Doctoral Thesis

Itinerant Rulership in Byzantium:
a topographical analysis of the Laskarid realm (1204-1261)

by Julia Jedamski

Supervisors:
Niels Gaul
József Laszlovszky

Submitted to the Medieval Studies Department
Central European University, Budapest

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Budapest, Hungary
2013

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements

This study has been raised by several *Doktorväter*, to whom I feel deeply grateful. Jannis Niehoff-Panagiotidis encouraged me to apply at the *Central European University* Department of Medieval Studies, first for the MA program, then to continue my topic as a PhD student. His advice led to a profound new direction in my life, which I will never forget. József Laszlovszky accepted me as a student from a different field and recognized from the start the potentials of my material. He provided me with a true interdisciplinary opening to archeology. He also introduced me to the practicalities of the discipline by taking me to fieldwork in Ravenna, which was a wonderful experience. Niels Gaul adopted my project when he arrived in 2007 as the new professor of Byzantine Studies at CEU – an adoption which worked out wonderfully. He challenged me to explore textual evidence and encouraged me not to be shy when my ideas differed from established scholarly opinion. In addition to our professional relationship, Niels became also one of my friends – Volker to name as the other – with whom I could share the experience of exile in Budapest.

This study would never have been born without its home institution, Medieval Studies at CEU. I am deeply grateful for the possibilities I received as a CEU student and for the support CEU gave me. It is a wonderful and special university and my scholarly home.

Two institutions abroad treated me with great hospitality: the Centre for Byzantine, Ottoman and Modern Greek Studies at the University of Birmingham and the Index of Christian Art at Princeton University. Ruth Macrides agreed to work with me and share her exciting ideas about the period of exile, and Leslie Brubaker kindly granted me visiting status in Birmingham. In Princeton, Colum Hourihane generously provided me access to the facilities, and Dimitry Gondicas equally generously invited me to join all activities at the Hellenic Studies Center. I would like to express my special Thanks for this possibility and the warm welcome to Ruth Macrides and Colum Hourihane, who both made my respective stays memorable.

Following these research semesters I received a Junior Fellowship at the Research Center for Anatolian Civilizations at the Koç University, Istanbul. I am deeply grateful for this opportunity and for the generousity of the Koç Foundation and would like to thank staff and fellow colleagues of the year 2009-2010 for making my stay

unforgettable. Special Thanks go to Scott-Bey, Duygu and Tamer for their constant support; and Elif, Jesper, Katerina, Kutlu, Ünver and all the others for their company.

There are many people holding their positions behind the curtain without whom a dissertation cannot be done. I would like to name here our coordinators of the Medieval Studies department, Csilla and Annabella. Csilla miraculously took away every fear I had regarding any adminsitrative issue and led me through the jungle of paperwork with encouraging words. Thank you for your patience and spirit! I also would like to express my gratitude to Ágnes Havasi and her team of colleagues and students from the library, who never got tired of locating misplaced books and keeping an eye on my steadily growing reserve pile. Ádám, Anna, Brian and Stephanie, Gergő and Lidi, Frauke, Kriszta, Melis, Niels – all understood resp. shared the vagabond life style of a PhD student, and thus opened their homes to me. Thank you for the shelter, dear friends!

A special Thanks goes to my friend Susann, who bravely came with me to Turkey for a second time. I am not sure that there is another person in this world who happily agrees to drive 1000km through the Turkish country side and camp in semi-legal spots during stormy early spring time, all for the sake of topographical studies.

My parents never had a doubt that I would finish this project. They patiently gave me shelter in my years of travel and were happy for each new temporary residence of mine, because it gave them the idea for their next vacation. Thank you for allowing me to be and do what I want!

Not to forget, I would like to thank the cast and crew of *Twin Peaks*, *The West Wing*, *Gilmore Girls*, *The Good Wife*, *Dr. House* and *Friday Night Lights* for their steady support and input.

Finally, I would like to thank Peter for walking all the way with me. Without your support and your ability to make me laugh even in the darkest moments I would never have made it this far.

Note on transliterations

I anglicized Christian names, such as George Akropolites, and used established spelling of place names, like Constantinople. I tried to avoid the Latinization of names, where it did not conflict with well-known names.

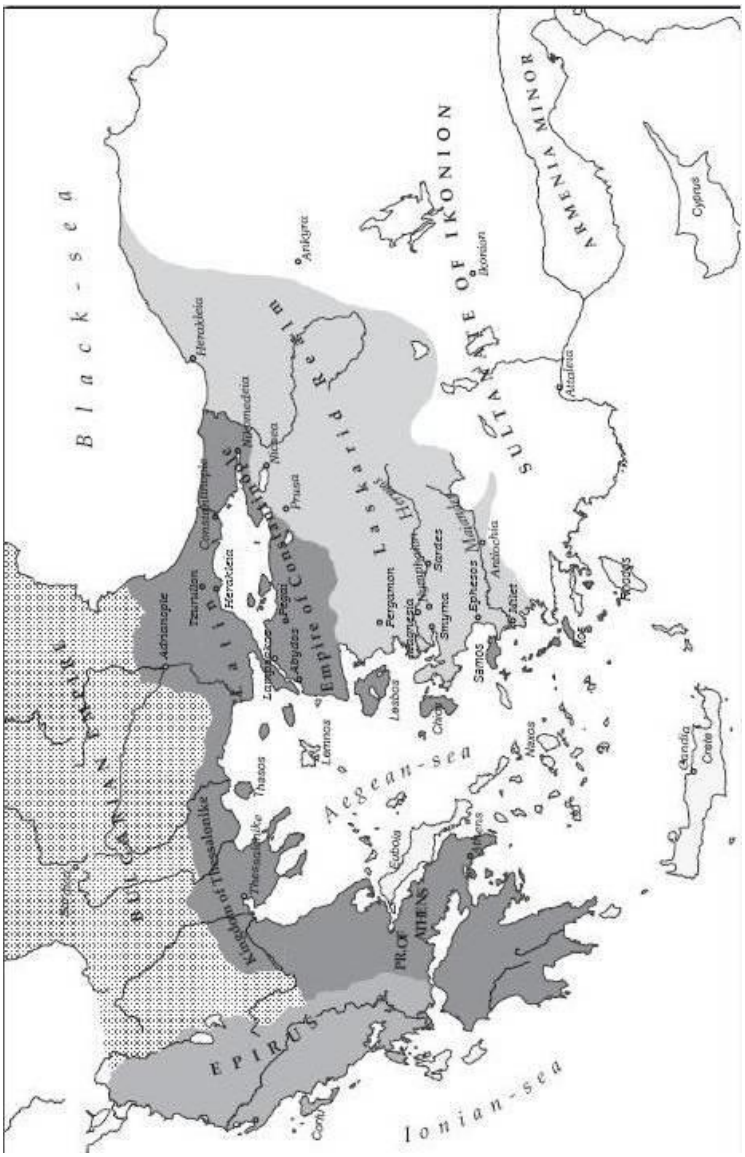
Note on place names

When mentioned first, the medieval Greek name appears next to the recent Turkish name of the site, further on the text refers to the site only with the Greek denomination.

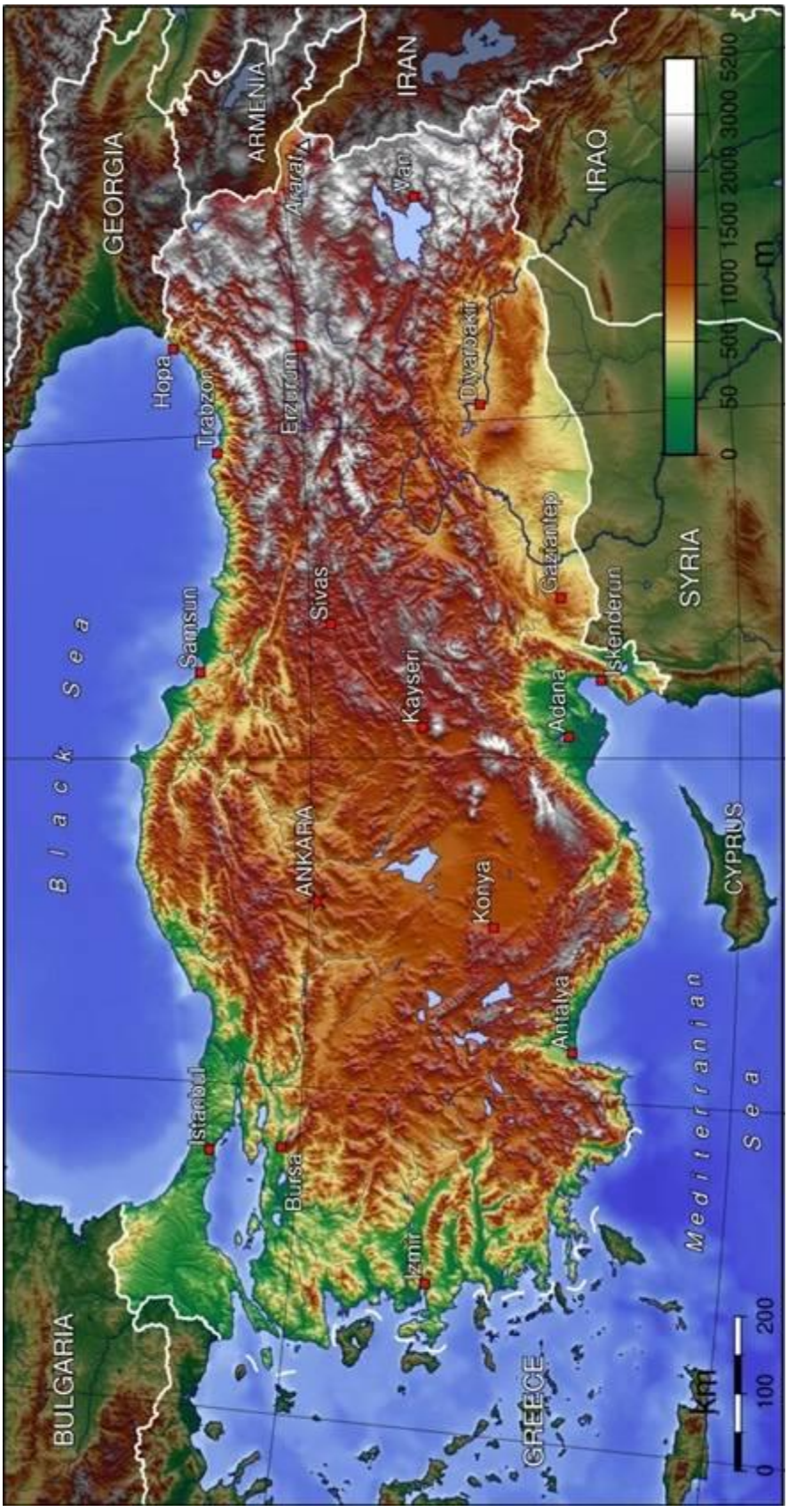
List of Illustrations

Nymphaion

Map of the Laskarid realm before 1224



Map of the Anatolian plateau



I. Introduction

Two monographs of the previous century shaped modern research of the Laskarid period. Alice Gardner's "The Lascarids of Nicaea: the story of an empire in exile" followed the political events in western Asia Minor after the events of 1204 and set the stage, as it were, in the first decade of the twentieth century. Michael Angold's "A Byzantine government in exile: government and society under the Laskarids of Nicaea, 1204-1261" was published around 60 years later and shed seminal light on the social and administrative aspects of this period. Any research on the period between 1204 and 1261 has to start from the findings of these two magisterial monographs.[1]

Prominently, both titles share their positioning of the Laskarid rulers in the city of Nicaea. Therefore, it is not surprising that in a recent handbook under the entry "empire of Nicaea" the period of Laskarid rule between 1204 and 1261 in western Asia Minor is subsumed.[2] The city became synonymous for the exile period: Nicaea is described in scholarly literature as the capital and imperial seat of the Laskarid rulers. There are good reasons for adopting this view, which will be examined in this study. Nicaea as the capital in exile was accepted easily not least since it fit the Byzantine model of a city that stood for the whole empire of which it was its hub. Once Constantinople was lost as the imperial center of the empire following the events of 1204, with the creation of three successor states in the provinces also three centers seemingly replaced the function of the sacked capital. Nicaea and Trebizond became – or, in the first case, are asumed to have become – the imperial seats for the two states that emerged after 1204 in Asia Minor, Arta resp. Thessalonike for the third on European soil.

Gardner and Angold are not the first to see in Nicaea the headquarters of the exile period. They took up and followed a perspective that had been established centuries before. Going backwards in time, Edward Gibbon, on whom Gardner relied in her research, stated that "Theodore [Laskaris] retired to breathe the air of freedom in Anatolia". On the foundation of the rule in exile Gibbon wrote that "Nice, where

[1] Michael Angold, *A Byzantine Government in Exile: Government and Society under the Laskarids of Nicaea (1204-1261)* (London: Oxford University Press, 1975); Alice Gardner, *The Lascarids of Nicaea. The story of an empire in exile* (London: Methuen, 1912; reprint, Amsterdam: Hakkert, 1964).

[2] Michael Angold, "Byzantium, History of: Empire of Nicaea (1204-1261)," *ODB*, 356-58.

Theodore established his residence, Prusa and Philadelphia, Smyrna and Ephesos, opened their gates to their deliverer". This numeration of cities followed closely the account of Akropolites for the first moves of Theodore on Asian soil. Yet, Gibbon ascribed also Theodore's successor John Vatatzes to the city of Nicaea. In the following narration of the struggles of the rulers of western Asia Minor against the Latin emperors of Constantinople Gibbon called John III consequently "Vatatzes of Nice"; likewise when referring to the Laskarid successor state he simply referred to the city of Nicaea.[3] For him the hub of Laskarid rule was Nicaea, from where the emperors acted against their opponents. As will be shown in this study, here Gibbon simplified Akropolites'report.

But instead of Akropolites, whom he did not name here as source, Gibbon referred to yet another scholar of the modern age, the founding father of Byzantine Studies, Charles du Fresne sieur du Cange. Yet, regarding the question of the spatial arrangement of the successor state in estern Asia Minor resp. the question of the capital, both scholars varied.

Throughout his work Gibbon made extensive use of du Cange's monumental *De familiis Byzantinis* (1680), an imperial genealogy of the Byzantine empire, which included also the ruling families of the exile period in western Asia Minor, Trebizond and Epiros. Du Cange provided entries for each member of the Byzantine imperial dynasties, describing birefly family relation, marital status, title and major biographical events. The entries of both Theodore I Laskaris and John III Vatatzes are equal in length and both contain references to sites. On Theodore Laskaris du Cange reported that he was crowned at Nicaea – in accordance with Gibbon. It is the only city mentioned in the entry. However, looking at the entry of John Vatatzes it appears that du Cange deviated slightly from the straight recognition of Nicaea as the capital of the exile. For the paragraph on Vatatzes closes with the following remark: *Imperii sedem Nicaeae, ut decessor, seu ut alii volunt, Magnesiae tenuit*.[4] The sentence stands for itself, the previous and the following ones are not connected as for their content, also a footnote is lacking. Nicaea and also Magnesia were mentioned as the cities of Vatatzes, apparently

[3] Edward Gibbon, *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, ed. with additional notes by W. Smith (London: J. Murray, 1862), 337, 339 and 343.

[4] Charles du Fresne Sieur du Cange, *Historia Byzantina duplici commentario illustrata. Prior familias ac stemniata Imperatorum Constantinopolitanorum ... complectitur: alter descriptionem urbis Constantinopolitanæ qualis extitit sub Imperatoribus Christianis* (Lutetiae Parisiorum: apud Ludovicum Billaine, 1680), 223.

taken from different sources, though the "alii" remains unexplained. Du Cange thus referred to differing views regarding the location of the imperial throne under Vatatzes. This Gibbon either chose to ignore or overlooked.

Du Cange's short and uncommented remark hinted at an important circumstance. For indeed the available body of source material presents a more complex and inconclusive picture regarding the location of the imperial residence during the exile period than has been noticed so far. Which city of western Asia Minor should be considered as the imperial residence during the exile, or rather – should one of the cities be regarded as the imperial city during the exile – has until now not been asked by scholars. In Byzantium, more than in any other medieval state entity, it was the residence of the ruler that marked the center of the realm. If the site of the imperial residence of the Laskarid rulers is subject to debate, what implications does this have for the layout of the successor state as a whole? This present study attempts to answer this question.

This analysis focuses on the topography and spatial organization of the Laskarid realm, commonly known as the "empire of Nicaea" situated in western Asia Minor, which came to existence after the sack of Constantinople in 1204 and lasted until the reconquest of the city in 1261.[5] It aims at examining the ways, in which the Laskarid rulers set up and tailored the western part of Asia Minor to serve as their core territory.[6]

The origin of this study has been an investigation focusing on the palace at Nymphaion, recent Kemalpaşa near modern İzmir, both as a site with archaeological remains and as mentioned in texts produced during the period of exile.[7] This building was presumably erected under John III Vatatzes (1221-54) and used as imperial residence by him and all subsequent rulers until Andronikos II (1282-1328), who still used it as a residence long after the recapture of Constantinople during the years 1291-93. Nymphaion, a neglected site often known only by scholars of the "period in exile",

[5] By applying the term "realm", I want to emphasize the different nature of the successor state to the former Byzantine empire. For now, realm here should be understood more neutrally simply as a territory that is defined solely by the authority of its ruler.

[6] The rulers during that period were Theodore I Laskaris (1203-1221), John III Vatatzes (1221-1254), Theodore II Laskaris (1254-1258) and Michael VIII Palaiologos (1258-1282) with his co-emperor John IV Laskaris (1258-1261). Hereby I consider the period from 1203 until 1261 as Laskarid rule, based on the facts that John III, despite his alternate family name, was son-in-law of Theodore I and thus member of the dynasty, and also that Michael VIII could not afford to rule without the legitimate heir to the throne, John IV, until he reconquered Constantinople.

[7] Julia Jedamski, "Nymphaion: A Byzantine palace in exile," *MA thesis*, Central European University, 2006.

seemed an awkward choice for an imperial residence, even during the time when Constantinople was lost. It is situated roughly 400km southwest of Nicaea, 30km east of the ancient harbor city Smyrna, modern İzmir. Addressing the question of why this spot was chosen to build an imperial residence during the exile period, resulted in a widened scope on the topography of the Laskarid realm as such.

The main question that followed was how the Laskarid rulers – in their struggle for political survival after the loss of their capital Constantinople in 1204 – coped with the loss of their imperial, ecclesiastical, thus cultural, economical and logistical center - in space. As the title "empire of Nicaea" would suggest, Nicaea was thought to be the capital in exile, although a detailed analysis focusing on a spatial perspective challenging this interpretation has never been attempted. This study attempts not only to offer a new perspective on Nicaea, but also a more complex picture on the spatial organization and power structure of the Laskarid realm.

Since its inauguration in 330, Constantinople had been built up as the New Rome (*Nea Rhomē*, the capital of the Roman empire of the East), and gradually became the largest city of the then known Christian world. In fact, the meaning of Constantinople for the Byzantine empire can hardly be overstated: it became the residence of the Byzantine emperors, seat of the patriarch, its population became occasionally a major political factor in the installment of new emperors, it was the center for education as well as for economy and trade, and it was with its loss in 1204 and 1453 that the empire as it had been known fell.

The difference between 1204 and 1453, however, was that in the middle of the fifteenth century, the Byzantine empire hardly comprised more than the territory of the Queen of Cities itself: with its sack the empire was gone. On the other hand, at the beginning of the thirteenth century the empire still included vast hinterlands in Asia Minor and on the Balkans, where crusaders failed to establish themselves as new authority. It was from these lands that resistance against the crusader-established so-called Latin empire of Constantinople was organized. Successor states took shape at Trebizond, the Epirote lands and also in the western part of Asia Minor, led by elites who each claimed to be heir to the Byzantine throne. These had subsequently not only to face the western intruders, but also their Byzantine rivals.

The "empire of Nicaea" gained its title to no small extent through the monuments that bear witness to Laskarid rule in the city of Nicaea: repaired city walls, renovated churches and newly founded monasteries. But the identification of Nicaea as

the capital of Laskarid Asia Minor has led to the neglect of basically all other sites that still preserve remains of Laskarid monuments, starting with the imperial palace at Nymphaion.

Focusing on these monumental remains and contemporary accounts will contribute to a better understanding of how Laskarid rule in western Asia Minor survived, stabilized and expanded within three generations. It will help to highlight motives of and tensions regarding Palaiologan politics in western Asia Minor after 1261. While the critical survey of the most important sites and their monuments mainly refers to the spatial arrangement of these places and their function, the analysis of the written sources contributes to our knowledge of the contemporary understanding and interpretation of the sites and their buildings.

A. Research agenda – the creation of the Laskarid realm

1. Hypothesis

The loss of the city of Constantinople after 1204 gave the Laskarid rulers in western Asia Minor the extraordinary position to create a new Byzantine state over the course of exile, which differed in its topographical layout tremendously from the former empire. The answer to the sack of Constantinople on behalf of this Byzantine rival successor state was not to erect a smaller and less significant center, as the Komnenoi rulers of Tebizond did.[8] Nicaea did not transform into a copy of the former capital, in exile, as the commonly used modern name for their realm might suggest. Instead having taken into account various features of their territory, the Laskarid rulers, in particular John III Vatatzes, set up a decentralized realm in which rule was exercised through itinerant rulership. It is this hypothesis that will guide through the following examination.

From the beginning one peculiar aspect of the palace of Nymphaion had been its seemingly odd location in the south of the Laskarid realm, far away from Nicaea, the see of the patriarch and posthumously name-giving city of the territory ruled by the emperors in exile. Previously, the functional aspect of the palace had not been raised in the literature which, in the process of my analysis however, turned out to be the crucial factor for a reevaluation of the edifice. By a careful reading of the sources, especially the account of George Akropolites, it appeared that Nymphaion received yearly visitations on a regular basis by all the emperors in exile for comparable reasons. Akropolites himself labeled Nymphaion as the usual resting place during winter.[9] Along with this observation, other sites moved into the focus of my interest, mostly because they were mentioned in similar contexts as imperial travel stations. For not only Nymphaion, but also places like Magnesia, Lampsakos, Nicaea and Philadelpheia seemed to have been temporary residences of the emperors and used for specific purposes.

[8] See for Trebizond in the thirteenth century Antony Eastmond, *Art and Identitiy in thirteenth-century Byzantium, Hagia Sophia and the empire of Trebizond* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004).

[9] *Georgii Acropolitae Opera*, ed. August Heisenberg, ed. and corrections Peter Wirth, 2 vols. (Stuttgart: Teubner, 1978), §84.

Thus, from the conclusion regarding the palace of Nymphaion in my previous study an assumption emerged which will here serve as the starting point for the following analysis. It appears that the loss of Constantinople after 1204 resulted in a new topographical structure as opposed to the former Byzantine empire; it resulted in a decentralized realm. It seems that no location within the Laskarid territory could claim to be *the* imperial center, no place became the heir of Constantinople within western Asia Minor. Nymphaion functioned as a main seasonal residence, but apparently only next to other sites where emperors lived part of the year. Imperial acts were performed in all parts of the governed territory, thus a misleading labeling of recreational and official residences, as can be found occasionally in the literature, shows the need for proper analysis and suitable terminology.

The aim of this study will be to verify the phenomenon of decentralization by parallel examination of all major sites within the territory and to clarify which sites fulfilled which functions during the exile period. Connected with this decentralized character, another hypothesis guiding this study is that the Laskarid realm in exile in western Asia Minor was lacking a capital, contrary to the common position within the literature that the center of Laskarid rule was based at Nicaea. The term "capital" had been applied in fact to several sites within the period under consideration, usually accompanied by certain explanatory labels, such as "economic", "secret" or simply "second" capital.[10] Part of this research will be devoted to the question what essentially turns a settlement into a capital and whether this is of any help in understanding the topography of Laskarid Asia Minor in particular. As it appears at the outset of this enterprise, nor was Nymphaion the capital of the Laskarid realm, since the one most obvious characteristic feature that turns a settlement into a capital was absent: in the

[10] Clive Foss, "Late Byzantine Fortifications in Lydia," *JÖB* 28 (1979), 297-320, here 307, stated that "Under John Vatatzes (…) Magnesia was effectively the capital of the empire". Influential in the interpretation of a capital based on the economical aspect was Michael Hendy, *Studies in the Byzantine Monetary Economy c.300–1450* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985). After showing that under the Laskarids the imperial treasury had been deposited at Magnesia, he added that "this city lay in the economic heart of the empire of Nicaea, the area between the rivers Hermus and Maeander, and within easy reach of the administrative capital at Nymphaeum where it had been customary for the emperors to spend the autumn and winter since the conquest of 1204." Klaus-Peter Matschke likewise distinguished during this period between official capital and residence by saying that "already during their exile in Asia Minor, the late Byzantine emperors had resided not only in the official capital of Nicaea; they may have spent just as much time in two other cities of the empire: Nymphaion and Magnesia.": Klaus-Peter Matschke, "The Late Byzantine Urban Economy, Thirteenth-Fifteenth Centuries," in *The Economic History of Byzantium from the Seventh through the Fifteenth Century*, 3 vols., ed. Angeliki E. Laiou, Dumbarton Oaks Studies 39 (Washington: Dumbarton Oaks, 2002), 463-495, here 464.

most general way, the leading elements of a realm should be located in a capital. Nymphaion did not provide such features. The patriarch never stayed at Nymphaion; his place was Nicaea. It was the only period in the history of the Byzantine empire when for decades the emperor and the patriarch were not located in the same city. Nicaea seems to have been a center of attraction for intellectuals and noble members of the Laskarid society. At one point the emperor decided not to stay in the same location as the patriarch and the aristocracy. It was apparently not considered a necessity by him and his contemporaries. It can hardly be overemphasized how unique this dispersed arrangement of power was for Byzantine sovereignty. Thus, as in the literature Nicaea is commonly regarded as the "official capital" of the empire in exile, the duality of these two locations, their relationship and function will be central to a deeper understanding of the political geography the Laskarid rulers adopted.

2. Residenzenforschung in Medieval and Byzantine Studies

At first sight, using the western approach of *Residenzenforschung* as a way of understanding a late medieval realm seems not to fit the Byzantine empire, since its main attribute is missing in Byzantium. This attribute is the variety and alteration of important locations during the Middle Ages: in the West a concentration of sites of royal supremacy can be recorded through the sources. Scholars focusing on the Medieval West are faced with the questions of where, why, and how local centers of medieval realms and principalities increased to become central residences of power. A Byzantine scholar, on the other hand, has almost no reason to search for the imperial center; the answer is simply, Constantinople.

Recently Peter Schreiner dealt with visitors and their impressions of the imperial palace in Constantinople. Since even within the walls of the city the actual residence of the emperors changed during the course of the empire, he included in his analysis texts dealing with the upper and lower terrace of the Great Palace complex, as well as the Blachernai palace. In order to justify this approach he started with a definition of what constituted the imperial palace in Byzantium:

> Der Kaiserpalast war nicht nur privater und zeremonieller Sitz des Kaisers, sondern auch Amtsbereich der kaiserlichen Verwaltung, Ort der Münzprägung, des Staatsschatzes und der zentralen Gefängnisse. Er war somit Mittelpunkt und Schaltstelle eines ganzen Reiches. Damit ist auch eine Definition gegeben, was unter Kaiserpalast zu verstehen ist: der Ort, von dem aus der Kaiser regiert. Dies war, beginnend im vierten Jahrhundert unter Konstantin bis ins zwölfte Jahrhundert nur

> an einer Stelle der Stadt, wo sich zwischen Hagia Sophia, Hippodrom und dem Terrassenbereich zum Marmarameer auf einem großen Areal die verschiedensten Anlagen entwickelt hatten.[11]

Here Schreiner compiled a handy list of features that an imperial residence in Byzantium had to possess. For him the residence of an emperor was that place from which the emperor reigned, and the fact that he reigned manifested itself at this residence through various institutions. Besides being the site where ceremonial acts were conducted, it hosted the administration: it was the place where the emperor could keep control of the mint, the treasury and the power over the prison. These elements Schreiner listed as vital parts of the imperial residences in Constantinople.

In every respect the Queen of Cities was the heir to ancient Rome, but in particular the heir regarding its central position within the empire. The Milion had been erected under Constantine the Great at the beginning of the Mese in the center of Constantinople to mark the zero point for all distances through the empire; here was the center from which everything else was dependent. To keep the imperial residence here for 900 years until 1204 and then again from 1261 until the fall of Byzantium in 1453 was only consistent with this perception.

Constantinople had been the capital of Byzantium in every respect. It had been the imperial residence of all emperors since its inauguration under Constantine the Great; the area of the Great Palace grew within time and required a whole district of the inner city.[12] The city was home to senate and adminsitration. It housed the patriarchate; the great church of the Hagia Sophia became the liturgical center of the Byzantine world. Slightly later in time, especially after the loss of cities like Antioch and Alexandria, Constantinople likewise turned into the heart of education and higher learning. Every now and then education in Constantinople was supervised and improved

[11] Peter Schreiner, "Zu Gast in den Kaiserpalästen Konstantinopels – Architektur und Topographie in der Sicht fremdländischer Betrachter," in *Visualisierungen von Herrschaft, Frühmittelalterliche Residenzen – Gestalt und Zeremoniell*, ed. Franz Alto Bauer, Byzas, Veröffentlichungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts Istanbul, vol. 5 (Istanbul: Yayinlari, 2006), 101-134, here 101. It is interesting to note that Schreiner was not considering the possibility of a residence outside Constantinople for the period under consideration. The Laskarid period was out of his scope.

[12] An initial description of the Great Palace may be given by Cecily Hennessy, "Topography of Constantinople," in *The Oxford Handbook of Byzantine Studies,* ed. Elizabeth Jeffreys (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 205-206. A more detailed recent analysis of the written material regarding the Great Palace is available by Jeffrey Featherstone, "The Great Palace as reflected in *De Ceremoniis*," in *Visualisierungen von Herrschaft, Frühmittelalterliche Residenzen – Gestalt und Zeremoniell*, ed. Franz Alto Bauer, Byzas, Veröffentlichungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts Istanbul, vol. 5 (Istanbul: Yayinlari, 2006), 47-62.

by individual emperors.[13] Regarding its size, wealth, and importance in terms of trade it did surpass any other city of the empire and deeply impressed visitors of the known medieval world.[14] So it was perceived by its inhabitants as well as by its visitors.[15] Above all, the meaning of Constantinople for its citizens and their relation to the empire can hardly be exaggerated. Magdalino in his chapter with the telling title "Byzantium = Constantinople" stated that the empire "developed a relationship between capital and country comparable to that of a centralized modern nation state."[16] The Queen of Cities had been the eternal guard of the empire that would fall only if the world came to an end.[17] Byzantium was simply unimaginable without its capital; tha latter was the guarantor of safety and the symbol of self-identity. For the empire was able to go on during its existence with gradual losses of territories on all its borders until it was shrunken to the size of Constantinople alone when facing the emerging Ottoman empire in the fifteenth century. Before 1453, Constantinople never fell into hostile hands; the only exception is the period of exile from 1204 until 1261.

Since its inauguration Constantinople had combined its position as captial and imperial city of the empire.[18] The question that is raised here is how the loss of such a meaningful center was overcome during the exile in western Asia Minor. Do we find a mirrored version of the structure of the Byzantine empire within the topography of the Laskarid realm, another such centralized state entity? Did the empire reinvented in western Asia Minor keep its centralized character after all, or did its rulers adopt a different topographical solution?

The conquest of Constantinople by the Crusaders of the Fourth Crusade brought the empire as it had been fashioned 900 years ago to a temporary end. The capital of the

[13] Athanasios Markopoulos, "Education," in *The Oxford Handbook of Byzantine Studies*, ed. Elizabeth Jeffreys (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 785-795.

[14] Ruth Macrides, "Constantinople: the crusaders' gaze," in *Travel in the Byzantine world, Papers from the thirty fourth spring symposium of Byzantine Studies, Birmingham, April 2000, ed. Ruth Macrides* (Newcastle upon Tyne: Ashgate, 2002), 193-212, here 195.

[15] Gudrun Schmalzbauer, "Konstantinopel" in Theologische Realenzyklopädie (Berlin New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1990), Band XIX, 503-518.

[16] Paul Magdalino, "Byzantium = Constantinople" in *A Companion to Byzantium*, ed. Liz James, Oxford, Blackwell, 2010, 43-54, here 43.

[17] See for the meaning of Constantinople regarding the eschatological beliefs in Byzantium Paul J. Alexander, "The strength of Empire and Capital as seen through Byzantine eyes," *Speculum* 37 (1962), 339-357, here 343.

[18] Magdalino recently exploited the interplay of imperial and public spaces within the city of Constantinople both through architecture and imperial processions and appearances and emphasized the bond between these two aspects of the city: Paul Magdalino, "Court and Capital in Byzantium," in *Royal Courts in Dynastic States and Empires: A Global Perspective*, ed. Duindam, Jeroen, Tülay Artan and Metin Kunt, Rulers and Elites: Comparative Studies in governance (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 131-144.

empire was lost, with it the imperial residence. After 1204 the very idea of a Byzantine empire, deprived of its heart, survived for 57 years along the periphery of the former empire without the upgrading of an equivalent capital. Instead the Byzantine emperors of the exile period were steadily on the move from one corner of their realm to another, saving or even enlarging the borders on all fronts. It was turning point of 180º in the history of Byzantium.

Here, *Residenzenforschung* can be introduced as a new approach that has not been used before in the context of the Laskarid period. It has the possibility to look at this era from a fundamentally different perspective: not focusing on the final result, the reconquest of Constantinople, but on the intermediate period of exile itself in an analysis of the system of rule that was practiced in a decentralized Byzantine realm. If the new situation lasted for almost three generations, as is known, what new system of rulership was invented and where was it centered, if not in the capital? How did the Byzantines cope with the situation of exile? What modifications of rule did they adopt to save their realm?

Residenzenforschung, developed during the 1980s in the German-speaking area and applied throughout Europe, focused on the system of rule in the Latin West.[19] Based on the question of whether capitals as the *residentia*[20] of rulers can be recognized as early as the Middle Ages, and if so, how they were conditioned, the aim was to find categories that could define a location of medieval power. The term *Residenz* in this

[19] Helpful as a first insight Klaus Neitmann, "Was ist eine Residenz? - Methodische Überlegungen zur Erforschung der spätmittelalterlichen Residenzbildung," *Vorträge und Forschungen zur Residenzenfrage*, ed. Peter Johanek, Residenzenforschung, ed. Residenzen-Komission der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Göttingen, vol. 1 (Sigmaringen: Jan Thorbecke, 1990), 17-43. He introduces the reader to the topic and at the same time provides a summary of recently discussed issues. It is the introduction of the series Residenzenforschung, which has been compiled annually in Stuttgart since 1990. The further volumes contain single sites, all located in recent Germany, and their specific analysis as case studies.

[20] The Latin word *residentia* as one may find it in the sources means the domicile of a person in a quite general way, it is not necessarily connected to a ruler or lord, and also does it not include a permanent stay. For the medieval use it was enough if the specific person had stayed at this place called *residentia* once. This is worth keeping in mind, since today's perception of a residence reflects more the world of court culture in, for example, eighteenth century kingdoms. In fact, part of the problem of *Residenzforschung* — locating a center within a medieval realm — is that the Middle Ages simply did not have a term which would fit the kind of place Residenzforscher are searching for. For a term description see: Birgit Studt, "Residenz," in *LexMA*, vol. 7 , 755-757. Also the first methodological part of Johann Kolb, *Heidelberg – Die Entstehung einer landesherrlichen Residenz im 14. Jahrhundert*, Residenzenforschungen, ed. Residenzen-Komission der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Göttingen (Sigmaringen: Jan Thorbecke, 1999), especially pages 15-25 might help to see the problems connected to the attempt to define *Residenz*. Kolb gives a good summary of aspects discussed and published literature is quoted in the footnotes.

scholarly context indicates a locality where supremacy was practiced directly through a ruler or lord, and also indirectly through administrative institutions that begin to assist and undertake tasks of the nobility at the transition from the High to Late Middle Ages. These changes were recognized by medievalists as the origins of territorial power, which were characteristic for the German territories.

Dealing with decentralization as one characteristic feature of rule in the Latin West, scholars analyzed the *Reisekönigtum* – itinerant kingship − of western rulers and their emphasis on various local centers, which were visited regularly on their travels. A focus was also put on the nobility, since the lower ranks of lordship were exercising their rule in the same manner as well, a habit probably inherited from tribal organization before Romanization. Going to the larger context of *Residenzenforschung*, in the elaboration of single locations and their characteristics scholars pointed out how rulership could be performed in a realm without one single center, but with a variation of several important sites that sometimes even belonged together and built in combination a decentralized residence region. Taking *Residenz* as the place from where the king or lord ruled over his territory, the primary question was which characteristics turned a medieval site into a residence. By the analysis of both archeological and written source material scholars tried to detect how a single site was used and what role it played in the system of rule.

A catalogue of diverse practical questions was compiled to analyze each of these local centers, mainly connected to the events and activities that happened at that site during one specific period. The questions are manifold, starting with administrative topics such as where was the place for jurisprudence, the announcement of new laws, signing contracts, meetings with other rulers or foundations of administrative institutions. A second group of questions is focused on the cultural and religious life of the whole realm and inquires into the foundation or upgrading of educational centers, monasteries, churches, and palaces. A third set of questions deals with another aspect of the ruler's life,[21] for instance the choice of the location for celebrating e.g. weddings, religious feasts during the year, burials or the location of his court and resting place.

[21] These events also belong to the performed sovereignty. For example, the celebration of Easter can also be a political act, if the ruler chooses the location of a controversial bishop, although the ruler might not appear as the acting person.

By an analysis of these questions scholars were able to point out when a medieval site gained in importance, and by which steps it turned into a local center of the praxis of lordship or even rulership. That was seen as the origin of that kind of territorial organization which partially still exists in Germany nowadays.

To sum up, *Residenzenforschung* has two advantages that should be emphasized in this context: firstly it combines archeological and written source material in an interdisciplinary analysis. Thus, it is focused on the topography of a medieval reign. Secondly, it creates a new perspective on one of the favored topics of medieval studies, the system of rulership in the Middle Ages. Both qualities are needed in recent historical research in general, and in Byzantine Studies in particular.

3. Terms and definitions

A term that will be vital to this study is itinerant rulership. It refers to a kind of rule that is executed by traveling through the governed territory on a regular basis. This concept has been applied to the studies on – mostly, but by no means exclusively – the execution of rule in the "Latin" Middle Ages. John W. Bernhardt very well described the general practice of itinerant rulership, which will be adopted for this study, in his analysis on kingship and monasticism in early medieval Germany. He said:

> Itinerant kingship refers to government in which a king carries out all the functions and symbolic representations of governing by periodically or constantly traveling throughout the areas of his dominion. Although especially well documented and most studied for the Frankish-Carolingian and the German realms of early medieval Europe, itinerant kingship existed throughout all of Europe during most of the middle ages. In fact, in the middle ages whoever exercised any kind of dominion – kings, dukes and counts; popes, bishops and abbots – all found themselves constantly under way to carry out the manifold functions of their office. Moreover, while particularly prevalent in medieval Europe, this method of governing existed beyond the geographical and cultural boundaries of Europe and lasted in some places beyond the end of the European middle ages.[22]

[22] John W. Bernhardt, *Itinerant Kingship and royal monasteries in early medieval Germany, c.936 – 1075* (Cambridge NY: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 45.

Bernhardt continued by listing such exotic places like Indonesia, Hawaii or Morocco, thereby describing their similarities and particularities in the exercise of itinerant rulership or kingship.[23] Next, he summarized as follows:

> Itinerant kingship, therefore, is not peculiar to Europe and the middle ages, but is rather a method of government found widely in pre-modern societies and is determined by various economic, social, political, religious and cultural factors. Societies having this kind of rulership displayed certain common characteristics: a largely natural economy; the dominance of peasant farmers by warriors or by a particular clan or family; governmental authority deriving from personal relationships and often from feudal relations; magical or sacred conceptions of rulership, and, in some cases at least, only marginal reliance on the written record in government. In such societies, kings or chiefs moved constantly throughout their territories making their presence felt and reinforcing the personal bonds of their rulership. They gathered their people around them, took part in solemnities, conferred gifts and honours, pronounced justice, fought enemies and rivals and ensured general security. In this way, the king-in-motion identified – even embodied – the society's centre of power; and the royal progress itself became the major institution of government. Through it, the king took symbolic as well as actual possession of the realm.[24]

Whether or not all of Bernhardt's conclusions and preconditions will be found in thirteenth century Laskarid Asia Minor, may for the moment remain open. To verify his statement or parts thereof for the Byzantine context, will in fact be one of the tasks of this study. What should be emphasized here is that itinerant rulership as such is a possibility of exercising rule, which is not bound to a certain period or geographical area in history. It is not conditioned by space and time, but rather by social factors and ideological perceptions, in short, its cultural context. It is an act of governing, in which the ruler publicly performs being leader of the realm. However, this observation in fact does not derive from the field of historical studies, it has its origin in anthropology.

For in his portrayal on itinerant rulership Bernhardt processed conclusions made by the anthropologist Clifford Geertz in his essay on "Centers, kings and charisma".[25] Geertz' three brief case studies cover Elizabethan England, fourteenth-century Java and Morocco around 1800, in which he elaborates on the "sacredness of sovereign power".[26] Here Geertz is taking up, where Shils in his discussion on the Weberian concept of the

[23] The sites are not chosen by coincidence, but have been researched under the perspective of itinerant rulership by Clifford Geertz, as will be shown below.

[24] Bernhardt, *Itinerant Kingship*, 46.

[25] Clifford Geertz, "Centers, kings and charisma: reflections on the symbolics of power," in *Culture and its Creators*, ed. Joseph Ben-David and Terry Nichols Clark (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1977) 150-71; reprinted in Clifford Geertz, *Local knowledge: further essays in interpretive anthropology*, 3rd ed. (New York: Basic Books, 2000) 121-46.

[26] Ibid., 123.

charisma of a ruler ended.[27] For Geertz, in an organized political entity there is "a governing elite and a set of symbolic forms expressing the fact that it is in truth governing [...] they justify their existence and order their actions in terms of a collection of stories, ceremonies, insignia, formalities, and appurtenances that they have [...] inherited".[28] In discussing the divine aura of a ruler, its accomplishment and repeated manifestations through rituals and ceremonies, he names the perambulation of a ruler through his dominion as but one of these:

> This [man-made creation of a sacred ruler] comes out as clearly as anywhere else in the ceremonial forms by which kings take symbolic possession of their realm. In particular, royal progresses (of which, where it exists, coronation is but the first) locate the society's center and affirm its connection with transcendent things by stamping a territory with ritual signs of dominance. When kings journey around the countryside, making appearances, attending fêtes, conferring honors, exchanging gifts, or defying rivals, they mark it, like some wolf or tiger spreading his scent through his territory, as almost physically part of them.[29]

Geertz compares rulership in Europe, Southeast Asia and northern Africa across time and religion. Thus, by emphasizing its worldwide existence, he highlights the universal symbolic meaning of journeying rulers.

A challenge of this research focus will be to clarify the tension between a possible decentralization, on one hand, or the performance of itinerant rulership, on the other, in thirteenth century Byzantium. [30] Apart from the anthropological perspective itinerant rulership offered further advantages of rather practical nature. Generally, a regular change of residence gives the ruler the possibility of not only showing his presence in various parts of his realm, but also of inspecting his territory. Controlling

---

[27] Edward Shils, "Charisma, order and status," *American Sociological Review 30, no.2* (1965), 199-213. In his article Shils focused on the model of charismatic authority, initially developed by Max Weber. Shils established a connection between the centers of a social order and the authority of the ruler who represents this society. Geertz continued this thought and dwelt on these centers of the social order and their use by the ruler.

[28] Ibid., 124.

[29] Ibid., 125. In this context, it is important to note what Geertz has in mind when he uses the term "center", thereby summarizing Shils: "[...] the lost dimensions of charisma have been restored by stressing the connection between the symbolic value individuals possess and their relation to the active centers of the social order. Such centers, which have "nothing to do with geometry and little with geography," are essentially concentrated loci of serious acts; they consist in the point or points in a society where its leading ideas come together with its leading institutions to create an arena in which the events that most vitally affect its members' lives take place," ibid., 122-23.

[30] That the Laskarid rulers were itinerant had for instance been noted by Dimiter Angelov, *Imperial Ideology and political Thought in Byzantium, 1204 – 1330* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 5. However, Angelov understood the itinerant movements of the Laskarid emperors as mere change of residence between Nymphaion and Nicaea for summer resp. winter season. As will be shown in this study, this dual system did not apply.

defense systems, supervising economic aspects like for instance agriculture or transportation system for goods, and the building up of infrastructures all depend on the attention of a ruler, in particular when in a case like this, the Laskarid period, a state entity had yet to be created. Also itinerant rulership can be seen as a means to irritate possible enemy attacks – the experience of 1204 had shown the vulnerability of a centralized empire. Surrounded by enemies in western Asia Minor, perhaps the practice of itinerant rulership was based on the decision not to display again one such imperial center for conquest, as Constantinople had been. In this case itinerant rulership offered protection and should be seen as a tool of survival strategies. One further practical feature of itinerant rulership constituted the limited time the imperial court spent in one given area. The larger the imperial entourage and the more fixed in space, the more burdensome its maintenance would have been on the environment. Thus, the practice of itinerant rulership was one way to ease the support of the court – it was split between several focal points of the given territory.

Another term mentioned already and related to, but not necessarily dependent on, itinerant rulership worth highlighting here is decentralization. Centralization in the Oxford English Dictionary is defined as "concentration of administrative power in the hands of a central authority, to which all inferior departments, local branches, etc, are directly responsible."[31] The German equivalent *Zentralisierung* is defined by its verb *zentralisieren* as "so organisieren, daß alles von einem Zentrum aus geleitet wird"[32], or in another version as "planmäßig zusammenfassen und von einer Stelle aus leiten lassen"[33]. Both languages show a deep connection between centralization and the administration of a large entity. This can – at least for the German context – be explained by its etymology: *Grimm's Deutsches Wörterbuch* adds to the meaning of *Zentralisation* that it is "ausdruck der franz. Revolution, der als bezeichnung für die neapoleonischen verwaltungstendenzen 1808 in Deutschland auftaucht [sic]".[34] It shows that the word was not in use before the emergence of the modern state administration and first denominated the French government apparatus. To use it in any Byzantine

[31] *The Oxford English Dictionary*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), vol. II, 1035, col.1.

[32] *Duden Was bedeutet das? Kleines Bedeutungswörterbuch der deutschen Sprache*, ed. Paul Grebe and Wolfgang Müller (London: George G. Harrap & Co., in association with Bibliographisches Institut, Mannheim, etc. 1970), 431.

[33] Gerhard Wahrig, *Deutsches Wörterbuch* (Gütersloh: Bertelsmann Lexikon-Verlag, 1972) 4259.

[34] *Deutsches Wörterbuch. 16 vols. ed. Jacob Grimm und Wilhelm Grimm* (Leipzig: S. Hirtzel, 1854-1971), vol. 15, col. 642.

context might therefore seem odd at first glance. To avoid misunderstanding, in this given context it should refer simply to the action that the term generally describes: entities being collected in a given point. Thus, its opposition, decentralization, as it appears in the title of this study, should simply refer to the distribution of entities. In my understanding both the English and the German definition give the possibility to have power concentrated either in a place or in a person. As the focus of this analysis is on topography rather than on personal power, I opt for its spatial denotation.

Following up a possible decentralization that might or might not emerge as a result of the study focusing on the spatial arrangement of the Laskarid realm, the next question would be what entities were those that might have been dispersed or decentralized in the realm? The elements listed above during the discussion of the agenda within Residenzenforschung should be understood as partaking in executing imperial rule in a fairly broad sense.

One last term that should be referred to before turning to the geographical survey belongs to the vocabulary of the twelfth- and thirteenth-century Byzantines themselves. Central for the study of the spatial arrangement of the Laskarid realm will be to see how its contemporaries perceived the emergence of their state in western Asia Minor. One way to answer this question could be to observe if they created a denomination or title for the territory the Laskarid rulers occupied that defined it as an original creation, distinct in nomenclature from the empire that just had fallen with the sack of Constantinople. Thereby the focus should center on the territorial concept they applied to their own realm. A famous forerunner regarding such a research agenda is the study on one of the opponents of the Laskarid realm, the Latin empire of Constantinople and its territorial title by Wolff several decades earlier.[35] And, as will be shown briefly, his results for the Latin empire are intertwined with a possible answer for the Laskarid realm: for the Latins called their empire Romania.

The name Romania appeared first in Latin in the fourth century and had an inconsistent history regarding its meaning and usage.[36] According to Lampe, for the early Byzantine period the term can be translated with “Roman empire” as well as

[35] Robert Lee Wolff, “Romania: The Latin Empire of Constantinople,” *Speculum* 23 (1948), 1-34.

[36] Wolff, “Romania,” 2-3.

"Roman territory".[37] In Greek, in contrast to *hē basileia*, which rather denotes imperial sovereignty in its abstract meaning, the name Romania was in variations applied to the lands over which the emperor of Constantinople ruled.[38] Wolff traced back the rather complex origin of this name and demonstrated that the root was to be found in the Byzantine context, whence it was adopted by western powers. For the Byzantine context he followed the term throughout the centuries and quoted examples of its applications. Crucial for this study is that due to the contacts between the Byzantine empire and other western powers the name Romania became associated in the western sources with the territory belonging to the empire. [39] Consequently, it was adopted in 1204 as title of the Latin empire of Constantinople, established on former Byzantine soil. Thus, as it appeared in the title of the Latin empire from the time of its existence onwards, the name became a taboo for Greek writers and ceased to exist in the Byzantine sources.[40] As the emergence of the Laskarid realm followed chronologically the foundation of the Latin empire, the question of interest therefore is whether a new term appeared that denoted the lands occupied by the heirs of the Byzantine empire, in particular due to the focus of this study for the Laskarid territory. Such a term could shed light on the self-awareness and reflection of the contemporaries on the achievements of Laskarid rule in western Asia Minor.

[37] *A Patristic Greek Lexicon,* ed. Geoffrey Lampe (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), 1219. Wolff stated that the term was used after the collapse and loss of the western part of the Roman empire in Late Antiquity and hence was applied to denote the territorial possessions of the eastern part: Wolff, "Romania," 5.

[38] PatrLex, ed. Lampe, 289. That translation applies to the secular meaning of *he basileia* as opposed to the theological as the kingdom of God for instance. No translation for *he basileia* could be found in any of the standart Greek dictionaries that linked the term to an assosiation with the territorial understanding of empire.

[39] Wolff offered a more multifaceted reciprocity between association, adoption, calculated rejection, change of habit and variations in meaning of the term than I outlined it here briefly. His research focused on the reasons for the adoptions of the name for the Latin empire and the meaning that the western contemporaries wanted to have reflected with it.

[40] Alexander Kazhdan, "Romania," *ODB,* 1805.

B. Geographical survey

The beginning of any topographical analysis in a given territory has to start with a description of the geographical setting, as this gives the conditions topography will be bound to. The territorial focus of this study is mainly on the western part of the Anatolian peninsula, starting from north to south with the ancient regions of Bithynia, the Troad, Mysia, Ionia and Lydia. These regions comprised ancient Nicaea (İznik), Prousa (Bursa) until the Hellespont along the Sea of Marmara, further southwards the coast of the Aegean and included the river valleys around ancient Smyrna (İzmir) with the mountains of the Latmos (Beşparmak Dağı) as the southern border. From an early stage onwards these regions belonged to the territory governed by the Laskarid rulers in Asia Minor and as such formed the backbone of their realm.[41]

Considering the whole of Anatolia, the immediate Aegean coast to the west and its hinterland until the broad north-south axis of Bursa – Denizli – that is roughly 150km east of the coast - are situated for most of its area below 500m above sea level, the highest peaks only around 1500m. Opposed to that, most of the actual Anatolian plateau lies above 1000m with peaks up to 2500m, which marks a sharp contrast to the Aegean coast.

Yet, the coastal area cannot be considered one simple plain: the landscape is described best by the so-called horst-graben system.[42] It basically refers to river basins that are encompassed by mountain ranges, which are dominating the Aegean coastal

[41] That is to say, the parts of the European continent, which came under Laskarid rule during the course of the period in exile, are not considered here. This decision is based in parts on the question that is at stake here, namely how initially the governed territory has been utilized to make it possible for Laskarid rule, to survive and even to expand in a generally hostile environment. Another reason for the exclusion lies in the difficulty to include the European areas, given that they became part of the Laskarid realm fairly late and are even less covered within recent scholarship. It is important to note that also certain parts of the above listed territories came under Laskarid rule only during and after the 1220s. Throughout the exile period the territory in western AsiaMinor remained the basis, from which military campaigns towards the European territories were organized, and here the Laskarid emperors returned to after a sucessful campaign. The European territories ruled by the Laskarids were results of a later expansion only after they had created a geographical-political unit on Asian soil, which was the basis of this expansion and was even perceived by its rulers as such, which will be shown during this study.

[42] Even in English geological terminology the German denominations caught on. A horst in German is an elevated piece of land, a graben is a ditch. For the region of western Anatolia see Kocyigit, Ali, Halil Yusufoglu, Erdin Bozkurt. "Evidence from the Gediz graben for episodic two-stage extension in western Turkey," *Journal of the Geological Society* 156 (May 1999): 605-617. The Gediz river is the ancient Hermus river that stretches from the Anatolian plateau to the Aegean Sea. This article seeks to explain the filling of the graben, that is to say the river valley, in western Turkey in comparison to the *Basin and Range Province* in the USA. Both regions are known for their expansion activity, although they differ in certain aspects. See for a more general description Birot and Dresch, *La Méditerranée et le Moyen-Orient*, vol. 2 (Paris: Presses universitaire de France, 1953-1956), 137-140.

area stretching in east-west direction. What is important to note for the geomorphologic understanding of this region is the extensional grain tectonic force that caused the river valleys and their "framing" horsts: the Anatolian plateau is expanding towards the Aegean Sea and thereby stretching like fingers of an opening hand – hence the horsts and graben towards the Aegean Sea. It is important because this expansion results as well in an east-west grained landscape in general, which determines route directions or natural defenses as for instance mountain chains: despite the mountains rising up towards the east, access to inner Anatolia from the west coast is fairly easy.[43]

Another difference of coastal region and plateau can be seen likewise in contrast according to climate, water access and fertility.[44] The western coast of Asia Minor rather conforms in climate with the Aegean Sea and its eastern bordering lands, than with inner Anatolia.[45] The Aegean as such and so western Turkey is part of the Mediterranean climate zone, which is characterized by mild and wet winters with average minimum temperatures of around 8° C and dry hot summers with average maximum temperatures of 30° C.[46] Rainfall is - considering its yearly average - not as extreme as one would expect, it is rather the dispersion over the year, which distinguishes the Mediterranean from other climate zones: 80% of the yearly rainfall is expected within the three months of winter.[47] This amount of rain is the decisive factor that allows vegetation growth.[48] It results in the winter season as the one of plowing, sowing and tillage, in short, the most time-consuming season in terms of agriculture. Harvest is usually centered within the months of May – June, before the big summer

[43] Wolf-Dieter Hütteroth and Volker Höhfeld, *Türkei* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2002), 116.

[44] To quote an often neglected, but still very valuable reference for the region of western Asia Minor: Alfred Philippson, "Das westliche Kleinasien," *Zeitschrift der Gesellschaft für Erdkunde zu Berlin* 4, 1904. See here for the height differences of plateau and coastal area, 258-59.

[45] Alfred Philippson, *Reisen und Forschungen im westlichen Kleinasien*, Ergänzungsheft No. 167 zu Petermann's Mitteilungen, 1910, 20. Likewise, though with an emphasis on the economic consideration that comes along with this division Michael Hendy, "Byzantium, 1081-1204: An economic reappraisal," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society, Fifth Series*, 20 (1970), 33-34.

[46] Avital Gasith and Vincent H. Resh, "Streams in Mediterranean climate regions: Abiotic influences and biotic responses to predictable seasonal events," *Annual Review of Ecology and Systematics* 30 (1999), 53.

[47] For dispersion of rainfall see Hütteroth-Höhfeld, *Türkei*, 79f, who give more than 600mm yearly average for the Aegean coast and place the winter maximum here at December-January. Likewise, though more elaborate, Dora Crouch, *Geology and Settlement: Greco-Roman Patterns* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 180.

[48] Bernhard Geyer, "Physical factors in the evolution of the landscape and land use," in *The Economic History of Byzantium from the Seventh through the Fifteenth Century*, vol. 1, ed. Angeliki E. Laiou, Dumbarton Oaks Studies 39 (Washington: Dumbarton Oaks, 2002), 34.

drought prohibits vegetation from progressing and basically burns it.[49] The period under consideration, roughly the first half of the thirteenth century, is framed by two climatic phenomena, the so-called Medieval Warm Period and the Little Ice Age. These two phenomena caused substantial changes within the climate of Northern Europe and North America. Within the frame of the TIB project Telelis raised the question of the effect of these phenomena for the Byzantine sphere and summarized findings from pollen and tree rings, as well as geomorphologic and anthropogenic evidence.[50] Even though much less data is available for this area and only hypothetically an answer can be posed, he concluded that generally the impact of both phenomena had not been as strong as in the northern parts of Europe. Most probably the Laskarid period belonged to a milder, colder and moister climate phase.

The main river basins are the – from north to south – Hermos (Gediz), Cayster (Küçük Menenderes) and the Meander (Büyük Menenderes). They are filled with alluvial deposits and are considered flood plains, which mean that its soil receives nutrition during the rain period on yearly basis. Thus, the basins provide fertile grounds and are naturally watered. It is even today a major region within the agrarian production of Turkey.[51]

Alluvial deposits, especially of the Maeander, also had another effect on the Aegean coast: they altered the course of the shore. Dora Crouch has investigated the geological development of the region and explained about the Great Meander river the following:

> As it meandered toward the coast, the river deposited hundreds of cubic meters of sediment, which silted up ports, raised water tables, continuously shifted the shore line, and, by natural damming at confluent points, changed the valley into a chain of marshes [...]A little later, just before or after the turn of the era, the Bafa Sea was cut off from the Latmian Gulf by alluvial deposits and became a saltwater lake; through the process of flooding and overflowing, the water gradually became fresher.[52]

[49] Ellen Churchill Semple, "Ancient Mediterranean Agriculture: Part 1," *Agricultural History* 2.2 (1928), 71. Also Gordon Merriam, "The regional geography of Anatolia," *Economic Geography* 2.1 (1926), 88.

[50] Ioannis Telelis, "Medieval Warm Period and the Beginning of the Little Ice Age in the Eastern Mediterranean. An approach of physical and anthropogenic evidence" in *Byzanz als Raum. Zu Methoden und Inhalten der historischen Geographie des östlichen Mittelmeerraumes*, Veröffentlichungen der Kommission für die Tabula Imperii Byzantini, vol. 7, ed. Belke, Klaus, Friedrich Hild, Johannes Koder and Peter Soustal (Wien: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2000), 223-244.

[51] Hütteroth-Höhfeld, Türkei, 230 fig. 82. Also Mark Whittow, *The making of orthodox Byzantium, 600-1025* (Basingstoke, Hampshire: Macmillan 1996), 30.

[52] Crouch, *Geology and Settlement*, 187.

Thus, the ancient cities of Miletus and Heracleia were once harbor cites founded in the Latmian Gulf, at that time an ideally protected harbor location in the eastern Aegean. But by the beginning of Late Antiquity, the gulf was cut off from the sea. Thus, the cities along the shore were no longer in the position to participate in sea trade and therefore lost their economical significance. The mountains of the Latmos vanished into the hinterland of Caria, an otherwise much less fruitful and valuable landscape compared to Lydia.[53]

Ephesos likewise suffered from the fact that its harbor silted up, in this case through the deposits of the Cayster river, although the development was not as dramatic as in the case of Miletus. Already in the first century of the Common Era the Hellenistic harbor had silted up and a new Roman one had replaced it only 200m down the coast. An official had been appointed to take measures against the sedimentation of the new harbor.[54] By the seventh or eighth century, the city was divided into two parts, one part being the harbor, the other the fortified settlement, both parts separated by roughly a mile.[55]

The region of ancient Bithynia is slightly different in character. It belongs halfway to the Mediterranean, and half to the climate zone prevailing in the Black Sea. This results in a general Mediterranean pattern with additional local rainfall during the otherwise dry summer season. This has a remarkable effect of the vegetation system in this area. Also here the horst-graben system prevails in east – west direction. Now, considering the additional summer rains, it means that the mountain slopes of the northern side receive the additional precipitation as a result of the climatic influence from the Black Sea. The southern slopes however are noticeably dryer. Thus, areas close to each other geographically can be used for different vegetation due to the varying amount of rainfall.[56]

To sum up, the Aegean and Marmara coastal areas in western Asia Minor are opposed to the Anatolian plateau lower in level and belong to the Mediterranean climate zone. Mild, wet winters and dry summers result in sowing during winter season and

[53] Anneliese Peschlow-Bindokat, Urs Peschlow and Volker Höhfeld, *Herakleia am Latmos: Stadt und Umgebung* (İstanbul: Homer Kitabevi, 2005), 17-18.

[54] Crouch, *Geology and Settlement*, 238.

[55] Clive Foss, *Ephesus after Antiquity: A late antique, Byzantine and Turkish city* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), 107.

[56] This is best described by Hütteroth-Hohfeld, *Türkei*, 80, who speaks of a northern "hazelnut slope" and a southern "olive slope", pointing out the advantages of the diverse agricultural options in this region.

harvest during early summer. These areas are very valuable considering fertility, climate and their variability in use for agriculture.

C. Sources

1. Written testimonies

Niketas Choniates

Niketas Choniates was the last court historian who started his narrative before the conquest of Constantinople. He witnessed and reported about the court of the Komnenoi and Angeloi before 1204, beginning with the death of Alexios I in 1118. Choniates is the main Greek source for the developments that led to the Fourth Crusade, thus, his account constituted the prelude to the exile period. Born in Chonia in the middle of the twelfth century, he moved to Constantinople for his education and became a state official during the reign of Alexios II. Parts of his historical account had already been composed by the time he together with his family had to flee from the occupied city in 1204. After a short stay in Selymbria Choniates moved to Nicaea to the emerging court of Theodore I Laskaris, where he also finally died in bitterness and poverty in 1217. Even though having lived for a good part during the reign of Theodore I Laskaris, his account ended abruptly in 1206. Apparently Choniates himself revised his narrative after the fall of Constantinople, trying to create a coherent report in which the loss of the almighty capital could be grasped.[57] As several manuscripts of his account exist, in both first draft and also revised versions, a thorough comparison between the manuscripts could reveal how challenging it must have been, especially for the upper leading class, to comprehend mentally the events of 1204.[58] Yet, as this study will not focus on the perception of the exile, but on the creation of a new Byzantine state entity in western Asia Minor and its correlation to the setting that had been laid out there before, Choniates is of little use. His narrative stopped at a time when a Laskarid authority barely existed and contemporaries were only about to sense that their exile from the city may not be only for a short period.

[57] See the recent examination of Choniates' struggles to edit his narrative by Alicia Simpson, "Niketas Choniates: the historian," in Alicia Simpson and Stephanos Efthymiades, *Niketas Choniates – A historian and a writer* (Geneva: La Pomme d'or 2009), 13-34.

[58] An assessment and reinterpretation of Choniates' view on the factors that led to the cataclysm of 1204 has been done by Jonathan Harris, "Distortion, divine providence and genre in Nicetas Choniates' account of the collapse of Byzantium 1180-1204," *Journal of Medieval History* 26 (2000), 19-31.

Nikephoros Blemmydes

Nikephoros Blemmydes belonged to the Constantinopolitanian elite in the Laskarid realm – those that were still born in the old capital before the sack. He was born in 1197, his parents moved to Asia Minor after 1204, where he was raised and educated. In his 66th year he wrote an autobiography, to be more precise, two versions of his life, a composition that sticks out among the literary legacy of the Byzantine world due to its uniqueness.[59] Whereas in language and word choice it could be counted as a rhetorical text, it may due to its chronological order and frequent references to contemporary events and circumstances also be taken as a historical narrative. It presents the personal account of one individual that lived in the Laskarid realm and held close contacts to the imperial and the patriarchal office throughout his active life. Blemmydes frequented for a while the court under John III Laskaris and became tutor of George Akropolites later on. Blemmydes joined also for a while the patriarchate, but decided to retreat to the monastic life. He himself and also the contemporary reports attest to a man of challenging personality, which had an impact on the scholarship focusing on Blemmydes. Beck judged Blemmydes rather negative:

> Einer der gebildetsten und fruchtbarsten Theologen des 13. Jahrhunderts ist unstreitig Nikephoros Blemmydes, auch wenn seine Persönlichkeit nur geringe Sympathie erwecken kann, da die spröde Härte seines Charakters und die hagiographisch anmutende Selbstbewunderung sein ganzes Leben und Werk durchziehen.[60]

Michael Angold stated that probably due to the unbearable nature of his character not many scholars dared to focus on Blemmydes' work, even though he apparently reinvented a literary genre.[61] However, for this study Blemmydes' twin biographies provide not only further insight into the imperial court and also the patriarchate, but also elaborate on the difficulty in receiving higher education in western Asia Minor after the loss of Constantinople.

[59] Blemmydes' work has been edited and translated: Nikephori Blemmydae, *Opera, Autobiographia sive Curriculum vitae necnon Epistula universalior,* ed. Joseph Munitiz (Turnhout: Brepols, 1984); Nikephoros Blemmydes, *A Partial Account,* Introduction, translation and notes Joseph Munitiz (Leuven : Spicilegium sacrum Lovaniense, 1988). Its uniqueness was pointed out by Herbert Hunger, *Die hochsprachliche profane Literatur der Byzantiner, 2 vols.,* Handbuch der Altertumswissenschaften XII.5 (Munich: Beck, 1978), 166-67.

[60] Hans-Georg Beck, *Kirche und theologische Literatur im Byzantinischen Reich,* Byzantinisches Handbuch, Handbuch der Altertumswissenschaften part 2, vol.1(Munich: Beck, 1959) 671.

[61] Michal Angold, "The autobiographical impulse in Byzantium," *DOP* 52 (1998), 225-257, here 251.

George Akropolites

The Laskarid period in its exact borders from 1204 until 1261 (that is including the beginning of the reign through the usurper Michael VIII Palaiologos) is completely recorded by the historiographer George Akropolites.[62] Through him modern historians are quite well informed about the Byzantine realm in Asia Minor, its political actions, and its rivalry with the Despotate of Epiros. Born in Constantinople during the Latin occupation in 1217, Akropolites had moved to Nicaea by the age of 16. Since his father, who belonged to the wealthy class of Constantinople, was already fatally ill, Akropolites left Constantinople alone both to flee from the Latin yoke and to get a classical Greek education, as wished by his father.[63]

Soon he was in contact with the intellectual leading men in Nicaea, where he also met the Emperor John III Vatatzes, who became aware of Akropolites' capacities and decided to promote his education personally.[64] Akropolites reached high positions in diplomatic, military, and political offices during his lifetime, always in close contact to the Laskarid family. For instance, around 1246 he was the teacher of Theodore Laskaris, the future emperor, with whom he was not in a relaxed relationship all the time.[65] Akropolites witnessed the usurpation of Michael VIII Palaiologos, the transition of power from the Laskarid to the Palaiologan dynasty, and also the reconquest of Constantinople in 1261. Under Michael VIII he kept his position as *Grand Logothete*; he died in 1282 shortly after a diplomatic mission to Trebizond.

Akropolites' work, the Chronikē syngraphē, was probably begun only under Michael VIII Palaiologos during the 1260s;[66] it covers the time from the events that led to the Fourth Crusade in 1203 until the re-appropriation of the Constantinople in 1261. Regarding the way Michael Palaiologos is introduced and his acts are treated in the account, keeping in mind that the text ends with the celebrated victory of Michael VIII

[62] Editions and translations: Acropolitae, *Opera*, ed. Heisenberg; Akropolites, Georgios, *Die Chronik*, tr. Wilhelm Blum (Stuttgart: Hiersemann, 1989); Ruth Macrides published her translation of Akropolites' History and provided an elaborate introduction with several studies to his life and work: George Akropolites, *The History*, Introduction, translation and commentary Ruth Macrides (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).

[63] *Acropolitae*, ed. Heisenberg, §29 and §32.

[64] *Acropolitae*, ed. Heisenberg, §29 and §32.

[65] *Acropolitae*, ed. Heisenberg, §63. Akropolites was the one who introduced Theodore II Laskaris to the sciences, in other words, he taught him, and their relationship was quite emotional. Because of the ambivalent character of the emperor, §63 informs us about an unjust punishment of Akropolites ordered by the emperor.

[66] This is the suggestion of the German translator of Akropolites, *Die Chronik*, tr. Blum, 19ff.

in Constantinople (although Akropolites was alive until 1282), it can be stated that Akropolites wrote in favor of the emperor who had usurped the throne. Neither did he criticize the way he reached the throne nor the way he treated his co-regent, John IV Laskaris.[67] In fact, he did not even mention the fate of the little boy after 1261. One further important thought is worth noting in the beginning; since he was compiling his work after the reconquest of the capital, he is at no point questioning the reestablishment of the former Byzantine empire and he is writing backwards, knowing the final end of his story.[68] For him the realm of the Laskarid dynasty, continued by the usurper Michael VIII Palaiologos, was the legitimate heir to the Byzantine throne.

His observations and use of topography within his account are of vital interest for this study. After the analysis of the case studies in the latter part a summary of the findings highlighting crucial aspects of Akropolites' engagement with the topography will be given. At this point it should only be stressed that Akropolites does refer to sites only in passing and in casual manner. He is not in particular interested in the spatial arrangement of the Laskarid realm or the topography. Yet, his account will provide information of vital interest for this study.

Theodore Skoutariotes

The account of Akropolites received a continuation in the sense that another writer, usually known by the name Theodore Skoutariotes, inserted the text into his world chronicle.[69] This chronicle started with the creation of Adam and Eve and ended

[67] When Theodore II Laskaris died, his heir and successor to the throne was his son John Laskaris, who was eight years old at that time. Through Theodore II's last will a guardian named Georgios Muzalon was given to him, who was killed by the crowd only nine days after Theodore's death during the solemn service for the dead emperor at the monastery of Sosandra, his burial place. It can only be assumed that Michael Palaiologos, who became co-regent immediately afterwards, stood behind this conspiracy. Concerning Akropolites and his positive perspective on Michael VIII it is significant that he did not mention these events at all. He also concealed the later fate of John Laskaris, who was blinded two years later, sent to prison in 1261, and was kept there until his death in 1305. Michael Angold, "John IV Laskaris," *ODB*, 1048-1049; Donald M. Nicol, *The last Centuries of Byzantium 1261 – 1453*, 2d ed. (Cambridge: University Press, 1999), 99 and 123, elaborated quite detailed the visit of Emperor Andronikos II at the imprisoned John Laskaris, asking him for the confirmation of his rank as emperor. Pachymeres recorded the fate of John Laskaris with critical eyes upon Emperor Michael VIII. For details, see Angold, *Government in Exile*, the chapter on "The Usurpation of Michael Palaiologos," 80-97 with the relevant sources.

[68] Which is always important to keep in mind; for instance, for his predecessor Niketas Choniates, who saw the capture of Constantinople, 1204 was the doom of the empire.

[69] Recently the continuator of Akropolites received renewed attention. Raimondo Tocci analyzed composition and handwriting: "Bemerkungen zur Hand des Theodoros Skutariotes," *BZ* 99 (2006), 127-144; "Zu Genese und Kompositionsvorgang der Σύνοψις χρονική des Theodoros Skutariotes," *BZ* 98 (2005), 551-567. Konstantinos Zafeiris challenged in two publications the identification of the author

with the recapture of Constantinople. The author made full use of Akropolites' account, yet with variations that – seen as a whole – offer to the reader a different perspective of the events during the exile period. In short, the writer is much more in favor of the Laskarid emperors and much less of the Palaiologan dynasty.[70] In his edition of Akropolites' report Heisenberg also edited various alternative comments of this chronicle in an appendix to Akropolites. For this study only those remarks that add to the topographical understanding of the Laskarid realm are taken into account.

George Pachymeres

George Pachymeres was born in Nicaea in 1242, he moved to Constantinople after 1261 as a student of George Akropolites, there he later on joined the patriarchal clergy.[71] His account begins in the year 1260, two years after Michael VIII Palaiologos had usurped the throne, and stopped in 1307. The composition of his narrative is dated to a late period of his life, probably the years shortly before his death in 1310.

Pachymeres' perspective on Michael VIII Palaiologos' politics differed substantially to that of the predecessor in writing, George Akropolites.[72] Compiling towards the end of his life, Pachymeres witnessed the decline of Asia Minor: the reverse actions of the Palaiologan politics led to the loss of Asia Minor, which had been so successfully built up by the Laskarid emperors during the exile. Being from Nicaea himself, Pachymeres was deeply concerned with the people of Asia Minor and blamed Michael VIII Palaiologos' bad management of the region and in particular of the weakening of the defense lines. By the time of his death, the cities of Asia Minor had shrunk to outposts in an unprotected region overrun by Turkish tribes.[73]

His emphasis on the fate of former Laskarid territories makes Pachymeres a problematic source for this study. For by stressing the decline under Michael VIII, he

with Theodore Skutariotes: "The issue of the Authorship of the Synopsis Chronike and Theodore Skoutariotes," *Revue des Études Byzantines* 69 (2011), 253-263; "A reappraisal of the Chronicle of Theodore of Kyzikos," *BZ* 103 (2010), 773-790.

[70] Macrides provides a comparison of the two views in on the exile period in her introduction: *Akropolites*, tr. Macrides, 65-71.

[71] Failler provided an overview of his life and professional carreer in the introduction of his translation: Georgii Pachymeres, *Relationes Historicas*, Books 1-6, ed. Albert Failler, Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae, Series Parisiensis, vol. 1-2 (Paris: Societe d'Edition "Les Belles Lettres," 1984), XIX-XXIII. Slightly earler Hunger, *Literatur*, 447-453.

[72] *Akropolites*, tr. Macrides, 71-75.

[73] As an excellent example for the fate of cities of western Asia Minor after the Laskarid period see the case study of Peter Schreiner, "Zur Geschichte Philaldepheias im 14. Jahrhundert (1293-1390)," *Orientalia Christiana Periodica* 35 (1969), 375-431.

underlined the significance of Laskarid rule and the care the emperors of the exile took in securing and strengthening their possessions. On the other hand, this study attempts to follow the steps of the birth and creation of this Byzantine entity in western Asia Minor, not its destruction. The narrative Pachymeres provided thus depicts the legacy of Laskarid rule in Asia Minor. As such, his account would deserve a study on its own, tracing the results gained through this study further into the early Palaiologan era.

Theodore II Laskaris

The son of John III Vatatzes, born around John's accession to the throne, is one of the most colorful personalities of the exile period. Theodore, the only child of John III and Empress Eirene, was raised to become emperor and taught by prominent men – George Akropolites and Nikephoros Blemmydes. As a young man Theodore established himself among the intellectual elite of the exile. He followed his father on the throne in 1254, yet being sick – probably with epilepsia – he died soon after in 1258.

Throughout his short life Theodore produced many compositions of philosophical and political nature, rhetorical exercises as well as many letters. His writings stick out from the sources of this period and allow a deeper look into the intellectual culture and society after 1204, yet their style may have prevented easy access for a long time. His political positions have recently been thoroughly examined by Dimiter Angelov.

Theodore's writings may seem a fruitful source for the questions raised in this study, since Theodore was member of the imperial family and left his mark on the period of exile through his own reign and in his own words. Even more, observations of sites within the Laskarid territory are available in his writings and seem to include crucial insights to the conditions, under which the Laskarid rulers had to create their realm. A good example for this might be the passage about the city of Pergamon in a letter to his teacher Akropolites, made known to a wider audience through the translation of Cyril Mango.[74] In these few lines Theodore mourned the fate of the present-day compared to the glory of the ancient past, visible in the ruined state of once

[74] *Theodori Ducae Lascaris Epistulae Ccxvii*, ed. Nicolaus Festa (Florence: Tip. G. Carnesecchi & figli, 1898), 107-08; Cyril Mango, *The Art of the Byzantine Empire: 312-1453* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1972), 243-245.

magnificent ancient monuments on the acropolis of Pergamon that stand in contrast to the shabby huts used as dwellings in his own times.

At first glance this might be a fair description and solid statement regarding the status of Pergamon in the thriteenth century. Most cities in western Asia Minor had suffered throughout the previous centuries, and at Pergamon the monuments of the pre-Christian era were still impressive, despite their ruined state. Yet, given the aspiration of the author, his texts prove to be difficult to handle for the focus of this study. For the comparison of one's own period of decay with the glory of antiquity constituted a popular topos in letter writing already in the twelfth century. Thus, such a comparison was in line with the tradition of letter composition. It can not be regarded as a genuine observation born out of a society that was deprived of their capital Constantinople and tried to establish successor states on the edges of the former empire. Margaret Mullett listed this theme of decay and comaprison with the past as one of several in her analysis of letters written in the Komnenian era.[75] There is no reason to doubt that Theodore as a learned intellectual had read and studied such letters and their recurrent topoi. He was conscious of this tradition and adopted it.

Elsewhere Mullet also pointed out that the compositions of letters did not undergo a significant change after 1204; however, they picked up new forms and themes in the Palaiologan era.[76] This appears remarkable, since the collapse of the empire and the loss of Constantinople led to a completely changed reality. Yet, Theodore's comment on the city of Pergamon seems to demonstrate Mullett's observation. The passage describing the city in its dilapidated state has to be seen in line with this literary tradition, to which the author was indebted.[77] The question how the inhabitants of the successor states responded intellectually to the changes brought by the sack of Constantinople is worth a study of its own.

[75] Margaret Mullett, "Originality in the Byzantine letter: the case of exile," in *Originality in Byzantine Literature, Art and Music*, ed. A. R. Littlewood (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 1995), 39-59, here 42-43.

[76] Margaret Mullett, "Epistolography," in *Oxford Handbook of Byzantine Studies*, ed. Elizabeth Jeffreys (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 882-893, here 886.

[77] Letters in contrast to historical accounts were short and produced quickly, it therefore may be surprising that the genre of letter writing did not reflect the dramatic changes after 1204. For this a short remark could be offered as possible explanation: The Laskarid emperors needed to stress that it was them who were to be considered the heirs to the former empire.Thus, established cultural forms as e.g. literary traditions were kept rather than filled with new content.

2. Monumental evidence[78]

Two summarizing studies focus on a number of monuments that are of Laskarid origin in western Asia Minor, one by Clive Foss on fortifications in Lydia, the other by Hans Buchwald on a Laskarid building program regarding churches, both published in 1979.[79] Both studies focus on the same region at the same time, but presuppose a distinction between the artistic facet of ecclesiastical architecture on the one hand, thereby adding the secular imperial palace at Nymphaion, and the functional aspect of fortresses on the other, and thus, analyzing the two types separately. This creates a bizarre situation: the two contemporary monuments at Nymphaion, the palace and the fortification on the hilltop, which are situated at a distance of around 2km, are discussed in two unconnected articles and as a consequence, the atypical relation between these two monuments is not even raised.

Another regional study of a different kind, conducted by the *German Archaeological Institute of Berlin*, targets since more than 20 years the mountains of the Latmos (Beşparmak) through intensive summer campaigns under the guidance of Dr. Anneliese Peschlow. Subject here is the Latmos as a cultural landscape with the focus on settlement pattern from prehistoric until Ottoman times, which resulted in several publications.[80] The mountains of the Latmos are famous for their prehistoric drawings inside a number of caves around the ancient settlement of Heracleia, but also the Laskarid interlude receives special attention due to extensive building activity. This research is based on yearly surveys, until now no excavations have taken place. For the Byzantine era, recent scholars could still profit from the pioneering studies of Theodor Wiegand dated to the beginning of the twentieth century, at that time diplomat of the *Berliner Museen in Konstantinopel*.[81]

[78] This subchapter is meant to be an overview of previous scholarship on the subject and at the same time an introduction to the material itself. Extensive description and elaboration of certain buildings will be given in chapter 3 within the case studies.

[79] Hans Buchwald, "Lascarid Architecture," in *JÖB* 28 (1979), 263-96; Foss, "Fortifications in Lydia," 297-320.

[80] Anneliese Peschlow-Bindokat, *Latmos: eine unbekannte Gebirgslandschaft an der türkischen Westküste* (Mainz am Rhein: Philipp von Zabern, 1996); ibid., *Frühe Menschenbilder: die prähistorischen Felsmalereien des Latmos-Gebirges (Westtürkei)* (Mainz am Rhein: Philipp von Zabern, 2003); ibid., *Herakleia am Latmos*.

[81] Theodor Wiegand, *Der Latmos* (Berlin: Reimer, 1913).

Clive Foss also published monographs on case studies such as Ephesos, Sardis and Nicaea, in which the later Byzantine period received a separate chapter.[82] Behind all these publications stood his pioneering PhD dissertation titled "Byzantine Cities of Western Asia Minor", in which he examined a region usually prominent for its Hellenistic and Roman past regarding its later and less popular Byzantine remains.[83] A few more articles have been published on single monuments of the same period, such as the palace of Nymphaion or the city walls of Nicaea.[84] A recent survey of the fortification at Pegai conducted by the *American Research Institute at Istanbul* reevaluated previous research done by Müller-Wiener.[85]

Excavations that brought to light findings of Laskarid origin were few and, like in the case of Sardis or Ephesos, targeted generally an earlier period. Moreover, excavations in this part of Turkey have a long history and – in the case of Ephesos – date back to the beginning of the 20th century. Methods, techniques and research agenda were of different nature and their results occasionally need a reevaluation.

Since the completion of my MA thesis the palace at Nymphaion had been in the focus of a rescue survey due to a public park that had been set up around the monument by the local authorities. The leader of the excavation, Zeynep Mercangöz, had a short

---

[82] Clive Foss, *Byzantine and Turkish Sardis* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1976); ibid., *Ephesus after Antiquity*; ibid., *Nicaea – A Byzantine Capital and its praises* (Brookline, MA: Hellenic College Press, 1996). The monograph on Sardis is based on the extensive excavation campaigns carried out by Harvard University and Cornell University. Foss visited the campaigns and his book is part 4 of the Archaeological Exploration of Sardis Monographs Series: Georg Hanfmann, *Sardis from prehistoric to Roman times, Results of the archeological exploration of Sardis 1958 – 75* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1983). His publication on Ephesos however, is more a survey of archaeological remains embedded in a historical narrative. The volume on Nicaea on the other hand came to light through the two Late Byzantine encomia by Theodore II Laskaris and Theodore Metochites, which he edited and provided with a translation by Sophia Georgiopoulou. Along with that, Foss added a substantial part focusing on the Byzantine monuments of the city, highlighting its importance during the exile period.

[83] Clive Foss, "Byzantine Cities of Western Asia Minor," *PhD Thesis*, Harvard 1972.

[84] On Nymphaion: Edwin Freshfield, "The Palace of the Greek emperors of Nicaea at Nymphio," *Archeologica* 49 (1886), 382-390; Tatiana Kirilova Kirova, "Un palazzo ed una casa di età tardo-bizantina in asia minore," *Felix Ravenna* 103-04 (1972), 275-305; Semavi Eyice, "Le Palais byzantin de Nymphaion près Izmir," in *Akten des XI. Internationalen Byzantinisten-Kongresses, Munich 1958*, 150-153; an extended version of this paper was published in: *Belleten* 25 (1961), 1-15; Julia Jedamski, "Nymphaion: A Byzantine Palace in Exile," in *Annual of Medieval Studies at CEU* 13 (2007), 9-22; Suna Cagaptay, "How Western is it? : the palace at Nymphaion and its architectural setting = Ne kadar batılı? : Nymphaion sarayı ve mimari oezellikleri," in *On ikinci ve on üçüncü yüzyıllarda Bizans dünyasinda değişim: bildiriler*, ed. Ayla Ödekan, Engin Akyürek, Nevra Necipoğlu (Istanbul: Vehbi Koç Vakfı, 2010), 357-362. On Nicaea: Wolfgang Müller-Wiener, "Mittelalterliche Befestigungen im suedlichen Ionien," *Istanbuler Mitteilungen* 11 and 12 (1961, 1962).

[85] On Pegai: Wolfgang Müller-Wiener, "Pegai-Karabiga, eine mittelalterliche Stadt," in *Festschrift für Jale İnan: armağani*, ed. Nezih Başgelen and Mihin Lugal, Istanbul, 1989, 169-176; William Aylward, "The Byzantine Fortifications at Pegae (Priapus)," *Studia Troica* 16 (2006), 179-203.

remark regarding a future publication of the findings, which has so far not materialized.[86]

[86] Zeynep Mercangöz and Engin Akyürek, "Living Spaces: Architecture," in *Kalanlar 12. ve 13. Yüzyıllarda Türkiye'de Bizans / The Remnants 12th and 13th Centuries Byzantine Objects in Turkey* (Istanbul: Vehbi Koç Vakfı, 2007), 25-29, here 28 and n23.

II. Case studies

During this research on Laskarid topography it became clear at some point that certain sites or regions were more in the focus of imperial visitations than others. As well characteristics of these sites or regions began to take shape that distinguished them from other favorite imperial spots. This led to a practical solution regarding the actual analysis of imperial focal points: In this chapter focusing on case studies sites will be paired and analyzed in one unit. In the case of Nymphaion – Nicaea the pairing was based on the common feature of both sites as imperial residences resp. the denotation "capital" of the realm. Pegai and Lampsakos are analyzed together due to their location close to each other at the Hellespont. Magnesia will stand for itself, and the Latmos finally is considered a region in itself.

A. Nymphaion – Nicaea

1. Nymphaion within the regional setting

The most impressive archaeological remains surviving from the Laskarid period are situated in Kemalpaşa, which was called Nymphaion during the Byzantine period, a small town in western Turkey approximately 30 km east of İzmir. Here a three storey monument dominates the central part of the modern settlement; it has recently been made to the center-piece of a small pleasure ground by the community of Kemalpaşa. The ruin stands quite close to the main road that leads straight through Kemalpaşa, in a flat area surrounded by modern apartment buildings and a schoolyard. It should be noted immediately, however, that the palace is not the only Byzantine structure one can find here. Additionally remains of a fortification are located roughly one kilometer south-east of the palace up on a neighboring hill overlooking the valley in which Kemalpaşa is situated.

To evaluate the location of Nymphaion, the choice of John III Vatatzes for one of his residences, one has to place the site in its regional context. Nymphaion itself was situated on the fringe of a level area approximately 30 km east of ancient Smyrna (İzmir) in Asia Minor. To the west rises Mount Olympos (Ulu Dağ); Mount Sipylos (Manisa Dağ) is situated to the north at a greater distance, and lower rocky hills rise to the east. Nymphaion never developed into one of the important Byzantine cities of Asia Minor; the settlement remained fairly small. However, important cities were situated in the neighboring area, for instance Magnesia at the Hermos to the north, Sardis and Philadelphia to the east, Ephesos to the south and Smyrna to the west. All were surrounding Nymphaion in a radius of at most 50km and thus, could be reached within a one-day-travel. At Nymphaion two important roads crossed the region that led from one major city to another, the road from Smyrna to Sardis and further to Philadelphia and Tripolis in the west-east direction, and the road from Magnesia at the Sipylos to Ephesos in a north-south direction.[87] Thus, Nymphaion was connected to the two main

[87] Freshfield, "The Palace," 386-387, emphasized the strategically advantageous position of Nymphaion, from where the emperors could move easily with their army to the different corners of their realm.

axes of this territory in Asia Minor, from here it was easy traveling to the different regions of the Laskarid realm.[88]

During this time the Byzantines had to deal with two neighboring powers that bordered on the Laskarid territory in Asia Minor, the Latins to the far north and the Seljuk Turks with their center in Konya to the south-east. Both borders changed a great deal during the time between 1204 and 1261, but throughout the exile period the settlement of Nymphaion was not directly neighboring a hostile power.

2. Setting of the remains

Two elements which might be datable to late Byzantine times are located in Kemalpaşa: the so-called palace of Nymphaion, a rectangular building measuring 25 x 11.5m in the center of the settlement, and many dispersed remains of what might have once been a fortification on a rocky hill above the settlement.[89] The distance between these two sets of remains is approximately one kilometer, however there is no visibility from the fortification to the palace in the center of the settlement.

Still recognizable of the citadel are the remains of a gate, watchtowers, small rooms with the rudiments of vaulted ceilings, and a side-entrance hewn into a natural rocky wall; all these elements are widely spread over the flat area of the hill top, covering a space of several hundred square meters.

The building in the center of the modern settlement on the other hand, which will be discussed in this text in detail, is still in quite good shape; all four outside walls are standing almost up to the third floor; the interior construction has collapsed and fills the whole ground floor up to the first floor today. The building is not exactly oriented towards the points of the compass, but by being generous it is possible to describe the long sides of the palace as oriented to the east and west and the short sides towards the

[88] For the evaluation of Nymphaion within the road system of the Laskarid period see also Angold, *Government in Exile*, 112.

[89] Recently two articles appeared on the palace of Nymphaion, one by Suna Cagaptay, "How Western is it? : the palace at Nymphaion and its architectural setting,"; the other one by myself, "Nymphaion: A Byzantine Palace in Exile." The citadel is poorly preserved, the scattered remains, for the most part overgrown by vegetation, do not allow any suggestion regarding the original design. Only Foss, "Fortifications in Lydia," 311, has at least mentioned the fact that the ruin in the center is not the only archeological site in the town. For a more profound overview of fortifications in Byzantium see Clive Foss and David Winfield, *Byzantine Fortifications – An Introduction* (Pretoria: University of South Africa, 1986).

north and south. The palace has never been properly excavated, but the recent creation of a pleasure ground next to the building led to a survey of the palace, the findings of which are yet to be published.[90] Whether further buildings that were associated with the ruin were erected in the neighborhood is at this point impossible to answer; at least in a short survey no traces could be found.[91]

3. The palace

I visited the so-called palace of Nymphaion, a well preserved monument, in 2005 for extensive photophraphic documentation, which was then basis of my MA thesis.[92] As the findings have been published in an article, at this point I would like to offer a comprehensive summary of the architecture and contrast the palace with the Byzantine fortification in the same settlement.

Architectural design

The palace had a ground floor and three upper floors. It was conceived as a rectangular hall, the longitudinal sides double as long as the short ones. The four outer walls are still standing, in contrast to the interior of the palace, which has caved in. The façade of the ground floor has been built of white ashlars; the façade of the three upper floors on the other hand displays regular courses of stripes of brick and ashlars. From inside the building traces of the collapsed vaulting structure is still visible on the walls: pillars made from brick attached to the frames of the windows protrude into the inner space of the ground floor, the first floor and the second one. Only the third and last floor seemed not to have been equipped with a vaulted ceiling; in all likelihood the palace was covered by a timber roof.

Evaluating the façade of the building, the austere, pure geometrical appearance is observable at first sight. Red and white colors dominate the walls; the regular horizontal stripes are not interrupted by any usual features like blind arcades or variations in the arrangement of brick and stone. Sober simplicity and architectural modesty prevail in this edifice. The fact that the building is a single construction,

[90] Mercangöz and Akyürek, "Living Spaces: Architecture," 28 and n23.

[91] Photographs taken by its discoverer Freshfield show that the area surrounding the building was an open space, covered by trees and bushes. Freshfield himself could not find any remains of other compartments.

[92] Jedamski, "Nymphaion: A Byzantine palace in exile."

according to the plain surfaces never connected to any other structures or walls, adds to the modest architectural character.[93]

Emphasis has been given to the central space of the first floor: a double window, a so-called *bifora*, opens to the western side. The *bifora* allowed a more open view into the inner space, yet, it was not accompanied by a balcony, at least no traces of such construction is visible on the façade. Thus, the emphasis was small and modest. It is this central space of the first floor that most probably constituted the "throne room", a hall suitable for representation.

By a comparison of outer and inner design, one can notice an important detail concerning the material used. Just below the windows of the first floor on the outside surface the material of the wall changes from the ashlars of the ground level to the stone and brick of the three upper floors (Fig. Nymph. 2). However, the bold line of ashlars that indicates the flooring of the first level on the inside is approximately 70 cm under the window openings (Fig. Nymph. 21). This means that the height of changing materials is not the same outside and inside; thus, the use of different materials does not indicate different phases of construction. This observation leads to the conclusion that the building was erected in a single phase and the use of different material is connected to static reasons or indicates a decorative usage.

This detail fits the observation of the arches on each floor of the building. Arches that indicate the vaulting system are incorporated in such a way into the masonry that later additions of these structures can be excluded. Each vaulted ceiling was conceived as a part of the building during the initial construction phase. These observations lead to the conclusion that the building was erected in one single phase of construction and was not remodeled afterwards.

The façade decoration of the palace is quite spare if not negligible. Material used for the construction was, as could be observed so far, neither expensive, nor imported from another location, but probably from the directly surrounding area. What is left of the palace is one single building of four stories. Emphasis was given to its safety and

[93] Here a remark concerning the windows is needed. As was mentioned in the description, none of the windows has survived intact, which means that the original outer and inner frame can no longer be reconstructed. Whether a stronger emphasis on the design of the frames on the outside created a somewhat different character of the façade cannot be excluded with certainty. What can be stated is that the inner design was not repeated on the outside: above the lost frame no other was incorporated into the wall above, neither are there blind arcades or further interruptions of unusual settings of brick or stone; the strata of the masonry are continuous.

modest architecture – no additional wings, no balconies, no atrium inside, no colonnade – the list of what the palace architecture does not provide is quite long. In common narratives on the history of Byzantium, the realm that was established during the first half of the thirteenth century in Asia Minor is described as stronger and healthier than the previous Byzantine empire.[94] It was liberated from the extraordinary costs of Constantinople and the gigantic, expensive administrative organization.[95] After the Fourth Crusade the territory of the Byzantines shrank in Asia Minor back to a size that was capable to recover and revitalize from past events. As a visible statement of a modest attitude towards wealth, which should be used only as an emphatic demonstration of necessity to the subjects, the impact of the style of the palace seems to fit the image of a small but flourishing realm in Western Asia Minor. It is modest, simple architecture, efficient, but far from being a wasteful, luxurious residence of an emperor.

4. The fortification

Whereas the palace is situated along the main road leading through Kemalpaşa, the fortification is located south of it on a steep hill overlooking the town. As mentioned above, the remains of the fortification are dispersed over an area of several hundred square meters. Bits and pieces of walls, towers, gates and chambers give the impression of an enclosed space with a higher and a lower fortified area and various construction phases. The hill on which the fortification is situated has an elongated shape and can be reached on foot on both narrow ends. The lower part of the fortification is located towards the modern town, whence the higher part can be accessed.

Given the different styles and techniques and also the large area over which various diverse remains have been erected, the fortification presents a rather challenging case for sufficient evaluation. Foss tried to establish a chronology based on style, comparison and the aid of written evidence.[96] However, problematic proved to be a reference of Pachymeres, in which the historian stated that Constantine Palaiologos,

[94] Michael Angold, *The fourth crusade: event and context* (Harlow: Pearson/Longman, 2003) 204-206; Nicol, *Byzantium 1261-1453*, 25.

[95] For the elaboration of how much the administration changed after 1204 and how deep the impact of these changes continued even after 1261, see Angold, *Government in Exile*, part IV, The central administration, 147-236.

[96] Foss, "Fortifications in Lydia," 318.

younger brother of Andronikos II, initiated the construction of a tower at the fortification of Nymphaion in 1292. Pachymeres referred to this construction when he reported that Andronikos II stayed at Nymphaion from 1292 to 1294.[97] Since no Palaiologan constructions had been securely identified for that area, the Palaiologan tower could not be identified with the aid of stylistic comparison. Other remains provided in parts resemblance to Laskarid reconstructions of other sites, but also significant differences. A coherent picture did not emerge. Foss described a postern that was hewn into the rock as of Ottoman style due to the pointed ceiling; however, due to the rough workmanship this dating remains doubtful (Fig. Nymph. 23). Foss finally stated that "the question [of Palaiologan or Laskarid origin] cannot be resolved, and identification of the work of Constantine remains problematic. There is in any case no doubt that parts, if not most, of the fortifications date to the thirteenth century."[98]

Two significant aspects of the fortification at Nymphaion need to be discussed. In contrast to the palace, for the fortification no reference for the Laskarid period could be found in contemporary sources. The city walls of Nicaea, the fortifications of Pegai and Magnesia were not only mentioned, but also described as playing a special role for the security of the site. For Nymphaion no such written testimony exist. To interpret this lack of reference is difficult, but it is perhaps connected to the second feature of the fortification, which will be elaborated in the following – the disconnectedness of palace and fortification.

Fortification and palace are separated by roughly 1 km as the crow flies. Taking additionally into account the altitude and accessibility of the fortification, this clearly shows that the two monuments were erected as independent units (Fig. Nymph. 24). There are reasons to believe that the fortification predates the palace. On one hand Foss suggested a dating of the earliest remains into the Middle Byzantine period.[99] Further the first reference to Nymphaion by Anna Komnene gives the impression of a settlement which in all probability owned a fortified space. For in general the situation of western Asia Minor during the two centuries preceding the Laskarid period required protection of the population. It means that behind the decision to erect the palace in the plain stood a conscious choice not to set up the palace inside the protected area. Even if

[97] *Pachymeres*, ed. Failler, III. 9.
[98] Foss, "Fortifications in Lydia," 318.
[99] Foss, "Fortifications in Lydia," 312.

the palace was surrounded by walls that have not survived the disadvantage of the defenseless plain is apparent. The lower part of the fortification provides a clear view on the modern settlement, which is situated at the foot of the hill (Fig. Nymph. 22). From here the palace cannot even be seen due to the natural rock formation to the left of the plateau. Thus, the fortification may have served as the safe retreat for the population of Nymphaion in times of need, however, it was not taken into account with regard to the planning construction of the palace.

The reason for erecting a palace separated from an already existing fortification can at this point only be guessed. An almost contemporary counter example may illustrate the unique solution even further: The rulers at Trebizond built a palace inside a fortification that consisted of two rings. The spot chosen for this palace constituted the highest point within the fortified area. Protection was given highest priority there.

5. Nymphaion witnessed by contemporaries

Akropolites

Nymphaion appeared early in Akropolites' account, namely dated to 1212 during the reign of Theodore I Laskaris. At that time the emperor of the Latin empire of Constantinople was Henry of Flanders (1205-1216). Henry was the brother of the first Latin emperor at Constantinople, Baldwin of Flanders, and had ascended the throne after Baldwin's capture by the Bulgarians in 1205.[100] In the winter of 1211/12 Henry conquered parts of western Asia Minor and moved at some point as far as Nymphaion, but turned away – because of the solitude of that spot, as Akropolites said – in order to sign a contract with the Laskarid emperor Theodore I:

> μέχρι καὶ αὐτοῦ τοῦ Νυμφαίου τὰς σκηνὰς ὁ Ἐρῆς ἐπήξατο, κατ' ἐρημίαν πολλὴν τοῦ κωλύοντος, ἐκεῖθέν τε ὑποστρέψας τὸ μὲν τοῖς κρατηθεῖσι κορεσθείς, τὸ δὲ καὶ ἐκεχειρίαν ἐθελήσας λαβεῖν, — οὐ γὰρ ἄγαν καρτερικὸν τὸ Λατινικὸν φῦλον ἐν ταῖς μάχαις καθέστηκεν—εἰς ξυμβάσεις ἦλθε μετὰ τοῦ βασιλέως Θεοδώρου. / Henry pitched his tent as far as Nymphaion itself, as there was not a soul in his way, and from there he turned back, partly because he was sated by his conquests, partly because he wished to obtain a truce – for the Latin race does not have great endurance in battle – and he came to an agreement with the emperor Theodore.[101]

[100] For Baldwin's death, the involvement and goals of the Bulgarian tsar Kalojan in Thrace see John V. Fine, *The Late medieval Balkans, A critical survey from the Late twelfth Century to the Ottoman Conquest* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1987), 80-87.

[101] *Acropolitae*, ed. Heisenberg, §15; *Akropolites*, tr. Macrides, 149. The contract between Henry and Theodore, dated to 1214, is commonly regarded as the treaty of Nymphaion, based on this passage of

At that time Theodore I Laskaris had already been crowned by the patriarch in Nicaea and was firmly established as the ruler of the Byzantine realm in Asia Minor.[102] His antagonist, Henry of Flanders, had been the ruler of the Latin empire of Constantinople for seven years. Henry, who reigned for a quite long time in comparison with his predecessor and successors, was the last successful and threatening sovereign in Constantinople. He was able to consolidate and enlarge the territory of his realm towards the Byzantines in Asia Minor.[103]

This particular passage has been interpreted at length by Michael Hendy in his considerations regarding the location of the mint during the exile period. As his interpretation would imply considerable information on the use of Nymphaion, it should be discussed here briefly:

For Hendy, the reason for Henry's advance until Nymphaion and the account of this by Akropolites was "because it was then winter, and Theodore would normally have been staying there. It was, in other words, a signal act of humiliation and/or contempt."[104] Based on his study on coin finds dated to the thirteenth century, Hendy had proposed that it was Theodore I who had transferred the mint from Nicaea to Magnesia, contrary to George Pachymeres, whose account hinted that the move of the mint happened during the reign of John III Vatatzes.[105] This proposal led Hendy to the

---

Akropolites. Whether this treaty was indeed signed at Nymphaion, can only be assumed according to the text, since it is reported that Henry moved away from Nymphaion and then signed a contract with Theodore. The place where the contract was signed is not clear from this passage.

[102] Commonly, the date for the proclamation of Theodore I as emperor had been established as the date of his coronation in 1208 after the election of the first patriarch in exile, Michael Autoreianos. Recently Ruth Macrides studied on the basis of her translation of Akropolites' *History* all available evidence and arrived to the conclusion that Akropolites is not reliable for the sequence of events during the early exile period, that is the reign of Theodore I. Starting with the conquest of Constantinople falsely dated to 1203, not 1204, he then merged the proclamation with the coronation as emperor of Theodore and dated it to 1205. At that time however, the see of the patriarchate was still vacant, a new patriarch was not elected until 1208. See for the discussion of these dates: *Akropolites*, tr. Macrides, 81-86.

[103] Antonio Carile, "26. Heinrich v. Flandern und Hennegau," *LexMA*, vol. 4, 2062.

[104] Michael F. Hendy, *Catalogue of the Byzantine Coins in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection and in the Whittemore Collection*, vol. 4 part 2 (Washington: Dumbarton Oaks Center for Byzantine Studies, 1999) 471.

[105] Hendy, *Monetary Economy*, 443-45, with further references. Hendy distinguished two different groups of coins issued under Theodore I. The first group could be found largely in European hoards, while the second one occurred almost exclusively in hoards in Asia. Thus, a mint resettled in the south of Western Asia Minor at one point during his reign would have be a likely explanation for the difference in occurrences. Consequently, Hendy therefore considered the possibility that Theodore I not only moved the mint to the south of the realm, but that it was he and not John III Vatatzes who established an imperial winter residence in the area, that is, at Nymphaion at some point between 1203 and 1221. Hendy gained support for this suggestion through the account of the church historian Nikephoros Callistus Xanthopoulus, who repeatedly reported Theodore's stay in the south of western Asia Minor during the years 1213-16.

suggestion that not only the mint, but along with it an imperial residence had been established down in the south of the territory under control, which he assumed to have been at Nymphaion, already during the initial set up of the Laskarid realm.[106] Therefore he considered the advance of Henry of Flanders to Nymphaion as a hint of imperial presence there and thus, directed as a threat towards Theodore I.

For the aim of this study, the investigation of topography and use of sites within the Laskarid realm, it is tempting to follow Hendy's interpretation, even though it is "scissored-and-pasted".[107] Especially when combining it with Blemmydes' early encounter with the court at Nymphaion, as will be analyzed below, there is reason to believe that indeed Nymphaion was built up as an imperial residence under Theodore I and not his successor John III. Lacking solid complementary data from archaeological excavations, however, it appears impossible to advance further in the imperial history of Nymphaion. For the early period of the exile textual evidence alone is too vague. The available sources are mostly written decades later after the reconquest of Constantinople, thus, lacking detailed information on the reign of Theodore I.

Taking into account the temporal distance from which Akropolites was writing, a different interpretation of this passage seems possible. Akropolites used Nymphaion here as a land mark, apparently the southern-most of the conquered territory, to describe how far Henry advanced in his campaign. At this point it is important to recapitulate the facts about Akropolites' life: in 1212, the year of Henry's campaign, Akropolites was not even born. He did not leave Constantinople before the year 1233 and it is assumed that he started to work on his account only 30 years later, 50 years after Henry had allegedly reached Nymphaion. Obviously for these events, Akropolites must have used

[106] Ibid. Hendy argued that on three occasions Theodore I was not able to summon a synod for the election of a new patriarch due to his absence from Nicaea, as he was in the south of his realm, the reason of which was not reported. However, the evidence is far from clear. For one, Nikephoros Xanthopoulos was writing in the fourteenth century and the only available edition of his work came out in the nineteenth century, thus, the question of reliability of this source regarding the exile period might be posed. Following Xanthopoulus' chronology, the patriarch Michael IV Autoreianos died in late August of 1213 and was not replaced earlier than September 1214, thus thirteen months later. This would imply that Theodore stayed away from Nicaea for a whole year. To explain this solely with a stay at Nymphaion over the winter season is not sufficient. Michael's successor Theodore II died shortly after his appointment in January of 1216. Here a delay in replacing him because of the distance of the imperial winter quarter is more probably, since his successor followed already in June of the same year. Questions however remain as to the general interpretation, for instance if a delay in patriarchal elections was caused only by permanent absence of the emperor. As a counter example, during the exile period the patriarchal office was vacant for four years between 1240 and 1244, and according to Akropolites this happened because John III did not find a suitable candidate: *Acropolitae*, ed. Heisenberg, §42.

[107] Hendy, *Catalogue of the Byzantine Coins*, 471.

other sources and could not have relied on his own experience. Based on the assumption that no unknown historiographer who wrote about the early years of Theodore I Laskaris was the source of Akropolites, probably he relied on oral tradition for the early period.[108] He himself witnessed the reign of John III Vatatzes (1221-54); under him Akropolites reached high positions and taught his son and later Emperor Theodore II. It was the long and prosperous realm of Vatatzes that Akropolites knew. As will become clear below in the following passages, Nymphaion was the usual winter resting place during Vatatzes' reign, thus for Akropolites the site was associated with a quite narrow meaning, it was an imperial residence. Most probable his addressees, the leading class of the reconstituted Byzantine empire in Constantinople, knew that as well. From the quoted passage it is not entirely clear if the Latin emperor really stayed for some time at Nymphaion or if Akropolites had been told that he had reached the region in the hinterland of Smyrna, and, knowing that later on in his own times Nymphaion became a residence of the Laskarids, used the name as a topographical mark.

Whichever interpretation is chosen, the description of Nymphaion provides interesting information. Nymphaion was introduced as a place of solitude – eremīa pollē - and thus, as an unattractive site in the eyes of the Latin emperor. Already from that remark it seems that Nymphaion was not, what a capital, or at least the political center of a realm, was supposed to be, namely an important location. Besides the very fact that Nymphaion is mentioned no emphasis is given to the site.

To list the following passage, which already belongs to the reign of John III Vatatzes, under the texts relevant for Nymphaion is problematic, because Nymphaion is in fact not mentioned in the text. But as it will be shown, there is reason to believe that this event took place at Nymphaion or in its proximity. Assuming this, it is important to note how Akropolites indirectly related to the site. In this passage Akropolites reported the death of Empress Eirene and provided an elaborate description of her personality and her grace as an empress. By recounting a conversation about a solar eclipse between the empress and Akropolites himself, he underlined her fondness of knowledge and his own fondness for her:

[108] As Macrides had pointed out, Akropolites himself hinted at oral sources that he relied on for his account. However, his hints are vague, he did not specify any source throughout his narrative. A comparison with the only Byzantine historian that came down to us writing about the early exile period, Niketas Choniates, revealed Akropolites' independence from his predecessor: *Akropolites*, tr. Macrides, 35-39.

> καὶ γὰρ ἐκλείψεως γινομένης, ἡλίου τὸν καρκίνον διοδεύοντος περὶ μεσημβρίαν, ἐπείπερ αὐτὸς οὕτω συμβὰν ἐν τοῖς βασιλείοις ἀπῆλθον—ἐσκηνοῦτο δὲ περὶ τοὺς τόπους οὓς ὀνομάζουσι Περίκλυστρα σὺν τῇ βασιλίδι ὁ βασιλεύς—ἠρώτηκέ με τὴν τῆς ἐκλείψεως αἰτίαν. / For, when an eclipse occurred, as the sun was passing through Cancer, around midday – since, when it happened, I had arrived at the imperial residence (the emperor with the empress were residing near a place which they call Periklystra) – she asked me the reason for the eclipse.[109]

Regarding this discussion about the eclipse, Macrides had pointed out the way Akropolites used the positive characterization of Empress Eirene: it was to show his critical stance towards the improper style of John III Vatatzes, who was lacking imperial attitudes.[110]

Periklystra, the only site that was mentioned here by name, reoccurred in the events surrounding the death of John III Vatatzes later in Akropolites' account with the note that is was close to Smyrna.[111] Crucial in this context is the imperial residence that was mentioned in the text. Akropolites recalled how he had arrived there first and then proceeded to the empress and emperor, who sojourned at Periklystra. From this it could be proposed that he logically assumed the imperial court to reside at Nymphaion, thus his return to the palace. Upon hearing that the court had left the place, he carried on to Periklystra. The Greek term Akropolites used for the palace is *to basileion* (ἐν τοῖς βασιλείοις), which occurs later in his *History* denoting the palace at Nymphaion.[112] So one optional reading of this paragraph would be that Akropolites arrived at Nymphaion and from there moved further to the court, which had taken brief residence at Periklystra.

Another reading would be that *to basileion* designates principally each place where emperor and empress were accommodated, which would mean that *to basileion* referred to Periklystra and that emperor and empress dwelled there either in a building or in imperial tents.

In the first reading apparently the fact that Nymphaion had been set up to serve as imperial residence did not prevent the emperor and his entourage to settle at a place 20km away for some time. The court resided where it was convenient, pleasant or necessary; mobility for all Laskarid emperors was a huge factor during the exile period.

[109] *Acropolitae*, ed. Heisenberg, §39; *Akropolites*, tr. Macrides, 210.
[110] *Akropolites*, tr. Macrides, 57.
[111] For Periklystra see *Akropolites*, tr. Macrides, 212 n5 with further references.
[112] *Acropolitae*, ed. Heisenberg, §52.

The second reading would point even more in this direction: in that case the imperial residence was an institution as flexible as the mobility of the emperor and his court was, and only conditioned by the presence of the emperor.

The next passage where Akropolites related something about Nymphaion was dated to 1242 again under the rule of Emperor John III Vatatzes. Akropolites explained where and when the emperor used to spend his time: during the winter he resided at Nymphaion, in the summer he moved to Lampsakos, where he stayed until the end of fall, then he moved to Pegai and from there, in the middle of winter, to Nymphaion again:

> Ὁ μὲν οὖν βασιλεὺς Ἰωάννης κατειλήφει τὴν ἕω. τὴν γοῦν χειμερινὴν τότε παραμείψας ὥραν ἐν τῷ Νυμφαίῳ, ὡς ἔθος ἦν αὐτῷ, ἀπάρας ἐκεῖθεν περὶ τὴν Λάμψακον ᾔει· κἀκεῖσε τὸ θέρος διαβιβάσας καὶ τὴν τῆς ὀπώρας ὥραν, ἐπεὶ ὁ χειμὼν ἤρξατο, τοῦ χώρου μεταβὰς περὶ τὰ τῶν Πηγῶν ἐχώρει μέρη. μεγίστου δὲ χειμῶνος πεπείραταικαθ’ ὁδόν, ἀρξαμένου μὲν ἐπὰν ὁ βασιλεὺς εἰς τὴν Σιγρηνὴν ἐσκήνωσεν· […] ὁ μὲν οὖν βασιλεὺς ἐν τῷ τῶν Πηγῶν ἄστει διημερεύσας, μέχρις ἂν τὸ πολὺ τοῦ χειμῶνος λωφήσῃ, ἐξιὼν ἐκεῖθεν εἰς τὸ Νύμφαιον ἀπῄει, καὶ ἦν ἐκεῖσε μέχρι καὶ τῆς τοῦ ἔαρος ἐπιλάμψεως. / The emperor John arrived in the east. He then spent the winter season in Nymphaion, as was his custom; leaving from there, he went to the area of Lampsakos. There he spent the summer and the autumn season, but when winter set in, moving from the place, he left for the region of Pegai. He was tested by a great storm on the way, which began when he encamped at Sigrene. […] The emperor passed the day in the town of Pegai until the worst of the storm abated and, leaving there, he went to Nymphaion and stayed there until the brightening of the spring.[113]

What Akropolites described here was the usual itinerant travel of the emperor, naming the three important stations: Nymphaion, Lampsakos and Pegai.[114] Whereas Nymphaion was situated in the south of the Laskarid territory, both Lampsakos and Pegai were on the northern border on the shore of the Sea of Marmara. Both fell to the Latins in 1204 and were reconquered under John III Vatatzes apparently in 1224/25; as will be discussed in the analysis below, apparently under him Pegai received quite strong defensive walls, and both harbor cities – Pegai and Lampsakos - were extended to function as the departure points for the army that went on battle across the Hellespont into the Balkans.[115]

[113] *Acropolitae*, ed. Heisenberg, §41; *Akropolites*, tr. Macrides, 220.

[114] What is left out in the quoted passage is the hard winter of 1242 and the deaths of hundreds of people who could not sustain the cold.

[115] Clive Foss, “Pegai,” *ODB*, 1615-16; Klaus Belke, “Lampsakos,” *LexMA*, vol. 5, 1634; Alexander Kazhdan, “Lampsakos,” *ODB*, 1172.

It seems from this passage that John Vatatzes had quite a regular route that led him through his realm, not only regarding the places of habitation, but also regarding the time periods throughout the year. During his reign, Vatatzes had two powers to face: the Greek refugees under Theodore Angelos Doukas Komnenos who followed his brother Michael 1215 on the throne and strengthened the Despotate of Epiros, and the sultanate of Ikonion in central Anatolia. Lampsakos and Nymphaion were used as the starting points for campaigns against these rival powers. But surprisingly in this passage Akropolites did not mention any military motif of the emperor for his journey. On the contrary, embedded into the quotation he informed us about a hard winter which caused the death of around three hundred people in 1242; it was not the danger from an outside power that forced the emperor to act, but a remarkable force of nature made him stay.

The emphasis on the custom (ἔθος) of Emperor John III, is crucial in this quotation: to spend the winter in Nymphaion until spring. For the aim of this study this expression could hardly be overemphasized: in this passage Akropolites explicitly labeled Nymphaion as the winter residence of the emperor. Regarding the question of the function and placement of Nymphaion in the realm, this report of an eyewitness provided the answer: it was used as the imperial winter accommodation of John Vatatzes.

The next mention of Nymphaion confirms this observation, for the usual habit of Emperor John Vatatzes, to spend his time there until spring, is expressed here again:

> Ὁ μὲν οὖν βασιλεὺς ἐν τοῖς τοῦ Νυμφαίου παραχειμάσας, ἦρος φανέντος, ὥσπερ εἰώθει, ἐξήει ἐκεῖθεν. / The emperor spent the winter in the region of Nymphaion but when spring arrived, he left from there, as was his custom.[116]

This passage appeared at the beginning of a new section; the preceding one ended with a successful conquest of Thessalonica. In the following, John III Vatatzes recruited his army again in order to attack cities close to Constantinople.[117] Akropolites, when he reported the preparations for new campaigns, started frequently with the current location of the emperor, like Nymphaion in the quoted passage. The key words "as usual" (ὥσπερ εἰώθει) repeat the classification of the previous passage: the function of Nymphaion was the residence of John III Vatatzes during winter. Connected

[116] *Acropolitae*, ed. Heisenberg, §47; *Akropolites*, tr. Macrides, 245.

[117] The author added that the campaign started in the same year when the Genoese conquered Rhodes; thus, it can be dated around 1248.

to the role of Nymphaion in the Laskarid realm, two aspects could now be detected: as the winter accommodation of the emperor and as the place for recruiting his army. The latter function will be confirmed through another part of Akropolites' account.

The following paragraph informs the reader about John's preparations for the conquest of Rhodes around 1250, for which he returned to Nymphaion in order to gather an army and a fleet: [118]

> Ὁ μὲν οὖν βασιλεὺς Ἰωάννης τὸ Νύμφαιον καταλαβὼν καὶ στόλον συσκευασάμενος ἀξιόμαχον ἐν τῇ Σμύρνῃ, ἱππαγωγούς τε τριήρεις οἰκονομήσας ὡς μέχρι καὶ τῶν τριακοσίων ἵππων ἐπιφέρεσθαι [...] / The emperor John arrived at Nymphaion and prepared a battle-worthy fleet in Smyrna, arranging for horse-carrying triremes to transport up to 300 horses […][119]

Smyrna at that time was perhaps the greatest city in the west of Asia Minor, around 50km westwards from Nymphaion. Situated on the coast, it provided a great harbor.[120] In the beginning of this section it was reported that the Genoese occupied Rhodes, and Emperor John, who stayed in the far north of his realm, gave John Kantakuzenos military orders and instructed him to besiege the Genoese. The emperor himself returned from the north to Nymphaion, in order to recruit further forces, as quoted above, for the upcoming campaign against the Genoese.[121] Ships were built in the harbor city of Smyrna. On the basis of this quotation Smyrna was considered the naval base of the fleet.[122] That ships were sent from here to Rhodes, which is in shorter distance than Lampsakos to Rhodes, seems quite logical. However, it does not consequently follow that Smyrna was the most important naval harbor. As it happened,

---

[118] Concerning the year Akropolites is not precise; see therefore Alice Gardner, *Lascarids*, 175 and the commentary to this section in *Akropolites*, tr. Macrides, 247 with further references.

[119] *Acropolitae*, ed. Heisenberg, §48; *Akropolites*, tr. Macrides, 247.

[120] Clive Foss, "Smyrna," *ODB*, 1919-1920.

[121] From the context it is even more astonishing that on the basis of this quotation Smyrna was considered the greatest base of the fleet. That ships were sent from here to Rhodes, which is closer than from Lampsakos to Rhodes, seems quite logical. But to assume as a consequence that Smyrna was the most important naval harbor is not a convincing argument.

[122] According to the publication of Hélène Ahrweiler, "L'histoire et la géographie de la région de Smyrne entre les deux occupations turques (1081-1317) particulièrement au XIIIe siècle," *Travaux et Mémoires du Centre de Recherche d'Histoire et Civilisation byzantines*, vol. 1 (Paris: Association des Amis du Centre d'Histoire et Civiliation de Byzantines, 1965), 35, especially n36, Smyrna was the base of the fleet during the Laskarid period. She based her argument on this very passage of Akropolites §48, and on the fourteenth century *vita* of John III Vatatzes, published by August Heisenberg, "Kaiser Johannes Batatzes der Barmherzige," *BZ* 14 (1905), 160-233. Both sources can be regarded as weak proofs: Heisenberg showed in the beginning of his article, that the historical facts in the *vita* are not reliable. Reading Akropolites, Smyrna is mentioned only once as the starting point for a naval campaign, *Acropolitae*, ed. Heisenberg, §48, which Ahrweiler referred to, whereas Lampsakos was mentioned in three passages as the departure point for a campaign to the Hellespont: *Acropolitae*, ed. Heisenberg, §23, §33, and §60.

it remained the only occasion in Akropolites' account, in which the navy was sent out from Smyrna. On other occasions the regions of Lampsakos and Pegai were used.[123]

Following the account of Akropolites, the next passage developed the death of John III Vatatzes in detail.[124] At the beginning of this passage the emperor was staying in Nicaea, having just returned from the West.[125] At night, all of a sudden, he had an apoplectic stroke[126] and lost his capacity for speech. After suffering two nights in Nicaea, he urged his subordinates to bring him back to Nymphaion to participate in the procession of Palm Sunday, although he was in very poor condition:

> ἔσπευσε γοῦν καταλαβεῖν τὸ Νύμφαιον φθάσαι τε πρὸ τῆς βαϊοφόρου κυριακῆς, καθ' ἣν εἴωθε θριαμβεύειν ὁ βασιλεύς. / He sought then to reach Nymphaion and to arrive before Palm Sunday, when the emperor was accustomed to make a triumphal entry.[127]

He reached Nymphaion in time for the celebration of Palm Sunday and Easter and stayed in his palace in Nymphaion the whole summer, while his health got worse and worse. He had further attacks, partly in his palace, sometimes even when he was outside; in that case his servants had to take care of him and to protect him from the sight of others:

> ἐπιτείνας οὖν τὴν ὁδὸν ἀφίκετο εἰς τὸ Νύμφαιον, κἀκεῖσε τὸν κατὰ τὴν βαϊοφόρον θρίαμβον ἐξετέλεσε καὶ τὴν ἀναστάσιμον ἑωρτάκει ἡμέραν. ... ποτὲ μὲν γὰρ ἐν τῷ παλατίῳ διάγων εὐθὺς ἐπὶ κλίνης ἔπιπτεν ἄφωνος, ποτὲ δὲ ἐφ' ἵππου βαίνων καὶ ὁδὸν βαδίζων ὑπὸ τῆς νόσου ἐγίνετο κάτοχος, καὶ οἱ συμπαρόντες κατεῖχόν τε καὶ πρὸς ὥραν παρεφύλαττον, ὥστε μὴ γνωρίζεσθαι τοῖς πολλοῖς. / Increasing therefore, his rate of travel, he reached Nymphaion and there performed the triumph for Palm Sunday and also celebrated the day of Resurrection. ... Sometimes while he was in the palace he would fall prostrate onto the bed, dumb, while at other times he would be seized by the illness as he rode horseback and proceeded on the road, and those who were with him would hold him and protect him for a time so that it would not become known to the people.[128]

[123] See the Case Study on Pegai - Lampsakos below.

[124] That whole part until his death is elaborated in detail, a sign of the popularity of John III Vatatzes, in contrast to his son and successor, Theodore II Laskaris.

[125] "The West" referred to the European parts of the former Byzantine empire, whereas "the East" denominated Asia Minor. Akropolites is consistent in these denominations, as Macrides had pointed out: *Akropolites*, tr. Macrides, 34

[126] That is well described by Akropolites who had a strong interest in medicine.

[127] *Acropolitae*, ed. Heisenberg, §52; *Akropolites*, tr. Macrides, 270.

[128] *Acropolitae*, ed. Heisenberg, §52; *Akropolites*, tr. Macrides, 270.

From Nymphaion then he traveled to Periklystra, the area that had been mentioned earlier in relation with the solar eclipse in 1239[129], to worship Christ and pray for better health:

> Ἐπεὶ οὖν χεῖρες ἰατρῶν εἰς τὴν νόσον ἀπέκαμον, παραμυθίαν βουλόμενος μικρὰν ἐφευρεῖν ἠθέλησεν εἰς τὴν Σμύρνην ἀπελθεῖν, ὅπως τῷ ἐκεῖσε προσκυνήσῃ Χριστῷ παράκλησίν τε ποιήσῃ καὶ ἵλεων αὐτὸν ἀπεργάσοιτο. ἀφικόμενος οὖν ταῦτα μὲν διεπράξατο, ἀνακωχὴν δὲ τοῦ πάθους οὐχ εὗρεν, ἀλλ' ἐν τοῖς Περικλύστροις Τόποις σκηνούμενος—τόπος δέ ἐστιν οὗτος ἐγγύς που τῆς Σμύρνης, διὰ τὸ πολλοῖς τοῖς ὕδασι περικλύζεσθαι οὕτω πως κατονομαζόμενος—μείζονος ἢ μᾶλλον χείρονος τοῦ πάθους ἐπήσθετο. / Since, then, the illness defeated the skill of the doctors, he wished to go to Smyrna to venerate Christ there and make supplication and gain His mercy, in a desire to find a little relief. When he arrived he did this but he found no respite from the affliction; as he was staying in the Periklystra area – this is a place near Smyrna, given this name because it is watered all around by many springs – he felt a greater or, rather, worse affliction.[130]

After pain and suffering for months he finally died at the beginning of November 1254 in the imperial tents that had been arranged by imperial order in the palace gardens:

> καὶ ἐν μὲν τοῖς βασιλικοῖς οὐκ ἀπῆλθεν οἰκήμασιν, ἐν δὲ τοῖς ἐγγύς που τῆς χώρας βασιλείοις κήποις τὰς ἀνακτορικὰς σκηνὰς ἐνιδρύσατο. ἔνθα καὶ τῷ χρεὼν ἐλειτούργησε τρίτῃ καλανδῶν Νοεμβρίου […] / He did not go to the imperial dwellings, but put up the royal tents in the imperial gardens near the place. And it was there that he died, on the third day of the kalends of November […][131]

He was buried in the monastery of Sosandra close to Nymphaion, which was founded by John III himself.[132] Theodore was acclaimed as his successor and raised on a shield. After that Theodore went eastwards from Nymphaion.

In this context one aspect catches the eye at once, namely the emperor's strong desire to return to Nymphaion. This can be explained by his imminent death: apparently he wanted to prepare himself at the most pleasant place. The choice, even in poor condition, to move to the south of his realm might have also several further explanations. It was surely, as Akropolites reported, important to be at Nymphaion for

[129] *Acropolitae*, ed. Heisenberg, §39.
[130] *Acropolitae*, ed. Heisenberg, §52; *Akropolites*, tr. Macrides, 270.
[131] *Acropolitae*, ed. Heisenberg, §52; *Akropolites*, tr. Macrides, 271.
[132] This is not reported by Akropolites in this context, but in *Acropolitae*, ed. Heisenberg, §74, describing the death of his son and successor Theodore II Laskaris, who was buried at the same place four years later. Although Heisenberg, "Batatzes der Barmherzige," 166-171, discussed a possible location of the monastery and Buchwald, "Laskarid Architecture," 263, especially n8-10, tried to find it in the hills between Izmir and Kemalpaşa (see in these articles the relevant sources for Sosandra), the monastery could not be located. At the time of preparing this study Sosandra is only known as a foundation of John III Vatatzes and as burial place for him and his son through written testimony.

Palm Sunday and Easter, which was presumably the accustomed location for that feast, since as shown above he usually stayed there until spring.[133] Also the emptiness and seclusion of that place might have been a preferred option in comparison with the larger population in Nicaea, where he had the first stroke. The emperor surely did not want to show himself like that in public, as also becomes clear from the fact that his servants protected him in order not to be recognized by the public. Additionally a kind of feeling at home might be connected to the wish to move to Nymphaion; retreat to a familiar ambit in case of calamity is a quite natural behavior, even for an emperor.

This passage of Akropolites highlights various characteristics of the emperor. John's piety is striking, making him search for help in procession, prayer, and pilgrimage. Furthermore his dignity of imperial office is clearly detectable, since he was ashamed to be seen by his people in that condition and his servants were eager to protect him from view. Also the fact that as emperor he could not allow himself to appear weak in public probably made him seek shelter at Nymphaion, since his weakness would have given potential adversaries the possibility of overthrowing him.

The arrangement of tents could indicate that he did not want to be carried around by his servants in his palace with its four levels and narrow staircases. It was maybe painful and torturing for him, as well as degrading for a powerful emperor, to die in such a way. As has been shown, Nymphaion was regularly visited during winter until spring; maybe tents were also a preferred solution to the temperatures during summer time.

The aspect that makes this passage so important for this study is the first mention of a palace in Nymphaion. That provides a *terminus ante quem* for the erection of the building; the construction must have been finished some time before. Having a second look at the text, by the examination of the terms Akropolites uses for palace – *to palation, ta anaktora, to basileion* – it is clear that he uses the common expression for the imperial accommodation of the emperor. In this respect he makes no distinction between Nymphaion and Constantinople. Since it is known that Akropolites grew up in Constantinople, moved to the Laskarid territories of Asia Minor, and probably wrote his

[133] In the account it was not mentioned yet where the emperor(s) usually spent Easter. Only in this quotation is Nymphaion finally mentioned directly as the place of the celebration of Easter. Further passages that refer to the reigns of Theodore II Laskaris and Michael VIII Palaiologos and that confirm this habit of these emperors will be discussed below.

account after the reconquest, he knew the Great Palace of Constantinople quite well.[134] Thus, a differentiation would not be surprising; even so, he uses the regular expression which might indicate that seen from the perspective of the imperial seat he took both places as equal.

The next passage leads back to the imperial travel route that was already noted above. This time the successor, Theodore II Laskaris,[135] spent his time during winter and the celebration of Christmas in Lampsakos; after the feast he moved to Nymphaion and stayed there until spring:

> ἐν τῇ Λαμψάκῳ γοῦν μικρὸν διὰ ταῦτα προσκαρτερήσας ὁ αὐτοκράτωρ, καὶ τὰς τοῦ Χριστοῦ πανηγύρεις τῆς τε γέννας καὶ τῶν φώτων ἀποπληρώσας, διὰ μετρίων πάνυ τῶν ἡμερῶν ἐπεφθάκει τὸ Νύμφαιον. Ἐκεῖσε γοῦν παραχειμάσας, ἐπεὶ τὸ ἔαρ ἐπέλαμψε, πολλὴν συλλεξάμενος στρατιάν […] / The monarch stayed in Lampsakos a short time for these matters, and after celebrating the feasts of Christ, His Birth and the Lights [Epiphany], he reached Nymphaion a very few days later. He spent the winter there, but when spring shone forth he mustered a large army […][136]

The same patterns are striking concerning the route and travel calendar of Theodore II in comparison to the passages of his father, John III Vatatzes. The recruitment of soldiers at Nymphaion also followed the practices of the previous emperor. It affirmed the role, function, and meaning of Nymphaion as the winter accommodation and place for marshalling the forces.[137] On the other hand, the embedding of this passage into the account is quite interesting. In the previous paragraph Akropolites reported quite illustratively and with mockery the incompetence of the Emperor Theodore regarding his choice in announcing important new officials of his court. What follows after the quotation is a description of the army as not consisting of soldiers, but of men skilled in hunting; the story continues with the bad tactics and bad luck of the emperor. By embedding the usually well-known and successful customs of the former Emperor John into the ridiculous and dilettante actions of the new

[134] Which is so different in its complexity and magnitude from the modest housing in Nymphaion that it is simply incomparable.

[135] The son of John III Vatatzes and Eirene Laskaris took the family name of his mother, since she was of higher birth: Hendy, *Byzantine Coin Collection*, 467 and 516-17.

[136] *Acropolitae*, ed. Heisenberg, §60 and §61; *Akropolites*, tr. Macrides, 298 and 300.

[137] Regarding the choice of Nymphaion as a winter accommodation some descriptions concerning climate conditions are useful in this context. Nymphaion itself was situated in a region, where the temperatures during the winter season remained at a level of around 8° to 12°C in a humid climate, a friendlier environment than, for instance, the coast of the Sea of Marmara, where the winters were usually much harder. As the confrontations with the Latins and the Greeks of Epiros happened either on the European mainland or in the north of Asia Minor, the regular time for campaigns was indeed the summer time, whereas during the winter the army had time to recover.

emperor, Theodore, Akropolites strengthened the contrast between the two and his critique on behalf of the latter. This served the whole composition and final aim of his work, to build up the usurper Michael VIII Palaiologos as the one who will bring order, strength, and success back to the Byzantines; Akropolites closed his account with the final reconquest of Constantinople under the reign of Michael VIII.

Nymphaion made its last appearance in the report during the reign of Michael VIII Palaiologos, who turned back from the west, first moving to Pegai, and after summer and fall had passed, to Nymphaion. Akropolites added the reason for his travel to Nymphaion, namely that it was usual custom of the emperors to seek refreshment there. The text continued with a diplomatic mission of Akropolites himself to the Bulgarian tsar (omitted in the quotation). He met the emperor again in Nymphaion, where Michael VIII stayed during winter and left in spring after celebrating Easter:

> ἐπεὶ δὲ ὁ τοῦ θέρους παρῄει καιρός, ἀλλά γε δὴ καὶ ὁ τῆς ὀπώρας ἐρρύη, τῶν τοιούτων ἀπάρας χώρων πρὸς τὴν ἐξ ἔθους τοῖς βασιλεῦσιν οὖσαν ἀνάπαυσιν, ἐξ ὅτου τῆς Κωνσταντίνου γεγόνασιν ὑπερόριοι, κατηντήκει τὸ Νύμφαιον […] ἐκεῖσε γοῦν ὁ βασιλεὺς παρεχείμασε, καὶ ἐπιλάμψαντος ἔαρος τοῦ Νυμφαίου ἐξῄει, τὴν λαμπρὰν τῆς ἀναστάσεως τοῦ κυρίου ἡμέραν προεορτάσας ἐν τῷ Νυμφαίῳ. ἡμέρας δέ τινας ἐν τοῖς Φλεβίοις διαβιβάσας, περὶ τόπον οὕτω πως ἐπονομαζόμενον Κλυζομενὴν ἀπελθὼν ἐπήξατο τὰς σκηνάς. ἐκεῖσε καὶ γὰρ εἰώθασιν οἱ βασιλεῖς τοῦ Νυμφαίου ἐξιόντες χρονοτριβεῖν καὶ τὸ πλέον τοῦ ἐαρινοῦ παραμείβειν καιροῦ. ὅ τε γὰρ τόπος ἅπας πεδιὰς καὶ χόρτον προβεβλημένη πολλοῖς ἀρκοῦντα τοῖς ἵπποις, κατάρρυτος δὲ τυγχάνει καὶ ὕδασιν, ἐγγὺς δὲ αὐτοῦ καὶ κώμας ἔχει πολλὰς καὶ πόλεις, ἐξ ὧν δαψιλῆ καθειστήκει τὰ ζωαρκῆ. / Since the summer season had passed and autumn also, he left from those lands and arrived at Nymphaion, which was the customary place of relaxation of the emperors from the time when they were banished from the city of Constantine. […] There the emperor spent the winter and, when spring shone forth, he left Nymphaion, having already celebrated the illustrious day of the Lord's Resurrection in Nymphaion. When he had passed some days in Phlebia, he went to a place which is actually called Klyzomene and [took up residence] set up tents. For there also the emperors were accustomed to spend time upon leaving Nymphaion and to pass most of the spring season. The entire region is a plain and provides sufficient pasturage for many horses; it is also irrigated and has near it many villages and cities from which the necessities of life are abundandly supplied.[138]

[138] *Acropolitae*, ed. Heisenberg, §84; *Akropolites*, tr. Macrides, 369. Here I inserted a small modification to the translation of Macrides and proposed a more literal expression. To translate *pēgnymi tas skēnas* with "to take up residence" in my understanding evokes the idea of a proper building, but I understand this passage differently. It appears to me that from the palace at Nymphaion the court moved out into the plain and encamped in open space, thus, here Akropolites referred to the tents. See also the suggestion of Albert Failler to translate *tas skēnas* generally literal: Albert Failler, "Review of Ruth Macrides (trad.), George Akropolites, The History, Introduction, translation and commentary by Ruth Macrides (Oxford Studies in Byzantium), Oxford University Press 2007," *Revue des Études Byzantines* 66 (2008), 283-285.

From Nymphaion, Michael VIII moved to a fruitful region called Phlebia, which was close by and provided much food for men and horses, and Akropolites added that this was also the usual custom of all previous emperors. These remarks, focused on the movements of Michael VIII as following the usual practice of previous emperors, clearly revealed Akropolites' purpose. Although Michael VIII Palaiologos was an usurper, Akropolites put Michael VIII in one line with the previous emperors and their usual habits in order to create a continuity, which in fact was not real. Akropolites concealed that Michael VIII had blinded the legitimate heir, John IV Laskaris, at the age of ten, with whom he had only been co-regent in the beginning.

Concerning Nymphaion, this final passage in a way serves as a summary. The imperial travel route through the realm was kept under Emperor Michael VIII, who moved on the regular route from Pegai to Nymphaion, even during the accustomed season of the year, in order to rest from the previous campaign. He stayed at Nymphaion until the celebration of Easter, which marked the end of his visitation there. As Akropolites added, where and why the emperor traveled to afterwards, the reader learned also the reason behind this change of residence, even though only indirectly: the plain of Klyzomene provided new grazing grounds for the horses and the villages around were apt to supply the residing emperor and his entourage. To recapitulate – Michael VIII had moved to Nymphaion by the end of autumn and thus, had stayed there a couple of months until Easter. Even though assuming that the court during the time of the exile was compared to previous centuries a significant smaller entity, its daily provision must have been substantial and some burden for its surroundings. Akropolites here emphasized the need of the horses and elaborated that the region of Klyzomene also was able to care for the court, since it was a populated space.

To sum up, the most remarkable information that the account of Akropolites provided was the habit of seasonal residency during the exile period. In his narrative the emperors – and it seemed so far that this was meant to be the habit of all emperors of the exile period – used Nymphaion mainly as their winter residence. It was the site of relaxation, recorded were the celebrations of Christmas, Epiphany and Easter. On occasion from here emperors organized new campaigns in the spring, for which the army was recruited.

Blemmydes

Constantinople had been the center for education throughout the history of the empire, the lack of it after 1204 and the consequences it created for transmitting knowledge become apparent when studying Blemmydes' account. For Blemmydes traveled immensely during his life, either for finding proper teachers or for acquiring literature. His life was an ongoing struggle for gaining wisdom.

Thus, regarding settlements in the Laskarid realm, Blemmydes referred to sites quite frequently throughout his two autobiographies. They appeared in specific contexts: usually in connection with his education, his offices and his life as a monk. In both versions of his autobiography Blemmydes recounted the educational steps of his younger life, in the first version much more elaborate than in the second. Both his life and especially his search for proper teachers were determined strongly by constant change of residence not only within the Laskarid territory, but in later years even beyond. In his second version of his autobiography he summarized his education as follows:

> Ἡ πατρὶς τὸ Βυζάντιον ἐαλώκει τοῖς Ἰταλοῖς, καὶ ἡμεῖς μετανάσται πρὸς Βιθυνίαν· κἀν τῇ Προύσῃ μὲν γραμματικήν, ἐν Νικαίᾳ δὲ ποιητικὴν καὶ ῥητορικὴν καὶ τὰ τῆς λογικῆς ὅσα πρὸ τῶν *Ἀναλυτικῶν,* παιδευόμεθα, συλλογιστικήν δε φυσικὴν ἀριθμητικὴν γραμμικήν, ἐκδεδημηκότες εἰς Σκάμανδρον· ἀποφοιτῶμεν ἐκεῖθεν· ἐντυγχάνομεν κατὰ τὴν τῶν Σμυρναίων τῷ βασιλεῖ· τοῖς ἀνακτόροις γὰρ ἀναστραφέντες, αὐτῷ προεγνώσμεθα καί γε προσῳκειώμεθα. / Once my father-land, Byzantium, had been captured by the Italians, I emigrated to Bithynia. In Prousa I made my studies of grammar, and in Nicaea those of poetry and rhetoric, and also of the first parts of logic (the parts that precede the *Analytics*). However it was when I had transferred to the Skamander [region] that I studied the parts of logic that deal with syllogisms, and also physics, arithemetic and linear geometry. When I moved from there, I happened to meet the Emperor in Smyrna: previously I had made the acquaintance of the Emperor during my visits to the palace, and I had close relationship with him.[139]

Omitted in this abbreviated educational progress of the second version is a seven-year-period in which he studied medicine at Smyrna, which he mentioned only in his first version.[140] Generally, all these stages and sites of his studies were more elaborate in the first version of his account. Comparing the first and second version, he contradicted himself seemingly in what regards his introduction to court. In the first

[139] Blemmydae, *Opera*, ed. Munitiz, II.7; Blemmydes, *Partial Account*, tr. Munitiz, 97-98.
[140] Blemmydae, *Opera*, ed. Munitiz, I.5 and I.19.

version he recounted how he was introduced to the emperor at his court, how he moved from there to the Skamander region and then returned to the court:

> Τῆς ἀνωτέρω δεδηλωμένης ἐπταετίας συντετελεσμένης, ἐπ' ὀλίγον ἀναστραφέντες ἐν βασιλέων αὐλαῖς καὶ σκηνώμασιν, ὡς ἂν μὴ δὲ τῆς ἐκεῖ καταστάσεως παίδευσιν καὶ ταύτην καλοῦσιν, ἀγνῶτες ὦμεν καὶ ἀδαεῖς […] μηδὲν τῶν ἐκ τοῦ κρατοῦντος τοῖς αὐτὸν διαδιδράσκουσιν ὑπολογισάμενοι, πρὸς ὃν ἐζητοῦμεν ὀξέως φερόμεθα. / After the seven year period that has been mentioned, I frequented for a short while the imperial halls and residences; this practice also is termed 'education', and its purpose was to familiarize me with, and give me competence in that world. […] without a second thought for what the Emperor might do to those who took their leave from him, I set off promptly towards the man I was looking for.[141]

> καὶ ταύτῃ προσενδιατρίψας οὐκ ἄχρι τέλους ἤδη γὰρ προβαίνειν εἶχον, καὶ τοῖς ἐξηγηταῖς μόνοις χρώμενος ποδηγοῖς, παλινδρομῶ πρὸς τὸ Νύμφαιον, τὸν ὅμοιον τρόπον, κινδύνου παντὸς ἀπείρατος. / It was already time for me to depart. [Although] I had only verbal explanations to guide my feet, I made the return journey to Nymphaion in the same way as I had come, evading all danger.[142]

Shortly earlier he had referred to the seven-year-period in which he had studied medicine with his father, and for which he had moved to Smyrna. Through cross-reference with another section of the same part of his autobiography Joseph Munitiz could establish that the place where he spent these years was Smyrna, whence he on occasion made visits to Ephesos.[143] Now, apparently after this period of studying medicine Blemmydes had been introduced at the imperial court. He did not specify at first where the court was located, but as he continued his account of leaving and returning to the court, he finally mentioned the spot of the imperial residence where he had been introduced – Nymphaion. He also provided a rough time frame – he had moved to Smyrna by the age of seventeen, studied there for seven years, and subsequently attended the court for a while. Given the fact that he was born in 1197, it would suggest that his appearance at court happened around 1221. That year witnessed a progression of the imperial throne: Theodore I died in November 1221 and was succeeded by his son-in-law John III Vatatzes.[144]

[141] Blemmydae, *Opera*, ed. Munitiz, I.6; Blemmydes, *Partial Account*, tr. Munitiz, 45-46. He continued with a detailed description of his travels to Prodromos, which had not been without danger, since the Skamander and Troad were at that time still in Latin hands. He recounted his studies with Prodromos, and he closed this narrative with the return to the court. For the sake of argumentation the former had been cut out from this quotation, whereas the latter, as it provided the location of the court, was added.

[142] Blemmydae, *Opera*, ed. Munitiz, I.9; Blemmydes, *Partial Account*, tr. Munitiz, 48.

[143] Blemmydes, *Partial Account*, tr. Munitiz, 44, n8.

[144] Constantinides named Theodore I Laskaris as the emperor in office when Blemmydes was attending the court first: C.N. Constantinides, *Higher Education in Byzantium in the thirteenth and early*

This leads to one interesting assumption: If the court was at Nymphaion right at the time of the death of Theodore and the inauguration of John III, there is a possibility that it had been there already before. Ruth Macrides in her introduction to Akropolites' *History* clearly spelled out the option, even though only through indirect references, that it might already have been already Theodore I who established a residence at Nymphaion in the decade before his death.[145]

Blemmydes continued to recapitulate his stages of learning: After medicine he finally decided to turn towards a clerical career. In order to pursue that he moved to Prousa and then to Nicaea:

> Ἕκτον οὖν διανύων ἔτος ἐν τῷ βίῳ καὶ εἰκοστόν, τῇ Νικαέων ἐν ᾗ καὶ τὴν ἐγκύκλιον περιενόστησα, καθὼς ἐν τῇ Προυσαίων τὴν προτεταγμένην αὐτῆς ἐγγραμμάτισμαι, Γερμανοῦ τοῦ τὰ θεῖα σοφοῦ πατριαρχοῦντος, ἐπιδημῶ· τῆς Κωνσταντίνου γὰρ ἢ τοῦ Βύζαντος ἐκπεπορθημένης ὑπὸ τῶν Ἰταλῶν, ἐν τῇ Βιθυνῶν μητροπόλει καὶ ὁ πατριαρχικὸς μετετέθειτο θρόνος, ὡς ἔπηλυς ὡς ἐπίθετος, καὶ τοῖς βασιλεῦσιν οἶκοι δεδόμηντο, κἂν ὁ τότε κρατῶν (Ἰωάννης οὗτος ἦν ὁ δεδοξασμένος ὑπὲρ πολλοὺς βασιλέας ὑπὸ Θεοῦ), τὴν ἀνακτορικὴν σκήνωσιν ἔχειν ἐν Νυμφαίῳ προείλετο. / During my twenty-sixth year I was living at Nicaea, where I had my general [=secondary] education; the grammar studies preceding it had been completed at Prousa. The spiritually wise Germanos was patriarch there. After the capture of the city of Constantine (also called the city of Byzas) by the Italians the patriarchal throne had been transferred to the metropolis of Bithynia [=Nicaea] as an immigrant and adjacent institution, and a residence had been built there for the Emperors; admittedly the Emperor at the time (it was John, the one that God glorified above many other Emperors) preferred to hold court at Nymphaion.[146]

Focusing on the information given for Nymphaion, the phrasing of Blemmydes was cautious: he made the distinction that the patriarchate was transferred to Nicaea and here also next to it a residence had been set up for the emperor, for which he used the term *oikos*. That the imperial throne had been transferred to Nicaea as well was not explicitly stated. It is interesting to note that apparently two different concepts were applied: the patriarchate faced a clear relocation. From its initial home at Constantinople it was now during exile reestablished at Nicaea. And exactly this relocation did not happen to the imperial abode. Blemmydes even added that the determining factor for

---

fourteenth Centuries (1204 – ca. 1310) (Nicosia: Zavallis Press, 1982), 8. Blemmydes, *Partial Account*, tr. Munitiz, 46 n14, had suggested that it was probably rather during the reign of John III Vatatzes in which Blemmydes entered the court, which contradicts Constantinides. This is even more probable since Munitiz still took the year 1222 as the death of Theodore I and the succession of John III, but this in the meantime has been revised by Macrides and predated to 1221: For the date of the death of Theodore I see *Akropolites*, tr. Macrides, 158 n.5 with the relevant literature. The consequence of this would be that Blemmydes had only second hand knowledge about Theodore I.

[145] *Akropolites*, tr. Macrides, 87-88.

[146] Blemmydae, *Opera*, ed. Munitiz, I.12; Blemmydes, *Partial Account*, tr. Munitiz, 48-49.

the location of the imperial residence was the preference of the reigning emperor at the time. Now, several factors need to be taken into account: for one, Blemmydes started to attend the court just at the transition of Theodore I to John III. Even though he attended the court then, he withdrew from it again relatively quickly and visited it only sporadically during later years of his life. So his general statement might be based on his impression from the first years of John III Vatatzes alone. Nevertheless it is significant that apparently Blemmydes thought of the imperial court as being "in transition" - flexible in space - in opposition to the patriarchate.

Blemmydes had settled at Nicaea in his 26th year, where he became member of the patriarchal clergy in a very short time. From here a long tale began which centered on the love the patriarch showed for Blemmydes, his favorable behavior towards him and the envy that resulted from it among Blemmydes' fellow clergy members. He thus faced a conspiracy: two of his colleagues tried to disgrace him in the eyes of the patriarch. Their first attempt failed, but they stirred up others against Blemmydes. So his enemies tracked down previous locations of Blemmydes' earlier life, trying to find anything in his history they could use to bring shame on him:

> Εὑρίσκουσιν οὖν τὴν Σμυρναίων, διατριβῆς ἡμῖν τόπον πολυετοῦς· ἐν αὐτῇ γὰρ πρώτως ἐκ τῆς Βιθυνῶν ἐληλύθειμεν, ἑπτακαιδέκατον ἔτος ἄγοντες, καὶ τῇ μητροπόλει καὶ τῷ ἱερῷ πολὺ προσηδρεύσαμεν. Ὁ τῆς Κρήτης ποιμὴν Νικόλαος ἐπιδόσεως λόγῳ ταύτην τωτότε διΐθυνε, καὶ οἱ τοῦ κλήρου, γινώσκοντες ἦσαν ἡμᾶς ὡς οὐχ' ἕτεροι· κἀν τῷ Νυμφαίῳ γὰρ μεταβεβηκότες ἐθαμίζομεν ἐν Σμύρνῃ […] In this way they found the city of Smyrna, a place where I had spent many years; this was where I had first come from Bithynia, when I was seventeen years old, and I had frequented both the metropolis and the cathedral. Nicholas, who was pastor of Crete, ruled the diocese as official administrator at the time, and the clergy there knew me better than anyone else did, especially as I frequently visited Smyrna, when I transferred to live at Nymphaion […][147]

This passage was the cross-reference mentioned above for locating Blemmydes' studies of medicine to Smyrna. From this the location of the imperial court at Nymphaion in the beginning of John III Vatatzes' reign could be established. Blemmydes made the distinction of having lived first at Smyrna and then later at Nymphaion. It would suggest that these were two fairly equally important sites, not one a suburb of the other.

His adversaries failed in disgracing him, even though their attempts continued for some time. Some time later the patriarch asked Blemmydes to replace him in office

[147] Blemmydae, *Opera*, ed. Munitiz, I.19; Blemmydes, *Partial Account*, tr. Munitiz, 53-54.

as he planned to travel. Blemmydes performed well in this task, and at one point after that he was in charge of the community at Nymphaion:

> Οὕτω κἀν τῷ Νυμφαίῳ τὴν αὐτὴν ὑπηρεσίαν ἐκπληροῦντες πεπολιτεύμεθα· κἀκεῖ γὰρ ὑπὸ τοῦ πατριάρχου καὶ τῆς συνόδου τὰ τῆς ἱεραρχίας διεξάγειν, τοῦ ἱεραρχοῦντος οὐκ ὄντος / In the same way I went to live in Nymphaion performing the same duties; there also I was appointed by the Patriarch and the Synod to look after the affairs as there was no hierarch.[148]

His swift advance in the hierarchy of offices resulted in enemies and envy. Judging the latter as the deeds of the devil, Blemmydes considered the affection and good will of others as God's love for him. After his appointment as substitution at Nicaea, the patriarch and the synod appointed him to the imperial residence at Nymphaion. From the analysis of Blemmydes' account it seems that for him the site was identical with the imperial abode. He never described Nymphaion as a temporal residence, for him it was the location of the court. Thus, as he was appointed there, it would fit the image Blemmydes liked to paint of himself: again he was given a prestigious office, this time being the hierarch overseeing the imperial lodging. For contemporaries familiar with the Laskarid realm the meaning of this information must have made an impression. Furthermore he did not spare his readers the elaborate account of how he introduced discipline in his appointed community, especially among his subordinate priests. In the following section he stated that he did not stop until he had cleaned the imperial palace from all evil.[149]

Even though his performance was utmost efficient, after fulfilling his task Blemmydes asked to be liberated from it, since he decided to leave the clergy and to take up the monastic habit. The next reference was dated to his life as a monk, however, it followed much later in the second part of his autobiography:

> Καὶ οἱ μέν, ἐκ Νυμφαίου, πρὸς τὰ σφίσιν αὐτοῖς ἀποτεταγμένα σκηνώματα μεταβαίνουσιν / Thus they [my parents] departed from Nymphaion to the *tabernacles* that had been appointed for them.[150]

Preceding this reference to the death of his parents Blemmydes elaborated quite in detail how he rejected to see them prior to their deaths, as he already had taken the monastic habit and thus refused to remain connected to earthly entities. They probably died some time after 1234, when Blemmydes lived as a monk near Ephesos. It has been

[148] Blemmydae, *Opera*, ed. Munitiz, I.31; Blemmydes, *Partial Account*, tr. Munitiz, 61.
[149] Blemmydae, *Opera*, ed. Munitiz, I.35.
[150] Blemmydae, *Opera*, ed. Munitiz, II.44; Blemmydes, *Partial Account*, tr. Munitiz, 116.

suggested that his father had attended the court as a physician, which is why he had been able to introduce Blemmydes to the emperor roughly thirteen years earlier.[151] The fact that Blemmydes placed the passing of his parents at Nymphaion indicates that his father had been a physician at court until his death.

The last reference of Blemmydes on Nymphaion requires some explanation. Franciscan friars, who had been set free from Seljuk captivity, reached Nicaea around 1232, where they received hospitality by the patriarch Germanos II. Spontaneous conversations between the friars and members of the patriarchate resulted in an official gathering in January of 1234 at Nicaea with two Franciscan friars from France and two Dominicans as papal envoys to discuss a possible unity of the churches taking into account various issues of doctrine.[152] Later one following the unsuccessful end of this debate, the Franciscan friars wrote a report of this event, which has survived until modern times.[153] According to this report, this first meeting at Nicaea was interrupted after a heated dispute and continued a few months later not at Nicaea, but at Nymphaion by invitation of Emperor John III Vatatzes. Also this second meeting ended in disagreement, hence the return to the pope and the report.

Blemmydes had been present at this meeting. In the second version of his autobiography he devoted much space and words to recall his answer to the question of the relation between the Holy Spirit and Christ.[154] But apparently he was only present at the first session in Nicaea. He then continued his autobiography with his retreat from Nicaea to the area of Ephesos, where he took the monastic habit.[155]

For several years the plan to reunite the Western and the Eastern Church was not brought up again by any side, until John III Vatatzes reconsidered negotiations with the papacy some time in the late 1240s. Once more a council was summoned, again at

[151] Blemmydes, *Partial Account*, tr. Munitiz, 46 n14.

[152] See for a short summary of this discussion John Moorman, *A History of the Franciscan Order from its Origins to the year 1517* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968) 298. See for the same event with special emphasis on the positive image of the friars in the eyes of the Orthodox Church Michael Angold, *Church and Society in Byzantium under the Comneni, 1081-1261* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 522-527. More recent and elaborate Henry Chadwick, *East and West – The Making of a Rift in the Church. From Apostolic Times until the Council of Florence* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 238-43, who devoted an entire chapter on the discussion that took place at Nicaea and Nymphaion. These meetings will be fully exploited in the later part of this study.

[153] H. Golubovich, "Disputatio Latinorum et Graecorum seu Relatio Apocrisariorum Gregorii IX de gestis Nicaeae in Bithynia et Nymphaeae in Lydia 1234" *Archivum Franciscanum Historicum* 12 (1919), 418-470.

[154] Blemmydae, *Opera*, ed. Munitiz, II.26-40.

[155] Blemmydae, *Opera*, ed. Munitiz, II.41.

Nymphaion. Again Franciscan friars took the lead on behalf of the Latin side. On this council Blemmydes wrote:

> Καὶ δὴ τοῦ βασιλεύοντος καὶ τοῦ πατριαρχοῦντος (οὐκ ἦν ὁ τὰ θεῖα σοφὸς Γερμανός, οὔτε μὴν ὁ πρώτως καὶ ἀμέσως ἐκεῖνον διαδεξάμενος—ἐπ' ὀλίγιστον γὰρ ἐν τῇ προεδρίᾳ καὶ ταῦτα γηραιὸς οὐκ ὢν διαβεβίωκεν ὁ Μεθόδιος—ἀλλ' ὁ μετ' αὐτόν), τούτων καὶ τῆς ἱεραρχικῆς πληθύος ἀγηγερμένων κατὰ τὸ Νύμφαιον, ὁ μετὰ τῶν ἐκ Ῥώμης διάλογος γίνεται, μενόντων ἡμῶν, ὡς μὴ λέγειν ἐπιτετραμμένων […] / The Emperor and the Patriarch – it was not the spiritually wise Germanos, nor the person who first and immediately succeeded him, Methodios (although he was not an old man, he had survived in office for only a very short time), but the Patriarch who came after Methodios – and a large group of bishops had gathered at Nymphaion; the discussion with the Roman representatives began, but I was silent as I had not been given permission to speak […][156]

The prohibition of participating in the discussion was imposed on Blemmydes by the emperor himself, and Blemmydes had given the explanation of this in the first version of his account: the Marchesina incident. Marchesina was the name of a lady who accompanied the second wife of John III Vatatzes to the Byzantine court and kept her company. She soon became the favorite mistress of John III.[157] The incident had taken place when the mistress had entered the Holy Service at Blemmydes' monastery prior to the council: he forced her out at once. This bold measure resulted in a moral conflict with the emperor, which Blemmydes seems to have won on the long run. However, it had occurred only shortly before the summit at Nymphaion, the dispute had not yet been fully settled and thus, Blemmydes was not allowed to raise his voice.[158]

Summary

From the twin autobiographies of Blemmydes it could be established that Nymphaion had already been set up as an imperial residence by 1221, the time of the accession of John III Vatatzes. However, he seems not to have regarded Nymphaion as a seasonal residence, at least he did at no point limit the presence of the emperor there to a temporary or seasonal one, despite the fact that he mentioned the existence of another imperial residence at Nicaea. On the other hand, compared to Akropolites he

[156] Blemmydae, *Opera*, ed. Munitiz, II.50; Blemmydes, *Partial Account*, tr. Munitiz, 119-120.

[157] *Acropolitae*, ed. Heisenberg, §52, described the passion John III Vatatzes held for her when elaborating on the emperor's character upon his death.

[158] See Joseph Munitiz, "A 'wicked woman' in the 13th century," in *JÖB* 32 (1982), 529-37. A short summary is given by Michael Angold, *Church and Society*, 557-558.

did not belong to the entourage of the emperor. Apart from the period when he was appointed as hierarch in Nymphaion, he was not regularly attending the court.

6. Nicaea

Nicaea (recent İznik) is the city that comes to mind most readily in connection with the Laskarid period. This city gave its name to the so-called "empire of Nicaea"; many scholars consider it the capital of the Laskarid realm. Whether Nicaea indeed took the lead as capital during the Laskarid period will be examined in the following.

Comparing Nicaea with Nymphaion, the most apparent difference between the two was that Nicaea could be traced down in Byzantine history as the stage for quite a few important events since Late Antiquity. During Byzantine times it belonged to the prosperous cities of Asia Minor due to its rich agricultural hinterlands and its position along the route from Constantinople to Amorion. Regarding the archaeological remains, the site houses monuments that date back to Antiquity. Whereas the sources for all other focal points within the Laskarid realm are few at best, for Nicaea the situation is the contrary: the historic past of Nicaea has come down to us in plentiful and complex detail. The challenge for this study will be to highlight mainly the Laskarid phase of the history and remains of Nicaea and to tackle the abundant material for all the other parts of its legacy only inasmuch as it is necessary.

Historical overview

There is no need to retell the history of the city, as this has been already done on larger scale elsewhere.[159] This summary confines itself to highlighting those aspects necessary for a deeper understanding of the site when dealing with the Laskarid period.

The foundation of Nicaea dates back to Hellenistic times, but to the present day the layout of the city plan reflects the typical Roman grid of vertical and horizontal streets running parallel. According to the description of Strabo from the first century of the Common Era, the shape of the town was rectangular with the two main roads, the

[159] Anthony Bryer, "Nicaea, A Byzantine City," *History Today* 21, 1 (1971), 22-31, gives a comprising overview on the history of Nicaea from its foundation until Ottoman times. The larger publication Foss, *Nicaea*, is a useful monograph on the city and comprises two encomia in Greek and English. More recent and the most detailed is the joint publication *İznik throughout History*, ed. Işıl Akbaygil, Halil İnalcık, Oktay Aslanapa (Istanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 2003), which covers the history of Nicaea from its foundation until modern times.

decumanus and the cardo, crossing in right angle at the center.[160] From this position an observer could spot the four gates that were inserted into the city walls. Those city walls of Strabo's time no longer exist – the ones standing still now date back to Late Antiquity and do not strictly follow a rectangular pattern. Apparently the city grew during Late Antiquity and further living quarters were then included into the new city walls.

Nowadays the center of Nicaea is dominated by the remains of the Hagia Sophia, which recently underwent substantial reconstruction. From here all the four main gates are still visible.

Nicaea hosted the first ecumenical council in 325 and hence gave its name to the Nicene Creed.[161] Likewise the Seventh ecumenical council took place here in 787, which marked a caesura in the middle of the Iconoclast period.[162] Thus, these two councils determined the significance of Nicaea for the history of the Orthodox Church.

As Clive Foss has pointed out, two major factors determined the replanning and the repairs of the city walls since antiquity: the invasion of the Goths and several earthquakes.[163] According to the account of Zosimos, the Goths looted and burnt Nicaea in the late third century.[164] Generally cities near to and on the way to Constantinople were likely in danger of conquest and plunder through enemies, simply because they proved to be the easier target. The invasion of the Goths triggered the set up of a better defense system, so at that time the latest the Hellenistic walls were given up and new ones were erected.

Several earthquakes struck Nicaea throughout its history. The damage they caused is to large extend unknown, it is suggested however that the walls survived them more or less intact due to the many traces of smaller repairs. A complete reconstruction never took place.

---

[160] *The Geography of Strabo*, tr. Horace Leonard Jones, 8 vols., The Loeb Classical Library, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1988), vol. 5, book 12, 4.7.

[161] On the council and the reasons why Nicaea was the chosen venue see Timothy D. Barnes, *Constantine and Eusebius* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1981), 214-219.

[162] See for a recent brief overview Michael Angold, "Church and society: Iconoclasm and after," in *A social History of Byzantium*, ed. John Haldon (Maldon: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009), 233-256; see for a detailed study Leslie Brubaker and John Haldon, *Byzantium in the Iconoclast era (ca 680-850): a history* (Cambridge: University Press, 2011).

[163] Foss, *Nicaea*, 5.

[164] *Zosime Histoire Nouvelle*, ed. and tr. François Paschoud (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 2000), I.35.

Previous research

Nicaea was one of the few cities in Asia Minor that expanded very little in Ottoman and recent Turkish times and thus preserved the legacy of its ancient and medieval design. Because of its heritage several substantial studies focused on the Byzantine remains and the history of Nicaea. First and foremost there is the pioneering work of Alfons Maria Schneider, who studied the remains of the city under the direction of the German Archaeological Institute in the early decades of the twentieth century. His findings on the city walls were published in 1938 and served as the backbone for all subsequent studies. A further publication deriving from this survey focused on the Roman and Byzantine monuments and appeared in 1943.[165] A groundbreaking work of a different kind, namely an introduction to fortifications of the Byzantine period, was jointly published by Clive Foss and David Winfield in 1986, in which the walls of Nicaea figured prominently in the second part. Ten years later Foss issued a monograph on Nicaea alone, comprising Byzantine remains and two encomia in Greek and English translation on the city, in which the finds of the investigation regarding the walls were summarized.[166] In 2003 a joint publication on the history of İznik comprising all historical periods and various source materials was the latest extensive issue on the subject.[167]

7. Setting

Nicaea was situated on the eastern shore of Lake Askanios (recent İznik gölü) approximately a hundred kilometers southeast of Constantinople as the crow flies. In Byzantine times Nicaea was the metropolis of Bithynia. A land route starting from Nicomedia crossed through Nicaea and continued further to Prousa. Towards the east and the south of the city hills rise and extend to the Anatolian plateau, which is less than a hundred kilometer distant. Within the immediate surroundings of the town fertile lands allow abundant vegetation growth and were also in Byzantine times famously rich in agriculture.

---

[165] Alfons M. Schneider, *Die Stadtmauer von İznik (Nicaea),* Istanbuler Forschungen 9 (Berlin: Archäologisches Institut des Deutschen Reiches, 1938); and: *Die Römischen und Byzantinischen Denkmäler von İznik-Nicaea,* Istanbuler Forschungen 16 (Berlin: Archäologisches Institut des Deutschen Reiches, 1943).

[166] Foss and Winfield, *Byzantine Fortifications*; Foss, *Nicaea*.

[167] *İznik throughout History*, ed. Işıl Akbaygil, Halil İnalcık, Oktay Aslanapa (Istanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 2003).

8. Laskarid remains at Nicaea

In the following, a survey will be provided for those archaeological remains at Nicaea that have been connected to or dated to the Laskarid period. The survey will take into account the city walls of Nicaea, the Hagia Sophia and four other unidentified churches. Many more churches have been in use during that time, some played a significant role, such as for instance the Hyakinthos monastery. However, for this subchapter only those buildings that have been included that considered as Laskarid foundations or reconstructions, that is, as physical witness to Laskarid architecture. Likewise excluded were those buildings, which have been referred to in texts produced during the Laskarid period, but have left no trace in the city.

The general problem that occurs when dealing with archaeological remains at Nicaea is that even though some buildings are known to have existed in the city based on their references in various texts, too little is known about their actual appearance in order to identify them with any existing ruin. Little is known about the conditions in Nicaea in the centuries preceding the exile. After 1204, however, an abundance of texts has come down to draw attention to a flourishing period of Byzantine rule in western Asia Minor. It is therefore tempting, but not necessarily compulsory to consider all remains that appear to be of middle or late Byzantine style, to be exclusively of Laskarid origin.

The City walls

The joint publication of Winfield and Foss was the combination of two distinct parts, written each by one author. Part one was composed by David Winfield and contains an overview of the development of Byzantine fortifications and their features, in particular the masonry and style. Part two, divided in two chapters, executed by Clive Foss present in the first chapter two case studies of the best preserved Byzantine defensive walls – the ones of Constantinople and the ones of Nicaea – and then summarized in the second chapter its findings in an overall synthesis on masonry, building techniques and dating.

The walls surround the center on all four sides in a length of around 5km. From bird's eye perspective the shape of the walls look the following clockwise: in the north they form a triangle peaking right at the Istanbul gate. From there towards the east the walls run in diagonal direction until they peak again at the Lefke gate. From here they turn south-south-west until they reach the same distance from the center as their counter

side to the north. Forming an almost right angle they turn west and run straight until the Yenişehir gate. From now on towards the lake the course of the wall is at its most irregular, only to some extent caused by the lake shore. The fourth gate – the Lake gate – faces the shore and cuts the western wall in equal measure (Fig. Nic. 1). All these gates described above are inserted into the walls to the north, east, south and west (Fig. Nic. 2). One further, smaller gate opens towards the southwest near the shore.

In their first design the walls were roughly 3,5m high. They were repaired several times, as inscriptions indicated. In their last layout the city wall consisted of a double wall system enclosing a ditch. A second lower wall equipped with towers was set in front of the Late Antique construction except on the western side facing the lake shore due to lack of space. According to Foss, this second outer wall "is built in such a consistent style that there has never been any doubt that it was a construction of one period."[168]

Foss attempted a chronology of the distinct phases after a careful analysis of the masonry, the materials used and the style. He divided the chronology into an absolute one, based on inscriptions, and an analogical one, based on the comparison with masonry and material. As he stated that the outer wall was erected in one single phase, he focused in his survey on the inner wall. Each brickwork pattern and mortar type received a code letter. He then listed carefully all towers and curtain walls and named each detectable code letter of brickwork and mortar in his description. As he could assign some of the brickwork patterns and mortar mixtures to the reign of a certain emperor, with the methods of comparison and stratigraphic evidence he was able to infer more chronological sequences of the wall.

Inscriptions

The walls have a history of initial construction and subsequent repairs for over a thousand years, and although different masonry styles indicate various phases of repair, they are not easy to date. Inscriptions, inasmuch as they were available, were thus vital in distinguishing and dating different phases from another. From the exile period two inscriptions came down to us in fortunate circumstances. In 1976 Julian Raby published the travel account to Nicaea of Reverend Doctor John Covel, who was chaplain to the

[168] Foss and Winfield, *Byzantine Fortifications*, 97.

British ambassador to the High Porte from 1669-1677.[169] Previously this report had not been accessible to the wider scholarly community. Raby's careful editing of the manuscript preserved its original voice, a collection of observations and descriptions. Covel studied the ruined city walls, thereby copying and deciphering inscriptions as he came across them. Two of them name Theodore I Laskaris. as the commissioner of a reconstruction phase. They were still seen by later travelers, but got lost some time between the nineteenth century and Schneider's survey during the 1920s. Covel added that "all that side which was so patch't was repaired by Theodorus Lascares when he lost Constantinople and came hither."[170] The same inscription had still been seen by John Macdonal Kinneir, another British traveler on his visit to the place in 1813-14: "We walked along the foot of the wall to the north gate, by which we had entered the city in the morning; and not far from hence I saw the name of Theodore Lascaris in Greek characters on the top of a tower, the letters being formed of different colored bricks inserted in the wall."[171]

Textual testimony for the wall

If it was considered fortunate that Laskarid inscriptions survived that could establish a dating of certain repairs on the walls, an even more exceptional case is a contemporary textual reference to a specific construction phase of the walls. It is included in the encomion of the city of Nicaea composed by Theodore II Laskaris during the reign of his father John III. The text will be discussed within the textual analysis below, but as the encomion helps to identify a particular phase of construction to be of Laskarid origin, it will be evaluated here. The particular paragraph says:

> τῇ γὰρ παντουργικῇ χειρὶ τοῦ θεοῦ τὰ πρωτεῖα, ὡς οἶδε μόνος αὐτός, αὖτη λαβοῦσα, καὶ ταῖς ἀριστουργίαις τοῦ ὑψηλοῦ βασιλέως τήν γε ὡς εἰκὸς ἐπίτασιν τῶν ὧν εἶχε δεξαμένη περιτειχισμάτων καὶ πυργωμάτων, διπλασιάζει τὸ ἀσφαλές, περιτειχιζομένη τοῖς προπυργώμασι καὶ ἐπενδυομένη τοῖς θριγγίοις θριγγώματα, τῇ τε ὡραιότητι καλλωπιζομένη καὶ στηριζομένη τῇ ἐδραιότητι. αὖθίς τε τὴν τῆς ἰσχύος μονάδα παρὰ τοῦ βασιλέως δυάδι συνενωθεῖσαν τῷ γύρωθεν αὐτῆς περιβοήτῳ ἐνδύματι, ὑπερβαίνει κατὰ πολὺ τὰς πάλαι θρυλλουμένας πόλεις τῆς γῆς. / For [having] gained the supreme rank from the almighty hand of God, as He himself only

[169] Julian Raby, "A Seventeenth Century Description of İznik-Nicaea," *Istanbuler Mitteilungen* 26 (1976), 149-188. His drawings and an excerpt of his account were published already slightly earlier by Bryer, "Nicaea, A Byzantine City."

[170] Raby, "İznik-Nicaea," 152.

[171] John Macdonald Kinneir, *Journey through Asia Minor, Armenia, and Koordistan in the years 1813 and 1814 with remarks on the Marches of Alexander and retreat of the Ten Thousand* (London: J. Murray, 1818), 28.

> knows; and ha[ving] received this strengthening, certainly, of the walls and towers which it had before through the great deeds of the sublime Emperor, [he] doubles its [Nicaea's] security, walled in with projecting towers and dressing its walls with battlements, adorned with beauty, and firmly fixed with stability. And so again, by having united its single strength to that duality of strength from the emperor, that celebrated vestment around it, exceeds by far the cities famous of old in the world.[172]

The text confirms that the emperor doubled the strength of the wall. It refers to the lower outer wall that had been added in one single construction phase, as the masonry indicates (Fig. Nic. 3 and 4).[173] This very same masonry style has also been adopted in the elevation of the inner wall that was already standing. This was necessary because the outer wall had been raised to the level of the existing one, so to increase the effect of the defense system, the inner wall needed to be higher than the outer one.

Now, the emperor that is addressed here has been identified as John III Vatatzes. For one, he apparently was present at the delivery of this speech. Secondly, as the same construction technique was applied to both walls, his elevation succeeds the repairs commissioned by Theodore I Laskaris stratigraphically. Thus, they must be dated later, but still before this speech was composed. Hence, we are able to identify the repairs of Theodore I Laskaris and the extension and duplication of the walls by John III Vatatzes.

Thus, here follows a brief summary of those parts that Foss dated to the Laskarid period. The absolute chronology based on inscriptions secured the large square towers no. 19 and 106 to the reign of Theodore I Laskaris. The entire lower outer wall could be assigned to his successor John III Vatatzes based on the encomion delivered by his son Theodore II Laskaris.[174] By analogy Foss assumed more parts of the walls to be part of the period in exile. As a consequence of the addition of the proteichisma the main wall had to be raised, which belonged to the same phase of construction of John III Vatatzes. The brickwork that is detectable at towers no. 19 and 106 resembled those signs of repair at towers no. 7, 9, 16, 19, 48, 68 and 93.[175] Foss thus pointed out that the rebuilding, which was carried out under Theodore I Laskaris appeared now more substantial than had been previously acknowledged. Repairs of towers no. 20 and 23 he attributed to the reign of Vatatzes based on the "soft" brickwork, likewise the walls

[172] *Theodorus II Dukas Lascaris Opuscula rhetorica*, ed. Tartaglia (Munich: Saur 2000) §5, 76-77; Foss, *Nicaea*, 145, changes in brackets by the author.

[173] Foss and Winfield, *Byzantine Fortifications*, 97. Foss names three characteristica for the style: the alternating brick, the mortar and the beam holes.

[174] Foss and Winfield, *Byzantine Fortifications*, 97, 102-03.

[175] Foss and Winfield, *Byzantine Fortifications*, 104.

between towers no. 110, 111 and 112. In the case of the latter, an analogy could be established to the outer wall. However, he also stated that the mortar employed varied, thus, was of no help in the dating.[176]

Ecclesiastical buildings

To state this from the beginning, no church that by the aid of textual references can be identified as a foundation of the Laskarid dynasty has survived, either in Nicaea or elsewhere. This had already been acknowledged by Hans Buchwald in his survey on Laskarid architecture from 1979.[177] However, as the city is not lacking undated and unidentified ecclesiastical monuments, attempts have been made to attribute them to the prosperous period of the Laskarid dynasty, when Nicaea was the city of the patriarchate and thus played a major role within the realm. Equally, repairs or reconstructions of already existing buildings have been attributed to the exile period, and ruins of once standing monuments have been suggested to be of Laskarid origin, but the evidence is thin.

The main problem with such attempted identifications is that of proposition and proof. As it had more or less been agreed that Nicaea served as the capital during the exile period, expectations were raised that contemporary buildings underlining the prosperity and the upgrading of the site ought to be found. If it was the imperial residence for almost 60 years, so the presence of the emperors would necessarily have left traces manifest in the architecture of the town. The challenge of evaluating both literature on and archaeology of Nicaea in the thirteenth century lies however in applying unbiased approach: What significance Nicaea had for the Laskarid realm should be answered at the end of any study, not at the beginning. More often than not, the case was the other way round.

Few churches can still be found in Nicaea. The Hagia Sophia in the center has already been mentioned. Famous is the church of the Dormition or Koimesis church (Hyakinthos monastery) due to its deliberate destruction in 1922. Remains of four buildings that protrude from the ground for a meter or less have been identified as church structures, named churches A to D, their identifications still open to debate; one

[176] Ibid.

[177] Buchwald, "Lascarid architecture," 262-263. To be more precise, the third church Buchwald mentioned he did not consider a foundation, but only a reconstruction – it was the church of St. Tryphon, rebuilt by Theodore II Laskaris.

of these has been suggested to be the remains of St. Tryphon, the church rebuilt by Theodore II Laskaris.

This is not the venture to study in detail the architectural design of remaining churches (or ground plans of their remnants) at Nicaea and elsewhere and establish a sequence based on art historical comparison. Rather, the interest here will be to investigate, on what basis certain and to whatextent edifices in Nicaea have been ascribed to the Laskarid period.

Hagia Sophia

The church of the Holy Wisdom occupies the most prominent site within the town right at the central crossing of the two main roads (Fig. Nic. 5).[178] Its foundation dates back to the fifth or sixth century when a Christian community was growing in Nicaea, but studies of the building revealed several phases of construction. The assessment of the literature proved challenging, because studies stretch over the entire twentieth century, in which the condition of the building changed, from partially collapsed and filled with debris, over excavated, to a fundamental re-erection in 2007-2009.[179] Hence, the remains that scholars were able to analyze varied greatly. By the latest rebuilding of the edifice many traces that have been visible to the eye earlier were covered or altered, therefore studies that predate this recent reconstruction are of significance.

The reason to discuss the Hagia Sophia within the context of Laskarid history lies in a new proposal for the dating of one specific floor mosaic found during excavations in the 1950s. Recently Christina Pinatsi has argued, following a careful analysis of the *fleur-de-lys* motive in the marble floor, that the Laskarid period may be

[178] Schneider and Foss both pointed out that the identification of the church in the center of Nicaea is far from secure. Until now no definite proof has been mobilized that identifies the edifice in the center of Iznik with the Hagia Sophia of Nicaea. Schneider mentioned that previous travelers did not name the basilica Hagia Sophia: Schneider, *Denkmäler Iznik*, 10; thus, the name is sufficient for the identification. Foss added correctly that it is not uncommon to name the main mosque of a town Aya Sofya when the building is in fact a converted church: Foss, *Nicaea*, 102. Regarding this the Turkish population just immitated the Greek one, following the model of Constantinople.

[179] Schneider, *Denkmäler İznik,* 10-17*;* Foss, *Nicaea*, 101-04; Angold, "The city Nicaea ca.1000 – ca. 1400," in *İznik throughout History*, ed. Işıl Akbaygil, Halil İnalcık, Oktay Aslanapa (Istanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 2003), 27-55; Peschlow, "Churches of Nicaea/İznik," in *İznik throughout History*, ed. Işıl Akbaygil, Halil İnalcık, Oktay Aslanapa (Istanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 2003), 201-218, here 202-03.

taken into account for one of the latest refurbishments of the building during Byzantine times.[180]

Commonly it was agreed that after the initial erection of the edifice several centuries later a substantial refurbishment took place, in which the building received among other features a new floor one meter higher than the previous one, commonly dated to the eleventh century.[181] Pinatsi did not reject the proposed dating for the last Byzantine construction phase altogether, but proposed a retouch of the floor; with her analysis she implicitly backed up Angold's proposal for the Hagia Sophia as the coronation site during the exile period.[182]

The church was erected as a three-aisled basilica oriented towards the east with a narthex on the western side. The main nave ended in the east in an apse, which was semicircular from inside and three-sided from outside; nave and aisles were separated from each other by colonnades.[183] The edifice had been built from carved marble ashlars up to 2m high, the upper level of the walls, in all likelihood including a clearstory, was made from brick. During Byzantine times a refurbishment took place: Here the colonnades were exchanged with pillars, the floor level was raised by roughly 1.5m and furbished with a new marble floor, and additionally the aisles received domed chambers. This modification Schneider dated to the eleventh century, partly based on the masonry technique, partly based on historical circumstances – a big earthquake hit

[180] Christina Pinatsi, "New observations on the pavement of the church of Haghia Sophia in Nicaea," *BZ* 99 (2006), 119-126. Her proposed dating is not only important because it is dated into the Laskarid period, but also, because this marble slab was usually considered a safely dated mosaic of the eleventh century due to the level in which it was found. Thus, its technique had been a reference for other mosaics that were lacking a dateable context and could only be placed in a time frame based on comparison. Consequently, when questioning the dating of this floor mosaic, other studies would be affected as well.

[181] Schneider, *Denkmäler İznik,* 13. During the excavations Schneider followed the still standing walls and cut samples along them into the ground. His findings he described in the text.

[182] The Hagia Sophia was one of the churches known from Byzantine Nicaea. Another church famous especially during the exile period was the monastery of the Hyakinthos. This very church had been suggested to be the one of the patriarch during the exile by Foss. Angold examined the references regarding the churches and opted for the Hagia Sophia as the church of the patriarch. It is interesting to note that he pondered the idea that the church of the patriarchate might not necessarily be the one of the coronation ceremony. So far he has been the only one to consider this option. Angold, "The city Nicaea ca.1000 – ca. 1400," in *İznik throughout History*, 27-55, here 36.

[183] Schneider prepared the primary outline of the architectural history of the building based on partial excavation, on which subsequent scholars oriented they own observations. When Schneider studied the site, the church was filled with debris. Additionally the street level had risen by at least 3m. Through cuts into the debris along the walls he was able to correct suggestions regarding the church made by N. Brounoff, "L'église de Sainte Sophie de Nicée," *Échos d'Orient* 24 (1925), 471-481, which is thus considered outdated.

Nicaea in the year 1065 and caused a lot of destruction. Presumably the Hagia Sophia had to be repaired as well, as the raised floor indicates.[184]

After the Ottoman occupation in 1331 during the fourteenth century the church was transformed into a mosque and the interior was again rearranged: the separation between the aisles and the main nave was changed and the floor level was once again raised.[185] According to Eyice it was the famous architect Sinan himself who planned the rebuilding of the edifice in the sixteenth century. A fire had destroyed the building, as remains of melted lead below the floor of the Ottoman period indicated.[186]

The piece of *opus sectile* floor that Pinatsi focused on had been discovered during excavations in the 1950s and was subsequently published by Eyice in 1963 (Fig. Nic. 6).[187] The mosaic consists of a square shaped slab, framed by a double band of white marble filled with *opus sectile* pattern. The main emphasis on the overall decor rests in the middle of the slab. The center of this square is dominated by a round marble plate, around which eight smaller plates are evenly arranged. All plates are girded by a band of white marble that prolongs in loops until the square frame. The corners of the square are filled with yet again four plates surrounded by the same marble band. Empty spaces between all the plates were once filled with *opus sectile* patterns, which are now lost. Eight *fleur-de-lys* prominently fill the spaces between the smaller disks pointing towards the main disk in the center. This particular floor piece was in fact an *omphalion*, a sacred space within the church indicated through a marble slab, where usually coronations were performed on.[188] It was found at the western end of the main nave near the central door to the narthex.

Eyice relied on the chronology established by Schneider. He considered the *omphalion* to be part of the eleventh century reconstruction phase, to which also belonged the somewhat simpler opus sectile floor in the bema, since both pieces were

[184] In the introduction of his book on the monuments of Nicaea Schneider gave an outline of the history of the town, in which he mentioned the earthquake of 1065, referring to the account of Michael Attaliotes: Schneider, *Denkmäler İznik*, 3.

[185] Schneider, *Denkmäler İznik*, 12-13. He stated that the lead had been part of the roof paneling, which melted during the fire and dropped into the church.

[186] Semavi Eyice, "Mosaic Pavements from Bithynia," *DOP* 17 (1963), 373-383, here 373.

[187] Eyice, "Mosaic pavements". Another floor mosaic had been found in the bema and the apse, which *in situ* belonged to the same level as the marble slab discussed in detail here. Eyice recognized that the marble slab is "far superior to the commonplace floor decoration previously uncovered in the bema and apse of the same building," 374. Nevertheless he did not consider it likely to be an *omphalion* or any other spot of importance within the church.

[188] The most famous omphalion still *in situ* is located in the Hagia Sophia Museum, Istanbul.

found on that very same level (Fig. Nic. 7). This dating Pinatsi challenged - however, explicitly only for this particular marble slab, which could have been incorporated into the floor of the church at later stage. That is to say, she distinguished between the *omphalion* and the architecture of the Hagia Sophia otherwise. Instead she opted for a dating into the Laskarid period as the time, in which this floor mosaic might have been commissioned. She listed four arguments, three of them referring to the technique applied to the elaboration of the slab, a technique for which she listed other thirteenth century examples. The fourth argument concerned the appearance of the *fleur-de-lys* motive. Regarding that she stated that

> the fleur-de-lys is clearly a pattern of western provenance. In the Frankish Kingdom, it represents the royal house as a symbol already in the first millennium, and in heraldry it is prominent in the coat of arms of the Frankish kings from the twelfth to the thirteenth centuries. In Byzantine art there are some precedents before the Frankish conquest, but this is rather coincidental, as they have the form of three-leaved anthemia rather than fully stylised gothic fleur-de-lys, which appear in the Nicaean pavement.[189]

Below in her analysis she gave reasons as to why a Frankish royal symbol could have entered the décor of a Laskarid church. This motive was not displayed on the coat-of-arms of the Latin emperors of Constantinople; Theodore I Laskaris married the sister of Robert of Courtenay and had made plans for further connections between the two houses; finally the fleur-de-lys appeared on coins of the Laskarid period starting from the reign of Theodore I Laskaris.[190]

Now, based on the function of the *omphalia* inside a church, her dating of it to the thirteenth century according to technique and motive, and the fact that Nicaea had been the coronation site during the exile period, Pinatsi arrived at the following hypothesis: the church of the Holy Wisdom could have served as the place where all emperors of the Laskarid period were crowned. This however had already been rejected by Foss, who discussed the question of the coronation church within a wider aspect, namely which of the churches could have served as the one of the patriarchate. His rejection was mainly based on the fact that the Hagia Sophia did not seem to have had galleries, which according to the study of Bryer and Winfield were considered

[189] Pinatsi, "Pavement," 121-22.
[190] Pinatsi, "Pavement," 124-25.

necessary for the very act of a coronation.[191] However, their postulations were based not on a contemporary text, but on the composition of the so-called writer Pseudo-Kodinos of the fourteenth century.

Pinatsi re-examined the source evidence for the necessity of galleries during the performance. One problem was the body of source material available – too little is known from the coronation ceremony during the exile period. Sources that could be taken into account are either later or much earlier; they only reveal that at some point between the tenth and the fourteenth century the use of galleries were incorporated into the coronation ceremony.[192] Pinatsi argued against Bryer and Winfield that the presence of galleries enabled their use, but they were by no means indispensable. Thus, Foss' rejection would be unnecessary. Consequently, she opted for the Hagia Sophia as the church of the patriarch, as Angold had suggested earlier.[193]

She however failed to discuss the odd position of the omphalion near the narthex, that is, the western end of the church. The coronation of an emperor surely would have taken place in front of the congregation near the apse. If the observation

---

[191] Anthony Bryer and David Winfield, *The Byzantine Monuments and Topography of the Pontos*, Dumbarton Oaks Studies 20 (Washington: Dumbarton Oaks Publications, 1985), 241-42. When Peschlow described the architecture of the Hagia Sophia, he seemed not to have been aware of Foss' discussion of the architecture and his rejection as the coronation site: not only did Peschlow furnish the church in his description with galleries above the aisles and the narthex, he also remained silent as to whether the Hagia Sophia was the church of the patriarchate and the coronation site or not. This is all the more interesting because the missing galleries had been discussed once again in the contribution of Angold in the very same publication: Urs Peschlow, "The churches of Nicaea/İznik," 203. Michael Angold, "The city Nicaea ca.1000 – ca. 1400," 36. Pinatsi seemed not to have noticed the mismatch of these two descriptions, as she referred to Peschlow as the authority for the latest publication on the Hagia Sophia.

[192] The sources in question are the *Book of Ceremoniis* produced for Constantine VII Porphyrogennetos and *De officiis* ascribed to Pseudo-Kodinos. Bryer and Winfield only used the latter. The fact that this text was at least 100 years younger and focused on the court at Constantinople, thus describing a different environment, was not discussed. For an analysis of the text to the ceremonies at the palace in fourteenth century Constantinople see Ruth Macrides, "Ceremonies and the city: the court in fourteenth-century Constantinople," in *Royal Courts in Dynastic States and Empires: A Global Perspective*, ed. Duindam, Jeroen, Tülay Artan and Metin Kunt, Rulers and Elites: Comparative Studies in Governance (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 217-235.

[193] Also Angold discussed the issue of galleries and rejected their necessities, but based on other arguments: in his opinion, the missing galleries in the Hagia Sophia were substituted with the ritual of raising the emperor on a shield during the coronation ceremony, which had been reintroduced exactly at that time; Angold, "The city Nicaea ca.1000 – ca. 1400," 36. The problems with his suggestion, however, were that for one, the ritual was not introduced in the thirteenth, but in the twelfth century, as Kazhdan had examined, and also, that Akropolites particularly described how Theodore II Laskaris was raised on a shield and acclaimed as emperor at Nymphaion and only crowned days or even weeks later – as he made a detour over Philadelphia – at Nicaea. The raising on the shield was thus not a ritual performed during the coronation ceremony. Alexander Kazhdan, "The aristocracy and the imperial ideal," in *The Byzantine Aristocracy IX to XIII centuries*, ed. Michael Angold, BAR International Series 221 (Oxford: B.A.R., 1984), 43-57, here 51. For the raising on the shield of Theodore II see *Acropolitae*, ed. Heisenberg, §53.

that the marble slab is *in situ* is correct and a moving of the marble slab can be excluded, her hypothesis raises further questions.

To sum up: the Hagia Sophia was so far not taken into account with regard to the building activities under the Laskarid emperors. After a careful analysis of a floor mosaic by Christina Pinatsi this church might in fact reveal itself to be the coronation site of the exile period. Consequently, Pinatsi made a proposal for a consideration of the Hagia Sophia as the church of patriarch.

Now, several aspects regarding the significance and the function of Nicaea within the Laskarid period are beyond doubt, above all that the town housed the patriarchate and was the site of all coronations that took place during the exile. The question of the patriarchal church and the coronation site had occupied the scholarship on Nicaea to certain extent, which may now take a new direction after Pinatsi's proposal. The choice of the Hagia Sophia as the church of the patriarch seemed plausible: it was probably the oldest ecclesiastical building in town, it occupied the central space of Nicaea, and its dedication to the Holy Wisdom was the same as the patriarchal church of Constantinople.

Church near Istanbul kapı (Church A)

Poor remains of a church structure were uncovered during the 1940s near the gate towards Istanbul (Fig. Nic. 8). Eyice published the report in 1949 and soon afterwards Papadopoulos suggested an identification of the structure with the church of St. Tryphon.[194] The existence of this church had been known through textual sources[195], and had - up to that point - not yet been associated with any archaeological remains in town. Buchwald examined the remains for his publication on Laskarid architecture in 1979 and stated that

> the remains are too fragmentary to permit a reliable attribution of the building to the 13th century, because the characteristics evident in the ruins indicate that the building could also have been constructed much earlier. The church of St. Tryphon can therefore not be associated with the exposed church remains with any degree of certainty.[196]

[194] J. Papadopoulos, " Ὁ ἐν Νικαίᾳ τῆς Βιθυνίας ναὸς τοῦ ἁγίου Τρύφωνος," *Eperteris tes Hetareias Byzantinon Spoudon* 22 (1969-72), 110-113.

[195] The reference is the historian known as Theodore Skoutariotes: *Scutariota*, ed. Heisenberg, Addidamenta no.35.

[196] Buchwald, "Lascarid Architecture," 263.

At the time of its excavation the remains of the church were about 1.5m in height. Ever since the condition of the building suffered immensely. This is partly due to a road that was first constructed and later even enlarged next to it, partly due to the fact that the site of the building had been transformed into a little park, equipped with benches, bushes and trees. In particular the roots of the latter damage the foundations of the walls. As of 2008, a newly built wall made from concrete blocks cut through the western end of the edifice.

According to the latest description, which used older published material, the building was erected with a cross-in-square outline, furnished with a dome carried by four columns and a narthex in the west.[197] The building measured roughly 22.5x12.5m and was erected from mortared rubble with bands of brick.

Foss was not questioning the identification of this church as St. Tryphon, rebuilt under Theodore II Laskaris; in his study on Nicaea he considered it a fact. He pointed out that the decoration of the walls from the outside included such elements as pilasters and blind arcades.[198] Based on these characteristics of the façade Foss deemed this church as typical for the buildings erected under Laskarid rule.

It is interesting to note how Foss further underlined his statement. He asserted that "in fact, the whole structure could represent the Laskarid rebuilding, for its masonry of rubble and brick bands as well as its decoration would correspond with the Laskarid style which is now well defined." The reference for this statement was the above quoted passage of Buchwald.[199] Thus, whereas Buchwald in his analysis rejected the identification of the remains with the church of St. Tryphon based on the fragmentary condition, Foss underlined his own diametrically opposite opinion with the results of Buchwald's very same study. It is probably fair to say that had the evidence of the church in 1979 allowed a dating into the Laskarid period, it would have been of benefit for Buchwald's endeavors to define Laskarid architecture. Consequently, as this church would have been one of three known from textual references, this example could have served as a definite reference for all other churches Buchwald discussed. In my opinion, Foss' proposal needs to be rejected on the basis of missing proof. If the style of the

[197] Peschlow combined his own observations with older publications of the site, his description and evaluation of the church is not only the latest, but also detailed and thorough: Urs Peschlow, "Churches of Nicaea/İznik," 208-210 and 215-216.

[198] Foss, *Nicaea,* 107.

[199] Buchwald, "Lascarid architecture," 263.

masonry is considered unsustainable as a proof for the dating, the traces of possible annexes are too thin to permit an identification with St. Tryphon.

The dating of this fragmented church was once more revised by Peschlow. He rejected the style of the walls as a helpful indicator of a safe placement into a specific period. However, he mentioned one particular material as a dateable clue – the bricks used:

> Unfortunately, the type of masonry work does not give any certain basis for the dating of the medieval buildings in Iznik, it occurs both in buildings of the 11th century and those of the 13th century. The only clue is the square, relatively small brick used here, 26cm in length, with bevelled edges. It only occurs in this form in dateable buildings in tower 19 of the city walls which was erected in the period of rule of the Lascarid dynasty.[200]

Nevertheless Peschlow arrived at the same conclusion as Buchwald, stating that the remains of church A cannot be identified with the church of St. Tryphon, lacking convincing evidence. He suggested taking into account the alternative identification of church C as the former St. Tryphon, which first had been proposed by Eyice and later ignored by Foss. This option will be discussed below. [201]

Church near Yenişehir kapi (Church C)

Another church that has partially been uncovered in the town during the second half of the twentieth century is situated near the southern Yenişehir gate. The remains are in poor condition, but are still standing higher than those of church A (Fig. Nic. 9). As they are higher, the remains had been visible throughout the periods and thus, the site has not been built over; however, a fence is cutting the edge of the apse, which affected the ruins of the church (Fig. Nic. 10). Nowadays the spot is surrounded by modern apartments and streets, the ruins are overgrown by bushes and grass.

The church has not received much attention within previous scholarship; as the excavation of it focused on Ottoman remains, the findings had not been properly documented. Eyice published a survey of the site in 1982; the most recent analysis has brought forward by Peschlow.[202] Fortunately Peschlow had visited the site in 1967, at a time shortly after excavations had freed the remains from overgrowth and had

[200] Peschlow, "Churches of Nicaea/İznik," 209.
[201] Peschlow, "Churches of Nicaea/İznik," 215.
[202] Semavi Eyice, "Die byzantinische Kirche in der Nähe des Yenişehir-Tores zu İznik," *Materialia Turcica* 7/8 (1981/82), 152-167; Peschlow, "Churches of Nicaea/İznik," 210-13.

uncovered parts of the walls.[203] He was able to observe the remains in better and more visible condition than in which they are nowadays. Thus, for his article in 2003 he could rely on his documentation material from four decades earlier.[204]

The clearest visible feature still standing are the corners of the walls that constituted the main inner bay of the church, which formed a square of 11m on each side.[205] Strong corner pillars attached to the walls indicate that this space was once covered by a domed structure (Fig. Nic. 11). To the east this doomed square adjoined a bema and an apse. According to Peschlow this inner space constituted the first construction phase of the building.[206] Later during the second phase a narthex to the west and side aisles to the north and south were added to the church, the aisles ended in the east in two smaller side apses flanking the main apse. Indication for the two phases of construction were the changes made to the bema: here during the first phase windows had been inserted into the wall on the north and south, the northern one was changed to a passage into the northern aisle, as Peschlow had observed.[207]

The material that was used for the walls consisted of brick, mortar, ashlars, rubble and spolia. The mortar Foss described as coarse and limy. As for the decoration of the wall, he named blind arcades and cloisonné technique. Once more Foss also dated this edifice to the thirteenth century, "it is confirmed by the distinctive masonry and mortar."[208] By "distinctive masonry" he probably meant the decoration of the wall, as it was the same as observed at church A.[209] Peschlow analyzed the architecture of church C and drew parallels to other buildings in Nicaea, in particular the Church of the Hyakinthos, the rebuilding of the Hagia Sophia dated to the eleventh century, and also church A.[210] His observations on the masonry led him to suggest either a dating into the eleventh century, or into the thirteenth, as there exist parallels for both periods.[211]

[203] As Peschlow noted, the excavations focused on the Ottoman period of Nicaea and the main aim was to find ceramic tile kilns; thus, besides cleaning the spot not much attention was devoted to the remains of the Byzantine church. Peschlow on the church C: Peschlow, "Churches of Nicaea/İznik," 210-212.

[204] Peschlow, "Churches of Nicaea/İznik," 210 and note 72.

[205] Scheider, *Denkmäler İznik*, 18 and Peschlow, "Churches of Nicaea/İznik," 210.

[206] Peschlow, "Churches of Nicaea/İznik," 210.

[207] Peschlow, "Churches of Nicaea/İznik," 211.

[208] Foss, *Nicaea,* 108.

[209] To repeat, Foss took blind arcades and decorative brick as the style of the Laskarid period, referring to the study of Buchwald. Buchwald himself, however, had been more cautious. Due to poor remains, he did not dare to date any church in Nicaea into the Laskarid period.

[210] Peschlow, "Churches of Nicaea/İznik," 212.

[211] Ibid.

In his summary Peschlow arrived at the conclusion that also Church C cannot safely be identified with the church of St. Tryphon. Whereas the two phases of construction would have underlined this option, neither masonry nor architectural comparison led to a definite hypothesis.[212] Based on archaeological evidence the erection of the building some time between the eleventh and the thirteenth century seemed likely. Eyice had arrived at a similar conclusion: an identification proved impossible because of the bad condition of the ruin on one hand, and on the lack of knowledge about Byzantine churches at Nicaea on the other. However, he had been convinced that church C could be considered as one church of the Laskarid period based on its late Byzantine style.[213]

The so-called "burial churches" B and D

At the Roman theater two churches have been located that served as burial churches. The site of the theater took over the function of a cemetery during the middle and late Byzantine periods. These two churches have in common that they are no longer visible. One was situated to the east of the theater, only the substructions of the edifice have remained. The other church had been built inside the orchestra of the theater, all that was left of the building were the foundations. For a proper investigation of the theater the remains of the church have been removed. Nevertheless, attempts have been made to analyze and date both of them into the Laskarid period, which is why they should be discussed here briefly.

Church east of the theater (Church B)

Already Schneider in his studies about Nicaea noticed the substructure of what he suggested to be a church built on the eastern side of the ancient Roman theater.[214] Besides the substructure nothing is left of the actual church above, the only traces still visible are parts of the vaults of burial chambers (Fig. Nic. 12).[215] A plan of the chambers has been published by Yalman in 1979 (Fig. Nic. 13).[216] According to that plan, three elongated chambers were built parallel, the middle one ending in an apse. Five further chambers of individual sizes and shapes with passage ways in between

[212] Peschlow, "Churches of Nicaea/İznik," 215.
[213] Eyice, "Die Byzantinische Kirche in der Nähe des Yenisehir-Tores," 158.
[214] Schneider, *Denkmäler İznik*, 18.
[215] I visited the site twice, in March 2008 and in May 2010. The vaults were so much overgrown that access was denied by the bushes that spread around and inside of them.
[216] B. Yalman, "İznik'teki kilise alt yapı kazısı," *VIII Türk Tarihi Kongresi, Ankara 1976,* vol. 1 (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1979), 457-466.

were attached to the west. Additionally graves were inserted into the walls. The walls were made from courses of rubble and brick, the vaults were made from brick and mortar alone.[217]

Foss mentioned that pottery shards were found on the site, dating from the eleventh to the thirteenth century. Nevertheless due to the masonry he suggested a date of construction within the Laskarid period.[218] Peschlow on the other hand followed what had been proposed already by Schneider decades earlier: the church must have been constructed sometime between the eleventh and thirteenth centuries.

Church in the theatre (Church D)

Parts of the foundation of an edifice were excavated inside the orchestra during the 1980s, the remains are no longer visible. What had been found were walls that later were interpreted as the separation walls between the aisles, the main nave and the narthex of a small church measuring no more than 13.5m in length.[219] Several burials have been found in the narthex and also inside the walls of the narthex to the north, west and south (Fig. Nic. 13).

Foss found similarities between the masonry of this church and those of towers that had been built under Theodore I Laskaris and consequently dated this church to his reign.[220] Peschlow however stated that "the masonry of the substructure is made up of layers of rubbles and bricks, in part also in cloisonné form so that it is also impossible to date this building from its masonry."[221]

Summary of the archaeological remains

The city walls of Nicaea are the most detailed studied of all remains in town, and from two inscriptions and one reference in a written source of the thirteenth century two phases of construction could be firmly attributed to the Laskarid period: one belonged to the reign of Theodore I Laskaris, one to his successor John III Vatatzes. Both emperors regarded the strengthening of the defense system of the city crucial.

[217] Foss, *Nicaea*, 108; Peschlow, "Churches of Nicaea/İznik," 213.

[218] Given that pottery sherds were found even inside the burials, it is interesting to note that Foss did not even attempt to explain the later dating of the church. For him only the masonry and especially the mortar is the definite proof.

[219] They were however not sufficient to establish certainty about the form of the actual church. Also the actual walls have not survived.

[220] Foss, *Nicaea*, 109. He devoted only five sentences to this building and nothing was said about the kind of masonry employed.

[221] Peschlow, "Churches of Nicaea/İznik," 214.

No such secure dating could be established for any other physical remains in town. A case has been made that part of the inner redecoration of the Hagia Sophia floor should be considered of Laskarid origin. The arguments seem plausible, however, in that case the actual change of the building would have been small. Assuming that the marble slab is of Laskarid origin, it would confirm the Hagia Sophia as coronation site and probably as the church of the patriarchate during the period of exile.

Opinions about the remains of four churches vary. Foss published a book on Nicaea as a Byzantine capital, in which he wished to date all of them into the Laskarid period. These datings would conveniently have underlined the status of Nicaea within the realm established during the exile in western Asia Minor. He thus attempted to identify them with churches that have been named in contemporary texts. Yet, he dealt generously with the evidence and also with previous scholarship. His proposals have been seriously questioned in a later survey on the ecclesiastical remains in town. It should be emphasized that due to their poor conditions, improper documentation and that few pieces are available, there is little chance that a dating can ever be more than a suggestion.

The importance Nicaea had during the period in exile, when the patriarchate, one of the two institutions that constituted the Byzantine ideal of rule, was settled here, is most apparent in its impressive defense system. These city walls were constructed so refined that they were able to survive the following Ottoman conquest and later earthquakes. The attention of two Laskarid emperors bears witness as to how crucial it had been that Nicaea would not fall into the hands of the enemy.

9. Written testimony for Nicaea

Akropolites

Nicaea is the site mentioned first when Akropolites reported on the initial history of the Laskarid realm. Theodore Laskaris fled from the city of Constantinople to Nicaea, tried to gain the support from its citizens and finally established himself as their new ruler:

> ἀπελθὼν οὖν οὗτος μετὰ τῆς σφετέρας γυναικὸς καὶ τῶν τέκνων—ὑπῆρχον γὰρ αὐτῷ θυγάτρια τρία, ὧν ἡ μὲν πρώτη Εἰρήνη, ἡ δὲ δευτέρα Μαρία, ἡ δὲ τρίτη Εὐδοκία κατωνομάζοντο—καὶ περὶ τὴν Νίκαιαν πόλιν γενόμενος παρεκάλει τοὺς Νικαεῖς ἔσω τοῦτον τῆς πόλεως δέξασθαι καὶὡς κυρίῳ προσανέχειν αὐτῷ. οἱ δὲ οὐκ ἐδέχοντο. λιπαρῶς γοῦν ὁ Λάσκαρις τούτοις προσκείμενος καὶ κἂν τὴν γυναῖκα μόνην δέξασθαι ἐκδυσωπῶν, μόλις εἰς τοῦτο πειθηνίους ἐγνώρισεν. ἀφεὶς οὖν τὴν

> γυναῖκα οὐτοσὶ κατὰ Νίκαιαν διήρχετο τὰ πέριξ, Προῦσάν τε καὶ τὰ περὶ αὐτήν, ὅπως τε ὑπὸ χεῖρα ταῦτα ποιήσαιτο καὶ ὡς βασιλεὺς ἀντὶ τοῦ πενθεροῦ Ἀλεξίου τούτων κατάρξειεν· / So, departing with his wife and children – he had three daughters of whom the first was named Eirene, the second, Maria, and the third, Eudokia – and arriving at the city of Nicaea, he appealed to the Nicaeans to admit him into the city and to accept him as their lord. But they would not admit him. Then Laskaris urged them persistently and, even though he entreated them to admit his wife only, he persuaded them with difficulty. Leaving his wife, he then went about the region of Nicaea, Prousa and the surrounding area, to bring these places under his control and to rule over them as emperor in the place of his father-in-law Alexios.[222]

Having a look on the map, one reason why Nicaea was chosen as refuge for Byzantines fleeing from the occupied city becomes apparent: towards the south of Constantinople it was in relative vicinity. It became the first base for Byzantines who fled the conquered zone in the direction of Asia Minor, one of the most famous ones being Niketas Choniates. The defense mechanisms of the city, famous since Late Antiquity, should not be underestimated during the struggles after the arrival of the crusaders in Constantinople: what parts of the former empire the Byzantines still held more often than not came down to the question, which city they could defend. As it became clear in the above quoted passage, the inhabitants of Nicaea controlled carefully, for whom they opened the gates. Nicaea might thus also have been an obvious choice for refugees from Constantinople because of its strong walls.[223] Theodore's inability to enter the city without permission of its citizens proves that indeed the city walls were functioning already then, that is before the repairs conducted by Theodore in the following decade.

Much attention has been paid to the dating of the above described events. According to the research on the *partitio* by Nikolas Oikonomides Theodore Laskaris gained control of Nicaea already in 1203, which is after the arrival of the Latins, but *before* the sack of Constantinople.[224] Oikonomides' argument was that the area of Nicaea had stopped paying taxes to the emperor already before the fall of the Byzantine empire. Thus, it was in 1203 not under Byzantine control and Theodore may have

[222] *Acropolitae*, ed. Heisenberg, §6; *Akropolites*, tr. Macrides, 118.

[223] For the struggles during the twelfth century Paul Magdalino observed likewise, that cities in Asia Minor were – due to their enforced defensive systems – the centers of resistance to the usurpation of Andronikos I: Paul Magdalino, *The empire of Manuel I Komnenos, 1143-1180* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 127.

[224] Oikonomides, Nicolas. "La décomposition de l'empire Byzantin a la veille de 1204 et les origines de l'empire de Nicée: a propos de la *partitio Romaniae*." *XV^e Congrès International des Études Byzantines* (Athens: Association internationale des études byzantines, 1979-1981), 3-28.

regained this by establishing himself there. To this fits the observation by Ruth Macrides, who stated that Akropolites' dating of Theodore's reigning years only match if its beginnings were dated back to 1203.[225]

The following passage is a key in the understanding of the function of Nicaea within the Laskarid realm. As the dating of the events described here are subject to debate, a discussion of the dating will follow below:

> Δύο γοῦν παραδραμόντων ἐνιαυτῶν καὶ ὡς δεσπότου παρὰ πάντων φημιζομένου τοῦ Λασκάριος, ἐπεὶ συνδρομὴ γέγονε κατὰ Νίκαιαν ἀπὸ περιφανῶν ἀνδρῶν καὶ τῶν λογάδων τῆς ἐκκλησίας, σκέψις τούτοις ἐγένετο ὅπως βασιλεὺς φημισθείη ὁ δεσπότης Θεόδωρος. πατριάρχου δὲ μὴ παρόντος ἐκεῖσε—ὁ γὰρ Καματηρὸς Ἰωάννης, ὃς τὸν πατριαρχικὸν ἐκόσμει θρόνον ἡνίκα τῆς Κωνσταντίνου ἐκράτησαν Ἰταλοί, περὶ τὸ Διδυμότειχον ἀπῆρε κἀκεῖσε τὰς διατριβὰς ἐπεποίητο, καὶ διαμηνυθεὶς παρά τε τοῦ Λασκάριος καὶ τῶν λοιπῶν ἀπηνήνατο τὴν πρὸς αὐτοὺς ἄφιξιν, ἔγγραφον τὴν παραίτησιν ποιησάμενος. ψηφίζεται γοῦν πατριάρχης Μιχαὴλ ὁ Αὐτωρειανός, λόγιος τυγχάνων καὶ πάσης γραφῆς ἔμπειρος τῆς τε ἡμετέρας καὶ θύραθεν· ὃς καὶ τὸν δεσπότην Θεόδωρον τῷ βασιλείας διαδήματι ταινιοῖ. / After two years had passed and Laskaris was being called despot by all, an assembly took place in Nicaea of notables and the select men of the church. They resolved that the despot Theodore be called emperor. But a patriarch was not present there, for John Kamateros, who graced the patriarchal throne when the Italians conquered the city of Constantine, had gone to Didymoteichon and taken up residence there, and when he was summoned by Laskaris and the rest, he declined to go to them, putting his resignation in writing. So Michael Autoreianos was elected patriarch, a learned man, acquainted with all literature, both ours and the other. He crowned the despot Theodore with the imperial diadem.[226]

Described here were the events of Theodore's proclamation as emperor and his subsequent coronation, which appeared problematic at first, since no patriarch was available to conduct the coronation. The coronation finally took place after a new patriarch had been elected. Following Akropolites' narrative it would seem that events described here took place right after one another in time. However, as has been examined above, a case had been made that Theodore Laskaris gained power already in 1203. Consequently, the assembly mentioned here that proclaimed Theodore as emperor would then have met in 1205, if one should follow Akropolites' remark. However, 1205 was not the year of Theodore's coronation, since a new patriarch was only elected some

[225] *Akropolites*, tr. Macrides, 82-83. Because of Akropolites' statement on the length of Theodore's reign he was sometimes regarded as unreliable. But, as Macrides had made clear in her commentary, this was unjustified, 39.

[226] *Acropolitae*, ed. Heisenberg, §7; *Akropolites*, tr. Macrides, 119.

time after the death of the former, which took place in 1206.[227] It would thus seem that Akropolites, who was at that time not even born and writing more than fifty years after these events, only had a vague overview of the chronological sequence of the early period.

This is the first coronation that took place during the exile period. As will be seen, all coronations until the reconquest of Constantinople took place here. At first glance it seemed obvious, since the patriarchate had been reestablished here in Nicaea and it was the task of the patriarch to crown the emperor. However, as will be shown throughout this study, also the patriarch traveled through the realm on occasion. Likewise, events that involved the presence of the patriarch were conducted at various places within the realm.[228] Only the coronation apparently became an act fixed in space. This might have been connected to the special requirements regarding the spot, where the performance of the coronation would be executed, as the discussion of the Hagia Sophia of Nicaea indicated.

The next part reported about the prologue to the famous Battle of Antioch at the Meander in 1211, in which Theodore I Laskaris defeated the Seljuk sultan and his father-in-law Alexios III Angelos. The latter had fled to the court of the sultan and asked for assistance in claiming back his power, upon which the sultan undertook the following:

> ὁ βασιλεὺς δὲ Θεόδωρος διῆγεν ἐν τῇ Νικαίᾳ, καὶ πρεσβεία πρὸς τοῦ σουλτὰν παρ' αὐτὸν ἀφικνεῖται τὴν τοῦ βασιλέως καὶ πενθεροῦ γνωρίζουσα ἄφιξιν, καὶ ὡς ἄδικος εἴη ξένης ἐπειλημμένος ἀρχῆς. / The emperor Theodore was residing in Nicaea, and an embassy came to him from the sultan, announcing the arrival of the emperor, his father-in-law, and stating that he was unjust in seizing another's realm.[229]

The arrival and news of the embassy made Theodore prepare his army for battle, he then left Nicaea and moved to Philadelphia, which was situated at the border between the Laskarid territory and that of the Seljuks.

Not much is known of the circumstances, under which Theodore resided in Nicaea. No remains of a Laskarid palace have ever been found in the town, however,

[227] See for all the relevant sources regarding the beginning of Theodore's reign in *Akropolites*, tr. Macrides, 81-84.

[228] For instance, an imperial wedding took place in Lampsakos in 1234 conducted by the patriarch, likewise this site housed an assembly for the election of a new patriarch in 1260. In both cases probably the presence of the emperor determined the location of the event; it was the patriarch, who had to be mobile.

[229] *Acropolitae*, ed. Heisenberg, §9; *Akropolites*, tr. Macrides, 129.

from the account of Blemmydes it is known that a palace had been built at the beginning of the exile.[230] Nicaea was not only the place where Theodore stayed before the battle, but also the one where he would return to after his victory:

> προσελάβετο δὲ καὶ τὸν πενθερὸν αὐτοῦ τὸν βασιλέα Ἀλέξιον ἐν τῇ μάχῃ εὑρών, καὶ τὰ εἰκότα τιμήσας ἀπήγαγέ τε εἰς Νίκαιαν καὶ τῶν βασιλικῶν παρασήμων ἐκδύσας ἐν τῇ τοῦ Ὑακίνθου μονῇ διάγειν ἐκέλευσεν. / He also took his father-in-law, the emperor Alexis, whom he found present at the battle and, paying him due honors, brought him to Nicaea, stripped him of his imperial insignia and ordered him to reside in the monastery of Hyakinthos.[231]

Alexios III had bestowed the title of despot on Theodore after he had been married to the emperor's daughter. As by 1211 Theodore had proclaimed himself emperor, Alexios' demands posed a direct threat to the legitimization of Theodore. Thus, the victory over the sultan was not only important regarding the political and strategic power relations in Asia Minor, with the victory in this battle Theodore got hold of Alexios. He confined him in the monastery of Hyakinthos at Nicaea, where he died just a short while later.

Most probably Theodore chose Nicaea as the site for Alexios' detainment, so that Alexios would remain under direct observation of the emperor and his immediate surroundings. Interestingly, the monastery of the Hyakinthos is known for having served as the initial burial site for the Laskarid dynasty: both Theodore I and his wife Anna were interred here. [232] Yet, this tradition began with the death of Alexios, who died during his imprisonment in the monastery and was subsequently also buried there. So, apparently even after Alexios' presence and his claim to the throne were considered a danger to Theodore's position as ruler, he nevertheless was not "banned" from his kin after his death. The aspect of imperial burials will be discussed in more detail in the later part of this study.[233]

A severe consequence of the Battle of Antioch was that Theodore had lost his Latin mercenaries, which had constituted a fierce unit of his army. As a result, Theodore had not much strength to set against his enemies, who marched against him. Shortly after the battle the emperor Henry embarked from Constantinople with an army and invaded Asia Minor from the harbor city of Pegai southwards. He was not stopped until

[230] The reference will be discussed below.
[231] *Acropolitae*, ed. Heisenberg, §10; *Akropolites*, tr. Macrides, 131.
[232] Cf. *Acropolitae*, ed. Heisenberg, §18; *Akropolites*, tr. Macrides, 157.
[233] See below under III. D. 4.

he reached the area of Nymphaion, and when Henry and Theodore signed a peace treaty, Theodore had to cede territories:[234]

> […] τὰ δ' ἐντεῦθεν παρὰ τοῦ βασιλέως Θεοδώρου δεσπόζεσθαι· Νεόκαστρα δὲ ταῦτα ἦν καὶ Κελβιανόν, Χλιαρά τε καὶ Πέργαμος καὶ τὰ πλαγίως ἐγκείμενα Μαγιδία τε καὶ Ὀψίκια. ὑπῆρχε δὲ καὶ ἄλλη χώρα τῷ βασιλεῖ Θεοδώρῳ, ἡ ἀπὸ τοῦ Λοπαδίου ἀρχομένη καὶ Προῦσαν περιλαμβάνουσα καὶ Νίκαιαν. / […] while everything from there and beyond would be controlled by the emperor Theodore. This consisted of Neokastra and Kelbianon, Chliara and Pergamon and the places adjacent to them, Magidia and Opsikia. The territory starting from Lopadion and including Prousa and Nicaea also belonged to the emperor Theodore.[235]

Akropolites mentioned here one theme and several settlements in western Asia Minor, which remained under control of Theodore I. As Henry had advanced from Pegai, that area would stay under Latin occupation. To say it in other words, Theodore I kept two core regions that were connected to each other through the Anatolian plateau. One was situated to the north and included Lopadion, Nicaea and Prousa. The other one lay to the south and west and included the cities of Pergamon, Kelbianon and Chliara with the adjacent or overarching theme of Neokastra.[236] This treaty has been named within scholarship after its presumed location of signing Nymphaion, because Nymphaion was named as the southern most station on the route of emperor Henry.[237] Whether or not the treaty had actually been signed at Nymphaion, is uncertain. Likewise the date of the treaty was subject to debate, the years 1212 and 1214 have been proposed.[238]

Another observation worth mentioning in this context would be that the attack of the Latins was launched from Pegai, which meant that the sea route over the Sea of Marmara was preferred over the land route via Nicomedia and Nicaea. Despite the fact

---

[234] The information regarding the mercenary forces and Henry's march into Asia Minor were provided by Akropolites himself in the preceding sentences.

[235] *Acropolitae*, ed. Heisenberg, §15; *Akropolites*, tr. Macrides, 149.

[236] In his book on Manuel I Komnenos, Magdalino examined the impact of Komnenian rule to western Asia Minor and drew attention to its recovery in the twelfth century. He in particular stated that the cities of Pergamon, Chliara and Adramyttion were enquipped with stronger defense systems and gathered under the province of Neokastra: Magdalino, *Manuel I Komnenos*, 126. However, this has been revised by Macrides, cf. *Akropolites*, tr. Macrides, 152, n15. The way Akropolites listed the topographical names here further suggests that by the time of his writing, Neokastra seemed to have been a separate entity.

Settlements further south of this area were not named, such as Smyrna, Philadelphia, Sardis and the region of the Meander valley. That is not to say, they were not in the hands of Theodore I. In this treaty the border zone between the Latin and the Laskarid territories is defined here.

[237] Franz Dölger, *Regesten der Kaiserurkunden des oströmischen Reiches von 565-1453*, (Munich: Oldenbourg, 1924), .no. 1684; Benjamin Hendrickx, "Régestes des empereurs Latins de Constantinople, 1204-1261/1272," *Byzantina* 19 (1988), 7-220, no.129.

[238] *Akropolites*, tr. Macrides, 152 n12.

that Theodore's army was considerably weakened after the Battle of Antioch at the Meander, apparently a siege on Nicaea was nevertheless feared. Instead, as Pegai, which was at that time still in Latin hands, provided easy access to Anatolia, Henry chose to cut into the conquered lands of Theodore along the western shore.

After the settling of the treaty between Henry and Theodore I, Akropolites turned to the conditions under Latin rule in the occupied former capital of the Byzantine empire and reported, how in particular monks and priests were forced to submit to the "Elder Rome". However, Emperor Henry showed mercy and allowed them to leave the city:

> πολλοὶ δὲ τῶν μοναχῶν προεξιόντες τῆς Κωνσταντίνου τῷ βασιλεῖ Θεοδώρῳ προσῆλθον, καὶ αὐτοῖς προστάξει τούτου μοναὶ πρὸς καταμονὴν ἐπιδέδοντο. καὶ πρεσβύτεροι δὲ πρὸς τὴν Νίκαιαν ἀπιόντες οἱ μὲν τῷ πατριαρχικῷ κλήρῳ συγκατηλέγησαν, οἱ δὲ θείοις ἐνασμενίσαντες τοῖς σηκοῖς ἐλευθέρως ἐβίωσαν. / Many of the monks came out of the city of Constantine and went to the emperor Theodore, and by his command monasteries were given over to them to dwell in. Priests also went to Nicaea; some were included among the patriarchal clergy, while others gladly became attached to the holy churches where they lived comfortably.[239]

Two targets were given in this passage for the fleeing monks and priests: the one target was Theodore I, the other the city of Nicaea. Needless to say, the former is a person, the latter a location. Unfortunately it is not said, where Theodore I stayed and which monasteries he assigned to the refugees. The emperor appeared here as an institution that was not bound to a particular place. Additionally it is possible that Akropolites did not have a personal meeting between refugees from Constantinople and the emperor in mind, but rather a shift in power sphere: the monks reached the territory controlled by Theodore I Laskaris. For sure, he could have been at Nicaea, where monasteries existed, but those were not the only ones within the Laskarid territory: for instance, the region of the Latmos seemed to have prospered particularly through its monastic communities during the exile period.[240] What on the other hand seemed to have been bound to the city was the patriarchate as an institution. Here priests turned to in search of new tasks within the hierarchy of the church.

It was the last episode, in which Akropolites referred to Nicaea under the rule of Theodore I Laskaris; the emperor's death occurred just a few passages below. Quite some time passed under the rule of his successor John III Vatatzes, before the site was

[239] *Acropolitae*, ed. Heisenberg, §17; *Akropolites*, tr. Macrides, 155.
[240] See below under III. D. 3.

mentioned again in the account. This following reference to Nicaea was special in two ways: it was one of very few occasions, where Akropolites used direct speech, and it belonged to those passages, in which Akropolites spoke about himself and revealed personal details of his own life. Shortly before the following quotation the reader learned that Akropolites, who had been born under Latin occupation in Constantinople, had left the city on order of his father and had joined the emperor's court.[241] In 1234 the emperor John sent him along with other young promising men to school for acquiring a higher education. It is one of few occasions where Akropolites used direct speech in his account, Emperor John spoke to the selected young men and said to Akropolites:

> τούτους μὲν ἐκ Νικαίας λαβὼν τῷ διδασκαλείῳ παρέδωκα, σὲ δὲ τοῦ ἐμοῦ ἐκβαλὼν οἴκου τουτοισὶ συναφῆκα διδάσκεσθαι. δεῖξον οὖν, ὡς ἀληθῶς τῆς ἐμῆς οἰκίας ἐξῄεις, καὶ οὐτωσὶ τῶν μαθημάτων ἀντιποιήθητι. στρατιώτης μὲν γὰρ τὸ ἐπιτήδευμα γεγονὼς ὁπόσα ἂν ἔσχες τὰ τοῦ σιτηρεσίου παρὰ τῆς βασιλείας μου, τοσαῦτα ἂν ἴσως ἢ καὶ ὀλίγον πλείω διά τοι τὸ τοῦ γένους περιφανές· ἔμπλεως δὲ φιλοσοφίας φανεὶς μεγάλων ἀξιωθήσῃ τῶν τιμῶν τε καὶ τῶν γερῶν· μόνοι γὰρ τῶν πάντων ἀνθρώπων ὀνομαστότατοι βασιλεὺς καὶ φιλόσοφος. / These I have taken from Nicaea and handed over to the school but you I have sent forth from my household and released with them to be taught. Demonstrate, then, that you indeed go forth from my household, and engage in your studies accordingly. For if you were to become a soldier by occupation, you would have so much from my Majesty by way of a living and perhaps a little more because of your illustrious family. But if you should prove to be steeped in philosophy, you will be deemed worthy of great honours and rewards. For, alone of all people, the emperor and the philosopher are most celebrated.[242]

Emperor John distinguished here between Akropolites' own place of residence and that of his fellow students. Whereas the latter had been based at Nicaea, Akropolites himself had been resident at the court. It is implied in this phrase, even though only indirectly, that these two were not one and the same place. Again it is interesting to see, that in this sentence Nicaea as a city is set parallel not with another city – for the location of the imperial court could have been mentioned – but with the court as such, that is, with an institution. The same had been detected in the earlier reference to Nicaea. In my view these two quotations could serve as a hint that the emperor and his court were not settled at one specific location, but were flexible in space. This is why Akropolites did not assign a particular spot to the emperor or his court.

The following passage had already been quoted and dealt with among the references to Nymphaion, it concerned the events that led ultimately to the death of

[241] He had left Constantinople at the age of 16, in the year 1233.
[242] *Acropolitae*, ed. Heisenberg, §32 ; *Akropolites*, tr. Macrides, 192.

Emperor John III Vatatzes.[243] He died after several apoplectic strokes, which he had received within a time span of several months. The very first of these he had when he spent some days in the city of Nicaea early in spring of 1254. It is not entirely clear how many days Emperor John had stayed in Nicaea, when the first stroke hit. From the account of Akropolites it would appear as if the emperor had spent the entire winter there, arriving to Nicaea in late autumn from the town of Philippi in the Balkans. However, Macrides pointed out the additional information given by Skoutariotes that the emperor had arrived just a couple of days prior to his first stroke, which she took as an indication that John III Vatatzes might have traveled down as usual to Nymphaion for the winter. In that case he would have come to Nicaea from the south and, as Skoutariotes stated, in order to prepare the city against a new attack by the Mongols.[244] That being somewhat unclear, what seemed clear in this passage was that feeling ill, the emperor wanted to be brought back to his residence at Nymphaion. Apparently Nicaea did not provide him with a suitable environment or was not the spot where he felt comfortable being ill.

His son Theodore became his successor in the imperial office. Akropolites described how Theodore honored his father with the accustomed funeral rites. Then he was raised on a shield, acclaimed as emperor and left Nymphaion for Philadelphia, where he sent an embassy to the sultan, informing him about the succession in the imperial office:

> ἐκεῖσε οὖν διακαρτερήσας μικρὸν καὶ ὅσον πρεσβείαν στεῖλαι πρὸς τὸν σουλτάν, περὶ τὰ Βιθυνῶν κεχώρηκε μέρη καὶ τὴν τῆς χώρας ταύτης προκαθημένην πόλιν τὴν Νίκαιαν. ἐπεὶ δὲ ἐχήρευε τοῦ πατριαρχοῦντος ἡ ἐκκλησία—πέφθακε γὰρ ὁ πατριάρχης Μανουὴλ μικρόν τι τοῦ βασιλέως Ἰωάννου προτελευτῆσαι—ἔδει δὲ πρῶτον πατριάρχην προβληθῆναι, ἵν’ ἐπὶ τῷ βασιλεῖ τὴν στεφηφορίαν ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ τελεσιουργήσῃ τεμένει […] ἐπεὶ δὲ τὴν ἀπὸ τῆς Νικαίας ἔξοδον ἔσπευδε, διὰ τάχους τοῖς ἀρχιερεῦσι προστάττει χειροτονῆσαι πατριάρχην αὐτὸν ὁ βασιλεύς· οἳ καὶ οὑτωσὶ διεπράξαντο, ἐν μιᾷ ἡμέρᾳ διάκονον καὶ ἱερέα καὶ πατριάρχην αὐτὸν ἐκτελέσαντες. / When he had stayed there a short time, long enough to send an embassy to the sultan, he left for the area of Bithynia and the capital city of the region, Nicaea. Since the church was bereft of a patriarch (for the patriarch Manuel had died slightly before the emperor John), it was first necessary that a patriarch be put forward, so that he might carry out the coronation of the emperor in the holy precinct. […] Since Theodore was in a hurry to leave Nicaea, he gave orders to the

[243] *Acropolitae*, ed. Heisenberg, §52; *Akropolites*, tr. Macrides, 270.
[244] *Akropolites*, tr. Macrides, 272 n1.

> bishops to ordain him patriarch quickly. And they did so, in one day making him deacon, priest and patriarch.[245]

Left out in this passage were the struggles Theodore faced in finding a new patriarch. His first choice had been Nikephoros Blemmydes, who however rejected disliking the emperor's attitudes. Akropolites, who also painted the character of Theodore pejoratively, recounted how the emperor decided that the monk Arsenios be made patriarch, who later figured prominently during the usurpation of Michael VIII Palaiologos.

Again Nicaea was described as the spot where the emperor, this time Theodore II Laskaris, needed to travel to in order to receive the imperial crown. This is the first of two passages where Nicaea received a label – *prokathemene polis* – literally the presiding city. Yet, Akropolites limited the label to the province of Bithynia.

Unfortunately it was not said what is precisely meant by the *hieron temenos*, however, it seems from this phrase that it was considered important to crown the emperor at a specific holy place. Apparently the performance required a specific space, which was located in the city of Nicaea. The coronation could not have been performed elsewhere.

The same impression is once more confirmed in the next episode in Akropolites' account, where Nicaea is mentioned. It concerned the coronation of Michael VIII Palaiologos. The reign of Theodore II had been short, he died after four years in office due to an epileptic shock. Akropolites then reported his version of the usurpation of Michael VIII, who allegedly only reluctantly accepted the imperial office next to the heir to the throne, the young son of Theodore, John IV Laskaris:[246]

> Μικρόν τι πάνυ χρονικὸν παρῆλθε διάστημα, καὶ ἐκὼν ἄκων εἰς τὴν βασίλειον ἀνήχθη περιωπήν, πολλὰ πρὸς τῶν προυχόντων ἐκβιασθεὶς καὶ οἷς τὰ κοινὰ τῶν πραγμάτων ἔμελε· καὶ γὰρ ἐπὶ τῆς βασιλικῆς ἀσπίδος οἱ τῶν ἐν τέλει καὶ οἱ ἄλλοι τῶν στρατευμάτων κρείττους ὄντες καθίσαντες βασιλικῶς ἐπεφήμισαν.ἐπεὶ δὲ ἔδει καὶ βασιλικῷ διαδήματι τοῦτον στεφθῆναι, ἐπὶ τὴν προκαθημένην πόλιν τῶν Βιθυνῶν ἀφίκετο Νίκαιαν, ἔνθα παρὰ τοῦ πατριάρχου Ἀρσενίου τὸ βασιλικὸν ἐταινιώθη διάδημα. / After a very short time had passed he was raised, willingly or unwillingly, to the imperial eminence, constrained greatly by the prominent men and

[245] *Acropolitae*, ed. Heisenberg, §53; *Akropolites*, tr. Macrides, 277-78.

[246] The attitude of Akropolites towards the emperors who supported him in the beginning of his career, John III Vatazes and Theodore II Laskaris, his motives for unthankfullness towards them in his account, and the reasons for his praise and preference towards Michael VIII Palaiologos have been thoroughly examined by Macrides: *Akropolites*, tr. Macrides, 55-65. The propaganda Akropolites wove into his account, striking in these and other passages, is crucial for understanding the writer. However, it is not the main focus of this study.

> those for whom public affairs were a concern. Those in office and the other, better men of the armies seated him on the imperial shield and proclaimed him imperially. But as it was necessary that he also be crowned with the imperial diadem, he went to the capital of Bithynia, Nicaea, where he was crowned with the imperial diadem by the patriarch Arsenios.[247]

In the case of Michael VIII the installation as emperor followed the same pattern as four years ago in the one of Theodore II: Michael Palaiologos was raised on a shield, proclaimed emperor by those who were present, and then traveled to Nicaea to receive the imperial crown from the hands of the patriarch. Akropolites gave no precise date or location for the circumstances, in which Michael came to power, which might have been connected to Akropolites' own absence from the events.[248] Regarding this chain of events, Macrides had pointed out the additional information provided by Pachymeres that Michael Palaiologos traveled first to Philadelphia, like Theodore II did four years earlier, from there he sent an embassy to the sultan before proceeding to Nicaea for the coronation.[249] Apparently the convention of diplomacy required to keep the sultan in the picture about any change of rule, perhaps also to affirm his approval. Philadelphia, as has been said, lay at the border to the Seljuk realm. Not only would the voyage for the embassy be shorter from here, but also the citizens of Philadelphia were probably acquainted best with travels to the Seljuk capital Konya way into the high Anatolian plateau.

This is the second quotation where Nicaea is named as the head of Bithynia - *prokathemene polis*. Akropolites used the same expression as in the above quoted passage.

The last passage in which Nicaea was mentioned appeared only shortly before the recapture of Constantinople. Emperor Michael VIII and his entourage had pitched up their tents in the plain of Klyzomene in spring of 1261 when the sebastokrator arrived:

> Ἐκεῖσε γοῦν ὄντος τοῦ βασιλέως καὶ ὁ σεβαστοκράτωρ Τορνίκης ἐκ τῆς Νικαέων ἐπιδεδήμηκε, καὶ δι' ὄχλου τῷ βασιλεῖ γέγονε διὰ τὸν προπατριαρχεύσαντα Ἀρσένιον. / While the emperor was there, the sebastokrator Tornikes came from

[247] *Acropolitae*, ed. Heisenberg, §77; *Akropolites*, tr. Macrides, 346.

[248] Akropolites had been imprisoned in Arta in 1257 by Michael II and was released only in 1259, thus, he did not witness the death of Theodore II and the usurpation of Michael VIII.

[249] *Akropolites*, tr. Macrides, 349 n5 with the relevant references.

> Nicaea and he troubled the emperor on account of Arsenios, who had previously been patriarch.[250]

Constantine Tornikes was the father-in-law of John Palaiologos, the brother of Michael VIII. Tornikes had been raised to the rank of sebastokrator just briefly before by the emperor. Akropolites was not only the source for this information, he also explained the hierarchical position of the office and the dress code.[251] The sebastokrator was during the exile period the second rank after the emperor, subordinate only to the despot. As Akropolites reported, Michael VIII had made two men sebastokratores, the here mentioned Constantine Tornikes and also his own brother Constantine. Why the sebastokrator Tornikes had been at Nicaea is not known. It is possible that he had stayed there on behalf of the emperor, in order to find a suitable candidate for the vacant office of the patriarch.

Summary

Akropolites treated Nicaea like most other sites within his account. Generally he did not pay attention to the cities within the Laskarid realm: Akropolites' account is lacking detailed descriptions about the furnishing, splendor or significance of a site. If he mentioned specific buildings of sites, it occurred casually. In the same way we did not learn much about the actual state of Nicaea through his references, he did not refer to building activity or the economic situation of the town. When Nicaea was mentioned, it was connected to a journey that started or ended here, to an act that took place there, or to political endeavors that were solved in Nicaea. Most of the quotations that include Nicaea could be dated into the reign of Theodore I Laskaris, fewer to John III Vatatzes, Theodore II Laskaris and Michael VIII Palaiologos. This is certainly owed to the initial history of the exile period, in which Nicaea had been among the first cities controlled by Theodore I Laskaris.

Akropolites also did not attribute any meaning to Nicaea for the emperors of the exile. Whereas in the case of Nymphaion he explicitly stated that this was the place

[250] *Acropolitae*, ed. Heisenberg, §84; *Akropolites*, tr. Macrides, 370.
[251] *Acropolitae*, ed. Heisenberg, §82.

where the emperors usually spent their winter, nothing comparable could be found in his account for Nicaea. Akropolites concealed how the emperors regarded, esteemed or used Nicaea. From his writing it indeed seemed as if Nicaea had no more importance than other larger settlements in the realm. However, one denomination occurred towards the end of his account, he named Nicaea twice the presiding city of Bithynia. This might be understood as an administrative label.

Nicaea was the place, where early on after the expulsion from Constantinople the patriarchate had been relocated. The creation of the patriarchate in exile and the subsequent coronation of Theodore I Laskaris had been an important act in the rivalry regarding the status of the Laskarid realm as the heir of the former Byzantine empire. It could be established from Akropolites' report that Nicaea remained the see of the patriarch and the coronation site throughout the exile period. As such, whether or not Akropolites explicitly stated this fact, Nicaea was a site of high significance for the emperors in exile.

As a final remark, it is interesting to note that not a single allusion has been made to the meaning of Nicaea for the history of the church. As the city became meaningful through the presence of the patriarchate located here, in my opinion it would not be too far-fetched to draw parallels to other moments, in which Nicaea played a significant role for the development of the Christian Church within the Byzantine empire. Two important ecumenical councils had taken place at Nicaea that could be considered landmarks, the First Council of Nicaea in 325 dismissing Arianism, the Second Council of Nicaea in 787 restoring the veneration of icons. Perhaps Akropolites is not the writer who would consider such allusions. Thus, it remains to be seen if any other contemporary writer would make use of this symbolic reference, or if this is rather the expectation of the modern scholar of Byzantine history.

Blemmydes

As had been established earlier, Blemmydes mentioned cities of the Laskarid realm at the beginning of his account mostly in connection with his travels for the purpose of learning. The first passage where Blemmydes referred to Nicaea has been quoted during the analysis of Nymphaion, it regarded his stations of instruction.[252] At

[252] Blemmydae, *Opera*, ed. Munitiz, I.12: Ἕκτον οὖν διανύων ἔτος ἐν τῷ βίῳ καὶ εἰκοστόν, τῇ Νικαέων ἐν ᾗ καὶ τὴν ἐγκύκλιον περιενόστησα, καθὼς ἐν τῇ Προυσαίων τὴν προτεταγμένην αὐτῆς ἐγγραμμάτισμαι, Γερμανοῦ τοῦ τὰ θεῖα σοφοῦ πατριαρχοῦντος, ἐπιδημῶ· τῆς Κωνσταντίνου γὰρ ἡ τοῦ

the time when he was twenty-six, he was taught at Nicaea, which he described with some words. He named Nicaea as the metropolis of Bithynia, a somewhat similar, though also deviant label to that observed in Akropolites' account. The focus of this denomination shifted to the diocesan structures of the church, Nicaea as the capital of a Roman province was the seat of a metropolitan. Blemmydes explicitly stated that here the patriarchate had been relocated to after 1204. Further, below, he then also explained that these two entities of the church – diocese and patriarchate – were treated separately, however since the relocation of the patriarchate to Nicaea led by one single head, the patriarch, which apparently caused some criticism from contemporaries.[253] He is also the only source who reported that a residence for the emperors – *basileusin oikoi* - existed there as well, even though the then reigning emperor John III Vatatzes preferred to stay at Nymphaion.

The same fact regarding his training at Nicaea Blemmydes repeated in the second version of his partial account, though with more information of what he had been trained in – poetry, rhetorics and logic.[254] Nicaea was one of the larger cities within the Laskarid realm, it apparently provided to certain extent a setting for intellectuals living in the realm to engage in their studies. However, as Blemmydes listed several places he traveled to in order to receive further instructions, Nicaea seemingly did not turn into the focal point for higher education during the exile. The aspect of higher education in the Laskarid realm will be discussed in the later part of this study.[255]

Blemmydes again mentioned the double appointment of metropolitan and patriarch in Nicaea further below in his account when the patriarch asked him to act for him during his absence from the city:

> Ἐπεί δ' ὁ πατριάρχης τὴν εἰς ἔρευναν τῶν Μανιχαίων διενοήσατο στείλασθαι, τὴν τῶν αὐτῷ προσηκόντων ἐν τῇ Νικαέων ὡς κοινῷ ποιμένι διεξαγωγήν / At this time the Patriarch, who had decided to set out an inquiry concerning the Manichaeans,

---

Βύζαντος ἐκπεπορθημένης ὑπὸ τῶν Ἰταλῶν, ἐν τῇ Βιθυνῶν μητροπόλει καὶ ὁ πατριαρχικὸς μετετέθειτο θρόνος, ὡς ἔπηλυς ὡς ἐπίθετος, καὶ τοῖς βασιλεῦσιν οἶκοι δεδόμηντο, κἂν ὁ τότε κρατῶν (Ἰωάννης οὗτος ἦν ὁ δεδοξασμένος ὑπὲρ πολλοὺς βασιλέας ὑπὸ Θεοῦ), τὴν ἀνακτορικὴν σκήνωσιν ἔχειν ἐν Νυμφαίῳ προείλετο.

[253] Cf. Blemmydes, *Partial Account*, tr. Munitiz, 49 n26.

[254] Blemmydae, *Opera*, ed. Munitiz, II.7: *κἀν* τῇ Προύσῃ μὲν γραμματικήν, ἐν Νικαίᾳ δὲ ποιητικὴν καὶ ῥητορικὴν καὶ τὰ τῆς λογικῆς ὅσα πρὸ τῶν *Ἀναλυτικῶν,* παιδευόμεθα, συλλογιστικήν δε φυσικὴν ἀριθμητικὴν γραμμικήν, ἐκδεδημηκότες εἰς Σκάμανδρον·

[255] See below under III. C.

> appointed me to look after the conduct of all that concerned him in his combined responsibility for the region of Nicaea.[256]

Munitiz had dated the substitution of the patriarchal office through Blemmydes to the year 1229.[257] Blemmydes expanded the story regarding his temporary task with the tale of the malevolent *archon* of Nicaea: This man was in charge when Blemmydes substituted the patriarch, therefore the citizens, who were treated so badly, asked Blemmydes for assistance. The patriarch Germanos II had left Nicaea in order to investigate and take action against the Bogomil heresy. Blemmydes had emphasized how close he and the patriarch were, the request to replace him temporarily should be seen as expression of the patriarch's trust in Blemmydes.[258]

Angold had pointed out that Germanos II was actively fighting for the unity of the church during the exile period, in which the disintegration of the church had been in immanent danger due to the fragmentation of the Byzantine world.[259] He especially emphasized Germanos' travels within Asia Minor and also to Epiros and the Seljuk territory. In my opinion a traveling patriarch could be considered symptomatic for the exile period: like the emperors during the exile apparently the patriarch could not afford residing in one place, at times his presence was needed elsewhere to gain control and keep his flock bound to the patriarchate now settled in Nicaea.

Similarly in 1230 the patriarch asked Blemmydes also to take care of the congregation at Nymphaion, a site which Blemmydes reduced in the following passage to the imperial palace alone:

> καὶ τὴν ἐς λόγους ἐπιμέλειαν τοῦ ὑπηρετήματος ἐπικόπτοντος, ἐπεὶ τῶν ἱερῶν ἀνακτόρων, ἅπαν ἐξεκέκριτο βέβηλον, καὶ ζιζανίων ἐγεγόνει τῶν ἐς βάθος ἐκρίζωσις, καὶ εἴ τι δύσεργον εἴργαστο, τἆλλα δ' ἦν εὐμαρῆ καὶ τῷ μὴ πάντη ἀναπεπτωκότι, διὰ πυκνῶν παραιτούμεθα τὸν πατριάρχην ἐπιστολῶν, ἐγκαταστῆσαι τοῖς ἐκεῖ ποιμένα, καὶ ἡμᾶς ἀπολῦσαι πρὸς τὰ συνήθη. […] καὶ ἡμεῖς ἐς Λέσβον, ἀναδιφήσεως εἵνεκα τόπων ἡσυχίας, ἀπαίρομεν· ὃ γνούς, ἐπιπέμπει μετακλήσεως ἡμῖν ἐπιστόλιον, μὴ πεπεισμένοις, ἐπιτίμησιν διαπειλησάμενος. Καὶ πάλιν ἡ Νικαέων, τοὺς ἀλλαχόσε τρέχοντας δέχεται / Eventually, as my official work impeded the continuation of my academic activities, when all pollution had been expelled from the holy imperial palace, and the cockle had been pulled out by the roots, and any difficult work had been completed (whatever was left was easy for

[256] Blemmydae, *Opera*, ed. Munitiz, I.27; Blemmydes, *Partial Account*, tr. Munitiz, 58-59.

[257] See the chronology of the introdcution to his translation: Blemmydes, *Partial Account*, tr. Munitiz, 18.

[258] Cf. Blemmydae, *Opera*, ed. Munitiz, I.12. From this passage it seemed that both the patriarch and Blemmydes knew each other before Germanos had been appointed. Regarding a possible meeting see Angold, *Church and Society*, 555.

[259] Michael Angold, *Church and Society*, 547-554.

> anyone not utterly incompetent), I wrote repeatedly to the Patriarch asking him to appoint a pastor for the people there, and to free me to continue with my normal occupations. […] I left for Lesbos, hoping to search there for an appropriate place in which to practice contemplation, but the Patriarch, on learning of this, sent me a letter summoning me to return and threatening me with penalties if I disobeyed. So it was that the city of Nicaea welcomed me once more, just when I was hurrying elsewhere…[260]

Blemmydes had finished his task at Nymphaion and was contemplating about leaving the patriarchal clergy and continuing his life as a monk, however, the patriarch tried to persuade him otherwise. Thus, he was ordered to return to Nicaea. Not only did the patriarch trust Blemmydes enough to deliver his office to him for a given interval, he also handed over to him the two most meaningful and prestigious communities of the realm – the communities of the patriarchate and the imperial residence. Blemmydes is known to have had the trust of the imperial court: John III Vatatzes asked him to teach five students, who had been selected by the emperor himself, one of them being George Akropolites.[261] Later he became the tutor of Theodore II Laskaris. His tasks for the communities at Nicaea and Nymphaion show that he also was a prominent figure within the clergy of the patriarchate. He had close ties to both the patriarch and the imperial family and thus, is for the focus of this study a unique witness.

Blemmydes informed his readers that he had been suggested as the successor of the patriarch Germanos, whom Blemmydes esteemed highly. The patriarch himself named him as his favorite candidate to the emperor John III:

> Ἀλλὰ ταῦτα, μετὰ μικρόν· πρὸ δέ γε τούτων, τὴν εἰς Θεὸν ἀνάλυσιν ἐπειγόμενον τὸν πατριάρχην, ἤρετο πρὸς αὐτὸν ἀφιγμένος ὁ βασιλεύς, ἐν τῇ Νικαέων εἶναι τυχών, τίνα πατριαρχῆσαι δεῖν εἰς τοὐπιὸν ἐπιλέγεται. / These events took place shortly afterwards. But beforehand, as the Patriarch was fast approaching his departure towards God, the Emperor, who happened to be in Nicaea, visited him and asked him, whom he would select as the man who ought to be Patriarch for the future.[262]

This talk took place at Nicaea shortly before the death of Germanos II in 1240, and interestingly Blemmydes emphasized that the emperor was at Nicaea by chance – *tuchōn*. From this expression it would seem as if the emperor was not connected to Nicaea in any particular way, contrary to the patriarch, who was residing at Nicaea. If the emperor was present, as in this incident, it just happened because he was on the way to or from somewhere.

[260] Blemmydae, *Opera*, ed. Munitiz, I.35; Blemmydes, *Partial Account*, tr. Munitiz, 63.
[261] Blemmydae, *Opera*, ed. Munitiz, I.49; cf. *Acropolitae*, ed. Heisenberg, §32.
[262] Blemmydae, *Opera*, ed. Munitiz, I.69; Blemmydes, *Partial Account*, tr. Munitiz, 82.

The next passage described the events following the death of John III Vatatzes and the subsequent succession to the throne of his son Theodore. The latter had arrived at Nicaea for the coronation ceremony; however, as the patriarch had also died recently, he first had to appoint a successor for this office:

> Ἐπείγει τοιγαροῦν τὴν χειροτονίαν, καὶ μάλιστα διὰ τὴν τοῦ τῆς βασιλείας χρίσματος τελεσιουργίαν, ὁ τῆς βασιλείας διάδοχος· ἔσπευδε γὰρ καὶ τῆς Νικαέων, ἐπὶ βεβαιώσει τῶν καθεστηκότων καὶ αὐξήσει τοῦ κράτους καὶ προσλήψει δυνάμεως, ἐξελθεῖν· / The heir to the throne was urging haste in the designation, especially for the performance of the rite of imperial anointing. Moreover he wanted to leave Nicaea as soon as possible in order to strengthen his position, increase his sway, and advance his authority.[263]

The rush in which Theodore had been prior to his coronation, was also mentioned by Akropolites.[264] Blemmydes gave an abstract explanation for his hurry: Theodore wanted to ensure his power, which Blemmydes described in three different expressions. From Akropolites we know why: the Bulgarian tsar learned about the death of John III Vatatzes and seized his chance to step in the seeming power vacuum.[265]

Theodore wished to install Blemmydes on the patriarchal throne, Blemmydes however hesitated, fearing the emperor's character:

> ἔωθεν δὲ μεταστειλάμενος ὁ τῷ λόγῳ δεδηλωμένος ἡμᾶς ἡ τῆς τελεσιουργίας ἦν κυρία, καθὼς ἐκείνῳ δέδοκτό τε καὶ ὥριστο, τὴν χειροτονίαν ἡμῖν ἀπαρτισθῆναι κατεπείγει, μηδόλως χρονοτριβήσουσιν· ἦμεν δ' ἄμφω μόνοι πρὸς τὸ ἐνδότερον, καὶ δύο τῶν οἰκειοτέρων αὐτῷ καὶ λογιωτέρων, περὶ τὰς θύρας, ἔξω δὲ κατὰ τὸν ἐν βασιλείοις μέγιστον οἶκον, ὁ τῶν ἀρχιερέων ἵστατο σύλλογος. / At dawn I was summoned by the person to whom I have referred. It was the date appointed and decreed by him for the ceremony. He urged me to accept the appointment and to waste no time whatsoever. We were both in the inner room; two of his closest and most learned ministers were waiting at the door; outside in the largest hall of the palace stood the assembly of bishops.[266]

Blemmydes described quite vividly how he was urged by the emperor to accept the office. Through this passage he delivered the information that the imperial palace named here – *ton en basileiois megiston oikon* – was not only still existing at Nicaea, but also used by the emperor Theodore II Laskaris. The talk took place in the imperial house. As no archaeological remains have survived, Blemmydes' reference is the only

[263] Blemmydae, *Opera*, ed. Munitiz, I.74; Blemmydes, *Partial Account*, tr. Munitiz, 86.
[264] *Acropolitae*, ed. Heisenberg, §53.
[265] *Acropolitae*, ed. Heisenberg, §54. Reading only Blemmydes' comment, it would seem as if Theodore II was under inner political pressure. However, with the combination of Akropolites' more elaborate account regarding the circumstances, it thus turned out to be pressure from outside the realm, that made Theodore rush through the procedures.
[266] Blemmydae, *Opera*, ed. Munitiz, I.76; Blemmydes, *Partial Account*, tr. Munitiz, 87.

evidence to an imperial abode at Nicaea. And here it is even stated that it consisted of more than one hall, since the bishops had gathered in the largest of those.

The next and last reference to Nicaea Blemmydes made was part of the second version of his account, it dated back to the year 1234, in which a discussion between Latin delegates and members of the patriarchal clergy took place:

> Λογίων δε τῷ τηνικάδε κατὰ τὴν τῆς Βιθυνίας μητρόπολιν Νίκαιαν ἐκ τῆς ῥωμαϊκῆς ἐπικρατείας ἐνδεδημηκότων ἀνδρῶν, καί τινων ἐκ ταυτησὶ τῆς Ἑλλάδος συνηθροισμένων διὰ τὸ ἀμφήριστον δόγμα, καὶ αὐτοὶ τῷ τῶν ὑπερεχόντων ἀγόμεθα βουλήματι πρὸς τὸν κοινὸν ἀθροισμόν. Καὶ δὴ τῶν μερῶν ἑκατέρων ἐς ταὐτὸ συνεληλυθότων, ὁ τῶν φιλοσόφων ὕπατος ὁ Καρύκης, αὐτουργὸς τοῦ μετὰ τῶν Ῥωμαίων διαλόγου καθίσταται, τῶν ἄλλων πάντων προκεκριμένος, καὶ μάλιστα παρὰ τοῦ κρατοῦντος· παρῆν γὰρ καὶ οὗτος τῇ συνελεύσει. / At about that time learned men of the Roman obedience were staying at Nicaea, the metropolis of the province of Bithynia. They and some from this Hellas here met together to discuss the dogma under dispute. I was also invited by the authorities to be present at the debate. When the representatives from both sides had assembled, the *hypatos of the philosophers*, Karykes, was appointed plenipotentiary in the discussion with the Roman. He had been chosen in preference to all the others, and especially by the emperor; the latter was also present at the meeting.[267]

This was the first discussion between Latin delegates and members of the patriarchate, which started at Nicaea.[268] It has been referred to above among the quotations of Blemmydes focusing on Nymphaion, since this first gathering had been interrupted and, on invitation of the emperor John III, continued at Nymphaion some months later. It was the prologue to the second discussion with the Latins, which took place entirely at Nymphaion in 1249-50. As has been said, Blemmydes joined the discussion at some point during the debate and in the second version of his account devoted much space to his successful line of argumentation. However, neither did he mention the abrupt departure of the Latin delegates, nor the continuation at Nymphaion.

Blemmydes ended his report on the discussion with his own retreat:

> Τὰ γοῦν τῆς ἀπολογίας ὡς ἐνεχώρει διαπεράναντες, τοῖς μὲν ἐν τῇ καθ’ ἡμᾶς μοίρᾳ, καὶ λόγου μετόχοις καὶ συνέσεως αἱρετά, τοῖς δ’ ἀντιφερομένοις ἀπρόσβλητα δόξαντα, τῆς πατριαρχικῆς ἀθυμίας ἀντιπεριηγμένης ἐς τοὺς ταύτης προξένους ὡς ἔπρεπε, μεταχωροῦμεν ἐκ τῆς Νικαέων ἐς τὰ κατ’ Ἔφεσον / Such was the reply that I was able to present under the circumstances. The learned and intelligent members of my own party judged it acceptable, and my adversaries irrefutable. The patriarch’s

[267] Blemmydae, *Opera*, ed. Munitiz, II.25; Blemmydes, *Partial Account*, tr. Munitiz, 106-07.

[268] Munitiz strictly pointed out that the term Hellas used here referred to the Anatolian provinces within the Laskarid territory and should not be applied to the studies of Hellenism within Byantine scholarship. Blemmydes, *Partial Account*, tr. Munitiz, 107, n35.

> despondency was rightly transferred back to those who had caused it. I then retired from Nicaea and went to live in the region of Ephesos […][269]

The change of location and the actual discussion between the Latin friars and the patriarchal clergy will be part of the third chapter of this study. For the analysis of topography and the focus here on Nicaea the following remarks however should be made: this discussion had been made possible on invitation of the then patriarch Germanos II. Thus, it was only natural that Nicaea had been the venue of this gathering, since this was the city where the patriarch lived. What might have started as a principal discussion on doctrinal matters between papal envoys and members of the patriarchate, turned under the presence of the emperor John III into a tool to regain Constantinople under the condition of supremacy of the pope over the Christian world. John Langdon has analyzed the sources for this gathering extensively and elaborated in detail on the role of John III Vatatzes in it. He coined the term *Realpolitik* for Vatatzes' concern in the debate and summarized that

> Vatatzes had unfortunately *set the precedent* for a fresh chapter in the ecclesiastical tradition of the Pentarchy and deeply held Orthodox religious conviction over the filioque issue – a dynamic that became increasingly clear as the geopolitical position of the Byzantine empire eroded under the Palaiologoi after the accidental recovery of Constantinople […] [270]

The beginning of Vatatzes' *Realpolitik* would ultimately lead to the attempts of Michael VIII Palaiologos to reach a union of the churches at the Second Council of Lyon 1974. A relocation and continuation of the gathering at Nymphaion has therefore to be seen as an eager interest of Vatatzes in the political outcome of this initially theological debate. The assumption Langdon made regarding Blemmydes' absence from the second part of the debate might thus be correct: seemingly John III Vatatzes dismissed theological hardliners such as Blemmydes in order to achieve a compromise with the Latin friars.[271]

Summary

For quite some time of his life, Blemmydes belonged to the patriarchal clergy situated at Nicaea. He was connected through friendship to patriarch Germanos II and

[269] Blemmydae, *Opera*, ed. Munitiz, II.41; Blemmydes, *Partial Account*, tr. Munitiz, 114.

[270] John S. Langdon, "Byzantium in Anatolian exile: Imperial vicegerency reaffirmed during Byzantino-papal discussions at Nicaea and Nymphaion, 1234," *Byzantinische Forschungen* 20 (1994), 197-233, for the quotation 230.

[271] Ibid., 212.

therefore participated in administrative tasks and doctrinal debates. Blemmydes also had gained the trust of the emperor John III and even his son Theodore II, though the relationship to the latter had been troubled. He thus offers in his twin autobiographies a unique insight into patriarchal and imperial agendas.

Through his eyes the function of Nicaea seems quite clear: during the exile this was the city of the patriarch. Here the patriarchal throne had been transferred to, the patriarch became the head of the diocese of Nicaea and thus, occupied a double office. The emperor on the other hand, might have kept an abode there, but his presence at Nicaea was irregular and usually connected to events that took place at Nicaea. The significance of Nicaea as the place of the coronation ceremony is confirmed through his writing. Blemmydes himself explicitly stated about emperor John III Vatatzes that he preferred to reside at Nymphaion. However, Blemmydes first attended the court when John III came to power, and he chose the monastic life during John's reign. Therefore it might be fair to raise the question whether this choice of residence was indeed peculiar to John III Vatatzes. He had been the only emperor during the time when Blemmydes frequented the court, so perhaps Nymphaion as the main residence could be applied to all emperors during the exile.[272]

[272] This had been stated by Akropolites: *Acropolitae*, ed. Heisenberg, §84. For an early establishment of a residence at Nymphaion under Theodore I Laskaris see *Akropolites*, tr. Macrides, 87-88.

B. Pegai – Lampsakos

It will be fruitful to observe the use of Pegai (recent Karabiga) and Lampsakos (recent Lapseki) under the Laskarids in combination, but nevertheless they differ in important aspects. From Byzantine Lampsakos no monumental evidence has survived; the fortification of Pegai on the other hand is still standing in substantial measure. On the eve of the Fourth Crusade Pegai housed a substantial Latin population[273], which cannot be attested for Lampsakos. However, within the frame of this study these two sites can be considered twin locations due to one common ground, namely their strategically advantageous location: both are situated at the southern shore of the Sea of Marmara not too far away from each other. This determined their similar function.

Lampsakos lay on the northwestern rim of the Anatolian peninsula at the Hellespont opposite Kallipolis. Pegai was located roughly 75km further eastwards at the shore of the Sea of Marmara. Here, for a short distance, the coastline is running almost in north-south direction and the site was located on a headland pointing eastwards. Adjacent south of the headland the coast forms a bay, which most probably served as the harbor of Pegai. Both Lampsakos and Pegai have been used as departure and arrival locations for crossing the Sea of Marmara, thus traversing between Europe and Asia.

Placing this aspect within the geopolitical situation created after the Fourth Crusade, the advantageous position becomes apparent: Pegai and Lampsakos were situated at the one of two straits of the Sea of Marmara used for crossing from Europe to Asia, the Hellespont. The other crossing point would have been near Constantinople, namely the Bosporus, which in the decades following 1204 became inaccessible for the Byzantines. The Laskarid core territories were in the western parts of Asia Minor. Their opponents were not only the Latins, then occupying Constantinople in the east; within time they also took up the fight against the Byzantines under the leadership of the Komneno-Doukai that had created the successor state on the Epirote lands to the west. The Laskarids attacked both of them via naval campaigns from Asia Minor, and, as will be shown below, used as points of departure either Lampsakos or Pegai.

[273] *Quellen zur Geschichte des Kreuzzugs Kaiser Friedrichs I.*, ed. Anton Chroust, Monumenta Germaniae historica, Scriptores rerum Germanicarum, nova series vol. 5 (Berlin: Weidmann, 1928), 72; Ekkehard Eickhoff, *Friedrich Barbarossa im Orient, Kreuzzug und Tod Friedrichs I.*, Istanbuler Mitteilungen, Beiheft 17 (Tübingen: Ernst Wasmuth, 1977), 83.

1. Problems regarding the identification of Pegai

Studying Pegai as a historical site turns out problematic. For instance, the exact identification of Byzantine Pegai remains unsolved within scholarly literature. Comparing two handbooks of Ottoman and Byzantine Studies, the identification of Pegai differs: the article in the ODB equats Pegai with the recent village of Karabiga at the southern shore of the Sea of Marmara.[274] A different tradition placed Byzantine Pegai roughly 20km inlands and identified it with the Turkish town of Biga as its modern counterpart, as for instance Ekkehard Eickhoff in his study on the crusade of Frederick Barbarossa.[275] Likewise in the EI² it was Biga, which was taken as the successor of Pegai.[276] In the latter, Karabiga was solely labeled as the former port of the actual settlement of Pegai. The article about Biga in the *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslâm Ansiklopedisi* does not make a bold decision, but mentions both Karabiga and Biga as possible identifications for Pegai.[277] These inconsistent identifications, which were never properly discussed within the scholarly literature, were rooted in difficulties of the textual evidence. Thus, a closer examination of this problem will follow before discussing the archaeological evidence.

References regarding Pegai in western medieval texts

Pegai appeared in western medieval accounts and travel reports describing the crusades in the late twelfth and early thirteenth century and was in those usually referred to as Spigast or Espigal. For instance, it is mentioned in the so-called chronicle of Ansbert as one station on the route of Frederick I Barbarossa to the Holy Land in the year 1190. This passage may have contributed to some confusion regarding the identification of Pegai with recent Karabiga or Biga, thus, the reference needs to be examined: *"ad lęvam nostrum veterem Troiam relinquentes […] Tribus itaque diebus*

[274] Clive Foss, "Pegai," *ODB*, 1615-6.

[275] Ekkehard Eickhoff, *Friedrich Barbarossa im Orient, Kreuzzug und Tod Friedrichs I.*, Istanbuler Mitteilungen, Beiheft 17 (Tübingen: Ernst Wasmuth, 1977), 83: "Da man, wie ausdrücklich belegt ist, auf die längere alte Römerstraße an der Küste entlang über Parion und Oriapos nach Kyzikos verzichtete, blieb nur der Weg von Lampsakos (Lapseki) direkt östlich durch die bewaldeten Bergketten des nördlichen Mysien nach Biga. Auf dieser Strecke verläuft heute eine unbefestigte Straße, und eine Verbindung über Kolonai nach Pegai (Biga) gab es auch im Altertum." This identification relied on the edition of the Latin text of the chronicle in the Monumenta Germania historica, which will be examined below.

[276] Vernon J. Parry, "Bīgha," in *Encyclopaedia of Islam, Second Edition,* 12 vols (Leiden: Brill, 1960-2005), 1209.

[277] Feridun Emecen, "Biga," in *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslâm Ansiklopedisi* (İstanbul: Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı Vakıf Yayınları İşletmesi, 1992), 136-37.

per montuosas et asperas vias progredientes in octava paschę ad civitatem Spigast a Latinis inhabitatam iuxta fluvium Diga castra metati sumus […]".[278] Two characteristics of Spigast, i.e. Pegai, were given in this passage: for one, it housed a Latin population; further, it was situated next to a river called Diga. Most probably Diga is a corruption of Biga, which is the recent name of the ancient Granicus river, now called Biga çay that runs from Mount Ida, recent Kaz Dağ, to the Sea of Marmara. Now, this river is of no help in distinguishing Biga from Karabiga, since it is adjacent to both settlements: Biga lies along its course, Karabiga at its mouth into the Sea of Marmara.

Based on the comments in the edition of the Latin text, Ekkehard Eickhoff interpreted Spigast as the predecessor of recent Biga. He argued that since the ancient site of Troy, which he considered to be Parion, was on the left of their route, they dismissed the ancient road along the coast and instead went through the hilly and rough path inlands from Lampsakos to recent Biga, which is roughly 20km away from the coast. However, as the text said nothing about its exact position, the identification based solely on this remark remains problematic. Fortunately this was not the only western medieval account mentioning Pegai. A comparison with the almost contemporary account of Geoffroy de Villehardouin seemed to suit best, since he also referred to the Latin population of Pegai. The famous chronicler of the Fourth Crusade reported about a crossing of the Sea of Marmara at some time between October 1204 and February 1205:

> (…) et cil s'en partirent a la feste Toz Sainz de Constantinople, et passerent le Braz Sain George a Avie, et vindrent a l'Espigal, une cite qui sor mer siet et ere poplee le Latins; et lors comencierent la guerre contre les Grex. / (…) et ils partirent de Constantinople à la fête de la Toussaint, et passèrent le Bras Saint-Georges à Avie, et arrivèrent à l'Espigal, une cité qui est assise sur la mer et était peuplée de Latins; et alors ils commencèrent la guerre contre les Grecs.[279]

Villehardouin participated in the Fourth Crusade and wrote his eyewitness account at some point after 1207. As in the quoted passage he, too, referred to the Latin community at Pegai, it suggests that he talks about the very same settlement as the

[278] *Quellen zur Geschichte Kaiser Friedrichs I.,* 72.

[279] Geoffroy de Villehardouin, *La conquête de Constantinople,* ed. et tr. Edmond Faral, 2 vols (Paris: Le BellesLettres, 1939), II, §305, 113-115. Regarding Villehardouin's intentions and credibility of writing see Colin Morris, "Geoffroy de Villehardouin and the conquest of Constantinople," *History* 53 (1968), 24-34.

chronicler of Frederick's crusade in 1190. Villehardouin clearly marked Espigal's - that is Pegai's - position as to be situated at the sea.

The same characteristics can be found in the letter written by the Latin emperor Henry of Flanders in 1211 after a campaign in Asia Minor:

> Cumque iam brachium transivissemus nec tamen adhuc omnes milites nostri transivissent, occurit nobis statim Lascarus cum gravi multitudine ante civitatem Spigacii, quam illuc solam habebamus./ After we had crossed the arm and not yet all our soldiers had crossed it, Laskaris confronted us at once with a strong force near the town of Spigacius, which was the only one we still held.[280]

Here the Latin emperor Henry described an attack of Theodore I Laskaris at a critical moment, when not even all the Latin forces had reached the Asian shore. This incident implied that the site of Spigast, i.e. Pegai, was in fact a harbor city, where the soldiers arrived upon crossing "the arm of St. George", the Latin name of the Bosporus in the thirteenth century. He emphasized that it was the only stronghold that had remained in Latin hands by 1212, which was thanks to the Latin community there.

To conclude, based on a survey of western medieval accounts there is one text that remained ambiguous, the so-called chronicle of Ansbert. The critical apparatus of the Latin edition most probably misinterpreted the vague formulation. The modern name Biga is most likely a corruption of Pegai, which however does not prove *per se* that the two settlements are identical. In western contemporary reports there is counter evidence to believe that Pegai, the Latin Spigast, was situated at the shore. Thus, recent Karabiga would be the successor of Pegai. Thus, identification of Pegai with recent Biga might have occurred because of wrong etymological conclusions, the fact that recent Biga is nowadays larger and more prominent than the rather small and perhaps unknown village of Karabiga and that the archaeological remains at Karabiga were only subject of investigation from 1980s onwards, as will be discussed below.

Biga or Karabiga? The archaeological evidence

Ruins of a fortification near recent Karabiga, consisting of several towers, building structures and parts of walls, have survived, which have never been subject to excavations. Hasluck in his publication on Cyzicus published photographs of the

[280] Günter Prinzing, "Der Brief Kaiser Heinrichs von Konstantinopel vom 13. Januar 1212," *Byzantion* 43 (1973), 395-431.

Byzantine fortification at Karabiga in 1910. He noted on modern Biga that "the history of the town is obscure: it seems to have existed beside the maritime settlement of Pegae and to have borne the same name, of which the modern one is a corruption".[281] He went on to describe the ancient city of Priapus and referred to the same as Pegai during its medieval history, linking it with Barbarossa's crusade, the accounts of Niketas Choniates and Geoffroy de Villehardouin.

In two recent articles, based on a survey project in the Troas, this fortification was once again identified as the citadel of Byzantine Pegai.[282] In the publications, Ch. Brian Rose et alii summarized the history of the region and interpreted the relation between Biga and Karabiga in the following way: in fourteenth century Ottoman administration Suleiman Pasha received the province of the Hellespont from his father Orhan I, established his center of power at Biga as the location of his capital and named it after the abandoned fortification of Pegai further north at the shore.[283] Based on this it would seem that Biga was a fourteenth century Ottoman foundation. The identification of the remains at Karabiga as those of Byzantine Pegai rests on a rough dating of the construction phases of the fortification in the Komnenian and Laskarid periods. For the Laskarid period, a resemblance to the reconstructed walls of Nicaea, which were of Laskarid commission, was observed.[284]

Earlier publications, based solely on observation, which referred to the remains at Karabiga as Byzantine Pegai dated them in slightly different ways: Wolfgang Müller-Wiener suggested an initial construction in the seventh to ninth century, which was substantially reconstructed in the early Palaiologan era.[285] Clive Foss and David Winfield in their joint study on Byzantine fortifications took the archaeological remains as the remnants of Byzantine Pegai without discussing textual references regarding the town in detail. Thus, no reference to a further adjacent settlement with the same name appeared.[286] Foss and Winfield likewise observed two phases of construction, but, based on comparison with the walls at Nicaea and Pontic Heracleia, date both into the

[281] Frederick William Hasluck, *Cyzicus* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1910), 97.

[282] Ch. B. Rose, Billur Tekkök, Reyhan Körpe et al., "Granicus river valley survey project, 2004–2005," *Studia Troica* 17 (2000), 65-150; William Aylward, "The Byzantine fortifications at Pegae (Priapus) on the Sea of Marmara," *Studia Troica* 16 (2007), 179-203.

[283] Rose et al., "Granicus river valley, 2004–2005," 72. Unfortunately no Ottoman sources were mentioned for the foundation of Biga.

[284] Aylward, "Pegae," 199.

[285] Wolfgang Müller-Wiener, "Pegai-Karabiga," 169-76.

[286] Foss and Winfield, *Byzantine Fortifications*, 154-55.

Laskarid period. They admitted that a more conclusive answer cannot be given without excavation, but it might be stated that building activity for this site has been proposed to originate in part from the thirteenth century. In both studies – Foss and Winfield and also Müller-Wiener – based on the archaeological evidence, the identification of Pegai with recent Karabiga was taken for granted.

To conclude, focusing on archaeological evidence alone, the site of Karabiga seems to have housed a substantial Byzantine site, whereas until now no such evidence is known from Biga. Apart from its name no archaeological sources have been mobilized to identify Byzantine Pegai with recent Biga. That suggests that evidence for an identification of Pegai with Karabiga is substantial, whereas the alternative of Biga seems to have been based on a misunderstanding of texts, ignorance of archaeological data and a misguided association of the name Biga and Pegai.[287]

As a result of analysis regarding the identification of Pegai, in the following Karabiga is taken as the successor of Byzantine Pegai on the same spot.

2. Settings

Pegai is situated at the southern shore of the Sea of Marmara. Here the Anatolian coast protrudes north into the Sea of Marmara and along the eastern shoreline of this protrusion some small part of the terrain is shaped like a little triangle pointing eastward. The fortification had been built on this triangle, using the shores formed by a rough cliff to the north and a bay on its southeastern flank as natural defense and harbor respectively. From bird's-eye perspective, the shape resembles – though in much smaller scale – the peninsula of Constantinople.

The surrounding landscape can be described as hilly, but Pegai was not placed on the highest point within the region. Nevertheless the site was chosen well: the cliff flanking to the north made the site easily defensible, also the natural triangular shape of the headland required only one strong man-made defense structure to protect the settlement. Given the power struggles of this region in the 13th century, the aspect of a well defensible site cannot be stressed enough. Another advantage was its position at the sea shore: Pegai as a port city provided the option of travel by sea and naval campaigns, both of which will be aspects of the text analysis below.

[287] It is interesting to note that neither philologists nor archaeologists seem to have made much use of the other's findings.

3. Pegai - Historical overview

Pegai appeared frequently in sources of the Laskarid period as an imperial focal point. A fortification, apparently substantially rebuilt by the Laskarid emperors, had been identified as the remains of medieval Pegai. Yet, these two sources were rarely combined and mentioned in the context of Laskarid history. Regarding its history, Pegai became prominent during the twelfth and thirteenth century. The settlement changed hands several times during the exile period. The Crusaders took Pegai in 1204, supported by the large Latin community that had settled in the town from the 12th century.[288] In 1211, the Latins defeated an attempt of Theodore I Laskaris to regain the city, but it fell to John III Vatatzes in 1225 through a peace treaty.[289] The Latins briefly recaptured it once more in 1233.[290] For the power struggles within the 13th century, the site is of strategic significance.

Pegai is commonly considered to be the medieval successor of the Hellenistic city of Priapos, because in all likelihood Pegai had been built on the same spot.[291] However, until now this could not be backed up by archaeological evidence, since no traces of Priapus have been found. At the same time scholars presumed that in all probability there was no continuous inhabitation from Hellenistic to Late Byzantine times. A resettlement of this particular spot might be connected to its strategic position and its link with the ancient road system. Speros Vryonis pointed out that under Komnenian rule in various parts of the empire a recolonization took place, which started under Alexios I after the reconquest of the coastal regions in Asia Minor from the Seljuks and continued throughout the twelfth century. Both Greek and foreign settlers have been employed in the repopulation process. However, due to the lack of direct

[288] Regarding the Latin community at Pegai, see Nicitae Choniatae, *Historia*, ed. Jan van Dieten, Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae, Series Berolinensis 11.1. (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1975), 601: […]ἀλλ' ἐς Ἀσίαν ταύτην διαβιβάσαι καὶ τῶν ἐκεῖ πειράσασθαι πόλεων, ἐξερεθισθεὶς εἰς τόδε τὸ ἔργον πρός τε τῶν Ἑλλησποντίων Λατίνων, ὧν ἡ πόλις Πηγαὶ κατωνόμασται, καὶ τῶν Τρωϊκῶν Ἀρμενίων· For the encouragement of the Latin inhabitants to conquer Pegai see also *Scutariotes*, ed. Heisenberg, addidamenta no. 2, 277, who seems to have followed Choniates' report, since he also mentions the Armenians in the Troad. Also as discussed above *Villehardouin*, ed. Faral, 115. That the Latins had taken possession of Pegai after 1204, is indirectly transmitted through the remark in the letter written by Henry of Flanders dated to 1212, when he remarked about Spigacii *"quam illuc solam habebamus"*. See Günter Prinzing, "Der Brief Heinrichs," 415 line 112.

[289] For the peace treaty see Hendrickx, *Regestes*, no.158, 107-8.

[290] This is mentioned in *Acropolitae*, ed. Heisenberg, §30. See also the evaluation of textual references regarding Pegai below.

[291] Hasluck, *Cyzicus*, 98-100.

evidence it cannot be verified, whether or not the Latin community of Pegai dated back to such an intentional repopulation.[292]

4. The remains at Pegai

In 2004/5 the Penn Museum conducted "The Granicus River Valley Archaeological Survey Project" which focused on an area of northwestern Turkey which was controlled by both Greeks and Persians during the first millennium BCE. It represented the first attempt to record and map both the settlements and burial mounds in this region. The ruins of the fortification near Karabiga fell within the survey area and the results of its investigation were published by William Aylward in 2006. The fieldwork at the site comprised measurement, photography, total station surveying and remote sensing (magnetometry and radar). Thus, it is a recent and for this enterprise an excellent study to gain latest information regarding the site and it will be the basis of the following description. Aylward himself used in its outline the ground plan published by Wolfgang Müller-Wiener in 1989, thereby following the latter in the numbering of towers (Fig. P. 1).[293]

The actual remains of Pegai consisted of a double wall furnished with a significant number of towers stretching in north-south direction, thereby separating the triangle shaped territory from the hinterland (Fig. P. 2). On its northern end it merges with the cliff, here further collapsed building structures and the remains of at least one cistern can be found. Towards its southern end the terrain slopes down nearly to sea level, here the wall opens in a narrow gate.

Masonry, used material and construction technique

Generally, the materials used are fieldstones and ashlars with brick or broken brick for facing, mortar mixed with rubble used for filling of walls and towers, as well as solely brick mortar facing. In the cisterns the inner walls are coated with plaster and pottery shards. Occasionally marble pieces and *spolia* can be seen. Quite visible all over the site are inserted sockets and cavities into the fabric of the walls and towers indicating former wooden beams that were part of the original construction. Beams

[292] See Speros Vryonis, *The Decline of Medieval Hellenism in Asia Minor and the Process of Islamization from the Eleventh through the Fifteenth Century* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971), 216-222, esp. 218 and n450.

[293] Wolfgang Müller-Wiener, "Pegai-Karabiga," 169-176; Aylward, "Pegae".

might have been used both during the initial set up of the walls and towers and also used as reinforcement components.

The walls

The defense construction consists of a double wall: a curtain wall punctuated by a number of towers runs, winding slightly, north south, following thereby a natural crest through the hills; in front of that, separated by a ditch, runs another lower wall, a so-called *proteichisma* (Fig. P. 3).[294] Müller-Wiener counted 24 towers, from which Aylward was able to indentify only 16.[295] The numbering of the towers starts from the south with number 1 and ends with number 24 to the north. Additional three towers were identified within the enclosure: two overlooking the cliff in the northeast and one situated at the southern corner of the upper terrace in proximity to tower 18.

Aylward divides the enclosure into three subsequent terraces sloping down the terrain.[296] In the northern most corner, where the defense wall meets the cliff, lies the highest point of the terrain enclosed by the wall.

The towers

The towers that are still standing did not survive in their full body. That is to say, seen from the outside of the fortification, the façade is prominent and suggests more or less a substantial building. From the inside however, the opposite wall has collapsed and thus the interior of the lower and upper space inside the tower is visible (Fig. P. 4).

Each of the towers still standing has a clear joint indicating two phases of construction (Fig. P. 5). The joint separates on ground level an inner round tower from an outer pentagonal coat. The inner tower is constructed with a mortar-rubble filling and a facing consisting of ashlars and field stones framed by brick. This facing can be seen clearly in the inner space of towers and slightly indicated from the side at the joint (Fig. P. 5). The same facing appears at the supporting wall near the upper terrace and inside of building structures on the terrace. In the latter case occasionally bricks inserted into the facing are forming a simple but clearly visible pattern.

The outer coat of the towers, which is almost doubling the width of each tower, is dominated by the large quantity of bricks used (Fig. P. 6). This does not exclude the use of ashlars, which can be observed especially in the lower parts of the façade, but

[294] For *proteichisma* see Foss, "Fortifications" *ODB*, 798-799.
[295] See Aylward, "Pegae," 180, the comment below the photograph.
[296] Aylward, "Pegae," 180.

definitely the more expensive utilization of brick was preferred. Otherwise the facing consists mainly of mortar and brick, the filling of this coat consists likewise of mortar and rubble. The pentagonal brick coat extends upwards to a second level, inside the ceiling of the upper room is domed entirely made from brick (Fig. P. 4).

Phases of construction

Based on his first-hand observations, Aylward detects three phases of construction. During the first phase, round shaped towers, walls and the fortification itself on the upper terrace were erected, the towers had one single floor and a facing of broken brick and field stones.[297]

During the second phase the towers received a second "coat" in pentagonal shape made from brick on the front side, the joint still clearly visible. Additionally, these towers received a second level. Only after the refurbishment of the towers was the *proteichisma* added; the indication for this sequence is the fact that the *proteichisma* curves around the shape of the pentagonal towers. This Aylward labels as phase three, although he admits that it might be actually part of the overall reconstruction scheme.[298] Important to note is his remark, that the round shaped towers actually show no sign of decay at the time of their refurbishment: they were intact and functioning and most probably considered insufficient.[299]

Dating

After a discussion of previous suggested dates for the construction of the remains at Pegai, Aylward came forth with the following proposal: He dated the first phase into the reign of John Komnenos (1118-1143) based on comparison of masonry technique with the remains at Lopadion.[300] The second phase he dated into the first half of the thirteenth century. Historically, both the Latin occupation of the town and the reign of John III Vatatzes are possible periods of the execution of this second phase. An

[297] The facing of this first phase of towers is important, since it proves that once this façade had been visible – the masons had put an effort in their appearance. It determines the sequence of construction. This contradicts Haslucks interpretation of the towers published 1910, see Aylward, "Pegae," 198.

[298] Aylward, "Pegae," 199.

[299] Ibid.

[300] Aylward refers here to the article including Lopadion of Clive Foss, "The defenses of Asia Minor against the Turks," *The Greek Orthodox Theological Review* 36 (1982), 145-205; reprint in ibid., *Cities, fortresses and villages in Asia Minor* (Aldershot: Variorum, 1996). However, Foss does not give a reference for John Komnenos being the commissioner of the fortification at Lopadion. It can be found in *Ioannis Cinnami epitome rerum ab Joanne et Alexio Comnenis gestarum*, ed. Augustus Meinecke, Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae 25 and 26 (Bonn: Weber, 1836), book II, 5.

argument for the latter would be a comparison of similar construction techniques at the walls of Pegai with those at Nicaea, which are securely known to have been reconstructed by John III. As a third phase he labeled the final construction of the *proteichisma*, adding that "Phases 2 and 3 make sense as consecutive components of a single plan for refurbishment, with the addition of the *proteichisma* logically following upon the completion of the last of the intended pentagonal towers to the main wall."[301]

It can thus be concluded that Aylward dated the remains at Pegai based on comparison of style and construction techniques. The archaeological evidence showed a significant revision and strengthening of the defense system at Pegai in the times of severe power struggles after 1204. His analysis appears accurate and trustworthy, yet, it does not go beyond the archaeological scope. Even though the history of Pegai offers additional textual references, not much has been made out of them.

5. Pegai in the account of Akropolites

Pegai made its first appearance in the *History* of Akropolites during the peace negotiations dated to 1225 between John III Vatatzes and the Latin empire of Constantinople, then ruled by Robert of Courtenay:

> Εἰς συνθήκας δὲ θελήσαντες οἱ Ἰταλοὶ ἐλθεῖν ἀπέλυσαν πρὸς τὸν βασιλέα καὶ τὸ τῶν Πηγῶν ἄστυ. καὶ οὕτω δὴ μετ' αὐτῶν ὁ βασιλεὺς Ἰωάννης εἰρήνευσε, πάντων τῶν πρὸς νότον ὑποχωρησάντων αὐτῷ τῶν Λατίνων, ἔτι δὲ κρατούντων τὰ πρὸς βορρᾶν τὰ πλησίον ὄντα τῆς Κωνσταντίνου καὶ τῇ τοῦ Νικομήδους πόλει ἐγγίζοντα. / Since the Italians wished to come to an agreement they ceded to the emperor also the town of Pegai. And so the emperor John made peace with them in this way, the Latins surrendering to him everything towards the south, while they still kept the land to the north that is next to the city of Constantine and is near the city of Nikomedes.[302]

As Akropolites reported in the preceding section, soon after John III Vatatzes had ascertained the throne, he started to attack the Latin army stationed on Anatolian soil near the town of Poimanenon. There Vatatzes achieved a victory, and during the peace negotiations he received, as quoted above, among others the town of Pegai.[303] This effectively meant a retreat on behalf of the Latins from western Asia Minor; as Akropolites pointed out later in the passage, the only possessions in Asia Minor that

[301] Aylward, "Pegae," 199.
[302] *Acropolitae*, ed. Heisenberg, §24; *Akropolites*, tr. Macrides, 171.
[303] The treaty is dated to 1224: Hendrickx, *Regestes* no. 158, 107-8.

remained in Latin hands were opposite Constantinople and around Nicomedia. *De facto* Vatatzes conquered the whole region south of the Sea of Marmara to the west, but the only stronghold that Akropolites mentioned by name – maybe because it was considered the most important one - was Pegai.

Crucial for a firm consolidation of the Latin empire of Constantinople would have been to keep its enemies at bay, if not to eliminate them. After the initial success of the first years after 1204 it was exactly what the Latin empire did not achieve in the long run, leading to the decline of Latin power in the region. To hold Vatatzes' forces in check would have meant to ban them to an area deep down in Anatolian territory and to maintain a firm grip on the coastal areas south of the Sea of Marmara. By recovering the strategically crucial straits of the Hellespont and the coast of the Sea of Marmara including the harbor city of Pegai Vatatzes seemed to have understood that. The consequence for the Latin empire was severe: based in Constantinople on European soil they had no close harbor on the Asian side near the territory held by Vatatzes, for the Latin forces strategically a major disadvantage for launching an attack.

The next passage referring to Pegai dates to 1233 and dealt likewise with conflicts between Latin and Laskarid forces. The above stressed disadvantage of the Latin empire regarding territorial losses in Asia Minor became apparent during the following military campaign, where the Latins tried to engage in battle on Anatolian territory:

> ὀλίγον οὖν χρόνον διαβιβάσαντες ἐν τῇ τοῦ βασιλέως παραιγιαλίῳ χώρᾳ—οὔπω γὰρ παρέδραμον τέτταρες μῆνες—καὶ ὀλίγον τόπον πατήσαντες—ἀπὸ γὰρ τῆς Λαμψάκου μέχρι καὶ τῶν Κεχρεῶν ἀφίκοντο—μικρὸν ἢ μηδὲν λυμήναντες προύφθασε γὰρ ὁ βασιλεὺς τὰ χρειώδη πάντα τοῖς ὑψηλοτέροις τόποις διασώσασθαι—περὶ τὸ τῶν Πηγῶν ἐχώρησαν ἄστυ, ἓν μόνον φρούριον χειρωσάμενοι, ὃ Κεραμιδᾶς ὀνομάζεται, περί που τοὺς βουνοὺς διακείμενον τῆς Κυζίκου. εἶχον δὲ τὰς ναῦς αὐτῶν ἑτοίμους εἰς τὴν Κωνσταντίνου παλινοστῆσαι, καὶ ᾤχοντο ἂν αἰσχύνης καὶ ζημίας πεπληρωμένοι, εἰ μὴ τοῦ τῶν Πηγῶν ἄστεος περιεγένοντο τῇ κλοπῇ. ἀνὴρ γάρ τις δεινὸς ἀναρριχᾶσθαι πρὸς ἀκρωνυχίας πετρῶν ὁδὸν ἐφεῦρε, δι' ἧς ὡπλισμένους Λατίνους εἰς τὴν ἀκρόπολιν νυκτὸς ἀνεβίβασεν· / After they had passed a short time on the emperor's coastal land – four months had not yet passed – and had covered a small area – from Lampsakos they got as far as Kenchrai – causing little or no destruction (for the emperor had managed to preserve all the necessities safe in higher places), they withdrew to the town of Pegai, having captured only one fortress which is called Keramidas and is situated near the mountains of Kyzikos. They had their ships ready to sail back to the city of Constantine, and they might have departed filled with shame and loss, if they had not overcome the town of Pegai by stealth. For one man, skilful at clambering up to

> the ridges of rocks, found a path by which he brought armed Latins up to the citadel at night.[304]

Latin forces had set sail towards Anatolia, but had no safe ground to land and to set up a base, since the coast was under control of Vatatzes and its inhabitants hostile towards the Latin forces, as described by Akropolites. He further remarked that Vatatzes had only few men at his disposal, but nevertheless by strategic means he hindered the enemy from conquering any significant stronghold.[305] Pegai was described here as a citadel difficult to conquer. However, as the Latins had a talented guide who showed them a path through the rocks, they were able to set foot on the citadel of Pegai briefly. Given the terrain near the remains of the fortification at recent Karabiga, most probably the Latin forces entered Pegai from the north. Here the coast is determined by rocky cliffs and slopes, which made access to the town challenging. The very fact that Akropolites mentioned this short reconquest of Pegai by the Latins might have been an indication of its strategic importance for both sides. Yet, the Latin occupation of Pegai was short-lived. Pegai remained a Laskarid possession until the reconquest of Constantinople in 1261.

Another observation that can be made on the basis of the passage is that the Latins were about to sail back to Constantinople when they found a way to reach Pegai over the cliffs. The statement indicates that from the west coast of Asia Minor back to Constantinople the Latins preferred the sea over the land route. For the moment it must remain open whether this was due to the difficult terrain, speed of ships or other constraints, yet it appears to have been the preferred means of travel.

In 1241 John III Vatatzes set out towards Thessaloniki to besiege the city and subdue John Komnenos Doukas, who ruled over that city. While engaged in these military operations, in the far east of Anatolia the Mongols advanced into Anatolia, thereby clashing with the Rūm-Seljuks. John III Vatatzes learned about it when negotiating with John Komnenos Doukas:

> καὶ ὁ λόγος φθάνει πρὸς τὸν βασιλέα, διαμηνυθεὶς παρὰ τοῦ υἱέος αὐτοῦ τοῦ βασιλέως Θεοδώρου· τοῦτον γὰρ καταλελοίπει περὶ τὰ μέρη τῶν Πηγῶν διατρίβειν […] / Word reached the emperor who was informed by his son, the emperor

[304] *Acropolitae*, ed. Heisenberg, §30; *Akropolites*, tr. Macrides, 190. Kenchreai mentioned here is according to Pachymeres at the Skamander: *Pachymeres*, ed. Failer, II, 613; see also William Ramsay, *The historical geography of Asia Minor* (London: John Murray, 1890), 162.

[305] For more information regarding Vatatzes' small force see below the discussion of §28 in the section regarding Lampsakos.

> Theodore. The emperor John had left Theodore behind to reside in the region of Pegai […][306]

John III had left his son Theodore behind on Asian soil at Pegai. Since it was unclear whether or not the Mongols could turn into a danger for the Laskarid realm, John III sped up his negotiations and headed back to Asia Minor.

No clue was given as to why Theodore, the future emperor, had remained at Pegai. A reason could have been the strategic importance of Pegai: it was crucial for the Laskarid emperors to keep the town and in fact the region within their domain, partly as departure and arrival sites for campaigns leading across the Hellespont, partly to prevent the Latins from re-gaining an access into Anatolia. So perhaps Theodore had orders to protect the shore from possible Latin invasions while John III was engaged in affairs at Thessaloniki.[307]

The next quotation directly followed upon the previous one, here John III returned from his affairs in the Balkans to Asia Minor:

> Ὁ μὲν οὖν βασιλεὺς Ἰωάννης κατειλήφει τὴν ἕω. τὴν γοῦν χειμερινὴν τότε παραμείψας ὥραν ἐν τῷ Νυμφαίῳ, ὡς ἔθος ἦν αὐτῷ, ἀπάρας ἐκεῖθεν περὶ τὴν Λάμψακον ᾔει· κἀκεῖσε τὸ θέρος διαβιβάσας καὶ τὴν τῆς ὀπώρας ὥραν, ἐπεὶ ὁ χειμὼν ἤρξατο, τοῦ χώρου μεταβὰς περὶ τὰ τῶν Πηγῶν ἐχώρει μέρη. μεγίστου δὲ χειμῶνος πεπείραται καθ’ ὁδόν, ἀρξαμένου μὲν ἐπὰν ὁ βασιλεὺς εἰς τὴν Σιγρηνὴν ἐσκήνωσεν· […] ὁ μὲν οὖν βασιλεὺς ἐν τῷ τῶν Πηγῶν ἄστει διημερεύσας, μέχρις ἂν τὸ πολὺ τοῦ χειμῶνος λωφήσῃ, ἐξιὼν ἐκεῖθεν εἰς τὸ Νύμφαιον ἀπῄει, καὶ ἦν ἐκεῖσε μέχρι καὶ τῆς τοῦ ἔαρος ἐπιλάμψεως. / The emperor John arrived in the east. He then spent the winter season in Nymphaion as was his custom; leaving from there, he went to the area of Lampsakos. There he spent the summer and the autumn season, but when winter set in, moving from the place, he left for the region of Pegai. He was tested by a great storm on the way which began when he encamped at Sigrene. […] The emperor passed the day in the town of Pegai until the worst of the storm abated and, leaving there, he went to Nymphaion and stayed there until the brightening of the spring.[308]

The passage is obscure since Akropolites named the residential sites on the travel route of the emperor over the entire year starting with the winter 1241/42 until the winter of 1242/43, but did not provide a clear account of what the emperor was doing or

[306] *Acropolitae*, ed. Heisenberg, §40; *Akropolites*, tr. Macrides, 216.

[307] Macrides hinted at the proposal made first by John Langdon that Theodore might have planned an attack on Constantinople: Akropolites, tr. Macrides, 216 and 219 n20. This is based on Langdon's study of Vatatzes' military operations in the beginning of his reign: John S. Langdon, *Byzantium's Last Imperial Offensive in Asia Minor, The documentary evidence for and hagiographical lore about John III Ducas Vatatzes' Crusade against the Turks, 1222 or 1225 to 1231* (New Rochelle: Caratzas, 1992).

[308] *Acropolitae*, ed. Heisenberg, §41; *Akropolites*, tr. Macrides, 220.

why he was traveling. The emperor took up residence at Nymphaion, Lampsakos, Pegai and Nymphaion again. Only for Nymphaion Akropolites added that the emperor moved there for the winter season out of habit, he stressed it by naming it as the imperial winter quarters for the two winter seasons listed. Thus, whether Lampsakos and Pegai were regular seasonal residences must at this point remain an open question, even more so since the spring, summer and autumn were usually the periods for military campaigns and thus, the ones in which the emperor would travel wherever warfare would lead him to.

The next reference to Pegai features prominently, since here an imperial betrothal was celebrated. John III arranged a betrothal between his granddaughter Maria, daughter of Theodore II, and the son of the despot Michael Doukas, Nikephoros by name, to seal a peace agreement:

> Ὁ μὲν οὖν βασιλεὺς Ἰωάννης μετὰ τοῦ δεσπότου Μιχαὴλ συνθήκας πεποίηκε καὶ εἰς κήδους κοινωνίαν συνῆλθε· τὸν γὰρ τοῦ Μιχαὴλ υἱὸν Νικηφόρον ἐπὶ τὴν θυγατέρα τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ τοῦ βασιλέως Θεοδώρου τὴν Μαρίαν γαμβρὸν ἠγάγετο. καὶ ἡ τούτου γαμετὴ Θεοδώρα τὸν Νικηφόρον μεθ' ἑαυτῆς λαβοῦσα εἰς τὴν ἕω διαπεραιοῦται καὶ περὶ τὰ μέρη τῶν Πηγῶν τῷ βασιλεῖ διάγοντι ἐντυγχάνει, καὶ ἡ τῶν παίδων μνηστεία γεγένηται. / The emperor John made a treaty with the despot Michael and joined with him in an alliance of marriage. He brought as a bridegroom for Maria, the daughter of his son, the emperor Theodore, Michael's son Nikephoros. Theodora, the wife of Michael, taking Nikephoros with her, crossed over to the east and met with the emperor, who was staying in the region of Pegai, and the betrothal of the children took place.[309]

Theodore Komnenos Doukas had himself installed as ruler of Epiros as early as 1215. After he took Thessaloniki in 1224, he had himself crowned as emperor. [310] He was captured and imprisoned by the Bulgarians in 1230 and released only in 1237.[311] His realm meanwhile had split into two parts: Michael Komnenos Doukas, nephew to Theodore Komnenos Doukas, had installed himself as the ruler at Arta; the sons of Theodore had reigned over Thessaloniki.[312] After his return Theodore supported his sons John and Demetrios as rulers of Thessaloniki and remained a rival of the Laskarid emperors until his death. His nephew Michael followed a different policy: he sought for

[309] *Acropolitae*, ed. Heisenberg, §49; *Akropolites*, tr. Macrides, 249.

[310] For the coronation see Bernhard Sinogowitz, "Über das Byzantinische Kaisertum nach dem vierten Kreuzzuge (1204-1205)," *BZ* 45 (1952), 345-56.

[311] Gardner, *Lascarids*, 140-143.

[312] Gardner, *Lascarids*, 145. She added that even though they were ruled by two parties, these two were not necessarily opposed to each other.

coexistence and joined in a marriage alliance with the Laskarid dynasty, as Akropolites reported. The betrothal and the peace agreement took place in 1252.

Now, marriage arrangements of the imperial family with another ruling house were official imperial acts of foreign policy. Kinship by marriage could turn a potential enemy into an ally and was more often than not an instrument of sealing peace treaties.[313]

In this case it was an attempt of John III Vatatzes to ensure the loyalty and subjugation of Michael II, ruler of Epiros, to whom he offered the title of despot.[314] This betrothal belonged to the acts of foreign policy of John III Vatatzes. As Pegai was chosen to house this important event, presumably a church had existed at Pegai and maybe also the patriarch, as in the case of the marriage between Theodore II and the Bulgarian princess Helen, conducted the service.[315] Following the description of Akropolites, apparently the union of the children was witnessed not by Michael II himself, but only by his wife Theodora, who had crossed the Hellespont. This arrangement mirrored the one of the wedding of Theodore II exactly: Also there the Bulgarian ruler had sent only his wife over the Hellespont, just that the celebration had taken place at Lampsakos, not at Pegai.[316]

Interestingly two marriage agreements with foreign ruler took place at sites near the Hellespont. Akropolites in his description of the betrothal between Maria and Nikephoros added that Theodora, the wife of Michael II, "οἴκαδε ὑπεχώρησε παρὰ τὸν αὐτῆς σύζυγον Μιχαήλ, προσηκόντως φιλοφρονηθέντες παρὰ τοῦ βασιλέως. / departed for home, to her husband, having been treated kindly, as was fitting, by the emperor."[317] The remark of Akropolites, how well-mannered John III attended Theodora, could imply that this was not necessarily obvious. In fact it might hint at the possibility that the Komneno-Dukai did not trust the situation entirely; even more reason for Akropolites to point out that John III behaved well toward Theodora and

[313] See as a recent study for this period, though focused on the Latin side, Michael Angold, "The Latin Empire of Constantinople, 1204-1261: marriage strategies," in *Identities and Allegiances in the eastern Mediterranean after 1204*, ed. Judith Herrin and Guillaume Saint-Guillain (Farnham: Ashgate, 2011), 47-67.

[314] The actual date of bestowing the title is subject to discussion, see *Akropolites*, tr. Macrides, 251 with possible dates.

[315] See the discusson of that event among the references regarding Lampsakos further below.

[316] *Acropolitae*, ed. Heisenberg, §33. That passage is part of the analysis regarding Lampsakos below.

[317] *Acropolitae*, ed. Heisenberg, §49; Akropolites, tr. Macrides, 249.

thus, had acted as a trustful partner. This impression was even more stressed when in the following Akropolites continued with a report how Michael II on the other hand soon afterwards broke the treaty and attacked John III on European soil.[318] It turned out that Michael was not to be trusted.

This might serve as an explanation why Pegai and at another occasion Lampsakos were the sites of marriage arrangements: The proximity to the Sea and to the border of Laskarid territory might have been taken as a gesture of honest intensions on behalf of John III, as Akropolites wanted to indicate for his audience. There was no plan to lure members of a foreign ruling dynasty deep down into the Laskarid realm, to take them into captivity. Quite the contrary, they were treated well and were free to leave after the ceremony had taken place. As a consequence, generally the choice of location for sealing peace agreements could have played a major factor in foreign politics and might have been singled out intentionally.

The last time Pegai appears in Akropolites' account has been quoted and discussed already above during the analysis of Nymphaion, since both settlements were named here:[319]

> Διαπεράσας γοῦν ὁ βασιλεὺς τὸν Ἑλλήσποντον, τὰ τῶν Πηγῶν κατέλαβε μέρη κἀκεῖσε τὰς διατριβὰς ἐποιεῖτο. ἐπεὶ δὲ ὁ τοῦ θέρους παρῄει καιρός, ἀλλά γε δὴ καὶ ὁ τῆς ὀπώρας ἐρρύη, τῶν τοιούτων ἀπάρας χώρων πρὸς τὴν ἐξ ἔθους τοῖς βασιλεῦσιν οὖσαν ἀνάπαυσιν, ἐξ ὅτου τῆς Κωνσταντίνου γεγόνασιν ὑπερόριοι / When the emperor had crossed the Hellespont, he arrived at the region of Pegai and dwelt there. Since the summer season had passed and autumn also, he left from those lands and arrived at Nymphaion, which was the customary place of relaxation of the emperors from the time when they were banished from the city of Constantine.[320]

It constitutes the central reference where the author described how Michael VIII Palaiologos, then the new emperor, took residence first in Pegai for the summer, then in Nymphaion for the winter period with the explanation that this was the usual custom during the exile period. Akropolites spelled out nowhere clearer than here the itineracy of the emperors. It constitutes a vital passage for this study. It becomes apparent that traveling itinerant was based on seasonal pattern; the stations of the route were situated

[318] *Acropolitae*, ed. Heisenberg, §49.

[319] But as the previous excerpt focused on Nymphaion, I excerpted the quotation differently, thus, it will be repeated here with the emphasis on Pegai.

[320] *Acropolitae*, ed. Heisenberg, §84; Akropolites, tr. Macrides, 369.

in different regions; furthermore, it was practiced by all emperors over the entire period of the exile.

Summary

The site of Byzantine Pegai houses the remains of a strong fortification that had been reinforced at some point during the thirteenth century. Its design reflects that of the city walls of recent İznik, which are securely known to have been refurbished under John III Vatatzes. Pegai was traded to John III during peace negotiations with the Latins in 1225, but remained a desired location for the Latins even after they had ceded it to John III, because it provided a harbor and thus a naval entrance to western Asia Minor. Pegai was used as a seasonal residence by John III and Theodore II at least once each during their reign. An important marriage alliance was forged here at some time between 1248 and 1250 between the Laskarid and the Komnenos-Doukas dynasty. Thus, it served as the stage for a diplomatic act.

6. Lampsakos in the account of Akropolites

The site of Lampsakos stands out in this investigation due to the fact that no Byzantine remains have ever been located there. Lampsakos has never been abandoned as a settlement, the recent Turkish town of Lapseki had most probably buried its ancient, Byzantine and early Ottoman past underneath.[321] Lampsakos was founded as a Greek colony and was situated at a narrow point of the Hellespont opposite Kallipolis.

Lampsakos was one of the sites Akropolites mentioned quite frequently in his *History* as one major stage of imperial presence and activity, as will be seen in the following. The site made its first appearance during the early reign of John III Vatatzes:

> ἐν τῇ Λαμψάκῳ δὲ διάγων μανθάνει ταῦτα. πυρὶ γοῦν τὰς τριήρεις καταναλώσας, ἵνα μὴ τοῖς Ἰταλοῖς ὑπὸ χεῖρα γένοιντο, καὶ προυργιαίτερον τὸν ἔσωθεν πόλεμον κρίνας τοῦ ἔξωθεν, ἀπάρας ἐκεῖθεν περὶ τὴν Ἀχυράους ἀφίκετο κἀκεῖσε τὴν ἐξέτασιν τῆς ἐπιβουλῆς ἐποιήσατο. / He [John III Vatatzes] learned about it when he was

[321] When I visited the town in 2008, officers of the town hall showed me around and pointed to the oldest remains of their settlement – early Ottoman structures. I could spot some *spolia*, former capitals or marble plates, in court yards, used as water basins or flower pots. Through talks to Nurretin Aslan, a Classical archaeologist from Canakkale University, I learned that some two or three meters of what could have been a wall of the ancient harbor may have survived somewhere in the town, but I was unable to locate them myself. All other remains of earlier periods are probably lost, since the site was continuously inhabited since its foundation.

> residing in Lampsakos. Thereupon he destroyed the triremes with fire so that they would not fall into the hands of the Italians and, judging the internal war to be of more importance than the external one, he left from there and went to the area of Achyraous, and there he made an investigation of the plot.[322]

This incident took place around 1224 only shortly after John III came to power in 1221. John III accession to the throne had been seen with envious eyes by brothers of Theodore I Laskaris.[323] What John III learned about prior to this quotation is about a plot conceived by two of Theodore's brothers to overthrow him. So he interrupted his preparations for a military campaign against the Latins and turned to the inner affairs. Mentioned in this passage were triremes, a Homeric expression for battleships. They were already referred to in the previous section as one instrument with which the emperor was fighting against the enemy:

> ὁ γοῦν βασιλεὺς Ἰωάννης παντοίως τοῖς Λατίνοις μαχόμενος τριήρεις τε κατεσκεύασε καὶ περὶ τὸν Ἑλλήσποντον ταύτας ἔστησεν ἐν τόπῳ, ὃς Ὁλκὸς ὀνομάζεται· καὶ ἦν πολλὰ παρέχων αὐτοῖς πράγματα, κατὰ δύσιν ὁρμώμενος καὶ λείαν τἀκείνων ποιούμενος πορθῶν τε τὸ τῶν Μαδύτων ἄστυ καὶ τὴν Καλλιούπολιν καὶ τὰ παραιγιάλια πάντα τοῖς Ἰταλοῖς ὑπόφορα ὄντα. / Indeed, the emperor John fought the Latins in various ways: he built triremes and stationed them on the Hellespont in a place which is actually called Holkos. And he caused them a great deal of trouble, setting out against the west, and making plunder of their straits, and ravaging the town of Madyta, and Kallipolis and all coastal areas which were subject to the Italians.[324]

These two passages are crucial in understanding one military aspect of the Laskarid realm, the naval force. What is narrated here is a quite clear description of how an attack via the navy was prepared – ships were built on the spot from where the attack was meant to begin. This passage described a campaign against the Latins. Lampsakos and Holkos, which were neighboring settlements, were starting points for naval moves against Latin bases along the Hellespont.

The next three passages all refer to the same event, namely an attempt of John of Brienne to conquer parts of the coast of Asia Minor in 1233. In the preceding section and also in between these quotations Akropolites inserted other information for the

[322] *Acropolitae*, ed. Heisenberg, §23; *Akropolites*, tr. Macrides, 169.

[323] Macrides counted at least six brothers in total, of which five are known by name. See *Akropolites*, tr. Macrides, 167–68.

[324] *Acropolitae*, ed. Heisenberg, §22; *Akropolites*, tr. Macrides, 166. Holkos was situated just between Lampsakos and Pegai along the shore of the Sea of Marmara. From chapter 30, which follows below, it becomes clear that Holkos and Lampsakos are not only in proximity to one another, but were at least once used almost synonymously by Akropolites when referring to military actions along the Hellespont. However, the relation between these two places is not clear.

reader, partly about events that took place among the Latins at Constantinople and among the Byzantines at the Aegean shore, partly about himself. He recapitulated how the Latins solved the question of succession after the death of their emperor Robert of Courtenay in 1228. John of Brienne (1231-37) arrived to the city and was crowned emperor of Constantinople in 1231. Two years later he prepared a campaign against John III Vatatzes:

> μόγις οὖν τριήρεις οἰκονομήσας καὶ στράτευμα συναθροίσας ὅσον εἶχε πρὸς δύναμιν, κατὰ τῆς ἕω ἐχώρησε, καὶ περὶ τὸ τῆς Λαμψάκου ἐλλιμενίζει νεώριον, προσεχῶς τῷ τότε τοῦ βασιλέως Ἰωάννου ἐκ τῆς κατὰ τοῦ καίσαρος Γαβαλᾶ μάχης ὑποστρέψαντος, ὃν διὰ νεωτερισμὸν ἐμαχέσατο. / Then, having with difficulty managed to prepare triremes and assembled the strongest army he could, he [John of Brienne, emperor of the Latin Empire of Constantinople 1231-7] set out against the east. He anchored at the port of Lampsakos just at the time when the emperor John was returning from his battle against the caesar Gabalas, whom he fought because of a rebellion.[325]

At this point apparently Lampsakos was no longer in the hands of John III, for John of Brienne could anchor at Lampsakos, whereas John III upon hearing that the emperor had set out for Lampsakos moved from Stadeia against him, which is a place situated at the far south of the Laskarid realm, at the shore of the Aegean Sea opposite Rhodes. There he had given orders and made arrangements to gain power over the island of Rhodes. All this was related in the following paragraph:

> ἐπεὶ δὲ ταῦτα οὕτω συμβαίη καὶ κατὰ σκοπὸν Ἰωάννῃ τῷ βασιλεῖ τὰ περὶ τὸν καίσαρα γένοιτο, ἀκούσοι δὲ καὶ ὡς ὁ ῥὴξ ἐξῄει τῆς Κωνσταντίνου καὶ βουλὴν ἔχει προσοκεῖλαι τῇ Λαμψάκῳ κἀκεῖ ἐξελθεῖν καὶ Ῥωμαίοις πολεμῆσαι, μεθ’ ὧν ἔτυχε διάγειν ὁ βασιλεὺς—ὀλίγοι δὲ ἦσαν οὗτοι, ἐπεὶ τὸ πολὺ τῆς στρατιᾶς τῇ μάχῃ καὶ τῇ ὥρᾳ τοῦ χειμῶνος τεταλαιπωρηκὸς περὶ τὰ οἴκοι ἐφέρετο—χωρεῖ πρὸς τὴν Λάμψακον καὶ τοῖς τῆς Σιγρηνῆς μέρεσι τὰς σκηνὰς πήγνυσι. / When these things had taken place in this manner, and the affair concerning the caesar had gone according to the emperor John’s intention, he heard also that the king had left the city of Constantine and planned to sail to Lampsakos, to disembark there and fight the Romans. The emperor left for Lampsakos with those men with whom he happened to be – these were few, since most of the army had gone home, worn out by battle and the winter season – and he encamped in the area of Sigrene.[326]

The issue John III Vatatzes had to settle beforehand was to bring the island of Rhodes under imperial control, the main opponent being Leo Gabalas.[327] Sigrene was the region between Lampsakos to the west and Pegai to the east, which was the area John of Brienne tried to bring under his control. The following section concluded the

[325] *Acropolitae*, ed. Heisenberg, §27; *Akropolites*, tr. Macrides, 184-185.
[326] *Acropolitae*, ed. Heisenberg, §28; *Akropolites*, tr. Macrides, 187.
[327] For more information regarding the situation on Rhodes see *Akropolites*, tr. Macrides, 187-88.

end of these strategic moves: as discussed previously regarding the site of Pegai, in the end only Pegai had been conquered briefly.

For one, this attempted conquest makes clear that at the time of this incident in comparison to 1224 Lampsakos had changed hands. Both Latins and Byzantines had fought for it, and the reason for this seems to be spelled out in this passage: for the Latins it served as the gate for their forces towards Asia Minor. For the Byzantines Lampsakos was the main base for the control of the Hellespont and the access by sea from the Mediterranean to Constantinople and vice versa. Thus, for both parties it was a key element in the strategic plans against each other.

The last reference regarding John of Brienne's conquest of the coast in 1233 specified that he actually used the harbor of Holkos instead of Lampsakos:

> Ὡς γοῦν ἔφημεν, καταλαβὼν ὁ ῥὴξ Ἰωάννης, ὁ καὶ βασιλεὺς Κωνσταντινουπόλεως φημιζόμενος, τὴν Λάμψακον, περὶ τὸν οὕτω πως ὀνομαζόμενον τόπον Ὁλκὸν τὰς νῆας τούτου καθώρμισεν. / As we said, when king John, who was also known as emperor of Constantinople, arrived at Lampsakos, he anchored his ships near the place which is actually called Holkos.[328]

This short reference confirmed the impression from above: Lampsakos and Holkos were apparently in close proximity to each other and thus, almost interchangeable in their use as naval harbor along the Hellespont. Holkos in opposition to Lampsakos was probably only a small settlement.[329]

Only shortly after the attack on Anatolian soil by John of Brienne, John III Vatatzes prepared the ground of a peaceful coexistence with the Bulgarian empire by conducting a marriage alliance between the two imperial families. Akropolites started to explain the marriage negotiations a little earlier in his narrative, interrupted these for an account of his own biography and returned to the Bulgarian-Byzantine politics in the following manner:

> Ἐπεὶ δέ, ὡς προειρήκειν, καὶ ἀμφοῖν τοῖν βασιλέοιν αἱ σπονδαὶ τῆς συμβιβάσεως γένοιντο, τῷ τε βασιλεῖ φημι Ἰωάννῃ τῷ Δούκᾳ καὶ τῷ κρατοῦντι τῶν Βουλγάρων Ἀσὰν Ἰωάννῃ, προκατέλαβε μὲν ὁ βασιλεὺς τὴν Λάμψακον καὶ διαπεραιοῦται μετὰ τῶν οἰκείων δυνάμεων εἰς Καλλιούπολιν […]μετὰ τοῦτο καταλαμβάνει τὴν Καλλιούπολιν καὶ ὁ Ἀσὰν σὺν τῇ οἰκείᾳ γαμετῇ τῇ ἐξ Οὔγγρων Μαρίᾳ καὶ τῇ θυγατρὶ Ἑλένῃ, καὶ συνέρχεται εἰς Καλλιούπολιν τῷ βασιλεῖ, καὶ τὰ εἰς φιλίαν ἀμφότεροι διαπράττονται. οὗτος μὲν οὖν οὐ διεπέρασε τὸν Ἑλλήσποντον, ἀλλ' ἔμεινεν ἐν τοῖς

[328] *Acropolitae*, ed. Heisenberg, §30; *Akropolites*, tr. Macrides, 190.

[329] In addition Skoutariotes mentioned that John III used Holkos to station boats there that were meant to hinder others to cross the straits for Constantinople: *Scutariota*, ed. Heisenberg, Addidamenta no.23; see for this observation and further literature *Akropolites*, tr. Macrides, 169.

> τῆς Καλλιουπόλεως μέρεσιν· ὁ δὲ βασιλεὺς Ἰωάννης τὴν αὐτοῦ σύζυγον σὺν τῇ θυγατρὶ Ἑλένῃ λαβὼν διαπεραιοῦται εἰς Λάμψακον, ἔνθα ἦν ἡ βασιλὶς Εἰρήνη, καὶ πληροῦσι τὴν τῶν παίδων συνάφειαν, τοῦ πατριάρχου Γερμανοῦ τὰ τῆς ἱερολογίας τελέσαντος. / As I said before, when the treaty of cooperation had been made by both emperors, I mean the emperor John Doukas and the ruler of the Bulgarians, John Asan, the emperor arrived at Lampsakos first and crossed over to Kallipolis with his own forces […] After this Asan too arrived at Kallipolis with his wife, Maria of the Hungarians, and his daughter Helen, and he met the emperor at Kallipolis and both men acted according to the conventions of friendship. Asan, however, did not cross the Hellespont but remained in the region of Kallipolis. The emperor John took Asan's wife and daughter Helen, and made the crossing to Lampsakos, where the empress Eirene was, and they concluded the union of the children with the patriarch Germanos officiating at the holy service.[330]

John III's wish was to marry his own son and successor Theodore to the Bulgarian princess Helena. The negotiations for this arrangement are dated to sometime between 1232 and 1234.[331] With this marriage kinship he hoped to seal a military alliance with John II Asan, the Bulgarian ruler, as Akropolites had explained previously.[332]

Once again a marriage alliance sealed a peace agreement between the Laskarid realm and another ruling dynasty. In this particular case of John III Vatatzes and John II Asan both parties benefitted from this alliance. The pact included mutual military help, also recognition of the Bulgarian patriarchate by the patriarchate of Nicaea. Thus, for the Bulgarian side, a turn away from the Pope and the Latin empire of Constantinople. In return the Bulgarians recognized the supremacy of the Nicaean patriarch over the *oikumene*.[333] It was not spelled out in the passage, but the text implies that a church must have existed at Lampsakos, where such a betrothal could have been celebrated with the blessing of the patriarch.

A closer look at the conclusion of this pact shows that two sites were mentioned as the meeting spots for the participants, Kallipolis and Lampsakos. According to Akropolites, Kallipolis became Venetian property after 1204 and was raided jointly by John III Vatatzes and John II Asan in 1234. It was after the cooperative military venture that John III along with the wife and daughter of John II Asan, who himself remained in

[330] *Acropolitae*, ed. Heisenberg, §33; *Akropolites*, tr. Macrides, 194.
[331] For the considerations regarding the dating see *Akropolites*, tr. Macrides, 191-92.
[332] *Acropolitae*, ed. Heisenberg, §31.
[333] For a short summary with references to motives on both sides see Fine, *The late medieval Balkans*, 129-135. More elaborate, though less recent: Vasil Gjuselev, "Bulgarien und das Kaiserreich von Nikaia (1204-1261)," in *JÖB* 26 (1977), 143-54. With particular emphasis on the Bulgarian interests of this union see Cankova-Petkova, "Griechisch-Bulgarische Bündnisse in den Jahren 1235 und 1246," *Byzantino-Bulgarica* 3 (1969), 49-80.

the conquered territory, crossed the Hellespont and conducted the union of the two families. There is a direct parallel arrangement detectable compared to the marriage alliance conducted at Pegai in 1252. In both cases only the wife of the foreign ruler crossed the Hellespont, and only to reach the closest harbor city, witness the union and to retreat. Lampsakos was the chosen site for this pact of imperial politics. Even though the patriarch sealed the betrothal himself, the celebrations did not take place at Nicaea, but rather, Germanos was summoned to Lampsakos.[334]

Being a betrothal celebration on the surface, it was a diplomatic act. It means that Lampsakos served as a stage for a peace treaty with a foreign power, it was used as one imperial focal point within the Laskarid territory. The position of Lampsakos at the shore and thus at the border, not deep in the territory of the Laskarid realm, might have been one factor in choosing the site for inviting the delegation from Bulgaria. It meant to secure the foreign ruling dynasty in the honesty and trustworthiness of the arrangement, as discussed previously regarding the marriage of Nikephoros and Maria at Pegai.[335]

The next reference listed Lampsakos with other locations governed by John III Vatatzes and described his seasonal travels. It had been quoted among the passage referring to Pegai above. [336] In it John III returned from campaigns back to Asia Minor in 1242. Akropolites gave no hint what the emperor had been doing or where exactly he came from. Nor did he mention events that took place on his travels apart from the storm. What he did mention in this small passage was the travel route through the realm over one entire year – stations of temporal residence were Nymphaion, Lampsakos and Pegai, as was already discussed beforehand.

Akropolites emphasized the customary habit of the emperor to take up residence at Nymphaion over winter. The underlying implication is that other residences were picked likewise for other seasons, otherwise Nymphaion would simply be regarded as

[334] Gjuselev referred to this event, based on the quoted passage of Akropolites, as the council of Lampsakos, which he dated to 1235: Gjuselev, "Bulgarien und das Kaiserreich von Nikaia," 143-54, here 149.

[335] *Acropolitae*, ed. Heisenberg, §49.

[336] *Acropolitae*, ed. Heisenberg, §41: Ὁ μὲν οὖν βασιλεὺς Ἰωάννης κατειλήφει τὴν ἔω. τὴν γοῦν χειμερινὴν τότε παραμείψας ὥραν ἐν τῷ Νυμφαίῳ, ὡς ἔθος ἦν αὐτῷ, ἀπάρας ἐκεῖθεν περὶ τὴν Λάμψακον ᾔει· κἀκεῖσε τὸ θέρος διαβιβάσας καὶ τὴν τῆς ὀπώρας ὥραν, ἐπεὶ ὁ χειμὼν ἤρξατο, τοῦ χώρου μεταβὰς περὶ τὰ τῶν Πηγῶν ἐχώρει μέρη. μεγίστου δὲ χειμῶνος πεπείραται καθ' ὁδόν, ἀρξαμένου μὲν ἐπὰν ὁ βασιλεὺς εἰς τὴν Σιγρηνὴν ἐσκήνωσεν· […] ὁ μὲν οὖν βασιλεὺς ἐν τῷ τῶν Πηγῶν ἄστει διημερεύσας, μέχρις ἂν τὸ πολὺ τοῦ χειμῶνος λωφήσῃ, ἐξιὼν ἐκεῖθεν εἰς τὸ Νύμφαιον ἀπῄει, καὶ ἦν ἐκεῖσε μέχρι καὶ τῆς τοῦ ἔαρος ἐπιλάμψεως.

"the residence" of John III Vatatzes. Akropolites did not state this clearly, but the link with Lampsakos and Pegai could suggest exactly that they served as seasonal residences in company with Nymphaion. Additionally the emperor apparently took up residence in open field, the region being called Sigrene.

Akropolites referred to Lampsakos again during the reign of Theodore II in the winter of 1255. After several turns in the relationship between the Bulgarian empire and the Laskarid realm, the death of John III Vatatzes had yet led to another confrontation in the Balkans. The Bulgarians had taken back the region south of the Marica that had been under the authority of Vatatzes. Immediately his son Theodore had set out to regain the territory. After a successful attack he crossed the Hellespont to set his winter quarters in Asia Minor:

> Οὑτωσὶ γοῦν ταῦτα πάντα καταρτίσας ὁ βασιλεὺς τὸν Ἑλλήσποντον διαπεραιωθεὶς περὶ τὴν Λάμψακον τὴν σκηνὴν ἔπηξε, κἀκεῖσε τοὺς αὐτοῦ ὀφφικίοις τετιμήκει καὶ ἀξιώμασι. […] ἀλλὰ ταῦτα μὲν παρῆλθε, διεξῄει δὲ τὰ περὶ τούτων ὁ τῆς ἱστορίας λόγος, ἵνα τὰ μετὰ ταῦτα σαφέστερον ἀπαγγείλῃ. ἐν τῇ Λαμψάκῳ γοῦν μικρὸν διὰ ταῦτα προσκαρτερήσας ὁ αὐτοκράτωρ, καὶ τὰς τοῦ Χριστοῦ πανηγύρεις τῆς τε γέννας καὶ τῶν φώτων ἀποπληρώσας, διὰ μετρίων πάνυ τῶν ἡμερῶν ἐπεφθάκει τὸ Νύμφαιον. / Having prepared all these matters in this way, the emperor crossed the Hellespont and pitched tent at Lampsakos, and there he honored his men with offices and dignities. […] And so it came to pass. But my narrative has related these things in detail in order to clarify later events. The monarch stayed in Lampsakos a short time for these matters, and after celebrating the feasts of Christ, His Birth and the Lights [Epiphany], he reached Nymphaion a very few days later.[337]

Theodore II had returned from European soil, where he had been on military campaign against the Bulgarians. On his route back to Asia Minor he entered first Adrianople and then Didymoteichon, then apparently in Laskarid possession. He took the established route over the Hellespont arriving at Lampsakos.[338] Akropolites added that after the celebrations of Christmas and Epiphany at Lampsakos the emperor returned to his winter quarters at Nymphaion. Once again the existence of a church at Lampsakos, this time suitable for the imperial Christmas celebration, is implied.

[337] *Acropolitae*, ed. Heisenberg, §60; *Akropolites*, tr. Macrides, 297-298.

[338] In the whole previous chapter and parts that were left out from this chapter Akropolites described Theodore II as an untalented and selfish emperor, almost a danger to his soldiers due to his lack of know-how. This he emphasized in his military orders as well as in his choice of promoting men to higher offices. With this, Akropolites prepared the ground on which the usurpation of Michael VIII Palaiologos, the emperor under whom Akropolites remained in office and compiled his *History*, could later be justified, likewise Akropolites' own survival under the new dynasty. For a detailed analysis see *Akropolites*, tr. Macrides, 24-28.

Omitted in this excerpt is a promotion of men that were closest to the emperor. One of these men was Akropolites himself, as he explained in the passage. His self-introduction explained why the events around that Bulgarian campaign were so rich in details: it was an eyewitness report. Akropolites himself had accompanied the emperor.

The route Akropolites described suggested that Adrianople and Didymoteichon were in Theodore's hands at that time. It meant that the Latins in Constantinople were at this period enclosed by Laskarid forces from north and south. The passageway over the Hellespont and thus, the strategic position of Lampsakos served now as the bridge between the European and the Asian territories that were both under Theodore's command.

As Akropolites stated, Theodore celebrated Christmas and Epiphany at Lampsakos, after which he retreated to Nymphaion for the winter. As it seemed from here, these celebrations marked the end of the military actions of that season and thus, the withdrawal to Nymphaion in a way closed this part.

On the other hand, the retreat to Nymphaion had certain consequences, which followed immediately in the following paragraph: upon learning that the emperor had left for the south of Asia Minor and had ordered only a small garrison to stay in the conquered territory, the adversary troops launched a counterattack. Theodore II headed back after the winter break to aid his men:

> τὴν πᾶσαν γοῦν συνηθροικὼς στρατιὰν μείζονα τῶν ποτὲ παρά τε πατρὸς αὐτοῦ βασιλέως καὶ τούτου συνειλεγμένων εἰς τὸ διαπεραιωθῆναι τὸν Ἑλλήσποντον, ἀφίκετο εἰς τὴν Λάμψακον, ἐλπίσας καὶ τοὺς κατὰ τὸ Διδυμότειχον καταλελειμμένους σώους τε εὑρεῖν κατὰ τὰ προστεταγμένα τούτοις καὶ οὐ σμικρὰν προσθήκην τῇ ἀμφ' αὐτὸν στρατιᾷ ἐμποιήσασθαι. / Having assembled the entire army, which was greater than those his father the emperor and he himself had ever collected to cross the Hellespont, he arrived at Lampsakos, hoping to find the men he had left behind at Didymoteichon safe and sound, in keeping with his orders to them, and to make not a small addition to the army accompanying him.[339]

Preceding this quotation, in the same narrative Akropolites had put some emphasis on the somewhat unusual assembly of the army, which had taken place at Nymphaion. From there Theodore II traveled back north to Lampsakos and crossed the Hellespont. Again, the battle ground was situated somewhere at the Laskarid-Bulgarian border in Thrace, and the Hellespont and thus, Lampsakos was the connection via the Sea of Marmara for these two parts that were governed by Theodore II. Lampsakos

[339] *Acropolitae*, ed. Heisenberg, §61; *Akropolites*, tr. Macrides, 301.

remained crucial for strategic plans, whether for controlling the sea traffic along the Hellespont or for connecting the conquered territories that were now south and north of the Sea of Marmara.

The last three passages belong to the reign of Michael VIII Palaiologos. The first quotation dealt with events that took place after the battle of Pelagonia in 1259:

> Ὁ μὲν οὖν αὐτάδελφος τοῦ βασιλέως ὁ σεβαστοκράτωρ Ἰωάννης καὶ ὁ πενθερὸς αὐτοῦ ὁ Τορνίκης Κωνσταντῖνος τῆς μάχης ἐξιόντες εἰς τὸν αὐτοκράτορα ἐπανέζευξαν περὶ τὴν Λάμψακον ὄντα καὶ τὰς διατριβὰς ἐκεῖσε ποιούμενον. / The emperor's brother, the sebastokrator John, and John's father-in-law, Constantine Tornikes, left the battle, returning to the monarch who was at Lampsakos and was staying there.[340]

From the battle, Michael VIII Palaiologos had withdrawn to Asia Minor, he resided at Lampsakos. When his brother John and John's father-in-law arrived there, the emperor promoted both to higher ranks in office. The act of promotion after a victory resembled the one that was given by Theodore II to his men at Lampsakos three years earlier in winter of 1255. Apparently it also belonged to the issues to settle at the end of a military campaign. Interestingly in these two cases the battle field was situated in the Balkans, but winter quarter and promotion took place at Asia Minor.

In difference to Theodore II, Michael VIII remained at Lampsakos for the winter ; nothing was said about a retreat to Nymphaion in winter of 1259-60. This is confirmed in the following paragraph, in which Michael VIII Palaiologos started to move from Lampsakos towards Constantinople in spring time:

> Ὁ δὲ βασιλεὺς παραχειμάσας ἐν τῇ Λαμψάκῳ, ἔαρος ἐπιλάμψαντος κατὰ τῆς Κωνσταντίνου κεχώρηκεν· ἅπασα γὰρ ἦν αὐτῷ σπουδὴ καὶ ἅπας σκοπὸς τῆς τῶν Λατίνων χειρὸς αὐτὴν ἀναρρύσασθαι. / The emperor spent the winter in Lampsakos; when spring shone forth he proceeded against the city of Constantine. For his every effort and whole aim was to rescue it from the hands of the Latins.[341]

It gives the impression that – even though Nymphaion was labeled by Akropolites himself as the usual winter residence of the emperors in exile just shortly before in his narrative – to a certain extent the habitual residency remained flexible in time and place during the exile period.

The last reference to Lampsakos appeared during the trouble caused by the decline of patriarch Arsenios to agree with the way Michael VIII had usurped the throne. Here Akropolites retold events that happened since 1258 from the time after the

[340] *Acropolitae*, ed. Heisenberg, §82; *Akropolites*, tr. Macrides, 365.
[341] *Acropolitae*, ed. Heisenberg, §83; *Akropolites*, tr. Macrides, 367.

coronation of Michael VIII Palaiologos. According to Akropolites, Arsenios changed his behavior towards the emperor after the coronation and finally chose the monastic life, thus, refusing the office of the patriarch. Akropolites failed to mention that this was a sign of protest due to the way, in which Michael VIII had deposed the young John IV Laskaris, with whom he was supposed to be the co-emperor.

As a result of his retreat to monasticism, a council was summoned at Lampsakos for the election of a new patriarch in spring of 1260:

> ἐντεῦθεν συνελθόντες πάντες οἱ ἀρχιερεῖς περὶ τὴν Λάμψακον, ψήφῳ πάντων καὶ προσταγῇ βασιλέως ὁ τῆς Ἐφέσου πρόεδρος Νικηφόρος εἰς τὸν πατριαρχικὸν ἀνήχθη θρόνον […] / As a result, all the bishops met at Lampsakos, and by the vote of all and by the emperor's order, Nikephoros, the bishop of Ephesos, was elevated to the patriarchal throne […][342]

Nikephoros, however, died within a year, so in summer 1261 Arsenios assumed his second patriarchate. The reason for choosing Lampsakos as the site of the council might have been in connection with the fact that the emperor was staying at Lampsakos at that time.

Summary

Lampsakos figured prominently within the Laskarid territory. It was not under Laskarid domination in the early formation of the realm, but came under the control of John III Vatatzes in 1224 briefly and firmly only in 1235. For the Byzantines in Asia Minor it was a site of vital significance in the run for a reconquest of Constantinople, for the Latins of Constantinople it would have been the gateway to subjugation of their Byzantine enemy to the south. Lampsakos' position at the narrow passage of the Hellespont did mean a control of the sea traffic to and from Constantinople on one hand, and the option and control of crossing the Hellespont from the European to the Asian shore and vice versa.

During the course of the exile period several events took place at Lampsakos that raised the meaning of the site to more than just a naval base. As these events included the presence of the emperor, the imperial acts made Lampsakos become an imperial focal point, a site from where to perform governance.

It was at Lampsakos where John III celebrated the betrothal of his son and successor Theodore to the Bulgarian princess Helena, thereby sealing an agreement of

[342] *Acropolitae*, ed. Heisenberg, §84; *Akropolites*, tr. Macrides, 370.

peace with one of his rivals, the Bulgarian tsar John II Asan. For this, the Bulgarian delegation with the wife of John II Asan, Maria of Hungary, gathered at Lampsakos.

At least once one of the emperors during the exile period, Theodore II Laskaris, made Lampsakos the spot of the imperial celebrations of Christmas and Epiphany. For one, these were prominent feast days in the Orthodox Church and second to Easter only. Celebrated by the emperor, the festivity was an act of official imperial ceremonial.[343] Michael VIII spent an entire winter at Lampsakos, thus probably spending Christmas and Epiphany there like Theodore II before him. Also, under Michael VIII a council for the election of a new patriarch took place here.

John III Vatatzes seems to have used Lampsakos as a summer residence, at least one seasonal stay was reported. Lampsakos was the site that meant first contact with Anatolian soil after campaigns conducted on the European territories; spending "resting" time here might have been connected to that. Also the presence of the emperor at this crucial strategic site might have added to the loyalty of its citizens and prevented their surrender to possible foreign threat. For by the course of the 1230s and 1240s battles were fought less in Asia Minor and more on the Balkans against the Bulgarian army or the rival state of Epiros.

Summary

Pegai and Lampsakos (Holkos) were apparently not locations of importance regarding the economy – as might have been the case with Nymphaion – their significance lay in the tactical advantage of their positions. In the beginning of Vatatzes' reign both sites were the outposts and crossing points for his forces towards Constantinople and the Balkans. They were crucial in moving the army forward, and the fact that they remained in Laskarid hands contributed to the success against their opponents on the long run.

Both sites lay at the sea and were thus used as meeting points with delegations from foreign powers. Pegai and Lampsakos featured prominently because of their

[343] Little is known about court ceremonial during the exile period. George Majeska studied the participation and role of the emperor during certain liturgical feasts in the Hagia Sophia for the preceding period, based mainly on the *Book of Ceremonies*: George P. Majeska, "The Emperor in His church: Imperial ritual in the church of St.Sophia," in *Byzantine Court Culture from 829 to 1204*, ed. Henry Maguire (Washington: Harvard University Press, 1997), 1-12. Older, though still the most profound study regarding the role of the emperor in the Eastern Church Otto Treitinger, *Die oströmische Kaiser- und Reichsidee nach ihrer Gestaltung im höfischen Zeremoniell* (Jena: Walter Bindermann, 1938).

accessibility, yet, this might also be the reason why no element connected to imperial rule had been settled there permanently, as for instance the treasury. These sites would have been a too easy target, even though their defense systems had been strengthened.

C. Magnesia

Magnesia at the Sipylos belonged to the group of Greek colonies founded in the hinterland of Smyrna. In proximity to Sardis and Magnesia at the Meander, its position during antiquity and most of the Byzantine period remained of little importance. The few historical records on Magnesia prior to the Laskarid period have been collected and summarized by Clive Foss.[344]

The reason to include Magnesia in the list of case studies on the topography of the Laskarid realm is not so much the abundance of source material that was available for the exile period, but from the judgment of previous scholarship. For reasons examined in the following, Magnesia has been identified as the "economic" or "actual" capital set up by the emperors during the exile. Magnesia could be a good example to observe, whether the term "capital" is in fact helpful to understand the structure of the territory that was transformed into the Laskarid realm.

1. Setting of Magnesia / Manisa and its Byzantine remains

The precise setting of Magnesia is crucial for an evaluation of the site and its significance for the Laskarid emperors. The most important aspect to understand is that the Byzantine settlement of Magnesia and the modern Turkish successor Manisa are not exactly overlapping, they are adjacent.

Whereas the valley of the Gediz river, which stretches roughly in west-east direction, is surrounding the boundaries of Manisa to the west, north and east, to the south of the city rises the Spil Dağı up to a height of ca. 1500m. Here the remains of Byzantine Magnesia are located.

Magnesia at the Sipylos was so named to differentiate it from the other Magnesia on the Meander. The latter became abandoned some time after antiquity; nowadays it is known among archaeologists for the remains of the temples of Zeus and Artemis that have been uncovered through excavations.

All that is left of Byzantine Magnesia is located to the south of the modern town up on a hill that rises just in front of the spur of the Sipylos (recent Spil Dağı). The

[344] Foss, "Fortifications in Lydia," 306. Ramsay discussed Herodotus' reference to the place, but remarked that the ancient historian himself most probably never traveled to Magnesia: Ramsay, *Historical Geography*, 61.

Sipylos is a smaller mountain massif, which stretches west-east and confines the valley of the Hermos (recent Gediz river) to the south. The ancient connections of Magnesia were quite the same as those in modern times: the valley allowed access to the coast and to the direction of the high plateau. The nearest city at the coast was Smyrna, which lay to the south-west of Magnesia. A route connected Smyrna with Magnesia and led further east to Sardis. This route between Smyrna and Magnesia had to circle around the Sipylos. It should be pointed out that although Smyrna and Nymphaion were within easy reach, this was not true for Magnesia and Nymphaion. Both places lay in the hinterland of Smyrna, but exactly in between them the massif of the Sipylos prevented the shortest connection. To reach Nymphaion from Magnesia, one had to travel first either to Smyrna, or to Sardis, where another route that connected the valley of Nymphaion with both these cities would circle around the Sipylos to the south. Were one not to take into account the topography of the area, one might misleadingly assume that Magnesia and Nymphaion were within easy reach. However, the distance covered walking or driving is twice the length as the crow flies.

The remains of Byzantine Magnesia at the Sipylos have not been excavated yet. They are located south of the modern city on a high hill, both on its side and top. This hill, situated right in front of the Sipylos, is however not directly ascending into the massif. From its top the gorge on its southern flank shows how well chosen the spot of the citadel was: access from all sides proved difficult, the slopes of the hill are rough to climb, except those from the valley. Climbing up from there the first historical building on the way is the Ulu Cami, the oldest mosque that was built in the fourteenth century after the Ottoman conquest. Its location suggests that at that time the center of Ottoman Magnesia must have been still attached to the hill slope.

2. Monumental evidence

The remains of Magnesia were surveyed by Clive Foss in 1979.[345] Behind the Ulu Cami, which is situated at the rim of modern Manisa, a path leads to the Byzantine

[345] An abbreviated form of his survey on Magnesia is also available in the publication of Foss and Winfield, *Byzantine Fortifications*, 152. The ruins are poorly preserved and have never been thoroughly examined. Regarding the general descriptions of the ruins, I have few to add to Foss' thorough observations. On my own visit in 2008 smaller remains were covered by bushes, the smaller vevtation however was neglible. The dating for the citadel Foss proposed in his article from 1979 and repeated in the publication from 1985 is as a consequence of too poor preservation based mainly on textual evidence.

ruins. Scattered remains of a gate and round shaped tower, substructure walls and collapsed buildings can be found half way between the height of the Ulu Cami and the top of the mountain (Fig. Mag. 1). Walking west along the same altitude further ruins in Ottoman style appear (Fig. Mag. 2).[346] Here to the west the area forms a sort of platform, on which citizens of Manisa keep orchards. The area is used as well by shepherds. Until this point a road leads up the slope, travel by car is thus possible. But from here until the mountain top a steep climb on foot is the only way to survey the actual fortification that is situated at the highest point of the hill.[347] Except for the northern way up from the gate and wall, all other sites of the hill fall down abruptly forming gorges with the neighboring mountain and thus prevent easy access to the top.

A better preserved gate is situated just several 100m further up from the first one, consisting of an arch, flanking towers and a part of the wall. At this point the wall is stretching in an almost straight line down- and uphill. The overall impression is of poor preservation: walls are partially broken, buildings halfway collapsed and overgrown, scattered huge rocks are blocking paths (Fig. Mag. 3). The remaining arch of the gate is set in a way not observed previously at other sites discussed so far in this study: its pointed shape suggests Ottoman design (Fig. Mag. 4). However, it is possible that this is due to a later refurbishment, as the joint in the masonry indicates.[348] The façade of the walls – inasmuch as it is still detectable – was built from courses of stone and brick. From most of the walls only the filling is still standing. The remains of these resemble Byzantine style, thus, here a continuous use from the Byzantine to the Ottoman period seems likely. The feature of the pointed arch can be found in several structures within the enclosed area of the former Byzantine city.

The remaining Byzantine ruins on the citadel in their present state cannot be seen from the gate or any other area below. This is partially due to forest vegetation,

---

However, the sources he used as proof are weak at best and provide several problems that he did not raise. Therefore they will be discussed in length below when dealing with textual references on Magnesia.

[346] To my knowledge these have not been described by Foss in his survey. It indeed suggests that Byzantine Magnesia was refurbished and inhabited at least in the initial phase during Ottoman times. The relocation into the plain must have happened some time later.

[347] When I visited the site in 2008, no sign indicated a path that would lead up on the top.The climb proved to be quite challenging and took at least 45min from the gate. Whereas the lower part is used by local inhabitants, the upper part seemed to be inaccessible to the extent that only shepherds would climb up to let their flock graze.

[348] As Foss had pointed out earlier, the walls are constructed in typical Byzantine style. As the gate is integrated into the wall, most probably the Byzantine construction collapses at this point and was later replaced by its new inhabitants.

partially due to the topography of the hill that prevents direct visibility. However, it cannot be excluded that from the top of a tower from the citadel the gate and lower wall could indeed be seen when both were in function. The area of the hilltop presents itself in elongated shape. Once it had been covered on all sides by structures, three rectangular watch towers and small pieces of the encircling wall are still standing (Fig. Mag. 5). The towers were integrated in the wall and relatively small in size, their inner space being no larger than 3m². The façade of one tower that is still intact includes courses of rough cut stones framed by bands of brick in regular manner.[349] The tower opens to the inner citadel and is set against the steep slope, its outer western wall is thus double the length of its inner eastern height. At the level of the ground floor a decorative band of white stone is inserted into the façade (Fig. Mag. 6).

In the middle of the enclosed area the ground opens into a circular pit of around 8m in diameter (Fig. Mag. 7). It is roughly 1.5m deep and its inside walls are walled up with rough stones and occasional broken brick. Only on few spots brick was inserted, probably reused one. Inserted into this wall roughly at mid-height rests a projecting edge of roughly 10cm. Whether this pit may have served as a cistern must at this point remain hypothetical.

To sum up, many scattered remains still bear witness to medieval Magnesia. Their poor preservation, especially often lacking the façade valuable for stylistic analysis, makes a solid identification and dating difficult. From the top of the hill even more ruins between the citadel and the gates can be spotted, but their state does not allow any identification as to their initial period of construction or function. The ruins show traces of reuse in the Ottoman period. Style and material of the buildings reflect Byzantine artwork, a dating based on it however can only be considered hypothetical.

3. Textual references

Akropolites

The only reference to Magnesia that can be found in the account of Akropolites falls into the reign of John III Vatatzes. More precisely to the beginning of his rule: John III had faced a conspiracy against him shortly after his accession to the throne. Not

[349] Foss considered this tower the largest of the surviving structures: Foss, "Fortifications in Lydia," 309. I was not in the position to judge this during my visit in 2008; it is likely that conditions of all ruins have further declined within this time span.

much is known about this conspiracy, which took place around 1224-25, since this passage of Akropolites is the only source and does not reveal much. John III unraveled the plot and arrested his enemies. Akropolites stated that all conspirators faced as a consequence the death penalty, however, the emperor decided to punish them more leniently:

> τοὺς δὲ πλείστους ἀφῆκεν εἱρκταῖς μέχρι τινὸς περικλείσας, καὶ αὐτὸν δὴ τὸν πρωτουργὸν τῆς ἐπιβουλῆς τὸν καὶ βασιλείας ἐφιέμενον, τὸν Νεστόγγον Ἀνδρόνικον, ἐν τῷ φρουρίῳ τῆς Μαγνησίας συνέκλεισε· τοσοῦτον ἡ τῆς ἀγάπης σχέσις τὸν βασιλέα τοῦ κακοποιῆσαι τοῦτον ἐκώλυσεν. ὃς καὶ μετ᾽ ὀλίγον ἀπέδρα, ὡς μέν τινες ἔφασκον, θελήσει τοῦ βασιλέως ἐλευθερώτερον βαίνειν τοῦτον παρακελευσαμένου καὶ οἷον κλέψαι τοῦτον τὴν σωτηρίαν βουλευσαμένου. / The majority he [John III] let go after having confined them in prison for a time, and the mastermind of the plot, the one who longed after the imperial office, Andronikos Nestongos, he imprisoned in the fortress of Magnesia; so great was the bond of affection that prevented the emperor from harming him. He escaped a short time later, as some said, by the wish of the emperor, who ordered that he circulate more freely, as if planning for him to secure his freedom clandestinely.[350]

Akropolites used this incident to present John III as a weak emperor, unworthy of his office, since he did not sanction his adversaries accordingly. But as a result, the emperor became more careful and employed personal guards to protect himself. Akropolites added that the empress Eirene kept a close eye on these issues.

In this passage not only Magnesia as such, but in particular its fortress were mentioned, since it served as the prison for Andronikos Nestongos, the leader of the plot. The incident has some facets in common with the other imprisonment on imperial orders in the account of Akropolites, which had been discussed above: the one of Alexios III. Theodore I Laskaris had defeated his father-in-law Alexios III and banned him to a monastery at Nicaea.

The choices for locations of imprisonments of opponents by the emperors should briefly be highlighted here. Research on medieval prisons in fourteenth-century Italy conducted by Guy Geltner has shown that prisons were usually located in proximity to the center of towns and are considered as a result of urban development. The case of Italy thus cannot be compared to Byzantium.[351]

However, the proximity of a prison to the center of power was detectable in Byzantium as well. The prison of Anemas is a good example of an imperial prison in

[350] *Acropolitae*, ed. Heisenberg, §23; *Akropolites*, tr. Macrides, 169-170.

[351] Guy Geltner, "Medieval prison: Between myth and reality, hell and purgatory," *History Compass* 4 (2006), 261-274.

Constantinople. It was constructed as a tower and attached to the walls of the city within the area of the Blachernai palace complex. It had been built during the early Komnenian period and named after its first inmate Michael Anemas, leader of a conspiracy against the emperor Alexios I Komnenos. All this we know from the *Alexiad* of Anna Komnene, who described the location of the building when reporting the attempted usurpation and subsequent incarceration of Michael Anemas.[352] So apparently the aspect of direct control over a conspirer played an important role in the set up of a prison. The palace area was the essential space of the emperor, and within the city of Constantinople it was here where the most dangerous enemies were kept.

After 1204 the imperial palace was lost. Therefore, for the period in exile the location of a prison might in turn be a good indicator in determinating, which area the emperor considered under his direct control and safe enough to lock up his adversaries. For in particular when it came to the incarceration of usurpers, it must have been in the central interest of the emperor to keep an opponent under his sway. Above Akropolites explicitly distinguished between the separate imprisonment of Angelos Nestongos, to whom he assigned the fortress of Magnesia, and that of his followers. It thus may be assumed that John III chose Magnesia initially as the most secure compound for his main adversary, and this due to the fact that this site was firmly in his hands. The question is whether John chose the fortress at Magnesia because he – the emperor – also stayed in proximity to it. Does the location of a prison give a hint as to where the emperor sojourned for most of his time? A similar incarceration in the account of Akropolites of the contender Alexios III by his son-in-law Theodore I Laskaris in Nicaea has been discussed in the preceding case study. An affirmation to this question would thus make a strong point: Nicaea as headquarters in the early days of Laskarid rule lost this position to the area around Magnesia under John III Vatatzes. Even more so bearing in mind one detail: Alexios III had been captured during the battle of Antioch at the Meander, which lay close to Magnesia. It thus meant that Theodore I Laskarid consciously brought his father-in-law all the way up north to Nicaea. It must mean that

[352] *Annae Comnenae Alexias*, ed. Diether Reinsch (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2001), XII, 7. To my knowledge, there is no recent study comparable to that of Geltner for the Byzantine sphere. Generally one can look at Ph. Koukoules, R. Guilland, "Voleurs et prisons à Byzance," *REGr* 61 (1948), 127-36. The article on prisons in the *ODB* placed the prison of Anemas incorrectly into the area of the Great Palace: Kazhdan, "prison" in *ODB*, 1723. Whether the building of the prison can indeed be identified with a still standing ruin along the city walls, is subject of discussion, but not relevant in this study. For the argumentation here the location of the prison is important, which is given in Anna's account.

the emperor considered this the safest spot for keeping his enemy under control, he regarded Nicaea as his city. And apparently John III chose differently because he thought differently.[353]

It has been argued that the fortification of Magnesia referred to in the quotation was built under John III Vatatzes and that the very citation discussed here fixed the *terminus ante quem* for the ruins at Manisa. As thefortification is mentioned during the early reign of John III Vatatzes, it must have been erected at some point before. [354] However, besides the fact that the fortress was named, nothing further described the actual site. Most probably Magnesia had been equipped with a fortification long before the rule of the Laskarid emperors. The monument at Magnesia may have been erected initially a lot earlier, and even may have been reconstructed under a Laskarid ruler much later. Consequently, this passage cannot identify John III Vatatzes or his predecessor Theodore I Laskaris as its commissioner.

Blemmydes

Likewise Magnesia is mentioned in the account of Blemmydes, each once in the two versions of his account. The first referred to a synod of bishops, which the patriarch convened on orders of the emperor Theodore II Laskaris:

> Ὁ μὲν οὖν ὑπερέχων, ἐκύρωσεν· ὁ δὲ πατριάρχης, ὑπούργησε. Καὶ δὴ τὸ ὑπ' αὐτὸν ἱεραρχικὸν συναγηοχώς, καὶ τὸν ἀφορισμὸν καὶ τὸν ἀναθεματισμὸν γνωμολογεῖ καὶ ἀποφαίνεται σὺν αὐτοῖς, καὶ τὸν τόμον συντάττουσιν, ὑπογραφαῖς τε πιστοῦνται πάντες, καὶ ἀπαρτίζουσιν. Εἶτα τὸν ἱερωμένον καὶ λοιπὸν ἠθροικότες λαόν, ἐκφωνοῦσι κατὰ τῶν ἀθώων τραναῖς βοαῖς τὸ ἀνάθεμα· Μαγνησία ἦν ἡ ἀνήλιος, ἐν ταύτῃ γὰρ ἐσκηνοῦντο, τῶν δραμάτων ὁ χῶρος, τῶν ἀξίων σκότου καὶ ἅδου καὶ σιωπῆς. / As superior, the emperor gave orders, the Patriarch merely acted as servant. Having summoned a meeting of the bishops under him, he formulated and published with them the sentences of interdict and anathema; they also composed the tomos, which they all endorsed with their signatures and ratified. Then they gathered the clergy and other people, and chanted the anathema of condemnation against those innocent people with loud voices. Magnesia, where they happen to be installed, the Anelios ['sunless'], was the site of these machinations, deserving of darkness, Hades and silence. [355]

[353] This observation would be a point to underline the long ago established assumption that Theodore I Laskaris put up his residence at Nicaea, and his son-in-law moved down to Nymphaion in the Thracesion theme. Whether or not it is at all possible to assign each emperor with a center of the realm, will be discussed in the latter part of this study.

[354] Foss, "Fortifications in Lydia," 307.

[355] Blemmydae, *Opera*, ed. Munitiz, I.82; Blemmydes, *Partial Account*, tr. Munitiz, 90.

The reason for the synod and the anathema was a plan of Theodore II to outmaneuver his enemy Michael II Doukas, despot of Epiros. He hoped that due to the excommunication the population of Thessaly would overthrow Michael II and he would consequently subordinate himself to Theodore II. Blemmydes disapproved of this plan and rebuked the emperor.

From this passage it is not clear why the synod took place at Magnesia, nor, if the emperor was present or whether he resided at nearby Nymphaion or elsewhere. The verb Blemmydes used to locate the gathering is *skēneō*, which literally means "to pitch a tent" or "to dwell in a tent". Even though difficult to assess, it may be that this word choice implies that the site for the assembly was chosen spontaneously, as the connection with a tent may hint at mobility and flexibility regarding the location.

Blemmydes referred to Magnesia as "the sunless" one.[356] And indeed, considering the hill on which the remains of the fortress have been located, this would be an accurate feature of the site. As the Mount Sipylos rises to the south in elongated shape and surmounts the hill, shadows would fall on the ruins for most of the time except during summer when the sun is at his most vertical position. Blemmydes used this epithet, which created a negative atmosphere, to underline his disapproval of the plan Theodore II hatched – a dark site was the fitting stage to measures that punished innocent believers.

The other reference to Magnesia is part of the second version and dates roughly to the same period, it describes events following the death of Theodore II Laskaris and the way, Michael VIII Palaiologos came to power:

> Τοῦ γοῦν νυνὶ κρατοῦντος, τὴν ἡγεμονίαν παρὰ τῶν ἐν τέλει πεπιστευμένου καὶ τὴν τῆς βασιλείας διεξαγωγήν, καὶ διὰ τὴν τῶν πραγμάτων μεταβολὴν συναγωγῆς ἐν Μαγνησίᾳ γεγενημένης πολυμιγοῦς, ἔνθα καὶ τὸ πέρας τῷ βεβασιλευκότι τοῦ κράτους ἐπεὶ καὶ τῆς βιοτῆς, ἐκεῖ μετάκλητοι καὶ ἡμεῖς καὶ παρὰ βούλησιν ἔνδημοι· / When the present ruler was entrusted by those in power with the leadership and with the administration of the empire, a very mixed assembly had been summoned at Magnesia because of the change in affairs. It was at Magnesia that the previous incumbent had reached the end of his reign, since also of his life-span, and it was there that I was invited as well, and was unwillingly present.[357]

[356] Cf. Blemmydes, *Partial Account*, tr. Munitiz, 90, n146. From Munitiz' remark it becomes clear that the epithet is not Blemmydes' literary invention, but has appeared elsewhere. However, he did not mention it in the second quotation, which hints at a conscious use.

[357] Blemmydae, *Opera*, ed. Munitiz, II.80; Blemmydes, *Partial Account*, tr. Munitiz, 135-36.

In this passage Blemmydes indirectly elucidated why Magnesia had been chosen; it was the site where Theodore II had died, consequently right afterwards also the gathering for the installation of Michael VIII on the throne happened here. The text that followed this passage tells a somewhat odd episode: apparently – not for the first time in Blemmydes' writing – an assassination was conceived against him, but protected by God he escaped the peril. In the course of events Blemmydes reports more on the outlook of the city:

> Τοὺς εἰς αὐτὸν ὁρῶντας ἐκκλῖναι τὴν μέσην παρασκευάζει καὶ πολυόδευτον, καὶ δι' ἄλλης ἄγει πρὸς τὴν πόλιν ὡς πρὸς κρησφύγετον· ἣν δὴ καὶ ταῦτα κατάκρως τὰ τῆς εἰσόδου πεφυλαγμένην, παρ' ἐλπίδα πᾶσαν εὐθὺς εἰσδύομεν, ἐπὶ τούτῳ τοῦ ἡγεμόνος ἐς πολὺ χαλεπήναντος, ὅτι τὲ καὶ οὗτος σὺν τῷ πατριάρχῃ καὶ τὸ σύμπαν πλῆθος ἐκτὸς ηὐλίζοντο, καὶ ὅτι καὶ ἡμῖν ἑτοιμασθῆναι προδιετάξατο, πόρρω ποι τῆς κοινῆς ἐπαύλεως ἰδιαζόντως τὴν σκήνωσιν, ἀλλ' ὅ τε τὴν ἀγγελίαν φέρων οὐκ ἐντετύχηκε τοῖς πρὸς οὓς αὖτη, καὶ οἱ τῆς πόλεως φρουροί, τοῖς ἐπήλυσιν ὡς οἰκήτορσι, σφαλέντες τὸν λογισμόν, ἐνέδοσαν τὴν εἰσέλευσιν. / He [the Lord] caused those whose eyes were fixed on Him to leave the main road, along which most traffic travelled, and brought them by another road to the city, as if it were a refuge. Indeed, even though the entrance was very strongly defended, I was able to enter the city at once contrary to all expectations. The ruler was most annoyed at this because he and the Patriarch, along with all the rest of the crowd, had taken up quarters outside, and because he had ordered beforehand that a lodging should be prepared for me on my own far away from the general camp, but the messenger had not reached those for whom the message was intended, and the city guards gave us the entry permit when we arrived, mistaking us, who were strangers, for local inhabitants.[358]

From this description we can confirm an observation made above on the archaeological remains and the setting of Byzantine Magnesia: the city was well protected. Not only did it have a strong gate and walls, but also armed guards who carefully watched and checked the traffic coming through. As it seems from here, outsiders were not necessarily allowed into the city.

Blemmydes further said that the emperor stayed outside the city in his camp. It is possible that he did so because his entourage was too big for the inner city, likewise perhaps there was no building assigned to him and thus, the imperial tents sufficed better than any other accommodation the needs of imperial lodging. Another possibility is that the emperor brought along parts of the army and wanted to stay close to his soldiers, who were not permitted into the city. To this an almost contemporary example exists within Byzantine literature. It is included in the famous ekphrasis on the church

[358] Blemmydae, *Opera*, ed. Munitiz, II.81; Blemmydes, *Partial Account*, tr. Munitiz, 136.

of the Holy Apostles by Nikolaos Mesarites, dated to around 1200.[359] In one paragraph in his lengthy text Mesarites described that the ruler moved out to the imperial tents, which had been pitched in a garden just opposite the palace. The description did not specify the garden or the palace further, however, the editor of the ekphrasis, Glanville Downey, identified the spot of the tents as the Outer Philopation.[360] Maguire later supported the suggestion, but added that also another unknown palace and garden could have been referred to.[361] The Outer Philopation was a garden just outside the city walls of Constantinople adjacent to the Blachernai palace complex, where the army encamped after their return from campaign. In this short description the ruler had preferred the tents over the palace proper so that he could be cheered by his people. Mesarites thus showed that the preference of staying in imperial tents rather than the palace complex would not have been an impossible scenario, even if the palace was located in direct reach. This description illustrates that imperial tents were by no means considered only as the improvised residence while being on campaign; as in Mesarites, they could be used in a symbolic gesture towards the subjects of the emperor.

This passage may not answer sufficiently, whether or not Magnesia had an imperial palace. In case it had one, it may however show that it was not necessarily used on all occasions by the emperor, even though he stayed at Magnesia. It shows that during this period, tents were equally a means of imperial temporary housing.

Nikodemos Hagiorites

In his survey on Magnesia Clive Foss mentioned a palace that was supposed to have been constructed under John III Vatatzes. Foss admitted that he could not base the existence of a palace on actual findings on the citadel, since the poor state of the collapsed ruins did not allow any identification.[362] Regarding a palace erected during Laskarid rule he only referred to the written testimony, the *akolouthia* of a certain

[359] Glanville Downey, "Nikolaos Mesarites: Description of the church of the Holy Apostles at Constantinople," *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society*, New Series vol. 47. 6 (1957), 855-924; for the referred passage V. 4-5 see the translation 864, the Greek edition 898.

[360] Downey, "Mesarites," 864 n4. Downey calculated that due to the sea level on which the church of the Holy Apostles and the garden outside thecity next the Blachernai palace complex were situated, the view from the roof of the church into the garden would be just perfectly possible.

[361] Henry Maguire, "Gardens and Parks in Constantinople," *DOP* 54 (2000), 251-264; regarding the Philopation see 254.

[362] Foss, "Fortifications in Lydia," 309.

Nikodemos Hagiorites, published in 1872, without further discussion.[363] The edition from 1872 had come down to us in rare copies.[364] This text influenced Foss' judgment on Magnesia as the "effective capital" resp. "administrative center" of the Laskarid realm, and thus requires some elaboration.[365]

Its compiler, the monk Nikodemos, lived in the second half of the eighteenth century. In the earlier part of his life Nikodemos studied for some time in the vicinity of Smyrna before retreating to Mount Athos. At an unknown period later he compiled the *akolouthia* on John III Vatatzes, then venerated in Magnesia and its immediate surroundings as the saint John the Merciful, whose cult had prevailed only in that region and on the island of Tenedos.[366] A century later the metropolitan of Ephesos, Constantine Agathangelos, published this compilation along with the attached vita. At the beginning of the twentieth century the vita came to the attention of August Heisenberg, the editor of the work of George Akropolites. Heisenberg published a thorough analysis of its content and historical reliability, as well as thoughts regarding its purpose, audience and the sources, on which it had been based, already in 1905.[367] In the legend, as Heisenberg called it, the author, an unknown monk, stated that he had heard the story of the life of John the Merciful from another monk in the year 1659 and wrote it down years later, therefore Heisenberg placed the date around 1670. In detail Heisenberg addressed the issue of historical trustworthiness of this legend for a period that lay more than 400 years in the past. He arrived to the conclusion that all in all the text is not a source for a historian focused on the thirteenth century.[368]

---

[363] An *akolouthia* is generally an order of chanting sung during service, which is compiled even for saints that have not been formally canonized; see David J. Melling, "akolouthia" in *The Blackwell Dictionary of Eastern Christianity* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1999), 10. Attached to the *akolouthia* in the manuscript was a legend about John III Vatatzes.

[364] John Langdon summarized the history of this compilation in detail. He reproduced the Greek text in the appendix of his book, based on two volumes he was able to consult, and thus, made it available for a wider audience: John S. Langdon, *Byzantium's Last Imperial Offense in Asia Minor,* for the history of the text, see 71 n124, for the Greek text see 88-117.

[365] Foss, "Fortifications in Lydia," 307; Foss and Winfield, *Fortifications*, 152.

[366] A somewhat curious fact that not even the seventeenth century writer of the vita was able to explain.

[367] August Heisenberg, "Kaiser Johannes Batatzes der Barmherzige," *BZ* 14 (1905), 160-233. In this article Heisenberg discussed two texts that focused on John III Vatatzes, a fifteenth century encomion and this here mentioned early modern Greek legend. The Greek text of the encomion was edited and published in the end of his article. He compared both texts to contemporary thirteenth century works, among other to those of Niketas Choniates and George Akropolites and pointed out their inreliabilities.

[368] Heisenberg, "Kaiser Johannes Batatzes der Barmherzige," 185.

The legend grew out of remembrance for a strong emperor, who had been buried in the vicinity of Magnesia. As told in the legend, monks from the monastery at Sosandra fled to the fortified city when the Seljuks approached. Later they also brought the body of the emperor to Magnesia, so that he would be safe from plunder and in hope that the relic would protect the city. [369] Because of this Magnesia became the site, where the cult for the emperor was established, nourished by the belief of its citizens over centuries.

Thus, as there is no other proof for a palace at Magnesia, the legend alone can not serve as a written testimony for its existence.[370]

Summary

However, in all likelihood the ruins that survive near Manisa occupy the very same spot as the fortification mentioned in Akropolites' report. As has been observed above, the citadel lay on a high and inaccessible hill top. Thus, for the purpose of imprisonment it could be considered a good choice: the hard-to-reach fortress would prevent flight. However, the prisoner soon escaped due to increased freedom of movement, yet as Akropolites added, with the furtive consent of the emperor.

4. The imperial treasury and the mint

Magnesia is recorded to have housed the state treasury for quite some time during the exile period. As has been remarked, the location of the mint was usually tied to the state treasury and thus, the latter might have been kept here as well. However, for the mint no direct evidence could be put forward; regarded as indirect evidence was solely the joint office for vestiarion and mint within the administration. The choice of Magnesia as the location of both will be reviewed in the following.

Angold in his study on the economic history of the Laskarid realm discussed the matter of the vestiarion at length.[371] According to him, the vestiarion meant at that period as a result of the Komnenian reforms simply the state treasury. He further stated that "after the fall of Constantinople the vestiarion […] was enlarged to include all

[369] Heisenberg, "Kaiser Johannes Batatzes der Barmherzige," 174.

[370] Certainly emperors during the exile might have camped or stayed at Magnesia and it may even be that a building had been allocated to or erected for them. However, it should be made clear that this is nothing more than a hypothesis, no proof could be mobilized.

[371] Angold, *Government in Exile*, 204-07.

aspects of the fiscal administration. […] This effectively meant that the whole fiscal machinery was concentrated in the vestiarion."[372] Angold mentioned the passage in the work of George Pachymeres, in which the historian recounted that John III Vatatzes had placed a large sum of money at Magnesia. Angold considered it therefore the "one fixed institution of the Nicaean administration", despite the fact that John's son Theodore II Laskaris had placed a second deposit at a site named Astytzion on the Skamander.[373] The latter deposit Angold explained with payouts for military campaigns to the Balkans.

The term basilikon vestiarion did apparently not appear in contemporary texts, only the archaic denomination basilikon tamieion, which Michael Hendy on the other hand equated with the vestiarion, thus the central state treasury, for the given period.[374] This was later supported by Kazhdan, who also confirmed that at that time there was no longer a distinction between the private and the state treasury, both were united in the basilikon vestiarion or tamieion.[375]

Hendy focused on the location of mints during the Laskarid period and referred to the same passage of Pachymeres, in which he interpreted the choice of Magnesia as follows:

> this city [Magnesia] lay in the economic heart of the empire of Nicaea, the area between the rivers Hermus and Maeander, and within easy reach of the administrative capital at Nymphaeum […] Astytzium, on the other hand, lay at the very edge of the Asian territories of the empire, and it seems reasonable to suppose the money deposited there to have been intended to cater for the European territories recovered by John III.[376]

Further he remarked that the site, which housed the state treasury, probably also accommodated the mint, for the office of both derived from the same administrative origin.[377] The coins from the Laskarid period are thus divided into the Nicaean type and Magnesian one.[378] To repeat, Hendy argued that the state treasury had been placed at Magnesia because it was situated in that part of the Laskarid realm, which could be

[372] Angold, *Government in Exile*, 204.

[373] *Pachymeres*, ed. Failler, I. 97: Ἦν γὰρ χρημάτων πλῆθος ἐναποτεθησαυρισμένον ἐν Μαγνησίᾳ, οὐ ῥᾳδίως ἀριθμητόν, συλλεγὲν καὶ ἀποτεθὲν παρ' Ἰωάννου τοῦ Δούκα καὶ βασιλέως· τὸ γὰρ παρὰ τοῦ παιδὸς ἐκείνου Θεοδώρου τοῦ Λάσκαρι συναγόμενον ἰδίως ἄλλο τι χρῆμα, εἰς βασιλείας αὔταρκες ὄγκον, ἐν τῷ κατὰ τὰ ἄνω Σκαμάνδρου φρουρίῳ, τῷ οὕτω πως Ἀστριτζίῳ ὑποκοριζομένῳ, ἀσφαλῶς ἐναπέκειτο.

[374] Hendy, *Monetary Economy*, 443.

[375] Kazhdan, "vestiarion," *ODB*, 2163.

[376] Hendy, *Monetary Economy*, 443.

[377] Hendy, *Monetary Economy*, 444.

[378] Hendy, *Catalogue of the Byzantine Coins*, 455. Here Hendy revisted also his previous considerations published in 1969 and 1985.

considered the economically most prosperous.[379] And a second deposit of a part of the same state treasury to the edge of the governed territory should be seen in closer relation to the newly acquired territories on the Balkans, as Angold had suggested earlier. In sum, Hendy here connected the choice for the location of the treasury deposits with the economic situation in the Laskarid realm.[380]

There are several issues with this interpretation. For one, Hendy interpreted the layout of the Laskarid territory in a way, which so far could not be confirmed in this study, for he considered Astytzion to be on the rim of the Laskarid territory. Pachymeres explained that Astytzion was situated at the river Skamander, the recent Karamenderes. This river is fed by two springs from Mount Ida, recent Kaz Dağı, and joins the Aegean Sea a little north of the modern excavation site of Troy. Thus, Astytzion lay in short distance to Lampsakos and on the route from there to the region of Magnesia. If a part of the state treasury had been deposited there by Theodore II Laskaris, then this presumably happened during his reign, which is between 1254 and 1258. By then Lampsakos and Pegai had been part of the Laskarid territory for more than 30 years. Which means, Astytzion was located on the above established itinerary of the emperors within the core of the realm; Theodore's presence at these settlements had been established above. Thus, from the preliminary results of this study the site of Astytzion appeared by no means as situated at the edge of the Laskarid territory. Quite the contrary, Astytzion lay in a region that just as the region around Magnesia belonged to the core territory of the rulers in exile. What indeed distinguished the Troad significantly from the Meander region was the fact that it could not be considered a border zone: all foreign powers flanked the Laskarid realm at some distance from Astytzion. It was a less risky site for a state treasury deposit.

[379] Much has been said about the strength of the Laskarid realm regarding its agricultural prosperity and resulting economic autarky. The latest publication focused on the economy in the Laskarid period labeled Magnesia as a central market town according to the central place theory developed by Walther Christaller: Ekaterini Mitsiou, "Versorgungsmodelle im Nikäischen Kaiserreich," in *Handelsgüter und Verkehrswege. Aspekte der Warenversorgung im östlichen Mittelmeerraum (4. bis 15. Jahrhundert),* edd. Ewald Kieslinger, Johanees Koder, Andreas Külzer (Vienna: Verlag der österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2010), 223-240. (While finishing this study, I became aware of the unpublished dissertation of Ekaterini Mitsiou, "Untersuchungen zu Wirtschaft und Ideologie im 'Nizäischen Reich', " *PhD Thesis* (University of Vienna, 2006). An examination of the text could not be realized, but is planned for spring 2013.) In this context the important role of having obtained the fruitful river valleys in western Asia Minor early on during the reign of Theodore I Laskaris can hardly be overstressed. The feature of Magnesia as the economic nodal point will be discussed fully in the next chapter of this study.

[380] Hendy also alluded to the possibility that it was already Theodore I and not only his successor who transferred state money to Magnesia, based on distribution of coin finds in the realm.

Since the publication of Hendy, Astytzion has been loosely identified with the ruins of the recent Turkish site locally called Kızkulesi near recent Ezine in the Troad (Fig. Mag. 8).[381] This site constitutes a hill that dominates a plain near the current of the Karamenderes (Fig. Mag. 10), on whose top remains of watch towers, other buildings and cisterns were found (Fig. Mag. 9). The surrounding plain area allowed spotting potential danger from afar (Fig. Mag. 11 and 12). Even though somewhat smaller in size, the layout of Astytzion would – should the identification be correct – be similar to that of Magnesia.

Hendy himself revised the issue of the state treasury in the Laskarid realm roughly 15 years later in the catalogue of the Byzantine Coin Collection of Dumbarton Oaks. There he pondered about the comparison of Magnesia and Nymphaion as optional sites of the state treasury and remarked:

> Hankerings after a mint at nearby Nymphaeum should be resisted. True, the small, still standing palace was overlooked by the fortress on a nearby hill, and true it could apparently be defended, but although it presumably once had a dependent complex of which there are now no visible traces, it does not seem to have been walled. The alternative and known axis of treasury and mint at Magnesia, and largely winter palace at Nymphaeum, therefore makes excellent sense.[382]

It can only be assumed that he compared the actual choice of Magnesia with the optional one of Nymphaion, since the presence of the palace there might have led to expectations that Nymphaion could be regarded as the imperial center of the Laskarid realm and thus, naturally would have housed the imperial assets also. In this comparison he took another factor for the placement of the treasury into account, namely the topography of the location. Hendy pointed out that the topography of Nymphaion was not suitable for the mint resp. the treasury, because it could not offer ideal protection. That separating imperial residence from state treasury could be of benefit did not occur to him. Neither did he point out the obvious advantages of Magnesia for keeping the vestiarion safe. For the account of Blemmydes had shown above: Magnesia was a well defended city and difficult to enter, even for contemporaries. In contrast to Nymphaion or Nicaea, the center of the city lay on the top of a hill, encircled by city walls, the hill

[381] Hendy himself suggested this possible identification, however without further explanation. Little can be said in support of this identification, it is no more than a hypothesis. Through a talk with Beate Böhlendorf-Aslan however I at least learned that she could date some Byzantine pottery shards, which she collected on a survey of that very spot, into the thirteenth century. The name kızkulesi is often attributed to ruins at hilltops or other isolated spots in Turkey and can be translated as "Maiden's tower," it however contains no indication regarding the function or history of the site.

[382] Hendy, *Catalogue of the Byzantine Coins*, 515.

as such again surrounded by mountains. In my view, this aspect has to large extent been overlooked and needs to be taken into account when dealing with the location of treasury and mint. This Magnesia and Astytzion had in common.

In line with that, Pachymeres himself, without whom we would not know anything regarding the location of the treasury, gave a hint for the additional deposit at Astytzion: it was done *asphalōs* – out of safety. Unfortunately we do not learn from Pachymeres, what triggered the safety precautions and when Theodore II established a second money depot at Astytzion. Helpful here might be a recapitulation of events during Theodore's reign that could have prompted precautions regarding the state treasury and its location.

For most of his short reign Theodore II had been occupied with campaigns on the Balkans, but in the winter of 1256-57 he hastened back to the region of Magnesia and Sardis to defend the Laskarid territory against a Mongol attack. In his narrative Akropolites placed the camp near Sardis, whereas the author known as Skoutariotes described the large army encamped at Magnesia.[383] In either case, both cities lay in proximity to one another and on the same route that led further to Philadelpheia and to the Byzantine-Seljuk border. From there Theodore II Laskaris moved towards the territory of the Seljuks. It could thus be a probable scenario to imagine that he decided to secure parts of the state treasury by moving it to a site more distant from the immediate border region.

In connection with the Mongol campaign also the flight of Michael Palaiologos to the Seljuks might have stood behind the deposit at Astytzion. Michael served as general under Theodore II and another reading of the circumstances could be that Theodore II Laskaris decided to move the treasury away from Magnesia in order to get it out of the reach of his then general Michael Palaiologos. In this way he could prohibit a taking of the treasury by his general, who fled to the Seljuk territory after having been threatened by the emperor.[384]

All these considerations remain hypothetical, but one aspect is interesting to note: Theodore II did not transfer the entire treasury from one place to another, instead

[383] *Scutariota*, ed. Heisenberg, Addidamenta no.33: ἐν δὲ τῇ κατὰ Λυδίαν Μαγνησίᾳ, ὅπου καὶ τὰ πλείω τῶν χρημάτων ἀπέθετο, τί τίς ἂν ἐζήτησεν ἀφ' ὧν ἄνθρωποι χρῄζομεν, καὶ οὐχ εὑρὼν ἐκληρώσατο τὴν ἀπόλαυσιν, οὐ τῶν ἐν τοῖς ἡμετέροις τόποις εὑρισκομένων ἀλλὰ καὶ ὅσα ἐνιαχοῦ τῆς οἰκουμένης, κατ' Αἴγυπτόν φημι καὶ Ἰνδίαν καὶ ἀλλαχοῦ;

[384] For the incident and the way Akropolites described it, see Macrides discussion of the author's intentions: *Akropolites*, tr. Macrides, 62.

he established a second deposit of money at another location. It is possible that the very act of splitting was considered the safety measure and not so much the other location. Keeping the state treasury at one single place might have been too risky, especially at a time when a Byzantine general with inside knowledge – being in conflict with the emperor – joined sides with the enemy beyond the border.

To sum up, the deposit of the vestiarion at Magnesia seems from this study a choice based on several advantages of the site. The most apparent was the strong defensive character of the city. The wealth accumulated during the exile period secured Laskarid independence and also their military strength, thus, keeping the state treasury safe was absolutely crucial for the survival of the realm. Under all circumstances the emperors needed to keep control over it. The proximity to Nymphaion could be thus regarded as another factor for locating treasury and probably mint at Magnesia. Not placing it at Nymphaion might have been motivated exactly by these aspects as well: boosting the winter quarter with the deposit of the treasury might have attracted the attention of an enemy, and the layout of Nymphaion as it is known today did not include an impressive defense system.

The additional deposit at Astytzion has to be considered a further safety measure. The second fund shows that also this institution was not fixed in space and could be moved if the situation required it. The split of the treasury had the advantage that the focus on it got diverted. It mirrored the way, in which imperial presence and imperial institutions were spread over the Laskarid core territory.

Summary

The nature of Magnesia's topography differed in comparison to Nicaea and Nymphaion, but shared features with Pegai for instance. The main characteristic was its inaccessibility: entry to the city was only possible from one cardinal direction, which could be controlled by its inhabitants. Thus, it proved to be an ideal site for guarding important prisoners or the state treasury.

The Byzantine remains of Magnesia are difficult to date, since there is not enough material for a substantial stylistic analysis. Remarkable are the traces of Ottoman reuse. Due to its location, the city was actually not offering many advantages for Ottoman inhabitants. For the Byzantine population in times of turmoil and raids Magnesia provided shelter and security. However after the Ottoman conquest the demands towards settlements changed, which led to abandonment of many Byzantine

sites. As observed in the case of Pegai, protection and defensibility gave way to easier accessibility, thus, Ottoman Biga was refounded in the plain along an inland route. This seemed not to have happened to Magnesia in the early Ottoman period. To qualify this statement: it apparently was true only for the lower city, on the upper citadel no traces of Ottoman architecture could be observed.

Magnesia did not figure prominently in the account of Akropolites, despite its obvious significance as the location of the treasury. This may be interpreted in the following way: Magnesia took the part as one focal point within the Laskarid territory, but it did not serve as a station on the imperial itinerary. That is not to say that emperors did not visit the city, generally it has to be considered that emperors surely stayed in all places of their realm more often than it was recorded by contemporaries. But this counts for all sites. Significant here is that for most sites every now and then imperial visitations could be proven through written testimony, for Magnesia little evidence survived. It may be explained by the fact that Magnesia was not housing emperors during the exile period as often as Pegai, Lampsakos or Nymphaion.

III. Layers of the Laskarid landscape

The preceding survey of several selected sites in western Asia Minor allowed us to detect how the Laskarid rulers set up their dominion in space. Constantinople, the center of the Byzantine empire, had been lost; the aim of this study is to examine, whether a new capital was built that served as the new center and housed the imperial residence during the exile period. The sites presented as case studies were discussed as focal points of the Laskarid realm. They had been preselected during the research for my MA thesis. The thesis had focused on Nymphaion alone and could not be extended to other sites that had appeared as crucial for the Laskarid design of their territory. Their examination here brought to light several facets that constituted such a hub in the realm: All of them became at one point during the exile stages of imperial acts or housed institutions that belonged to imperial rule.

The following chapter seeks to turn away from single sites and to examine the topography of the Laskarid realm as a whole under specific aspects connected to imperial rule. For one, a deeper study will be made at the way topographical information was generally presented within contemporary texts. An emphasis will be put on motivation and word choice of those references within the accounts. In previous scholarship no attempt had been made to discuss all aspects of a medieval capital and to consider, which site or sites within the territory under Laskarid rule could possibly have fulfilled all of these. The economic, symbolic, administrative, ecclesiastical and imperial facets of a capital will thus be guiding the examination in the following part.

Additionally, during the preceding studies of sites further features emerged, which during the course of the exile constituted a spatial orientation of imperial rule. As an example, because of the reorganization of power spheres in the Eastern Mediterranean, alliances were sealed and broken frequently and peace treaties signed at regular intervals with neighboring rulers. Some of these agreements have been observed in the case studies; however, the topic is by no means sufficiently covered, since only a few of them were signed at the studied sites, others were concluded elsewhere. To investigate which locations were chosen in which situations for negotiations and confirmations of written treaties, might reveal a topographical pattern that can help to understand the setup of the realm. In the same way the location of chancery and judicial court will be looked at.

A. The Laskarid realm in its borders

1. Territorial expansion, road network, naval routes

Territorial expansion

So far this study focused on the region of western Asia minor as the central area of the Laskarid realm. Given the fact that almost all focal points analyzed above were situated in that very area, the ascription seems justified. A brief reflection on the other, less prominent, less visited and partially later added areas of the Laskarid territory will highlight the significance of western Asia Minor even further. The difficulty here lies in the fact that during the course of the exile period the Laskarid rulers conquered new territories, only to lose and reconquer them again. The territorial organization across the Sea of Marmara did not remain stable.

The lands that belonged at one point during the exile to the territory governed by the Laskarid emperors could be divided into the following regions: the area south of the Sea of Marmara; the west coast of Asia Minor including the fertile river valleys; the western coastal strip along the Black Sea from the eastern mouth of the Bosporus to the vicinity of Sinope; finally conquered parts in the Balkans. From the five case studies examined here, the cities of Lampsakos and Pegai, Magnesia and also Nymphaion were all situated in western Asia Minor along the coast in the most prosperous region of the Anatolian plateau. Only Nicaea stuck out because it did not belong to the same strip, but was located to the north of the high plateau near the Sea of Marmara.

The Sangarius river has been referred to as the rough orientation line between Laskarid and Seljuk territories.[385] The approximate line of demarcation was cutting from the Black Sea region through the plateau from north-east to south-west until the lower river valley of the Maeander. This boundary marked not only the division of these two authorities, but also the line between settled lifestyle and tribal nomadism and was of peculiar characteristics. Keith Hopwood examined in detail this frontier zone called *uc* by Turkologists in his study on the cultural boundaries between the Byzantine and

[385] Mitsiou, "Versorgungsmodelle," 227.

Seljuk frontier.[386] The *uc* therefore constituted an uncontrolled and insecure buffer of no-man's-land between the two power spheres.[387] Hopwood also stated that while inhabitants who remained faithful to their Christian belief accepted the sultan as their ruler, at the same time Turkmen were settled in areas under the control of the Laskarid emperors. Thus, a differentiation has to be made between military control on one hand and cultural hegemony on the other.[388]

There is reason to consider the coastal area of western Asia Minor as the core region of Laskarid rule and the most precious possession within the ruler's territory, valued higher than the European parts conquered later. This judgment can be based not only on the geographical or economic situation, but also on the contemporary perception. It will be examined below in this subchapter.

The fact that all of these regions have been acquired step by step over the course of time had an effect on the spatial development of the Laskarid realm. When establishing authority over a territory, logically those parts that are added first occupy distinct roles required for the set up of rule. The cities examined in this study all belonged to the regions occupied very early during the reign of Theodore I Laskaris. Therefore, not only the description of the regions and their economic value, but also the timeline of their possession needs to be taken into account.

Theodore I Laskaris faced two types of opposition against his attempt to set up rule in western Asia Minor. There were, on the one hand, foreign powers that tried to push into the power vacuum, in particular the Latins and the Seljuks. On the other there were domestic enemies: already before 1204 local lords had taken possession of parts of western Asia Minor, whom Theodore had to convince by word and deed to recognize his rulership as emperor.[389]

[386] Keith Hopwood, "The Byzantine-Turkish frontier 1250-1300," in *Acta Viennensia Ottomanica.* Akten des 13. CIEPO-Symposiums (Comité International des Études Pré-Ottomanes et Ottomanes) vom 21. bis 25. September 1998 in Wien, ed. Markus Köhbach (Vienna: Selbstverlag des Instituts für Orientalistik, 1999), 153-62.

[387] Hopwood took in particular issues with the interpretation of Langdon's claim that John III Vatatzes led a crusade against the Seljuk realm. Hopwood laid out the difference between the Seljuk authority on the other side of the frontier zone on one hand, and the Turkmen raids that occurred in the *uc* and he argued that Vatatzes' attacks had targeted the latter, over which also the sultan had had no control: Hopwood, "Byzantine-Turkish frontier," 156-57.

[388] Hopwood, "Byzantine-Turkish frontier," 153.

[389] That Theodore I Laskaris had not been accepted immediately when arriving at the city of Nicaea, had been noted above. Akropolites described the situation briefly: *Acropolitae*, ed. Heisenberg, §7. Angold described the economic situation in the asiatic provinces of the former Byzantine empire as in a "state of anarchy": Angold, *Government in Exile,* 97-100. For a more detailed analysis on the collapse

Peace agreements with foreign powers marked the regional change of power or the settlement of recognized boundaries for certain segments.[390] Dölger counted six such agreements during the reign of Theodore I Laskaris, all concluded in Asia Minor.[391] All of these involved either the Latin emperor or the Seljuk sultan. During the first two decades the task had been to subject most of western Asia Minor under Laskarid authority. The battle of Antioch in 1211 after the victory of Theodore I Laskaris settled the boundaries between the Laskarid realm and that of the Seljuk territory at the Meander valley. In the following battle of the same year near Pegai between Theodore I and the Latin emperor Henry of Flanders the Latin forces remained victorious. The subsequent agreement ruled that a substantial part of northwest Asia Minor remained in Latin hands. The region of Smyrna seemed from that time onwards firm in Laskarid hands uncontested by Seljuk or Latin ruler. Also during Thedore I Laskaris' reign the boundaries along the Black Sea coast were settled. According to Akropolites, he ruled over Pontic Heracleia after 1214.[392] It constituted however just a small narrow strip along the immediate coast, as mountain chains to the south prevented easy access to inner Anatolia.

The treaties of the reign of John III Vatatzes were more numerous and several renewals among them bear witness to the ever changing political situations in the Eastern Aegean. However, not all of them deal with territorial expansion or boundaries. After the battle near Poimanenon in 1224 just shortly after the succession of John III, a new agreement settled the territorial power spheres in Asia Minor: the Latins gave up their possessions in northwest Asia Minor and continued to hold only the area near Nikomedia.[393]

---

of Byzantine authority on the eve of the Fourth Crusade, the rise of Byzantine landholders to the rank of local lords and references to previous studies for Asia Minor and also the Balkans see Günter Prinzing, "Das Byzantinische Kaisertum im Umbruch – zwischen regionaler Aufspaltung und erneuter Zentrierung in den Jahren 1204-1282," in *Legitimation und Funktion des Herrschers: vom ägyptischen Pharao zum neuzeitlichen Diktator*, ed. Rolf Gundlach and Hermann Weber (Stuttgart: Steiner, 1992), 129-183, especially 130-131 and n4.

[390] The development of territorial expansion was not linear. Even if agreements had been settled, sometimes boundaries were again challenged later on, as has been shown in the case of Pegai. Only with some distance to the single steps it would be possible to say that from a nucleus the Laskarid realm enlarged its borders within time. Therefore this distance is applied here. For a detailed overview of the space and the course of the boundaries with the relevant source references see Mitsiou, "Versorgungsmodelle," 224-228.

[391] Dölger, *Regesten*, no. 1669, 1670, 1675, 1682, 1684, 1706.

[392] *Acropolitae*, ed. Heisenberg, §11.

[393] This treaty is described by Akropolites and discussed above in the case study on Pegai.

During the 1230s John III began to engage and conquer territories in the Balkans, first jointly with the Bulgarian ruler John Asan.[394] Here John III faced the Angeloi rulers, first situated at Arta, then at Thessaloniki. Later on John Asan and then his successors at various times turned against John III. Regardless, John III conquered large parts in Macedonia including the city of Thessaloniki in 1246.[395] However, not all of these remained Laskarid possessions throughout the exile.

Now, as stated at the beginning, there is reason to consider the region in western Asia Minor as the core territory and of higher value for the Laskarid emperors than any other. In 1237 John III Vatatzes held the town of Tzouroulos in Thrace near Constantinople, when the Latins decided to forge an alliance with the Bulgarian ruler John II Asan and to besiege Tzouroulos:

> ἐν ἀμηχανίᾳ δὲ ἦν ὁ βασιλεὺς Ἰωάννης, οὐ τοσοῦτον τῶν ἐν τῷ ἄστει ὑπεραγωνιῶν, ἀλλ' εἰδώς, οἷα ἐχέφρων καὶ συνετὸς τὰ πολέμια, ὡς εἰ τὸ ἄστυ παρὰ τῶν ἐναντίων ἁλῴη, φροῦδα πάντα τὰ ἐν τῇ δύσει τούτῳ τυγχάνοντα γένοιντο. τέως οὖν ἠγάπα μᾶλλον ἐν τούτῳ ἑπτοῆσθαι τοὺς πολεμίους καὶ τὸ πολὺ τῆς ῥύμης σφίσιν ἐναποκόπτεσθαι· ἔμελε γὰρ αὐτῷ μᾶλλον τὰ ἐν τῇ ἕω, ὧν ἐλευθέρων ὑπαρχόντων τῆς μάχης πλεῖον αὐτῷ τὸ τῆς εὐφροσύνης ὑπῆν. / The emperor John was in difficulty, not so much because he was in great distress for those in the town, but because he knew, being prudent and shrewd in military matters, that if the town were taken by the enemy, all that was his in the west would be gone. In the meantime, however, he preferred in this matter to distract the enemy and curtail the vehemence of their attack; for his possessions in the east were of more importance to him; it was a greater source of cheer to him that they be free of warfare.[396]

As observed before, the European territories and those of Asia Minor were differentiated through "west" and "east". In this passage it became apparent that John III Vatatzes regarded the territories of Asia Minor higher than those of the Balkans, even though the latter were at that very moment of strategic advantage. Keeping Tzouroulos would have meant for John III to have the Latins in Constantinople surrounded from both sides. Thus, it was in the interest of the emperor not to lose the town, which however took place some time after. But, as the passage here made clear, despite its strategic value John III considered it the less troublesome outcome. He preferred engaging the Latins in military conflict on European soil rather than on the Anatolian part. For by all means he wanted to protect his possessions in Asia Minor. The safety of the "eastern" territory had priority. A conscious awareness of the

[394] *Acropolitae*, ed. Heisenberg, §33.
[395] *Acropolitae*, ed. Heisenberg, §43-47.
[396] *Acropolitae*, ed. Heisenberg, §36; *Akropolites*, tr. Macrides, 201.

importance to keep control over the Asian territory as a guarantee for existence shines through here. It is interesting to note that a territorial entity serves as the warrant of survival. It contrasts the meaning the city of Constantinople had for the elite of the Byzantine empire in the past.

Another more subtle distinction between the western and eastern part in terms of the meaning for its inhabitants might also be hinted at in one further passage of Akropolites that dated to 1246 at the end of a campaign in the west. Emperor John III had been on campaign in Macedonia and after its completion in the fall prepared his way back to Asia Minor:

> ἦν μὲν πρὸς βουλήσεως τῷ βασιλεῖ μνήσασθαι νόστου καὶ πρὸς τὴν ἕω ἐπαναζεῦξαι—καὶ γὰρ καὶ ὁ καιρὸς τοῦτο ἀπῄτει· μὴν γὰρ παρερρύη Ὀκτώβριος, καὶ περί που τὰ μέσα τούτου διήρχετο ὁ Νοέμβριος […] / It was the emperor's plan to turn his attention to the homeward journey and to return to the east, for the season also required this; the month of October had passed and November was nearly half over.[397]

Perhaps here Akropolites' perception of Asia Minor could be understood from a different, more personal angle: even though John III had conquered and subjected territories on European soil, only the eastern part was considered home. Here an awareness of the importance of their own territory in western Asia Minor and their need to keep authority over it can be grasped. The word *nostos* - homeward journey - had been used first by Homer to describe the journeys of the Greek protagonists on their way home after the taking of Troy. Anna Komnene had used the term in the same sense when the "Scythian" auxiliary troops ceased to engage any longer in the battle and decided instead to collect their booty and start their home journey.[398] Blemmydes had been asked by the emperor to return to Asia Minor when he had been in the European parts trying to collect books.[399]

Road network

Long established routes determined to a great extent the setup of structures in Asia Minor during the Laskarid period. The roads that connected areas within the

[397] *Acropolitae*, ed. Heisenberg, §45; *Akropolites*, tr. Macrides, 235.

[398] *Annae Comnenae Alexiad*, ed. Reinsch, book I, 5, §9. Constantinides had stated that Homer belonged to those authors, which were taught throughout Byzantine history: Constantinides, *Higher Education*, 2. According to Kazdhan and others, Homer was the most observed ancient author in Byzantium: Alexander Kazhdan, Kenneth Snipes, Anthony Cutler, "Homer," *ODB*, 943-44.

[399] Blemmydae, *Opera*, ed. Munitiz, I.64.

Laskarid territory date back to Roman, Hellenistic and also Persian times.[400] Generally the road system of Asia Minor connected various regions with one another and stretched over the entire peninsula. Their formation can only be understood when viewing all of Asia Minor; their segments located in the later created Laskarid territory however constitute only small parts. Nothing hinted at the possibility that under Laskarid rule new routes were established or roads were built. Even more, it has been stated that during the reorganization of the dioceses within western Asia Minor those cities had been elevated to the rank of a metropolis, which were situated along these roads.[401]

Particularly in its western part Asia Minor owed its roads to a large extent to Roman times. Then the need had emerged to connect the important cities of the Roman empire by land: Byzantium, Nikomedia and Nicaea with cities inside the Anatolian plateau such as Ankyra and Dorylaeum, and with those south of Asia Minor like Antiochia in Syria or Alexandria in Egypt. Thus, from the crossing point of the city of Byzantium to Chalkedon as the entrance to Asia Minor one route led to Nikomedia, from where two routes led to Tarsos in south-central Asia Minor near the Mediterranean coast. One of these two crossed the high plateau of Anatolia via Dorylaeum and Ankyra. The other route from Nikomedia led west towards Cyzicus, circled around the edge of the plateau and turned south at Pergamon along the coast via Smyrna and Ephesos. From there following the coast along the Aegean and Mediterranean Sea the western route joined with the route from Ankyra again at Tarsos. A third way from Nikomedia followed the coast of the Black Sea over Sinope to Trebizond.

One further route dominating the road network in Asia Minor was the older and much studied Persian Royal road, created under Darius I, which connected the two ends of the Persian empire.[402] Its western end station was Sardis, from where the road led into the high plateau eastwards and then through the Cilician Gates into present-day Iran. Sardis was to the west connected via Nymphaion to Smyrna at the Aegean Sea. Likewise from Sardis another road led north-east towards Dorylaeum into the high plateau, thereby following more or less the course of the river valley of the Hermos.

[400] *Barrington Altas of the Greek and Roman world*, ed. Talbert, Richard, Roger Bagnall et al, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), 56.

[401] Mitsiou, "Versorgungsmodelle," 236.

[402] Recently David French, "Pre- and Early-Roman Roads of Asia Minor. The Persian Royal Road," *British Institute of Persian Studies* 36 (1998), 15-43.

The territory of the Laskarid realm included only a small part of this large network of roads, particularly since the routes into the high plateau fairly soon left the sphere of Laskarid authority. The most important connections within its boundaries were the routes from Nicaea to the west and from Smyrna over Sardis to Philadelpheia towards the Seljuk territory.[403]

As for the road network in western Asia Minor, the territory was largely determined by the geomorphologic conditions of the plateau and the few passes that allowed crossing over from the lower coast to the highlands.

When examining the network of routes that are set in the territory which evolved into the Laskarid realm, certain developments become more understandable. For instance the fact that Nicaea had been the first shelter for refugees fleeing from Constantinople into Asia Minor – it becomes more apparent when taking into account that Nicaea was not only situated on the route from Constantinople into Asia Minor, but that it also was at the crossroads of the various routes leading deeper into Asia Minor.

Nymphaion as the site for an imperial palace may have seemed awkward given its status as a small, unimportant settlement. But the site was situated along one major route, which facilitated swift travel to other focal points of the realm. At the same time, Nymphaion as a settlement was not exposed to enemy attacks, neither situated along the Aegean coast, nor close to the Seljuk border, and surrounded by middle range mountains.

Naval routes

One statement regarding the navy in the Laskarid realm had survived persistently within scholarship, which now calls for reconsideration. It concerns the harbor city of Smyrna. According to the publications of Hélène Ahrweiler Smyrna should be seen as the main base of the fleet during the Laskarid period.[404] Basis for a re-evaluation is the closer look at Akropolites' account regarding topography. Ahrweiler

[403] Akropolites reported that embassies were sent from Philadelphia to the sultan, on orders of Theodore II Laskaris after his succession to the throne: *Acropolitae*, ed. Heisenberg, §53.

[404] Ahrweiler, Hélène, *Byzance et la mer* : *La marine de guerre, la politique et les institutions maritimes, de Byzance aux VIIe - XVe siècles* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1966), 312ff and 437; Ahrweiler, Hélène, "L'histoire et la géographie de la région de Smyrne," 35, and n36.

based her argument on one passage of Akropolites and on the fourteenth century *encomion* on John III Vatatzes, published by August Heisenberg.[405]

Both sources can be regarded as weak proofs. The incident Akropolites described belongs to the context of the victory of Laskarid troops against the Genoese on the island of Rhodes in 1248-49. John III, after his arrival in Nymphaion, moved to Smyrna and there initiated the construction of a fleet to launch the attack on Rhodes.[406] Reading Akropolites, Smyrna is mentioned only this one time as the starting point for a naval campaign, which Ahrweiler referred to, whereas e.g. Lampsakos was mentioned in three passages as the departure point for a campaign to the Hellespont.[407] It appears logical to use Lampsakos as departure for targets to the north, and another city more to the south of the realm, when launching a naval campaign towards the south.

Angold had added to Ahrweiler's statement his own supporting observation of the sailors' tax – *ta nomismata tōn ploimōn* – that had been collected in the region around Smyrna. For Angold this was a strong sign that Smyrna was the regular site for the maintenance of the fleet in the Laskarid realm.[408] There are several counter arguments. The fact that the collection of this tax is known for the area around Smyrna derived from the exceptional detailed source material of this area that has come down to us. But from that one cannot arrive at the conclusion that it had only been paid in that area.[409] Other areas lack this kind of rich source material. At the same time, two developments in the twelfth and thirteenth century need to be taken into account. For one, during the reign of John II Komnenos (1118-1143) a standing navy ceased to exist; the tax continued to be collected, but was no longer used to maintain the navy. It went into the imperial treasury, from where ships were then ordered in case of need.[410] From the account of Akropolites it can be deduced that the same practice continued into the

[405] August Heisenberg, "Batatzes der Barmherzige." Heisenberg discussed the nature of this text devoted to the life of Vatazes in detail. The text itself is titled *bios* in the manuscript, but since its composer stated frankly that it was not his intention to write an historically accurate narrative, Heisenberg opted for the term *encomion*: 162. Based on references to two battles of the recent past of the writer Heisenberg dated the composition to around 1370. This text is not to be confused with the seventeenth century *vita* discussed by Heisenberg in the same article in the later part, of which the original text was republished by Langdon in 1992. The seventeenth century *vita* was discussed in the case study on Magnesia.

[406] *Acropolitae*, ed. Heisenberg, §48.

[407] *Acropolitae*, ed. Heisenberg, §23, §33, and §60.

[408] Angold, *Government in Exile*, 199-200.

[409] The source collection of the monastery Lembiotissa is discussed in length in the following subchapter on the economic centers in the Laskarid realm.

[410] Eric McGeer, "Navy," *ODB*, 1444.

exile period.[411] In line with that, recent studies on the taxation practices in the thirteenth century confirm this development: Nicolas Oikonomides had pointed out that many taxes, among them the *ploimoi*, were kept or revived during the thirteenth century and also kept their names, but "the content of the charges involved had changed."[412] Makris brought it down to the statement that "levies in favor of the fleet existed in name only."[413]

Heisenberg showed in the beginning of his article that the historical facts in the vita were not reliable and need to be treated with caution.[414] He compared the versions of historical events described in the vita with the same reported by Akropolites and Choniates a century earlier and attested oral tradition as the basis for the vita.[415] The author apparently did not consult written testimonies for his text, which led to an imprecise, at times erroneous narrative. To do justice to the writer – he himself had stated that writing history had not been his aim.[416] Heisenberg dated the composition to around 1370, a period when western Asia Minor had been lost to the Byzantine empire and the cult of John III Vatatzes had been firmly established in the vicinity of his last resting place.[417]

2. Topography addressed in written testimony

Akropolites was not particularly interested in topography or in the spatial arrangement of the Laskarid realm in Asia Minor. When he mentions settlements, he usually does not introduce such information as the main theme, but rather as subsidiary information to the main narrative. He never described the layout of a city or architectural features for its own sake. If there was a geographical focus in his work, it would surely lie in the Balkans, which featured in greater detail than Asia Minor.[418]

[411] On at least two occasions ships were built just prior to launching a naval attack: *Acropolitae*, ed. Heisenberg, §22; §48.

[412] Nicolas Oikonomides, "The role of the Byzantine state in the economy," in *The Economic History of Byzantium from the Seventh through the Fifteenth Century*, 3 vols., ed. Angeliki E. Laiou, Dumbarton Oaks Studies 39 (Washington: Dumbarton Oaks, 2002), 973-1058, here 1037.

[413] Makris, "Ships," *The Economic History of Byzantium from the Seventh through the Fifteenth Century*, 3 vols., ed. Angeliki E. Laiou, Dumbarton Oaks Studies 39 (Washington: Dumbarton Oaks, 2002), 91-100, here 95.

[414] Heisenberg, "Kaiser Johannes Batatzes der Barmherzige," 161-167.

[415] Heisenberg, "Kaiser Johannes Batatzes der Barmherzige," 163.

[416] Heisenberg, "Kaiser Johannes Batatzes der Barmherzige," 162.

[417] Heisenberg, "Kaiser Johannes Batatzes der Barmherzige," 162.

[418] *Akropolites*, tr. Macrides, 87.

Still, in his account much could be revealed regarding the use and function of individual chosen settlements within the eastern part of the Laskarid realm. This following analysis is an attempt to summarize these findings and answer some of the questions of this investigation on the spatial arrangement of power in thirteenth century western Asia Minor based on Akropolites' work. For this however, it will be necessary first to consider some characteristics of his account as a whole, bearing in mind Akropolites' own biography, and see the interplay of both biography and the agenda of his writing in correlation with the topographical information provided.

The edition of his text, published by Heisenberg in 1903, presented the account divided into 89 chapters of more or less equal units, given some exceptions. From these the dedication of chapters and the word count to each emperor in relation to each actual years of rule is fairly uneven. The chart below gives for years of rule, chapters and word count first the absolute amount and then also the percentage value of these compared to the whole period in exile resp. Akropolites' narrative:[419]

	Theodore I Laskaris	John III Vatatzes	Theodore II Laskaris	Michael VIII Palaiologos
Years covered	1205-1221	1221-1254	1254-1258	1258-1261
Years of rule	16	33	3.5	3
Chapters of reign	§7-§18 =12	§19-§52 =33	§53-§74 =21	§76-§89 =14
Words	4467	16513	10936	6526
Years in percentage	28%	**58%**	**6%**	**5%**
Chapters in percentage	13.5%	37%	23.5%	15.5%
Words in percentage	11%	**40.5%**	**27%**	**16%**

The percentages are probably the most revealing numbers. Percentages of chapters compared to words within the entire account show little deviance for each emperor, the largest difference can be seen in the case of Theodore II, who reached

[419] The exile period is taken as having lasted 57 years. In the case of the years of reign of Theodore I Laskaris I followed the chronology provided by Akropolites, even if his counting contradicted other perceptions. Thus, the reign as emperor of Theodore I in this case would have started from 1205, since Akropolites merged the proclamation and coronation into one event. See *Akropolites*, tr. Macrides, 81-84. Chapter 75 is neither regarded as belonging to the reign of Theodore II Laskaris, nor Michael VIII Palaiologos, since it is dealing with the aftermath of the death of Theodore II only. The amount of words for each emperor is counted based on chapter units; this appears legitimate, since in Heisenberg's edition the text is divided into chapters that mark the beginning and ending of each reign.

3.5% more word coverage than devoted chapters. However, the coverage in the account for each emperor differs significantly in relation to the years of reign. In the case of Theodore I and John III their share in terms of years of the exile period is higher than the coverage of the amount of words that described their reigns. This relation stands in contrast to the one of Theodore II and Michael VIII Palaiologos. John III Vatatzes' 58% of reign face only 40.5% in word coverage, whereas his son Theodore II short reign shares only 6% of the exile period, however he is given 27% of the whole space in the narrative. For Theodore I Laskaris the amount of years that he rules is slightly larger than the chapters devoted to him. Michael VIII Palaiologos received like Theodore II similarly greater attention through Akropolites, even though less prominent.

In absolute quantitative measures, the reign of John III Vatatzes occupies the largest space within the account, the number of chapters devoted to him is higher than those of each of the other emperors during the exile period. However, his reign is also the longest, covering more than half of the exile period as a whole. Given 89 units, the events surrounding the death of John III described in chapter 52 roughly cut the account into two slightly uneven parts, 52 chapters for the time span from 1204 until 1254, and 37 remaining chapters for the years from 1254 until 1261. This means that Akropolites compressed the greater part of the period in exile and elaborated its development towards the end significantly. The remaining 37 chapters covered the rules of Theodore II Laskaris and Michael VIII Palaiologos, altogether not even seven years until the reconquest of Constantinople. Two factors may explain this imbalance – Akropolites' own curriculum vitae and his motivation for writing.

As has been stated in the introduction, Akropolites moved as a young adult from Constantinople to the Laskarid realm in 1233, where he pursued further his education and joined the court of John III Vatatzes only in the 1240s after the completion of his studies. This meant that he had not yet been born by the end of the reign of Theodore I Laskaris, and during the first third of the reign of John III Vatatzes still lived in Constantinople. Being occupied with his studies for the second third, he only took part actively in politics and campaigns during the last third of Vatatzes' reign. Consequently, for the earlier period he had to rely on other sources, but from the 1240s onwards he based his report on autopsy, since he participated in most campaigns and missions. He stayed intimately connected to the imperial office, gained first-hand knowledge and witnessed events, from where he could fill his account with details. So his own personal

involvement can be considered one factor why the latter part of his account is richer and larger than the earlier one.

By that time when Akropolites joined the court, something significantly had happened to the realm in western Asia Minor that is worth emphasizing in this context: its territorial integrity stabilized. The birth and creation of the Laskarid realm in Asia Minor had been characterized by clashes over the supremacy in the region between the Byzantine refugees and the pressing Latin and Seljuk powers. Theodore I had needed all military strength, diplomacy and also some luck to keep his rule alive during the first decade. John III as well was struggling with attacks from the Latin side, as seen within the case studies; Pegai remained a spot of military dispute until the peace agreement of 1235. But as a matter of fact, conflicts with the Latin forces abated during Vatatzes' reign. The shift had focused towards the rival Byzantines and the Bulgarians situated in the "west".

The turn in Byzantine-Seljuk relations was to a large extent the advance of the Mongols into the high plateau of Asia Minor. Their attack troubled the Seljuks heavily on their eastern border, which resulted in a peaceful coexistence with the Laskarid rulers after this incident from the 1240s onwards. Consequently, by the time Akropolites accompanied the emperor on campaigns, for him the territory in western Asia Minor presented itself as a fixed entity. The focus of territorial expansion during the 1240s until the end of the exile period lay in the European "western" parts, the enemies being the rival state of the Angeloi centered on Thessaloniki and Arta and the Bulgarians that dwelt northeast of it. For Akropolites' perception towards Asia Minor this is an important contributing factor when evaluating his references. Asia Minor was the base from whence organize campaigns and whether to return to after their completion, it was no longer the stage for battle fields. The calm borders in the east and the territorial expansion to the west coincided in time with Akropolites' own participation in imperial affairs and explains why the topography of the Balkans was laid out in his account in greater detail.

The other reason for the elaborated last phase of Laskarid rule lay in the contrast Akropolites built up between Theodore II Laskaris and Michael VIII Palaiologos. As his work was intended to present Michael Palaiologos as the ideal emperor, under whom finally the Byzantine empire would be recreated, Akropolites needed the bad example of Theodore II Laskaris to show why the change of dynasty was of benefit for the subjects. This rather political motivation of writing corresponded with the conflicting

relation Akropolites had with Theodore II during his reign. Theodore's irrational behavior, his corrupted character and his military incapacity allowed Akropolites to introduce Michael Palaiologos as the savior of the Byzantine people. It is reflected in the space devoted to Theodore II: his three and a half years of rule were narrated in 21 chapters, the ratio is the highest of all emperors during the exile.

To sum up the observations made above: By the time Akropolites joined emperors on campaign, the military targets were situated across the Hellespont on the Balkans. These were the expeditions he participated in and reported, even though only as a sideline to the main narrative, which for Akropolites himself constituted the change from the Laskarid to the Palaiologan dynasty. Through the main narrative Theodore II received his negative image, which Akropolites created intentionally. In particular during his military operations against the Bulgarians his inability was laid out for the reader. It explains the geographical focus on the Balkans as the stage on which Theodore II performed so badly.

For the spatial arrangement, and the distribution, of imperial presence in the eastern part of the Laskarid realm, nevertheless Akropolites' account is of highest value, mainly for two reasons: he described the itinerant movement of the emperors during the exile, and his account is the main textual reference for the palace erected in Nymphaion.

Terminology

The word choice of Akropolites regarding the palace at Nymphaion has been discussed above. However, an expression equally employed by Akropolites and also Blemmydes in the context of an imperial dwelling is *hē skēnē*, the tent, or the verbal equivalent *skēneō* – to encamp.[420] In various occasions the emperor is described as staying in the imperial tents, mostly during campaigns, but by no means exclusively.[421] This practice should be kept in mind when discussing residences during the period of exile in western Asia Minor; not necessarily proper buildings like the palace of Nymphaion or the apparent imperial accommodation at Nicaea housed the emperor and his entourange, tents were regarded as equally acceptable. On the one hand the constant

[420] Blemmydae, *Opera*, ed. Munitiz, II.81: Michael VIII encamped outside the walls of Magnesia.

[421] To name a few examples, *Acropolitae*, ed. Heisenberg, §28: John III encamped near Stadeia; §49: John III encamped at Vodena; §52: John III ordered imperial tents to be placed in the garden of the palace at Nymphaion; §69: Theodore II encamped at Sardis; §84: Michael VIII encamped in the region of Klyzomene during spring.

campaigning required a mobility, which tents could suffice perfectly and had been the usual accommodation on campaign since antiquity. On the other, even during a peaceful period the emperor seemed to have traveled to all parts within his territory, thus, staying in tents allowed a maximum in freedom of movement.

Among the sites that Akropolites referred to in Asia Minor Nymphaion was the only site he ascribed a customary use to. In his perception Nymphaion was the usual winter residence for the emperors during the exile period.[422] Emperors visited other settlements for considerable amount of time, but none of those were described by Akropolites in a similar way. Apart from this explanatory remarks on Nymphaion, there seems to have been no settlement that in his mind stood above all others. No site was given special emphasis or attention. However, on two occasions he conspicuously named Nicaea the *prokathēmenē pōlis* – literally the presiding city - of Bithynia.[423] It seems to have been the only site in his account to receive such a title. The verb *kathēzomai* is translated in its basic form with *to sit down*; the created image for a presiding Nicaea would therefore be a city that "sits at the head of the table". *Prokathēzomai* acquired further meanings over time, two will be of interest here. Lampe suggested to translate the verb either as to be superior in terms of a capital city or a metropolitan church.[424] Would this mean that Akropolites perceived Nicaea as some kind of a capital of the Laskarid realm?

There are arguments against this assumption. For one, the context, in which Akropolites considered Nicaea to be the leading city might just be the one that he named himself – the leading city of Bithynia, its province. Support for this interpretation can be gained from one passage involving Nicaea that had been written by Blemmydes and observed above. He named Nicaea *tēs Bithynías mētropolin* – the metropolis of Bithynia.[425] Both expressions have been translated into English as "capital" by Macrides resp. Munitiz. Within the diocesan order of the Byzantine empire a metropolis was the capital of an eparchy, a defined ecclesiastical territory, which usually corresponded with the boundaries of an ancient civil province, where the metropolitan bishop had taken his seat.[426] Nicaea had become a metropolis during the

[422] *Acropolitae*, ed. Heisenberg, §84.
[423] *Acropolitae*, ed. Heisenberg, §53, §77.
[424] *PatrLex*, 1151.
[425] Blemmydae, *Opera*, ed. Munitiz, II.25.
[426] Papadakis, "Metropolitan" *ODB*, 1359.

reign of Valens.[427] From this comparison both medieval authors seem to refer to this status of Nicaea within the ecclesiastical hierarchy.[428]

Another argument provides the etymology of the usual term that can be translated as *capital* in Byzantine Greek, *to basileion*. The plural *ta basileia* referred to the dwelling of the emperor also in the more abstract meaning as the seat of the empire. Akropolites used the term *to basileion* / *ta basileia* to refer to the palace building erected at Nymphaion and also once for the residence of a foreign ruler. After a meeting with the Seljuk sultan in the border town of Tripolis, John III left for Philadelpheia and the sultan left "εἰς τὴν Ἰκονιέων, ἔνθα εἶχε καὶ τὰ βασίλεια / for Ikonion, where he had his residence".[429] Macrides here translated *ta basileia* as capital, which suited the context, because Akropolites referred here not to a building, which he did at other times in the Laskarid context, but to the seat of the sultan. However, it should be noted that this is a modern perception, for Akropolites Ikonion was the city where the Seljuk sultan had his residence. If a Medieval Greek mind had a similar idea of a capital as the modern scholar one has, it would probably center on the image that all vital parts of the government should be concentrated here. The nucleus of the medieval capital was the palace of the ruler.

The problem with this transferred meaning is that for a citizen of the Medieval Eastern Roman empire, Constantinople was the only such place within the Byzantine sphere. Given that Akropolites never used it to address a city within the Laskarid realm as such – not even Nymphaion – suggests that for him no such permanent seat for the rulers existed. It is true that Constantinople was lost to the Laskarid rulers in Asia Minor for decades, but – and this is important to keep in mind – the city had not ceased to exist. Constantinople was physically still present, Akropolites himself had been born there, it just happened not to be part of the realm of the Romaioi. The term *ta basileia* as the place where the emperor had his imperial residence may thus have been reserved exclusively for Constantinople. And so, returning to the title discussed above that was given to Nicaea, the two denominations used by Akropolites and Blemmydes did not focus on Nicaea as the imperial residence, but as the capital of its eparchy. The association as the imperial city did not apply in their writings, but perhaps the one as the

[427] Foss, "Nicaea," *ODB*, 1463-64.

[428] Angold interpreted this title of Nicaea similarly, though with a focus on the civil provincial division, not the ecclesiastical. Cf. Angold, *Government in Exile*, 244.

[429] *Acropolitae*, ed. Heisenberg, §41.

residence of the patriarch, hence, the emphasis on the status of Nicaea within the ecclesiastical diocesan organization.

Another term that should be addressed at this point is Akropolites' word choice for the territory of the Roman empire after 1204. The Greek term *he basileia* can be translated as reign, empire, sovereignty and also the imperial office. The usual denomination for the Byzantine empire by its contemporaries was *basileia ton Rhomaion*, the empire of the Romans, and was applied to the entity of the empire in an abstract manner.

Akropolites did not apply this term to the lands held by the Laskarid rulers or their Byzantine rivals, the term kept its abstract form in Akropolites' account. When it comes to a territorial denomination for Roman territory, the term he uses is *Rhomais*, or to be more precise, the genitive from of it, *ta tēs Rhomaidos*. It is by no means restricted to the territory belonging to the Laskarid rulers, but it denotes all lands that were part of the Byzantine empire before the sack in 1204:

> τῶν γοῦν Ἰταλῶν εἰς πολυμέρειαν τὰ τῆς Ῥωμαΐδος κληρωσαμένων καὶ τοῦ μὲν ἐκ Φλάντρας ὡρμημένου Βαλδουΐνου βασιλέως ἀναγορευθέντος […] / Now when the Italians had divided the lands of the Roman empire into many parts, Baldwin,who was from Flanders, was proclaimed emperor […] [430]

Literally *ta tēs Rhomaidos* should be translated as "that, which is Roman". There is another passage, in which Akropolites referred to the territory of the former Byzantine empire in this way:

> Ὁ δὲ Κομνηνὸς Θεόδωρος, ὃν πρὸ μικροῦ ὁ λόγος ἱστόρησε, μὴ θέλων μένειν ἐν τῇ οἰκείᾳ τάξει ἀλλὰ τὰ τῆς βασιλείας σφετερισάμενος, ἐπειδὴ τῆς Θεσσαλονίκης γέγονεν ἐγκρατὴς πολλήν τε χώραν τῆς Ῥωμαΐδος ἐκ τῆς κεκρατημένης παρὰ τῶν Ἰταλῶν ὑφ' ἑαυτὸν ἐποιήσατο, ἔτι δὲ καὶ τῆς παρὰ τῶν Βουλγάρων κεχειρωμένης / But Theodore Komnenos, whom the account mentioned a short time ago, was not willing to remain in his proper place, but appropriated the insignia of imperial office when he gained control of Thessalonike and brought under him much of the land of the Roman empire that had been held by the Italians, and even that which had been conquered by the Bulgarians.[431]

From this it seems that the situation, which was created after the sack of Constantinople in 1204, would have required a new vocabulary for the territories of the fallen Byzantine empire, but no suitable term seemed to have existed or invented. The Roman territories were merely paraphrased. The term that Lampe asigned to the

[430] *Acropolitae*, ed. Heisenberg, §8; *Akropolites*, tr. Macrides, 123.
[431] *Acropolitae*, ed. Heisenberg, §21; *Akropolites*, tr. Macrides, 162.

meaning of Roman territory – *Romania* – cannot be foud in Akropolites‘ account. As Wolff had elaborated in detail, from 1204 onwards the term Romania was put on equal footing with the Latin empire of Constantinople.[432] Previously it had been used in Greek texts as the term for the territory of the empire, however, as the Latin empire was in their eyes illegitimate, a continuation of this use would have meant to acknowledge the foreign power in Constantinople. Thus, Byzantine sources stopped using the term altogether. The way Akropolites addressed the territories that once belonged to the Byzantine empire - *tā tēs Romaïdos* – bears witness to the unwillingness of accepting the changed conditions on the Byzantine side. Equally in Blemmydes' account the expression *Romaïdos* for the Roman territory can be found and confirms the impression provided by Akropolites.[433] However, it should be noted that both texts were composed after the reconquest of Constantinople in 1261. The unwillingness on Byzantine side to equip the period of the exile with original denominations, *per se* of political and rhetorical matter, was a bold statement, yet, legitimized by the course of history, which in the eyes of the Greek writers was restored to its proper path by 1261. The aim throughout the period of exile had been to restore the former empire, the lack of a genuine term for the Laskarid realm attests to the perception of its contemporaries as interim solution.

3. Defense reconstructions

Müller-Wiener and Foss both devoted attention to Byzantine fortifications in the region of the west coast of Asia Minor. Both faced the problem of the lack of definite evidence for most of the fortifications for sufficient dating.[434] Müller-Wiener focused on the citadel of Smyrna and other examples nearby. Foss rather paid attention to the river valleys of the *hinterland* of Smyrna. As has been discussed above in detail for the cases of Magnesia and Pegai, historical circumstances seemed in most cases the best clue for dating the surviving archaeological evidence. Helpful for the two scholars' investigations proved to be the fate of this area, which fairly soon after the Laskarid period fell to the advancing Turkish tribes. Thus, a likely scenario in most cases of late

[432] Wolff, "Romania".
[433] Blemmydae, *Opera*, ed. Munitiz, II.61.
[434] Müller-Wiener, "Mittelalterliche Befestigungen"; Foss, "Fortifications in Lydia"; Foss and Winfield, *Byzantine Fortifications.*

Byzantine refurbishing suggested Laskarid commission, since it constituted the last prosperous period of Byzantine power in this region where repairs on larger scale could be executed, even though rarely definite proof of Laskarid origin could be mobilized. Furthermore, differentiation from early Palaiologan repair proved difficult.[435]

During my own travel in this area I visited some sites referred to by either Müller-Wiener or Foss like Smyrna, Tripolis, Magnesia or the fortification at Asar. A crucial aspect that one can only fully grasp during a direct contact with the site needs to be pointed out here: for an understanding of the function of the fortification, the most revealing feature is its location within the landscape. As an example, all that remained from the construction at Tripolis is a round-shaped tower dominating the top of a steep gorge.[436] Tripolis occupied an important position within the territory, since it was situated at the route that connected the river valley of the Maeander with that of the Hermos; the quickest way from Philadelphia to Antioch at the Maeander would lead through here. From the watch tower this route could be perfectly controlled (Fig. Fort. 1 and 2). In contrast, the fortification that survived in the village of Asar is situated in the plain and occupies only a minor elevation in the landscape. Thus, its intended function as a storage facility for the harvest seems more likely (Fig. Fort. 3).

The sites of Nicaea, Pegai and Magnesia have been discussed in the second part of this analysis. They represent refurbishments at central locations in the territory. Plausible as this may seem at first glance, it cannot be stressed enough that those fortifications that are considered to be of Laskarid reconstruction in the area show careful planning and management of resources. The aim of reshaping had not been to bring ancient cities back to their former splendour. The rebuilding of structures in this case focused on those settlements that took their share in securing the vital points of the realm. The archaeological evidence supports the notion of an intentional and supervised building program of defense structures that were considered necessary for keeping authority over the territory. Settlements that proved crucial for a control of the territory were in the focus of refurbishment. Roads, rivers, access points like harbors, frontier points, in short the topography of the realm formed the grid on which to conceptualize the defense mechanisms during the Laskarid period. The fortification of Asar likewise

[435] Foss and Winfield, *Byzantine Fortifications*, 150; 158-59.
[436] Foss, "Fortifications in Lydia," 299-303; Foss and Winfield, *Byzantine Fortifications*, 152-53.

may have been built for a need recognized by the Laskarid emperors: the need to secure supplies.

Whereas however most of the fortifications mentioned within a Laskarid context are difficult to date, by mere coincidence an inscription has come down to us that attests an early refurbishment of the city of Smyrna under John III Vatatzes.[437] It is the only known inscription from this region and therefore, as it is dated, is testimony for the awareness of defense reinforcement at an early stage during the exile. The inscription was no longer been placed *in situ* upon its discovery. The marble slab on where it had been written had turned into a spolium inserted into the walls of an Ottoman barrack in the nineteenth century. Whereas the marble slab itself is now lost, copies of the text survive.

The text was conceived using metaphors and allegories for the city, which had been rejuvenated and embellished by emperor John.[438] The renovation usually is ascribed to the citadel and its walls, even though concrete steps taken by the emperor remain vague in the text. The inscription is nevertheless significant because of its precise dating. The text named the year 6731, from this we know that by 1222/3 the main renovation of the city walls of Smyrna had been completed. Therefore, the plan to rebuild this citadel and, in all likelihood, generally the defenses of settlements in the coastal region of western Asia Minor could be ascribed to a period before the beginning of reign of John III Vatatzes. It was probably a project initiated by Theodore I Laskaris and only continued by John III, as Müller-Wiener already suggested.[439]

The citadel of Smyrna represents not only a fine example of Laskarid refurbishment, but also a monument of comparison for other sites of the area. A survey on a larger scale focusing on masonry types, materials used, architectural features and the like is still a desideratum in our knowledge of the Laskarid remains. For this study however, the focus remains on another feature of the monuments that are considered to be of Laskarid origin or reconstruction: their location. In his judgment on Laskarid building activity Foss stated that

---

[437] *Die Inschriften von Smyrna*, Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, ed. Georg Petzl, Rheinisch-Westfälische Akademie der Wissenschaften, vol. II, 1 (Bonn: Habelt, 1987), for the inscription of Vatatzes see no. 854.

[438] The city was compared to a lady faded by time and also to a young deer hunted down by a leopard. Unfortunately also the measures taken during the renovation remain locked in these metaphors, thus, what exactly had been rebuilt cannot be deduced from this inscription.

[439] Müller-Wiener, "Stadtbefestigung von Izmir," 65-66.

> The peace and prosperity which the Lascarids maintained in their kingdom for half a century was secured in part by a system of fortifications in every part of their domains. In some areas, this involved the construction or rebuilding of long city walls, as at Nicaea, Magnesia and Heracleia, or of the walls of reduced cities, as Tripolis and probably Smyrna. These protected the capitals and main economic centres, particularly the ports, of the country. […] For the most part, however, the fortifications were on small scale, suitable to local needs, whether to guard roads or river crossings or to provide refuge. […] The Lascarid fortifications display a great variety of defenses.[440]

However, it may be added that these defense mechanisms were not the only key to the prosperity of the Laskarid period. For as time progressed, the defenses of the Laskarid realm were less and less contested. Fortifications did not exist or were in decay at the beginning of the rule of Theodore I Laskaris, when the very existence of the successor state in western Asia Minor was at stake. During the long reign of John III Vatatzes, when most refurbishings were completed, with few exceptions the battle fields shifted away from western Asia Minor to the Balkans. That is to say, rather the planning of attacks and the willingness of the Laskarid emperors to leave their home base and meet their enemy on his ground secured Laskarid domain, not the defense constructions.

[440] Foss and Winfield, *Byzantine Fortifications*, 166.

B. Focal points of imperial power and presence

The loss of Constantinople deprived the imperial court among many other features also of the stage, from where it was effectively and visibly for the audience exercising its rule. The following examination aims at tracing down several acts or institutions, by means of which the emperor performed his rule and manifestly took the lead of his realm. If indeed the loss of one capital had led to the creation of another, the execution of rule should have manifested itself at the new center. Likewise, if the loss of the capital had lifted the burden of a concentration of power in space, in this case by focusing on single features of government, a distribution of such acts and institutions in the realm should have come to light. Three administrative features of governing have been selected for this analysis: the institution of the chancery, the execution of diplomatic meetings and the presiding of emperors over law courts. I included furthermore two facets that were rather specific for the Laskarid realm: for one, the negotiations over a possible church reunion, in which John III took the lead. Second, an examination on residential preferences of each of the emperors during the exile, as far as the sources permitted.

1. The imperial chancery

Within the general paradigm of Residenzenforschung an emphasis is always put on the chancery, because this indicated the administrative unit of any medieval state. In a realm based on itinerant rulership the chancery moved along with the court through the territory. But within the transformation process from the Medieval to the Early Modern state the chancery belonged to those institutions of the government that came to be settled down early on.[441]

Angold analyzed the characteristics of the administration during the exile period and examined its origins from the early years of the reign of Theodore I Laskaris. Meticulously Angold followed the step-by-step recreation of certain offices and the

[441] For the development of a chancery that turned from a mobile institution to one fixed in space in western Europe see summarizingly Klaus Neitmann, "Was ist eine Residenz?," 29-32, with further references. Still the standart reference work for the Byzantine chancery Franz Dölger and Johannes Karayannopulos, *Byzantinische Urkundenlehre: Erster Abschnitt die Kaiserurkunden*, Byzantinisches Handbuch (Munich: Beck, 1968). See for an outline of the chancery in the late Byzantine period, though without refering to a location for the duration of the period of exile, Nicolas Oikonomides, "La chancellerie impériale de Byzance du 13e au 15e siècle," *Revue des Études Byzantines* 43 (1985), 167-195.

formation of the imperial court, which functioned as a senate and acted as an "advisory board". Angold coined the term "household government", by which he referred to the central position of the emperor and the close circle of family members and officers that the emperor kept around him. As for the location of this government, Angold stated:

> The court met as council or a tribunal wherever the emperor happened to be. Michael Palaiologos was tried for treason at Philippi in Macedonia, for example. The imperial court, or at least an important part of it, accompanied the emperor on his travels and campaigns.[442]

In the summer of 1246 Akropolites was accompanying emperor John III Vatatzes on an inspection campaign to the western parts when news reached the imperial camp that the Bulgarian tsar had died.[443] Quickly Vatatzes held council with his court, asking for their advice, and subsequently decided to launch an attack on the neighboring Bulgarian lands, during which he conquered substantial territories. After the city of Melenikon had subjected itself to the emperor, he ordered the composition of a chrysobull including the requests made by his new cities, which was then handed over to them. Subsequently the emperor agreed on a peace treaty with the Bulgarians; in the following Akropolites was ordered to draft letters on behalf of the emperor:

> καὶ σπονδαὶ ἐπὶ τούτοις τῶν Βουλγάρων τῷ βασιλεῖ ἐγεγόνεισαν, τοῖς τοιούτοις καὶ μόνοις ἀρκεῖσθαι τοῦτον καὶ μὴ περαιτέρω κατεπεμβαίνειν. καὶ ταῦτα μὲν οὕτως ἔσχον τὸν τρόπον, ἐγὼ δὲ αὐτὸς ἐν τοῖς ἐπιστολιμαίοις τῶν λόγων ὑπούργουν, ἑκάστῳ τῶν ἁλισκομένων ἄστεών τε καὶ χωρῶν καὶ γραφὴν ἐγχαράττων βασιλικήν· ἔθος γὰρ τοῦτο παλαιὸν τοῖς βασιλεῦσι Ῥωμαίων, δῆλα τοῖς μακρόθεν διὰ γραμμάτων ποιεῖν τὰ σφῶν αὐτῶν κατορθώματα καὶ πρὸς ἡδονὴν ἐπεγείρειν, ἧς δὴ καὶ οὗτοι διὰ τῶν ἔργων μεταλαγχάνουσιν. / A treaty was made between the Bulgarians and the emperor with respect to this, stating that he would be satisfied with these places alone and would not go beyond. Events took this turn while I myself assisted in the writing of letters, composing an imperial document for each of the towns and territories which had been won. For this is an old custom among the emperors of the Romans, to make their own accomplishments known to those who are far away through letters, and to awaken in them pleasure through the deeds in which they also have a share.[444]

In a nutshell this episode underlines the way in which Angold had characterized the imperial chancery above. A peace treaty, chrysobull and letters were produced

[442] Angold, *Government in Exile*, 153.

[443] *Acropolitae*, ed. Heisenberg, §43-44.

[444] *Acropolitae*, ed. Heisenberg, §44; *Akropolites*, tr. Macrides, 232. None of the here named documents actually survived in the original, they are known solely through Akropolites' account. Cf. Dölger, *Regesten*, no. 1787 and 1788. Most of the documents listen in the *Regesten* are lost and known only by other means, except those included in the collection of the Lembiotissa cartulary. As Macrides observed, no chrysobull of the exile period survived dated before the reign of Michael VIII Palaiologos: *Akropolites*, tr. Macrides, 233 n8.

where the emperor happened to be; since his court accompanied him on his travels to the Balkans, the chancery was simply part of his entourage. And as Akropolites had pointed out, this was to some extent an old tradition practiced by emperors before the exile. Now, considering the fact that several sites functioned as residences and also considering that during the exile the emperors were practically on campaign each summer and sometimes even throughout the winter, there is reason to believe that the chancery and the court were, as a rule, with the emperor. In other words: the law court and the chancery were not bound to one specific location within the Laskarid territory; both institutions were characterized by their mobility. Therefore the classification of Nymphaion as the administrative capital of the Laskarid realm seems a bit hasty. Such an understanding of the site would work only inasmuch as it seems to have served as the favorite imperial residence. Nymphaion was visited most among several others. If the emperors spent here usually the winter, then for that period court and chancery would be located here, determined by the presence of the emperor. No administration was permanently settled there. It remained a mobile feature of the Laskarid realm for as long as this realm lasted.[445]

The aspect of the chancery to a certain extent already surfaced during the analysis of the case studies, for instance in the form of signing peace treaties. Within the wider frame of diplomacy also the locations where the emperor held trials or met foreign rulers or their ambassadors should be examined.

2. Diplomatic acts

The impression can be confirmed when studying the treaties between the Laskarid and foreign rulers listed in the *Regesten*. As the originals have not survived, historical accounts constituted the bulk of sources from which those treaties are known. For this period thus the main written testimonies amount to Choniates, Villehardouin, Ibn Bibi, Akropolites, Blemmydes and Pachymeres. While it is not always possible to assign a location to the signing of the agreement due to the nature of the references, sometimes assumptions based on the context can be made.

[445] There is no information whether an imperial archive had existed during the exile, which seems however quite probable. Due to its nature an archive even in those times might have been – like the imperial treasury – permanently settled somewhere. The only archives, from which documents of this period have survived, belonged to monasteries like the Lembiotissa or the one at Patmos.

There are two patterns emerging from the *Regesten* for the way a treaty – in which I include truces, peace treaties and alliances – was usually reached. In one way the treaty marked the end of a military conflict and confirmed in one way or the other the newly conquered territories or established boundaries. Dölger counted 23 treaties, of which at least 13 could be seen as the result of such campaigns.[446] Consequently, these treaties were composed and signed in the field, where the two parties were present, had fought and negotiated. The location of the signing of the treaty was thus predefined by the territory that was at the center of dispute.

A quite different matter in terms of the location was that of an alliance between the Laskarid realm and another party during a general time of peace. Because in that case a site for meeting the other party had to be chosen purposefully. As example, alliances were agreed on between the Laskarid realm and the Bulgarian realm, and also with the Seljuk sultanate.[447] The first alliance with the Bulgarians dated to 1234 or 1235 and was forged between John III Vatatzes and John Asen at Kallipolis.[448] In detail Akropolites described that the rulers met at Kallipolis, which then lay outside the boundaries of the Laskarid realm, to approve their agreement. John III then took Asen's wife and daughter Helen and left for Lampsakos, where the betrothal of Helen and Theodore, the future emperor, took place. John Asen had stayed behind and awaited the return of John III. Both then went on a joint campaign in the European parts, a territory that could be considered neutral to both of them.

Likewise an alliance with the sultan dated to 1243 was reported by Akropolites and described in detail. The Seljuks had been greatly troubled by the forces of the Mongols who attacked them on their eastern borders. Thus, the sultan sent an embassy to John III Vatatzes, who stayed at Nymphaion, with the proposal for a peace treaty. The sultan pointed out the mutual benefit of this alliance: if the Seljuks were able to concentrate on the Mongols only and be able to defend their borders, the Laskarid realm would be secured against any Mongol attack. Convinced, John III agreed to the alliance and met the sultan:

> καὶ γοῦν ἐπὶ τοῖς τοιούτοις συσκευασάμενοι συνηλθέτην καὶ ἄμφω, ὅ τε βασιλεὺς Ἰωάννης καὶ ὁ σουλτὰν Ἰαθατίνης, ἐν τῷ ἄστει τῆς Τριπόλεως, ὅπου καὶ ὁ Μαίανδρος

[446] Dölger, *Regesten*, no. 1669, 1670, 1675, 1682, 1706, 1711, 1745, 1787, 1799 or 1806, 1833, 1840, 1843, 1882, 1885.
[447] Dölger, *Regesten*, no. 1670, 1745, 1776.
[448] *Acropolitae*, ed. Heisenberg, §33.

> ῥεῖ ποταμός. γέφυραν γοῦν ἐξ αὐτοσχεδίου ἐκ ξύλων οἱ τοῦ σουλτὰν ἐργασάμενοι, εὐχερῆ τοῖς βουλομένοις πεποιήκασι τὴν περαίωσιν. ἀλλήλους γοῦν οἱ ἀρχοὶ φιλοφρόνως δεξιωσάμενοι, ἔτι δὲ καὶ τοὺς ὑφ' ἑκάτερον ἑκάτεροι προύχοντας, καὶ συνθήκας, ἃς καὶ πρὸ τοῦ εἶχον, κρειττόνως βεβαιωσάμενοι, ὡς ἂν μάχοιντο συνημμένως τοῖς ἐναντίοις, διελύθησαν, ὁ μὲν βασιλεὺς ὑποστρέψας εἰς τὴν Φιλαδέλφου, ὁ δὲ σουλτὰν εἰς τὴν Ἰκονιέων, ἔνθα εἶχε καὶ τὰ βασίλεια. / And so, having made preparations for this, both the emperor John and the sultan Iathatines met in the town of Tripolis where the Maeander river flows. The sultan's men improvised a bridge of timber, making the crossing easy for those who wished. The leaders greeted each other in friendly fashion, as did the chief men of each, and they secured more strongly the agreements which they had from before, so that they might fight the enemy jointly; they parted, the emperor turning back to Philadelphia, the sultan to the city of the Iconians where he had his capital.[449]

Tripolis was a town directly at the border between the two powers, and as Clive Foss described, in a quite important geographical position: "Tripolis occupies a strategic and defensible site on the north bank of the Maeander […] It stands at the edge of the broad and fertile plain of Laodicea and commands the entrance to the pass which leads to Philadelphia."[450] Laodiceia had not been part of the Laskarid realm, thus, Tripolis served as the first stronghold of the Byzantines in Asia Minor. Today still one single watch tower bears witness to the late Byzantine period. The tower is constructed round-shaped against the slope of the hill and is famous for its beautifully preserved façade. On the basis of historical circumstances the tower has been dated to the Laskarid period.[451]

The river apparently marked the border between the Seljuk state and the Laskarid realm. As the parties met for a peaceful alliance, the constructed bridge may have served as an underlying symbol of it. Each ruler could cross the bridge at his convenience, but had his camp set in his own territory. The formalities of friendship were celebrated and thus, the treaty concluded.

As in the case of the Bulgarian tsar, no ruler entered the territory of the other; instead, after embassies had been sent to agree on the terms, the rulers met at the border and confirmed the treaty with rituals and most probably an exchange of gifts. It seems not to have been of importance to impress the ally with a splendid scenery like a

[449] *Acropolitae*, ed. Heisenberg, §41; *Akropolites*, tr. Macrides, 221.
[450] Foss, "Fortifications in Lydia," 299.
[451] Foss, "Fortifications in Lydia," 299-301. In the paragraphs before Foss had recounted all that could be gathered on the history of Tripolis in Byzantine times. He recounted how the crusaders on their way south under the lead of Frederick Barbarossa in 1190 crossed the site, which then had been destroyed and abandoned. Vatatzes rebuilt the fortification against the Seljuk threat. Thus, I agree with Foss' dating of the tower.

wealthy city as the stage for the union. Quite the contrary, the aspect of equal partnership in the alliance apparently benefitted from a setting, in which both parties acted on a par with each other.

Pachymeres provides a contrasting example of such a meeting for the reign of Theodore II Laskaris. The difference to the previous example, which should be pointed out at the beginning, is that in the following passage not two rulers of equal authority met, for envoys visted the court of Theodore. The passage is inserted in retrospect in the early reign of Michael VIII Palaiologos shortly before the reconquest of Constantinople in 1261.[452] Emperor Theodore had heard that an embassy from the Mongols was on their way to him. He consciously conceived a set of measures to impress and frighten the delegation. He sent messengers towards them to lead the way. These messengers were ordered to guide the embassy on a cumbersome, devious route to the emperor, so that they would gain the impression of a highly defensible site.[453] The emperor then ordered his soldiers to line up on the streets and the senate, court officials and members of the imperial household to dress up and show themselves repeatedly to the delegation as to appear more numerous than they actually were. It is not spelled out in the passage whether the messengers led the embassy to Nymphaion or to another site within the Laskarid realm, even though Nymphaion appears most likely. For Theodore it seemed vital to point out the strong defenses of the realm, as to discourage any plans on behalf of the Mongol ruler to attack the Laskarid realm. This example demonstrates how an emperor can stage a visit of a foreign embassy to display his own power.

A different and probably the most famous example among the treaties during that time that were concluded without the prelude of a military conflict is the so-called "Treaty of Nymphaion" signed between Michael VIII Palaiologos and the city of

[452] Pachymeres, ed. Failer, II.25. Pachymeres discusses here the actions taken by the Laskarid emperors against the Mongols. A comment to a similar situation during the reign of John III Vatatzes preceeds the passage related to Theodore. Facing the advancing Mongols, John III provisioned fortifications with wheat and weapons to strengthen the defenses.

[453] Ibid.: Ἔγνω δ' ὅμως ὁ βασιλεύς, τὸ φοβερὸν πλασάμενος, ἐκείνους κατασοφίσασθαι. Καὶ πρῶτον μὲν προαπέστελλεν ὡς δῆθεν ἀγγελοῦντας ἐπὶ Περσίδος ὡς ἐπ' αὐτοὺς εὐτρεπίζοιτο, καὶ οἱ ταχυδρομοῦντες ἐπέμποντο· μισθὸς δ' ἦν τοῖς ἀγγελοῦσι ταῦτα, εἰ κινδυνεύοιεν ἐνιστάμενοι καὶ τὴν τῶν Ῥωμαίων ἀρχὴν ἀνυπόστατον πᾶσιν ὁμολογοῦντες ἔθνεσι, δαψιλῆ τέκνοις σφετέροις καὶ γυναιξὶ σιτηρέσια. Εἶτα δὲ τοῖς πρέσβεσι προσελαύνουσι πέμψας τοὺς ὑπαντήσοντας, ὡς δῆθεν καὶ σφίσι τὰς ὁδοὺς ὁδηγῆσαι, δι' ὅτι δυσχώρων ἐξεπίτηδες τόπων ἐκείνους διαβιβάζειν προσέταττε, κἄν τις ἀποκναίων ἐρωτῴη τὴν δυσχωρίαν, οὕτω πᾶσαν ἔχειν τὴν τῆς Ῥωμαΐδος γῆν ἀποκρίνεσθαι, ὡς ἑτοίμως ἐχόντων τῷ μὴ εἰδέναι πιστεύειν.

Genoa.[454] It granted Genoa many privileges within the empire in exchange for their naval support in the recovery of the city of Constantinople. The content of the document survived only in two Latin versions, one of them copied by du Cange. Its date reads as follows:

> *Acta fuerunt praedicta in Romaniae imperio, in aulà imperiali, quae est apud Nisiem, MCCLXI. A nativitate domini Jesu Christi, Indict. Quarta, die xiii. Martii.*[455]

The venue where the treaty had been concluded is named as the palace of Nymphaion, thus, Michael VIII chose the "imperial hall" as the stage for negotiations. Contrary to the above discussed examples this treaty was not actually a peace agreement between two equal partners. Michael VIII sounded out all possibilities to reconquer the city of Constantinople and chose the Genoese to fight off the Venetians situated in the Queen of Cities.[456] The concessions he made in the treaty – and also granted, even though the city was finally conquered without any aid from the Genoese – are usually regarded as quite high if not too high a price. It in fact consolidated a firm grip of the Genoese for the last phase of the Byzantine empire.[457] Within this pact Michael VIII played the role of the solicitant, and the Genoese leadership took advantage of the situation. Therefore, the venue of Nymphaion might be significant to please the Genoese in addition to the concessions offered in the treaty. They were invited and hosted at a convenient site regarded as the highest among the imperial residences. It may have a been a symbolic sign of friendship and mutual trust to invite them to this privileged place. Unlike previous requests for support on behalf of Byzantine emperors, Michael VIII actually had offers to make to the party he turned to. Surely the location served its purpose to please his guests.

3. Holding court

The same situation observed for the chancery seems to have prevailed when looking at the location of judicial acts during the exile, even though the information for

[454] Kazhdan, "Nymphaion, Treaty of" in *ODB*, 1506.

[455] Charles du Fresne du Cange, *Histoire de l'empire de Constantinople sous les empereurs français jusqu'à la conquête des Turcs*, ed. J. A. Buchon (Paris: Verdière, 1826), 447.

[456] See for a recent discussion of Michael's motives Cecily Hilsdale, "The Imperial Image at the End of Exile: The Byzantine Embroidered Silk in Genoa and the Treaty of Nymphaion (1261)," *DOP* 64 (2010), 151-99.

[457] Nicol, *The last centuries of Byzantium 1261-1453*, 34.

holding court during that period is rather thin. Michael Angold examined the judicial institutions and remarked that "the question arises of how to differentiate the imperial court as a court of law from its other functions".[458] Implied in this thought was the general identification of the imperial court as the court of law. Smaller judicial decisions might have been made on a day-to-day basis, but for larger investigations the right time and the right location surely were decided upon purposefully. Two trials for treason stick out in the account of Akropolites, one of them being the famous and much discussed trial against Michael Komnenos, as Akropolites introduced the later emperor Michael VIII Palaiologos in 1253 in his narrative.[459] The other and much earlier one happened likewise during the reign of John III Vatatzes and already came up in this study during the discussion of Lampsakos. It is an interesting episode viewed under the aspect of space and topography within the realm. Early on in his reign around 1224 John III had led campaigns against the Latins along the Sea of Marmara and the Hellespont:

> Ἐν τουτοισὶ δὲ ὄντος τοῦ βασιλέως Ἰωάννου καὶ ἀκρατῶς μαχομένου τοῖς Ἰταλοῖς κατά τε χέρσον καὶ θάλατταν, σκευωρεῖται τούτῳ ἐπιβουλή. […] ἐγένετο δὲ ἡ ἐπιβουλὴ πολυήμερος καὶ τὸν βασιλέα ἐλάνθανεν. ἐν τῇ Λαμψάκῳ δὲ διάγων μανθάνει ταῦτα. […]καὶ προυργιαίτερον τὸν ἔσωθεν πόλεμον κρίνας τοῦ ἔξωθεν, ἀπάρας ἐκεῖθεν περὶ τὴν Ἀχυράους ἀφίκετο κἀκεῖσε τὴν ἐξέτασιν τῆς ἐπιβουλῆς ἐποιήσατο. / While the emperor was engaged in these affairs, and was fighting the Italian without restraint both on land and sea, a plot was hatched against him. […] But the plot was in the making for many days and the emperor escaped. He learned about it while he was residing in Lampsakos. […] judging the internal war to be of more importance than the external one, he left from there and went to the area of Achyraous, and there he made an investigation of the plot.[460]

There is no information where the conspiracy actually would have unfolded, however based on the fact that one of the traitors had been the chief of the imperial bodyguards, it seems reasonable to assume that it would have taken place in the immediate environment of the emperor regardless where he would be.[461] Therefore, John III Vatatzes' decision to set up a trial at Achyraous was not rooted in the fact that Achyraous was the stage of the plot. But it is significant that for devoting his full attention to the trial, he left the area where he planned to engage against the Latins and

[458] Angold, *Government in Exile*, 167.

[459] On the evaluation of the report of the trial by Akropolites, his rhetoric and his motives, and references within existing scholarship see *Akropolites*, tr. Macrides, 61-62.

[460] *Acropolitae*, ed. Heisenberg, §23; *Akropolites*, tr. Macrides, 169.

[461] Akropolites named Phlamoules as one of the schemers, who had been appointed *megas hetaireiarches.*

retreated to Achyraous, which lay more inwards away from the conflict zone. Akropolites had referred to Achyraous once before this trial, then it had been listed among the Latin possessions ceded to the emperor Henry after his campaign in 1212.[462] William Ramsay emphasized its position "on the great route to Miletopolis and Constantinople from the Hermos and Kaikos valleys".[463] This route thus connected the Byzantine capital across western Asia Minor on an inland direction with Sardis. The fortification of Byzantine Achyraous survived there on a hill overlooking the plain of the *Simav* or *Susurluk Çayı*, the ancient Makestos river in vicinity of recent Balıksehir.[464] As it seems, Achyraous had fallen to John III Vatatzes just shortly before this trial, no more than a few months perhaps, in the aftermath of the battle of Poimanenon.[465] One therefore might assume that at the moment of the trial Achyraous could not have received any attention in form of rebuilding or repairs, considering that this would have been necessary. To sum up: Achyraous was not a symbolically meaningful site at this point of exile; it had been part of the Laskarid possessions only for a very short time and the significance it had was mainly connected to its strategic advantageous position. Why it had been chosen to host a trial for treason can be answered only hypothetically. As implied in Akropolites' passage, surely the distance to the enemy on the shore played a role in this decision. The Skamander region where Lampsakos lay was not equipped with larger settlements at the time of the exile, so perhaps Achyraous was simply the nearest site where the set up of a trial seemed feasible.

The way the trial against Michael Palaiologos was set up in 1253 shows certain similarities. John III Vatatzes initiated a campaign to the Balkans in the fall of 1252 after Michael II Angelos, despot of Epiros, had broken his loyalty and tried to establish himself against the emperor. The emperor conquered Vodena, recent Edessa, and encamped in the vicinity. From there he sent his generals into the area to pillage and conquer whatever was possible; one of his generals was Michael Palaiologos.

[462] *Acropolitae*, ed. Heisenberg, §15.

[463] Ramsay, *Historical Geography*, 156. Miletopolis, recent Manyas, was situated below Panormos, recent Bandırma.

[464] It belongs to one of the sites I have not visited myself. For literature on the fortification see Foss, "Defenses of Asia Minor," 161-166, who dated it into the early twelfth century. According to Johannes Preiser-Kapeller, it became a metropolis some time between 1204 and 1261: *Der Episkopat im späten Byzanz: Ein Verzeichnis der Metropoliten und Bischöfe des Patriarchats von Konstantinopel in der Zeit von 1204 bis 1453* (Saarbrücken, Verlag Dr. Müller, 2008), here 2.

[465] *Acropolitae*, ed. Heisenberg, §22.

παραχειμάσας οὖν ἐν τοῖς Βοδηνοῖς ὁ βασιλεὺς ἦρος ὥρᾳ, ἐπεὶ καὶ τὴν ἀναστάσιμον ἑωρτάκει ἡμέραν, τὰ στρατόπεδα αὐτοῦ που καταλελοιπὼς καὶ εἰς ἡγεμόνας αὐτῶν τάξας τόν τε πρωτοβεστιάριον Ἀλέξιον τὸν Ῥαούλ, γαμβρὸν ὄντα ἐπ' ἀδελφόπαιδι τοῦ βασιλέως, καὶ τὸν Κομνηνὸν Μιχαὴλ τὸν Παλαιολόγον, μετὰ μετρίου στρατεύματος εἰς θέαν τῶν προσφάτως ἐπιγεγενημένων τούτῳ χώρων ἀφίκετο. καὶ ἀπῆλθε μὲν εἰς Ἀχρίδα, ἐπιδεδημήκει δὲ εἰς Δεάβολιν κἀκεῖθεν εἰς Καστορίαν. καὶ τῇ τῆς ὀπώρας ὥρᾳ συσκευασάμενος τὰ στρατεύματα τῆς εἰς ἕω φερούσης ἐφήψατο.

Παραμείψας γοῦν τὴν Θεσσαλονίκην καὶ τὴν Βισαλτίαν διαβάς, ἐς Φιλίππους ἐπήξατο τὴν σκηνὴν λόγου πέρι, ὡς ἐδόκει τούτῳ, οὐχὶ σμικροῦ. ὁ γὰρ ἐκ τοῦ Μελενίκου Μαγκλαβίτης Νικόλαος κατεῖπε πρὸς τὸν βασιλέα τοῦ Παλαιολόγου Μιχαὴλ τοῦ προρρηθέντος υἱοῦ τοῦ μεγάλου δομεστίκου, ὅτε ἦν ἐν τοῖς Βοδηνοῖς· ἐπεὶ δὲ οὐκ ἦν καιρὸς τοιούτων πραγμάτων ἐρεύνης ἀλλ' ἐκστρατείας καὶ μάχης, ἐταμιεύετο τῷ βασιλεῖ τὰ τῆς ὑποθέσεως ἐς ὥραν εὔθετον. τότε γοῦν εἰς ἐξέτασιν τῶν τοιούτων ἐγεγόνει ὁ βασιλεύς, καὶ δικαστήριον ἔστησε καὶ κριτὰς ἐκάθισε καὶ λαμπρὸν κριτήριον συνεκρότησεν. / The emperor, then, spent the winter at Vodena, but in the spring, when he had celebrated the day of Resurrection, he left the encamped army in that area, appointing to its command the *protovestarios* Alexios Raoul, the emperor's son-in-law through his brother's child, and Michael Komnenos Palaiologos, while he went with an army of moderate size to inspect the territories which had recently become his. He went to Ochrid, visited Deavolis and from there went to Kastoria. In the autumn season, after he had prepared the army, he took the road to the east.

When he had passed by Thessaloniki and through Visalta, he encamped at Philippi for no small reason, it seemed to him. For Nicholas Manglavites of Melenikon had denounced Michael Palaiologos (the previous mentioned son of the *megas domestikos*) to the emperor when he was at Vodena. Since it was not the time for inquiry into such matters but for campaign and battle, the case was set aside by the emperor until a suitable hour. So it was then that the emperor came to investigate the matter; he set up a court, appointed judges and assembled an illustrious tribunal.[466]

Altogether the campaign lasted from fall-winter of 1252 until the winter-spring of 1253-54.[467] At the moment when the emperor heard suspicious accounts on Michael Palaiologos he stayed in Vodena, recent Edessa. Therefore it fell into winter 1252-53, however, he chose not deal with it right then because he was preparing for military actions, as Akropolites reported. A quite considerable amount of time passed by before John III reacted to the report. For after settling the conflict with Michael II Angelos in spring, he left Vodena westwards for an inspection over the summer. Only being reunited with that part of the army that had earlier stayed behind at Vodena, the entire camp left eastwards. The trial took finally place at Philippi during autumn of 1253, a

[466] *Acropolitae*, ed. Heisenberg, §49 and §50; *Akropolites*, tr. Macrides, 251 and 259.
[467] *Akropolites*, tr. Macrides, 251.

site that lay on the way home halfway between Vodena and Kallipolis, the crossing point at the Hellespont.[468]

The trial has been much discussed in scholarship, it received particularly attention as one example of the ordeal by hot iron.[469] Here however, neither the accusation of treason nor the ordered punishment is of interest, instead the location where the trial took place is in the focus of this study. The question may be posed why the trial had not been solved at Vodena, the base for the campaign where the party was encamped already for a considerable amount of time. Instead the court and army started their homeward journey and the trial was solved on the way. From the earlier reference to the town of Philippi it indeed looks as if the site served as a ground for council.[470]

Two cases are not sufficient to give a coherent impression, but perhaps some features might be pointed out nevertheless. In both cases a larger settlement had been chosen to house the trial. If such trials went on for some time and the court, the judges and in these two cases also a considerable amount of the army were to be accommodated, the factor of supplies would certainly play a role in choosing the venue. Another aspect that might be deduced from these cases could be that apparently trials did not need to be solved at a designated location. If the emperor decided that the time to deal with an accusation had come, he could set up a trial wherever he wanted. Holding court belonged to the mobile institutions under Laskarid authority, at least seen from these two famous trials.

[468] Macrides considered Philippi a base for the Laskarid emperors on the newly conquered territories in the Balkans: *Akropolites*, tr. Macrides, 228 n10 and 263 n2. There is indeed reason to label it as one focal point, however, on this particular campaign Vodena apparently had taken up a similar significance, being the winter quarter and as the stage for the important celebration of Easter. It is more difficult to make out the use and function of sites on the Balkans from Laskarid perspective due to the frequent absence of the emperors and the instability of authority in the region.

[469] See for an overview on previous scholarship and a discussion on the motives of Akropolites for this report Günter Prinzing, "Ein Mann *tyrannīdos āxios*. Zur Darstellung der rebellischen Vergangenheit Michaels VIII. Palaiologos" in *Lesarten. Festschrift für Athanasios Kambylis zum 70. Geburtstag, dargebracht von Schülern, Kollegen und Freunden*, ed. Vassis, Ioannis et all., Berlin, 1998, 180-197. Prinzing elaborated on the background of the trial and compared Akropolites to later reports of the same rumors of treason in the accounts of Pachymeres and Gregoras.

[470] Here John III Vatatzes met and conferred with his council whether or not to attack the Bulgarians after the death of Kaliman: *Acropolitae*, ed. Heisenberg, §43.

4. Negotiations over the reunion of the churches

One diplomatic instrument that in particular John III Vatatzes utilized to ease the political conflict with the Latin empire and even to regain Constantinople in a peaceful way was the attempt to negotiate a reunion between the papacy and the Byzantine church of the Byzantine empire.[471] Literature on this exists and thus, this is not the attempt to reexamine its course of events. But negotiations over the reunion of the two churches between papal envoys and Patriarch Germanos II and John III Vatatzes in 1234 had surfaced during the analysis of Blemmydes' autobiography. Initiated first at Nicaea, they were continued at Nymphaion and even relaunched there roughly 20 years later. Being mainly an imperial interest and effort, the negotiations over a reunion will be analyzed with an emphasis on the choice of locations and a discussion of the break and its relocation.

John Langdon examined the first arrival of papal delegates to Nicaea and their relocation to Nymphaion in 1234.[472] He was particularly interested in the positions of both the emperor and the patriarch during these negotiations within the context of the general political aims pursued by John III Vatatzes, which he carefully extracted from the Latin report of this meeting that has come down to us.[473] The report of those negotiations revealed surprising and puzzling information on the chosen sites, which will be elaborated below. To understand these from the outset, a sketch on the schedule of the meetings at their proper places will be given first.[474]

The papal delegates arrived upon an invitation from the patriarch Germanos II at Nicaea in January 1234. The eventually fruitless theological debate ended with the announced departure of the emperor John III Vatatzes and the suggestion of the patriarch to convene another meeting, this time including also the patriarchs of Jerusalem, Antioch and Alexandria. The envoys left for Constantinople at the end of

[471] An overview of the attempts to ease the ecclestiastical controversies between the Latin and Byzantine side offers Jan van Dieten, "Das Lateinische Kaiserreich von Konstantinopel und die Verhandlungen über kirchliche Wiedervereinigung," in *The Latin Empire: some contributions,* ed. van Aalst, Victoria, Ciggaar, Krijna Nelly (Hernen: A.A. Bredius Foundation, 1990), 93-125.

[472] Langdon, "Byzantium in Anatolian exile."

[473] Golubovich, "Disputatio Latinorum et Graecorum," 418-470.

[474] The main obstacles that ultimately needed to be resolved in order to reunite the churches of the Latin and the Byzantine sphere centered around the *filioque,* the use of leavened or unleavened bread, and the question of supremacy of papal authority resp. the position of the patriarch of Constantinople within the ecclesiastical hierarchy. Whereas these were the theological issues, of course the forceful sack of Constantinople dominated each contact between these two parties. It is not the aim of this analysis to repeat the content of the discussions in depth. For further literature on the subject see the references to the excerpts of Blemmydes discussed in the chapters on Nicaea and Nymphaion above.

January and returned upon invitation to Nymphaion in mid April of the same year. Why the relocation took place was not reported. One plausible explanation could be that the emperor wished to head down to his usual winter quarter. Another reason could have been the participation of the additional three patriarchs: as all had to travel north, maybe a relocation of the meeting to the south of the realm was a kind gesture on behalf of the emperor and the patriarch of Constantinople-Nicaea. They may have anticipated a long and difficult journey from the regions that were no longer part of the Byzantine sphere. And indeed, as the other invited patriarchs had not arrived by mid April, the discussions were delayed by almost two weeks until April 24. After another session on April 28-29 and on May 3-May 4, the Latin envoys finally left Nymphaion on May 6 of 1234. The negotiations over a reunion of the churches had failed.

Another attempt was made in 1249. This time Pope Innocent IV sent, upon the request of John III, several Franciscans, among them John of Parma, as delegates to Nymphaion. Unfortunately from this council no detailed report has survived.[475] However, Blemmydes in the second version of his autobiography outlined the main arguments from his point of view. As a result of this meeting, a Byzantine delegation traveled to the papal curia, equipped with a letter written by Patriarch Manuel II and the permission to negotiate. Also this second discussion petered out, mainly due to the fact that the main protagonists – John III, Manuel II and Innocence IV – all died within the following years. Their successors rejected the idea of a reunion of the churches altogether.

Having studied Nicaea and Nymphaion within the context of exile and the set up of the Laskarid realm, one might be tempted at first glance to see in these two locations the patriarchal predominance in the first phase in Bithynia, and the take over of the emperor in the second phase down in Lydia. However, following the description of the report, the locations *within* these sites contradict this interpretation. Despite the initiation of this meeting on behalf of the patriarch, the gathering at Nicaea took place *in palatio imperiali* - in the imperial palace, headed by John III.[476] Hence, with the departure of the emperor the session closed down. Upon resuming the negotiations at

[475] Joseph Gill, *Byzantium and the Papacy, 1198-1400* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1979), 88-90; van Dieten, "Verhandlungen über kirchliche Wiedervereinigungen," 98-101. Moorman, *A History of the Franciscan Order,* 299, did not know much about these renewed discussions. Angold, *Church and Society*, 525-26, described the main points of the discussion and also the subsequent negitiations between the Byzantine delegates and the pope in Perugia.

[476] Golubovich, "Disputatio Latinorum et Graecorum," 430, §5.

Nymphaion, the first session on April 24 took place *in hospitio Patriarche* […] *ad domum Patriarche* – apparently under the lead of the patriarch in his own lodging, and with the remarkable absence of the emperor from the debate.[477] The Latin envoys only appeared before John III at the end of the session, ready to leave the fruitless negotiations. After an exchange with the emperor however, the envoys consented to the request by John III to gather at his palace the following day. In this way the emperor returned to the discussions for the following session, which continued on April 28 – 29 in the *palatium Imperatoris* – the imperial palace at Nymphaion.[478] So apparently, and indeed logically, as a practice on the Byzantine side the leadership of each session was with the lord of the chosen venue. But remarkably, the analogy of the patriarch as the conductor in the "patriarchal" city of Nicaea and the emperor as the leader at his winter quarter in Nymphaion could not be established.

In line with this observation Langdon attested a dominant and interfering participation of the emperor during the initial talks in Nicaea that took place in the imperial palace.[479] He extracted from the report how John III tried to push into the theological debates and how frustrated he seems to have been at the end of the first phase over the fact that no compromise had been reached.[480] Lacking thorough knowledge Emperor John nevertheless engaged actively in the discussions and offered concessions to the Latin envoys. As Langdon pointed out, the main force behind the emperor's motivation became apparent when he hinted at the possibility to offer the subordination of the patriarch under the Episcopal see of Rome, while asking in return for the authority over the city of Constantinople.[481]

When the second phase of the negotiations continued at Nymphaion, John III initially retreated and a tough debate between the envoys and the Byzantine clerics evolved. Langdon implied that the emperor's strong involvement and his willingness to grant facilities earlier might have provoked his own clerics to go the opposite way, hence his non-interference at the second meeting. The clerics were not ready to make any concessions, nor the Latin envoys, which were apparently not authorized to do so.

[477] For the patriarchal lodging see Golubovich, "Disputatio Latinorum et Graecorum," 448, §19; 450, §20. Cf. Langdon, "Imperial viceregency," 223. It it the only reference I have come across that mentioned a patriarchal dwelling at Nymphaion. Unfortunately the Latin text does not give any hint as to the design of it.

[478] Golubovich, "Disputatio Latinorum et Graecorum," 453, §22.

[479] Langdon, "Imperial viceregency," 209-211.

[480] Langdon, "Imperial viceregency," 210-213.

[481] Langdon, "Imperial viceregency," 213-222.

The opinions on the different theological issues were too deep, and above all the Latins wrote in their report that the entire endeavor had been doomed because of the rancor felt over the sack of Constantinople. Even after the envoys appeared before the emperor again, no result was produced. Langdon interpreted the changing behavior of the emperor throughout the negotiations in the following:

> Once the circumspect Vatatzes realized that hammering out theological compromise with the friars was impossible because he was not dealing with *legati*, the Emperor, with consummate *Realpolitik*, subtly abandoned that policy and set as his new goal the mobilization of Anatolian Byzantine public opinion *against* the Latins.[sic][482]

With that statement Langdon presented Vatatzes as an emperor who clearly knew what he was doing and made use of the outcome of his actions. He dismissed the view on him as a weak and unsuccessful military leader, who tried to overcome the Latin enemy in the diplomatic way. However, he did not explain why it would have been necessary to build up the Latins as the enemy for the audience of court and citizens in Asia Minor, because, as was remarked in the report by the Latin envoys, they were perceived as such from the beginning. Another question that would follow his interpretation is then why one further attempt to continue these negotiations followed in 1249? John III Vatatzes might have had his own agenda, but it seems from this that he might have held on to his initial intentions longer than Langdon ascribed to him, and his retreat might have been in the hope that without his presence solutions could be found.

Be this as it may, for this study the report revealed new topographical information of the sites that had been chosen as the stages of negotiations. It is worth repeating that for one, two different locations had been used. Whether or not the relocation from Nicaea to Nymphaion matched with the usual seasonal habit of imperial traveling is difficult to judge, simply because the travel dates usually given are too vague.[483] In difference to the diplomatic acts examined before, here the envoys had been invited to two focal points located inside the realm, not to frontier settlements. So apparently not only on behalf of the Laskarid side no need for caution was felt. It might also have been a gesture of sincerity regarding the willingness to negotiate, despite its negative outcome.

[482] Langdon, "Imperial viceregency," 225.

[483] Thanks to the Latin report the meetings could be dated exactly to year, month and day, whereas the usual movements of emperors during the exile could be specified only by seasons.

Two residences had been mentioned at each location, from where the envoys walked back and forth. Apparently the patriarch possessed a residence for himself at Nymphaion, likewise an imperial palace – which had already surfaced in Blemmydes' account – existed in Nicaea. From the terms used it seems that these were not tents, but built structures. It is the only textual reference for a house of the patriarch at Nymphaion. The patriarchal residence would underline the notion of necessity for traveling of the leading elite of the realm and the necessity for presence in various parts of the territory on regular basis. Not only the emperor and the court governed their people this way, but also the patriarch may have tended his flock by similar means. However, caution is needed. It may have been that for the time of these negotiations a house had been given to the patriarch, since he had to stay unusually long at Nymphaion. Thus, it may only have been the perception of the Latin envoys, otherwise unfamiliar with the settlement, that the house indeed belonged to the patriarch.

For the emperor negotiations over a reunion of the churches turned into a diplomatic tool for his aim to regain the Byzantine capital, Constantinople. Being an ecclesiastical dispute on the surface, a discussion over a reunion was a matter of imperial diplomacy. This probably explains best the two attempts that followed, regardless of its first failure at Nicaea in January of 1234, in April of the same year and again in 1249. That it constituted an imperial interest may be reflected in the relocation to Nymphaion.

C. Higher Education

Since Late Antiquity higher education constituted a prerequesite for a career in the administration of the Byzantine empire. Also the supervision of higher education within the empire by the emperor dates back to the beginning of the empire. The collapse in 1204 disrupted the system of higher education. The Laskarid emperors therefore also faced the task of providing facilities for higher education, if the leading members of the government in exile intended to hold on to those structures that had been developed over centuries.[484]

The education system that was reestablished in the Laskarid realm had been analyzed by Costas Constantinides.[485] He closely examined the writings of Akropolites, Blemmydes and Theodore II and reconstructed the measures taken and obstacles encountered in western Asia Minor after the sack of Constantinople and the loss of all institutions that had been housed there. The two writers, whose accounts covered the period of exile in western Asia Minor, Akropolites and Blemmydes, are perfect representatives of this elite: for both the quest for higher education had been without alternative, since they aimed at a carreer in the ecclesiastical resp. secular sphere. Higher education constituted a necessity for it. Both writers came from wealthy families who had ties to the imperial court in one way or the other.[486] From their own writings it is known that Akropolites and Blemmydes were born to well-situated and educated families. Their accounts provide a detailed picture of the ups and downs in receiving higher education after 1204. The letters of Theodore II Laskaris bear witness to a vibrant intellectual exchange of knowledge and rhetorics during this time.[487] For Theodore higher education meant a preparation for his role as future emperor.

[484] See for a quick and recent overview Markopulos, "Education." A deeper analysis of the situation of higher education in the period before 1204 can be found in Magdalino, *Manuel I Komnenos*, 325-344.

[485] Constantinides, *Higher Education*, 5-27.

[486] Blemmydes father attended the court during the exile as physician, Akropolites' father on the other hand remained behind in Constantinople, however was able to send his son into the Laskarid realm, where he was taken into imperial care. Even though only indirectly, ties between the imperial court and that part of the inhabitants from Constantinople that had remained in the city, is implied.

[487] Constantinides, *Higher Education*, 18-21.

1. The recreation of higher education

Constantinides stated that during the early period, the Laskarid realm "was unable, it seems, to embark on the re-establishment of the institutions in higher education".[488] He ascribed this to the struggles for survival at the beginning of Laskarid rule in Asia Minor, in which he is certainly right to a great extent. As has been examined above, Theodore I Laskaris first endeavored to establish a base in western Asia Minor and to bring territories under his control, then he set up armed forces to fight against his opponents. His victory against the Seljuk sultan, who had been joined by Alexios III, at the battle of Antioch-on-the-Maeander raised hopes of a quick recovery of the capital, which were however soon shattered after his defeat at the hands of Henry of Flanders. However, a lack of means and time might not have been the only and not the major factor. For creating a solid path of primary and higher education in exile not only a lack of attention was missing during the early years. For the willingness to set up long term strategies that could aid the survival of a Byzantine cultural identity after the collapse of the empire first the notion that this indeed was at stake had to be acknowledged. As long as the loss of the capital was considered as short term situation that within a short time could be reversed, no measures would be taken to rescue a Byzantine cultural identity for the generations to follow. The organization of higher education in the Byzantine tradition depended on the recognition of the exile as a long-term given reality; thus, it could not have belonged to one of the first steps towards creating Laskarid rule in Asia Minor, even if it indeed turned out to be a decisive factor in the recreation of Byzantine rule later on.[489] But as Constantinides pointed out, the initiative to create facilities and collect material for the new generation of scholars and intellectuals that would solely be trained outside Constantinople was owed to John III Vatatzes. Skoutariotes inserted into the latter's reign the information that John III took

[488] Constantinides, *Higher Education*, 6.

[489] Angold, *Government in Exile*, 2-3. For Angold, the Laskarid realm preserved Byzantine culture and education, thus, identity, stronger than the other two Byzantine rival states during the exile period. The Palaiologan period, 1261-1453, was built on the legacy of the Laskarid realm, which at the time of Angold's publication had received little attention. While having preserved Byzantine traditions in exile, at the same time the rulers of western Asia Minor altered them according to their specific needs in a changed environment.

care of the foundations of public libraries in each town within the realm and donated manuscripts to them.[490]

2. Traveling for teachers and study material

Three individuals should be discussed when talking about the search for education in the Laskarid realm: Blemmydes, Akropolites and the later patriarch of Constantinople, Gregory of Cyprus. All of them reported on the conditions of higher education in their writings in context of their own personal quest for it. Based on their subsequent dates of birth – Blemmydes was born in 1197, Akropolites in 1217 and Gregory of Cyprus in 1241 – they bear witness to the evolution of teaching opportunities in western Asia Minor during the exile period.

Blemmydes had been born in Constantinople, then still the capital of the Byzantine empire, but he moved with his parents after the sack of the city to Prousa by the age of six. He reported at length and at various parts of both his accounts of his own training as a boy and young man, including all stages and locations that he attended: Prousa, Nicaea, Smyrna, the Skamander region and finally Ephesos.[491] This report shows that apparently teachers were available even during the very formation of some sort of order in western Asia Minor after the loss of the capital. It is imaginable that among the refugees from Constantinople who moved to this part of the former empire, teachers were among those who continued to offer their expertise.

Akropolites likewise was born in Constantinople, but during the Latin occupation probably in 1217. He revealed about himself that at the age of 16 he left Constantinople exactly for the very purpose of seeking higher education.[492] It seems that he was able to obtain the first stages of education in Latin-occupied Constantinople, but for the remainder of his educational training apparently the structures established meanwhile in the Laskarid realm made his move there an obvious choice. It shows that by that time, around 1234, the Laskarid realm provided enough to attract young men

[490] *Scutariota*, ed. Heisenberg, Addidamenta no. 33: ἀλλὰ καὶ βιβλιοθήκας κατὰ πόλεις συνήθροισεν ἐκ βίβλων πασῶν τεχνῶν καὶ ἐπιστημῶν.

[491] Munitiz kindly provided an overview of Blemmydes' life in the introduction of his translation of Blemmydes, in which Munitiz summarized the information provided by the twin autobiographies in charts that named all chapters from where the information was drawn: Blemmydes, *Partial Account*, tr. Munitiz, 14-15. Whereas in the first part of his partial account Blemmydes elaborated in length on each specific subject, in the second part he merely summarized his steps of education, focused each time on the location where he had been taught in each of these levels.

[492] *Acropolitae*, ed. Heisenberg, §32.

from Constantinople to join the Laskarid elite. Likewise, from this move to Asia Minor it seems the situation in the old capital was not favorable for further training. In the Laskarid realm Akropolites joined the imperial court, where Emperor John administered to him and sent Akropolites on the path of higher education:

> οὕτω μὲν τῶν ἀνακτόρων ὑποχωρήσας εἰς διδασκάλου φέρων ἐνέβαλον ἐμαυτόν, ἑπτακαιδέκατον ἔτος ἄγων. ἦν δὲ οὗτος, ὡς ἔφην, ὁ Ἑξαπτέρυγος, ἀνὴρ οὐ πάνυ μὲν ἐπιστήμων ἐν τοῖς μαθήμασιν, ἀγαθὸς δὲ φράζειν, οἷα ῥητορικοῖς λόγοις κατάκρως ἐνδιατρίψας καὶ τὸ ἐξαγγέλλειν εὐφυῶς μεμελετηκὼς καὶ πολλοῦ διὰ τοῦτο ἠξιωμένος ὀνόματος. ἐκείνου δὲ τελευτήσαντος μετὰ τὴν εἰς ἡμᾶς τῶν ποιημάτων σαφήνειαν καὶ τὴν τῆς τῶν λόγων τέχνης διδασκαλίαν, παρὰ τὸν Βλεμμύδην Νικηφόρον, ὃν τότε πάντες οἴδαμεν τῶν ἄλλων τελεώτερον ἐν ταῖς κατὰ φιλοσοφίαν ἐπιστήμαις, ἐφοίτησά τε αὐτὸς καὶ ὅσοι σὺν ἐμοὶ ἐτελοῦντο τὰ λογικά. / Thus, departing from the palace, and going to the teacher, I committed myself; I was in my 17th year. He was, as I said, Hexapterygos, a man not very learned in philosophy, but good at declaiming, since he had dwelt extensively on rhetorical studies and had studied skilful expression and had acquired a great reputation because of this. When he died, after he had elucidated poetry for us and had taught the art of words, I, and those who with me were accomplishing their education in philosophical studies, went to Nikephoros Blemmydes, whom we all knew to be more accomplished than others at that time in the philosophical sciences.[493]

Blemmydes himself confirmed that he received five students through the pressing hand of emperor John III at his monastery at Ephesos:

> Καὶ τὸ φροντιστήριον κατειληφότες, ἡσυχίᾳ καὶ λόγοις, ἧττον τοῖς ἔξω μᾶλλον τοῖς ἔνδον, ἠρετισάμεθα προσανέχειν. Ἀλλ' ὁ κρατῶν διὰ τὸ τὸν λόγον ἠτονηκέναι, πέντε φοιτητὰς ἐς τὴν λογικὴν εἰσδεκτοὺς ἡμῖν ἐποιήσατο, βίᾳ μετὰ πειθοῦς ἢ πειθοῖ μετὰ βίας χρῃσάμενος. ἐδίδου δὲ καὶ σῖτον, ἐδίδου καὶ χρυσίον, ἐτήσια καὶ ἄμφω […] / When I regained my spiritual retreat, I decided to continue living there, dedicating myself to contemplation and study, the latter concerned more with Christian than with pagan authors. However, the Emperor, preoccupied by the decadence in education, arranged that five students should be entrusted to me to be trained in higher studies: to arrange this he used a mixture of force and persuasion, rather than persuasion and force. He granted provisions and funds, both on annual basis [...][494]

Significant in Akropolites' narrative and Blemmydes confirmation is that students went to the teacher. This may have been the custom in Constantinople before 1204, the difficulty now however lay in the fact that teachers were not spreading over the area of the one capital, but over the entire territory gathered under Laskarid power. Moving from one teacher to another therefore pointed to the fact that travel for

[493] *Acropolitae*, ed. Heisenberg, §32.

[494] Blemmydae, *Opera*, ed. Munitiz, I.49. From this passage however it did not become clear where Blemmydes had settled; he had been on a pilgrimage previously and only narrated that he came back from where he had started. It is in I.38 where the reader had learned that he had created a small spiritual retreat in the vicinity of Ephesos upon request of emperor John III Vatatzes.

education was still a necessity. Later in his account Akropolites revealed that he had studied with Hexapterygos roughly five years, so the time when he joined Blemmydes can be dated to 1238-39.[495] Thus, like in the early days of the exile elaborated by Blemmydes, by the middle of John III Vatatzes' reign teachers and students had not been gathered in one of the cities of western Asia Minor. The label of Nicaea as the "center of learning" therefore needs to be treated with caution.[496]

What could be deduced from the accounts of Blemmydes and Akropolites was the strong concern John III Vatatzes showed for keeping alive the curriculum of higher education that had existed before 1204. He requested from learned men to pass their knowledge to the younger generation, he selected worthy students, paid their fees and took care of their earthly needs. Education had become a matter for the emperor.

Unlike Blemmydes and Akropolites Gregory of Cyprus did not play an active role during the Laskarid period, for he was born in Nicosia around 1241/42 and rather belongs to the prominent men of the early Palaiologan period. Yet, he composed a short and valuable autobiography, apparently intended first as an introduction to his collection of letters.[497] The composition centers around Gregory's experiences in seeking education as a young man. Being 17 years of age, around 1258 or 1259 Gregory left Cyprus for higher education and made his way to Ephesos, where he – a poor foreigner without references – was rejected as a student by the famous teacher Blemmydes. Subsequently Gregory travelled to Nicaea, where he was disappointed at the low quality of teaching facilities. After the reconquest of Constantinople Gregory studied with Akropolites, who in the 1260s offered his expertise in the reconquered city.

Apparent in Gregory's account is the fact that the Laskarid territory acquired at some point during the exile renown for its preservation of higher education. This Gregory shares with Akropolites, who equally had left his birth place in exchange for education under Laskarid rule. Its fame became big enough so that a young man from

[495] *Acropolitae*, ed. Heisenberg, §39; *Akropolites*, tr. Macrides, 194.

[496] Foss, *Nicaea*, 65-66. Foss pointed to the gathering of monks on the debate over the reunion of churches; yet, simply because for this occasion representatives of the intellectual elite had gathered in the city, it did not turn the very same into a center for learning. It is precisely a characteristic of the realm that such a center did not exist.

[497] In the context of autobiographical writing see Angold, "Autobiographical impulse," 239. Gregory's composition was discussed by Aristeides Papadakis, *Crisis in Byzantium, The Filioque controversy in the patriarchate of Gregory II of Cyprus (1283-1289)* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1986), 29-33, as a characterization of Gregory before embarking on the conflicts he faced during his patriarchy 1283-89.

Cyprus was willing to embark on quite dangerous travel in order to benefit from it.[498] However, from the Greek successor states the one in western Asia Minor lay with its southern border closest to the island of Cyprus, through contacts with the main land it seems logical that the Laskarid realm was the one people talked of when thinking of a place of preserved Byzantine culture. It may explain Gregory's disappointment upon arrival in Nicaea.[499] Also it seems that Gregory's journey to the Laskarid realm rather targeted one specific scholar, Blemmydes in Ephesos, whose expertise he was seeking, and not so much the general wide-range provision of higher education established by the Laskarid rulers. Apparently higher education in the Laskarid realm survived, but to a limited extent only.

Whereas it seems that not so much teachers were scarce after 1204 in the Laskarid territory, certainly no center of education emerged from the sources that had been created to gather teachers and students alike. Moreover the realm was lacking the necessary books, which made thorough training in higher education difficult. Famously, Blemmydes complained about the lack of reading material to his audience quite plainly when elaborating on his travels to other parts of the fragmented former empire on his quest for manuscripts:

> Μετά τινας καιρούς, διαπεραιωθῆναι πρὸς τὰ δυτικώτερα προειλόμεθα, χάριν ἐντυχίας ὧν οὔπω βίβλων ἐντετυχήκαμεν· καὶ πλοῖον εὐτρεπισάμενοι, καί τινας εὖ εἰδότας τῶν κατὰ θάλατταν συλλεξάμενοι […] Οἱ γὰρ τῶν κατὰ τὴν ἡμετέραν διόδευσιν ἄρχειν κεκελευσμένοι πόλεων καὶ χωρῶν, τῆς εἰς ἡμᾶς προμηθείας οὐκ ὀλίγον τιθέμενοι λόγον, ἐς τὰ προσωτέρω μετ' ἐπιμελείας ἄλλος ἐξ ἄλλου κατὰ διαδοχὰς ἄχρις Ἄθω σχεδὸν παραπέμπουσιν· ἔνθα χρονίσαντες, καὶ δυσαρίθμοις ἐνιδρώσαντες βίβλοις, τὴν Θεσσαλονικέων καταλαμβάνομεν, κἀκεῖ τοῖς ὁμοίοις διαρκέστερον ἐμμογήσαντες, τοῖς περὶ Λάρισσαν προσχωροῦμεν καὶ περαιτέρω, τῆς αὐτῆς ἐργασίας ἐπιμόνως ἐχόμενοι, καὶ τοῦ καιροῦ φειδόμενοι, καὶ τὴν σπουδὴν ἐπιτείνοντες. […]Τοῖς δυσμικοῖς οὖν πολυκαιρίως ἐμμείναντες, καὶ συντόνως τῇ τῶν εὑρημένων μελέτῃ βίβλων ταλαιπωρήσαντες δυσμέτρητοι δ' αὖται γε καὶ δυσπόριστοι, καί τινες πολλοῖς τῶν ἐν λόγοις βεβιωκότων ἠγνοημέναι καὶ τὰ ὀνόματα / Some time later I decided to journey to the westernmost regions to search for books that I had not been able to find anywhere. I equipped a ship and selected some men, skilled in the ways of the sea. […] So, with the governors of various cities and regions through which I passed taking it in turn, one after the other, to provide most carefully for all my needs as far as the next stage, I was escorted almost as far as Athos. I spent some time there, and worked hard with the vast quantity of books. Then I went on to Thessaloniki and studied intensively their similar stocks. I continued to the region around Larissa and beyond, always intend on the same

[498] William Lameere, *La tradition manuscrite de la correspondance de Grégoire de Chypre, patriarche de Constantinople (1283-1289)* (Bruxelles: Palais de Académies,1937), 179.

[499] Lameere, *La tradition manuscrite*, 183.

> undertaking, wasting no time and stretching my capacities to the maximum. […] I spent a long time in these Western parts and worked extremely hard at the study of the books I found there; they were to be found in countless profusion, many of them difficult to find elsewhere, so much so that even the titles of some are unknown to many who have dedicated their lives to study. [500]

Blemmydes made some effort to acquire manuscripts and study material; he however also produced at least one himself, a handbook for philosophy, commissioned by John III Vatatzes.[501] It can only be guessed how much the loss of the library collections of Constantinople must have been felt and how much teachers and students suffered from it in their struggle to maintain knowledge.

3. Schools

The case of Blemmydes and his five pupils discussed above represented a good example of a "school" in the Laskarid period, funded by the imperial office.[502] The school of St. Tryphon at Nicaea became famous as the foundation of Theodore II Laskaris. He as the well-educated philosopher on the imperial throne concentrated the efforts of recreating knowledge during the exile on himself, mainly through his writings. Yet, the abundant source material that came down to us on and from Theodore II Laskaris may blur the fact that without his father John III Vatatzes, Theodore II would never have received an education himself. The commission of the school was reported by Skoutariotes as an addition to the church of St. Tryphon in Nicaea, both apparently started in 1254 when Theodore II assumed the imperial office. The commission included a school building proper, which however did not survive.[503] Theodore II continued the same practice as his father in not only paying for the teacher,

[500] Blemmydae, *Opera*, ed. Munitiz, I.58, 63, 64.

[501] Pantelis Carelos, "Ein "integrierter" Fürstenspiegel im Prooimion der "Epitome logikes" des Nikephoros Blemmydes" *BZ* 98 (2005), 399-402.

[502] Schools in the Laskarid realm should thus be merely understood as the gathering of a handful of students attached to one teacher.

[503] *Scutariota*, ed. Heisenberg, Addidamenta no. 35:Τότε καὶ τὸν τοῦ χριστομάρτυρος ἤρξατο Τρύφωνος κτίσαι ναὸν καὶ εἰς ὃ νῦν ὁρᾶται κάλλος καὶ μέγεθος ἤγαγε· καὶ σχολεῖα γραμματικῶν καὶ ῥητόρων ἔταξεν ἐν αὐτῷ, διδασκάλους ἐπιστήσας καὶ μαθητὰς ἀποτάξας, ἐκ βασιλικῶν δασκάλους ἐπιστήσας καὶ μαθητὰς ἀποτάξας, ἐκ βασιλικῶν θησαυρῶν τὰ σιτηρέσια τούτους ἔχειν διορισάμενος φιλοτίμως.

but also for the students to be able to attend the school, which was intended for primary education.[504]

Thus, the establishment of schools throughout the exile period remained in the hands of the emperors. It is possible that this already began under Theodore I Laskaris, yet the sources remain silent about it.

[504] Constantinides, *Higher Education*, 19-20.

D. The religious sphere

This subchapter explores the religious sphere of the Laskarid realm. The church as a institution, the patriarchate at its head, and the development of monasticism will be looked at. However, the interest here centers not so much on the evolution of faith as such and its diverse facets during the exile. The central question here will be, what kind of relation the Greek Orthodox Church, the patriarch and monasteries had to the imperial office and how the latter influenced their development during the exile, in particular its spatial expansion and organization. Could one or all of these parts of the religious sphere be considered in any way an imperial tool in the creation of rule that was set up in western Asia Minor? Or were they operating independently from the imperial office? For an analysis on the set up of the Laskarid realm in western Asia Minor the structure of the church and the consolidation of monastic focal points may have been a crucial factor.

1. The Church

To define the Church as an institution in the Laskarid realm is not easy, since the transition to Nicaea and re-creation in exile was not as smoothly as contemporary sources want to make their readers believe.[505] The Church as an institution in this particular context of the Laskarid realm refers in this study to the assembly of bishops, who had been installed in their sees in Asia Minor before 1204 and that recognized Theodore Laskaris as their leader and accepted the appointment of a new patriarch from him. That patriarch received the task of overseeing those communities that lay within Laskarid territory; towards other patriarchates he assumed the position, which formerly the patriarch of Constantinople had occupied.

In his survey on the emperor and the Church Angold highlighted the two rights the emperor held over the Church: the right of ecclesiastical appointments, which will be discussed below, and the right to make changes in the diocesan arrangement.[506] That is to say, the emperor was in the position to alter the status of a diocese. Three different

[505] *Acropolitae*, ed. Heisenberg, §7. That is to say, bishops of other territories of the former empire that were not under Laskarid authority did not necessarily acknowledge the patriarch of Nicaea as their own, this was therefore a period where the Greek Orthodox Church disintegrated into various smaller entities not unlike the empire itself. For a detailed analysis of the ecclesiastical controveries during the exile see Prinzing, "Kaisertum im Umbruch," with the relevant source references.

[506] Angold, *Government in Exile*, 48-49.

categories were at his disposal – metropolitan sees, autocephalous archbishoprics and suffragan bishoprics. Angold named only two changes during the Laskarid period, Philadelphia and Pontic Heracleia, which were both elevated from suffragan to metropolitan sees.[507] He perceived these changes as the result of the increased significance of these cities - Pontic Heracleia and Philadelphia both became border cities and Laskarid outposts in the aftermath of 1204. Yet, Angold judged that despite these two, overall the diocesan organization stayed the same during the exile. In other words, modifications occurred, but the diocesan disposition of the twelfth century had been kept.

Yet, his observation can be considered outdated. Mitsiou judged the changes during the exile period more significant. She compared ecclesiastical structures, particularly the arrangement of metropolitan sees and bishoprics, of the territory that fell under Laskarid authority after 1204 with those structures that existed before 1204 in the same area.[508] Basis of this comparison were among other documents mainly the *notitiae episcopatuum* of Constantinople in the twelfth and thirteenth century, in particular *notitiae* 13 and 15. The *notitiae* generally contained lists of ecclesiastical dioceses in hierarchical order, in which places are listed in the above mentioned three different categories.[509] Mitsiou listed several more sites that received the status of a metropolis under Laskarid rule, next to Philadelphia and Pontic Heracleia also Achyraous, Pegai, Parion and Antiocheia at the Maeander.[510] She emphasized that the higher ranked sites were situated at junctions or important routes of the realm, which meant that the ecclesiastical status reflected the accessibility of the site, its centrality.[511] Problematic regarding the lists of the *notitiae episcopatum* is to establish when exactly such a change of status happened. For the ones named here, the entire period of exile of 1204 to 1261 remains the tentative dating for the changes in the ecclesiastical status of each site.

Two issues may be highlighted in view of Angold's and Mitsiou's different points of view, which underlie both judgments and have been taken as given without

[507] Angold, *Government in Exile*, 48-49.
[508] Mitsiou, "Versorgungsmodelle," 235-37.
[509] Beck, *Kirche und Literatur*, 148; Kazhdan, "Notitiae Episcopatuum," *ODB*, 1496.
[510] This is confimed by Preiser-Kapeller, *Der Episkopat im späten Byzanz*, for all the mentioned cities see 2, 37, 148, 338-39 and 352. He established the status of each site by comparing at the lists of the Notitiae 13 and 15.
[511] The city of Parion had seized to exist by that time. The archbishopric named Parion was united with Pegai and elevated to the rank of a metropolis: Preiser-Kapeller, *Episkopat*, 338-39.

being discussed by any of the two authors. For one, the diocesan arrangement reflected not ecclesiastical, but secular significances of sites. Especially topographical factors, that is the geographical position within the Laskarid territory, determined ecclesiastical ranks, which – bestowed by the emperor – could thus indeed be regarded as a tool in the creation of Laskarid rule. However, the question that remains to be answered is what kind of advantage resulted from the elevated status for both the city and the emperor. Second, the power in the hands of the emperor did not lead to a thorough reorganization of the overall arrangement of dioceses within the realm. It means that the general layout of western Asia Minor was not questioned or thoroughly altered under Laskarid rule. Like the route system the diocesan arrangement showed continuity from earlier Byzantine periods.

2. The patriarchate

The installation of the patriarchate early during the exile in the city of Nicaea belonged to the crucial consolidating elements of the Laskarid realm. This institution remained fixed in space throughout the Laskarid period.[512] Blemmydes elaborated on the conditions under which the patriarchate as an ecclesiastical institution had been inserted into the existing structures of the metropolis of Nicaea:

> Δυοῖν δ' ὄντοιν κλήροιν ὑφ' ἑνὶ προέδρῳ τῷ πατριάρχῃ (συντετήρητο γὰρ τῇ μητροπόλει καὶ ὁ θρόνος καὶ ὁ κλῆρος πλὴν ἰδιαιτάτου ποιμένος, καὶ τἄλλα προνόμια), τῆς τῶν πόλεων βασιλίδος τὰ πρώην ἐλπιζομένης ἀπολήψεσθαι σκῆπτρα (καὶ ἡ ἐλπὶς ὡς ἐωράκαμεν οὐ κατήσχυνεν). / There were thus two clergies under one head [proedros] the Patriarch[sic]; the diocesan throne and clergy had been respected – except for not having their own pastor – and also many of their privileges, as the queen of cities maintained the hope of regaining her former power, a hope which we have seen has not been defrauded.[513]

From the last remark of this passage it becomes clear that Blemmydes wrote this after the recapture of Constantinople; nevertheless he pointed out that – except for the patriarch as the principal of both the diocese and the patriarchate – these two units did not merge into one over the course of the exile. The reason for that was the hope from the start that the installation of the patriarchate at Nicaea constituted only a temporary

[512] This does neither exclude the necessity of patriarchs to travel, nor the possibility of conducting synods or similar events related to the patriarch outside Nicaea. The strongest hint for Nicaea as the patriarchal city constituted the act of coronation, which, as observed earlier, took place in Nicaea for all emperors during the exile.

[513] Blemmydae, *Opera*, ed. Munitiz, I.12.

solution. The appointment of a new patriarch and the coronation of Theodore I Laskaris by this patriarch immediately following solidified the beginning of Laskarid rule in Asia Minor and remained an advantage towards the two other Byzantine rivals.[514] However, this advantage was contested during the course of the exile period by the rulers of Epiros. The debate between Epiros and western Asia Minor over the step of Theodore Doukas, to appoint Demetrios Chomatenos as archbishop of Ochrid in 1216 or 1217, displayed this clearly. Prinzing examined the sources and principal outlines of conflict in detail.[515] The problem of the appointment was simple: Theodore Doukas acted seemingly as emperor, whose responsibility such a task would have been, but from Laskarid perspective the only emperor at that time was Theodore I Laskaris, and not his rival Theodore Doukas. The consequence of this appointment sparked a debate over the nature of the empire, which Prinzing attested through various correspondences. Yet, for the purpose of this study the fact that the relocation of the patriarchate and the claims of the Laskarid emperors continued to be challenged did not change one crucial element: for the Laskarid rulers and their claim to the throne of the Byzantine empire the recreation of the patriarchate constituted a reality.

It thus could be argued that due to the location of the patriarchate the denomination "empire of Nicaea" suited the realm in western Asia Minor; all the more because this Byzantine entity had been declared the defender of orthodoxy against the Latin intruders. As Angold pointed out, it was due to the initiative of monks and clergy who had stayed behind in Constantinople that Theodore I appointed a new patriarch after the death of John Kamateros in Didymoteichon in 1206. The patriarch at Nicaea remained for the exile period the spiritual leader of the Greek speaking population in Constantinople and also fulfilled the task of overseeing the church in the occupied territories.[516]

However, an emphasis on the ecclesiastical pillar of the Byzantine realm in western Asia Minor would give the impression that indeed the patriarchate marked the defining element of its existence. This can hardly be justified. Angold had elaborated on the weakness of the patriarchal versus the imperial office in the last decade before the

[514] Angold and Hendy considered it the crucial step in recreating the idea of a Byzantine power after 1204: Angold, "The city Nicaea," 34, and earlier Angold, *Church and Society*, 516; Hendy, *Catalogue of the Byzantine Coins*, 449. Similar Prinzing, "Kaisertum im Umbruch," 134.

[515] Prinzing, "Kaisertum im Umbruch," 144-52.

[516] Angold, *Church and Society*, 518-22.

sack of Constantinople.[517] From 1204 onwards the Latin power installed at Constantinople as the common enemy forged these two pillars of Byzantine identity together in their struggle for survival during the exile. However, this did not necessarily mean that the status of the patriarch versus the emperor gained in power. This becomes quite apparent when looking at the way in which Akropolites described patriarchal appointments under the Laskarids.[518] The search for suitable candidates for the patriarchal office and the appointment of these runs like a common thread through the account of Akropolites and also occurred in the autobiography of Blemmydes. From these it can be deduced that in addition to suitable patriarchs at least two were appointed that were actually unfit for the patriarchal office due to their lack of education or weak personality, one of them Maximos II, appointed in 1215:

> μετὰ γὰρ τὴν τελευτὴν τοῦ πατριάρχου Μιχαὴλ ὁ Εἰρηνικὸς Θεόδωρος τῷ πατριαρχικῷ ἐνίδρυται θρόνῳ, ὃς καὶ Κωπᾶς ὑπὸ τῶν πολλῶν ἐκαλεῖτο· μετὰ δὲ ἐνιαυτοὺς ἓξ ἐκείνου τὸν βίον ἀπολιπόντος ὁ μοναχὸς Μάξιμος εἰς τὸν πατριαρχικὸν ἀνάγεται θρόνον, θεραπεύων τὴν γυναικωνίτιδα καὶ ὑπὸ ταύτης ἀντιθεραπευόμενος· οὐδὲν γὰρ ἄλλο ἦν τὸ εἰς ταύτην ἀναβιβάσαν αὐτὸν τὴν περιωπήν. ἐπιβιοὺς δὲ μῆνας ἓξ τελευτᾷ, καὶ ὁ Μανουὴλ εἰς τὸν πατριαρχικὸν ἀνάγεται θρόνον, φιλόσοφος, ὡς ἐδόκει, ὢν καὶ ὑπὸ τῶν πολλῶν κατονομαζόμενος. / Theodore Eirenikos, also called Kopas by the people, was established on the patriarchal throne. When he left six years later, the monk Maximos was elevated to the patriarchal throne. He paid court to the women's quarters and was in turn courted by it; for it was nothing else which raised him to such eminence. Living for six months after this, he died and Manuel was elevated to the patriarchal throne; a philosopher, it seems, in deed, and so named by the people.[519]

Slightly more generous Akropolites judged the patriarch Manuel II when referring to events shortly before the death of John III Vatatzes, even though Akropolites pointed out the patriarch's lack of education and intelligence:

> στέλλει τοῦτον πρὸς τὸν πατριάρχην. ὁ Μανουὴλ ἦν τότε τὰ τῆς πατριαρχίας διιθύνων πηδάλια, ἀνὴρ εὐλαβοῦς καὶ βίου καὶ πολιτείας σεμνῆς, εἰ καὶ γυναικὶ συνεζύγη, ἄλλως δὲ οὐ πεπειραμένος γραμμάτων οὐδὲ ὧν ἀνεγίνωσκεν ἀνελίττων τὴν ἔννοιαν. / He [John III Vatatzes] sends him to the patriarch. Manuel was the steering the rudder of the patriarchate, a man of pious life and chaste behavior (even

[517] Angold, *Church and Society*, 505-06.

[518] Macrides in her analysis on the saint in early Palaiologan era pointed out that as a consequence of the way, in which Michael VIII Palaiologos treated the presumptive heir to the throne John IV Laskaris, opposition to his policy began to grow precisely in the former Laskarid territory. John III Vatatzes, John IV Laskaris and the patriarch Arsenios, who excommunicated Michael VIII Palaiologos, were venerated as saints, which expressed this opposition and the Church generally regained a powerful position during the beginning of Palaiologan rule: Macrides, "Saints and sainthood in the early Palaiologan period," in *The Byzantine Saint*, ed. Sergei Hackel (London: Fellowship of St. Alban and St. Sergius, 1981), 67-87.

[519] *Acropolitae*, ed. Heisenberg, §19; *Akropolites*, tr. Macrides, 160.

though he had been married) but, otherwise, one who had no experience of letters, nor was able to unravel the meaning of what he read.[520]

Significant among the sequence of patriarchs during the exile was a vacancy of several years in the patriarchal office, which Akropolites explained in the following:

> Ἔτυχε μὲν πρὸ καιροῦ τὸν πατριάρχην Γερμανὸν τὰ τῇδε καταλιπόντα πρὸς τὰς θείας ἀπᾶραι σκηνάς, καλῶς καὶ ὁσίως βιώσαντα καὶ καλῶς τὴν αὐτοῦ ποιμάναντα ποίμνην· ἐγένετο δὲ μετ᾽ αὐτὸν Μεθόδιός τις καλούμενος μοναχός, ἡγούμενος τῆς κατὰ Νίκαιαν Ὑακίνθου μονῆς, ἀνὴρ αὐχῶν μὲν εἰδέναι πολλά, ὀλίγων δὲ ἴδρις ὤν. ἀλλ᾽ οὗτος τρεῖς καὶ μόνους μῆνας ἐπαπολαύσας τοῦ θρόνου τετελεύτηκεν. ἐστέρετο γοῦν ἀρχιερέως ἡ ἐκκλησία. ὁ γὰρ βασιλεὺς Ἰωάννης ἐν τοῖς τοιούτοις μὴ πρόχειρος ὢν οὐκ εὐχερῶς εἶχεν ἐκ τοῦ προχείρου τὸν ἄξιον ἐφευρεῖν, ἢ μᾶλλον τὸν ἐκείνῳ ἀρέσοντα· μάλιστα γὰρ οἱ κρατοῦντες τοὺς πρὸς ἀρέσκειαν ἐν τούτοις προσίενται, ὡς ἂν μή τινας ἔχοιεν ἀντερίζοντας τοῖς βουλήμασι. παρερρύη γοῦν χρόνος συχνός, καὶ οὐκ ἦν ὁ διεξάγων τὸ ποίμνιον. / Some time earlier it happened that the patriarch Germanos left the things of this world and departed for the divine dwelling places, having lived a good and holy life and having tended his flock well. After him a certain monk called Methodios became patriarch; he was the abbot of the Hyakinthos monastery in Nicaea, a man who boasted that he knew many things but who was knowledgeable in little. But he had benefit of the throne for three months only before he died. The church was then without a bishop, for the emperor John, not being hasty in such matters, could not easily find the worthy person in a hurry, or, rather, the one who was to his liking. For above all, rulers approve in these matters those who are pleasing to them, so as not to have anyone opposing their wishes. Therefore, much time passed and there was no one administering the flock.[521]

Macrides remarked that even though Akropolites described the behavior and the interest of John III Vatatzes in quite general terms, the incident of the vacancy was based rather on a peculiar case and cannot stand as an example for the usual way of appointing patriarchs.[522] Akropolites made a similar remark on a patriarchal appointment when Theodore II Laskaris succeeded in the imperial office and searched for a suitable candidate. Many contemporaries agreed that Blemmydes, the former teacher of both Akropolites and Theodore II, would be the ideal candidate, so Theodore II asked him to accept the office of the patriarch, which Blemmydes however declined:

> οὐ μὴν ἀλλὰ καὶ ὁ βασιλεὺς αὐτὸς μαλακώτερον αὐτοῦ ἐπειρᾶτο· μᾶλλον γὰρ πρὸς βουλήσεως ἦν αὐτῷ τὴν προστασίαν μὴ καταδέξασθαι. ταπεινοτέρους γὰρ καὶ μετρίους εἶναι τὸ φρόνημα τοὺς πατριαρχεύοντας οἱ κρατοῦντες ἐθέλουσι καὶ προσπίπτειν εὐχερῶς τοῖς σφῶν αὐτῶν βουλήμασιν ὡς προστάγμασι. τοῦτο δὲ μᾶλλον οἱ ἀγροικότεροι πάσχουσιν, οὐδὲ γὰρ ἔχουσι τοῖς λόγοις θαρρεῖν· οἱ δὲ περὶ λόγους ἀκαμπέστεροι φαίνονται καὶ τοῖς ἐκείνων ὁρισμοῖς ἀντιπίπτουσιν. ὁ γοῦν

[520] *Acropolitae*, ed. Heisenberg, §51; *Akropolites*, tr. Macrides, 268.
[521] *Acropolitae*, ed. Heisenberg, §42; *Akropolites*, tr. Macrides, 223.
[522] *Akropolites*, tr. Macrides, 49 and 225 n14.

> βασιλεὺς Θεόδωρος διὰ ταῦτα μικράν τινα πεῖραν λαβὼν τοῦ ἀνδρὸς ἐφ' ἑτέρους ἐτράπετο. καὶ ἐπεὶ δυσαρεστῶν ἐτύγχανεν ἐν πολλοῖς, μοναχόν τινα εἶναι μαθὼν ἐν τῇ τῆς Ἀπολλωνιάδος λίμνῃ ὀλίγων γραμμάτων πεῖραν ἔχοντα—μόνον καὶ γὰρ ἐφήψατο τῆς γραμματικῆς παιδείας—ἀνίερον τελοῦντα καὶ Ἀρσένιον ὀνομαζόμενον, ὡς εἶχε τάχους στέλλει τοὺς αὐτὸν ἄξοντας. καὶ ὃς ἀφίκετο. ἐπεὶ δὲ τὴν ἀπὸ τῆς Νικαίας ἔξοδον ἔσπευδε, διὰ τάχους τοῖς ἀρχιερεῦσι προστάττει χειροτονῆσαι πατριάρχην αὐτὸν ὁ βασιλεύς· οἳ καὶ οὑτωσὶ διεπράξαντο, ἐν μιᾷ ἡμέρᾳ διάκονον καὶ ἱερέα καὶ πατριάρχην αὐτὸν ἐκτελέσαντες. / But the emperor himself made a feeble attempt, for he probably preferred him not to accept the charge, for rulers want those who act as patriarchs to be submissive and moderate in their thinking and to succumb easily to their wishes as if they were commands. This is what happens in the case of boorish men especially, for they are not able to be confident in learning, whereas learned men appear unyielding and oppose the emperor's decrees.
>
> And so the emperor Theodore turned to others for this reason, after he had made a small attempt with the man. But since he was dissatisfied with many, when he learned that there was a monk on Lake Apollonias who had little experience of letters (he had only reached the level of grammar education), who was unordained and named Arsenios, as quickly as he could he sent people to fetch him. And he came. Since Theodore was in a hurry to leave Nicaea, he gave order to the bishops to ordain him patriarch quickly. And they did so, in one day making him deacon, priest and patriarch.[523]

The patriarch Arsenios played a special role in the account of Akropolites, one which the narrator preferred not to reveal. Arsenios, together with George Mouzalon, one of the "favorite men" of Theodore II, was later through the last will of the emperor entrusted with the guardianship of the infant and future emperor John IV Laskaris, Theodore's son.[524] Arsenios despised Michael Palaiologos for usurping the throne, blinding and imprisoning the boy and ignoring the protest against his actions; thus, Arsenios excommunicated Michael VIII after his coronation.[525] Being sent into exile and replaced in office, in his resistance to the emperor he gained followers among the monks of Asia Minor. These, called Arsenites, caused a schism within the church that was not resolved until 1315.[526]

What can be concluded from the vacancy are two main issues: firstly, no candidate could be elected as patriarch without the consent of the emperor. Contrary to

[523] *Acropolitae*, ed. Heisenberg, §53; *Akropolites*, tr. Macrides, 277-78.

[524] For George Mouzalon see *Akropolites*, tr. Marcides, 25-27.

[525] For details of this conflict and the later development in the early Palaiologan era see Ruth Macrides, "The new Constantine and the new Constantinople – 1261?," *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 6 (1980), 13-41 especially 19-22.

[526] Alice-Mary Talbot, "Arsenites," in *ODB*, 188. See also Teresa Shawcross, "In the name of the True Emperor: Politics of Resistance after the Palaiologan Usurpation," *Byzantinoslavica* 66 (2008), 203-227, for the Arsenites especially 209.

that, the measure of excommunication spelled out by the patriarch seemed not to have the same effect on the emperor. Secondly, the Church apparently could exist without a leader for years. The impression that is created by these conclusions for the relationship between the imperial office and that of the patriarchate is that of a dominant emperor and a subordinate patriarch. This power-relationship of emperor and patriarch is in fact nothing new in the history of Byzantium, quite the contrary it seems to have been the norm, given a few exceptions as, for instance, the strong patriarch Photius in the ninth century. However, considering the relevance of religious conflicts between the various realms that emerged in the eastern Mediterranean after the collapse of the Byzantine empire, it seems useful at this point to emphasize the situation between emperor and patriarch within the Laskarid realm.

Above, the negotiations between the patriarchate at Nicaea and the papacy of Rome in 1234 have been discussed. In these emperor John III Vatatzes played an active role and was willing to make huge concessions to the papacy for regaining Constantinople. In light of this, combined with the observations of the relation between the patriarch and the emperor during the exile, it might be safe to say that the patriarch constituted no independent force in the creation of the Laskarid realm. The patriarch definitely supported the undertaking of establishing Byzantine authority in exile, but it remained of secondary degree. For the aim of this study, the following can thus be stated for the city of Nicaea: the relocation of the patriarchate certainly emphasized the site. However, to consider Nicaea as the capital of the Laskarid realm solely due to that relocation seems not justified. For it would elevate the patriarchate to a higher and stronger part of the realm than it actually was. The recreation of the patriarchate in exile proved to be a crucial advantage for the Laskarid emperors, and the patriarch embodied the supporting role of the imperial office. However, the patriarch did not constitute the leading figure for the exile.

3. Monasteries and churches as imperial foundations

In 1935 de Jerphanion published two inscriptions which he had copied in cave churches of Cappadocia that named Laskarid rulers as commissioners, one of them

dated to 1216, the other to the reign of John III Laskaris.[527] Even though the inscription only partially survived, it can be excluded that the names of Laskarid rulers appear only for dating purposes. For in the earlier dated one next to the name of Theodore I Laskaris also the exact year has been written in form of Greek letters. In the other case the commission of the painting is attributed to the empress Eirene Laskaris, the wife of John III.

Since in the thirteenth century Cappadocia belonged to the realm of the Seljuks, De Jerphanion speculated how these inscriptions were to be understood, for certainly, the presence of Theodore I Laskaris in Cappadocia was difficult to explain. The underlying but not explicitly elaborated understanding of a commissioner, who played an active part in the execution of the artwork was implied, however, not discussed. Therefore, De Jerphanion suggested a corridor through which the west coast of Asia Minor had been connected to the region of Cappadocia in inner Anatolia and thus fell under authority of the Laskarid rulers.[528] The distance between Philadelphia, named by Akropolites as frontier city towards the Seljuk border, and the region of Cappadocia amounted to roughly 700km. Given the peculiar case of these surviving inscriptions it appeared understandable to consider Laskarid power to have extended that far; yet, this hypothesis had in the following been rejected as impossible based on historical realities at that time. Scholars refused the idea of a Laskarid domain on the high plateau in such a long distance to their core region, surrounded by land occupied through Seljuk nomads.[529]

Regardless of the Seljuk authority, the appearance of Laskarid rulers in these inscriptions needs to be discussed. If they themselves cannot be regarded as active commissioners, the following possibilities remain: a Greek population continued to inhabit this part of the former empire now ruled by the Seljuk sultan. They considered themselves bound by faith as belonging to the Christian ruler across the border, while on an administrative level being subject to a Muslim sultan. Hence, they felt the need to name these rulers in inscriptions of churches they commissioned. Hopwood stated that these inscriptions "were not testimony to Byzantine geographical extent but to its

[527] Guillaume De Jerphanion, "Les inscriptions cappadociennes et l'histoire de empire grec de Nicée," *Orientalia Christiana Periodica* 1 (1935), 239-256.

[528] De Jerphanion, "Les inscriptions cappadociennes," 250-252.

[529] Charanis, "On the Asiatic frontiers of the Empire of Nicaea," *Orientalia Christiana Periodica* 13 (1947), 58-62; Angold, *Government in Exile*, 101; Hopwood, "Byzantine-Turkish frontier," 153-54.

cultural hegemony over the Christian subjects and officials of the Sultanate of Rûm".[530] According to him this mechanism could be traced throughout the centuries to come, it helped the Greek population to conserve their cultural identity in the centuries under Ottoman rule later on. It should not be forgotten that in this particular case these churches were not free standing buildings that could be spotted from afar, but spaces cut into the soft volcanic rock Cappadocia is famous for. There was a chance that they would have remained hidden for the unknowing eye, if this was necessary. This may have contributed to an open avowal on behalf of the Greek speaking population to the ruler of the neighboring hostile state entity. It is possible that the Laskarid emperors were only financially involved, so to say as financial donors of these frescoes, which were executed under the supervision of local inhabitants. Due to the incomplete state of the inscriptions it is also possible that lines, which named local people as further commissioners, did not survive.

If it can be dismissed that Laskarid rulers directly commissioned Cappadocian cave churches despite the fact that their names can be found in the donor panels, the question arises if there were churches or monasteries within their territory in the construction of which they indeed were involved.[531] Buchwald in his article on architecture in western Asia Minor during the exile period pondered the idea whether or not the Laskarid emperors created an imperial building program during their rule.[532] Buchwald listed two monasteries – together with the refoundation of the church of St. Tryphon in Nicaea – as the only three religious institutions verified today as Laskarid (re-)foundations.[533] One more that he apparently overlooked in the textual evidence was

[530] Hopwood, "Byzantine-Turkish frontier," 153.

[531] At the outset of this dissertation project part of my research would have included a separate analysis of architectural forms developed in the Laskarid period. At early stage when my interest turned to the topographical set up of this new Byzantine entitiy in western Asia Minor, I became aware of a dissertation project by Naomi Ruth Pitamber, aiming at analyzing Laskarid architecture. The project is currently ongoing titled **"***Re-Placing Byzantium: Laskarid Urban Environments and the Landscape of Loss (1204-1261)".* Thus, the focus here is strictly limited to topographical aspects and possible imperial commission of these sites.

[532] Buchwald, "Lascarid architecture," 261-296. It is still the latest comprehensive study focussing on the Laskarid period. There are several issues with Buchwald's method and conclusions that have been referred to before in this study. As there is a reassessment of Laskarid architecture within the larger frame of art history under way by Naomi Ruth Pitamber, I leave it to her to either confirm Buchwald's results or to suggest new datings for the monuments discussed by Buchwald. For the time being his results and conclusions are considered hypothetically. If he is right to establish a number of monuments that can be dated to the first half of the thriteenth century, the question for this study focuses on their location and the implications for the development within the Laskarid realm.

[533] Buchwald, "Lascarid architecture," 262-63.

the monastery of St. Anthony at Nicaea.[534] Unfortunately the remains of the two Sosandra monasteries, assumed to be on mount Sipylos, have up to now not been located, likewise St. Anthony has never been identified, and finally the identification of St. Tryphon is subject to debate, as discussed above.

Starting with the loss of these foundations, Buchwald listed eight monuments scattered in western Asia Minor on Laskarid territory, which he believed should not only be dated to the Laskarid period, but should also be considered to belong to a building program initiated by the emperors during the exile period. The list included the palace at Nymphaion, a church in Sardis, three monastic churches at and near the Latmos, recent Bafa gölü, three further churches on the island of Chios, and one more in Philadelphia.[535] Thus, the monuments he compared with one another could be divided into three regions: Nymphaion, Sardis and Philadelphia in the valley on the route from Smyrna to the high plateau, the remote holy retreat site of the Latmos, and the island of Chios. Through art historical comparison Buchwald established that these monuments showed similarities in the façade decoration, for instance the use of blind arcades. Yet, above all, the main significance he saw constituted their disparity:

> It is a dominant characteristic of our group of churches that the major architectural forms are *not* based upon a single church plan, that they do *not* follow a clear pattern of development, and that they do *not* have distinctive similarities[sic].[536]

None of these monuments can be dated firmly. Only the palace at Nymphaion could on the basis of historical narratives be linked with imperial presence and use of the building.[537] Buchwald established similarities in style and quality between the palace at Nymphaion, the church at Sardis and the one at Philadelphia, and suggested that these represented the style of the imperial court, not the least since they were executed in vicinity to one another. The striking aspect here would not only be the vicinity, but also the fact that these churches were situated in rather larger and important settlements, as opposed to Latmos especially. So if Buchwald's observations are correct, it seems that in combination with the monuments that survived only through written testimony, Laskarid commissions of churches or monasteries did focus on

[534] Janin located the monastery within the walls of Nicaea: Raymond Janin, *Les eglises et les monastères des grands centres Byzantins* (Paris: Institut Francais d'Études Byzantines, 1975), 111.

[535] Unfortunately, Buchwald provided no information as to the creation of this list. It remains unclear what categories were the basis of these monuments he chose to analyze.

[536] Buchwald, "Lascarid Architecture," 280.

[537] Interestingly, one of the churches of the Latmos housed Blemmydes for a short period. See Blemmydae, *Opera*, ed. Munitiz, I.36; Peschlow-Bindokat, *Herakleia am Latmos*, 191-92.

significant sites within their core territory in western Asia Minor.[538] Once again, this statement can only be made under the premise that a revision of Buchwald's results will not lead to different observations.

Buchwald attributed peculiarities of the monuments also to taste and commission of local tradition or patrons.[539] This would imply that neither an imperial workshop executed the building, nor did the imperial family commission it, but that the monument was a result of local initiative.

For centuries, in some parts since the beginning of Christianity, monastic centers emerged in western Asia Minor as in other parts of the Byzantine empire. During the relatively prosperous and peaceful period of Laskarid rule these monastic centers were able to be re-inhabited and grow again. The area of the Latmos constituted one of these centers. First examined by Theodor Wiegand at the beginning of the twentieth century, the Latmos has been surveyed each year since the 1980s. Situated south of the river valleys of the Hermos, Cayster and Maeander it would have been within reach of the court to bestow the area with new foundations. To strengthen the significance of this or another monastic center in the realm, it would have been possible to place the imperial Sosandra-foundation in one of them; yet as it will be shown below, this was not in the interest of the imperial court.

4. Imperial burials

In his examination of the fourteenth-century encomion on John III Vatatzes, Heisenberg analyzed the references in the text regarding the monastic foundation by John III Vatatzes called Sosandra. [540] This monastery played an important part as the imperial resting place for John III and also his successor, his son Theodore II Laskaris. Heisenberg established that in fact two monasteries existed within the district, later on the bishopric called Sosandra, one founded by John III Vatatzes in the first decade of his reign, the other founded as a nunnery soon after by the empress Eirene, where she was subsequently buried. As stated before, none of these has been located.

[538] Needless to say, the art production during the period of exile in western Asia Minor is still a desideratum in recent scholarship. Thus, the results here cannot be understood in any other way than preliminary and hypothetical.

[539] Buchwald, "Lascarid architecture," 285, 286 and 288.

[540] Heisenberg, "Kaiser Johannes Batatzes der Barmherzige," 166-171.

The creation of a burial place at Sosandra was a step contrary to earlier customs that will be elaborated below. The significance of the Sosandra complex for the understanding of the topographical layout in the Laskarid realm has to be seen in context and will be highlighted in the following.

Two imperial burial places existed during the exile, the first one being the Hyakinthos monastery at Nicaea. It has been shown above that Theodore I Laskaris confined his father-in-law and predecessor in the imperial office, Alexios III Angelos, to the Hyakinthos monastery after the battle of Antioch-at-the-Maeander in 1211.[541] The monastery, first used as a prison for the deposed emperor, soon served as the prisoner's burial place as well, since Alexios III died shortly afterwards in captivity. Apparently another relative of Alexios III named Manuel may have been buried there in 1211, too.[542] The empress Anna, wife of Theodore I Laskaris and daughter of Alexios III, was laid to rest there next to her father, too. Akropolites mentioned her death at some point between the death of her father and that of her husband, but added no information as to when she had passed away.[543] When Theodore I Laskaris died in November of 1221, he also found his eternal resting place at the Hyakinthos monastery at Nicaea.[544]

The fact that Theodore I Laskaris was at the time of the sack of Constantinople the son-in-law of the emperor Alexios III allowed him to claim from this position the succession to the imperial throne after his installation in Asia Minor. Even though Theodore I fought against and imprisoned Alexios III in 1211, it was to his connection with Alexis that Theodore owed his imperial title. To this fits the remark of Akropolites that, despite the imprisonment, Theodore I treated his father-in-law with respect.[545] Choosing therefore his own eternal resting place next to the former Byzantine emperor and the latter's relatives emphasized the lineage of Theodore's succession to the throne.

From these burials dated from 1211 to 1221 it can safely be stated that the Hyakinthos monastery had been chosen to serve as the imperial burial site in the early days of the exile. With this decision to employ a monastic site as the spot of the family grave of the ruling dynasty Theodore I followed a pattern that had developed at the beginning of the eleventh century. A monastery as imperial burial site had been the new

[541] *Acropolitae*, ed. Heisenberg, §10.
[542] J.-L. van Dieten, "Manuel Prinkips †17. 06. 6719 (1211) Welcher Manuel in welcher Kirche zu Nikaia?" *BZ* 78 (1985), 63-91.
[543] *Acropolitae*, ed. Heisenberg, §15.
[544] *Acropolitae*, ed. Heisenberg, §18.
[545] *Acropolitae*, ed. Heisenberg, §10.

setting since the traditional resting place for the emperors from the time of Constantine the Great, the church of the Holy Apostles in Constantinople, had run out of space. The first dynastic burial site outside the Holy Apostles seems to have been the Myrelaion, a chapel established by Romanos I Lekapenos in the tenth century.[546]

Two further famous examples of these kinds of dynastic burial sites were the Pantokrator monastery in the Komnenian period and the Lips monastery in the early Palaiologan period in Constantinople.[547] It is striking that both these monasteries were located within the city proper in proximity to the church of the Holy Apostles. Thus, even if imperial families erected separate burial places, their intentional vicinity to the traditional burial site and to each other might have been meaningful and of symbolic character.[548] It should also be noted that this spatial continuity was to bridge the time of the exile, meaning the early Palaiologan policy of locating imperial burials within the city of Constantinople drew on the custom set before 1204. However, the burial site of the Lekapenos dynasty, the Myrelaion, located in a different neighborhood of Constantinople, suggests that perhaps more than just one reason led to the abandonment of the Holy Apostles as imperial burial site. It seems to be the only site that fell out of alignment with tradition before the eleventh century.[549]

The Hyakinthos monastery was situated within the city walls of Nicaea. The church of the monastery has also been suggested to have served as the Patriarchal church of the exile period.[550] The monastery constituted a prominent spot within that

---

[546] Glanville Downey, "The tombs of the Byzantine emperors at the Church of the Holy Apostles in Constantinople," *The Journal of Hellenic Studies* 79 (1959), 27-51.

[547] The Pantokrator monastery in Constantinople had been founded by John II Komnenos and was subsequently used as a burial site, it housed the burials of John II and his wife, also his son and successor Manuel I Komnenos and his first wife Bertha von Sulzbach: Robert Ousterhout, *Master Builders of Byzantium* (Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press, 1999), 120-122. The other famous example, the Lips monastery, had been founded already in 907; empress Theodora, wife of Michael VIII Palaiologos, added the church of St. John the Baptist as a mausoleum for herself and other family members after the reconquest of the city: Theodore Macridy, "The monastery of Lips and the Burials of the Palaeologi," *DOP* 18 (1964), 253-277; for the church of St. John the Baptist see especially 265-67. Yet, Teresa Shawcross had suggested that Michael VIII initially intended another monastery as the dynastic mausoleum: Shawcross, "In the name of the True Emperor: Politics of Resistance after the Palaiologan Usurpation," 220-221.

[548] Two emperors of the eleventh and twelfth century, Constantine IX Monomachos and Alexios I Komnenos, were buried at the monastery St. George of the Mangana in vicinity to the Great Palace. Their burials are to be distinguished from dynastic burial sites of imperial families, since they were not accompanied by any other members of their family.

[549] Cecil L. Striker, *The Myrelaion (Bodrum Camii) in Istanbul* (Princeton : Princeton University Press, 1981).

[550] It has been referred to in the case study on Nicaea. For a claim of the Hyakinthos as the patriarchal church see Foss, *Nicaea*, 110-11. For the rejection of his arguments see Angold, "The city

city, from where Theodore I Laskaris had established his rule in Asia Minor. Therefore, his choice to set up a dynastic burial place here that included his predecessor was of strong symbolic character and should have established the custom during the exile.

Also Theodore's successor to the imperial throne, John III Vatatzes, had been made presumptive heir based on his relation as son-in-law to the emperor. Through Akropolites' account it became clear that his succession to the throne had been challenged by some of Theodore's brothers at the outset of John's reign.[551] Another full-scale conspiracy followed soon after and created the impression that John's early reign stood on shaky ground. It is with this background that John's decision to create a new imperial burial site seems all the more a surprising move. The monasteries of Sosandra were located roughly 400km away from Nicaea. Whether or not from the start he intended to set up this monastery as a new imperial burial site, is not known. What is clear, however, is that his remains were buried in the monastery of Sosandra in 1254.[552] His son Theodore, whom he named after his father-in-law and first emperor in exile, a son who then later decided to take his maternal family name Laskaris, was also buried at Sosandra, despite the close affiliation to the legacy of his grandfather, even if in name only.[553] At the time of the death of Theodore II Laskaris Akropolites clearly stated that both emperors were buried there:

> ὁ μὲν οὖν νεκρὸς αὐτοῦ ἐν τῇ τῶν Σωσάνδρων ἀπεκομίσθη μονῇ καὶ ἐτάφη ἐκεῖσε, ὅπου καὶ ὁ βασιλεὺς καὶ πατὴρ αὐτοῦ. / His corpse was taken to the monastery of Sosandra and was buried there, where the emperor, his father, also lay.[554]

Nicaea," 36-37. No definite proof of either argumentation could be mobilized, the debate thus rests on individual judgement. The decisive factor for Foss constituted the existence of galleries, required for the coronation act, in the church of the Hyakinthos monastery. Angold argued that the act of raising the new emperor on a shield made the galleries obsolete for the coronation ceremony. However, Akropolites who described this rite, clearly stated that after Theodore II Laskaris had buried his father, he was raised on a shield and acclaimed emperor by the people surrounding him, before he left Nymphaion and proceeded to Philadelphia. Only after the visit of that city he then went to Nicaea, where after electing a new patriarch he then got crowned: *Acropolitae*, ed. Heisenberg, §53. Thus, the applied custom of raising the emperor on a shield remained at least for the period of the exile an act separate in space and time from the coronation ceremony.

[551] *Acropolitae*, ed. Heisenberg, §22. Macrides added in her commentary that Nikephoros Gregoras had been more elaborate on this incident: *Akropolites*, tr. Macrides, 167. Cf. also *Akropolites*, tr. Macrides, 160.

[552] The fourteenth century vita reported the transportation of his body to the safer location of Magnesia in the wake of the approaching Turkish tribes: Heisenberg, "Kaiser Johannes Batatzes der Barmherzige," 171.

[553] Hendy, *Catalogue of the Byzantine Coins*, 467 and 516.

[554] *Acropolitae*, ed. Heisenberg, §74; *Akropolites*, tr. Macrides, 336.

Thus, a new eternal resting place of the Laskarid dynasty had been founded, far away from the former. Instead of choosing another monastery in Nicaea, John III Vatatzes abandoned the idea of location continuity altogether. Remarkably as well was the fact that the monastery of Sosandra was not founded next to his residence at Nymphaion or within the boundaries of another significant city, but in the massif of the Sipylos.[555] The vicinity of Nymphaion and Magnesia cannot be denied, but the independence of the monastic foundations from the surrounding focal points of the realm should be stressed as well. For despite its proximity to Magnesia, both sites constituted independent bishoprics, thus, even if the ruins have so far not been located, a certain distance between the monastic site and the city of Magnesia should be assumed.[556] Sosandra and Magnesia were not identical places.

The other main difference between Hyakinthos and Sosandra – apart from the location – was the fact that the Hyakinthos monastery had already existed for several hundred years, whereas the two monastic foundations of Sosandra were a direct result of the exile and the set up of Laskarid rule in Asia Minor. Equally, a deliberate act of promoting a different region within the Laskarid realm on behalf of John III Vatatzes can be grasped.

John III Vatatzes succeeded Theodore I Laskaris in the imperial office on account of his status as son-in-law and his rule was contested in the beginning. Despite this he chose to establish a new imperial burial place for himself and his family, away from the city of Nicaea. In this move, more apparent than in other actions, a change in the topographical layout of the Laskarid realm can be observed. If Nicaea had been built up by Theodore I Laskaris as an imperial center during exile, this promotion would have ended with John. John III paid little attention to Nicaea when manifesting his reign in the territory he ruled. It seemed that John III did not regard it a crucial factor to strengthen the dynastic lineage and his own succession to the throne symbolically by placing his own grave and that of his family near to that of his predecessor.

This aspect appears all the more crucial, since the comparison with Constantinople and imperial burials before 1204 and after 1261 show two things: the location of imperial burials was regarded as symbolically meaningful by contemporaries, and the meaning it had did not vanish into oblivion during the exile.

[555] Buchwald, "Lascarid architecture," 263.
[556] Heisenberg, "Kaiser Johannes Batatzes der Barmherzige," 168.

Thus, the decision to establish an imperial burial in the massif of the Sipylos must be understood as a conscious move of disregard for this custom.

E. Economic centers

The economic history of the Laskarid realm has been reviewed from various angles by studies published in recent years.[557] Groundbreaking publications however remain those by Hélène Ahrweiler on Smyrna (1967) and Michael Angold on the social and economic history of the Laskarid realm (1975).[558] The purpose of this subchapter is to summarize the main outlines of the current state of research. Aspects are highlighted that should be seen in connection with the topography of the Laskarid territory and deal with the question of economic centers in the realm.

1. Lembiotissa

One factor that determined all investigations focused on economy or social developments in thirteenth century Byzantine Asia Minor was the survival of a collection of legal documents from the monastery of Lembiotissa situated between Smyrna and Nymphaion.[559] The monastery itself was destroyed soon after the conquest by the Turks and its actual site remains unknown. The cartulary containing about 200 documents, now housed in Vienna, has become available to scholars through the collections of Miklosich-Müller and Dölger.[560] These documents were first studied thoroughly by Ahrweiler and allow a view on the organization and conditions of daily life of the peasant population in the area. However, as Angeliki Laiou remarked

[557] Various articles either focus on Asia Minor in the thirteenth century or cover it partially within the collected volume of the *Economic History of Byzantium, From the seventh to the fifteenth century*, ed. Angeliki Laiou, Dumbarton Oaks Studies 39, Washington D.C., Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 2002. Most prominent for this study are the following contributions: Angeliki Laiou, "The agrarian economy, thirteenth-fifteenth centuries," 311-375; Jacques Lefort, "The rural economy, seventh-twelfth centuries," 231-314; Klaus-Peter Matschke, "The late Byzantine urban economy," 463-495. Two more articles on aspects of Laskarid economy are available in *Handelsgüter und Verkehrswege, Aspekte der Warenversorgung im östlichen Mittelmeerraum (4. Bis 15. Jahrhundert)*, ed. Edwald Kieslinger, Johannes Koder and Andreas Külzer (Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2010). One by Ekaterini Mitsiou, "Versorgungsmodelle im Nikäischen Kaiserreich," 223-240, deals with the distribution of good supplies and market towns under Laskarid rule; the article of Klaus-Peter Matschke, "Rechtliche und administrative Organisation der Warenversorgung im byzantinischen Raum: Die Strukturen des 13. bis 15.Jahrhunderts," 205-221, sheds light on the legal and practical aspects of good supplies.

[558] Hélène Ahrweiler "L'histoire et la géographie de la région de Smyrne"; Angold, *Government in Exile*.

[559] Alice-Mary Talbot, Alexander Kazhdan, "Lembiotissa," *ODB*, 1204.

[560] *Acta et diplomata Graeca medii aevi sacra et profana*, coll. and ed. Franz Miklosich and Joseph Müller, 6 vols., (Vienna: Carolus Gerold, 1860-1890); Franz Dölger, *Regesten der Kaiserurkunden des oströmischen Reiches von 565-1453*, Corpus der griechischen Urkunden des Mittelalters und der neueren Zeit, Reihe A, Abt.1, 5 vols., (Munich Berlin: R. Oldenbourg, 1924-1965).

recently, for solid quantitative analysis the documents have a limited reach.[561] Within these documents the monastery emerged as the landowner of various farmsteads in villages and sometimes whole estates, also as the authority to whom the *paroikoi*, the dependent peasants, had to pay their taxes. John III Vatatzes apparently rebuilt Lembiotissa early during his reign and granted the monastery land as financial support.[562]

2. Agrarian economy

Michael Angold judged early on that two factors determined the history of the Laskarid realm, of which the agrarian economy was one.[563] In fact, the survival of Laskarid rule in western Asia Minor for almost six decades cannot be explained without placing its economic prosperity and the resulting autarky from foreign powers in the center. Laiou argued that this could only be achieved with an increase of the population density in the countryside, of which however little is known for the exile period.[564] Trying to explain the apparent prosperity under Laskarid rule, she also mentioned hints in the sources that point to significant land clearance and recultivation in western Asia Minor during the reign of John III Vatatzes.[565]

Recently Mitsiou verified that as the main driving force behind this agricultural prosperity stood an imperial initiative to enforce agricultural production and autarky already on local level. For this statement she mobilized manifold evidence. For one, there were written testimonies apart from Akropolites, first his continuator Theodore Skoutariotes. He in particular expanded the résumé on the reign of John III Vatatzes regarding the care for his subjects.[566] Skoutariotes elaborated in many words how John

[561] Angeliki E. Laiou, "The Agrarian Economy, Thirteenth-Fifteenth Centuries," *The Economic History of Byzantium from the Seventh through the Fifteenth Century*, vol. 1, ed. Angeliki E. Laiou, Dumbarton Oaks Studies 39 (Washington: Dumbarton Oaks, 2002), 311-376, here 314.

[562] Laiou, "The agrarian economy," 320.

[563] Angold, *Government in Exile*, 97.

[564] Laiou, "The agrarian economy," 312.

[565] Laiou, "The agrarian economy," 314.

[566] *Scutariota*, ed. Heisenberg, Addidamenta no.33: τὸ δὲ καὶ χωρία ἀναθεῖναι, ὡς ἂν τοὺς ἐκεῖθεν καρποὺς εἰσκομίζεσθαι καὶ εἰς σιτοβολῶνας εἴτουν ὡρεῖα ἐνθησαυρίζεσθαι εἰς χιλιάδας καὶ μυριάδας μεδίμνων ἀριθμουμένους οὐ κριθῆς μόνον καὶ σίτου, ἀλλὰ καὶ τῶν ἄλλων σπορίμων καὶ τῶν χρειωδῶν ἄλλως ἐν ἀφορίας καὶ ἐνδείας καιρῷ, φυλαττόμενα καὶ τοῖς μὴ ἔχουσι τὸ ἐνδέον ἀναπληροῦντα βασιλικῇ πλουσίᾳ χειρί, τίνος ἔργον ἄλλου ἢ τοῦ αὐτοκράτορος τούτου κατόρθωμα, ἐφ' ᾧ καὶ ἦν ὁρᾶν οἴκους ὅλους πεπληρωμένους κατὰ τὸ εἰρημένον, ἀπὸ σίτου, οἴνου τε καὶ ἐλαίου καὶ τῶν ἄλλων ἐκ γῆς χρειωδῶν, ἀλλὰ καὶ τοὺς τῶν πόλεων πύργους σίτῳ καὶ κριθῇ καὶ κέγχρου σπέρματι βρίθοντας; ἐν δὲ τῇ κατὰ Λυδίαν Μαγνησίᾳ, ὅπου καὶ τὰ πλείω τῶν χρημάτων ἀπέθετο, τί τίς ἂν

III founded new estates, from where he not only received large yield of various crops and fruits, but he also took care of its storage for bad times. In this context Skoutariotes paid special notice to Magnesia at the Sipylos, where apart from the needs of daily life also exotic and luxurious foreign products could be purchased. This passage had led to the label of Magnesia as the economic center of the Laskarid realm.[567]

Connected to this Vatatzes seemed to have applied also a successful settlement policy along the eastern frontier zone, the border zone towards the Seljuks. No reference on settlement policy under Laskarid rule can be found in contemporary texts, but references of the reversal of those half a century later. Bartusis laid out in detail how Michael VIII Palaiologos revoked the status and tasks of a part of the population settled on the high plateau, reported through Pachymeres.[568] These people had under Laskarid rule been "frontier militiamen", exempted from taxes and endowed with lands, their task was to keep the frontier zone safe. As they proved to be faithful to the Laskarid dynasty after the usurpation of Michael VIII and even initiated a revolt against him, these frontier men constituted a problem for Michael VIII. Additionally more soldiers were needed for campaigns to the west; both issues led to the abolishment from tax exemption, reduction of their land properties and a cash payment for their services in campaigns.[569] From this the steps of Laskarid policy in this region can be deduced: men skilled in arms had been settled as farmers on state property, who – in return for tax-exemption – secured the region from Seljuk raids.

Mitsiou examined another valuable reference from Pachymeres regarding autarky. Here Pachymeres pointed even more in the direction of purposely enforced autarky by elaborating how the safeguard of the frontier zone was organized on

---

ἐζήτησεν ἀφ' ὧν ἄνθρωποι χρῄζομεν, καὶ οὐχ εὑρὼν ἐκληρώσατο τὴν ἀπόλαυσιν, οὐ τῶν ἐν τοῖς ἡμετέροις τόποις εὑρισκομένων ἀλλὰ καὶ ὅσα ἐνιαχοῦ τῆς οἰκουμένης, κατ' Αἴγυπτόν φημι καὶ Ἰνδίαν καὶ ἀλλαχοῦ;

[567] Hendy, *Monetary Economy*, 443-47; Foss, "Fortifications in Lydia," 306-07.

[568] Mark Bartusis, *The Late Byzantine Army 1204-1453 – arms and society* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1992), 54-57.

[569] Bartusis, *Byzantine Army*, 55. As a result of these measures, the attachment of the militia to their land property shrank and with advancing Seljuk attacks, many fled the region or turned to those who promised better payment. Bartusis pointed out that Pachymeres reported on the steps of Michael VIIIs policies decades after their initiation and thus, as he had witnessed the result – the loss of western Asia Minor to the Seljuks – he reported with bitterness. In defense of Michael VIII Bartusis stated that for one, revolts in western Asia Minor against Michael VIII stopped and at the same time he led successful campaigns in Europe: 57.

practical level.[570] He stated that John III Vatatzes cared for the provision of newly or re-built fortifications by placing villages near them, which were obliged to deliver the necessary goods to the caretakers of the defense line.[571] Here the emperor is prominently portrayed as the initiator who provided the arrangements for self-sufficiency.

3. Economic autarky

Mitsiou tried to verify Pachymeres' remark within the available source material of the given period. Thus, she not only looked at the general economic situation under Laskarid rule, but examined this in relation to population and settlement patterns. Mitsiou applied two methods to the given period: the location theory of J. H. von Thünen and the central place theory of Walter Christaller. Von Thünen focused on self-sufficiency of settlements and thus, based on this principle he examined a site always in connection with its surrounding agricultural land use and access to trade routes. Mitsiou accordingly applied this research method to several villages and also to the city of Nicaea and pointed out that these were more or less supplying themselves with the necessary goods.[572] To reach conclusions regarding self-sufficiency for the Laskarid territory she then applied Christaller's theory on the interdependence of settlements and the provision of the realm as a whole. Christaller had labeled towns accordingly as central, intermediate and standard market towns (CMTs, IMTs, SMTs) and developed a pattern within a territorial unit based on their hierarchical status, the distances between them and access of these, which would be necessary to ensure sufficient coverage for

[570] See for this excellent observation of the interplay between fortifications and settlements Mitsiou, "Versorgungsmodelle," 230.

[571] *Pachymeres*, ed. Failler, I. 99:Ἐς τόσον καὶ γὰρ ὁ μὲν Ἰωάννης προμηθευτικῶς τοῖς ἅπασιν εἶχεν ὥστε καί, ἰδίαν πρόνοιαν τῆς βασιλικῆς ἐξουσίας τὰ λεγόμενα ζευγηλατεῖα ἡγούμενος, παρ' ἕκαστον κάστρον καὶ φρούριον κώμας ἐπὶ τούτοις καθίστη, ἐφ' ᾧπερ ἐκ τῆς ἐκείνων ἐπικαρπίας καὶ εἰσφορᾶς σιταρκοῖτο μὲν καὶ τὸ παρακείμενον φρούριον, ἔχοι δέ γε καὶ ὁ κρατῶν ἐντεῦθεν πολλοῖς ἢ καὶ πᾶσιν ἐξαντλεῖν τὰς τῆς εὐεργεσίας ἀμάρας.

[572] It should however be noted that she applied two textual sources of a very different nature to this analysis. For the region of Nicaea the only textual evidence for its agricultural productivity were the encomia of Theodore II and Theodore Metochitis, the latter dated to the late thirteenth century. The villages she discussed on the other hand were situated in vicinity to Smyrna and named in the cartulary of the monastery Lembiotissa. These texts, the former rhetorical exercises, the latter legal agreements, are not on the same level of expressiveness.

the entire population.[573] Mitsiou applied those categories to the Laskarid territory and remarked that under these special circumstances three CMTs had additionally the function of the capital at some point during the exile:

> Am Anfang vereinigte Nikaia in sich alle zu einer Hauptstadt gehörenden Funktionen. Später aber wanderte das Zentrum nach Süden, nach Nymphaion und Magnesia am Sipylon. […] In der Folge blieb Nikaia vorwiegend als kirchliches Zentrum aktiv, Nymphaion wurde das administrative und Magnesia das finanzielle Zentrum.

As she had stated previously, for her Magnesia should be considered the economic capital because of the location of the imperial treasury there.[574] However, in the following Mitsiou delivered no details on the nature of these three centers, nothing was said about the access or prosperity of Magnesia, nor in what way Nymphaion fulfilled any administrative function. Instead the focus moved to Smyrna as metropolis and provincial capital. Basis for the emphasis on and deeper analysis of Smyrna were the studies of Ahrweiler and ultimately the documents of the monastery Lembiotissa. Thus, rephrasing the statement of Laiou from above: the area of Smyrna is due to the available source material the only one where quantitative results on the economic situation during the exile period can possibly be gathered. Based on the lack of further sources for the exile period a case study on Smyrna was the only one feasible. Mitsiou mainly developed on the distances between dependent villages and the city of Smyrna on one hand, and on those of the other SMTs and Smyrna as CMT on the other. As SMTs she considered the neighboring bishoprics.[575] She measured a distance of roughly 15km to each SMT and thus recognized a quite dense population for the area around Smyrna.[576] Subsequently she compared distances between other metropoleis and their

[573] Walter Christaller, *Die zentralen Orte in Süddeutschland, Eine ökonomisch-geographische Untersuchung über die Gesetzmäßigkeit der Verbreitung und Entwicklung der Siedlungen mit städtischen Funktionen* (Jena: Gustav Fischer, 1933).

[574] Mitsiou, "Versorgungsmodelle," 227 n37.

[575] On one hand she was right to do so. The central place theory is not only focused on the economic strength of a settlement, but also on its function as an administrative head in the area. However, little is known about certain bishoprics during this period. Sosandra as an example is solely known for its monastery founded by John III Vatatzes. Nothing is known about any settlement occupying the same spot.

[576] Her measurements were based on the linear distance between two spots on a given map, cf. Mitsiou,"Versorgungsmodelle," 236 and Abb. 5. As for the central place theory the accessibility and time, which each peasant needed to reach the nearest market town, is a crucial factor in this model, it would have been vital not to measure the linear distance, but the actual distance traveled on routes. As described in the introduction of this study, the area in western Asia Minor is characterized by its mountain chains that are stretching in east-west direction and thus considerably prolong certain movements through the region. To give an example, Mitsiou set the distance between Magnesia and Nymphaion with 20km,

bishoprics in the realm, which had been partially reorganized after 1204, and noted differences – most prominently the number of SMTs in a given province varied and the spacing of each SMT to their metropoleis were longer.[577] As a result, Mitsiou concluded that the region surrounding Smyrna – the river valley of the Hermos, Meander and Cayster - was the one with the highest population density and consequently the economic hub in the Laskarid territory.[578]

She demonstrated that indeed a purposeful move by the imperial court can be detected behind the successful maintenance in the realm, as the mentioned passages of Skoutariotes and Pachymeres presented to their audience. But what is the outcome for a topographical analysis of the Laskarid realm, where does one end up in search for an economic center? If agricultural production and self-sufficiency was the achieved economic aim of Laskarid rule during the exile, then perhaps the question of economic centers should rather focus on regions than on cities. Thus, to propose here a different view on the economy under Laskarid rule: the river valleys in western Asia Minor and the fruitful plain along the Sea of Marmara constituted the economic hubs of the Laskarid realm. Klaus-Peter Matschke pointed out that the character of the city during the Late Byzantine period, besides the one of a market town, also "had many elements of a large village".[579] He continued to elaborate that life in cities was at that time strongly influenced by, if not dependent on, their agricultural surroundings. Many citizens were engaged in agricultural activities, indeed not a few of them were in fact peasants.

4. Magnesia as central market town

Mitsiou categorized Magnesia as a central market town and labeled the city as the economic center based on the fact that the imperial treasury was located there.[580] Yet, apart from the location of the treasury and the remark of Skoutariotes on the existence of a larger market at Magnesia, not much is known about the economic

---

but she did not take into account Mount Sipylos, which made the linear distance obsolete. By circling Mount Sipylos the distance would be roughly 50km, more than twice the linear distance.

[577] Mitsiou, "Versorgungsmodelle," 236-37.

[578] Mitsiou, "Versorgungsmodelle," 235-36.

[579] Matschke, "Urban economy," 466. His article focused mainly on the two largest Byzantine cities, Constantinople and Thessalonike, in the period following 1261, but many observations are valid for all major and minor cities on the territory of the former empire.

[580] Mitsiou, "Versorgungsmodelle," 233.

strength of the city. Smyrna as metropolis in the vicinity and based on the evidence deriving from the Lembiotissa monastery remained under economic aspects the only tangible example; Smyrna and Magnesia both belonged to the region that was considered the hub of the economy in the Laskarid realm. As this was the area where a lot of taxes could be collected, it seems plausible to deposit them in the vicinity. At the same time it seems plausible to locate the treasury at the most defensible site also. Magnesia was situated in close distance to Smyrna, but whereas Smyrna was a harbor city, Magnesia was surrounded by mountains. The reason, as previously proposed, for which the imperial treasury was housed in Magnesia, may thus have been safety. Smyrna, equally a center in the economically prosperous region, lay at the open sea and was perhaps considered more vulnerable to foreign encroachment. Therefore, the classifications of Nymphaion and Magnesia as administrative and economic-financial capitals necessarily remain vague at best. Instead of splitting the functions of a capital and applying these to several sites, it may thus be of more clarity to state that the strength of the economy lay in its agriculture on one hand, and in the careful management of its yield on the other. Magnesia provided the necessary facilities to become a central market town in the richest region of the Laskarid realm. Magnesia did not have an influence on the economy as a driving force. Rather, wealth in form of agricultural goods were produced around it and were carried into the city. Its vicinity to the Seljuk border and access to goods from exotic places, as Skoutariotes reported, turned it into the "golden Magnesia" Theodore II referred to.[581] Magnesia may however only stand for a realm whose agriculture constituted its main economic strength.

[581] *Lascaris Epistulae*, ed. Festa, 98, line 264-65.

F. Residential preferences of the emperors during the exile

It has been shown through a number of selected case studies within the Laskarid realm that emperors shared common habits during the exile. For instance, emperors spent the winter season preferably at Nymphaion, where they also celebrated Easter. At the same time, all emperors during the exile got crowned as emperor by the patriarch at Nicaea. However, at the same time a closer look at each of the emperors may reveal unique preferences regarding residential habits. The concept of itinerant rulership does not prevent rulers from selecting one residence as their favorite one and using it more often than all others. Quite the contrary, one of the main characteristics of itinerant rulership may in fact be that each ruler chooses a main residence, the particularity here lying more in the implied option that it is not necessarily the same his predecessor preferred. The system of residences remains a flexible one over generations when itinerant rulership is applied. The question thus will be whether this was indeed the case in the Laskarid realm.

In the particular case of the exile period in western Asia Minor after 1204 decentralization and the origin of itinerant rulership – if indeed it was the applied practice of rule – started from an unusual situation. Whereas in the regular case a center would crystallize from itinerant rulership after centuries of practice, here on the contrary the sudden loss of this center had triggered the implementation.[582] So the question may be raised whether the first reaction to the loss of Constantinople was indeed the concentration on an alternative center that was then, during the course of events, given up and for practical reasons exchanged for either a decentralized approach to the newly created realm, or another center somewhere else.

Whether or not it is possible to assign different preferences of residences to each emperor during the exile will be in the focus of the following subchapter. It should be said from the outset that two intertwined factors may prohibit a sufficient answer. It is for one the previously mentioned lack of inside information for the first decades of the exile period in western Asia Minor, and secondly the imbalance of years of reign for the emperors during this time spent on the throne. Focusing on the latter, it would be easier

[582] Klaus Neumann,"Was ist eine Residenz," Residenzenforschung 1, 1990; Paul Magdalino, "Byzantium=Constantinople," here 43-44.

to extract a preferred residence when an emperor was ruling for a considerable amount of time. Thus, the reigns of Theodore I Laskaris and John III Vatatzes are adequate in length in order to investigate how they tailored the emerging state and what adjustments they may have made as time progressed. The short reign of Theodore II Laskaris on the other hand is difficult to judge simply because not enough time passed in which he would have been able to develop a detectable habit, nor was there sufficient time to make basic changes to the meanwhile established set up of the realm. Similarly short was the reign of Michael VIII Palaiologos, if one considers only the first three years which he spent in exile.[583] This unevenness needs to be kept in mind when investigating how the answer to the loss of Constantinople was formed in exile in Asia Minor.

1. Theodore I Laskaris

Hendy was the first to raise doubts about the common allocation of Theodore I to the city of Nicaea. Not rejecting the idea entirely, Hendy attested a shift from Nicaea to Nymphaion, as implied by Blemmydes, but suggested that the shift took place already during the reign of Theodore I Laskaris. Hendy based his judgment on the absence of Theodore I from Nicaea for a longer time in between 1212 and 1216, which he spent in the south of the realm and prevented him from appointing a new patriarch.[584]

From the study of sites in the previous part of this analysis it became clear that the region of Lampsakos was under control of the Latins from 1214 onwards until the peace agreement in the early reign of John III Vatatzes, dated to 1223. Thus, the Laskarid territory for the second half of Theodore I Laskaris' reign comprised more or less two separate parts in Asia Minor – the region around Nicaea, and the river valleys around Smyrna. For keeping control over both, the emperor's presence in both parts constituted a crucial factor. Traveling and exercising immediate rule was without alternative, otherwise the danger might have been that the Seljuk power would advance again towards a Laskarid territory that at that time had not yet been rebuilt and strengthened against hostile invasion. On top of that before and for some time after the

[583] His reign lasted until 1282, but clearly after the reconquest of Constantinople only three years after his usurpation of the throne he put all effort in the restoration of the regained capital and made it once again the center of the Byzantine empire, which is beyond the scope of this study. His reign likewise is valuable for the impact the Laskarid set up of the realm had for the early Palaiologan period, which is also not in the focus here. For Michael's efforts see Alice-Mary Talbot, "The Restoration of Constantinople under Michael VIII," *DOP* 47 (1993), 243-261.

[584] Hendy, *Monetary Economy*, 444-445.

sack of Constantinople in 1204 members of the local elite had challenged the very idea of imperial authority in western Asia Minor by establishing themselves as local lords.[585] Therefore, to suggest a hypothesis at this point: during this period Nymphaion might not have been so much a resting place during winter, as a secure base from where to oversee and organize the defense line against inner and outer enemies. The early date of the inscription at Smyrna would support a reconstruction phase that had been initiated already during the reign of Theodore I Laskaris and was only completed by John III Vatatzes.

Theodore I Laskaris certainly understood the significance of the coastal areas in the south of his realm and did what was in his power to secure them. As the climate during winter was milder in the south, it offered the possibility of rebuilding also during this part of the year, lacking the heavy snowfall of the northern parts. However, the question is whether this should be seen as the relocation of an imperial center from Nicaea to Nymphaion. The imprisonment of Alexios III at Nicaea, the imperial burial site in the city, also intended as the resting place for Theodore I Laskaris himself, and the remark of Blemmydes that John III Vatatzes preferred to hold court at Nymphaion would speak against it. Theodore I Laskaris apparently recognized the necessity of being mobile within the territory he exercised authority, but from the available sources there seems not enough proof to corroborate an intention on his behalf to create a second imperial focal point.

2. John III Vatatzes

The body of source material for Theodore's successor John III Vatatzes is more substantial in two ways: his reign was longer, comprising 33 years from 1221 until 1254, and closer to the composition of the main narratives for the Laskarid period. Thus, it permits a more detailed picture of John's approach to the formation of the realm he governed.

From the inscription at the citadel of Smyrna it can be deduced that John III took care to reinforce the coastal area of western Asia Minor from the beginning of his reign

[585] A prominent example would be Theodore Mangaphas in the city of Philadelphia, who appeared in the account of Choniates already during the 1180s and again in the beginning of Laskarid rule: *Choniates*, ed. van Dieten, 399 and 603-04. See for a short summary of the situation in the beginning of Laskarid rule Angold, *Government in Exile*, 60-63. Apropolites also referred to local lords in the beginning of his report: *Acropolitae*, ed. Heisenberg, §7.

onwards. Whether or not he already had been put in charge of this task during the reign of Theodore I Laskaris remains speculative, but cannot be excluded. It would explain why according to Blemmydes from the outset of his reign Nymphaion had been his preferred residence – he had already been familiar with the site while serving under Theodore I Laskaris. The foundation of a monastic complex in the south of his realm in the massif of the Sipylos, which later on assumed the function of a new imperial burial site, constituted an emphasis away from the region of Bithynia to the area in the south of the realm. The placement of the state treasury at Magnesia, ascribed to his reign, mirrored this move. For him, regular winter seasons at Nymphaion and in its vicinity were attested.

At the same time, John III went frequently on campaign residing in his imperial tents, or staying for a considerable amount of time in other parts of his realm. Like his predecessor he seemed to have employed an itinerant performance of power.

3. Theodore II Laskaris

Theodore II has been linked to the city of Nicaea because of the school he built and due to the encomion he wrote on Nicaea.[586] He is the emperor whose character is described in depth through the account of Akropolites. However, his reign constituted the shortest during the exile, which for the focus of this investigation is crucial to take into consideration. By the time he came to power in 1254, the creation of the Laskarid realm had been solidified. During his three and a half years of rule he seems to have made no changes to the established setup, albeit with one exception already mentioned: he split the imperial treasury then housed at Magnesia and created a second safety deposit to the north of it, at Astytzion. Events during his reign gave him no choice as to leave his mark on the topographical arrangement of the Laskarid realm: in 1254 he went on expedition against the Bulgarians, for which he left Asia Minor and did not return until the winter of 1255/6.[587] He returned via the Hellespont with a stop at Lampsakos, where he celebrated Christmas, and then traveled down to Nymphaion. He thus continued the habit of hibernating at Nymphaion like his father had. He left Asia Minor again when spring arrived and stayed in the western parts until the autumn of 1256,

[586] Foss, *Nicaea*, 133-63.
[587] *Acropolitae*, ed. Heisenberg, §55-60.

when he returned to Asia Minor due to a threat posed by the Seljuks.[588] Theodore II met with the sultan at Sardis.[589] It constituted one of his last acts in the account of Akropolites, for his death followed soon afterwards.

Theodore II received Akropolites' greatest attention. Additionally, his writings have come down to us in the form of letters, philosophical treatises and rhetorical exercises. Among the latter the encomion of the city of Nicaea is of vital significance for this study. Clive Foss' study on Nicaea started with the idea of a treatment of the two encomia on Nicaea that had been written in the thirteenth century, the one by Theodore II Laskaris, the other by Theodore Metochites, to make them known to a wider audience.[590] He wrote a long introduction to the two speeches, in which he first recapitulated the history and nature of encomia as rhetorical exercises. He then showed the two surviving encomia as the best preserved examples of a long line of encomia on the city of Nicaea that dated back to Late Antiquity.[591] Before the study moves to the discussion of the speech of Theodore II a brief summary of Foss' results, which are relevant for this study, will be given in the following.

The genre of encomia developed long before the Byzantine period already in classical times. Topic and structure of encomia were since Late Antiquity part of handbooks used in the educational training in Byzantium. From early on, the subject of an encomion could next to an individual also be a city, for which already a catalogue had been developed that listed the features to be addressed. Foss emphasized the most famous and most elaborated treatment of Menander the Rhetor on how to praise a city.[592] Then he listed praises on Nicaea that were composed before the thirteenth

---

[588] *Acropolitae*, ed. Heisenberg, §61-67.

[589] *Acropolitae*, ed. Heisenberg, §69.

[590] Foss, *Nicaea,* vii. The other famous encomion composed by Theodore Metochites was delivered in the presence of Andronikos II in 1290: Foss, *Nicaea*, 128. See for a recent discussion of the encomia on Nicaea Andreas Rhoby, "Theodoros Metochites' *Byzantios* and other city encomia of the 13th and 14th centuries," in *Villes de toute beauté. L'ekphrasis des cités dans les littératures byzantine et byzantino-slaves,* ed. Paolo Odorico and Charis Messis, Actes du colloque international, Prague, 25–26 novembre 2011(Dossiers byzantins 12) (Paris: de Boccard 2012), 81-99. Foss did not edit the text of the encomion by himself, but used an edition provided by Sophia Georgiopoulou, who had then just completed her dissertation on Theodore II Laskaris: *Theodore II Dukas Laskaris (1222-1258) as an author and an intellectual of the XIIIth century.* (Harvard University, 1990). Foss stated that Georgiopoulou planned to publish her dissertation and therefore his commentary on the encomion remained limited. However, a publication did not materialize to date. The edition of the encomion, which is nowadays usually quoted was published in the Teubneriana series and came out shortly after Foss' volume on Nicaea in 2000: *Theodorus II Ducas Lascari Opuscula rhetorica,* ed. Tartaglia.

[591] Foss, *Nicaea*, 123-131.

[592] *Menander Rhetor*, ed. and tr. Russell, D. and N. Wilson (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981), 33-43. For an introduction to the genre see also Hunger, *Literatur*, 120-132.

century and emphasized that behind these two surviving encomia stood a long established tradition of praises for this city, which unfortunately survived only in fragments.[593] One element Byzantine writers added to the canon of features constituted the Christian piety, thereby mainly focusing on the *Nea Roma* Constantinople as the center of Christian faith.

Little is known regarding the circumstances in which the encomion was delivered, however, apparently John III Vatatzes was present, since Theodore addressed him directly; thus, the composition must be dated prior to 1254.[594]

Foss compared the two speeches with one another and judged the following:

> Metochites follows the rules more closely and gives far more information than Laskaris whose speech almost entirely eschews the concrete in favor of a high-flown and often emotional rhetoric. […] Laskaris succeeds in conveying almost no information at all, but instead creates an emotional atmosphere which culminates in the peroration likening the city to a nurse and mother. In the process, he employs a smooth and elegant language, maintains contact with real and imaginary auditors, and indulges in some intricate and highly obscure metaphors.[595]

Yet, Foss pointed out that exactly this style most probably met the taste of the audience. The encomion was not meant to be an accurate description of reality, but a rhetorical play. High style, metaphors and sentence structures difficult to follow suited the occasion of praise much better than bleak and simple manner.[596]

The lengthy speech covered many of the issues that should be included in a praise of a city like outer appearance, buildings and also its wealth. Theodore II compared Nicaea with Athens and praised not only its facilities for learning, but also its significance for religious faith.[597] However, one part stands out that is of interest for this investigation, it is the passage that praised the role of Nicaea after the sack of Constantinople in 1204. Here Theodore II paid tribute to the city as the savior of the empire; Nicaea was the city which welcomed the imperial sovereignty – *basilikē archē* – and secured and assured it.[598] Elaborating on the details, the narration of this deed of

[593] Foss, *Nicaea,* 125-126.

[594] Hunger, *Literatur,* 129; Foss, *Nicaea,* 129. For addressing John III Vatatzes in the speech see Lascaris, *Opuscula rhetorica*, 3, line 304-308.

[595] Foss, *Nicaea,* 129.

[596] Foss, *Nicaea,* 130.

[597] Nothing however hinted directly at the two councils that had taken place at Nicaea.

[598]Lascaris, *Opuscula rhetorica*, 3, line 256-266: σὺ δ' ὑπέρκεισαι καὶ ὑπερῆρας πασῶν, ἐπειδὴ πολλαχῶς ἡ Ῥωμαίων ἀρχὴ μερισθεῖσα παρὰ τῶν ἐθνικῶν στρατευμάτων καὶ ἡττηθεῖσα, πρότερόν τε συμπλακεῖσα καὶ ἀλωθεῖσα τὰς πόλεις καὶ γυμνωθεῖσα τῆς ἐξουσίας, καὶ πᾶσαν γῆν οἰκείαν ἄβατον οὖσαν τὸ πρὶν βατὴν τοῖς ἐναντίοις τῇ δυναστείᾳ παραχωρήσασα, καὶ τῆς πρὶν

rescue closed on a reference to Theodore I Laskaris, the one who starting from the city of Nicaea laid the foundation of the realm. This last point Theodore II underlined through a vivid image and a common law: He compared Nicaea to the person who alone remained on a ship that was under attack. Theodore laid out that the one who held out against the enemy alone should be the rightful owner of the ship.[599] The ship here stood for the Byzantine empire, and since it was the city of Nicaea that gave shelter to the leading elite at the time of total collapse, the city ought to "own" this rank. He acknowledged the role Nicaea had during the initial creation of Laskarid rule in western Asia Minor.

For the understanding of the meaning of Nicaea for the exile period this passage is crucial. Even bearing in mind that an encomion is not a historical narrative and ought not to deliver hard facts, here perhaps better than anywhere else the perception of Nicaea by contemporaries can be grasped. Theodore argued with the historical development of the Laskarid realm in mind. Due to its important role in the beginning of Laskarid rule in Asia Minor Nicaea should be regarded as the city ranked higher than all others. It is of symbolic significance to hint at the leading part of withstanding the danger. The symbolic meaning stands therefore in contrast to the actual meaning. Had Nicaea been the center of the realm, there would have been no reason to justify it historically, in other words, Theodore would have had no need to go back in time, but could have described Nicaea as the actual capital of the Laskarid realm. Along with that, already the very fact that Theodore felt the need to explain why Nicaea should have the superior rank among the cities in the realm, looms large. It might reveal that in fact this was not obvious any longer.

This presentation by Theodore II of Nicaea as the leading city is perhaps better understood when contrasted with a passage of Akropolites on Theodore II. It is part of the prelude to the famous incident, where an irate Theodore II ordered his men to beat up Akropolites after a dispute.[600] The event happened on campaign shortly after a treaty with the Bulgarian ruler had been concluded at Regina in summer of 1256. Akropolites began the narration with the daily routine of the emperor to inspect the camp:

μεγαλοπρεπείας στερηθεῖσα καὶ τῇ ἀτυχίᾳ εἴπω τι γεγονυῖα σμικροπρεπής, καὶ βρίθοντα πλοῦτον ἀπολωλεκυῖα καὶ τὴν βασιλικὴν ὑπεροχὴν τῆς πενίας τῇ λύπῃ χθαμαλωθεῖσα, ἐν σοὶ μόνῃ ἡδράσθη καὶ ἐστηρίχθη τε καὶ ἐπαγιώθη.

[599] Ibid.

[600] See for Akroploites' motives for and particular length of the story the analysis of Macrides: *Akropolites*, tr. Macrides, 59-62.

> ἔθος δὲ ὑπῆρχε τῷ βασιλεῖ περὶ δείλην ἐσπέραν ἐποχεῖσθαι καὶ σύμπαν διέρχεσθαι τὸ στρατόπεδον, καὶ ἀμφὶ τὸ τούτου τέρμα εἰς τόπον ἀγχώμαλόν πως τελοῦντα καὶ μικρὸν ὑπερανεστηκότα τῆς πεδιάδος ἀνέρχεσθαι καὶ τὴν ὅλην καθορᾶν στρατιάν, ἣν καὶ πόλιν κινουμένην ὠνόμαζε, πάσας τὰς Ῥωμαϊκὰς ἄλλας πόλεις φυλάττουσαν. / It was the emperor's habit to ride out around twilight and pass through the entire camp and to go up and survey the whole army – which he used to call a city on the move which guards all the other Roman cities - at its edge, at a level place projecting a little above the plain.[601]

Akropolites further reported how he tried to follow the emperor on his mule, but was not able to catch up. In this small passage Akropolites cited Theodore II in his perception of the army. The image of the army as the guarding city of the realm is striking. Admittedly it is not a direct statement written by Theodore II himself, which conveyed a different perspective to the image invoked in the encomion on Nicaea. To weaken the contrast even further, in the *Alexiad* Anna Komnene likewise created an image of the army as a moving city, so even if Theodore II indeed used to say this phrase, it can hardly be considered his own invention.

However, on one hand there is no reason to assume Theodore II did not use this phrase. From the way Akropolites recounted the events, in his narrative the statement of the army as the guarding city only underlined the motivation behind the emperor's habit for his daily inspection of the camp – the army guarded the realm and thus, needed his attention. On the other, the circumstances, in which Anna Komnene referred to the army, and the image she had in mind of the army as a city were not the same. For she depicted Alexios I as on the march with his entire army in formation, a movement, which might have appeared to the one who was watching the scene like a city in motion.[602] The phrase delivered by Akropolites however did neither describe an army on the move, nor one that was marching in formation. Also Akropolites did not focus on the outer appearance – that is, what the army looked like – but on the function the army occupied within the realm. The army had become the guardian of the realm. In this occupation it apparently was perceived as the substitution of a city.

[601] *Acropolitae*, ed. Heisenberg, §63; *Akropolites*, tr. Macrides, 305.

[602] *Annae Comnenae Alexias*, ed. Reinsch, XV, §4.9: Ὁ δὲ τὴν καινὴν ἐκείνην αὖθις παράταξιν διατυπωσάμενος καὶ μέσον τοὺς δορυαλώτους ἅπαντας <σὺν> γυναιξὶ καὶ παιδίοις εἰσελάσας, τὴν αὐτὴν ἀτραπὸν διήει δι' ἧς διεληλύθει ὁδοῦ, καὶ ἐφ' οἷς ἂν προσεπέλασε τόποις, μετ' ἀσφαλείας ἁπάσης ἐπορεύετο. Καὶ εἶπες ἂν ἰδὼν πόλιν τινὰ ἔμψυχον πεπυργωμένην πορεύεσθαι κατὰ τὴν εἰρημένην ἐκείνην καινουμένην σύνταξιν.

Now, there is a danger of over interpreting this phrase, but to expand on the idea just a little: if a mobile army as the guarantor and protector of the realm is described as a city in motion, would it be possible to understand it as the shift from a realm governed from a central position to one that is governed through constant mobility of army and emperor? As had been demonstrated, during the exile emperors were for the most part of their reign on campaign. The army and its leader constituted a unity, if the army played the part of the mobile guardian of the realm, the emperor would be the mobile head. When recapitulating the short reign of Theodore II Laskaris, it becomes clear that for the most part of his period as emperor he was on campaign.

4. Michael VIII Palaiologos

Michael VIII reigned for less than three years before the recapture of Constantinople, therefore his mark on the topographical layout of the Laskarid realm established in exile may be as weak as that of his predecessor. One feature that nevertheless remains crucial to observe when evaluating his movements in the territory constituted his usurpation. Interestingly, a change of ruling dynasty not necessarily led to the establishment of new routes or residences within the realm, at least as far as the short period reveals.

Remarkable seems the fact that the Nicaean forces marched on the campaign, which would lead to the decisive "battle of Pelagonia" in summer of that year, under the leadership of the emperor's brother John, while Emperor Michael VIII Palaiologos himself stayed on Asian soil.[603] Akropolites did not elaborate why the experienced military leader Michael Palaiologos stayed safely behind; whether he had to fight opposition among the population due to his usurpation remains hypothetical.

The leaders of the army met the emperor again at Lampsakos after they had crossed the Hellespont.[604] The emperor decided to spend the winter at Lampsakos, which indeed stood in contrast to predecessors, who preferred to rest during that time in the mild climate of Nymphaion. Michael VIII launched a siege on Constantinople the following spring, but without success.[605] After the campaign and a lengthy stay at Pegai

[603] *Acropolitae*, ed. Heisenberg, §80.
[604] *Acropolitae*, ed. Heisenberg, §82.
[605] *Acropolitae*, ed. Heisenberg, §83. Macrides explained that the campaign started in fact in January, thus the winter season: *Akropolites*, tr. Macrides, 368. Therefore, staying in Lampsakos made rather more sense.

the emperor moved to Nymphaion for the following winter of 1260/61. The recovery of Constantinople and the re-erection of the Byzantine empire was about to unfold during the course of the next months.

The sites that featured during this admittedly short period of Michael VIII did not differ from those of previous emperors during the exile, or if only in their use at other seasons. All in all, routes and residences remained stable even under new dynastic leadership.

IV. Conclusion

Decentralization and itinerant rulership

The analysis of the topographical design of Laskarid rule in western Asia Minor revealed a unique model of rule, unprecedented in the Byzantine world. The Laskarid rulers turned the loss of Constantinople and the banishment to western Asia Minor into a crucial strategic advantage, which on the long run secured not only their survival but also their success against their rivals during the struggles that followed the events of 1204.

Looking at the description put forward by Magdalino of Constantinople on the eve of the Fourth Crusade, he stated that apart from the military "everything else was concentrated to a high degree in the capital: power, administration, wealth, commerce, manufactures, education, entertainment, sacred objects, and sacred space, even monasticism […]."[606] The city of Constantinople had no heir on Laskarid territory. The realm in western Asia Minor produced no site which over the course of the exile gained the position of a capital, outranking all other sites within the dominion.

Yet, as was shown, when looking at single aspects of a capital, locations could be found within the Laskarid realm that became the center for one of these aspects. Though no single site comprised them all, several features of a capital, raised within the wider frame of *Residenzenforschung*, did exist in the Laskarid realm. The state treasury as the accumulation of wealth was housed at Magnesia, also at Astytzion. Power, administration and to certain extent also education were features carried by the imperial court, which to a high degree remained mobile throughout the exile period. Agriculture as the driving force of the Laskarid economy was reinstated and promoted on local level within the entire territory. Sacred space was by no means confined to Nicaea, even though the city comes to mind easily due to its function as the coronation site; also monastic centers of the Latmos or near Mount Ida developed into sacred sites during the Laskarid period.

[606] Paul Magdalino, "Byzantium=Constantinople," 44.

If Constantinople as the capital had been the center of the former empire, then the imperial residence was the nucleus of this center, or the *Schaltstelle,* as Schreiner called the Great Palace (as quoted in the beginning of this study).[607] To revisit Schreiner's definition of such a *Schaltstelle*: it should include the private and the ceremonial headquarters of the emperor, concentrate imperial administation, the state treasury and even the state prison. As has been examined, these facets that characterized imperial rule were – what regards the Laskarid sphere – neither united in one single place.

The case studies revealed that several sites within the Laskarid realm held important institutions crucial for imprial rule. However, none of these sites comprised all aspects alone. The features that characterized the Great Palace before 1204 were not tranferred to one other site under Laskarid control, but had been distributed in space. The emperors made much use of imperial tents as accommodation, which gave them their necessary mobility. Ceremonial acts such as the celebration of Easter and Christmas on occasion took place at Nymphaion, but were not limited to that place. Imperial weddings took place at sites on the border, since they involved the participation of foreign rulers who ought not to enter deep into the territory.[608]

In contrast to the former empire the Laskarid realm was tailored as a decentral entity with various focal points. These focal points were visited regularly by the emperors on itinerant routes throughout their realm.

A decentralized design of the realm had an advantage that can best be understood when looking at the consequence of the sack of Constantinople. With one strike by the crusaders not only the capital was lost for its inhabitants, but the entire empire fell apart. With loosing one center as meaningful and symbolic as the city of cities, the disintegration of the empire began. Whereas the loss of territories in previous centuries did not question the existence of the empire as such, apparently there could not be an empire without Constantinople at its head. This was the result of 1204 and the experience the inhabitants of the Byzantine empire had made. The creation of a new capital in exile would have meant to display a new target as prey for the surrounding

[607] Schreiner, "Zu Gast in den Kaiserpalästen Konstantinopels," 101.

[608] As has been pointed out in III.B.2 in this study, this statement is valid even for the Mongol embassy to the court of Theodore II Laskaris, since the ruler himself did not come in person.

enemies. To split such a center into its various features and to disperse those in space made it difficult for any attackers that aimed at occupying the Laskarid realm.

As a result, I would propose to reconsider the common scholarly name, "empire of Nicaea", as it appears misleading. Nicaea held an important position among the focal points of the realm, being the coronation site and the seat of the patriarch. Yet, if a capital is supposed to be the place where the crucial elements of a given state entity are united, and if we look at the elements of power that turned out to be driving forces of survival and success in the Laskarid period, so were those not located in Nicaea. Imperial presence, economic prosperity, military strength – none of these could be identified with one given site alone. The term "Laskarid realm", applied in this study, rather puts an emphasis on the dynasty that exercised power, secured and widened the territory and made a survival in exile possible.

By applying itinerant rulership, the emperors were able to secure their control in various ways. For one, regular visits to the regions within their domination gave them the possibility to inspect all corners of their territory. They could initiate and follow closely the maintenance of fortifications and harbors, security of major routes and crossroads, and the strengthening of border systems. At the same time an emperor traveling constantly through his realm made his presence visible to his subjects. In this period when the very idea of Byzantine survival was at stake, the bond that was created between the caring emperor and his loyal subjects should not be underestimated. This also stood in contrast to the former empire in which the emperor was rarely seen even by the inhabitants of Constantinople due to the seclusion of the imperial sphere behind the palace walls.[609] Itinerant rulership may be seen here also as an instrument to secure power and prevent the rise of local revolts and the disintegration of authority.

There were further practical aspects of itinerant rulership that should be pointed out. The emperor traveled with his entourage and for most of the time with large parts of his army. Even though the number of people can only be speculated and may have varied at times, it is easy to imagine that each time the emperor put up residence the environment felt the burden of maintaining the imperial court. Supply of food for

[609] Exceptions being for instance processions that would lead the emperor through various parts of the city of Constantinople. See e.g. Stefan Diefenbach, "Zwischen Liturgie und civilitas: Konstantinopel im 5. Jahrhundert und die Etablierung eines städtischen Kaisertums," in *Bildlichkeit und Bildort von* Liturgie, *Schauplätze in Spätantike, Byzanz und Mittelalter*, ed. Rainer Warland (Wiesbaden: Reichert, 2002), 21-49.

people and animals, during dry periods also of water, must have been challenging. Regular change of residence therefore distributed the supply of goods for the imperial court evenly within the realm.

The decentralized design of the realm in combination with a system of rulership based on itinerant movement constituted the strategy for survival that led to the triumph of the Laskarid rulers over their enemies. In the first and second decade of the thirteenth century Theodore I Laskarid faced enemies and invasions within his domain. Later on, in particular under John III Vatatzes, battles were fought outside the Laskarid domain, which allowed its inhabitants to develop an economic strength that substantiated their well-being. The practice of this form of itinerant rulership constituted a novelty for the emperors of Byzantium, which only the loss of the city of Constantinople could have triggered.

Outlook: the Palaiologan era

In order to thoroughly highlight the development of Laskarid topography, its distinctiveness and its relevance for the struggles of the thirteenth century also the early Palaiologan period should be taken into account. This *aftermath* of Laskarid rule provides valuable information regarding the impact of Laskarid political geography in Asia Minor. In this context 'aftermath' should be defined not by the change of dynasty in 1258, but by the reconquest of Constantinople in 1261, which turned the focus back on the city as the imperial center and changed the layout of the governed territory profoundly. Following this shift, emperor Michael VIII Palaiologos paid no longer attention to securing the borders of western Asia Minor, as the Laskarid rulers had done.[610]

Western Asia Minor is by the turn to the fourteenth century lost for good to the approaching Turkish tribes following the disintegration of the Seljuk state. Thus, moving away from an event-oriented historical narrative to a geopolitical perspective, the thirteenth century as a whole will be the last century of Byzantine rule in western Asia Minor. From this point, it appears as one unit rather than two.

[610] See for this shift Angeliki Laiou, "The Palaiologoi and the world around them (1261-1400)," in *The Cambridge History of the Byzantine Empire c. 500-1492*, ed. Jonathan Shepard (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 803-833, here 803.

Further, the memory of Laskarid heritage in western Asia Minor among the inhabitants remained strong even after the reestablishment of the Byzantine empire at Constantinople. This memory, detectable mainly in written records, may further highlight backwards the significance of Laskarid rule in that region. As such, the aftermath likewise provides testimony suitable for this investigation. The difficulty in addressing pre- and post-1261 topographical developments is that is has to be viewed under different preconditions.

To be more specific: a study focusing on the years 1204 until 1261 that seeks to investigate the use of sites by the Laskarid rulers, as this study aims to do, tries to understand the emergence of a new Byzantine realm within western Asia Minor. In this period the Laskarid rulers secured power within their territory and positioned themselves in space. Thus, an examination of the topography in that period can help to underline their struggle for survival and their applied spatial strategies. Therefore, a method applied to this period should target use and set-up of sites and highlight their functions within the boundaries of the new-born empire in exile.

However, if one addresses the aspect of topography and the use of sites in the same area *after* 1261 under the usurper Michael VIII Palaiologos, the question is not any longer whether or not Michael VIII could establish and secure his territory. The Queen of Cities had been taken back into Byzantine hands, the center of the empire was thus re-erected. As a result, the territorial focus shifted back to the Bosphoros and the region housing the just maturing, as it were, Laskarid realm once more fell back to the status of a hinterland to its capital. The reason why a look on the region after 1261 could be a rewarding enterprise is due to the burden of Laskarid heritage the Palaiologoi were confronted with. Following the political struggles during previous centuries, thirteenth-century Asia Minor had become famous for its contrasting peace and prosperity.[611] For several sites had regained importance and wealth under Laskarid rule and thus, were in the following decades by its population associated with remembrance of the successful former ruling dynasty. This heritage collided after 1261 with the illegitimate way Michael VIII came to power. Contemporary records report revolts and opposition to the Palaiologan emperors in this region, which has to be seen as the long-

[611] Angold, *Government in Exile*, 97-120. Recently Angold's statement was again verified by Laiou, "The agrarian economy," for John III Vatatzes see 314, 320. The article provides a comparison with both the contemporary Greek realms in Epiros and Trebizond as well as the development after 1261.

lasting impact of the changes brought by the Laskarid dynasty to western Asia Minor. As Teresa Shawcross had examined, the blinding of John IV Laskaris had created a symbolic figure for Palaiologan resistance.[612] Also the fury about the loss of Asia Minor, that can be well examined in Pachymeres' account, speaks volumes. Pachymeres went as far as to let a member of the Laskarid court, Kakos Senachereim, wail at the evil fate of the reconquest of Constantinople. Seen with the eyes of the inhabitants from Asia Minor, the reconquest of the city turned out to be a distaster.[613]

Thus, the topography of western Asia Minor in the early Palaiologan era should after this analysis be considered as a bearer of remembrance of Laskarid rule. This turn of perspective might add to the already established research on how Michael VIII came to terms with his past. Macrides pointed out Michaels' attempts to reconnect with Komnenian traditions once he had retaken Constantinople and reestablished Byzantine power there.[614] In the cities of western Asia Minor he had to face the remembrance of the Laskarid rulers, more than in the recovered capital. Pachymeres provides the legacy of the Laskarid period by elaborating the decline of western Asia Minor under Palaiologan politics. His account tells the story how Laskarid legacy had been gambled away swiftly due to neglect. Yet, this analysis would then focus on the loss of territory after the recapture of the capital, not on the creation of a realm.

[612] Shawcross, "In the name of the True Emperor: Politics of Resistance after the Palaiologan Usurpation."

[613] Discussed in the context of official and unofficial ideologies in the early Palaiologan era by Laiou, "The Palaiologoi and the world around them," 804.

[614] Ruth Macrides, "From the Komnenoi to the Palaiologoi: imperial models in decline and exile," in *New Constantines: The rhythm of imperial renewal in Byzantium, 4th – 13th centuries,* ed. Paul Magdalino (Aldershot: Variorum, 1994), 269-282.

V. Bibliography

Abbreviations

BZ *Byzantinische Zeitschrift.*

DOP *Dumbarton Oaks Papers.*

JÖB *Jahrbuch der österreichischen Byzantinistik.*

LexMA *Lexikon des Mittelalters*. Studienausgabe. 8 vols. Stuttgart: Metzler, 1999.

ODB *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*. 3 vols. New York: Oxford University Press, 1991.

PatrLex *A Patristic Greek Lexicon.* ed. Geoffrey W. H. Lampe. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994.

Primary Sources

Acta et diplomata Graeca medii aevi sacra et profana. 6 vols., coll. and ed. Franz Miklosich and Joseph Müller. Vienna: Carolus Gerold, 1860-1890.

Akropolites, George:

Georgii Acropolitae Opera. Ed. August Heisenberg. Ed. and corrections Peter Wirth, 2 vols. Stuttgart: Teubner, 1978.

George Akropolites. *The History.* Intorduction, translation and commentary Ruth Macrides. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007.

Georgius Akropolites. *Die Chronik.* Tr. Wilhelm Blum. Stuttgart: Hiersemann, 1989.

Blemmydes, Nikephoros:

Nikephori Blemmydae Opera. *Autobiographia sive Curriculum vitae necnon Epistula universalior.* ed. Joseph Munitiz. Turnhout: Brepols, 1984.

Nikephoros Blemmydes. *A Partial Account*. Introduction, translation and notes Joseph Munitiz. Leuven: Spicilegium sacrum Lovaniense, 1988.

Choniates, Niketas:

Nicitae Choniatae Historia. ed. Jan van Dieten. Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae. Series Berolinensis 11.1. Berlin: De Gruyter, 1975.

Dölger, Franz. *Regesten der Kaiserurkunden des oströmischen Reiches von 565-1453.* Munich: Oldenbourg, 1924.

Festa, Nicolaus. *Theodori Ducae Lascaris Epistulae Ccxvii*. Florence: Tip. G. Carnesecchi & figli, 1898.

Gregoras, Nikephoros:

Nikephori Gregorae Byzantina Historia. Ed. and translated into Latin Ludwig Schopen and Immanuel Bekker, 3 vols. Bonn: Weber, 1829.

Golubovich, Hieronymus."Disputatio Latinorum et Graecorum seu Relatio Apocrisariorum Gregorii IX de gestis Nicaeae in Bithynia et Nymphaeae in Lydia 1234." *Archivum Franciscanum Historicum* 12 (1919): 418-470.

Die Inschriften von Smyrna. Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften. Ed. Georg Petzl. Rheinisch-Westfälische Akademie der Wissenschaften, vol. II, 1. Bonn: Habelt, 1987.

Hendrickx, Benjamin. "Régestes des empereurs Latins de Constantinople, 1204-1261/1272.*" Byzantina* 19 (1988): 7-220.

Kinnamos, John:

Ioannis Cinnami epitome rerum ab Joanne et Alexio Comnenis gestarum. ed. Augustus Meinecke. Corpus Scriptorium Historiae Byzantinae. Bonn: A.Weber, 1836.

Komnena, Anna:

Annae Comnenae Alexias. ed. Diether Reinsch. Berlin: De Gruyter, 2001.

Menander Rhetor:

Menander Rhetor. ed. and tr. Donald Russell and Nigel Wilson. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981.

Pachymeres, George:

Pachymeris, Georgii. Relationes Historicas, Books 1-6. Ed. Albert Failler. Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae, Series Parisiensis, Vol. 1-2. Paris: Societe d'Edition "Les Belles Lettres," 1984.

_____. Relationes Historicas. Books 7-13. Ed., translated and commented Albert Failler. Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae, Vol. 3-4. Series Parisiensis. Paris: Institute Français d'Etudes Byzantines, 1999.

Polemis, Demetrios. “The speech of Constantine Apropolites on St. John Merciful the Young.” *Analecta Bollandia* 91 (1973): 31-54.

Prinzing, Günter. “Der Brief Heinrichs von Konstantinopel vom 13. Januar 1212.“ *Byzantion* 43 (1973): 395-431.

Quellen zur Geschichte des Kreuzzuges Kaiser Friedrichs I.. ed. Anton Chroust. Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Scriptores rerum Germanicarum, Nova Series 5. Berlin: Weidmann, 1928.

Strabo:

The Geography of Strabo. tr. Horace Leonard Jones, 8 vols.. The Loeb Classical Library. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1988.

Tartaglia, Aloysius. *Theodorus II Dukas Lascaris Opuscula rhetorica*. Munich: Saur, 2000.

Villehardouin, Geoffrey de. *La conquête de Constantinople*. ed. et tr. Edmond Faral. Paris: Societe d’Edition “Les Belles Lettres,” 1939.

Zosimos:

Zosime. *Histoire Nouvelle*. ed. and tr. François Paschoud. Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 2000.

Secondary Literature

Ahrweiler, Hélène. “L’histoire et la géographie de la région de Smyrne entre les deux occupations turques (1081-1317) particulièrement au XIIIe siècle.“ *Travaux et Mémoires du Centre de Recherche d’Histoire et Civilisation Byzantines,* vol. 1. Paris: Association des Amis du Centre d’Histoire et Civiliation de Byzantines, 1965.

_____. *Byzance et la mer*. *La marine de guerre, la politique et les institutions maritimes, de Byzance aux VIIe - XVe siècles*. Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1966.

Alexander, Paul. “The strength of Empire and Capital as seen through Byzantine eyes”, *Speculum* 37 (1962): 339-357.

Angelov, Dimiter. *Imperial ideology and political thought in Byzantium, 1204-1330*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007.

Angold, Michael. *A Byzantine Government in Exile: Government and Society under the Laskarids of Nicaea 1204 – 1261*. London: Oxford University Press, 1975.

_____. “Byzantium, History of: Empire of Nicaea (1204-1261).“ *ODB*: 356-58.

_____. “John IV Laskaris.” *ODB*: 1048-1049.

_____. *Church and Society in Byzantium under the Comneni, 1081-1261*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995.

_____. “The autobiographical impulse in Byzantium.” *DOP* 52 (1998): 225-257.

_____. “The city Nicaea ca.1000 – ca. 1400.” in *İznik throughout History*, ed. Işıl Akbaygil, Halil İnalcık, Oktay Aslanapa, 27-55. Istanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 2003: 27-55.

_____. “Church and society: Iconoclasm and after.” *A social History of Byzantium*, ed. John Haldon. Maldon: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009: 233-256.

_____. *The Fourth Crusade – Event and Context*. Harlow, UK: Pearson Education 2003.

_____. “The Latin Empire of Constantinople, 1204-1261: marriage strategies,” in *Identities and Allegiances in the eastern Mediterranean after 1204*, ed. Judith Herrin and Guillaume Saint-Guillain. Farnham: Ashgate, 2011: 47-67.

Aylward, William. “The Byzantine Fortifications at Pegae (Priapus).” *Studia Troica* 16 (2006): 179-203.

Barnes, Timothy. *Constantine and Eusebius*. Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1981.

Barrington Altas of the Greek and Roman world. ed. Richard Talbert, Roger Bagnall et al. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000.

Bartusis, Mark. *The Late Byzantine Army 1204-1453 – arms and society*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1992.

Beck, Hans-Georg. *Kirche und theologische Literatur im Byzantinischen Reich*. Byzantinisches Handbuch, Handbuch der Altertumswissenschaften part 2, vol.1. Munich: Beck, 1959.

Belke, Klaus. “Lampsakos.” *LexMA*, vol.5: 1634.

Bernhardt, John W. *Itinerant Kingship and royal monasteries in early medieval Germany, c. 936 – 1075*. Cambridge MA: Cambridge University Press, 1993.

Birot, Pierre and Jean Dresch. *La Méditerranée et le Moyen-Orient*. 2 vols. Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1953-1956.

Brounoff, N. “L’église de Sainte Sophie de Nicée.” *Échos d’Orient* 24 (1925): 471-481.

Brubaker, Leslie and John Haldon. *Byzantium in the Iconoclast era (ca 680-850): a history*, Cambridge, University Press, 2011.

Bryer, Anthony. "Nicaea, A Byzantine City." *History Today* 21.1 (1971): 22-31.

_____ and David Winfield. *The Byzantine Monuments and Topography of the Pontos*. Dumbarton Oaks Studies 20. Washington: Dumbarton Oaks Publications, 1985.

Buchwald, Hans. "Lascarid Architecture." in *JÖB* 28 (1979): 263-96.

Cagaptay, Suna. "How western is it? The palace at Nymphaion and its architectural setting." in *First International Sevgi Gonul Byzantine Studies Symposium: Change in the Byzantine World in the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries*. ed. Odekan, Ayla, Engin Akyurek and Nevra Necipoglu. Istanbul: Vehbi Koc Vakfi, 2010: 357-362.

du Cange, Charles du Fresne. *Historia Byzantina duplici commentario illustrata. Prior familias ac stemniata Imperatorum Constantinopolitanorum ... complectitur: alter descriptionem urbis Constantinopolitanæ qualis extitit sub Imperatoribus Christianis*. Lutetiae Parisiorum: apud Ludovicum Billaine, 1680.

Cankova-Petkova, Genoveva. "Griechisch-Bulgarische Bündnisse in den Jahren 1235 und 1246." *Byzantino-Bulgarica* 3 (1969): 49-80.

Carelos, Pantelis. "Ein "integrierter" Fürstenspiegel im Prooimion der "Epitome logikes" des Nikephoros Blemmydes." *BZ* 98 (2005): 399-402.

Carile, Antonio. "26. Heinrich v. Flandern und Hennegau." *LexMA*, vol. 4: 2062.

Chadwick, Henry. *East and West – The Making of a Rift in the Church. From Apostolic Times until the Council of Florence*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003.

Charanis, Peter. "On the Asiatic frontiers of the Empire of Nicaea." *Orientalia Christiana Periodica* 13 (1947): 58-62.

Christaller, Walter. *Die zentralen Orte in Süddeutschland: Eine ökonomisch-geographische Untersuchung über die Gesetzmäßigkeit der Verbreitung und Entwicklung der Siedlungen mit städtischen Funktionen.* Jena: Gustav Fischer, 1933.

Churchill Semple, Ellen. "Ancient Mediterranean Agriculture: Part 1." *Agricultural History* 2.2 (1928): 61-98.

Constantinides, C. N. *Higher Education in Byzantium in the thirteenth and early fourteenth Centuries (1204 – ca. 1310).* Nicosia: Zavallis Press, 1982.

Crouch, Dora. *Geology and Settlement: Greco-Roman Patterns.* Oxford New York: Oxford University Press, 2004.

Deutsches Wörterbuch. ed. Grimm, Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm. 15 vols. Leipzig: Hirzel, 1956.

Diefenbach, Stefan. "Zwischen Liturgie und civilitas: Konstantinopel im 5. Jahrhundert und die Etablierung eines städtischen Kaisertums." in *Bildlichkeit und Bildort von* Liturgie, *Schauplätze in Spätantike, Byzanz und Mittelalter*. ed. Rainer Warland (Wiesbaden: Reichert, 2002): 21-49.

van Dieten, Jan. "Das Lateinische Kaiserreich von Konstantinopel und die Verhandlungen über kirchliche Wiedervereinigung." in *The Latin Empire: some contributions.* ed. van Aalst, Victoria, Ciggaar, Krijna Nelly. Hernen: A.A. Bredius Foundation, 1990: 93-125.

_____. "Manuel Prinkips †17. 06. 6719 (1211) Welcher Manuel in welcher Kirche zu Nikaia?" *BZ* 78 (1985): 63-91.

Downey, Glanville. "Nikolaos Mesarites: Description of the church of the Holy Apostles at Constantinople." *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society, New Series* 47. 6 (1957): 855-924.

_____. "The tombs of the Byzantine emperors at the Church of the Holy Apostles in Constantinople." *The Journal of Hellenic Studies* 79 (1959): 27-51.

Dölger, Franz and Johannes Karayannopulos. *Byzantinische Urkundenlehre: Erster Abschnitt die Kaiserurkunden*. Byzantinisches Handbuch. Munich: Beck, 1968.

Duden was bedeutet das?: Kleines Bedeutungswörterbuch der deutschen Sprache. ed. Grebe, Paul and Wolfgang Müller. Mannheim: Bibliographisches Institut AG, 1970.

Eastmond, Antony. *Art and Identitiy in thirteenth-century Byzantium: Hagia Sophia and the empire of Trebizond*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004.

Eickhoff, Ekkehard. *Friedrich Barbarossa im Orient. Kreuzzug und Tod Friedrichs I.* Istanbuler Mitteilungen Beiheft 17. Tübingen: Ernst Wasmuth, 1977.

Emecen, Feridun. "Biga." in *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslâm Ansiklopedisi*. İstanbul: Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı Vakıf Yayınları İşletmesi, 1992: 136-37.

Eyice, Semavi. "Le Palais byzantin de Nymphaion près Izmir." in: *Akten des XI. Internationalen Byzantinisten-Kongresses, Munich 1958*: 150-153.

_____. "Le Palais byzantin de Nymphaion près Izmir." *Belleten* 25 (1961): 1-15.

_____. "Mosaic Pavements from Bithynia." *DOP* 17 (1963): 373-383.

_____. "Die byzantinische Kirche in der Nähe des Yenişehir-Tores zu İznik." *Materialia Turcica* 7/8 (1981/82): 152-167.

Failler, Albert. "Review of Ruth Macrides (trad.), George Akropolites. The History. Introduction, translation and commentary by Ruth Macrides (Oxford Studies in Byzantium). – Oxford University Press 2007." *Revue des Études Byzantines* 66 (2008): 283-285.

Featherstone, Jeffrey. "The Great Palace as reflected in *De Ceremoniis.*" *Visualisierungen von Herrschaft. Frühmittelalterliche Residenzen – Gestalt und Zeremoniell*. ed. Franz Alto Bauer. Byzas. Veröffentlichungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts Istanbul, vol. 5. ed. Franz Alto Bauer. Istanbul: Yayınları, 2006: 47-62.

Fine, John V. A. *The late medieval Balkans, A critical survey from the Late twelfth century to the Ottoman conquest.* Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1987.

Foss, Clive. "Byzantine Cities of Western Asia Minor." *PhD Thesis*, Harvard 1972.

_____. *Byzantine and Turkish Sardis*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1976.

_____. "Late Byzantine fortifications in Lydia." in *JÖB* 28 (1979): 297-320.

_____. *Ephesus after Antiquity: A Late Antique, Byzantine and Turkish City*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979.

_____. "Smyrna." *ODB*: 1919-1920.

_____, "The defenses of Asia Minor against the Turks," *The Greek Orthodox Theological Review* 36 (1982): 145-205; reprint in Clive Foss. *Cities, fortresses and villages in Asia Minor*. Brookfield,VT: Variorum, 1996.

_____ and David Winfield, *Byzantine Fortifications – An Introduction*. Pretoria: University of South Africa, 1986.

_____. *Nicaea – A Byzantine Capital and its praises*. Brookline, MA: Hellenic College Press, 1996.

_____. "Fortifications." *ODB*: 798-799.

_____. "Nicaea." *ODB*: 1463-1464.

_____. "Pegai." *ODB*: 1615-6.

French, David. "Pre- and Early-Roman Roads of Asia Minor. The Persian Royal Road." *British Institute of Persian Studies* 36 (1998): 15-43.

Freshfield, Edwin. "The Palace of the Greek emperors of Nicaea at Nymphio." *Archeologica* 49 (1886): 382-390.

Gardner, Alice. *The Lascarids of Nicaea*: *the Story of the Empire in Exile*. London: Methuen, 1912; reprint: Amsterdam: Hakkert, 1964.

Gasith, Avital and Vincent H. Resh. "Streams in Mediterranean climate regions: Abiotic influences and biotic responses to predictable seasonal events." *Annual Review of Ecology and Systematics* 30 (1999): 51-81.

Geertz, Clifford. "Centers, kings and charisma: reflections on the symbolics of power." *Culture and its Creators*: essays in honor of Edward Shils. ed. Ben-David, Joseph and Terry Nichols Clark. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1977: 150-71; reprinted in Clifford Geertz, *Local knowledge: further essays in interpretive anthropology*. 3rd ed. New York: Basic Books, 2000: 121-46.

Geltner, Guy. "Medieval prison: Between myth and reality, hell and purgatory." *History Compass* 4 (2006): 261-274.

Georgiopoulou, Sophia. "Theodore II Dukas Laskaris (1222-1258) as an author and an intellectual of the XIIIth century." *PhD thesis*. Harvard University, 1990.

Geyer, Bernhard. "Physical factors in the evolution of the landscape and land use." *The Economic History of Byzantium from the Seventh through the Fifteenth Century*. 3 vols., ed. Angeliki E. Laiou. Dumbarton Oaks Studies 39. Washington: Dumbarton Oaks, 2002: 31-45.

Gibbon, Edward. *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, ed. with additional notes by W. Smith. London: J. Murray, 1862.

Gill, Joseph. *Byzantium and the Papacy, 1198-1400.* New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1979.

Gjuselev, Vasil. "Bulgarien und das Kaiserreich von Nikaia (1204- 1261)." in *JÖB* 26 (1977): 143-54.

Hanfmann, Georg. *Sardis from prehistoric to Roman times. Results of the archeological exploration of Sardis 1958 – 75.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1983.

Harris, Jonathan. "Distortion, divine providence and genre in Nicetas Choniates' account of the collapse of Byzantium 1180-1204." *Journal of Medieval History* 26 (2000): 19-31.

Hasluck, Frederick William. *Cyzicus.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1910.

Heisenberg, August. "Kaiser Johannes Batatzes der Barmherzige." *BZ* 14 (1905): 160-233.

Hendy, Michael. "Byzantium, 1081-1204: An economic reappraisal." *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society, Fifth Series* 20 (1970): 31-52.

_____. *Studies in the Byzantine Monetary Economy c.300 – 1450.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985.

_____. *Catalogue of the Byzantine Coins in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection and in the Whittemore Collection*. vol. 4 part 2. Washington: Dumbarton Oaks Center for Byzantine Studies, 1999.

Hennessy, Cecily. "Topography of Constantinople." in *The Oxford Handbook of Byzantine Studies,* ed. Elizabeth Jeffreys. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008: 202-216.

Hilsdale, Cecily. "The Imperial Image at the End of Exile: The Byzantine Embroidered Silk in Genoa and the Treaty of Nymphaion (1261)," *DOP* 64 (2010): 151-99.

Hopwood, Keith. "The Byzantine-Turkish frontier 1250-1300." in *Acta Viennensia Ottomanica.* Akten des 13. CIEPO-Symposiums (Comité International des Études Pré-Ottomanes et Ottomanes) vom 21. bis 25. September 1998 in Wien. ed. Markus Köhbach. Vienna: Selbstverlag des Instituts für Orientalistik, 1999: 153-62.

Hunger, Herbert. *Die hochsprachliche profane Literatur der Byzantiner*. 2 vols. Handbuch der Altertumswissenschaften 12, Byzantinisches Handbuch 5. München: Beck, 1978.

Hütteroth, Wolf-Dieter and Volker Höhfeld. *Türkei*. Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2002.

İznik throughout History. ed. Işıl Akbaygil, Halil İnalcık and Oktay Aslanapa. Istanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 2003.

Janin, Raymond. *Les eglises et les monastères des grands centres Byzantins.* Paris: Institut Francais d'Études Byzantines, 1975.

Jedamski, Julia. "Nymphaion: A Byzantine Palace in Exile." *MA thesis*. Central European University. Budapest, 2006.

_____. "Nymphaion: A Byzantine Palace in Exile." in *Annual of Medieval Studies at CEU* 13 (2007): 9-22.

De Jerphanion, Guillaume."Les inscriptions cappadociennes et l'histoire de empire grec de Nicée," *Orientalia Christiana Periodica* 1 (1935): 239-256.

Kazhdan, Alexander. "The aristocracy and the imperial ideal." in *The Byzantine Aristocracy IX to XIII centuries*. ed. Michael Angold. BAR International Series 221. Oxford: B.A.R., 1984: 43-57.

_____, Kenneth Snipes, Anthony Cutler. "Homer." *ODB*: 943-944.

_____. "Lampsakos." *ODB*: 1172.

_____. “Nymphaion, Treaty of.” *ODB*: 1506.

_____. “Prisons.” *ODB*: 1723.

_____. “Romania.” *ODB*: 1805.

_____. “Vestiarion.” *ODB*: 2163.

Kirilova Kirova, Tatiana. “Un palazzo ed una casa di età tardo-bizantina in asia minore.” *Felix Ravenna* 103-04 (1972): 275-305.

Kocyigit, Ali, Halil Yusufoglu, Erdin Bozkurt. “Evidence from the Gediz graben for episodic two-stage extension in western Turkey.” *Journal of the Geological Society* 156 (May 1999): 605-617.

Kolb, Johann. *Heidelberg – Die Entstehung einer landesherrlichen Residenz im 14. Jahrhundert.* Residenzenforschungen, ed. Residenzen-Komission der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Göttingen. Sigmaringen: Jan Thorbecke, 1999.

Koukoulès, Phédon and Rodophe Guilland. “Voleurs et prisons à Byzance.” *Revue des Etudes Grecques* 61 (1948): 127-36.

Laiou, Angeliki E. “The Agrarian Economy, Thirteenth-Fifteenth Centuries.” in *The Economic History of Byzantium from the Seventh through the Fifteenth Century*. 3 vols., ed. Angeliki E. Laiou. Dumbarton Oaks Studies 39. Washington: Dumbarton Oaks, 2002: 311-376.

_____. “The Palaiologoi and the world around them (1261-1400).” in *The Cambridge History of the Byzantine Empire c. 500-1492*. ed. Jonathan Shepard New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008: 803-833.

Lameere, William. *La tradition manuscrite de la correspondance de Grégoire de Chypre, patriarche de Constantinople (1283-1289)*. Bruxelles: Palais de Académies, 1937.

Langdon, John S. *Byzantium’s Last Imperial Offensive in Asia Minor, The documentary evidence for and hagiographical lore about John III Ducas Vatatzes’ Crusade against the Turks, 1222 or 1225 to 1231*. New Rochelle: Caratzas, 1992.

_____. “Byzantium in Anatolian exile: Imperial vicegerency reaffirmed during Byzantino-papal discussions at Nicaea and Nymphaion, 1234.” *Byzantinische Forschungen* 20 (1994): 197-233.

Lefort, Jacques. “The rural economy, seventh-twelfth centuries.” in *The Economic History of Byzantium from the Seventh through the Fifteenth Century*. 3 vols., ed. Angeliki E. Laiou. Dumbarton Oaks Studies 39. Washington: Dumbarton Oaks, 2002: 231-314.

Macdonald Kinneir, John. *Journey through Asia Minor, Armenia, and Koordistan in the years 1813 and 1814 with remarks on the Marches of Alexander and retreat of the Ten Thousand.* London: John Murray, 1818.

Macrides, Ruth. "The new Constantine and the new Constantinople – 1261?" *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 6 (1980): 13-41.

_____. "Saints and Sainthood in the early Palaiologan period." in *The Byzantine Saint.* ed. Segei Hackel. London: Fellowship of St. Alban and St. Sergius, 1981: 67-87.

_____. "From the Komnenoi to the Palaiologoi: imperial models in decline and exile." in *New Constantines: The rhythm of imperial renewal in Byzantium, 4th – 13th centuries.* ed. Paul Magdalino. Aldershot: Variorum, 1994: 269-282.

_____. "Constantinople: the crusaders' gaze." in *Travel in the Byzantine world: Papers from the thirty-fourth spring symposium of Byzantine Studies, Birmingham, April 2000. ed. Ruth Macrides.* Newcastle upon Tyne: Ashgate, 2002: 193-212.

_____. "Ceremonies and the city: the court in fourteenth-century Constantinople," in *Royal Courts in Dynastic States and Empires: A Global Perspective*, ed. Duindam, Jeroen, Tülay Artan and Metin Kunt, Rulers and Elites: Comparative Studies in Governance. Leiden: Brill, 2011: 217-235.

Macridy, Theodore. "The monastery of Lips and the Burials of the Palaeologi." *DOP* 18 (1964): 253-277.

Magdalino, Paul. The empire of Manuel I Komnenos, 1143- 1180. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993.

_____. "Byzantium=Constantinople." in *A Companion to Byzantium*. ed. Liz James. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010: 43-54.

_____. "Court and Capital in Byzantium." in *Royal Courts in Dynastic States and Empires: A Global Perspective*. ed. Jeroen Duindam, Tülay Artan and Metin Kunt. Rulers and Elites: Comparative Studies in Governance. Leiden: Brill, 2011: 131-144.

Maguire, Henry. "Gardens and Parks in Constantinople." *DOP* 54 (2000): 251-264.

Majeska, George P. "The Emperor in His church: Imperial ritual in the church of St.Sophia." *Byzantine Court Culture from 829 to 1204*, ed. Henry Maguire, Washington: Harvard University Press, 1997: 1-12.

Makris, George. "Ships." in *The Economic History of Byzantium from the Seventh through the Fifteenth Century*. 3 vols., ed. Angeliki E. Laiou, Dumbarton Oaks Studies 39. Washington: Dumbarton Oaks, 2002: 91-100.

Mango, Cyril. *The Art of the Byzantine Empire: 312-1453*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1972.

Markopoulos, Athanasios. "Education." in *The Oxford Handbook of Byzantine Studies,* ed. Elizabeth Jeffreys. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008: 785-795.

Matschke, Klaus-Peter. "The Late Byzantine Urban Economy, Thirteenth-Fifteenth Centuries." in *The Economic History of Byzantium from the Seventh through the Fifteenth Century*. 3 vols., ed. Angeliki E. Laiou, Dumbarton Oaks Studies 39. Washington: Dumbarton Oaks, 2002: 463-495.

_____. "Rechtliche und administrative Organisation der Warenversorgung im byzantinischen Raum: Die Strukturen des 13. bis 15.Jahrhunderts." in *Handelsgüter und Verkehrswege. Aspekte der Warenversorgung im östlichen Mittelmeerraum (4. bis 15. Jahrhundert).* edd. Ewald Kieslinger, Johanees Koder, Andreas Külzer. Vienna: Verlag der österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2010: 205-221.

McGeer, Eric. "Navy." *ODB*: 1444.

Melling, David J. "Akolouthia." in *The Blackwell Dictionary of Eastern Christianity*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1999: 10.

Mercangöz, Zeynep and Engin Akyürek. "Living Spaces: Architecture." in *Kalanlar 12. ve 13. Yüzyıllarda Türkiye'de Bizans / The Remnants 12th and 13th Centuries Byzantine Objects in Turkey* (Istanbul: Vehbi Koç Vakfı, 2007): 25-29.

Merriam, Gordon. "The regional geography of Anatolia." *Economic Geography* 2.1 (1926): 86-107.

Mitsiou, Ekaterini. "Untersuchungen zu Wirtschaft und Ideologie im 'Nizäischen Reich'. " *PhD Thesis*, University of Vienna, 2006.

_____. "Versorgungsmodelle im Nikäischen Kaiserreich." in *Handelsgüter und Verkehrswege. Aspekte der Warenversorgung im östlichen Mittelmeerraum (4. bis 15. Jahrhundert).* edd. Ewald Kieslinger, Johannes Koder, Andreas Külzer. Vienna: Verlag der österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2010: 223-240.

Moorman, John. *A History of the Franciscan Order from its Origins to the year 1517*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1968.

Morris, Colin. "Geoffroy de Villehardouin and the conquest of Constantinople." *History* 53 (1968): 24-34.

Müller-Wiener, Wolfgang. "Mittelalterliche Befestigungen im suedlichen Ionien." *Istanbuler Mitteilungen* 11 and 12 (1961, 1962).

_____. “Pegai-Karabiga, eine mittelalterliche Stadt.” in *Festschrift für Jale İnan,* ed. Nezih Başgelen and Mihin Lugal. Istanbul: Arkeoloji ve Sanat Yayınları, 1989: 169-76.

Mullett, Margaret. “Originality in the Byzantine letter: the case of exile.“ in *Originality in Byzantine Literature, Art and Music.* ed. A. R. Littlewood. Oxford: Oxbow Books, 1995: 39-59.

_____. “Epistolography.“ in *Oxford Handbook of Byzantine Studies*, ed. Elizabeth Jeffreys. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008: 882-893.

Munitiz, Joseph. “A ‘wicked woman’ in the 13th century.” in *JÖB* 32 (1982): 529-37.

Neitmann, Klaus. “Was ist eine Residenz? - Methodische Überlegungen zur Erforschung der spätmittelalterlichen Residenzbildung.“ *Vorträge und Forschungen zur Residenzenfrage,* ed. Peter Johanek, Residenzenforschung vol.1: 1-43. Sigmaringen: Jan Thorbecke, 1990.

Nicol, Donald. *The last Centuries of Byzantium 1261 – 1453*. 2nd ed. Cambridge: University Press, 1999.

_____. *The Despotate of Epiros 1267-1479. A Contribution to the history of Greece in the middle ages.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984.

Oikonomides, Nicolas. “La décomposition de l’empire Byzantin a la veille de 1204 et les origines de l’empire de Nicée: a propos de la *partitio Romaniae*.” XVe Congrès International des Études Byzantines. Athens: Association internationale des études byzantines, 1979-1981: 3-28.

_____. “La chancellerie impériale de Byzance du 13e au 15e siècle.” *Revue des Études Byzantines* 43 (1985): 167-195.

_____. “The role of the Byzantine state in the economy.” in *The Economic History of Byzantium from the Seventh through the Fifteenth Century*. 3 vols., ed. Angeliki E. Laiou, Dumbarton Oaks Studies 39. Washington: Dumbarton Oaks, 2002: 973-1058.

Ousterhout, Robert. *Master Builders of Byzantium.* Princeton NJ : Princeton University Press, 1999.

Papadakis, Aristeides. *Crisis in Byzantium: The Filioque controversy in the patriarchate of Gregory II of Cyprus (1283-1289).* New York: Fordham University Press, 1986.

_____. “Metropolitan.” *ODB*: 1359

Parry, Vernon J. “Bīg̲ha.” *Encyclopaedia of Islam. Second Edition.* Leiden: Brill, 1986: 1209.

Peschlow, Urs. “Churches of İznik.” in *İznik throughout History,* ed. Işıl Akbaygil, Halil İnalcık, Oktay Aslanapa, 27-55. Istanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 2003: 201-218.

Peschlow-Bindokat, Annelise. *Der Latmos: eine unbekannte Gebirgslandschaft an der türkischen Westküste*. Mainz: Philipp von Zabern, 1996.

_____. *Frühe Menschenbilder: die prähistorischen Felsmalereien des Latmos-Gebirges (Westtürkei)*. Mainz: Philipp von Zabern, 2003.

_____, Urs Peschlow and Volker Höhfeld. *Herakleia am Latmos: Stadt und Umgebung*. Istanbul: Homer Kitabevi, 2005.

Philippson, Alfred. “Das westliche Kleinasien.” *Zeitschrift der Gesellschaft für Erdkunde zu Berlin* 4 (1904): 257-273.

_____. *Reisen und Forschungen im westlichen Kleinasien.* Petermann’s Mitteilungen, Ergänzungsheft Nr. 167. Gotha: J. Perthes, 1910.

Pinatsi, Christina. “New observations on the pavement of the church of Haghia Sophia in Nicaea.” *BZ* 99 (2006): 119-126.

Preiser-Kapeller, Johannes. *Der Episkopat im späten Byzanz: Ein Verzeichnis der Metropoliten und Bischöfe des Patriarchats von Konstantinopel in der Zeit von 1204 bis 1453*. Saarbrücken: Verlag Dr. Müller, 2008.

Prinzing, Günter. “Das Byzantinische Kaisertum im Umbruch – zwischen regionaler Aufspaltung und erneuter Zentrierung in den Jahren 1204-1282.” in *Legitimation und Funktion des Herrschers: vom ägyptischen Pharao zum neuzeitlichen Diktator.* Ed. Rolf Gundlach and Hermann Weber. Stuttgart: Steiner, 1992: 129-183.

_____. “Ein Mann *tyrannidos axios*. Zur Darstellung der rebellischen Vergangenheit Michaels VIII. Palaiologos.” in *Lesarten. Festschrift für Athanasios Kambylis zum 70. Geburtstag, dargebracht von Schülern, Kollegen und Freunden*, ed. Vassis, Ioannis et all.. Berlin New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1998.

Raby, Julian. “A Seventeenth Century Description of İznik-Nicaea.” *Istanbuler Mitteilungen* 26 (1976): 149-188.

Ramsay, William. *The historical geography of Asia Minor*. London: John Murray, 1890.

Rhoby, Andreas. “Theodoros Metochites’ *Byzantios* and other city encomia of the 13th and 14th centuries.” in *Villes de toute beauté. L’ekphrasis des cités dans les littératures byzantine et byzantino-slaves.* ed. Paolo Odorico and Charis Messis. Actes du colloque international, Prague, 25–26 novembre 2011(Dossiers byzantins 12). Paris: de Boccard 2012: 81-99.

Rose, Charles B., Billur Tekkök, Reyhan Körpe et al. “Granicus river valley survey project, 2004–2005.” *Studia Troica* 17 (2007): 65-150.

Schmalzbauer, Gudrun. “Konstantinopel.“ *Theologische Realenzyklopädie. vol. XIX*. Berlin New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1990: 503-518.

Schneider, Alfons Maria. *Die Stadtmauer von İznik (Nicaea).* Istanbuler Forschungen 9. Berlin: Archäologisches Institut des Deutschen Reiches, 1938.

_____. *Die Römischen und Byzantinischen Denkmäler von İznik-Nicaea.* Istanbuler Forschungen 16. Berlin: Archäologisches Institut des Deutschen Reiches, 1943.

Schreiner, Peter. “Zu Gast in den Kaiserpalästen Konstantinopels – Architektur und Topographie in der Sicht fremdländischer Betrachter.“ *Visualisierungen von Herrschaft, Frühmittelalterliche Residenzen – Gestalt und Zeremoniell*, ed. Franz Alto Bauer, Byzas. Veröffentlichungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts Istanbul, vol. 5: 101-134. Istanbul: Yayinlari, 2006.

_____. “Ein Prostagma Andronikos’ III. Für die Monembasioten in Pegai (1328) und das gefälschte Chrysobull Andronikos’ II. für die Monembasioten im Byzantinischen Reich.” in *JÖB* 27 (1978): 203-228.

_____. “Zur Geschichte Philadelphias im 14. Jahrhundert (1293-1390).” *Orientalia Christiana Periodica* 35 (1969): 375-417.

Shawcross, Teresa. “In the name of the True Emperor: Politics of Resistance after the Palaiologan Usurpation.” *Byzantinoslavica* 66 (2008): 203-227.

Shils, Edward. “Charisma, order and status,” *American Sociological Review 30, no.2* (1965): 199-213.

Sinogowitz, Bernhard. “Über das Byzantinische Kaisertum nach dem vierten Kreuzzuge (1204-1205).“ *BZ* 45 (1952): 345-56.

Simpson, Alice. “Niketas Choniates: the historian.“ in Alicia Simpson and Stephanos Efthymiades. *Niketas Choniates – A historian and a writer*. Geneva: La Pomme d’or 2009: 13-34.

Striker, Cecil. *The Myrelaion (Bodrum Camii) in Istanbul*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981.

Studt, Birgit. “Residenz,“ in *LexMA*, vol. 7: 755-757.

Talbot, Alice-Mary, and Alexander Kazhdan. "Lembiotissa." *ODB*: 1204.

_____. “The Restoration of Constantinople under Michael VIII.” *DOP* 47 (1993): 243-261.

Telelis, Ioannis. “Medieval Warm Period and the Beginning of the Little Ice Age in the Eastern Mediterranean. An approac of physical and anthropogenic evidence.” in

Byzanz als Raum. Zu Methoden und Inhalten der historischen Geographie des östlichen Mittelmeerraumes. Veröffentlichungen der Kommission für die Tabula Imperii Byzantini. vol. 7. ed. Belke, Klaus, Friedrich Hild, Johannes Koder and Peter Soustal. Wien: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2000: 223-244.

Tocci, Raimondo. "Zu Genese und Kompositionsvorgang der Σύνοψις χρονική des Theodoros Skutariotes." *BZ* 98 (2005): 551-567.

_____. "Bemerkungen zur Hand des Theodoros Skutariotes." *BZ* 99 (2006): 127-144.

Treitinger, Otto. *Die oströmische Kaiser- und Reichsidee nach ihrer Gestaltung im höfischen Zeremoniell*. Jena: Walter Bindermann, 1938.

Vryonis, Speros. *The Decline of Medieval Hellenism in Asia Minor and the Process of Islamization from the Eleventh through the Fifteenth Century*. Berkely: University of California, 1971.

Wahrig, Gerhard. *Deutsches Wörterbuch: mit einem Lexikon der deutschen Sprachlehre*. ed. Wahrig-Burfeind, Renate. seventh edition. Gütersloh: Bertelsmann Lexikon, 2000.

Whittow, Mark. *The making of orthodox Byzantium, 600-1025*. Basingstoke, Hampshire: Macmillan 1996.

Wiegand, Theodor. *Der Latmos*. Berlin: Georg Reimer, 1913.

Winkelmann, Friedhelm. "Nachrichten über das Nikaia des 13. Jahrhunderts in einer laudatio des Konstantinos Akropolites." *Studia Balkanica* 3 (1970): 113-115.

Wirth, Peter. "Die Begründung der Kaisermacht Michaels VIII. Palaiologos." in *JÖB* 10 (1961): 85-91.

Wolff, Robert Lee. "Romania: The Latin Empire of Constantinople." *Speculum* 23 (1948): 1-34.

Yalman, Bedri. "İznik'teki kilise alt yapı kazısı," *VIII Türk Tarihi Kongresi, Ankara 1976*, vol. 1. Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1979: 457-466.

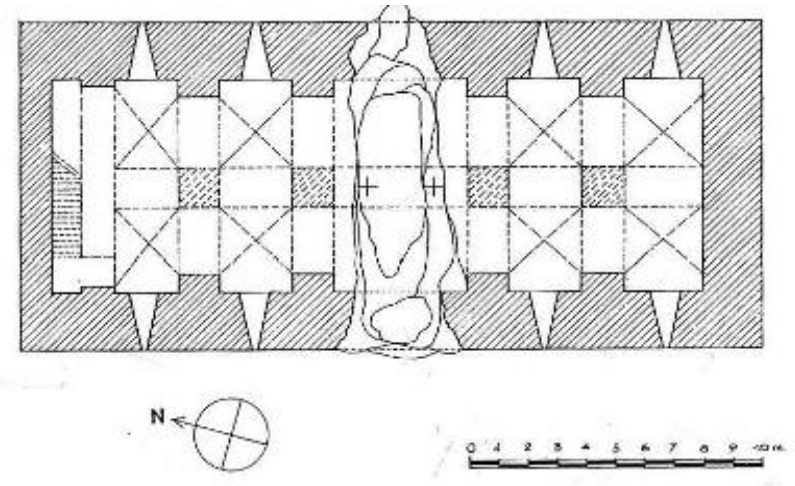
_____. "İznik Tiatro Kazısı 1986." *Kazı Sonuçları Toplantısı* IX (1987): 299-325.

Zafeiris, Konstantinos. "A reappraisal of the Chronicle of Theodore of Kyzikos." *BZ* 103 (2010): 773-790.

_____. "The issue of the Authorship of the Synopsis Chronike and Theodore Skoutariotes." *Revenue des études Byzantines* 69 (2011): 253-263.

VI. Catalog

Detailed description of the Palace of Nymphaion



Plan published by Tatiana Kirilova Kirova[615]

Ground plan

Ground plans and descriptions of the central palace building in Kemalpaşa are available in the publications of Semavi Eyice from 1958 and Tatiana Kirova from 1972.[616] A further analysis, based on these ground plans, can be found in the article of Hans Buchwald, who visited the site as well some time before 1979.[617] The following examination will deal with these publications and additional photographic material taken by myself in May 2005 and March 2008.

At first sight, detectable on the ground plan, is the quite symmetrical and clear architectural design: two axes, one north-south and the other east-west, provide a simple and concise structure. The plan shows a rectangular-shaped building; it consists of

[615] Kirova, "Un palazzo," illustration page 282.

[616] Eyice, "Le Palais byzantin de Nymphaion près Izmir," 150-153; Kirova, "Un palazzo," 282, the ground plans given in these two articles are almost identical, both scholars proposed the same solutions concerning the inner space and entrances. As will be discussed below, these ground plans reveal some problems.

[617] Buchwald, "Lascarid Architecture," 264, stated that a solution for the inner space organization cannot be proposed without excavation and explicitly dismissed the previous published solutions, consequently he did not publish a ground plan. A plan of the first floor is available in his article. None of these authors explained explicitly how they analyzed the place. Whether an architect accompanied them or how the surveys were organized must remain open at this point.

longitudinal sides of approximately 25m that have a little more than twice the length of the narrow sides of about 11.5m. The outer walls to the east, south, and west are quite massive; each wall measures at least a third of the inner space, approximately 2 meters at the thickest parts. The wall to the north contains the inner stairway and is therefore not as massive as the others; this issue will be discussed below. The windows on the ground level are open to the outside in narrow embrasures and widen toward the interior. They exist only in the longitudinal walls to the east and west; four windows each are set symmetrically on both sides. The distance between the two inner windows on each side is larger than between the inner and outer windows, probably because an entry was placed on the east-west axis between them at the same distance.[618]

The inscribed wall pilasters between the windows, which protrude into the inner space and divide the ground floor hall into compartments, are a problematic element in the published ground plans.[619] According to Eyice and Kirova, these pilasters along with additional inscribed piers supported the vaulting system. This created an inner space of an entrance hall and two bays each, north and south. But, as Hans Buchwald mentioned correctly in his descriptions, this special feature of wall pilasters on the ground level cannot be seen since rubble and earth cover most of the inner wall; the upper visible remains do not provide insight into the inner space organization and cannot be analyzed unless they were excavated.[620] Thus, the pilasters and piers of the ground plan can only be accepted as a possible solution for the inner space design, they cannot be taken for granted.

As mentioned, the outside walls are quite thick in comparison to the width of the building. As will be discussed below, each floor with the exception of the highest was planned with a vaulted ceiling from the beginning. Therefore the walls, which have no buttresses on the outside, had to be constructed solidly so that they would be able to support three vaulted ceilings. In general the solution of a vaulted roof is more stable as regards, for instance, earthquakes than a simple wooden construction. It prevents

[618] Unlike the windows, the construction of the entrance has not survived and can only be assumed by examination of the surface of the walls. Therefore see the description of the façade in the next unit.

[619] Here Buchwald, "Lascarid Architecture," 264, n18, announced doubts whether pilasters on the ground floor can indeed be detected without excavation, since the interior is filled almost up to the first floor with fallen rubble and earth.

[620] On the other hand, here Buchwald is not quite precise. Even though he states that the construction of the ground level cannot be seen, he mentions the lack of wall pilasters and a probable barrel vault on this floor: Buchwald, "Lascarid Architecture," 264, especially n18.

possible destruction through fire. Thus, the decision for a vaulted system can be taken as the need to have a safe and stable building. The fact that it is still standing up to the third floor can be taken as proof of its success.

Façade

The façades of the building are still in quite good shape; up to the second floor the original design can still be recognized. All four walls have plain surfaces and the corners survive as right angles. This observation leads to the conclusion that the palace was never connected to another building or one part of a palace complex: this edifice was erected as an independent, single construction.[621] The northern wall is the only one which has to some extent collapsed down to the ground level in its inner part, which might be connected to the integrated stairway in this wall.[622] All four sides provide the same features of the material and surface design used.

South façade (Fig. Nymph. 1)

The southern façade, one of the narrow sides of the building, is the most intact at massive white stone ashlars which are equal in height and differ in length. Thus, clear layers provide a uniform construction of around ten courses that form the ground floor from the outside (Fig. Nymph. 5).[623] Between the ashlars small rocks and bricks fill the horizontal and vertical interstices, but without an additional visual effect.[624] Above the last stone layer of the ground floor on the southwest corner of the southern wall a *spolium* can be detected: a marble plate is incorporated into the closing layer of the ground floor (Fig. Nymph. 6).[625]

The façade changes from the first level to the top of the building: stone layers no longer consist of single blocks but of various smaller ashlars and crude stones, alternating with layers of brick. These brick layers are made from four, five or six bricks, one upon the other with mortar in between. Both the brick and stone layers are

[621] Further buildings cannot be excluded, however, the walls of the monument do not show any traces of annexes. On the contrary, the palace seems to have been erected as a single monument block.

[622] Since the stairway, which will be discussed below, hollowed the northern wall, it is not as massive as the other walls. Damage caused by earthquakes, for instance, affected this part of the building more than others.

[623] The amount of strata depends on each side whether the foundation layers are still visible or not and how much the building has sunk into the ground.

[624] The bricks can only been seen if the observer is very close to the building. A visual effect, like the alternate brick and stone layers of the three upper floors, can be excluded.

[625] This detail was not mentioned so far in the secondary literature. Further investigation was not possible because of the height and the fence construction right in front of the building, but from the pictures I have taken it seems that the present bottom side of the plate is carved. Whether this might be a helpful indication concerning the dating, etc., must at this point remain open.

each of equal width on the same floor and the contrasting colors of the strata are clearly visible from afar. From the first floor up to the third both layers are increasingly being reduced in scale, which intensifies the optical effect of an extremely high building.

Two huge window openings are set in the first floor. The frames are no longer intact, but compared with the inner surface the construction is clearly visible. The masonry provides no change in style, from the outside neither arcades nor a different stone decoration are detectable. From the second and third floor not much has survived. On both corners the masonry sticks up quite high, whereas the space above the windows of the first floor has collapsed. A possible explanation of the cave-in might be that the upper floors also had the same design of windows, which made the construction fragile.

West façade (Fig. Nymph. 2)

The longitudinal western wall provides the best-preserved second floor of all four sides. According to the surface, the style of the ground floor is identical with the southern side: massive stone ashlars are layered one above the other. The windows of the ground floor, which are open only a slit to the outside, are hardly detectable from a distance of about 15 m. The huge triangular hole in the center of the ground floor that starts with a width of approximately two and a half meters at the ground up to the peak in two-meter height is dominant on this level. The previous secondary literature suggested an entrance here, parallel to its counterpart on the eastern wall.[626] No one, however, discussed in detail the remaining filling of the western wall, which can clearly be seen in the middle of the opening (Fig. Nymph. 8). In my opinion, assuming that the filling is *in situ* and is evidence for the former construction, an entry is impossible to reconstruct here; there is simply not enough space for it.[627]

The first floor surface follows the same masonry as on the southern façade: small white stone layers alternate with brick continuing just after the last stone layer of the ground floor. Four windows of smaller height, two each to the northern and southern sides, frame the remains of a double window opening in the center of the first floor, a so-called *bifora*. The double window is somewhat higher than the four windows to the

[626] So did Buchwald, "Lascarid Architecture," 266. Kirova, "Un palazzo," 282, expressed doubts whether the building could have been entered from both sides, but she did not discuss the issue in particular and did not connect her doubts to identifiable details.

[627] Compared to the east façade, where no filling remains at the same place. the situation creates the possibility of an entry. Also, the shapes of the openings on both sides are different: whereas the eastern hole is quite rectangular and the same width at the upper boundary, the break on the western side becomes narrower the higher it is. Therefore, instead of an entrance, I would suggest that another tiny window was here or simply closed wall, which was destroyed later on by accident.

sides. Both its compartments are close together, so that the small frame between them has not survived and is only detectable in the upper closing frame. There the form of a double arcade construction is still visible.[628]

The floors differ in height; they decrease in height from one floor to the next. The second floor, according to the size of the windows, is shorter than the first floor. Also, the strata of stone are not as broad as in the first floor masonry. The window system of the first floor seems to have been repeated here, although this cannot be established with certainty since the upper closing frame of the windows has not survived. Four smaller window openings are detectable to the north and south exactly above those of the first floor. The central space has collapsed and a gap similar to the size of the *bifora* has remained.

The third floor, again somewhat shorter than the previous one, can hardly be analyzed properly, since the frames of the windows are too fragmentary. Whether a row of six equal windows or the pattern of the lower floors was chosen cannot be stated clearly; however, the latter seems more plausible. Between the outer and inner windows fragments of the masonry did survive, whereas the central space has collapsed completely. As Buchwald has already stated, based on the photographs taken by Edwin Freshfield in 1886, probably the building was never higher than what can still be seen.[629]

North façade (Fig. Nymph. 3)

The northern wall, the other narrow side of the building, is the most poorly preserved side: a huge gap is broken into the wall down to its ground level, framed by the still standing corners. The northwest corner is preserved up to the third level and creates one of the highest still standing points of the building, whereas the northeastern corner only remains to the top of the first floor. The design of the masonry follows the walls described above: the ground floor is erected by white ashlars in equal-sized layers. The first floor differs in its alternating stone and brick layers, detectable only in the narrow parts that are left on the sides. Due to the fragmentary preservation nothing can be said regarding windows, etc.

[628] Which was clearly observed by Buchwald, "Lascarid Architecture," 266.

[629] Buchwald, "Lascarid Architecture," 266; he suggests a timber roof as the upper covering construction. He based this argument on the missing pilasters on the inner wall surface; since this is connected to the interior design, it will bediscussed again below.

East façade (Fig. Nymph. 4)

The east façade follows the same masonry technique and used the same material as are described above. The design and style of the eastern side are comparable to its western counterpart; here also a window front dominates the façade. The southern wall survives up to the third floor; the northern corner is still standing to the first level of the building.

On the ground floor a huge opening is broken into the wall, approximately three meters high, measuring between three and four meters at the bottom, and becoming slightly narrower in the upper part. As discussed above, an entrance into the building has been suggested here.[630] The original form of the doorframe did not survive, so the entrance can only be an assumption. Since the ground floor is made of such massive stone ashlars and survived in quite good condition presuming that an entrance existed on the ground level here would have been the most possible space.

The first floor provides six almost equal-sized window openings that are placed symmetrically as are the windows on the western side. The two southern openings are a little larger at the bottom, but this seems to have been caused by poor preservation. Since the surviving frame between the central openings is quite massive, probably the solution of the *bifora* was not repeated here; instead, all windows were designed in the same way.

From the second floor the wall has collapsed for the most part; viewing this level from the southeastern to the northeastern corner, the wall is broken horizontally at the base of the second floor before the windows are incorporated into the masonry. Regarding the overall symmetrical character of the building and the remains that are left on this level, here I would also suggest six equal-sized windows parallel to their counterparts on the west. Indications of this are remains of the frame to the southern side, which is still standing quite high, and lower remains between the two central windows and their southern and northern neighbors. Whether the two central windows formed a *bifora* is impossible to assess. All that is left of the third floor is the southeastern corner.

Some remarks are necessary here concerning the previous literature: Semavi Eyice detected a decorative element on the eastern surface close to the southeastern

[630] Buchwald, "Lascarid Architecture," 264; Kirova, "Un palazzo," 282.

corner. This element consists of three bricks that fill the interstice between two smaller ashlars in one of the first strata of the first floor. The unusual decorative element is the arrangement of these bricks: one larger one oriented vertically and two smaller ones branching from it to the top (Fig. Nymph. 7). Eyice interpreted this decoration as a stylistic element typical of this period, which was planned as a motif for the whole surface, but then was given up due to time pressure and lack of expensive material.[631] In his opinion this part of the masonry was done in the earliest stage of bringing up the walls of the first floor.

If so, this can only be taken as an assumption. He explained this motif as of typical Byzantine style of that period, but unfortunately without quoting further comparable examples of other monuments. Agreeing with that interpretation, Hans Buchwald mentions that bricks used on the outer wall surface sometimes emulate letters of the Greek alphabet.[632]

The materials used for the inner walls are the same as those used for the outer ones: stone, brick, and mortar. As will be described below, however, the arrangement of these materials differs depending on the construction. Bricks in combination with mortar were used for several vaulting solutions, whereas small stone and brick layers form the plain surfaces of the inner walls. The huge stone ashlars can still be seen for each flooring layer and incorporated into the important carrying frames such as pilasters and the inner wall of the staircase.

On all sides of each floor sockets can be seen within the masonry, even at places where the surface of the wall is intact otherwise. They are all more or less of the same size and appear at similar places, for instance at the pilasters or next to the windows (Figs.Nymph.10, 14, 15 and 19). These sockets are probably the remaining holes of a once existing internal wooden scaffolding that was either necessary for the erection of

[631] Eyice, "Le Palais," 153.

[632] In my opinion, both interpretations include some weak parts. To start with Hans Buchwald, the Greek alphabet in its purest form was invented as a system of letters easy to build out of stones or sticks and also easy to write by using only some horizontal and vertical lines. To interpret therefore an arrangement of some similar forms as an imitation of Greek letters, one should show at the same time that the arrangement is not just caused by accident. As I have tried to show in my descriptions, the main ornament of the building is the strong, two-color striped masonry, which gives a strong impression from afar. As will be discussed below in the architectural analysis, the character of the whole building is that of simplicity and unsophisticated solutions. Such a tiny arrangement of bricks can hardly be detected, even if the viewer is standing right in front of the building.

the building, or was part of the inner solution and remained throughout the habitation of the building.

Ground Floor

As mentioned above, the inner arrangement of the ground level cannot be analyzed extensively since most of the inner space is under fill. To repeat the question of an entrance once more, probably one entrance was incorporated into the central space of the eastern wall; the remaining filling of the wall on the western side seems to prohibit a second entrance (Fig. Nymph. 8).

Although the triangular windows can be seen, the frame constructions around them are heavily damaged; it is impossible to ascertain whether pilasters were attached to the walls between them without excavation. However, part of the central space can better be observed since the level of the ground is lower there. Below the central windows of the first floor at the eastern wall, two remnants of narrow arches can be seen (Figs.Nymph.14 and 15). Below the *bifora* of the first floor on the western side a corresponding construction is visible, although not surviving in equal detail; here also two remnants of narrow arches can be observed (Fig. Nymph. 16 and 17). The space between the two arches on each wall measures a little more than one meter. On the eastern wall between the two arches a remnant of a somewhat different construction can be seen just above the supposed entrance (Fig. Nymph. 14). Stones and bricks protrude a little towards the inner space in an upward direction. By observation of the arrangement of bricks, these arches can be taken as remnants of cross vaults that covered the central space of the ground floor.[633] Considering the size of these arches, probably a subsidiary was needed in the middle of the entrance hall to carry the cross vault, this suggests that, contrary to the usual practice, the vaulting covered a long, narrow space.[634] In the space between the two narrow arches of the eastern side stands a remnant of a quite extensive arch, approximately 2 m wide, leading to the interior of the

[633] To repeat once more what can be seen here quite clearly: the arches are incorporated in such a way into the masonry that a later addition of these arches can be excluded. This feature can be observed on each arch that will be discussed below. The building was erected in one phase and not remodeled later.

[634] To repeat once more, this solution of the ground level especially is to a great extent only a theoretical possibility. Excavation would make it possible to detect whether central supporting systems were erected on ground floor level or not. Hans Buchwald has already correctly pointed out the near impossibility of a proper evaluation of the ground floor. As for omitting the examination of the ground floor completely, in my opinion too many elements are detectable and at least should be opened for further discussions.

building. Probably this arch covered the whole space of the entrance and was based on a subsidiary support, maybe a pier, in the middle of the hall.

What is clearly visible on the photographic material is that the level of the two narrow arches does not correspond with the flooring of the first level. In other words, here, above the central space, the height of the flooring is somewhat higher than on the southern and northern parts due to the arches (Figs.Nymph.14, 15 and 16). The emphasis of the central space on the ground floor has an impact on the next floor; here one needed to climb up some stairs to reach the central space from the northern or southern spaces.

If this suggestion is so, the question is how these stairs could be integrated into the architectural solutions of the first floor. As this level they can be observed much better; an analysis of the inner design can be based on more solid ground. In accordance with the design of the ceiling, the floor was subdivided into a central, a northern, and a southern part. The central part was covered by one huge cross vault; an indication thereof is the missing pilaster between the central windows on one hand, and the setting of the bricks that create the arch on the other. The arch above the windows on the southern wall clearly indicates that a barrel vault spanned the whole space in the north-south direction, as seen with the interruption of the central cross vault. Thus, the smaller arches above the windows on the long sides of the building can be considered as underpitch vaults (smaller openings at the peak of the arch) that fit into the barrel vault and were supported by the pilasters. This suggests that a longitudinal hall with an architectural emphasis on the central axis was designed here, created by the cross vault as well as by the level a few steps higher than the rest of the floor. This design corresponds to the window constructions, since on the western side the *bifora* also emphasizes the central space. The central windows above the entrance on the eastern wall have quite a thick frame between them. This place, as has been shown, was probably higher and only reachable by stairs. Since this building is considered as the temporary residence of a Byzantine emperor, of course the question of a throne or other imperial seat is implied. If the inner design was as described above or similar, the best place for an imperial seat would, in my opinion, be the space above the entrance on the first floor. As the wall at this place is quite plain and the space between the windows wide enough, the back of a chair would have fit the space there. It should be kept in mind, however, that this can only be an assumption based on assumptions.

First Floor

The inner surface of the first floor has survived in quite good condition. The height of the flooring, composed of white ashlars, is clearly visible approximately 70 cm under the window openings, nowadays soil and debris fill the building to approximately 30 cm below where the first floor ceiling would have been (Fig. Nymph. 16). To the south two huge windows dominate the wall, imbedded into the masonry without detectable window frames. The masonry consists of small white stone layers alternating with layers of one course of brick. At the southwest corner at the height of the windows of the first floor remnants of a layer of plaster are visible covering parts of the inner wall surface (Fig. Nymph. 18). Above the windows one huge arch, elaborated in typical Byzantine brick-mortar technique, is incorporated into the masonry and covers the whole wall surface of the first floor from one corner to the other (Fig. Nymph. 9).

On the western wall the design of the six described window openings is even more clearly visible. Between the outer windows and the second windows from the outside window pilasters are attached to the wall, just as between the central windows and their flanking neighbor windows to the outside. Only between the two central windows, where the frame did not survive at all, is a pilaster impossible to reconstruct due to lack of space and can therefore be excluded. All windows are imbedded into stone-brick masonry and framed above by an arch of brick and mortar; only the *bifora*, formed by the two central windows, is covered by one huge arch. These arches rest on pilasters made of stone ashlars, smaller stones and bricks (Fig. Nymph. 10).

Compared with the western side, the eastern wall did not survive in such good quality, however, the same features can be seen as on the western side: pilasters framing all the windows, excluding only the space between the central ones and all windows covered by single arches, except the central windows, which are covered both by one arch. Parallel with the *bifora* on the western wall, also the central windows of the eastern side are designed differently: the frame between them survived and it is clearly visible that these were created as single windows although they are covered by one arch (Fig. Nymph. 19).

To the north the wall has collapsed and provides a view into the inner structure. Embedded in the northwestern corner at the height of the second floor a narrow sloping vault formed of brick and mortar in a small niche indicates the location of the staircase (Fig. Nymph. 11). Its direction points upward, but not enough of the vaulting has

survived to reconstruct its exact course. A similar corresponding construction somewhat lower is detectable on the opposite side; here the rudiments are more fragmentary (Fig. Nymph. 12).

The elaboration of the walls to the sides of the staircase is questionable. Whether windows were incorporated to the northern part can probably never be answered. Assuming that a light source was needed, it might be that tiny, narrow windows such as those of the ground floor were used here as well.

Second Floor

From the second floor the corners on the southern side and parts of the walls to the east and west remain. As far as can be detected, the inner design of the first floor was repeated here: above the pilasters of the first floor pilasters were also attached to the wall between the windows on the second level (Fig. Nymph. 13). These also supported vaulting systems; rudiments of brick vaults on their upper parts are still in situ. The height of this level is distinct from the first floor: the second floor is a little lower than the first one.

Third Floor

Parts of the third floor have survived on both corners of the south side and on the whole western side including the northwest corner (Figs.Nymph.1 and 2). Generally, the remains of the third level of the building are quite poor. One can base assumptions of the inner design only on some fragments, for instance, the whole longitudinal eastern wall provides no remains of the third level. What can be detected on the western side are the different solutions for the inner space of this level: no pilasters are attached to the wall here; the masonry between the windows is flat. Thus, the design of the first and second level was not repeated (Fig. Nymph. 20). Also, no rudiments of arches or vaults can be observed on these parts. How the design of the northern and southern side was constructed can no longer be detected.

Vaulting

Each window was embedded in a niche, which started at floor level and was framed on the wall surface by pilasters on the side and an arch above (Fig. Nymph. 10).[635] The arches can be considered as the rudiments of the vaulted ceiling.

[635] As has been shown already, the design of the central windows is excluded here.

Kirova and Buchwald have both published plans of the first floor indicating a suggested vaulting system. The solution of Hans Buchwald was a groined vault for the inner space and a barrel vault each for the northern and southern parts.[636] Kirova suggested cross vaults for the three parts, one in the center and one each on the two sides, for which she gives no explanation concerning the arches above the windows on the long sides and the pilasters that carried them.

At the height of the first floor, the northern wall provides the remains of the vaulted staircase. The narrow barrel vault on the western side was settled somewhat above the upper window frames pointing even further upwards, whereas the niche of the staircase vault on the eastern part was at the same level as the windows. The eastern part seems to be the arrival point of the staircase; here one reached the first floor from downstairs and turned through an opening into the inner room. The western vault, pointing upward, seems to be the one that leads to the second floor. As the starting point, this staircase is already settled at a level higher than the level of the first floor; a probable solution seems to be a second, inner staircase. Therefore, the arrival point on the first floor is at the same time a continuing way up to the next level. As Buchwald has already suggested, a staircase consisting of two flights seems here probable, one flight integrated into the northern wall and the other one parallel inside of the building.[637] Since the first floor is quite high, two flights even seem to be necessary to use the staircase without too much effort. How the staircase on the following level continued is impossible to say due to missing traces.

Continuing with the second level, the repetition of the pilasters indicates that this level was also vaulted, otherwise pilasters would have been omitted. Since only small parts of the floor have survived, suggestions concerning the interior can only be vague. Frames of presumed windows on the western side are still standing quite high, yet on the eastern side only remnants of the ones toward the south end of the wall survived. This might be due to different window constructions on both sides or to the quality of the material used, or simply due to the fate of preservation. Since at least two fragments

[636] Buchwald examined the bricks left as rudiments of the arch and suggested here a vaulting system of a groined vault above the central space, since the bricks were in an unusual position, "Lascarid Architecture," 265. Whether indeed the bricks lead to this assumption, I am unable to judge, but that a pointed vaulting system was constructed here and not a barrel vault, which would have needed a flanking wall as support, seems to be the common opinion.

[637] Buchwald, "Lascarid Architecture," 265, especially n19.

of frames are still detectable on the eastern wall, probably the design of the first floor was repeated at the second level.

The third level, as can be seen on the western side, is the only one without pilasters. As this seems to be the final level, the solution for the roof was probably quite light, therefore a support system was not needed. This assumption also explains why no arches or remnants of vaults are observable; the floor was simply constructed in a different way than the others.

Images