

THE TURKS IN EUROPE (1305-13) AND THE SERBS IN ASIA MINOR (1313)

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Modern historians have often deplored the fact that the Balkan Christians were unable to set aside their differences during the 14th century and create a common front that would have halted the Turkish onslaught. Moreover, the bitter struggle for supremacy in the Balkans at the time of Stephen Dushan, which coincided with a catastrophie Byzantine civil war, did not leave much scope for turning against the Turks.

Yet, already before the irresistible rise of the Ottomans, some emirates of Asia Minor, especially those of Mentеше and of Aydin, had wrought havoc all over the Aegean with naval raids. But it was even earlier, at the time of the Catalan company, that the European parts of the empire had their first taste of what was to come from the Turks. And for once, there was an effort not only to push these new invaders away from Europe but also to strike a blow at their bases in Asia Minor.

There had been previous attempts to push back the Turks. The emperor Andronikos II first tried Alan mercenaries against them, but without success. Then came the Catalans, who conducted very successful operations in Asia Minor during the summer of 1304. But immediately after their departure, the Turks captured Ephesos (October 1304). What is more, in the spring 1305, the Company broke with the Byzantines and embarked upon the great adventure that would lead to the capture of Athens six years later.

It was during the Catalan adventure that the Turks eventually crossed to Europe. The Byzantine historian Nikephoros Gregoras says that the Catalans, who were at Kallipolis, first invited 500 of them as allies from the opposite side (of the Dardanelles), i. e. from Asia Minor, and that many more volunteered their services.¹ In fact this second group also arrived in 1305. They did not ask for any money; all they wanted was to keep the booty that they would gain, giving only one fifth to the Catalans;² eight hundred horse and two thousand foot joined

1. GREGORAS, v. I, p. 228-229: διαπρεσβεύονται περι συμμαχίας πρὸς τοὺς ἀντιπέραις οἰκοῦντας τῶν Τούρκων καὶ λαμβάνουσι τότε μὲν πεντακοσίους ὀπλίτας... μετ' οὐ πολὺ δὲ καὶ ἑτέρους οὐκ ὀλίγους αὐτομόλους ἰόντας.

2. This is an interesting arrangement, apparently in accordance with the law of Islam,

the Company under this agreement.³ According to another Byzantine historian, George Pachymeres, they originally came from the clan of the Aydinoğlu and were accompanied by many Greeks from Asia Minor.⁴ Later, after the battle of Apros (1307), they were joined by a corps of Christianised Tourkopouloi who had deserted the emperor. It is not impossible – but it cannot be demonstrated either – that some Ottomans had joined forces with them.⁵

These Turkish contingents stayed with the Company for quite some time and impressed Muntaner with their valour, loyalty and obedience, as well as with their efficiency in conducting looting expeditions in neighbouring – and not so neighbouring – regions. They also impressed the Greeks with their destructive raids, and with their desire to make permanent conquests so far away from home.

which stipulated that one fifth of the spoils of war should go to Allah, that is the State. Cf. MAJID KHADDURI, *War and Peace in the Law of Islam*, (Baltimore and London 1955) p. 120 ff. In this first phase, the Turks were simple auxiliaries and consequently they had to recognise that the Company was the “State” that employed them. But this practice was applied by other powers in the region: the very Christian Byzantine emperor also required one fifth of the booty gained by his soldiers; see PSEUDO-KODINOS, *Traité des offices*, ed. J. VERPEAUX, (Paris 1966) p. 251.

3. MUNTANER, *Crònica*, ch. 228, p. 75-77 = *The Chronicle of Muntaner*, transl. by LADY GOODENOUGH, II, (London 1921) p. 542-544. – Pachymeres calls the Turks “allies” (σύμμαχοι), Gregoras “mercenary allies” (μισθοφορικὴν συμμαχίαν), but I think that Muntaner, who was an eyewitness, describes the agreement more accurately. According to PACHYMERES (1835), v. II, p. 572, there was an initial agreement giving the Turks half the booty, but the Catalans cheated and gave them only one third of it.

4. PACHYMERES (1835), v. II, p. 585: τῶν περὶ Ἀτίνην Περσῶν... ἐμξάντων καὶ Ῥωμαίων ἐξ Ἀνατολῆς... This is a noteworthy piece of information. The permanent conquest of Western Asia Minor by the Turks was then very recent: Ephesos had fallen not even one year before the events that we describe here (October 1304); and the fall of its hinterland could not by any means antedate the operations of Alexios Philanthropenos (1293-1295). The collaboration of the conquered populations with the Turks in operations directed against the Byzantine empire is significant in showing that an anti-Constantinopolitan ideology prevailed then in Asia Minor, an ideology which certainly facilitated the Turkish conquest and which, combined with a certain greed for booty, motivated the participation of Christians in overseas looting operations.

5. A persistent note of the Greek Short Chronicles places the first crossing of the Turks in the West (or in Europe, or in the “world”) in the year 6815 (= 1306/7); in some of them it is even mentioned that this was done by a son of Osman, named Süleyman, who remained as a governor for 21 years. See SCHREINER, *Kleinchroniken*, v. I, p. 451, 459, 461, 471, 493, 551, 571 and cf. v. II, p. 221-222. It is possible that we have here a confusion due to the fact that in 1307 the Turks advanced for the first time into western Thrace and Macedonia; and a confusion with events that followed the year 1347 (6855), when a Süleyman, son of sultan Orhan, eventually crossed to Europe as a supporter of Kantakouzenos and settled permanently on European soil waiting for the opportunity to conquer a strong point (which was to come with the capture of Tzympe and Kallipolis in 1352 and 1354).

Moreover, the Greek texts that we are going to examine in what follows, represent them as people attached to the principles of the Islamic religion and particularly motivated by the ideology of the *djihad*. This ideology, and the economic desire for booty, appear to be the main motives attracting the Turks to the service of any chieftain who conducted operations, mainly looting raids, against the infidel.

Thomas Magistros (the monk Theodoulos) describes how in 1308-1309 the Turks, then with the Catalans in Central Macedonia, sent ambassadors repeatedly with demands that the city (Thessalonica?) be delivered to them forthwith and that its inhabitants become their subjects; otherwise, they threatened to conquer the city and destroy it down to the foundations, to massacre the inhabitants, in particular those who resisted them, to take thousands of slaves, to loot everything, to destroy all agricultural production, to destroy all churches and houses, ports and graves, porticos and amphitheatres, among other frightful things.⁶ I believe that the rhetoric of Thomas Magistros accurately describes the Turkish proposals. According to a tenet of Islamic Law, the Turks, before launching their attack on the city, proposed surrender to the inhabitants and status as *zimmi* in return for security in their "blood and property". As these inhabitants were Christians, there could be no question of demanding their conversion to Islam.⁷ If this invitation, which had normally to be repeated three times, was ignored, then the Muslim army was allowed to show no mercy to the enemy: according to the usual Turkish tactics, this attack would start with the destruction of the countryside and the isolation of the city; then, when the city was taken, the conquerors would feel free to kill whoever they wanted, to seize all that they would find, to carry off the entire population into slavery, to destroy all buildings that they deemed necessary for destruction. It is clear that the Turks, although auxiliaries of the Catalans, were planning their own conquests, to be made in the name of Islam, and that in the process they obeyed the precepts of Islamic Law while fulfilling their obligation as Muslims to conduct the *djihad*. This was in 1308-1309.

Eventually the Turks parted company with the Catalans. According to Gregoras, this would have happened before the company crossed into Thessaly (1309); according to Muntaner⁸ and, most importantly, to Marino Sanudo, who was

6. Letter of Thomas Magistros to the monk Joseph concerning the attack of the Italians (= Catalans) and of the Persians (= Turks), in *PG*, v. 145, c. 444-445: (the Turks) κήρυκας τινας ἡμῖν ἐκπέμπουσιν ὁσημέραι... δεινότατα πάντων αἰτοῦντας· κἄν μὴ τὰ βουλευόμενα πέρας ὡς τάχιστα σχῆ (τοῦτο δ' ἐστὶν ἐκόντας ὄντας παραδεδοκέναι σφίσι τὴν πόλιν καὶ μετὰ τῶν ὑποτεταγμένων φέρεσθαι), ἀτόπους τινὰς ἀπειλοῦσι πορθήσεις καὶ κατασκαφὰς γῆς, καὶ πόλεως ἀναστάσεις ἐκ βάθρων, καὶ τῶν ἐνοικούντων ὄλεθρον, καὶ δάκρυα καὶ σφαγὰς καὶ αἷμα καὶ φόνον, καὶ αἰχμαλώτους μυρίους, καὶ τραύματα τῶν ἀνθισταμένων, καὶ ἀπολωλότας ὑπὲρ τὸ πλῆθος, καὶ ἀγωγὴν σκυλευμάτων, καὶ καρπῶν ἀπάντων φθοράν, καὶ νεῶν καὶ οἰκῶν, καὶ λιμένων καὶ τάφων, καὶ στοῶν καὶ θεάτρων· καὶ πάνθ' ὁμοῦ τὰ φρικώδη.

7. KHADDURI, *War and Peace*, p. 96.

8. MUNTANER, *Crònica*, ch. 241, p. 109 = *The Chronicle*, p. 578. Muntaner describes

then serving at Negroponte, the parting of the ways took place after the victory of the Catalans over the duke of Athens on 15 March 1311. Jacoby has convincingly shown that this last date is the correct one.⁹ The testimony of another contemporary, Thomas Magistros, leads to the same conclusion. He describes how, after this victory, the Turks refused all lands and took only the movable part of the booty, especially all pieces of armour and all horses – which, taking into consideration the extent of the Frankish defeat of 1311, must have added up to objects of considerable value.¹⁰

It seems that new business was then opening up. According to an obscure passage of Thomas Magistros, the Serbian kral Stephen Milutin was making preparations against Byzantium and for that reason he wanted to take the unemployed Turks into his service. The Byzantine general Chandrenos, who had successfully pushed the Company and its Turkish allies towards Thessaly and Southern Greece, opposed this arrangement as much as he could and with successful stratagems managed “to kill many enemies and to put to flight the others, with insignificant losses on his part”.¹¹

The subsequent fate of the Turks is known from Gregoras.¹² The Tourkopouloi deserters, 1,000 horse and 500 foot strong, under the command of Melik, submitted to the Serbian kral, gave up their armament and became farmers, with the promise to serve as reservists when asked to do so. It seems that this arrangement did not proceed smoothly, since Serbian sources inform us that in order to subdue them, Milutin had to crush them in battle and then disperse them inside his state.¹³

how the Turks refused to stay in Attica although they had been promised lands by the victorious Company. Had they accepted that offer, however, they would have had to submit to a Christian state.

9. D. JACOBY, *Catalans, Turcs et Vénitiens en Romanie (1305-1332): un Nouveau Témoignage de Marino Sanudo Torsello*, *StuMe*, ser. iii, 15/1 (1974) 230-234.

10. *PG*, v. 145, c. 364: Οἱ μὲν ἐκ Σικελίας ὀρμώμενοι τὰς πόλεις ἐλόντες ... ἵπποι δὲ καὶ ὄπλα καὶ πᾶσά τις πρὸς μάχην παρασκευὴ Πέρσας ἦν. GREGORAS, v. I, p. 248-249, also insists on the friendly sharing of the “movable” booty between Catalans and Turks when they parted company (αἰχμαλώτους... λάφυρα).

11. *PG*, v. 145, c. 364: Τοῦ δὲ Τριβαλλῶν ἄρχοντος τὰ πρὸς Ῥωμαίους ἠθετηκότος, (Milutin was the son-in-law of the Byzantine emperor, but at that time he was still involved in the anti-Byzantine alliance led by Charles de Valois) καὶ διὰ τοῦτο τοὺς μὲν Πέρσας ὑποποιήσασθαι (the edition has *περὶ* ὑποκίσασθαι which makes no sense; it should be corrected into *ὑποποιήσασθαι* or *παραποιήσασθαι*) πειρωμένους, τῶν δ' ἡμετέρων ἦκιστ' ἐόντων (ἐπὶ γὰρ ἡμῶν ἐπειράτο), ὀπλων ἐδέησε καὶ χειρῶν... Χανδρηνός, τοῦτο μὲν στρατηγικαῖς ἐπινοίαις, τοῦτο δὲ χειρῶν εὐψυχία καὶ τόλμη... τῶν μὲν οἰκείων μηδὲν ἀποβεβληκώς, τῶν δὲ πολεμίων τοὺς μὲν πλείους διεργασμένος, τραυματίας δὲ καὶ φυγάδας τοὺς λοιποὺς εἰργασμένος.

12. GREGORAS, v. I, p. 254-258.

13. See for example the *Life of Stephen Milutin* by Danilo: a victory of the kral over the “Persians and the Agarenes”: ARHIEPISKOP DANILO, *Životi kraljeva i arhiepiskopa Srpskih*, ed. N. RADOJČIĆ, (Beograd 1935) p. 107-110. Cf. DÖLGER, *Regesten*, v. IV, no

The rest, 1,300 horse and 800 foot, under the command of Halil (Halil Edje in the Turkish sources¹⁴) struck a deal with the Byzantines: they promised to leave them in peace if the Byzantines allowed them to cross the passes of Christoupolis (Kavalla) and provided them with the ships necessary to carry them, together with their booty, to Asia Minor. But when they arrived at Kallipolis, the Byzantine military changed their mind and a confrontation ensued. The Turks occupied a fortress and used it as their base, brought in some reinforcements from Asia Minor, and won a major victory over a Byzantine army led by emperor Michael IX, capturing many distinguished prisoners as well as the emperor's tent with even his crown. This must have occurred in late summer 1311.

From then on, for a period that lasted not quite two years, the Turks laid waste the whole of Thrace, to the point that the Byzantines, shut inside the fortified cities, were no longer able to cultivate or sow their fields.¹⁵ The situation was becoming desperate for the Byzantine government, the more so now that the Turks were entrenched on European soil, their number constantly increased by the addition of volunteers attracted by booty as well as by desire to participate in the holy war. This is how the recruitment of the Turks is described by the Byzantine emperor in a chrysobull of 1313: "Numerous were their compatriots who came to join them again and again, the ones being added to the others, and larger numbers came to be added to the numerous ones that were already there, and their power increased much; and this was bad, because our forces were not yet organised to face them. They could not be contained by any means...".¹⁶

Moreover, the Turks were known to be efficient and highly motivated soldiers, in their desire for material as well as for spiritual gains. Thomas Magistros describes them as being particularly ferocious warriors, who took pleasure in killing; he dwells on their unlimited greed and on their readiness to die in order to protect not only their own possessions but also (and especially) to grab someone else's goods. "In truth they find that it is very dishonourable for them not to die in war, not to have the frenzy of war operated over their bodies¹⁷; this is something that

2344 (a Byzantine embassy of congratulation for this event is dated towards the end of 1312). Danilo was then hegoumenos of the Chilandar monastery and wrote Milutin's Life before he became Archbishop of Serbia (14 September 1324), most probably in the early 1320s: G. L. MCDANIEL, *The Lives of the Serbian Kings and Archbishops by Danilo II: Textual History and Criticism*, unpublished doctoral dissertation submitted at the University of Washington in 1980, p. 136-137. Cf. also *infra*.

14. WITTEK, Yazijioghlu, p. 662-3.

15. GREGORAS, v. I, p. 262: ὡς μήτε ἀροτριᾶν, μήτε σπείρειν τῶν πόλεων ἐξιόντας δύνασθαι Ῥωμαίους ἐφ' ὅλοις ἔτει παρὰ βραχὺ δυσί. This phrase, taken literally, would mean that the Turks started their raids after the harvest of the fields (July), but before their sowing for the year to come (autumn).

16. Actes de Chilandar I. Actes grecs, ed. L. PETIT, in *VV*, 17 (1911), Priloženje 1, no 26, l. 22-27 = DÖLGER, *Regesten*, no 2348.

17. The phrase is obscure. It seems to refer to specific rites reserved to those who fall

they often say to each other as an insult.”¹⁸ This is an obvious reference to the ideology of the *djihad* and to the individual desire to obtain a martyr’s death while fighting the infidel.

They also impressed the Byzantines with their customs and rituals. When, in the spring of 1313, one raiding party had been intercepted by the Byzantine army, the Turks used the wagons transporting the booty to create a “fortified camp” in the well known manner of the nomads. In Gregoras’ description it is added that afterwards the Turks threw dust on their heads, raised their hands to heaven (in prayer, presumably) and then took up their weapons to fight.¹⁹ These rituals may reflect a Shiite mentality²⁰ of constant mourning.²¹

All this happened at a time when the anti-Byzantine alliance of Charles of Valois had fallen apart. The Byzantine emperor asked for military assistance from his son-in-law, the kral Stephen Milutin, with whom relations had ostensibly been restored in the meantime, and who had already subdued the Turks who took refuge in his state. A Serbian cavalry corps, 2,000 strong, came to support the Byzantines, who had already won a first victory over the Turks and had forced them to retreat to their fortified refuge on the Kallipolis peninsula. Byzantine and Genoese ships completed the blockade by cutting off communication by sea. Thus the Turks, after some unsuccessful attempts to break free, decided to surrender to the Genoese in the hope that they would not be as harsh to them, since they had not suffered at their hands. But in the night, many by mistake fell into the hands of the Byzantines, who slaughtered them and took all their posses-

in war as martyrs. But this is not a regular Muslim practice, at least as far as I have managed to find in KHADDURI, *War and peace*, p. 62: the martyrs of the *djihad* must be buried where they fell without being brought to a mosque in order to be washed. One may wonder whether this is not a reminiscence of customs of Central Asia, where frenzied ceremonies, including horse races, banquets, dances, etc., were performed at funerals: see J.-P. ROUX, *La mort chez les peuples altaïques anciens et médiévaux*, (Paris 1963) p. 166, 168.

18. PG, v. 145, c. 441: καὶ τοῦτοις ὡς ἀληθῶς εἰς αἰσχιστον πίπτει τὸ μὴ πολέμῳ τεθνάναι, μηδὲ τάχεινον βακχεῖα τοῖς σώμασι τελεσθῆναι· καὶ τις ἤδη τοῦτο πολλάκις ἐτέρῳ εἰς ὄνειδος προὔτεινεν.

19. GREGORAS, v. I, p. 266: πρῶτα μὲν τὰς ἀμάξας κατὰ κύκλον στήσαντες... ἔπειτα κόνιν χεάμενοι κατὰ κεφαλῆς καὶ χεῖρας πρὸς οὐρανὸν ἀνατείναντες ἀνελάβοντο τὰ ὄπλα.

20. Is it noteworthy that in the year 1313 (AH 713) the Islamic month of Moharrem started on the 28th of April. The first decade of Moharrem is the period of remembrance par excellence for the Shiites. – Be that as it may, it has already been remarked that the Aydinoglus were Shiite: ZACHARIADOU, *Trade and Crusade*, p. 206, note 774.

21. The gesture of throwing dust on one’s head may also be seen as expression of celebration, or at least as a gesture performed before addressing God. This can be seen from a passage of the Memoirs of John Kantakouzenos: Umur Aydinoglu unexpectedly learned from an embassy that his dear friend John Kantakouzenos, whom he thought dead, was alive and well; immediately, “he threw dust on his head and expressed many thanks to God for these news” (κόνιν μὲν κατεχέατο τῆς κεφαλῆς καὶ Θεῷ πολλὰς ὠμολόγει χάριτας τῆς ἀγγελίας): see CANTACUZENUS, v. II, p. 384.

sions. Only some of the Turks who went to the Genoese galleys survived: the Genoese executed only those carrying many valuables (because they wanted to hide the existence of these valuables, which could be claimed by the Byzantines); the others they sold as slaves for their own profit.

This was a major victory and the court poet, Manuel Philes, wrote a poem addressed "to the emperor, when the barbarians were destroyed by our men in Aigos Potamoi and in Syke."²² Aigos Potamoi, to-day's Cimaliköy on the Kallipolis peninsula,²³ seems to have been the place of the Turkish defeat and massacre. Syke undoubtedly refers to Galata, opposite to Constantinople, where the Genoese would have delivered their prisoners to the emperor and where a second massacre seems to have taken place. Philes describes how Thrace was filled with the corpses of these barbarians who "came from the west", how this would be a lesson to the other barbarians, and how the emperor attributed this success to the help of the Virgin.²⁴

The poem of Philes concludes with a prayer to the Virgin on behalf of the emperor, in which he mentions a "successful attack in the ocean" conducted with the help of the Christians in order to sweep away any nation that foolishly ignores the Son of the Virgin.²⁵ This seems to be a reference to a naval expedition that was then in preparation.

And indeed a naval expedition there was. It is not mentioned by Nikephoros Gregoras, and his silence has caused historians to dismiss the information from other sources as exaggeration.²⁶ But these sources, Serbian, Greek and Turkish, are very reliable:

1. *Serbian sources*, i.e. (a) The biography of the Serbian Kral Stephen Milutin by Archbishop Danilo, to which we referred already,²⁷ and (b) the preface of a chrysobull of Milutin granting to the monastery of Chilandar on Mount Athos the village of Uljare.²⁸ This document has been considered by some specialists to be a forgery produced after the battle of Kossovo (1389). Both sources have been compared and analysed by I. Dujčev.²⁹

22. MANUELIS PHILAE, *Carmina*, ed. E. MILLER, v. I, (Paris 1855) p. 220-225: εἰς τὸν βασιλέα, ὅτε οἱ ἐν Αἰγὸς Ποταμοῖς καὶ ἐν τῇ Συκῇ βάρβαροι παρὰ τῶν ἡμετέρων ἀπώλοντο.

23. PAUL-WISSOWA, *Real-Encyklopaedie* I, 1894, 977.

24. This information completely agrees with Nikephoros Gregoras, who describes how Andronikos II, in his despair, had concluded that only divine help would allow him to get rid of these enemies.

25. MANUELIS PHILAE, v. I, p. 225: ἔως μετ' αὐτῶν ὑπὸ σοὶ τῶν φιλάτων, εἰς ὠκεανὸν εὐτυχῶς ἐπιδράμη· ὡς ἂν δι' αὐτοῦ πᾶν κατακλύσης γένος, ὃ τὸν σὸν ἠθέτησεν ἀφρόνως τόκον.

26. LAIOU, *Andronicus II*, p. 232-233.

27. Life of Stephen Milutin by Danilo: fighting the Turks in Asia Minor under the command of Novak Grebostrek: DANILO, *supra* note 13, p. 110-112.

28. Text easily available in Actes de Chilandar 2. Actes Slaves, ed. B. KORABLEV, *VV*, 19 (1915) Priloženie 1, no 18, esp. p. 432 ff.

29. I. DUJČEV, *La conquête turque et la prise de Constantinople dans la littérature*

2. *Greek sources*, i.e. two prefaces to chrysobulls of the emperor Andronikos II Palaiologos. (a) The first was issued in October 1313: to show his gratitude to the Serbian kral who had helped him against the Turks (the story is detailed in the preface), the emperor accedes to his request and gives the village of Koutzi in the Strymon to the Serbian monastery of Chilandar.³⁰ (b) The second chrysobull was issued in July 1317: for the same reasons (and with a similar preface) the emperor confirms all possessions of the monastery of Chilandar.³¹

3. *Turkish source*. The poet Enveri, who glorified the feats of Umur pasha of Aydin, speaks at the beginning of his epos of how Mehmed Aydinoglu, the founder of the dynasty, came to western Asia Minor as a lieutenant of Sasa beg, and how he conquered on his behalf the cities of Ayasoluq (Ephesos) and Keles (Kaloe). He then mentions an attack of the joint forces of Alans (Byzantine mercenaries whom we have already met), Greeks and Serbs, who came from the sea and who were finally repelled by the Aydinoglu and their army. At this moment there was also a quarrel between the Aydinoglu and Sasa, who sided with the Christians and was killed.³² These events are placed between the arrival of the Aydinoglu in the region (1304, fall of Ephesos) and the distribution of the emirate by Mehmed Aydinoglu to his sons (1320's).³³

According to these sources the events may be reconstructed as follows.

After Halil Edje and his men were annihilated, a second Serbian elite cavalry contingent arrived in Herakleia (Eregli), under the command of the nobleman Novak Grebostrek. That this was a second contingent is clearly stated in Serbian and in Greek sources (σύμμαχος αὐτοῦς ἑτέρα δύναμις οὐκ ἀγεννής). As there was no longer any enemy in Thrace, an expedition against the country of the Turks was organised, obviously the country whence the troops of Halil Edje mainly came, the land of Aydin. What happened there cannot be determined, since both sides, the Serbs and the Turks, claimed victory. The Byzantine emperor alone does not speak of any military triumph, probably because the results of this expedition fell short of his expectations.

That the expeditionary force won a battle against the Turks and looted their territory, as the Serbian sources claim, seems probable. The pressure on the Turks must have been strong enough to convince one of them, Sasa, to side with the Christians, in spite of the fact that he was a true believer in Islam, as Enveri stresses. But the expedition soon lost steam and finally left the land of Aydin without making any permanent gains – a fact that entitled the Aydinoglu to claim victory for their side.

slave contemporaine, *BSI*, 16 (1955) 318-326 (with complete bibliography and indication of other Serbian sources).

30. Actes de Chilandar I, no 26 = DÖLGER, *Regesten*, no 2348.

31. Actes de Chilandar I, no 32 = DÖLGER, *Regesten*, no 2390.

32. On the poorly known personality of Sasa see ZACHARIADOU, *Trade and Crusade*, p. 107-108.

33. MÉLIKOFF, *Destan*, p. 47-48; cf. LEMERLE, *Aydin*, p. 25 ff.

The chronology of these events is not open to doubt. The Turkish defeat started "almost two years after 1311" and was completed before October 1313 (the first Byzantine chrysobull). Moreover, two independent and very reliable Serbian sources, a manuscript colophon and an inscription from Nagoričino, state clearly that 1312/13 was the year in which the Serbian kral was victorious over the Turks.³⁴ Gregoras states that Halil's defeat occurred the year before the deposition of patriarch Niphon (11 April 1314),³⁵ that is in 1313. And a Greek Short Chronicle places [the destruction] of Halil in the year 1312/13.³⁶

An improvised overseas expedition? This is, I believe, precisely what happened. The Serbian cavalry was feudal in character, which meant that they had a contractual obligation towards their kral to serve him abroad for a limited number of days each year, after which the lord would have to pay them a salary if he wanted to keep them on campaign any further. The first Serbian contingent arrived in time to participate in the siege and annihilation of Halil Edje and his men, and to share in the spoils taken from them. But the second contingent, which obviously was dispatched in order to replace the first one (presumably neither the Serbian kral, nor the Byzantine emperor were willing to pay salaries³⁷) arrived after all was over. As this was a fresh army that joined the already mobilised Byzantines, with ships ready and available from the previous operation, an expedition may have been improvised against the territory of the enemies, the Turks of Aydin, whose morale could not but be shaken by the news of Halil Edje's disaster. This could simply have been a punitive attack, aimed, among other things, at booty. Or it could have been an attempt to test the Turkish defences in Western Asia Minor, which, as the Catalan expedition had shown in 1304, were not all that impregnable.

And so the operation was launched, made up of the Serbs, the Greeks and the Alan mercenaries. At first came success – looting and divisions among the Turks. But the resistance of the latter did not collapse; on the contrary it seems to have stiffened on the part of the Aydinoğlu. Time passed, and the Serbians had to return home; for their part, the Byzantines obviously did not feel that they were in a position to hold by themselves the bridgehead that the allied army had created. So they all left, without any permanent results. This temporary, essentially piratical, character of the operation may explain why it is not even mentioned by the historian Nikephoros Gregoras.

There were, however, permanent results on the Turkish side. The competition between the Aydinoğlu and Sasa, which may well have started before 1312-13³⁸

34. Cf. DUJČEV, *loc. cit.*

35. GREGORAS, v. I, p. 269.

36. SCHREINER, *Kleinchroniken*, v. I, p. 194, cf. v. II, p. 224-225.

37. The Byzantine treasury was then in dire straits; see GREGORAS, v. I, p. 263.

38. An inscription of the *Ulu Djami* of Birgi declares that the city was conquered by Mehmed Aydinoğlu in 1307 (it is not said whether he was then acting on his own or as the lieutenant of Sasa) and that he constructed the mosque in the year 712 H (May 1312-May

was then exacerbated.³⁹ But the Christians abandoned their ally, Sasa, who ended up being killed as a traitor to the cause of Islam, probably in late 1313 or some time later. Henceforth, the Aydınoğlu would reign unopposed. Curiously enough, this Byzantino-Serbian expedition resulted in reinforcing the position of the very enemy against whom it was directed.

1313); consequently in this last date he certainly acted as an independent lord. See P. WITTEK, *Inscriptions from Southwestern Anatolia*, *Art Studies*, 1931, p. 198-199.

39. See MÉLIKOFF, *Destan*, p. 47-48: Enveri stresses that Sasa sided with the Christians because he was "plein d'envie".