οἱ πάλαι Πατέρες λογισάμενοι, οὐ τοῖς φονεῦσι συγκατέλεξαν τοὺς ἐν πολέμοις φονεύοντας, συγγνωμονήσαντες αὐτοῖς, ὡς οὗτος ἔφησεν ὁ ἅγιος, ὡς ὑπὲρ σωφροσύνης καὶ εὐσεβείας ἀμυνομένοις· ... Ὁ δὲ τὰ θεῖα πολὺς Ἀθανάσιος, ἐν τῇ πρὸς Ἀμμοῦν μονάζοντα κανονικῇ ἐπιστολῇ ταῦτα λέγει ῥητῶς· Φονεύειν οὐκ ἔξεστιν, ἀλλ' ἐν πολέμῳ ἀναιρεῖν τοὺς αντιπάλους, ἔννομόν τε καὶ ἐπαίνου ἄξιον. Οἶμαι γοῦν, ὡς οὔποτε ἡ τοῦ μεγάλου Βασιλείου ὑποθήκη αὕτη ἐκράτησε· τέως δὲ ἐν καιρῷ τοῖς ἀντεχομένοις τῶν ἐκκλησιαστικῶν παραδόσεων ἐλυσιτέλησε. Τοῦ γὰρ βασιλέως Νικηφόρου τοῦ Φωκᾶ, ὡς ἱστόρηται, ἀπαιτοῦντος τοὺς ἐν πολέμοις ἀναιρουμένους συντάττεσθαι τοῖς μάρτυσι, καὶ κατ'ἐκείνους τιμᾶσθαι καὶ ὑμνεῖσθαι, οἱ τότε ἀριχιερεῖς ἀντεπέφερον μὴ δίκαιον εἶναι τοὺς τοιούτους τιμᾶσθαι, καὶ μὴ πείθοντες, τελευταῖον ὡς κανόνι τούτῳ ἐχρήσαντο, φάμενοι, Πῶς ἡμεῖς τοῖς μαρτυρήσασι τοὺς ἐν πολέμοις πεσόντας συναριθμήσομεν, οὓς ὁ μέγας Βασίλειος, ὡς μὴ καθαροὺς τὰς χεῖρας, ἐπὶ τριετίαν τῶν ἁγιασμάτων ἀπεῖρξε.*

character and never prevailed as a canonical praxis of the Church[112]. He never says though that the main idea of the canon (i.e. war is a sin) was wrong, but that the suggested punishment was extremely severe, i.e. unfair, for the Christian soldiers of the empire that were obliged to fight a just war for the protection or liberation of their brothers from enemy hands. This shows that his comment is not directed against the canon's principle that warfare could not be a means of salvation, but only against the practical aspect of penitential chastisement, which contradicted the Byzantine *raison d'état*[113]. His arguments clearly demonstrate that he was thinking within the framework of the Byzantine just war concept as presented in the *Tactica*. The cause that justified Byzantine warfare and exempted Christian soldiers from the burden of sin for the killing of men is here once more defined by the rational ideas of protection and liberation. In this regard, any penitential chastisements imposed by the church would unfairly exclude Roman soldiers from the benefits of their religion, since the latter had no choice but to fight in order to defend themselves and their brothers. Furthermore, the canonist makes explicit reference to the older church-fathers and in particular to the canon of Saint Athanasios in which killing in war was considered a sin exceptionally forgiven within the framework of the ecclesiastical *oikonomia*[114]. The conception of forgiveness for the sin

112. On this see Beck, *Nomos, Kanon und Staatsraison*, 27.

113. Beck, *Nomos, Kanon und Staatsraison*, 28 makes the observation that Zonaras' attitude towards both canons is primarily dictated by the political interests of the imperial state, which required that the soldiers could fight without having to fear a punishsment from the Church. Taking that into account, it becomes obvious that Zonaras' main goal was to show how the church dealt with the practical problem of the penitential chastisement of the soldiers. As a canonist who was thinking in the frameworks of *raison d'état* his goal was to demonstrate that in terms of practical use of the ecclesiastical law Athanasios' canon, which exempted the soldiers of any penitential chastisement, had prevailed. The main issue for him though was whether the soldiers should be punished or not according to canonical order, not whether killing in war was a sanctifying act that made the soldiers martyrs.

114. Beck, *Nomos, Kanon und Staatsraison*, 27 points out that Zonaras' intention in this case is not to ascribe a greater significance to the canon of Athanasios. In addition to this view, it should be emphasized that the latter's canon mentions nothing about a spiritual reward which could be related to the soldier-martyr concept. The praise of the soldiers suggested by Athanasios concerns reward and recognition by the state and their co-citizens on a secular level. Moreover, the main goal of his canon is to compromise the need of the imperial state to promote its interests through warfare with the religious ethic of the Church

of killing in a war the cause of which is not a religious one that dominates Zonaras' comment is essentially different from a conception of warfare as a divinely ordained means of absolution and sanctification[115]. In addition to that, the canonist views Basil's canon as belonging to the tradition of the church. This demonstrates that he meant only for the practical and not for the ideological aspect of the canon to be downplayed. This means that he considered its employment in case a matter of *dogma* came up as legitimate. This explains why Zonaras not only does not object or refer negatively to the employment of the canon by the Patriarch against Phocas' proposal in his comments but he also describes it in his chronicle as a brave reaction. Comparing Zonaras' thesis in his comments on Saint Basil's canon with his thesis in his chronicle it becomes evident that the canonist did not share Phocas' perception of warfare as a means of plenary remission of sins and sanctification.

Theodoros Balsamon, another canonist of the twelfth century, demonstrates a similar attitude regarding the employment of Saint Basil's canon by the Church against Nicephorus Phocas' soldier-martyr concept. He focuses as well on the issue of penitential chastisement for the soldiers and points out that the canon did not define ecclesiastical practice because of the problems that this would have caused to the armies of the empire. Then, he reports on the employment of the canon by the Church against

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by reassuring Christian soldiers that fighting on behalf of the empire did not make them sinners. On a comparative analysis of both canons of Basil and Athanasios see Stouraitis, *Krieg und Frieden*, 353-357; Idem, Methodologische Überlegungen, 283ff. For an alternative view cf. Kolia-Dermitzaki, Ο βυζαντινός «ιερός πόλεμος», 126-130, 134-136.

115. This is further proven by Zonaras' comment on Basil's fifty-fifth canon which refers to penitential chastisement for those who kill a bandit. Basil says that in this case the laymen should refrain from Holy Communion and the priests should cease from the ministry. The canonist argues that this canon is burdensome in the same way as the canon about the ones killing in battle; he then suggests that the ones killing a bandit should be viewed as worthy of reward, Ralles – Potles IV, 212-213; cf. Beck, *Nomos, Kanon und Staatsraison*, 30. Consequently, it becomes obvious that Zonaras regards the killing of a bandit and the killing of an enemy in the battlefield as equally praiseworthy. This demonstrates that he was thinking within the framework of a life-affirming concept of justice which was based on the natural-law cause of defence for the justification of the use of force. Such a perception corresponds by no means with a religious concept which facilitates a perception of warfare as a divinely ordained means of absolution.

Nicephorus Phocas' appeal without objecting to it[116]. This shows that he also distinguished between the practical and the ideological aspect of the canon by objecting to the former and accepting the latter. The significance of the canon in the ideological tradition of the Church is further verified by the position of a third canonist of that period, Alexios Aristenos, who, contrary to the other two, argues that the canon of Saint Basil retained its practical value as well, even though it contradicted Saint Athanasios' canon[117]. In view of these facts, it is obvious that the canonists' debate focused on the issue of the practical value of Saint Basil's canon. Therefore, it can by no means be considered as an indication for a dichotomy of attitudes within the Byzantine Church in regard to the question of war being a means of indulgence. The canonists who criticize the canon do not object to the spirit that created this church law but to the penal measures foreseen for the maintenance of its spirit[118].

116. Ralles – Potles IV, 133; cf. *Beck, Nomos, Kanon und Staatsraison*, 28.

117. Ralles – Potles IV, 133-134; cf. Beck, *Nomos, Kanon und Staatsraison*, 28. The last canonist who takes a positive position towards the canon and emphasizes the correctness of its employment by the rejection of Phocas' martyr-concept is Matthaios Blastares in the late Byzantine time (fourteenth century); see Ralles –Potles VI, 492. Blastares differentiates his position from the position of Zonaras and Balsamon by affirming the correctness of imposing penitential chastisement on the soldiers. Moreover, he is justifying the rejection of the Phocas' concept based on the canon; for Blastares' position see Beck, *Nomos, Kanon und Staatsraison*, 30-32; Viscuso, Christian Participation in Warfare, 33-40; Stouraitis, Methodologische Überlegungen, 288-289.

118. The only known exception with regard to the position of the Byzantine Church towards the issue of war as a means of indulgence is the case of the Patriarch Michael Autoreianos (1208-1214), who seems to have promised remission of sins to Byzantine soldiers in a letter addressed to the army of the first emperor of Nicaea Theodoros I Laskaris (1205-1222). This extraordinary action of the Patriarch, which implies a western influence, cannot be considered representative for the Byzantine society before 1204, especially if we consider that the remission of sins seems to have concerned a war against the Latins, who although hateful enemies after 1204 were Christians and not infidels; see N. Oikonomides, Cinq actes inédites du patriarche Michel Autôreianos, *REB* 25 (1967) 113-145; Beck, *Nomos, Kanon und Staatsraison*, 34-35; Kolia–Dermitzaki, *Ο βυζαντινός «ιερός πόλεμος»*, 355-358.

4. Conclusion

Byzantine polemic against the concept of *jihād* becomes evident in the sources over a century – at the least – after Islam had been established in the Arab world[119]. Byzantine polemic against the concept of *crusade* dates also over a century after the emergence of that concept in the West. The great chronological distance in both cases shows that such concepts, besides taking some time to establish within the same society, took a longer time to become well known and cause reactions within neighbouring societies. From a Byzantine perspective the Muslim concept related to a religious movement that was initially viewed as a Christian heresy and developed then into a different religion the followers of which were considered infidels. Moreover, this concept was ideologically directed against the empire and its own religion, causing thus a political, military and religious controversy. Conversely, the Latin concept emerged within a society that shared the same religion with the Byzantines and apart from certain political and cultural differences between the Hellenized East and the Latin West ideologically was not directed – at least in its initial phase – against the empire but corresponded in many aspects with its own war ideology. The ideological complexity of the crusade movement, which was generated by the idea of a

119. The establishment of Islam in its official form in the Caliphate seems to have lasted many decades, if we consider that the Koran appeared in written form towards the end of the seventh century under the rule of ʿAbd al-Malik; see R. G. Hoyland, *Seeing Islam as others saw it. A survey and evaluation of Christian, Jewish and Zoroastrian writings on early Islam* [Studies in Late Antiquity and early Islam 13], Princeton, N. J. 1997, 550-559; P. Crone – M. Cook, *Hagarism. The making of Islamic world*, Cambridge 1977, 3. This implies that also the concept of *jihād* did not dominate the whole Islamic community right from the beginning; cf. Firestone, *Jihad*, 127. The first Byzantine polemical mention against *jihād* in the *Chronographia* of Theophanes the Confessor is dated in the early years of the ninth century. For his information on the Arabs the author is probably based on eastern Greek sources that were available to him through the record of Georgius Synkellus (who had spent some time in Palestine during the second half of the eighth century) as well as on Syrian sources that had been translated in Greek towards the end of the seventh century; cf. Karpozilos, *Βυζαντινοί ιστορικοί, τόμος Β΄ (8ος – 10ος αι.)*, Athens 2002, 121-122. The fact that Patriarch Nicephorus, who wrote his *Historia Syntomos* probably a little earlier than Theophanes towards the end of the eighth century, makes no mention of the *jihād* concept is an additional indication that it was after the late eighth century that this concept became broadly known in Byzantium.

reconquest of Christian-Roman lands, but from the very beginning developed into an armed pilgrimage and a notion of divinely ordained warfare with spiritual merits for those participating in it, is the key for the decoding of Byzantine attitudes towards it.

The evidence from the Byzantine sources of the period before the Crusades demonstrates that the strong religious aspect of the Byzantine concept of *dikaios polemos* did not include the idea that war could be justified as divine will and consequently be perceived as a means of plenary remission of sins and sanctification. The source evidence after the First Crusade shows that the Byzantines were positive towards the idea of a war of reconquest of Christian (former Roman) lands from the Muslims, which is explainable in respect of the ideological correspondence of such a concept with the Byzantine concept of *restauratio imperii*. The present-day theory which explains the absence of a Byzantine polemic against the 'holy war' aspect of *crusade* before 1204, based on the argument that the Byzantines were familiar with the idea of God commanding a war and rewarding the faithful soldiers with eternal life in Heaven, is questionable insofar as it fails to explain Byzantine rejection of these very ideas in the case of Nicephorus Phocas' appeal to the Byzantine Church as well as within the framework of Byzantine polemic against the Islamic *jihād*. The problem is a theoretical one and concerns our understanding of the concept 'holy war' and its different notions within different societies. The main characteristic of a 'holy war' is that the justification of warfare is principally provided by the divine will which commands the destruction of the infidel. The propagated cause for war is in this case a purely religious one. By characterizing *crusade* or *jihād* a type of 'holy war' we recognize the different political, cultural and religious characteristics in the implementation of this concept in each society. This, however, cannot rule out the fact that the central ideas which designate both species of 'holy war', the Islamic and the Latin, remain the same. For instance, in the case of the Crusade as well as of *jihād*, it is neither the leadership of the Caliph or the Pope nor the use of the cross or the crescent as war symbols the decisive elements that make them qualify as notions of 'holy war', but the common biblical ideological core that facilitated in both cases the arbitrary justification of war action through an appeal to the divine will and, as a result, promoted a mass perception of warfare as a means to achieve the salvation of the soul. It is the preponderance of these

ideas about warfare within both the Latin and Muslim society that makes the modern concept of 'holy war' in each case applicable.

In Byzantium, the firm rejection of these concrete ideas as presented in a number of written sources both in connection to the case of Nicephorus Phocas as well as to Byzantine polemic against *jihād* demonstrates that a notion of the 'holy war' concept never became predominant within Byzantine society before the period of the Crusades[120]. This leaves us with two possible answers to the problem of the Byzantine understanding of *crusade* in the period from 1096 to 1204: Either the Byzantines regarded the Crusades as just wars of reconquest or the influence of the crusade ideas of *deus vult* and *remissio peccatorum* on Byzantine mentality after 1096 caused a change regarding the principal Byzantine attitude towards the relation between religion and warfare. The negative positions of the twelfth century canonists towards Nicephorus Phocas' concept of soldier-martyr demonstrate that no such change of mind had taken place and speaks for an ideological continuity. This continuity is further verified by the negative attitude of Anna Comnena, Nicetas Choniates and Constantine Stilbes towards the issue of a fighting clergy as well as towards the idea that warfare could be justified as divine will and become a means of absolution. In this light, the long absence of a Byzantine polemic against the Latin ideas of divinely ordained warfare and spiritually meritorious death in battle before 1204 – although these were standing in clear contradiction to the preponderant conceptions within Byzantine society that the waging of warfare could not be justified as God's command and that from a religious point of view just war (*dikaios polemos*) was principally perceived as a sin exceptionally forgiven by God – can be explained as a result of the interaction between the image of *crusade* by the Byzantines, which before the events of 1204 consisted in the familiar idea of a war of liberation/restoration favored by

120. This is by no means to say that the Byzantine Chruch was not fully supporting the belligerent interests of the Byzantine ruling elite by accepting and legitimizing the identification of the idea of defense with the idea of reconquest, permitting thus the consistent employement of religious rhetoric and symbolism in all Byzantine warfare, defensive or offensive. This demonstrates that Eastern Christianity has also a good share along with the Latin Church and Islam in the promotion of military violence in the Middle Ages. On the distortion of the concepts of peace and defense within Byzantine war ideology and the offensive disposition of the Byzantine state see Stouraitis, *Krieg und Frieden*, 190-302.

God, and the common religion, which facilitated the use of similar religious rhetoric and symbolism in warfare.

Jihād and Crusade: Byzantine Positions Towards the Notions of 'Holy War'

The current study aims to re-approach the issue of religious warfare in Byzantium by exploring Byzantine attitudes towards the conception of *crusade* in the period 1096-1204. The study aims to analyse Byzantine positions towards the idea of divinely ordained and spiritually meritorious warfare, based on a comparison of Byzantine reactions to the Muslim concept of *jihād* with Byzantine reactions to the western Christian concept of *crusade*. The main part of the paper focuses on the exploration of Byzantine attitudes towards the two core ideas that made *crusade* a notion of 'holy war', the ideas of *deus vult* and *remissio peccatorum.*