INTERNAL STRIFE AND UNREST
IN LATER BYZANTIUM, XIth-XIIIth CENTURIES
(A.D. 1025-1261)
THE CASE OF URBAN AND PROVINCIAL INSURRECTIONS
(CAUSES AND EFFECTS)*

I

The late Byzantine period, which is inaugurated with the death of
the warrior-emperor Basil II the 'Bulgar slayer' (Bulgaroctonus) on 15
December 1025, was one of steadily accelerating political, economic,
administrative and military decline for the Eastern Empire. D. Zaky-
thenos aptly observed that, although in the years following Basil II's
death the Empire seems to have maintained its territorial status, this
preservation was in fact superficial, as the Turkish invasions and settle­
ments manifest1. The Empire was literally 'impregnated' with both re­
bellious and separatist uprisings on the part of eminent representatives
of its military aristocracy, especially during the XIth, XIIth and XIIIth
centuries2. In the course of the former, i.e. rebellious movements, the
insurgents attempted to overthrow the Byzantine ruler (of Constanti­
nople until 1204 and of Nicaea following the latter date), whereas in
the course of the latter, i.e. separatist or autonomy movements, they
usually proclaimed the independence of the areas which they controlled
or had been governing under the control of the central government3.

* The personages dealt with in the present study have been restricted, for lack
of space and for obvious methodological reasons, to insurgents of Byzantine-Greek
origins [see list at end]. Therefore, insurrections like those of the Asenid brothers,
Dobromir Chrysus et al., have not been included.

1. D. Ζ a k y t h e η ο s, Βυζαντινή Ιστορία, I: Α.Δ. 324-1071, Athens 1972, repr.
1977, pp. 467, 468.

2. See remarks by D. X a n a l a t o s, Βυζαντινά Μελετήματα. Συμβολή εις τήν
Ιστορίαν τού Βυζαντινοῦ Λαοῦ, Athens 1940 (Texte und Forschungen zur Byzantinisch-
Neugriechischen Philologie, 38), pp. 68, 75 ff. 86 (XIth cent.), 78 ff., 86 ff. (XIIth cent.)
and 68, 79, 87 ff. (XIIIth cent.).

3. On the differentiation between rebellious and separatist movements (στατια-
στικά-αυτονομιστικά κινήματα) see introduction in my recent Ph. D. dissertation: A.
The mighty rule of the bellicose sovereigns of the Macedonian dynasty (867-1025), a period during which Byzantium had reached the apex of its power and glory in south-eastern Europe and the Near East, was a thing of the past. Basil II's decease was ensued by a rapid decline of the Empire's military and socio-economic foundations, through which the great soldier-emperor, who had foreseen the dangerous growth and upsurge of aristocratic influence, had striven to curb the limitless greed of the nobles, for the most part consisting the majority of the powerful landowners. In fact, Basil's ineffective successors, 'Macedonians' only by name, offered to the most ambitious members of the military landed aristocracy the opportunity to obtain more privileges, thus contributing to the state of internal corruption and segregation. In the decades following 1025 the most wealthy and prominent among the magnates (γεώργιοι, μεγαλοκομνηνοί) were in a position to materialize their aspirations to topple their sovereign and usurp imperial power. It was through the insensible policy of the later Macedonians (1025-57) and their successors, the Comneno-Ducae (1057-81), that various pretenders were eventually enabled to raise arms against their suzerain. The situation of an 'illusion of a durable peace' ('l'illusion d'une paix durable') envisaged by P. Lemerle some years ago to explain the fact that Basil's epigoni did very little to continue the policies of the Macedonian house (which had established a long and uninterrupted pax byzantina), contributed significantly both to the internal disorder in the Empire as well as to its growing inability to oppose its external enemies effectively. It is precisely to this 'illusion of a durable peace' that D. Nicol...
referred to —some years before Lemerle— as "a sense of false security"¹.

The careers of several homines seditiōsi as well as their seditions (στάσεις) in the period 1025-1261 have been surveyed in my recent monograph on Studies in Byzantine History, XIth-XIIIth Century². It will be evident by a superficial look at the surnames of the protagonists of these seditions (both rebellious and separatist) that they almost invariably originated from aristocratic households (σιζοτ), and that they held—in most cases—high military (or sometimes civil) posts and ranks in the Empire's administration³. The critical period from the death of Basil II, the indomitable emperor who had reigned for about 50 years having "left behind him an Empire which stretched from the mountains of Armenia to the Adriatic and from the Euphrates to the Danube"⁴, and the recapture of the City by the general of Michael VIII Palaeologus, Alexius Strategopulus, on 25 July 1261, witnessed an impressive chain

1. Νικόλ, Last Centuries, op. cit., p. 3.
2. See A. Σανδές, Μελέτες Βυζαντινής Ιστορίας 11ου-13ου αι., Athens 1986, chaps. II (period: 1025-1098), III (period: 1104/5-1195/6) and IV (period: 1199/1200-1258/9) with detailed refs. The kinemata of the years 1025-56 have also been treated in detail recently by Calliope Burdara, Καθοδικοι και Τυραννοί κατά τοις Μέσους Βυζαντινοίς Χρόνοις, Μακεδονική Δυναστεία, 867-1056, Athens-Comotene 1981, pp. 103-28 & refs. See also remarks by A. Καζδαν, La Ville et le Village à Byzance aux Xle-XIIe Siècles, in: Hélène Antoniadis-Bibicou (ed.), Le Féodalisme à Byzance: Problèmes du mode de Production de l'Empire Byzantin, Paris 1974 (Recherches Internat. à la Lumière du Marxisme, 79/2), pp. 78 ff., 81 ff., who refers to the 'decentralization' of the Empire.
3. A variety of sources attests the presence of more than 300 prominent Byzantine aristocratic (and non-aristocratic) houses, which flourished during the latter part of the middle as well as throughout the later Byzantine period (IXth-XVth cent.). Particularly on the period from 976 to 1204 see the statistical survey by A. Καζδαν, Sotsialnyi Sostav Gospodstvuiushchego Klassa Vizantii, XI-XII Vekov (= On the Social Structure of the Ruling Class in XIth-XIIth Century Byzantium), Moscow 1974, passim; cf. review by C. Μανγο, Engl. Historical Review 92 (1977), pp. 851-853.
of κινήματα, both rebellious or separatist, in Byzantine mainland and insular Greece (inclusive of Cyprus). Their overwhelming majority, however, occurred in Asia Minor, which had since the VIIth century been a stable source of manpower and economic virility and prosperity for the imperium byzantinum.

The history and background of Byzantine insurrection, particularly during the 2nd part as well as the 1st part of the late Byzantine period (867-1025 and 1025-1261 respectively), has gained considerable grounds among Byzantinists in recent years. About 50 years ago a Greek scholar from Munich University, Diogenes Xanalatos, published an important treatise on the seditions (στάσεις, ἀποστασίαι), uprisings (ἐξεγέρσεις), mutinies (ἀνταρσίαι, ἔπιβουλαι), 'tyrannids' (τυραννίδες) and conspiracies (συνωμοσίαι) in the Byzantine Empire from the IVth century until the fall of Constantinople to the ironclad knights (ἱππόται κατάφρακτοι) of western Christendom in 1204, in the course of the ignoble Fourth Crusade.

On a general basis, Xanalatos’s treatment of this intricate and demanding subject, as well as his corollaries, were quite substantial and contributed to the further advancement of research on the political, administrative, social, economic and military conditions prevalent in the Eastern Empire.

The limited space which this pioneer study occupies, however, makes it inevitably one of generalities, since the author attempted in a mere 91 pages to encapsulate and portray the cardinal trends of an epoch and not to study separately and in detail on a parallel basis the careers of the dramatis personae, who were the protagonists in a long array of rebellions until 1204.

The gradual intensification of insurrections throughout the period under discussion is closely intertwined with the upsurge of the nobilitas byzantina. In his relevant 1971 study G. Ostrogorsky dealt in detail with the rise of Byzantine aristocracy, which reached its apex in the period between the Xth and XIVth centuries, its fundamental elements

1. The position and historical rôle of Asia Minor as a bastion of the Byzantine Empire, its demographic development, its cultural integration with its great urban and provincial Greek-Christian centres, as well as its social and economic contribution to Byzantium until the early decades of the XIth cent., when a gradual—albeit steady—decline commenced, are treated by P. Charanis, Cultural Diversity and the Breakdown of Byzantine Power in Asia Minor, DOP 29 (1975), pp. 1-20. Charanis also discussed the stable withering of the Graeco-Byzantine element amidst a rather dissimilar 'mosaic' of nationalities (Armenians, Georgians, Syrians, Hebrews, Moslems et al.) from the XIth cent. onwards.

being those of personal wealth and noble origins, government service, military and administrative experience and personal connections\(^1\). The year 1974 marked the appearance of A. Kazhdan's analytical monograph on the social structure of the ruling classes in Byzantium, with particular emphasis on the powerful urban nobility of the Empire's provinces in the XIth and XIIth centuries, and more precicely from Basil II's accession in 976 until 1204. This fundamental study, now a classic in its field, undertakes a statistical scrutiny of about 340 known aristocratic 'households' (οικοι) as a basis of power in Byzantium (especially from c. 1000 onwards); here Kazhdan distinguishes between a civil and a military aristocracy, whence most of the homines seditiosi, and defines, like Ostrogorsky above, the basic characteristics pertaining to the ascent of the nobiles: military achievements and high posts, noble lineage, ethnic origin and geographical-geopolitical conditions\(^2\).

In 1974 two more important publications on the insurrections of the 1st part of the later Byzantine era made their appearance, the first being an interesting article on the period 1185-95 (reign of Isaacus II Angelus) by the Greek historian Theodore Vlachos\(^3\), and the second a lengthy dissertation by the German Byzantinist Jürgen Hoffmann, who examined the crucial period from the aftermath of the fateful battle at Manzikert (1071) until the 6th year of the exiled Byzantine state of Nicaea, i.e. the year 1210\(^*\). The latter study in particular consists a detailed look into local separatism in the various provinces of the Empire


as well as the geopolitical conditions which helped or hindered it; it examines separately the tendencies towards independence (Unabhängigkeitsbestrebungen) as well as the uprisings of several insurgents (στασιασταί, κινηματία), troublemakers (ταραχοποιοί), opportunists (καιροσκόποι) and 'innovators' (νεωτερισταί), who attempted to set up their own splitter-states (Territorialstaaten) both in the European and Asiatic provinces of the Empire. These 'movements' (κινήματα) were directed against the central authority of the Byzantine dynasties of the later Macedonians (1025-57), the Comneno-Ducae (1057-81), the Comneni (1081-1185) and the Angeli (1185-1204) at Constantinople, and —after 1204— the Lascarids of Nicaea (1204-61). Hoffmann's monograph is certainly most useful despite certain omissions as regards some important uprisings as well as a number of inadequacies concerning both a detailed critical parallelism of all available source material and secondary literature, especially in relation to several problems as regards the various rebels and potential usurper (σφετερισταί) of the Byzantine crown. The author has undertaken a considerably detailed fragmentation of each examined insurrection (Beispiele) (in fact it has been characterized as «extraordinarily repetitious»); he has also looked into the results that those στάσεις had on the development of new conditions in Byzantium (Ergebnisse), particularly following the formation and establishment of several 'toparchies' (τοπαρχίες), which contributed to the reshaping of a new socio-political status quo (neue politische Gebilde). Hoffmann, however, has not fully succeeded in differentiating the examined seditions into 2 cardinal categories:

a) into the definitively rebellious movements (επαναστατικά and στασιαστικά κινήματα), mainly for the period until 1204, in the course of which the insurgents sought to overthrow the Byzantine sovereign, thus


usurping the Constantinopolitan throne\(^1\) --or the Nicaean in 2 cases after 1204\(^2\)-- and

\(b)\) into the movements towards independence or separatist movements (αυτονομιστικά or χωριστικά κινήματα), which constituted attempts deriving from centrifugal tendencies (κεντρόφυγοι τάσεις)\(^3\) for the period after 1204, a period of Byzantine history not so "highly obscure" any longer, as the numismatist M. Hendy believed some 20 years ago. In this latter case the insurgents, far from having imperial aspirations (since the Byzantine Empire had fallen to the Latin Crusaders), were in most cases content to proclaim the independence (αυτονομία) of the imperial areas they had heretofore governed or wielded influence over, from what they considered to be an arbitrary and corrupt régime; naturally, they were not disposed to recognize the legitimacy of the Lascarid inheritance. If we take into account that in the first category (a) above the rebels refused to obey what they deemed a crumbling régime (especially that of Andronicus I in 1183-5 and the Angeli in 1185-1204).

1. E.g. the *staseis* of the 4 Pseudo-Alexii in the mid. 1190s (Brand, op. cit., p. 698; cf. below, p. 245, n. 1). J. Karayannopoulos, *Κεντρόφυγοι και Κεντρομόλοι Δυνάμεις...* (below p. 252, n. 1), pp. 5 and 18, correctly observes that the military movements of the XIth century cannot be considered as separatist (χωριστικά), for they do not constitute examples of slackening in the cohesive bonds of the state, since the insurgents did not aim at the establishment of independent principalities, but at seizing the throne and assuming imperial power.

2. As, for example, with the insurrections of the Lascarid brothers of Theodore I in 1224/5 and the Nestongi against their cousin, John III Ducas Batalzes, in 1225. Cf. below, p. 245, n. 1.

3. The terms centrifugal and centripetal tendencies/forces (κεντρόφυγες and κεντρομόλες τάσεις/δυνάμεις) were extensively examined in a sub-heading section of the history reports/co-rapports during the XVth International Congress of Byzantine Studies at Athens in 1976: Forces Centrifuges et Centripètes dans le Monde Byzantin entre 1071 et 1261, with important contributions by Hélène Glykatzi-Ahrweiler, Vera Hrochova, J. Karayannopoulos, A. Kazhdan, N. Oikonomidès and Zinaida Udaltsova. Cf. esp. Z. I. d a l t s o v a, *Forces Centrifuges et Centripètes de la Monde Byzantin entre 1071-1261. Aspects Socio-économiques du Problème*, V. H r o c h o v a, *Les Villes Byzantines aux XIe-XIIe Siècles. Phénomène Centrifuge ou Centripète dans l’Évolution de la Société Byzantine?*, A. K a z h d a n, *Sotsialnaja Struktura Vizantijskago Obshchestva Tsientrastremelnye i Tsientrorezhny Silj v Vizantijskom Mire*, J. Karayannopoulos, *Κεντρόφυγοι και Κεντρομόλοι Δυνάμεις...* (below, p. 252, n. 1) with useful remarks on the centrifugal and semi-autonomous movements against central authority on the part of the members of the empire’s urban and provincial aristocracy from 1025 onwards.

they were apparently even more reluctant to recognize the newly-born Nicaean state. In their initial steps the Lascarids were not unanimously accepted by a considerable part of the Greek populations in the Balkans and Anatolia as the lawful upholders of Byzantine imperial tradition.

In 1981 Calliope Burdara published her doctoral thesis on the 'abjurations' (καθοσίωσις) and 'tyrannids' (τυραννίδες) in the period of the Macedonian dynasty (867-1056), where, as the author herself states in the prologue, she has examined "the historical events which constituted crimes against the Byzantine emperor"1. Of particular importance is part II of Burdara's study, dealing with the various penalties (ποιναί) that the arrested insurgents had to face, which ranged from public ridicule (διαπόμπευσις), exile (ἐξορία) and property-confiscation (δήμευσις) to mutilation (ἀκρωτηριασμός), blinding (τύφλωσις) and execution (ἐκτέλεσις) through decapitation and other severe methods2. A year after Burdara's contribution, Speros Vryonis discussed in detail the notion of 'tyrannid', i.e. the illegal seizure of military authority and the ensuing forceful and despotic toppling of legitimate authority through rebellion, a notion loathed in Byzantium, if we judge by the illustrative testimony provided by the Archbishop of Achrida (Ohrid), Theophylactus Hephæstus († c. 1226) in his Παιδεία Βασιλική, addressed to prince Constantine Ducas, son of the emperor Michael VIII Ducas "Parapinaces" (1071-78) and —initially— heir apparent of Alexius I Comnenus (1081-1118) until the late 1080s3.

The author of this article has recently attempted to re-evaluate the importance of both rebellious and separatist movements in his doctoral dissertation, focusing on the insurrections in the Byzantine provinces of Dodecanese and Asia Minor in the epoch of the Angeloi and the Lascarids. This work, based on a wide range of primary sources and secondary material, actually covers the period 1189-c. 1240 and concentrates on 12 rebellious and autonomy 'movements', thus carrying on Hoffmann's aforementioned study (which ends in 1210) to the middle of the XIIIth cent4. Some of the κινήματα included in Hoffmann are re-examined,

2. See details below, p. 259, n. 3 ff.
3. See details below, p. 256, n. 1 ff.
4. S. Avvides, Kivprata (1985). On the rebellious movements (1189-1204, 1224 and 1225) cf. ibid., pt. 1, and on the independence or autonomy seditions (separatist
especialiy in relation to the early years of the Nicaean Empire, when the last of the noteworthy centrifugal attempts were made on the part of powerful independent or semi-independent lords (ἀρχοντες), local rulers (δυνάσται), or provincial governors (ἐπαρχιακοί κυβερνῆται), such as Manuel Maurozomes, Leo Gabalas, the Lascarid brothers of Theodore I, the Nestongi, etc.1. Additional prosopographical and genealogical information is also provided on the specific late Byzantine ὀίκος, aristocratic or elsewise, whence the examined rebels originated, while on a parallel basis there is a detailed examination of the geography and topography of those areas of the Empire, where the specific insurrections broke out, as well as their administrative status in relation to the administrative centre: Constantinople until 1204 and Nicaea from 1204/5 onwards.

II

The slackening of the Anatolian thematic administration was brought about chiefly on account of the overburdening taxation, especially that levied by Basil II's successors from 1025 onwards, as well as on the criminal negligence on the part of the state itself concerning the needs of the once thriving frontier-zone soldier-guards in Anatolia, the acritae.

1 The rebellious movements examined in the thesis are those by Theodore Mancaphas (1189-1204/5, chap. I), Basil Chotzas (c. 1190-1204/5, chap. II), the 3 Anatolian Pseudo-Alexii (c. 1192-1196, chap. III), the Lascaridae (1224/5) and the Nestongi (1225) (chap. IV). The 5 autonomy seditions are those by Manuel Maurozomes (1204-6, chap. V), Sabbas Asidenus (1204-6, chap. VI), Theodore II Gabras (1204-c. 1208, chap. VII), David (Grand) Comnenus (1204-12, chap. VIII) and Leo Gabalas (1204-c. 1240, chap. IX). Throughout the work, the relations of the Byzantine state as well as those on the part of the insurgents with the Empire's external enemies (Seljuk Turks, Armenians of Cilicia, Franks, Venetians, etc.) are examined in detail and set within their proper context. However, this important issue presented in my above dissertation, was inevitably under chronological and geographical limitations, since only the period 1189-c. 1240 was treated in detail concerning the development of the chosen insurrections in the Dodecanese and Asia Minor.
This aggravated condition inevitably led to the comparatively easy penetrations of the Seljuk Turks and the Turcoman nomadic bands in the 1040s onwards. The Christian populations of the Anatolian provinces must have lost their faith in their sovereigns, if we contemplate the rash step taken by the emperor Constantine IX Monomachus (1042-1055) to allow those among the military aristocrats, who could afford it, to buy off their military service.

The feeble Byzantine rulers after 1025 adopted on several occasions a cajoling and rather servile attitude towards the most eminent representatives of the well-do-do military gentry, for the latter were instrumental —so the emperors believed— in sustaining them on their weak throne in view of a potential massive popular uprising. In reality, however, by annulling most of the former stringent decrees, which had aimed to curb the excesses and peculations on the part of the powerful (δυνατοί), the later Macedonians enabled the urban and provincial dynatoi to resort to their older methods of acquiring more privileges and concessions at the expense —this is almost certain— of the interests of the state itself.

The power and influence of Byzantine aristocrats, whose hey-day has recently been dated to the period that runs from the IXth to the early XIVth century, seems to have been considerable. It is certain


2. See S a ν ν i d e s, Κινήματα, pp. 73-75 & refs. On the ‘powerful’ (δυνατοί) and the ‘poor’ (πένητες) see the background information by R o s e m a r y M o r r i s, The Powerful and the Poor in Xth Century Byzantium: Law and Reality, Past and Present. A Journal of Historical Studies, no. 73 (Nov. 1976), pp. 3-27.

3. See M. A n g o l d, Introduction, in: M. A n g o l d (ed.), The Byzantine Aristocracy, IXth-XIIIth Centuries, Oxford 1984 (BAR Intern. Ser., 221), p. 7. The topic of IXth-XIIIth century Byzantine aristocracy was treated in detail during the 1982 British XVIIth Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies, held in Edinburgh, under the direction of M. Angold, who in 1984 edited a lengthy volume based on the agenda of the symposium and supplemented by new contributions. The papers included therein (by St. Runciman, Evelyne Patlagean, A. Kazhdan, P. Magdalino, D. Nicol, Rosemary Morris, Lucy-Anne Hunt, R. Cormack, Margaret Mullet, Elizabeth Jeffreys, Vera von Falkenhausen and M. Angold) shed new light on the social history, genealogy, artistic and intellectual life, as well as everyday living conditions of Byzantine nobility from the accession of the Macedonian dynasty to the close of the XIIIth century. See A n g o l d (ed.), Aristocracy, with detailed
that several notable representatives or dynatoi came to control whole cities in the Empire, where a considerable portion of the inhabitants used to 'sell' their freedom in order to secure the 'protection' of some powerful lord (archon) according to G. Ostrogorsky. As M. Angold observes recently, the leading archons (ἐπιφανείς) of a city (πόλις) originated from old established families with local interests, though they seem to have maintained — whenever this was feasible — ties with Constantinople and the imperial government. However, the degree of their real autonomy is not certain. A. Kazhdan has characterized their state as one of "an individualism without freedom", yet this view holds true when applied to the Constantinopolitan or large-cities nobility and not to the powerful provincial military aristocracy. The urban archontes of the Xth-XIIth and XIIIth centuries, writes Angold, "were slaves of
the emperor, but retained a strong sense of family independence. They were eager to conform to the standards of the court, but flaunted their individualism. They were public figures who valued their privacy above all, shutting themselves away behind the high walls of their palaces. They were contradictions at the heart of Byzantine society.

Already severely harmed by the hazardous policy of the bureaucracy-oriented dynasties of the later Macedonians and the Comneno-Ducaes, Byzantium gained a period of relative resurgence under the able Comneni (1081-1185). Erosion, however, had gone too deep, and the hapless Angeli (1185-1204) struck the fatal blow of disaster, which paralyzed the Empire. One of the major goals of the latter dynasty, which lost

1. Angold, Introduction, op. cit., p. 8; cf. P. Magdalino, Byzantine Snobbery, in: Angold (ed.), Byz. Aristocracy, op. cit., pp. 56-78, a valuable study tracing the social status and ambitions on the part of the Byzantine aristocratic circles, the ευγενείς or nobility, as they are viewed in the contemporary sources. Cf. Kazhdan, Ville et le Village..., p. 79.


3. As St. Runclman (Byzantine Civilization, London 1933, repr. 1975, p. 54) characteristically put it, "the rule of the Angeli... was a tale of melancholy weakness, of more disorder and poverty in the Empire and more concessions to the Italians..."; on Byzantium’s commercial relations with the Italian maritime states of Venice, Genoa and Pisa during the Comneni and the Angeli see the monograph of Lilie cited in the previous n. Also, on the gradual economic infiltration of the western powers and the takeover of Byzantine economy, a phenomenon clearly manifested in the Palaeologan period, especially from the XIV cent. onwards, see now Angeliki Laiou-Thomadakis, The Byzantine Economy in the Mediterranean Trade-System: XIIIth-XVth Centuries, DOP 34/35 (1980/81), pp. 177-...
control of many provinces and caused a financial crisis through a shaky
economy resulting from a fast-sinking monetary devaluation\(^1\), was to
attempt to bribe the potentially menacing lords and provincial magnates,
thus buying them off, but the awkward and ineffective way in which
they handled fiscal affairs had exactly the opposite result. As it has
been said recently, "the fatal weakness of provincial administration
under the Angeloi was a willingness to connive at local power combined
with oppressive and erratic taxation"\(^2\). The provincial —and in some
instances the urban— populace more or less opted for supporting their
local lords (ἐραχοντες-τοπαχαι) in the latter's separatist movements against
imperial oppression and tyranny\(^3\).

Thus, while both the state's treasury and the lower social classes,
the πενιτες, became poorer, the holders of large landed estates, both in
the cities and the provinces, grew wealthier and more powerful, and
began to act independently from the state's common interests. This
process ultimately weakened the Empire's authority and undermined
its power of resistance against its numerous enemies, who continually
attacked and ravaged the imperial provinces both in Asia Minor and
the Balkans, as well as in Italy, from the XIth century onwards, until
finally in 1204 the Latins of the Fourth Crusade fell upon an already
chopped carcass and rent it asunder. The erstwhile glorious Byzantine
Empire had by 1204 become a cadavre vivant. The undeniably attested
decline of imperial military power, especially the thematic, from the
period of the mid-XIth century onwards contributed substantially to
this catastrophe (see next note).

As a general rule, Byzantine sovereigns succeeded in most cases in
checking and quelling most of the uprisings both in urban centres and
the provinces. From the XIth century onwards the emperors managed
to suppress in detail the coups of celebrated and quite popular personages
(i.e. George Maniaces in 1043, Leo Tornicius in 1047, Andronicus Consto-
stephanus in 1183/84, Alexius Branas in 1186, etc.), depending upon

---

\(^3\) Ibid., p. 275 ff., esp. 277: "...Under the Angeloi the imperial government found
it more and more difficult to control local power, whence the increased lawlessness
in many provinces...".
their well organized — albeit mercenary — armies as well as on an elaborate network of civil bureaucrats, who seem to have exercised effective control over large portions of imperial territory. In the long run, however, it was Byzantium's external enemies who took advantage and profited from the Empire's fratricidal strife: on the northern frontier the Turcophone Ouzoi (Uzes), the Patzinaks (Pechenegs), the Cumans (Qomans) and the Hungarians (Magyars), on the western the Frankish and Italian crusaders (Franks, Flemish, Venetians, Lombards etc.) as well as the Normans of Sicily, and on the eastern the Seljuk Turks and the Turcoman nomadic tribes of Anatolia. Ironically enough, we meet several of these peoples also enlisted as mercenaries in imperial armies and used in order to quell internal seditions in Byzantium from the XIth century onwards.1

It is important to note at this juncture that the Byzantine insurgents are invariably sharply criticized with rather caustic remarks and styled as pretenders and counterclaimants (ἀνταπαιτηταί) to the Byzantine throne. They are also characterized as revolutionaries, opportunists, troublemakers, as well as usurpers of imperial rights by an impressively long list of contemporary and later Byzantine historiographers and chroniclers, mainly of the XIth, XIIth, XIIIth and XIVth century, whose accounts are evidently biased against any kind of movement or operation aiming at the overthrow of the divinity (θειότης), impeccability (τὸ ἀλάθητον) and legitimacy (νομιμότης) of their 'God-promoted' (θεοπρόβλητος) basileus, the living representation of the Almighty's power and will on earth.2

1. See Zakythenos, Βυζ. Ἱστορ. I, pp. 479-480.— A. Savvides, Byzantium's Oriental Front in the 1st part of the XIII Century. The Empires of Nicaea and Trapezus (Trebizond) in view of the Seljuk and Mongol Menace, Μπυχα 3 (1982/3), pp. 161-2, n. 1. Haussing (Byz. Civilization, pp. 305-306) attributes the decline of Byzantium's military power to the rapid growth of feudalism (on Byzantine 'Feudalism' and the problems it poses cf. refs in my Κινήματα, pp. 11 and 74 & refs.); the gradual 'dismantling' of the imperial thematic troops followed suit as a consequence (Haussing, op. cit.): "... The great armies of the themes, which had been stationed in Asia Minor, were no longer the Emperor's willing tools, gathering at assigned places on receipt of mobilization orders, to march along pre-arranged routes into Arab (sc. Moslem) territory. Now the armies of the themes rarely marched to the East; more often they made their way to the West in order to precipitate a revolution in the capital, Constantinople...").

General remarks on the erosion of Byzantine armies by foreign mercenaries from the XIth cent. onwards in my Μελέτες, appendix II, pp. 160-172.

2. See Vryonis, Imperial Authority (cf. above, p. 248, n. 2), pp. 142,154. The theme of the ideal Byzantine ruler as envisaged by his subjects is preponderant in the recent
this period are full of scorn and vituperant remarks—with very few exceptions—concerning an endless chain of 'unpatriotic' villains (ἀπατριδες), who aspired to gain more power at a time when the state was crumbling from internal rot and ominous external threats. “The members of the landed aristocracy”, writes J. Karayannopulos, “moved in order to subdue central power, thus materializing their own goals and ambitions, despite the fact that in so doing, they contributed to the decline of the Empire's economic prosperity, social equilibrium, and political stability.”

III

The above observations come very close to what contemporary Byzantine authors thought on the issue: that the sole aim of the insurgents


1. On the vehement accusations (μυθοί) on the part of the sources, aiming at the ‘wickedness’ of the ring-leaders of the seditions, the ἁγγείαται, see S a n n a s, Κινήματα, pp. 75 ff., 94 ff. & refs to the sources. It seems valid that the acquisition of more power on the part of the urban and provincial magnates contributed to the further weakening of the Empire’s power of resistance against the external threat, while it also gave a considerable furtherance to the ‘feudalization’ of Byzantium’s several important areas (cf. above, p. 250, n. 1). Finally, concerning the gullibility of the popular masses (ῥό οὐροί), who followed the insurgents, see remarks by Kazhdan, Ville et Village, p. 82.

was to overthrow the Empire’s status quo. These authors, however, have been aptly characterized as “self-interested” (συμφεροντολόγοι ἱστορικοί τῆς ἐποχῆς)\(^1\); it has moreover been observed that the majority of Byzantine historiographers had always been propagators of imperial propaganda, in defense of imperial policy, which they attempted to justify in the eyes of future generations\(^2\). Therefore, the attestations of those ‘mouth-pieces’ or ‘blind agents’ (porte-parole) of Constantinople —thus Hélène Ahrweiler styles the biased and partial Byzantine authors— must be used with caution by scholars\(^3\).

The unswerving legitimacy (νομιμοφροσύνη) of the sources towards the Byzantine monarch is well depicted in the following extracts, selected from important authors of the first part of the later Byzantine period. Firstly, the Thessalian general and magnate, Kekaumenos, composed probably shortly after 1071 his “General’s Manual” (Στρατηγικόν), in which he strongly urges his sons —and indirectly all potential insurgents against the ruler— to abstain from taking any action on the side of rebels in times of sedition and civil war\(^4\):


3. On the hostile attitude that grew amidst the members of Byzantine provincial aristocracy against the nobility of the capital, a situation which resulted in the outbreak of uprisings against the central government, see Hélène Ahrweiler, op. cit., pp. 58-59, 87 ff.

"If a man rebels and calls himself emperor, do not enter into his counsel, but depart from him. If you cannot fight him and overthrow him, (at any rate) fight for the emperor and the peace of the whole (body politic). If you cannot fight the rebel, depart from him; and, occupying some stronghold with your men, send word to the emperor and try to do him such service as you can in order that you and your children and your followers may have honour. If you have not men enough to occupy a stronghold, leave everything and take refuge with the emperor. But if, on account of your family, you dare not do this, then join his side (i.e. the side of the rebel) but let your heart be on the emperor's side, and, when you can, show some sort of action worthy of praise. For when you join his side (i.e. take part with the rebel), you should draw to you those of your friends who are of a high spirit, practice on him (i.e. act secretly against him), and have faith in the emperor in Constantinople... Whenever somebody dared raise the banner of revolt against the emperor and Homania (i.e. the Byzantine Empire), thus attempting to destroy the peace, he himself perished in the process... I therefore urge you, my dear sons... always be on the emperor's side, for he who resides in Constantinople, i.e. the basileus, always emerges victorious..."

The same spirit is echoed in the words of the XIIIth century polymath, Nicephorus Blemmydes († c. 1272), in the latter's "Oration on the Right Actions a Kings ought to follow" (Λόγος ὁποίον δεῖ είναι τὸν Βασιλέα):

"And let there not be the slightest doubt that the basileus ought to be considered as the head and brain of the state, that he may be answerable only to the Almighty and that he should preserve the profound teachings on reverence as well as the rules and regulations postulated by the holy Fathers (the Hierarchs) as sacrosanct and immovable... That he should see to it that the preservation and correction of the
polity's errors may be attained by him (i.e. the emperor) through the holy intervention of the Lord... so that his mission on earth will be crowned and rewarded, and that his toils will not have been in vain; but he must also take the necessary steps in order to crush and eliminate those who oppose him (i.e. the various insurgents)...

Several years before Blemmydes, the historiographer Nicetas Choniates (†1216/17) expressed in his "Historical Narrative" (Χρονική Διήγησις) his indignation and disgust at the treacherous perpetrations on the part of the Empire's provincial lords, both in Asia Minor and mainland Greece inclusive of the Aegean islands and Cyprus, who had attempted a bold and uncalculated aggrandizement of their territories in such an inopportune time, when the Byzantine state was on the verge of prostration before the Latin onslaught, as a result of the ceaseless decline during the Angelus dynasty. Choniates's tone is revealingly pungent and condemning when referring to those who refused to accept the lawfulness of the Lascarid inheritance, when Theodore I Lascaris of Nicaea, who eventually "in a way harnessed the separatist tendencies of the Anatolian cities", was desperately trying to gather around him a core of the exiled Byzantine element in north-western Anatolia:

"And then, apart from these unrests, it is virtually impossible to narrate how many more of them (i.e. rebels) and on how many occasions raised the banner of revolt and mutiny; they seemed to spring up from everywhere, as if they had been sown like seeds bearing giants; they used to attack and then vanish again and again, like the hollow blasts which are produced by bellows... The chief reason for those incessant uprisings was the fact that Isaacius (= Isaacius II Angelus) had slackened the grip of his rule, having obviously placed his trust in the belief that he had received the right to govern by God alone, and that it was God Who would protect him against all vicissitudes... There were also those who were consumed by an innate craving to cause harm to their own country; they were base and slavish characters, who, corrupted by luxury and the loss of all...

---

1. See Angold, Byz. Empire, p. 276. The same scholar (Archons and Dynasts..., in: Angold, ed., Byz. Aristocracy, pp. 243-244) correctly observes that the rebellions drew the attention of the historians of the time to the existence of dynasts, who, in more peaceful conditions, would simply be ignored, since their authority was informal.

decency, seized several precipitous fortifications and castles, while others occupied walled towns, thus establishing their own wicked tyrannies, instead of opposing the Latins. In this way, by fighting each other, they were in the long run unable to offer effective resistance to the Latins... All of them, instead of uniting their arms and acting concertedly towards the common cause, which ought to have been the liberation of their beleaguered cities and the protection of the Empire's territories (against the Latin and Turkish raids), they instead took up arms against each other (as well as against the central government) on account of their limitless ambition and vain desire to be called 'rulers'. As a result, they delivered in the end their cuirasses and arms as spoils of war to their (common) foe, who had taken the best possible advantage of their discord and lack of cooperation..."

The court historian and high official of the Nicaean state, George Acropolites († c. 1282), reminds us, too, of this chaotic situation in the early 1200s regarding the Empire's fate in his chronicle (Χρονική Συγγραφή), written sometime after the middle of the XIIIth century¹:

"And amidst all this confusion which ensued the sack of the City of Constantine (by the Franks), a considerable number of archons, originating from various areas of the state and believing that they could easily gain power, thus becoming absolute masters of the territories, where they had previously governed, proceeded with their plans and — contrary to the will of the local inhabitants — seized control of them..."

The aforementioned passage by Acropolites must have made a deep impression on his contemporaries, if we take into consideration the fact that Theodore Scutariotes, metropolitan of Cyzicus on the north-western corner of Anatolia in the years 1261–c. 1284 and a conscientious annalist of older historical works, copied Acropolites almost verbatim in his "Compiled Chronicle" (Σύνοψις Χρονική)².

2. Ed. C. Sathas, (Ἀνωνύμων) Σύνοψις Χρονική, Μεταβολική Βιβλιοθήκη 7 (Paris-Venice 1894), p. 452. He also quotes verbatim for the period A.D. 1118 onwards extensive extracts from John Cinnamus and Nicetas Choniates. See bibliogr. in my Κινήματα, pp. 20 and 58-59.
One of the most characteristic texts which illustrate the negative connotation that the notion of 'tyrannid' (τυραννίς), i.e. the illegal seizure of military authority and the ensuing forceful and despotic toppling of legitimate authority by means of a rebellion, bore for the Byzantines, is the Oration (Logos) known as "Paideia Basilike"; it was written by Theophylactus Haephestus, Archbishop of Achris (Ohrid) in the years c. 1090-c. 1108 (f 1126) and formerly tutor to the 'purple-born' (πορφυρόγεννητος) prince Constantine Ducas, son of the emperor Michael VII Ducas 'Parapinaceus' (1071-78); actually, the oration is addressed to Constantine, who enjoyed several privileges in the court of the founder of the Comnenian dynasty, Alexius I, after the latter's accession in 1084, and though it may have been composed before the abdication of


Michael VII in 1078, it is more likely dated to 1081 as a *terminus post quem*. Certain extracts from this valuable text epitomize the defects of 'tyranny' in the conscience of contemporary Byzantines:

"There are three fundamental political situations, of which the first, i.e. monarchy, is also called legitimate and kingship (*ἐννομός καὶ βασιλεία*), having its foundations on the people... Moreover, monarchy is composed of several lawful archons... and its name is called aristocracy (*ἀριστοκρατία*), that is, the rule of the best; on top of this, the various contributions of the people to the administration of the state has been termed democracy (*δημοκρατία*). Now, opposing the three aforementioned situations, there are three more situations which constitute the roots of misfortune: kingship is undermined by tyrannid, while aristocracy is speared by the force of oligocracy, i.e. the situation when a few wealthy and violent people replace the best apt to rule (*τοὺς άριστους*) in the government; and finally, democracy is menaced by ochlocracy, i.e. the rule of the masses... But here, behold the characteristics between tyrannid and kingship; first, the tyrant uses force in order to control authority (*την αρχήν*); the reigns of government have not been bestowed upon him by the will of the citizens, but he seizes them by slaughter and blood-shedding... therefore, he is stained with blood from the very start... You notice, therefore, how loathsome and abominable can the tyrant become, as
opposed to the most desirable and bright beauty of the king... he
does not acquire authority by force, or steep his garments in blood,
for his foundations are the good will of the populace (ευνοία πλήθους)
and the latter's assent, which go hand-in-hand with his own moderation
and mercy. He becomes king as a reward for his virtue (αρετής... άθλον)
and all men are readily disposed to concede what is considered
best to him who is deemed the best of men... . . . The tyrant, on the
other hand, is always surrounded by fear and threats, so he is usually
busy committing murders (of his opponents), a headache he cannot
dispense with easily...”.

IV

The rebellious and autonomist (separatist) movements usually oc­
curred in the Empire's maladministered provinces (έπαρχίαι), and their
ring-leaders were often initially successful, either by means of their
personal might and imposing personality, assisted by the support —albeit
not unswerving— of the populations inhabiting the areas which they
had controlled or governed1, or by means of lucrative pacts (συνθήκαι),
often with foreigners, which befitted their purposes2. Their opportunism
on several occasions did not prevent them from concluding treacherous
alliances (συμμαχίαι) with Byzantium's enemies3.

1. Such were the cases of George Maniaces (1042/3), Leo Tornicius (1047), Ale­
xius Branas (1186), Leo Sgurus (c. 1200-c. 1208) et al.
2. As with Leo Gabalas and his 1234 treaty with the Venetians (see bibl. above,
p. 252, n.3).
3. Nicephorus (III) Botaneiates in 1077/8 and Nicephorus Melissenus in 1080/81
used Seljuk mercenaries from the chieftain Kutlumush and the latter's son, Suley­
man I ibn Kutlumush (the founder of the Seljuk Sultanate of Rûm in Asia Minor)
in their bid for the Byzantine throne. The renowned Leo (or Constantine) Diogenes,
the so-called Pseudo-Diogenes, laid a 48-days siege to Adrianople with hordes of
Cuman mercenaries in 1094, while the protostrator Alexius Axuchus also used Cuman
aid in his attempt to overthrow Manuel I Comnenus in 1167. The three Pseudo­
Alexii of Anatolia in the last decade of the XIIIth century made ample use of Seljuk
and Turcoman help, and so did the Anatolian magnates Theodore Mancaphas of
Philadelphia and Manuel Maurozomes of the Maeander valley regions in the early
XIIIth century. David Grand Comnenus of the Pontus, on the other hand, attempted
to dislocate Theodore I Lascaris from Bithynia by signing a pact of alliance with
the Latin régime of Constantinople (the Empire of "Romania") in 1206.

On the Pseudo-Alexii, Mancaphas, Maurozomes and David Megalomnomenos cf.
details in S a v v i d e s, Kινήματα, chaps. I, III, V and VIII. On those local rulers
(dynasts) who succeeded in maintaining a certain amount of independence without
foreign help, like Basil Chotzas of Tarsia in the period 1190-1205, Sabbas Asidenus
A familiar pattern of the internal strife in Byzantium, which in effect was a clash between military aristocrats and civil bureaucrats, was that in several cases, at the outbreak of a sedition or a separatist κίνημα, the majority of the population of the rebelled areas sided with the insurgents, hoping for deliverance from imperial oppression, as was the case of Leo Tornicius in the mid-XIth century. T. Lounghis has recently pointed out that "social struggle in Byzantium initially assumed the form of uprising against the state itself and not against the ruling class as such; on several occasions the popular rural masses assisted the bid for power on the part of fief-owners... the middle Byzantine period witnessed the creation of a new ruling class of a feudal character, which —up to the mid-XIth century— often opposed the state with the support of agrarian populations, who were fed up with the existing social conditions and the taxation system..."1.

As the seditions progressed, however, the local populations eventually abandoned the insurgents, fearing possible reprisals on the part of the emperor, in case the latter was victorious. Without popular support it would not have been possible for the rebels to put up an effective stand against the superior and better-trained imperial forces, which were sent to suppress the seditions2. Therefore, the kinematiai were ultimately abandoned to a more or less cruel fate, since they were invariably arrested or handed over to the imperial troops and led in front of the emperor in chains. The penalties (ποιναί) which they had to face were various and severe3: they were paraded and ridiculed in the streets and the in Sampson on the Ionian littoral in the years 1204-6, and Theodore (II) Gabras in Pontic Amisus (Turk. Samsun) in the years 1204-c. 1208, cf. S a ν ν i d e s, op. cit., chaps. II, VI and VII. Finally on the kinemata of the XIth-XIIth centuries (until 1189), see above, p. 239, n. 2 & refs.

1. T. C. Lounghis, Κοινωνικοί Άγώνες στο Βυζάντιο, in: Μεγάλη Γενική 'Εγκυκλοπαίδεια 'Υδρία, vol. 16 (Athens 1981), pp. 194-197, esp. 195. Most of these local rulers had begun their career as imperial military commanders or various governmental officials, and ended up as independent and semi-independent feudatories with vast estates and properties. They succeeded in detaching a considerable amount of imperial territory, taking advantage of the general atmosphere of instability, fratricidal strife, economic exploitation by the westerners, and invasions of Byzantine lands by new raiders, i.e. Patzinaks (Pechenegs), Cumans, Normans, Crusaders (French, Germans and Italians), Seljuks, Turcomans etc.

2. Cf. the useful commentary by D. X a n a l a t o s, Βυζ. Μελετήματα, pp. 17, 31, 52 ff., 70 ff.

3. X a n a l a t o s, op. cit., p. 21 ff. On Byzantine courthouses and punishments (δικαστήρια-ποιναί), cf. P h. K u k u l e s, Βυζαντινών Βίως και Πολιτισμός, III, Athens 1949, pp. 44-49.
Hippodrome of Constantinople (διαπόμπευσις), they were blinded (τύφλωσις), or elsewise horribly maimed (ακρωτηριασμός), they were held in custody and stringent detention (φυλακή, περιορισμός), they were exiled (εξορία) to far-away areas, they had their hair shaven and were shut up in monasteries (κούρα and εγκλεισμός), they had their property confiscated (δήμευσις). The capital punishment, i.e. various ways and methods of execution, was also adopted on certain occasions.

Most Byzantine rulers of the period 1025-1204 bestowed lavishly many privileges (προνόμια) upon the members of military aristocracy both in the large urban centres and the provinces, with the result that the most ambitious among them actually acquired unlimited prerogatives within their domains, even forming their own private small armies. They began to act as they pleased in the territories they had been assigned to govern, and their recalcitrant attitude soon developed into open disregard of the emperor's orders. The central administration of the capital, basically composed of civil bureaucrats, were alarmed at the rapid growth of power on the part of the provincial military magnates. Thus there developed a "rule of the civil bureaucracy" (period 1025-81) versus a "rule of the military aristocracy" (period 1081-1204), a situation


2. Cf. the doctoral dissertation by Ο d. L a m p s i d e s, 'Η Ποινή τῆς Τυφλώσεως παρά τούς Βυζαντινούς, Athens 1949; cf. C. B u r d a r a, Καθοσίωσις και Τυραννίς, pp. 165-167.

3. The most frequent mutilation penalty appears to be that of wrist mutilation (χειροκοπία, χειροκοπή). It seems rather unlikely that victims of such cruel treatment would have survived in those years, when the only way to face such horrible wounds as those of maimed limbs was either cauterization or herb ointment application.


5. B u r d a r a, pp. 167-168.

6. Ibid., p. 167.

7. Ibid., p. 162 ff.

8. Ibid., pp. 159-160, 164 ff. on the various κεφαλωκαὶ ποιναὶ.


10. The case of Leo Sgurus, with his meteoric career in the north-eastern Peloponnese, (Sterea) Hellas and Thessaly in the years c. 1200-c. 1208, comes to mind. On Sgurus see refs. in my Μελέτες, pp. 41-42, 124-125 & notes, 175; cf. M. K o r d o s e s, 'Η Κατάκτηση τῆς Νότιας Ἑλλάδος ἀπὸ τοὺς Φράγκους. 'Ιστορικά καὶ Τοπογραφικά Προβλήματα, 'Ιστορικογεωγραφικά 1 (Ioannina-Thessalonica 1986), pp. 64-65, 66 ff., 72 ff., 76 ff. et passim.
well defined and masterfully treated by G. Ostrogorsky in his *History*¹. The bureaucrats may have been victorious for the most part of the XIth century, but it was the military who eventually gained control in 1081. As A. Vasiliev observed several years ago, "a distinguishing feature of this period (=1056-81) was the struggle waged by the military element and the large landowning nobility, especially that of Asia Minor, against the central bureaucratic government. This struggle between the provinces and the capital ended, after a number of fluctuations, in the victory of the army and the landowners, which was the victory of the provinces over the capital"². The work of the Comneni, however, was marred by the Angeli, and by 1204 the Empire had been brought to a lamentable condition on the eve of the disastrous Fourth Crusade, the first of the two decisive blows that paralyzed it.

Several Byzantine sources, especially those of the late XIIth-early XIIIth century, provide ample information concerning the fiscal oppression of the urban and provincial lower classes, the πένητες, by the greed of their local masters, the δειρατοί, as well as by the government tax-collectors, the ἀναγραφείς, ἀναγραφείς, φορολόγοι, φοροεισπράκτορες, and πραίτορες of the Greek authors³. "With the steady growth of private estates", wrote Ostrogorsky, "the administrative system of the dwarf provinces became unavoidably dependent upon the local landed proprietors. The weakness of the central government was such, that it was only a step to the replacement of the provincial governor by the landowner and to the development of independent principalities"⁴.


4. Ostrogorsky, *History*, p. 102. Several among the powerful land-holders had had meteoric military careers, like George Maniaces (from c. 1032 to 1043), Nicephorus Bryennius, the grand-gather of the historiographer, his namesake, in c. 1072-1077/8, Alexius Branias in 1185-6, and others, before ending up as local rulers (τοττάρχαι), replacing the official provincial governors of the Empire, like Nicephorus Basilacius in 1078, Theodore I (Saint) Gabras in c. 1091-c. 1098, Isaccios Comnenus of Cyprus in c. 1181-91, Leo Sgurus in c. 1200-c. 1208, et al. Consequently, more
One such famous source regarding fiscal oppression and exploitation in late Byzantium is the "Memorandum" (Ὑπομνηστικόν) of Michael Chônaitês († c. 1222), elder brother of the historiographer Nicetas and metropolitan of Athens in the years c. 1182-1204. This work, written about 1198/9 and addressed to the emperor Alexius III Angelus (1195-1203), provides revealing details concerning the miserable conditions prevailing in Byzantium's Greek (Helladic) provinces at the close of the XIIth century. The disillusioned hierarch expresses his profound disappointment and the oppressed Athenians's bitter repinements against the gross peculations on the part of the "merciless" imperial agents, whose tax exactions he colourfully compares to raids of bandits\(^1\):

"And I have to report to you that Athens, once a famous and prosperous city, has gradually become empty and devoid of its inhabitants on account of their incessant maltreatment (by your majesty's agents); to such an extent is this taking place, that it (= Athens) may soon resemble a Scythian desert. The chief reason (for the city's misfortunes) will be that we will all have suffered severe hardship to a greater extent than our neighbours (i.e. the rest of the Atticans and the Boeotians), in spite of the fact that they are placed in a lower (administrative) status than we are... I shall abstain, your majesty, from relating to you again the excessive demands of the tax-collectors and the ravages inflicted by the sea-faring pirates. But how could I possibly refrain from shedding tears, when narrating to you the unspeakable behaviour of your agents?... He (i.e. the tax-collector) pretends that he has to pay a visit (to our city) in order to attend to his errands, producing imperial chrysobulls for this reason; in reality, however, he rushes to our city accompanied not only by his own assistants (i.e. other tax-collectors), but also by certain local shirkers, who in the manner of drones (κηφήνες) are always ready to make easy gains (by informing the φορολόγοι wherefrom to exact the largest sums) power and wealth were accumulated by the dynatói, while the central government was powerless to mediate. Its only outlet was to despatch its 'blood-thirsty' tax-collectors in the areas which still remained under imperial control, and thus, by exacting heavy tributes, attempt to fill up the imperial treasury.

They all perpetrate such horrors and robberies — even snatching away the food of the poor and the unprotected — that they rather resemble (foreign) invaders, who raid hostile territory... The loss and hardship that we have been suffering, most serene majesty, is certainly not to the interest of the state: on the contrary, it happens to be at its expense, for it constitutes the cardinal reason for a vast emigration, thus making our lands look desolate and the Empire ending up deprived of its populations... Having, therefore, related to you at least some of the misfortunes which have befallen us, we make a plea, most holy and humane majesty, hoping that you shall extend your mercy upon us, thus putting an end to this cataclysm of peculations. If this be not possible, we hope that you will consider at least replacing them (i.e. the onerous taxes) with lighter ones, so that we may be able to bear them according to our private ways and means (and not to our utter detriment)...”.

Scholarship, however, must watch for misinterpretations. Testimonies like the aforementioned by Michael Choniates have sometimes led recent authors to draw far-fetched and ‘impregnated’ conclusions of a generalizing character, one step —and sometimes many— ahead of the sources, by attempting to give a vivid picture of declining Byzantium as well as of the greed, lust and maladministration on the part of the governmental agents and the ruling class, who mercilessly exploited the πένητες; there the masses of the poor appear almost as hunted animals in deep despair.

To recapitulate, the chief causes which led various insurgents to proclaim their independence (ανεξαρτησία) from the corrupt central government and seek recognition by local populations as territorial masters (αύθένται, κυρίαρχοι), were the following:

i. Exorbitant and arbitrary taxation of the middle and lower classes, especially in the provinces.

ii. Provocative and extravagant dispensation of the collected sums by the government.

iii. Gross peculations on the part of the corrupt imperial agents.


2. Cf. my Κινήματα, pp. 87-89 & refs.
iv. Unjust confiscation of land and property to the benefit of the 
dynatoi and at the expense of the penetes.

v. Maladministration in both urban centres and the provinces of 
the Empire, and

vi. Inadequate defence of the state’s frontier zones, which resulted 
in increased invasions by foreign nations (Patzinaks, Turks, Normans, 
Crusaders, etc.).

As soon as the insurgents succeeded in gaining some sort of control 
in their territories, they usually proceeded to take the following necessary steps in order to stabilize their position and reach a feasible modus 
vivendi with both the central power and the inhabitants of the apo-
statized areas:

i. Their newly established χρατίδια, i.e. ‘mini-states’ (Territorialsta-
aten), should now be strengthened by the amassment of wealth through 
the exaction of the hitherto imperial taxes.

ii. The insurgents attempted to delineate a fresh external policy with 
neighbouring foreign nations, a policy which often differed from that 
adopted previously by the government of Constantinople. Sometimes 
certain insurgents did not hesitate to fight on the side of foreign in-
vaders against the Byzantine emperor.

iii. Several insurgents attempted to recruit more followers and con-
solidate their status by claiming rights to the imperial throne, either 
through the deliberate propagation of their supposed relation to pre-

1. Ibid., Introduction, p. 5 with ref. to Jürgen Hoffmann, Rudimente von 
Territorialstaaten im Byzantinische Reich, 1071-1210, Munich 1974 (above, p. 242, n. 1).

2. Like e.g. Pseudo-Michael (posing as Michael VII) and the Normans against 
Alexius I Comnenus in 1080/81, Pseudo-Diogenes and the Cumans against Alexius I 
in 1094, the Pseudo-Alexii, Mancaphas and Maurozomes with Seljukus and Turco-
mans against the Angeli and Theodore I Lascaris in the late XIIth-early XIIIth cent., 
etc. Referring to the XIth cent., J. Karayannopoulos, Keradoúrou kai Kerato-
μοθης Δυνάμεως... (op. cit., pp. 7-8) observes that it is rather incorrect to talk of 
massive cessations of Byzantine populations to the foreign invader and conqueror 
(sc. the Turk), whom they allegedly preferred to their compatriots and correligionists 
during the outbreak of rebellious and separatist movements. Furthermore, Karay-
annopoulos asserts that in the XIIth cent. there were no cases of voluntarycession 
to the enemy, while there was also no outbreak of separatist insurrections aiming 
at the setting-up of independent principalities (Territorialstaaten). He moreover differen-
tiates between the kinemata of Greeks and those of Roussel de Bailleul (Urse-
lius or Ruselius in the Byz. sources) and Philaretus Brachamius in the 1070s, which 
—although separatist in nature— cannot be regarded as Greek. On Philaretus see 
Savvides, Bυζάντιο και Σελτζούκοι Τούρκοι (above, p. 216, n. 1), p. 52, and on 
Urselius lius see ibidem, Melétes, p. 27 & refs.
vious—and usually quite popular—Byzantine rulers, thus hoping that they could count on popular support, or by the formation of strong private armies, an enterprise which required fresh taxation. The harassed local populations soon realized that they had opted for another oppressor instead of the previous one, i.e. the emperor. The threat of a possible punitive expedition on the part of the Byzantine sovereign kept these forces on the alert most of the time. So, the local populations, having lost hope that they could be delivered from persecution and exploitation, were filled with exasperation. This is why frequently they had no scruples about opening their gates to foreign invading forces, especially from the late XIIth century onwards.

As soon as the local authentai felt secure enough, they often attempted an aggrandizement of their territories. Few among them, however, dared to come into direct clash with the imperial troops. The most daring of their kind, like Maniaces, Tornicius, Bryennius et al., perished in their efforts to overthrow the emperor; Tornicius actually laid siege to Constantinople in 1047, but Constantine IX Monomachus was eventually saved on account of the rebel’s indecisiveness at a very crucial moment of the siege. Others were content to proclaim their inde-

1. I.e. Pseudo-Michael (posing as Michael VII himself) in 1080/81, Leo (or Constantine) Pseudo-Diogenes, posing as a son of Romanus IV Diogenes in 1094, the three Pseudo-Alexii in the final decade of the XIIth cent., who all posed as the son of the late Manuel I Comnenus, i.e. Alexius II, who had been executed by Andronicus I in 1183, et al. On the death of the hapless Alexius II Comnenus see Os tr o- 2. Like the cases of Nicephorus Bryennius in 1077/78, Leo Sgurus in the period c. 1200-c. 1208, et al. (see above, p. 260, n. 10 and pp. 261-262, n. 4).

3. Several local administrators succeeded in winning over the support of the populations, being recognized as local masters (αύθέντας) in the territories assigned previously to them by the imperial government. It seems that it had not been particularly difficult to buy off the conscience of those harassed populations, who would do anything to get rid of the prevalent stringent taxation and enjoy protection and peace. And if bribery could not work, sheer terror could always be implemented by those local lords through their private armies, thus forcing the masses of provincial populations into compulsory obedience. On this topic see the vivid but not always accurate pages of M. V. Lev tchenko, 'Ιστορία Βυζαντινής Αυτοκρατορίας (to 1453), Athens 1956, pp. 298 ff. Cf. Y. Korda tos, 'Ιστορία Βυζαντινής Αυτοκρατο- 709 ff., 576 ff., 604 ff., 646 ff., who follows Lev- tchenko but often draws his own far-fetched conclusions (cf. above, p. 263, n. 1).
pendence and continue to rule in their territories independently of the central government's wishes, like Sabbas Asidenus, Theodore II Gabras, Leo Gabalas et al. in the early XIIIth century, while others dynamically seized provinces of the Empire and attempted either to usurp the crown, like Isaacius Comnenus in Cyprus and Bryennius in Adrianople, or to extend their conquests, like Leo Sgurus in central and southern Greece (Hellas), Manuel Cammytzes in Thessaly and western Macedonia, Michael (I) Angelus of Epirus, et al. The detailed list of the homines seditiosi for the period from 1025 to 1261, which is appended to this article, attempts to offer a bird’s-eye-view of this situation.

It is, of course, impossible to give a contemporary partial and accurate picture of the careers of the various urban and provincial archons who opted for independence, since the accounts of the official Byzantine chroniclers of the XIIth-XIIIth century (as well as those of later historiographers of the XIVth century) almost invariably accuse and blame the 'rebels' of unpatriotic attitude, especially when their country needed their combined forces in order to put an effective stand against foreign invaders. This situation was felt more than ever during the closing stages of the XIIth century and the early XIIIth, with the splintering of medieval Hellenism due to attacks from all quarters. In certain cases, however, we have testimonies coming from other sources, like that by Nicephorus Blemmydes on Leo Gabalas of Rhodes, which helps towards a rehabilitation from the slanders which the Rhodian ruler suffered at the hands of the official Nicaean and early Palaeologan sources, i.e. George Acropolites and Theodore Scutariotes, who both saw in Gabalas much to criticize and almost nothing to praise.
A LIST
OF THE HOMINES SEDITIOSI
IN BYZANTIUM
A.D. 1025-1261

Key:
A Apostacy
C Conspiracy
R (Open) Rebellion
S Separatist Movement
U Usurpation


The names of those who succeeded in occupying the throne are in block capitals.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>REIGNING EMPEROR</th>
<th>INSURGENT(S)</th>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>PLACE</th>
<th>KIND OF INSURRECTION</th>
<th>COINAGE OF INSURGENT(S)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Constantine VIII</td>
<td>Constantine Burzalez</td>
<td>1025</td>
<td>Constantinople</td>
<td>C (?)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nicephorus Comnenus (dux and archon of Media and Vaspurakan)</td>
<td>1025/6</td>
<td>Vaspurakan</td>
<td>C-R</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bardas Phocas</td>
<td>1026</td>
<td>Cple</td>
<td>C-R</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Basil Sclerus (patricius)</td>
<td>1026/7</td>
<td>NW Anatolia - Osea island</td>
<td>C-R</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1st time)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romanus III Argyrus</td>
<td>Constantine Diogenes (strategus of Thracian and Paristrion-Paradounyton)</td>
<td>1029</td>
<td>Cple</td>
<td>C-R</td>
<td>lead seals (moly-bodoula)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Basil Sclerus (patricius and magistros, although blinded in 1026/7)</td>
<td>1031</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(again)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Basil Synadenus (strategus of Dyrachaeion)</td>
<td>1033</td>
<td>Cple</td>
<td>C-R</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michael IV Paphlagon</td>
<td>Constantine Dgalassenus (patricius)</td>
<td>1034</td>
<td>Anatolia - Cple</td>
<td>C</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gregory Taronites (patricius)</td>
<td>1040</td>
<td>Phrygia</td>
<td>C-R</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Basil Synadenus (strategus of Dyrachaeion)</td>
<td>1040</td>
<td>Dyrarchaeion</td>
<td>C</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Michael Cerularius (the future Patriarch: 1043-58) and John Macrembolites</td>
<td>1040</td>
<td>Cple</td>
<td>C</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constantine IX Monomachus</td>
<td>CONSTANTINE (IX) MONOMACHUS (ascended throne in 1042)</td>
<td>1034/5</td>
<td>Lesbos (Mytilene) — exiled to C</td>
<td>C</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>and 1038</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1038</td>
<td>Lesbos (Mytilene) — until 1042</td>
<td>C</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constantine IX Mono-</td>
<td>George Maniates (strategus and katepano)</td>
<td>1042/3</td>
<td>Macedonia</td>
<td>R-L</td>
<td>lead seals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Theophilus Eroticos (strategus-governor of Cyprus)</td>
<td>1042/3</td>
<td>Cyprus</td>
<td>R-S-A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Stephanus (sebastophorus)</td>
<td>1043</td>
<td>Cple</td>
<td>C-R</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### UNREST IN LATER BYZANTIUM, 1025-1261

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Leo Tornicius (strategus-ensured a monk ante 1047)</td>
<td>1047</td>
<td>Macedonia-Thrace</td>
<td>R</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nicephorus and Michael, sons of Euthymius</td>
<td>1050/1</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romanus Boilas (senator-court official)</td>
<td>1051/2</td>
<td>Cple</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constantine Barys</td>
<td>between 1052-57</td>
<td>Cple</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MICHAEL VI 'STRATICUS' (1056-57)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nicephorus Bryennius (I) (strategus of Macedonian tagmata)</td>
<td>1057</td>
<td>Anatolia</td>
<td>C-R</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISAACIUS (I) COMNENUS (seized throne in 1057, reigned 1057-9)</td>
<td>1057</td>
<td>Anatolia-Cple</td>
<td>C-R</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MICHAEL VII DUCAS 'PARAPINACIUS' (1071-78)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Ducas (caesar) with Roussel de Bailleul (Norman mercenary chief)</td>
<td>1073/4</td>
<td>Anatolia</td>
<td>R-S-A-U</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nicephorus Bryennius (II), son of N.B. (I) (strategus and dux of Dyrrachion), with his brother, John Bryennius</td>
<td>1077/8</td>
<td>Macedonia-Thrace (Adrianople)</td>
<td>R-S-A-U coins (nomisma-ta) of N.B. (II)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NICEPHORUS III BOTANEIATES (seized throne in 1078, reigned 1078-81), formerly strategus of Anastolicon</td>
<td>1077/8</td>
<td>Anatolia</td>
<td>R-U no coins before his accession in 1078</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NICEPHORUS III BOTANEIATES (1078-81)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nicephorus Basilacius (strategus-duke of Dyrrachion)</td>
<td>1078</td>
<td>Thessalonica</td>
<td>R-S-A coins (?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constantine Ducas (younger brother of Michael VII)</td>
<td>1078</td>
<td>Cple</td>
<td>C-R</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nicephorus Melissenus (strategus)</td>
<td>1080/1</td>
<td>Anatolia</td>
<td>R-U coins (?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALEXIUS (I) COMNENUS (strategus)</td>
<td>1081</td>
<td>Anatolia-Cple</td>
<td>R-U no coins before his accession</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reigning Emperor</td>
<td>Insurgent(s)</td>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Place</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Alexius I Comnenus</strong></td>
<td>Pseudo-Michael (posing as Michael VII)</td>
<td>1080/1</td>
<td>W Macedonia - Epirus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>John Comnenus (dux of Dyrrachion, nephew of Alexius I)</td>
<td>1091</td>
<td>Dyrrachion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rapsomates (governor of Cyprus)</td>
<td>1092</td>
<td>Cyprus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Caryces (governor of Crete)</td>
<td>1092</td>
<td>Crete</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nicephorus Diogenes (elder son of Romanus IV Diogenes)</td>
<td>1094</td>
<td>Cple</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Leo (or Constantine) Diogenes (Pseudo-Diogenes)</td>
<td>1094</td>
<td>Thrace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Theodore (I) Saint Gabras (dux of Chaldia)</td>
<td>1095/6-98</td>
<td>Trebizond-Pontus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Anemas brothers (Michael, Leo et al.)</td>
<td>1104/5</td>
<td>Cple</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gregory Gabras-Taronites (son of Theodore I, dux of Chaldia)</td>
<td>1106/7</td>
<td>Trebizond-Pontus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>John II Comnenus</strong></td>
<td>Constantine Gabras (son or brother of Gregory G.-T.)</td>
<td>1124/6-1139/40</td>
<td>Trebizond-Pontus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Manuel I Comnenus</strong></td>
<td>Alexius Axuchus (protostrator)</td>
<td>1167</td>
<td>Cple (?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Alexius II Comnenus</strong></td>
<td>Andronicus (I) Comnenus (cousin of Manuel I)</td>
<td>1182/3</td>
<td>Anatolia - Cple</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Andronicus I Comnenus</strong></td>
<td>Andronicus La(m)pardas (strategos)</td>
<td>1183/4</td>
<td>Anatolia (Adramyttion ?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Andronicus Constantephanus (Megas Dux = admiral)</td>
<td>1183/4</td>
<td>Anatolia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Character</td>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Region</td>
<td>Coins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>---------------------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Comnenus-Batatzes (strategus-governor of Philadelphia)</td>
<td>1183/4</td>
<td>Anatolia (Philadelphia)</td>
<td>R-S-A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theodore Cantacuzenus (strategus-governor of Prussia)</td>
<td>1184</td>
<td>NW Anatolia (Nicaea)</td>
<td>R-S-A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isaacius Comnenus (I) (nephew of Manuel I C.)</td>
<td>1184/5-1191</td>
<td>Cyprus</td>
<td>R-S-A-U silver coins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISAACIUS II ANGELUS (strategus, seized throne in 1185)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constantine Aspietes</td>
<td>1185/6</td>
<td>Macedonia</td>
<td>C-R (?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alexius Branas (strategus)</td>
<td>1186</td>
<td>Macedonia</td>
<td>R-U</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theodore Mancaphas (governor of Philadelphia)</td>
<td>1189/90</td>
<td>Philadelphia-Phrygia</td>
<td>R-S-A silver coins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constantine Taticius</td>
<td>1190</td>
<td>Cple</td>
<td>C-R</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basil Chotzas</td>
<td>1190-1204</td>
<td>Tarsia (NW Anatolia)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isaacius Comnenus (II) (nephew of Andronicus I)</td>
<td>1190/1</td>
<td>Cple</td>
<td>R</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pseudo-Alexius (I)</td>
<td>1192</td>
<td>Anatolia (Phrygia)</td>
<td>R-U</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pseudo-Alexius (II)</td>
<td>1192</td>
<td>Anatolia (Paphlagonia)</td>
<td>R-U</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALEXIUS III ANGELUS (brother of Isaacius II A.) (seized throne in 1195)</td>
<td>1195</td>
<td>Cple</td>
<td>R</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>no coins before his accession</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALEXIUS III ANGELUS (1195-1203)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pseudo-Alexius (III)</td>
<td>1195/6</td>
<td>Anatolia (Ançara regions)</td>
<td>R-U</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theodore Mancaphas</td>
<td>1195/6</td>
<td>W Anatolia</td>
<td>R</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2nd time)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REIGNING EMPEROR</td>
<td>INSURGENT(S)</td>
<td>DATE</td>
<td>PLACE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALEXIUS III A., toppled in 1203 by his nephew, ALEXIUS IV ANGELUS, who restored his now blind father, ISAACUS II A. (1203-4)</td>
<td>Michael Angelus (Michael I of Epirus, ruled: 1204/5-1214/15)</td>
<td>1200/4</td>
<td>SW Anatolia-Caria (Mylassa Melanudium) and Epirus (Nicopolis-Arta)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Leo Chamaretus (archon of Lacedaemon)</td>
<td>1200/6</td>
<td>S Morea (Sparta-Mystras)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Leo Sgurus (archon of Argolis and Corinthia, sebastohypertatus from 1204)</td>
<td>1200/8</td>
<td>Morea (Argolis-Corinthia) and Central Greece up to Larissa in Thessaly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>John Comnenus (Axuchus) &quot;Pachys&quot; (= the Fat) (court official)</td>
<td>1201/2</td>
<td>Cple</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Manuel Cam(m)ytzes (protostrator)</td>
<td>1201/2</td>
<td>Thessaly-W Macedonia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nicholas Canabus (nobleman)</td>
<td>1204</td>
<td>Cple</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ALEXIUS (V) DUCAS &quot;MURTZUPHILUS&quot; (seized throne in 1204)</td>
<td>1204</td>
<td>Cple</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(CONSTANTINE (XI) LASCARIS (1204-5) and THEODORE I LASCARIS (1204/5-22))</td>
<td>Theodore Mancaphas</td>
<td>1204/5 (3rd time)</td>
<td>Philadelphia - Phrygia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Basil Chotzas</td>
<td>1204/5 (continued)</td>
<td>NW Anatolia (Tarsia)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Leo Gabalas (governor of Rhodes)</td>
<td>1203/4 (see below)</td>
<td>Rhodes - Dodecanese</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Manuel Maurozomes (governor of Phrygia)</td>
<td>1204/6</td>
<td>Phrygia (Maeneander regions)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Place</td>
<td>Notes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sabbas Asidenus (governor of Sampson/Priene, sebastocrator from 1206)</td>
<td>1204/6</td>
<td>Sampson (W Asia Minor - Ionia)</td>
<td>S-A coins (?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David (Megas) Comnenus (co-founder of Empire of Trebizond in 1204)</td>
<td>1204/5-7</td>
<td>Pontus-Paphlagonia (Bithynia ?)</td>
<td>Lascars are to be considered lawful heirs of Byzantine throne</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Cantacuzenus (archon of Methone)</td>
<td>1204/5-9</td>
<td>SW Morea (Messenia)</td>
<td>S-A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theodore II Gabras (governor of Amisus/Samsun)</td>
<td>1204/8</td>
<td>Amisus (Pontus)</td>
<td>S-A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leo Gabalas (governor of Rhodes, caesar from 1225/6)</td>
<td>1203/4-1239/40</td>
<td>Rhodes - Dodecanese</td>
<td>S-A copper coins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>: 1225/6, 1234</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lascaris brothers Isaacius and Alexius (brothers of Theodore I L.)</td>
<td>1225/5</td>
<td>Nicaea-Bithynia</td>
<td>C-R</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nestongi brothers Andronicus and Isaacius (cousins of John III)</td>
<td>1225</td>
<td>Nicaea-Bithynia</td>
<td>C-R</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Gabalas (brother and successor of Leo G.)</td>
<td>1239/10-1259/50</td>
<td>Rhodes - Dodecanese</td>
<td>S-A (?) copper coins (soon accepted Niccaean suzerainty)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JOHN IV LASCARIS (1258)</td>
<td>1258</td>
<td>Nicaea</td>
<td>C-R-1 various coins before and after 1261</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MICHAEL VIII PALAELOGUS (strategus) (occupied throne in 1258/9, recaptured Gple from Latins in 1261, founded Palaeologan dynasty 1261-1282)</td>
<td>1258</td>
<td>Nicaea</td>
<td>C-R-1 various coins before and after 1261</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>