

THE SYRIAN CAMPAIGN OF ROMANOS III ARGYROS IN 1030 CE¹

MACIEJ CZYŻ

ABSTRACT: The paper discusses various aspects of Romanos III Argyros' expedition in Syria, such as its objectives and route. It is argued that Romanos' goal was to not just replace the Mirdāsids with Maṣṣūr Ibn Lu'lu' in Aleppo, but to annex the city and then lend his support to the Ṭayyi' in Palestine, thus profiting from Fāṭimid problems and eventually conquering Syria. The defeat of the Byzantines before they reached Fāṭimid territory allowed for the later amelioration of relations with Fāṭimids. A solution to the issue surrounding the personality of *Ibn Dūqs* is also presented.

ABSTRAKT: (Syryjska kampania Romanosa III Argyrosa w 1030 r. n.e): Artykuł omawia szereg aspektów wyprawy Romana III Argyrosa do Syrii, w tym jej cele i trasę. Autor utrzymuje, że celem Romana nie było zastąpienie Mirdāsydów w Aleppo Maṣṣūrem Ibn Lu'lu', ale zaanektowanie tego miasta i wsparcie plemienia Ṭayyi' w Palestynie, wykorzystanie problemów Fāṭymidów do podbicia Syrii. Twierdzi, że to, iż Bizantyńczycy ponieśli porażkę, nim dotarli na ziemię Fāṭymidów, przyczyniło się do późniejszej poprawy relacji między dwoma imperiami. Poza tym proponuje rozwiązanie problemu osoby Ibn Dūqsa.

KEYWORDS: Byzantium, Arabs, Syria, Aleppo, Argyros

SŁOWA KLUCZOWE: Bizancjum, Arabowie, Syria, Aleppo, Argyros

The expedition of Romanos III Argyros was, together with the conquest of Edessa shortly afterwards, the end of a prolonged period of Byzantine expansion along the Syrian section of its border. The expedition can therefore be viewed as an important event with regards to understanding the changes in Byzantine politics in the region. Since there are some doubts concerning the goals of the expedition and the route that was chosen, Romanos' alleged indolence is too easy an explanation for what he is blamed for: campaigning during the summer and camping in a waterless location, this paper attempts to provide an explanation for each of these issues. It is argued that Romanos' goal was to strengthen Byzantine prestige after the failure of Michael Spondyles, which resulted in revolts in the mountain areas. Avenging this defeat was more important due to that the duke of Antioch was Romanos' relative. Another goal was to protect Aleppo from the Fāṭimids, but not necessarily by replacing Mirdāsids with Maṣṣūr Ibn Lu'lu', but perhaps by directly annexing it. It is also argued that the expedition was part of a larger campaign against the Fāṭimids, profiting from the revolt of the three main Syrian tribes against them. The choice of route can be explained by strategic considerations, which included access to water resources, contrary to the accusations fielded against Romanos. The issue of the abandonment of the emperor by his

¹ This work is dedicated to A. Streletsky, who I would like to thank very much. I would also like to acknowledge D. Arrigoni, M. Baranowski, T. Dawson, Ł. Różycki, A. Panagopoulou and all the authors of the literature I used, as well as the reviewers.

army, which is mentioned in several later sources, can be explained as a deformation of history caused by combining certain events from 1030 and 1071 into one story.

Sources

The following sources were utilised – Yaḥyà ʾāl-Anṭākī² (d. post 1066); Michael Psellos³ (1018–1081 or post ca. 1096); John Skylitzes⁴ (born ca. 1040); Matthew of Edessa⁵ (d. ca. 1136); Ibn al-Aṭīr⁶ (1160–1233); Kamāl al-Dīn⁷ (Ibn al-ʿAdīm; 1192–1262); Al-Maqrīzī⁸ (1364–1442), and others. The testimonies of Yaḥyà, Skylitzes and Kamāl al-Dīn’s second version⁹ are generally in agreement. Yaḥyà and Kamāl al-Dīn both lived in Northern Syria and provide the most detailed and valuable descriptions. Other authors such as Psellos (Constantinople), Al-Maqrīzī (Cairo) and Ibn al-Aṭīr (Mosul) lived further afield, while Ibn al-Aṭīr, Al-Maqrīzī and Matthew of Edessa were also chronologically distant, albeit this also concerns Kamāl al-Dīn. Psellos’ account is dated to the late 11th c., but it focuses on the court rather than Romanos himself, who is very often¹⁰ unfairly treated by the author with claims such as “Romanos blundered wherever he went”.¹¹ Other works,¹² however, are not so biased. Suhayl Zakkar calls this description of Romanos absurd.¹³

² ANT (ANT = Yaḥyī Ibn Saʿīd d’Antioche, “Histoire de Yahya ibn Sa’id d’Antioche, connu sous le nom de ‘Suite de l’histoire d’Eutyches’”, ed., trans. I. Kračkovskiy, A. Vasiliev, F. Mischeau, G. Troupeau, *Patrologia Orientalis* 18 (1924: ANT1), 23 (1932: ANT2), 212 (1997: ANT3), Turnhout). The translations from Arabic sources are my own.

³ Psellos (Psellos = Michel Psellos, *Kronika, czyli historia jednego stulecia Bizancjum (976–1077)*, trans. O. Jurewicz, I, Wrocław–Warszawa 1985).

⁴ Skylitzes (Skylitzes = Skylitzès Jean, *Empereurs de Constantinople*, trans. B. Flusin, Paris 2003).

⁵ Matthew of Edessa (Matthew of Edessa = Matthew of Edessa, *Armenia and the Crusades, Tenth to Twelfth centuries: The Chronicle of Matthew of Edessa*, trans. A.E. Dostourian, Lanham, New York–London 1993).

⁶ Ibn al-Aṭīr (Ibn al-Aṭīr = Izz al-Dīn Abū ʾāl-Ḥasan ʿAlī Ibn Abī ʾāl-Karam Ibn al-Aṭīr al-Šiyabānī ʾāl-maʾrūf bi-ʾIbn al-Aṭīr, *Al-Kāmil fī ʾāl-Tārīḥ*, Beirut 1994).

⁷ Kamāl al-Dīn (Kamāl al-Dīn = al-mawlā aṣ-ṣāhib Kamāl al-Dīn Abū ʾāl-Qāsim ʿUmar Ibn Ahmad Ibn Hibat Allāh Ibn al-ʿAdīm al-Ḥalabī ʾāl-Ḥanafī, *Zubdat al-Ḥalab min Tārīḥ Ḥalab*, ed. Ḥalīl al-Manṣūr, Beirut 1996).

⁸ Al-Maqrīzī (Al-Maqrīzī = Taqī ʾāl-Dīn Ahmad Ibn ʿAlī ʾāl-Maqrīzī, *Ittiʿāz al-Ḥunafāʾ*, ed. Muḥammad A. Ḥilmī, II, Cairo 1996).

⁹ Zakkar (1969, 110) suggests it was copied from Yaḥyà.

¹⁰ This was noted earlier by Shea (2020, 3).

¹¹ Jenkins 1993, 339–341.

¹² Forsyth (1977, 301–302) criticises the reliance on Psellos; Littlewood (2006, 34) writes about his attempts to revive the sciences; Lauritzen (2009, 231–240, esp. 236, 239–240) writes: “Psellos dismissive tone does not reflect the cultural activities of this time and [...] reveals the change of mood in the court of Michael IV”. Michael IV and Zoe were traitors and the killers of Romanos, thus they were hostile. Psellos got to know about their affair from a courtier (Krallis 2006, 185–186), who was likely the source of his information on Romanos. He was either close to Zoe, or not loyal to Romanos; Cheynet and Vannier (2004, 68–72) present a balanced approach. Shea (2020, 123, 174–175) credits Romanos III with “transforming the *droungarios tes viglas* [...] into the minister of justice [...] probably the most radical government reform of the eleventh century”; Howard-Johnson (2017, 110–111) comments on the same, and (113–114) on patronage; Mokhov (2000, 175) recalls Kekaumenos’ praise of Romanos; Todt (2018, 57) mentions reasonable motives for the expedition, and (406) also comments on building activity in Antioch.

¹³ Zakkar 1969, 114.

Background

At the beginning of the 11th c., three major Arab tribes resided in Syria: The Kilāb in the North (Aleppo), the Kalb in the middle (Damascus), and the Ṭayyi' in the South (Palestine). The settled part of Syria was divided into three regions, the Byzantine North (Antioch), the Fāṭimid South (Tripoli, Ramla, Jerusalem and Damascus), and the buffer emirate of Aleppo, which paid tribute to Byzantium¹⁴ but recognised the Fāṭimids as caliphs. In 1016, its emir Maṣṣūr Ibn Lu'lu' lost the city to the Fāṭimids, but Basil II, busy in Bulgaria, limited his response to a trade embargo, and offering his support to Maṣṣūr and the Kilāb. This pressure forced the Fāṭimid governor Fāṭik to re-establish Aleppo's de facto buffer status. When Fāṭik was murdered in 1021 – for which some blamed the Fāṭimids – their rule was reasserted. However, in 1024 the three tribes signed a pact dividing Fāṭimid Syria.¹⁵ They appealed to Basil II for help, but he (being prejudiced against the rebels due to Skleros and Phokas) did not want to support them against a fellow ruler.¹⁶ The Kalb resubmitted to the Fatimids temporarily after their chief died.¹⁷ The Ṭayyi', after their initial success in capturing Ramla,¹⁸ were defeated at Al-Uḡḡuwāna (1029),¹⁹ but did not yield. The Kilāb took Aleppo,²⁰ but their chief Ṣāliḡ Ibn Mirdās died at Al-Uḡḡuwāna.²¹ The Fāṭimids were busy with the Ṭayyi', but they recaptured Ba'labakk, Ḥims, Sidon and 'Akkār from the Mirdāsids,²² and would try to take Aleppo,²³ which was in the hands of two orphans (Naṣr and Ṭimāl), whose army had just been crushed. Aleppo was taken only four years earlier (1025). Their youthfulness and quarrelling (if they started already) undermined their reign. Additionally, before their army marched from Palestine, Aleppo must have seemed an even easier target than it actually was. This explains why Michael Spondyles,²⁴ the *kapetano* of Antioch, tried to seize the opportunity before it passed, without imperial approval. If he did not act the Fatimids may

¹⁴ E.g. Kamāl al-Dīn, 107, 108, 136, 142.

¹⁵ This was part of a wider process, see Zakkar 1969, 66–79; Kennedy 1991, 105–113; Bianquis 1991, 49–50; Kennedy 2004, 274–305.

¹⁶ ANT3, 472 (470–472, 536–538) refused help to the three tribes of Syria; ANT2, 451–452 to Maṣṣūtakīn; ANT2, 454 did support a city rebel 'Allāqa in Tyre, perhaps because it was a coastal city (Farag 1990, 55–56; Czyż 2013, 226), but probably because he was not a Fāṭimid soldier.

¹⁷ ANT3, 490–492.

¹⁸ ANT3, 470–472, 536–538,

¹⁹ ANT3, 490–492.

²⁰ ANT3, 470–478.

²¹ ANT3, 492; Kamāl al-Dīn, 131; Al-Maqrīzī, II 176–178; Ibn al-Aṭīr, VI 32, 46; Treadgold (1997, 585) claims the Fāṭimids raided Aleppo's territory and killed its emir, but it was Ṣāliḡ that raided the Fāṭimids.

²² ANT3, 492, also Ibn al-Aṭīr (VI 32) says *all Syria*, and Al-Maqrīzī (II 176): *the land*. Thus, they reached the Byzantine border.

²³ As well as Bālis, Al-Raḡba and Manbiḡ.

²⁴ Skylitzes (XVII 1) speaks ill of Spondyles, but Todt (2018, 137–138) indicates that this is exaggeration, adding that Spondyles later served under Maniakos' command, thus he was not worthless.

have seized Aleppo, but it was also an “unexpectedly favourable strategic situation” to capture it, as John Haldon claims to have happened in Bulgaria before.²⁵

The emirs could not dissuade Spondyles in a personal meeting, but defeated him by launching a surprise attack on his camp while he was busy besieging Qaybār (14 July 1029).²⁶ Still endangered by the Fāṭimids, the brothers apologised to Spondyles, and peace was restored. Romanos condemned Spondyles and dismissed him, but he was also angry with Naṣr and Ṭimāl (he “hated them”),²⁷ and subsequently led an expedition against them.²⁸ Maybe he did not mind Spondyles’ attack, but launching it without his approval and its subsequent failure angered him.

Skylitzes claims that Basil was busy in the West and only addressed the most pressing matters, and the Saracene cities planned a revolt, which was to begin the moment he died. They massacred the Byzantine troops and continually raided (especially the emir of Aleppo) Byzantium. The emboldening of the Arabs after the death of Basil seems convincing; especially since it coincided with the Kilāb’s capture of Aleppo (1025), and perhaps this was the false pretext that Psellos mentioned,²⁹ however this is a simplification.³⁰ The only event that can be seen as the ousting of the Byzantines from Aleppo is the demise of Maṣṣūr, who, still during Basil’s reign, escaped to Byzantine territory and was given a village next to the monastery of St Simon. To a certain extent, this expedition could be seen as a late reaction to his demise, which Basil could not afford, while Romanos, having achieved peace on other fronts,³¹ could. Also, he did participate in Romanos’ expedition. But the last raid Byzantium suffered was at the beginning of Fāṭik’s rule, due to Maṣṣūr’s presence.³² Moreover, Byzantine relations with Fāṭik (the first

²⁵ Haldon 1999, 40.

²⁶ ANT3 (492) gives 14 July 1029 as the date, also in French edition (ANT3, 493) and Crawford (1953). 15 July in J.-Cl. Cheynet’s footnote in Skylitzes (XVIII 3 and n. 15), likely due to the issue of if the night should be counted as part of the next, or the previous, day. There’s also a difference between the day of the week indicated by Al-Anṭākī, and the actual one (indicated by <http://mela.us/hegira.html>). Skylitzes (XVIII 3) claims it was the same day that a comet appeared, which would make it the 31st of October. But I doubt Todt’s (2018, 55) and Laurent’s (1962, 238–239) claim that this was another battle: it was simply in the vicinity of a comet sighting and was assumed to coincide with this bad omen (just like he mentions a moaning stream in Thrakesion: Skylitzes, XVIII 4).

²⁷ Kamāl al-Dīn, 139: *ḥaqīda ‘alayhimā*.

²⁸ ANT3, 492–494; also Kamāl al-Dīn, 135. Skylitzes (XVIII 3) claims that Romanos wanted to fix the damage done by Spondyles’ defeat.

²⁹ Psellos, III 7.

³⁰ Kaldellis 2017, 112 n. 35: Skylitzes sometimes clusters events by thematic affinity, not contemporaneity.

³¹ Mokhov (2000, 176–177) comments on the normalisation visible in the Georgian participation in the expedition. But perhaps also in Georgian Abukab’s alleged saving of the emperor’s life. On the other hand, I do not see the basis for his claim that Romanos assured Fāṭimid neutrality in his conflict with Aleppo (unless it was in the alleged peace of Constantine VIII), nor his claim that grand imperial expeditions were ineffective.

³² ANT3, 400, 404. Discussed by Schlumberger 1900, II, 455; Honigmann 1935, 109 n. 2; Felix 1981, 70 and n. 81; Bianquis 2002a, 322.

Fāṭimid governor of Aleppo) and Šālīḥ (the future first Mirdāsīd ruler) were good.³³ Thus, the fights Skylitzes mentions are likely the result of confusing the two different Našrs, as Skylitzes importantly puts the revolt of Našr Ibn Mušarraḥ ar-Rādūfī in the coastal mountains in the same context.³⁴ Marius Canard is surprised that the defeat at Al-Manīqa caused the expedition according to Byzantines sources, as he claims there is no link in Yaḥyà between the emir of Aleppo and Ibn Mušarraḥ.³⁵ But this is not true. Skylitzes does not link the emir of Aleppo and Ibn Mušarraḥ directly; Yaḥyà does. The second revolt of Ibn Mušarraḥ – the first ended when he was captured by Pothos *notabene* Argyros³⁶ – started after the defeat of Spondyles (and his replacement by his imperial brother-in-law Constantine Karantenos),³⁷ thus resulting in the weakening of the Empire’s prestige.³⁸ The involvement of family members could make it a personal matter. Also, even assuming that Romanos distinguished between the Našrs: Ibn Mušarraḥ and Ibn Šālīḥ, it was the defeat by the latter that undermined Byzantine rule, and perhaps Romanos decided he had to be punished to assert Byzantine dominance in the region. It is unlikely that the defeat of Spondyles – which seemed to be inconsequential in Aleppo as peace was re-established – humiliated the emperor to such an extent that he went to Syria,³⁹ but problems with his brother-in-law could. Thus, Romanos told him to guard the roads and raid the enemy, but not to engage in a general battle, whilst he himself started preparing to go.⁴⁰ However, both his personal involvement – the doukations could only respond to local problems⁴¹ – and Našr Ibn Mušarraḥ’s submission to the Fāṭimids, especially if it happened before the expedition,⁴² could indicate the goal of the expedition.

³³ ANT3, 404 with Fāṭik; 398 with Šālīḥ, father of Našr and Ṭimāl; Ibn Lu’lu’ received help, but this was rescinded when Šālīḥ was informed of his treachery; 400: exempting Šālīḥ from the Syrian embargo; 476: *katapano*’s help for Šālīḥ against the Fāṭimids, rescinded by the emperor; 476–478: the lack of Byzantine help towards the Aleppo citadel besieged by Šālīḥ and declaring allegiance to Byzantium. Holmes (2005, 354) calls the Mirdāsīds Byzantine allies. Forsyth (1977, 545) calls him a useful tool of Byzantine interest. When Šālīḥ started destroying the walls of Aleppo, so that the people would not oppose him, they want to hand over the city to Byzantium: Al-Maqrīzī, II 171.

³⁴ Skylitzes, XVIII 4; Koutrakou 2011, 323. Laurent (1962, 224) uses the words of Kedrenos to paint an image of the grand return of the jihad, which is not true. For more on Ibn Mušarraḥ see Aliquot, Alexidzé 2012, 175–208.

³⁵ Canard 1961, 305.

³⁶ Skylitzes, XVIII 4; Todt (2018, 268) suggests this was the reason for promoting him to *katapano* of Italy. See also Cheynet and Vannier 2004, 75.

³⁷ Skylitzes, XVIII 5. This was also noted by Makrypoulas 2021, 256 n. 29.

³⁸ ANT3, 502. Also Czyż 2015, II, 498 n. 2554; Todt 2018, 57. While the Eastern front was the most prestigious: Porphyrogenitus 87 (Porphyrogenitus = Constantine Porphyrogenitus, *Three Treaties on Imperial Military Expeditions*, trans. J.F. Haldon, Wien 1990); Psellos, I 7.

³⁹ Bianquis 1993, 117 i 2002, II, 472 believes so, merging Psellos’ and Skylitzes’ accounts.

⁴⁰ Skylitzes, XVIII 31.

⁴¹ Haldon 1999, 85, 90.

⁴² Skylitzes, XVIII 4. The problem is when did it happen. If before, as the text of Skylitzes may suggest, this would provide an additional argument that the expedition was directed against them, especially since after the

Note that Romanos gathered his army at Philomelion, and Karatenoi are mentioned as proprietors there, albeit in later times.⁴³ He did not (and could not due to his wife being too old) have a successor. Success in Syria could gain his family enough popularity for one of them to claim the throne. Romanos was the brother-in-law of the previous emperor, and Karatenos was his. However, this scenario is unlikely as Romanos had his own family, but besides all of this Antioch had dynastic significance. Jonathan Shepard claims that Romanos wanted to legitimise his rule and impress the army.⁴⁴ Romanos was chosen by his predecessor, was the husband of Zoe, the heir of the legitimate dynasty, as well as a relative of the previous emperor, and one of the top officials, thus he had a strong claim to the throne. But before he was chosen as the successor to Constantine VIII, Constantine Dalassenos⁴⁵ was considered. He was suspected of having imperial ambitions by Michael IV, and, according to a late addition by Skylitzes, he had an affair with Romanos' wife Zoe. His popularity in Antioch (which had the biggest army in the Empire)⁴⁶ was causing problems for Michael IV's brother, doux Niketas,⁴⁷ and Karatenos – and even Romanos – may have also felt this. This issue is linked to that of *Ibn al-Dūqs*, which itself connected to another reason for the war – Mansūr.

Fraternal squabble

In the second account of Kamāl al-Dīn it was Naṣr who urged Romanos to come and help him against Ṭimāl. The fraternal conflict ended (the emirate was divided),⁴⁸ but Romanos did not

Al-Uḡḡuwāna battle the Fāṭimids became direct neighbours of the Byzantines in the region: ANT3, 492. But ANT3 (506) mentions Fāṭimid intervention (Ibn Mušarraḡ incited the Fāṭimid emir of Tripoli against Maraḡiyya) only after the defeat of Romanos III and this suggests that the Fāṭimid support for revolts in the mountains were likely a response to the Byzantine plans to attack and support the revolts (of the Ṭayyi') on their side of the border. Thus, the most likely conclusion is that both the defeat of Spondyles and the Fāṭimids retrieval of nearby lands stirred the local warlords against Byzantium, and this contributed to the expedition, which in turn made the Fāṭimids support the rebels. One could point to the mention (ANT3, 506) of the inciting of Muslims, and participation of *qāḡī* of Tripoli, in support of Skylitzes' (XVIII 4) story of the Muslim attack, see also Laurent (1962, 224), but Al-Anṡākī (ANT3, 500–506) shows Fāṭimid involvement happened after Romanos' expedition.

⁴³ Todt (2018, 139) bases this claim on Cheynet (1990, 233, esp. n. 129). Note that Philomelion was used earlier by Basil II: ANT3, 460.

⁴⁴ Shepard 2010, 102.

⁴⁵ For more on Dalassenos see Biały 2005, 41–59.

⁴⁶ Todt 2018, 268.

⁴⁷ These issues are described by Patlagean (2007, 131–135), whose narrative was based on Skylitzes and Zonaras (Skylitzes, XVII 3; XIX 2–3, 5–6, 14–18, 33–35 etc. Note that the doctor that was supposed to poison the emperor was from Antioch); Cheynet (1990, 43–46, 55–56, also 226, where he notes that Dalassenoi did not have properties in the doukation, but four of them held the position of doux there) also writes about this. Yaḡyā (ANT3, 536) mentions the popular happiness at his death, which is indicative, above all, for Antioch.

⁴⁸ The division probably occurred later: ANT3, 500; Kamāl al-Dīn, 139.

want to turn back. This befits more his care for the emirs mentioned by Yaḥyà, but Kamāl al-Dīn relates a similar story about Fātik in 1021.⁴⁹

According to Robert W. Crawford, the numismatic sources indicate that Ṭīmāl was the crown prince, but Naṣr became the main ruler. He fought the Fāṭimids with his father, whilst Ṭīmāl guarded the capital. After the death of Ṣāliḥ, Naṣr returned with his army and took Aleppo, although Ṭīmāl managed to hold the citadel for some time. It was only the external threat (Spondyles, and later Romanos) that reconciled the brothers.⁵⁰ Robert W. Crawford's narrative relies on the uncertain interpretation of the word *Malaka* that was used by Ibn al-Aṭīr⁵¹ in the context of obtaining power both by force⁵² and peacefully.⁵³ In most cases, the verb indeed means obtaining control by force, but this does not make it right in this context, especially since cities changed hands by force more often than they did peacefully. Moreover, the author of a general chronicle written two centuries after the events would not be more informed about them than the contemporary and Syrian-based Yaḥyà. Or Ibn al-Aṭīr knows the details, but only hints at them by using uncertain terminology. Even if the claim is true, it is still not proof. Additionally, Wolfgang Felix rightly indicates⁵⁴ that Yaḥyà proves the claim that only Naṣr ruled Aleppo (and fought against Romanos) wrong by mentioning the victory of both brothers.⁵⁵ And if Naṣr is mentioned as the victor,⁵⁶ it is because he led the army⁵⁷ (and ruled Aleppo after the division).

According to Yaḥyà, once they were safe both brothers went to the desert, where they had evacuated their wives prior to the conflict. Naṣr returned first, took over the city and did not let Ṭīmāl in, but he did give him other lands.⁵⁸ He was the leader of a victorious army, so the situation was analogous to what R.W. Crawford describes. This makes sense, while Kamāl al-Dīn's story about how Naṣr took over the citadel (priorly) is unlikely: Ṭīmāl followed his angry wife out of Aleppo to try and get her to return with the promise of golden jewelled shoes, Naṣr then seized the citadel and said: "the one who placed my brother above me⁵⁹ did wrong, as I am more fitting for the company of men, and he – of women".⁶⁰

⁴⁹ Kamāl al-Dīn, 136. A similar situation (backing out of an appeal for Byzantine help) allegedly happened in Aleppo under Fātik (Kamāl al-Dīn, 124).

⁵⁰ Crawford 1953, 89–95, esp. 91–95.

⁵¹ Ibn al-Aṭīr, VI 46.

⁵² E.g. Ibn al-Aṭīr, VI 409.

⁵³ Ibn al-Aṭīr, VI 47.

⁵⁴ Felix 1981, 83 n. 122.

⁵⁵ Crawford 1953, 94.

⁵⁶ Crawford 1953, 94.

⁵⁷ ANT3, 496.

⁵⁸ ANT3, 500.

⁵⁹ Hinting at Ṭīmāl's crown prince status.

⁶⁰ Kamāl al-Dīn, 135–136.

Thus, it probably occurred after the war with Byzantium, which in the 10th/11th centuries was repeatedly asked to intervene in Syria,⁶¹ so this should not surprise Wolfgang Felix.⁶² It should be noted that in order to defeat half of Aleppo (Naṣr being an ally), Romanos would not need such a big force. However, perhaps the size of his army was exaggerated to magnify the failure and smear Romanos, whose death “pleased the grand and the small”⁶³ in the Byzantine sources, or to exaggerate the Aleppine victory in Muslim ones.⁶⁴ The disparity of the forces used by Romanos suggests that the Fāṭimids were the main target: to safeguard Aleppo, or to conquer some of their territory.

At Philomelion Romanos received encouragement to invade Syria⁶⁵ from the Ṭayyi’ leader Ḥassān Ibn al-Ġarrāḥ, who offered to accompany him wherever he wanted to go (within Syria),⁶⁶ thus he believed that after (or, rather, instead of) Aleppo, he would venture further South to the Fāṭimid lands he lived in. The emirs of Aleppo hoped for the same and sent their cousin, Muqallad Ibn Kāmil, to accompany the Ġarrāḥids with hostages and an analogous offer of help.⁶⁷ Muqallad gave Romanos the tribute that Basil II used to receive from the Ḥamdānids⁶⁸ in the hope that Romanos would “deviate towards Syria”. *Syria* (Damascus) is mentioned as separate from Aleppo,⁶⁹ which means that the previous message about invading Syria may indicate that Aleppo was not (believed to be) its (only) target. The good relations between the Ṭayyi’ and the Mirdāsids are certain: they sent a common embassy to Romanos, and earlier they had fought the Fāṭimids together.⁷⁰ The Ṭayyi’ would not encourage the invasion if Aleppo was its (only) goal, and would not have sent an embassy with Aleppo’s Mirdāsīd rulers. The Mirdāsīds also encouraged Romanos to go to Syria, but to fight against the Fāṭimids. At Antioch, Romanos also asked the Ṭayyi’ to remain where they

⁶¹ ANT2, 440: people of Aleppo, against the Fāṭimids; 451–452: part of the Fāṭimid army during the civil war; 454: anti-Fāṭimid rebels in Tyre; ANT3, 390–392: Marwānids against Ibn Lu’lu’; 398–402: Šāliḥ and Ibn Lu’lu’, against each other; 470–472: the anti-Fāṭimid revolt of the tribes of Syria, including the Kilāb (Mirdāsīds); 476: Mirdāsīds in Aleppo, against the Fāṭimids; 476–478: the Fāṭimid army in Aleppo, against the Mirdāsīds.

⁶² Felix 1981, 83. Moreover, if they wanted to join the invasion of Syria (ANT3, 494), they must have believed they *were not* the (main) target, or that the target could change.

⁶³ ANT3, 536.

⁶⁴ As indicated before by Todt 2018, 58.

⁶⁵ But not Aleppo – which was the Ṭayyi’ ally.

⁶⁶ ANT3, 494. Note that the decision to invade Syria was taken before the Ṭayyi’ approached the emperor, thus the original plan could have been limited to the mountains and perhaps Aleppo, but was enlarged as a result of Ibn al-Ġarrāḥ’s advice. Also note that Skylitzes (XVIII 7) distorts Ibn al-Ġarrāḥ into Pinzarach and makes him the governor of Tripoli.

⁶⁷ ANT3, 494.

⁶⁸ Kamāl al-Dīn, 136.

⁶⁹ Similarly ANT3, 472: “all the lands of Syria and Aleppo”.

⁷⁰ ANT3, 470–476, 490–492.

were, and to unfurl the banner he had sent them, and to only join him when he gets close.⁷¹ Thus, after taking Aleppo, he wanted to go to the Ṭayyi', to Fāṭimid Palestine. Psellos, Skylitzes and Al-Maqrīzī, and to some extent Yaḥyà, point to Aleppo as the target, but they do it *ex post*, because Romanos was defeated and did not go any further. Undoubtedly, Aleppo was a goal, but not *the* goal, or *the most enticing* one⁷² (even if it was economically important).⁷³ It was dealt with first, being weaker and closer than the Fāṭimids, as well as being on the way to them.

Thus an opportunity, coupled with peace on other fronts,⁷⁴ existed not just for Aleppo, but for the whole of Syria, where since 1024 tribal rebels had asked Byzantium for help.⁷⁵ When Nikephoros ruled, people were sure the Byzantines would conquer Syria⁷⁶ and such an idea was not seen as absurd at the time. In 1020, when speaking about the destruction of Cairo, the Slavic eunuch 'Ādī (who was sent to quell the riots) commented that “even king Basil, had he conquered the city, would not allow such a thing.”⁷⁷ And in 1024, the cavalry commander Ibn Dawwās was accused of encouraging the Ṭayyi' to start a civil war and urging Basil II to conquer the Fāṭimid state.⁷⁸ He was declared by the regent Sayyidat al-Mulk to be responsible for the death of her brother, Al-Ḥākim,⁷⁹ although he could have been killed because he was one of her co-conspirers in his killing.⁸⁰ This group included Ḥaṭīr al-Mulk, who falsified the signature of Al-Ḥākim, thus helping to get rid of the nominated heir (whose son fled to Byzantium)⁸¹ and install the young Aḏ-Ḍāhir as caliph, and to become the regent.⁸² It should be noted that even Basil II himself was going to Syria, but both in 1000⁸³ and in

⁷¹ ANT3, 496. De Giorgi and Eger (2021, 301–302) mention the deal with the Ṭayyi' after the Aleppo expedition but does not notice the implications. This and other comments by Yaḥyà suggest the goal of Romanos was to fight the Fāṭimids, and it is a highly valuable source, but Yaḥyà was a local Christian, and a refugee from the Fāṭimid domains. As I indicated (Czyż 2011, 37–55) it's (mostly) Muslim and Syriac sources that indicate Byzantines wanted to retrieve long lost provinces. Yaḥyà is a much better source than them and can probably be trusted, but some doubt still remains.

⁷² Shepard 2012, 531 (about Romanos' expedition: 517).

⁷³ E.g. Bianquis 1991, 53.

⁷⁴ Mokhov 2000, 176–177.

⁷⁵ ANT3, 490–492. See also Al-Maqrīzī, II 147–160; 'Izz al-Mulk al-Musabbihī, *Aḥbār Miṣr*, ed. A.F. Sayyid, Th. Bianquis, Cairo 1978, 47–58, 62–65, 68, 82–84, 89; Kamāl al-Dīn, 126–127.

⁷⁶ ANT1, 825; Ibn al-Aṭīr, V 370.

⁷⁷ ANT3, 426.

⁷⁸ Al-Maqrīzī, 152.

⁷⁹ ANT3, 454; Ibn al-Aṭīr, V 651; Al-Maqrīzī, II 127–129.

⁸⁰ She promised him he would direct the state (Ibn al-Aṭīr, V 650–651), but according to Al-Maqrīzī (II 127) just before death, as a ploy. Al-Maqrīzī (II 127–129) mentions killing Ibn al-Dawwās and other people she conspired with to kill Al-Ḥākim (the plot itself: II 125).

⁸¹ ANT3, 448–450.

⁸² Note that this information does not necessarily come from the well-informed Al-Musabbihī, Al-Maqrīzī also utilises several anti-Fāṭimid sources: Czyż 2021, 29.

⁸³ ANT2, 459–460.

1021–1023 (when he was already free from the Bulgarian issue) he was distracted by Georgia: on the latter occasion Georgia tried to forge an alliance with the Fāṭimids; in fact, the murder of Al-Hākīm – which may have been carried out by his sister to save the state both internally and externally – and Xiphias’ revolt made invading the Fāṭimid lands a less pressing issue.⁸⁴ Georgia also stopped Constantine VIII: the emperor was preparing for the expedition when the king of Georgia died (1027);⁸⁵ the Georgians took back several forts from the Byzantines and Constantine had to send reinforcements to the region.⁸⁶ Seemingly, it appears that Constantine VIII died with Syria on the *to do* list. It was at this point that Romanos inherited the throne and solved the Georgian issue.⁸⁷ Perhaps, Basil II gave Romanos advice on ruling before he died,⁸⁸ like he did with Constantine VIII? Kamāl al-Dīn claims that when Basil II saved Aleppo from the Fāṭimids, his brother had urged him to take it by surprise, as its capture would give him all of Syria. But Basil said that the other kings would not hear of him if he betrayed the people he come to support, and that Aleppo would not be worth such a betrayal, even if it was the entire world.⁸⁹ While it seems legendary, and fits the author’s patriotic agenda, yet his conviction of the existence of a community of (legitimate) rulers, and adherence to principles, influenced by the issue of Bardases, is also visible in his refusal to support revolts in the Fāṭimid caliphate, in his modest burial,⁹⁰ condemning the mistreatment of an envoy,⁹¹ or withdrawing help for Maṣūūr when Šālīḥ informed him of his perjury.⁹² When Basil II died, the moral obstacle also perished. Or in 1021, when the son of the murdered Fāṭimid heir came to Byzantium.

⁸⁴ ANT3, 458–470. He (ex post?) claims that Basil was just pretending to go to Syria, to mislead Georgia; Kamāl al-Dīn, 124. Shepard (2012, 516–517) speaks of the reluctance of Basil II to wage war against the Fāṭimids, but he was simply too busy, with Bulgaria being his priority (because of his early defeat, and he himself being from nearby Constantinople), being distracted by Georgia, and being reluctant to support the rebels.

⁸⁵ Skylitzes, XVIII 3.

⁸⁶ ANT3, 482–484. Also, I disagree with Todt (2018, 54–55) who assumes Spondyles suffered two defeats, one under Constantine (who encouraged Spondyles to attack), and another under Romanos. Only one defeat is mentioned, and mentions of earlier fights against the emir of Aleppo and his raiding of Byzantium are probably the result of confusing the name (Naṣr) of the next emir of Aleppo and the mountain warlord.

⁸⁷ ANT3, 488. Note that this and the persecutions of the Jacobites, caused by his strong faith, which might have influenced his decision to invade the Fāṭimids, who had recently destroyed the Holy Sepulchre (1009) and other churches (1012).

⁸⁸ ANT3, 480, see also Aristakes, VI (Aristakes = Aristakes Lastivertc’i, *History*, trans. R. Bedrosian, New York 1985, <https://www.yumpu.com/en/document/view/16351494/aristakes-lastivertcis-history-of-the-armenians-robert-bedrosians->).

⁸⁹ Kamāl al-Dīn, 108. This *hawkish attitude* is mentioned by Kaldellis 2017, 155.

⁹⁰ ANT3, 480–482; Skylitzes, XVI 47; Psellos, I 37; Michel le Syrien, v. III, XIII 5, 133 (Michel le Syrien = Michel le Syrien, *Chronique*, trans. J.-B. Chabot, Paris 1905 – Bruxelles 1963).

⁹¹ ANT2, 439.

⁹² ANT3, 396–398. Basil changed his decision when he learnt that Šālīḥ spoke the truth, and Šālīḥ felt his support. Felix (1981, 65) thinks Basil wanted to replace Maṣūūr with Šālīḥ, but then why did he support him in the first place, or treat him as an emir after he lost power?

Al-Maqrīzī claims that Byzantium signed a truce with the Fāṭimids in 1027,⁹³ but that would mean Romanos supported the anti-Fāṭimid rebels despite this. This treaty, however, is unlikely to have existed. It is written under AH 416, but it probably refers to AH 426, which is the treaty signed by Michael IV (which he also mentions, but without details).⁹⁴ Especially since, due to the example of the Treaty of Al-Ḥudaybiyya (629), Muslims used to sign treaties (truces) for ten years,⁹⁵ which is also the case in this instance.⁹⁶ This can point either way, but the form, corresponding to the letter of Sayyidat al-Mulk⁹⁷ and the later peace, lack of mention by other sources, and the improbability (Aleppo issue was not solved) point to that.

Care

In his letter, Romanos expressed concern that, due to the Mirdāsids' young age, plotters could wrest Aleppo away from them. The Ḥamdānids lost Aleppo in such a situation,⁹⁸ which led to Fāṭimid rule, after Lu'lu'id *intermezzo*⁹⁹ Mirdāsids losing the throne to a local power was not dangerous, but to Fāṭimids was. And they had their adherents and spies-missionaries everywhere.¹⁰⁰ The care of Romanos for those he attacked may seem suspicious, but averting a greater evil and fighting for peace may be an excuse for his actions, including waging war.¹⁰¹ Romanos demanded that the Mirdāsids hand over Aleppo in exchange for money and more lands elsewhere. He was certain they would agree,¹⁰² which suggests that he wanted to fight someone else in Syria. James M. Gilmer lists a lack of secrecy among Romanos' mistakes.¹⁰³ But his army would have profited from not letting Aleppo know he wanted to attack it if the goal was to achieve a military, and not a political victory. The goal, in Aleppo's case, was to make the emirs submit to the proposal. Also, the main target was the Fāṭimids, so ostensibly focusing on Aleppo helped to obscure the real goal.¹⁰⁴

⁹³ As claimed by Forsyth (1983, 459), and Todt (2018, 56), citing Runciman. Based on Al-Maqrīzī, II 176.

⁹⁴ Al-Maqrīzī, II 182.

⁹⁵ Holt 1980, 67.

⁹⁶ ANT2, 460–461; Hamdani 1974, 173–174.

⁹⁷ ANT3, 468–470.

⁹⁸ ANT3, 390; Kamāl al-Dīn, 110–111: the two boys inherited Aleppo, but were robbed of their power by the regent Lu'lu', a slave of their father.

⁹⁹ ANT3, 398–402; Kamāl al-Dīn, 118–119.

¹⁰⁰ Daftary 1999, 31–38.

¹⁰¹ Laiou 2016, 24–29 (160–165).

¹⁰² ANT3, 494 (a shorter version in Kamāl al-Dīn, 139). Byzantium had previously done this with Armenia: Garsoïan (1998, 111) mentions how the Armenian kingdoms of Vaspurakan 1021/1 (ANT3, 462), Ani 1044/5, Kars 1064, willingly or not, exchanged their lands for domains in Cappadocia.

¹⁰³ Gilmer 2012, 95–96. But one would expect the Mirdāsids to be in their capital. And letting the Kilāb receive help from Numayr was an actual mistake.

¹⁰⁴ Also, Shepard (2016, 77/87) believes the army wanted the expedition for its own benefit, and Treadgold (1997, 214–215) suggests that Romanos wanted the army to gain experience – but this contradicts the idea that

Manşūr

Kamāl al-Dīn mentions Manşūr's participation in the expedition, but does not ascribe significance to it.¹⁰⁵ However, according to Al-Maqrīzī, after Şāliḥ took Aleppo (1025),¹⁰⁶ Ibn Lu'lu' hoped to retrieve it, and wrote to the emperor urging him to take it.¹⁰⁷ If this is true, the emperor was encouraged to attack even before Spondyles' debacle, ever since the Fāṭimids lost Aleppo, which opened up new opportunities irrespective of Manşūr. He probably did urge Byzantium to invade Aleppo as soon as he lost his throne, but he saw the advent of Şāliḥ and the end of Fāṭimid rule, and not the death of Şāliḥ, as the opportunity. When besieged by Şāliḥ, the Fāṭimid troops in the Aleppo citadel declared submission to Byzantium, put crosses on the walls, and proclaimed the emperor's¹⁰⁸ name (which angered the local population).¹⁰⁹ It is likely that they counted on Manşūr, the old enemy of Şāliḥ, or just wanted to discourage the Bedouins from attacking,¹¹⁰ but Basil ignored this as he had good relations with Şāliḥ.¹¹¹

Obviously Manşūr hoped he would be restored to power, but whether the emperor wanted this is another matter. When Manşūr fled from Aleppo, he was well received, treated with respect he was receiving an emir, and a special unit of his followers was created¹¹² (wanting to get additional conscripts and using him as a pressure tool¹¹³ on anyone ruling Aleppo, as with Fātik before, is enough to explain his favourable treatment) and used in the expedition, Byzantium nevertheless had good relations with his successors in Aleppo, including the father of Naşr and Ṭimāl.¹¹⁴ Several people assumed Manşūr would be restored,¹¹⁵ but contrary to

the emperor tried to gain Aleppo by exchange, because then, the army would not practice fighting, just marching to avoid that practice, unless it was for practicing march. Todt (2018, 57) is uncertain.

¹⁰⁵ Kamāl al-Dīn, 119, 138–139.

¹⁰⁶ ANT3, 472–480.

¹⁰⁷ Al-Maqrīzī, II 179.

¹⁰⁸ However, this was not as it seems as the troops were not celebrating Manşūr himself, they were actually proclaiming “oh Manşūr”, which means “victorious”. See also ANT3, 400.

¹⁰⁹ ANT3, 476–478; Kamāl al-Dīn, 130.

¹¹⁰ There were Byzantines in the Fāṭimid army (e.g. ANT1, 756), but they probably would not have been placed at the Byzantine border (the Umayyads were wary of the Christian tribes in North Syria: Gibb 2004, 67). Manşūr could have influenced Spondyles as well.

¹¹¹ Kaldellis (2017, 160) claims that Byzantium was happy with Şāliḥ fighting the Fāṭimids, but there was no agreement between them. Indeed Basil refused to help the triumvirate (ANT3, 472, 536). But in fact Şāliḥ was a formal Byzantine client, who sent his son to Constantinople (1014; ANT3, 398).

¹¹² ANT3, 400.

¹¹³ Schlumberger 1900, II, 451; Zakkar 1969, 52.

¹¹⁴ I doubt Cappel (1994, 121–122), who claims this expedition was part of a wider effort to curb the Bedouins. The Byzantines had cooperated with the Kilāb for years, and worked with the Kalb and the Ṭayyi' at this very moment. The same, Ibn Ḥayyūs' claim (125) that the Kalb and the Ṭayyi' converted to Christianity is propaganda, and the bad intent of Romanos towards them, as he invited the Kalb and the Ṭayyi' refugees (ANT3, 510–512) was just a rumour; he did want to use the Ṭayyi' against the Kilāb, but before the peace (Skylitzes XVIII 7); the Yaḥyà translation is imprecise (126 n. 33).

¹¹⁵ Felix 1981, 83; Kaldellis 2017, 160.

the opinion of S. Zakkar,¹¹⁶ Ibn Lu'lu's participation in this expedition is not proof of that. He was part of the Antioch army that was situated right on the border, so it was obvious, irrespective of any objectives.¹¹⁷ Replacing one client with another would not give Romanos glory and would have been of little use. Giving Aleppo to Manşūr, while giving compensation for it to the Mirdāsids (as promised) would result in a loss of land, and this proposal itself indicates that Aleppo would have been annexed. With the fall of Fāṭimid Aleppo to the Mirdāsids, it had already returned to its previous status as a buffer state.¹¹⁸ Moreover, for some time before, it had been a mere Fāṭimid province, which allowed Byzantium to get used to it not being autonomous. Direct rule was a surer way to safeguard it from Fāṭimid conquest rather than leaving it to the fresh and uncertain rule of the Mirdāsids; this explains Romanos' proposals. Aleppo would probably be annexed.¹¹⁹ It was the Rus' elimination of Bulgaria that allowed the Byzantines to claim it based on its earlier status as a Roman possession.¹²⁰ The Fāṭimids lost Aleppo, and one could get it without ostensibly violating their rights (but in fact, the conflict already existed). The claim of the new dynasty to the city was weak; the personal links between Şāliḥ and Bāsil were severed by their deaths, the army crushed; the probability of the Fāṭimids defending it were slight; and it was in the hands of young, quarrelling rulers with little experience or legitimacy.

Would giving Aleppo to Manşūr safeguard it from the Fāṭimids, which was the official reason for the attack?¹²¹ He was older than the young Mirdāsīd rulers. But he would owe his reign to Byzantium only, while they had the support of the Kilāb, which indeed would make them less dependent on Byzantium than Manşūr, but also less exposed to the Fāṭimids, which was crucial if Aleppo was to remain a Fāṭimid-Byzantine frontier town. Some people hated Manşūr¹²² (due to his perfidy),¹²³ and this would also make him more dependent and loyal, but could lead to another revolt and losing the city to the Fāṭimids again.¹²⁴ There was also opposition to Kilāb rule within Aleppo, indeed not so long ago the Aleppines stated that they

¹¹⁶ Zakkar 1969, 114–115.

¹¹⁷ It was preferred to let the locals, who knew the terrain and local way of fighting, lead the army: Porphyrogenitus, 91.

¹¹⁸ Farag 1979, 173–174; Kaldellis 2017, 130.

¹¹⁹ See also Naşr's mention, that he will be like one of Byzantine governors: ANT3, 500.

¹²⁰ Czyż 2011, 53–55.

¹²¹ ANT3, 494.

¹²² ANT3, 390.

¹²³ ANT3, 392–394 – towards the Fāṭimids; 390–394 – towards the Kilāb; 396–398 – towards the Kilāb. He could also turn against Byzantium.

¹²⁴ ANT3, 398–402.

did not want Bedouins in the city, demanding Fāṭimid rule.¹²⁵ By having Maṣṣūr rule over the city, and the Kilāb outside, as during the first rule of Maṣṣūr (to a certain extent)¹²⁶ and the reigns of Fath¹²⁷ and Fāṭik,¹²⁸ the Byzantines would have stronger influence in the emirate, which would not pose a danger, while a state ruling both the city and the Bedouins could cause problems – and it is these that were more likely to pillage. Moreover, the Mirdāsids captured the city from the Fāṭimids, and were bound to be attacked, while Maṣṣūr ruled the city before direct Fāṭimid rule, as a continuation of the Ḥamdānid state. The Fāṭimids took Aleppo from the rebels that took it from them – which is what the Byzantines now wanted to do. This gave him an advantage over the Mirdāsids. But on the other hand, attacking the Kilāb and taking Aleppo from them would result in a lack of their support in case of conflict with the Fāṭimids over that very city. Moreover, the Ḥamdānids fled to both Byzantium and to the Fāṭimids after their defeat, yet they were not restored, even though Ḥamdānid forces did serve in the Fāṭimid army¹²⁹ and the Fāṭimids did get their hands on Aleppo.¹³⁰ Any intervention would make it weaker, increasing the danger of it falling into the hands of the Fāṭimids again, unless direct Byzantine rule was envisaged.

Still, it was a chance for Maṣṣūr, if not for restoration, then for revenge on the sons of Šāliḥ, who overthrew him and violated his daughter.¹³¹ He could not cause conflict earlier between Šāliḥ and Byzantium, as he was their client, and did not have anything they would want.

Expedition

Romanos left Constantinople (31 March 1030) and went to Philomelion, where he mobilised a grand, but inexperienced, army. In Antioch, he prepared siege machines. The emirs sent him a gift, but the envoy met him on the way.¹³² Romanos refused the gift and instead he took the envoy with him. While in Anatolia, he received another embassy from the Ṭayyi', which was

¹²⁵ ANT3, 402; still, it was likely gone by now, Aleppo became like mitochondrium, endosymbiont in the Kilāb state. Kennedy (2004, 291, 303) claims Aleppo became more prosperous under the Mirdāsids, and that their rule was preferred to Fāṭimid governance.

¹²⁶ ANT3, 392–394, 396–398 Kamāl al-Dīn (113–114, 117) not that he was happy about it.

¹²⁷ ANT3, 402.

¹²⁸ ANT3, 404; Kamāl al-Dīn, 124.

¹²⁹ Lev 1987, 343.

¹³⁰ There were attempts to use them by both the Byzantines (Abū āl-Hayḡā': ANT3, 390–392), and the Fāṭimids (Kennedy 2004, 303).

¹³¹ ANT, 398–400; Kamāl al-Dīn, 118–119, 121; also, Ibn al-Aṭīr, V 591.

¹³² In Philomelion, with gold, according to Skylitzes, XVIII 5; Psellos, III 8: an embassy after Romanos' solemn entry to Antioch, but it refers to a previous one, as Yaḡyā claims the emirs waited for a reply to their letter. Koutrakou (2011, 322) indicates that the long journey of the embassy (which Romanos must have known about) to Philomelion indicates that the rejection was premeditated.

accompanied by a cousin of the Aleppo emirs, Muqallad Ibn Kāmil, who offered submission.¹³³ However, he had already sent his own envoy, a judge, with a letter.¹³⁴ The news that the emperor was heading to Aleppo¹³⁵ reached it before his envoy did, but probably after it sent its own emissary. The nearby population sheltered in the city. The envoy was greeted with a military demonstration, in which common folk took part. He was then imprisoned as the brothers awaited a reply to their letter.¹³⁶ After reaching Antioch (20 July 1030), Romanos camped “between two rivers”.¹³⁷ When he learnt that the Aleppines had imprisoned his envoy, he put their emissary under guard. He also sent an embassy to the Ṭayyi’. He spent a week there, during which both Antioch and his army suffered greatly, the city (probably) due to price rises and the army due to heat-induced diseases. It should be noted that this was a short time in which to acclimatise to the hot climate,¹³⁸ especially considering the lengthy period Romanos spent in Philomelion (March-July). One of the reasons for the delay, apart from the slow process of gathering the thematic forces,¹³⁹ may have been caused by the solving of the Georgian issue, but surely also by the heavy rains that turned valleys into lakes and drowned cattle and crops, causing a famine the following year.¹⁴⁰ The bad weather lasted until March, which is when the emperor left Constantinople, according to Yaḥyā.¹⁴¹ Perhaps the diseases and the local swampy climate¹⁴² caused the short stay in Antioch, and perhaps Romanos was already late.¹⁴³ Note also that the hot and draughty summer might have been a surprise after the heavy rains,¹⁴⁴ Skylitzes claims that John Chaldos warned him against carrying out the expedition in heat which the Arabs were used to,

¹³³ Kamāl al-Dīn, 136.

¹³⁴ A shorter version in Kamāl al-Dīn, 139.

¹³⁵ Which may mean that, until then, people assumed that the target would be the Fāṭimids.

¹³⁶ For more on the treatment of ambassadors see Drocourt 2011, 87–98 (about this case: 95).

¹³⁷ ANT3, 494, n. 58: Micheau and Troupeau claim it was between Orontes and ‘Afrīn, but there was swamp there, thus perhaps it was an Orontene island close to Antioch: Czyż 2015, II, 490, n. 2527.

¹³⁸ An issue indicated to me by T. Dawson, in a personal conversation, who also noted that if the army came from upland Anatolia, it would have had bigger problems than if it had come from the coastal region. This problem did not exist earlier, as the armies would meet close to the campaign target, but still in Anatolia: Porphyrogenitus, 125.

¹³⁹ Mokhov 2000, 179.

¹⁴⁰ Skylitzes, XVIII 3.

¹⁴¹ ANT3, 494–496.

¹⁴² The heavy rains might have also extended the swamps and increased the number of disease-carrying mosquitos.

¹⁴³ Apart from the heat, if he wanted, as Nikephoros Phokas, to come at harvest time to destroy the crops (ANT1, 825–826), then he should have come in June/July (Izdebski 2018, 112), not late July.

¹⁴⁴ Or the weather pattern was different in Anatolia and Syria. Also: the good climate in Anatolia lasted up to the year 1000, after that it became less stable: Izdebski 2018, 176. For more on the weather and climate see Telelis 2007, 431–462.

also because of their clothes and equipment.¹⁴⁵ Ibn al-Aṭīr, on the other hand, claims it was the emperor that wanted to wait for the rain, but was urged to carry on.¹⁴⁶ If we accept that it was the *doux* of Thessalonike (Chaldos) that was urging him to wait for rain, and the local Ibn Lu'lu' and son of the *doux* of Antioch that was urging him to proceed, we can assume that it was a regional division – European forces were not used to the heat.¹⁴⁷

Naṣr and Ṭīmāl evacuated their wives and belongings to the desert. Ṭīmāl guarded the citadel, and Naṣr marched against the emperor, but was defeated at Qaybār. The emperor stopped near Tubbal, close to A'zāz,¹⁴⁸ in a waterless place by the hills, while the Arabs took control of the nearby resources.¹⁴⁹ Around the camp, a shield-fenced moat was dug.¹⁵⁰ The emperor sent two troops to the A'zāz stronghold to assess it, and sent enough equipment to besiege it, with another troop (under Constantine Dalassenos and with Ibn Lu'lu'?)¹⁵¹ behind them (foragers¹⁵² and ruffraff).¹⁵³ The Arabs ambushed the scouts returning from A'zāz, and

¹⁴⁵ Skylitzes, XVIII 4; basic infantry armour consisted of a heavy, knee-length padded *kavadion* and a thick felt cap with a turban, although hip, or waist-length jackets were also used, and the quilting produced a garment that was heavy and stiff: Dawson 2016, 379–380 (81–82).

¹⁴⁶ Ibn al-Aṭīr, VI 54–55.

¹⁴⁷ Kaldellis (2017, 276) notes this for after 1070 and says it is not mentioned in the sources, but it is: Skylitzes, XVI 42; Czyż 2011, 87 and 2013, 218.

¹⁴⁸ Skylitzes (XVIII 5) claims that Romanos' camp was in A'zāz, two days away from Aleppo, which is imprecise, but not far from the truth. Al-Maqrīzī (II 179) claims that the emperor was one day away from Aleppo. Mokhov (2000, 179) claims (mixing this event with the routing of the scouts) that Romanos wanted to camp at the well-watered Qaybār, but the enemy did not allow it.

¹⁴⁹ Todt (2018, 58) claims that the Arabs poisoned the water, but the source he bases this claim on is unknown. See also Haldon 2014, 312–313.

¹⁵⁰ See Porphyrogenitus, 94.

¹⁵¹ According to Skylitzes (XVIII 5) the emperor sent Constantine Dalassenos, but he was routed, and had to shelter in the camp with his disorderly army, which was frightened and fled (which is also mentioned by ANT3, 496–498), and this caused Romanos to return. The problem is that in Skylitzes he is sent after the return of the defeated scouts, and in Yaḥyà the troop is sent before. Perhaps the army that was sent was supposed to establish a camp and await the siege engines. But if we accept Marius Canard's correction, the unit might have been a foraging one, while the presence of the ruffraff there – M. Canard sees it in the context of Romanos' care about quantity – explains why it was defeated so easily.

¹⁵² See Canard 1961, 306 n. 57. The correction of *mutaqaddira* in n. 56 is unnecessary (see De Biberstein Kazimirski 2004, II, 686 for *qdr VI: taqaddara: être bien arrangé, préparé, disposé comme il faut; être déterminé, décrété*).

¹⁵³ Skylitzes (XVIII 5) claims that he sent the commander of Excubites, Leo Choiosphaktes (his seal was found: Mokhov 2000, 181) to check if the Arabs were going to attack, and to search for a good place for a camp. See also Haldon 2016b, 123. Skylitzes does not know the details and claims the emperor was at A'zāz and wanted to establish a new camp, seemingly at Aleppo, but he also claims it was two days away, which makes it absurd. McGeer (1995a, 357–358), in a seemingly convincing manner tries to make sense of it, giving a reason for the change of place cherry-picked from Yaḥyà: the Arabs controlled the water. Albeit inspiring in Attaleiates mention, McGeer uses the less informed Skylitzes as the basis, using just snippets of Yaḥyà, while he should use the local Yaḥyà and Kamāl al-Dīn as the basis, and read Skylitzes in the right context and correct when necessary. Romanos was not at A'zāz, but at Tubbal, between the hills he had passed and the plain he was entering, where he could expect the enemy. A'zāz was far away, and he did not know if the enemy were there or not. If he found water resources taken before he camped, it would be natural to fight for them, not to search for a new camp, far away. Water was around, and the Arabs took control of it *after* Romanos had camped (they did not know where he would camp). The placement and objective of the scouts in Skylitzes are mistakes.

both them, and most of the second troop, escaped, while the remaining part of the second troop retreated to the camp the same day (8 August 1030) after a fight.¹⁵⁴ Many of the escaping Byzantines were taken into captivity, some were killed. The Arabs followed them and encircled the camp, harassing people going out (to drink) and pestering the shielded defenders, and finally stormed it and pillaged its bazaar, while the Byzantines did not put up a fight. Byzantine spirits plummeted, while that of the Arabs rose. The besieged were thirsty.¹⁵⁵ The following day Romanos concluded he had chosen the wrong time for the invasion and decided to retreat¹⁵⁶ and burn the siege engines. But then he changed his mind – maybe due to disagreement in the army – and rested in place.¹⁵⁷ Then he decided to return again (10 August 1030),¹⁵⁸ but the Armenians in his army began pillaging the camp and other soldiers started fighting each other, also the infantry guarding the moat dispersed which allowed the Arabs to attack.¹⁵⁹ The Byzantines escaped towards the hills, to Qūrus (Cyrrhus), whilst a few remained with the emperor, who was saved by archers.¹⁶⁰ Nevertheless, only three Byzantine leaders were lost, whilst a number of Arabs were killed, including two emirs.¹⁶¹

¹⁵⁴ Kamāl al-Dīn (137) claims it happened three days before the 10th of August.

¹⁵⁵ In Kamāl al-Dīn (137) the Byzantines, afraid of being captured by the Arabs, did not even dare to eat cucumbers in a field an arrow's shot away. According to Skylitzes (XVIII 5), after the first battle, the Arabs disturbed the supply to the camp, water mostly, and the thirst the made Byzantines and their animals venture out of the camp, only to be killed. Note also that the latrines were outside: Haldon 2014, 256.

¹⁵⁶ This first decision is mentioned by Yaḥyā only but may correspond to the difference of opinion regarding whether the expedition should continue or not, as mentioned by Skylitzes, Ibn al-Aṭīr, Al-Maqrīzī and Matthew of Edessa (I 57).

¹⁵⁷ Still in the camp (a moat is mentioned), almost surely the same one. This disproves the versions that the emperor was ambushed in a defile.

¹⁵⁸ On the 2nd of August in Skylitzes (XVIII 5); 8th of August in Al-Maqrīzī (II 179), who mistakes the date of the first battle with that of the last one.

¹⁵⁹ In Kamāl al-Dīn (137), Naṣr came close with 923 or 700 mounted men. The Byzantines thought it was an ambush, and escaped. This corresponds with several other sources. The second version of Ibn al-Aṭīr, VI 54–55; Aristakes, VI: 800 or 1000 Arabs. Kamāl al-Dīn (137–138) is a bit less explicit than Yaḥyā (ANT3, 496) about the battle happening in the camp. But the ambush did not have to happen immediately. The Arabs wanted to pillage the treasure before it was taken, and this explains the mentioning of Arabs and Byzantines mixed in the camp. Psellos (III 9–11) mentions a single battle, an ambush in a defile. The disorderly, but vigorous barbarians appeared in the hills (in Kamāl al-Dīn, 138 and ANT3, 498 this is where the Byzantines fled to – but this could show that the Arabs were simply busy looting, not fighting; note Kamāl al-Dīn's word *ašrafa*: "approach"/"tower"/"look down") on both sides of the road, terrifying the Byzantines, as they fought out of line and seemed numerous. The army escaped, and the emperor was almost captured. The surprised barbarians busied themselves with the loot. Unless this description is completely made up (Psellos thought Antioch was conquered!), one should see it as a mixture of the first battle (ambushed scouts), and the last one (the emperor).

¹⁶⁰ Kamāl al-Dīn (137) adds that they were Armenian. One should read Al-Maqrīzī, II 179 in this context. But the mention of Armenians pillaging the camp (ANT3, 498) were distorted by Ibn al-Aṭīr (VI 54) into them robbing and killing the Byzantines alongside Bedouins and locals. This probably lead Dadouyan (1997, 79) to read Al-Maqrīzī similarly (plus ascribing the number of Numayr to them) and making too bold assumptions on the *flight of 'Azīz al-Dawla*. Ibn al-Aṭīr (VI 54) mentions that some of the Byzantines envied Romanos (*Ibn al-Dūqs*), and some hated him (Armenians?). This may be a misrepresentation of a common source with Al-Maqrīzī, or the influence of miaphysite sources: Michel le Syrien, v. III, XIII 6, 136 and Matthew of Edessa, I 57, which blame the failure of Romanos on his persecution of miaphysites (Matthew of Edessa suggests that this, apart from Romanos' cowardice, annoyed the army). But the Armenians were known for having a lack of

Route

Tubbal, where Romanos camped, can be interpreted as either Tibil (situated to the North-East of A'zāz)¹⁶² or Nubbul,¹⁶³ (situated to the South-West of A'zāz). The case for Nubbul would be that Romanos tried to go from the vicinity of Qaybār¹⁶⁴ and through Nubbul towards Aleppo via a valley rivulet, which was likely temporary. Romanos may have tried to take a short-cut to Aleppo after the victory at Qaybār,¹⁶⁵ going away from the 'Afrīn valley, or perhaps was deliberately lured there, for example by Ibn Lu'lu', who lived nearby in Šādir, if we accept Ibn al-Aṭīr's claims. However, Nubbul lies between Qaybār and Aleppo, but Tubbal should be close to A'zāz, and that fits Tibil better than Nubbul.

The Byzantines escaped to Qūrus through the hills: Tibil is close to it, across the hills, Nubbul is far away.¹⁶⁶ Other mentions of Tubbal include: an army going to it from Aleppo being intercepted at Ḥarbul;¹⁶⁷ the Byzantines coming to Aleppo in 962 from the North-East (Dulūk, Tall Ḥāmid (Ḥālid), Tubbal), and it's only when they appeared there that Sayf al-Dawla became aware of them.¹⁶⁸ Sayf al-Dawla responded by sending Nāgā to A'zāz, where a battle took place,¹⁶⁹ and the battle taking place North of the city, between Banqūsā, Al-Hazzāza and Bāb al-Yahūd, suggests Tubbal was Tibil, not Nubbul.

discipline: Nicéphore Phocas II 2–3 (Nicéphore Phocas = Nicéphore Phocas, *La traité sur la guerrilla (De velitatione) de l'empereur Nicéphore Phocas (963–969)*, trans. G. Dagron, Paris 1986); McGeer 1995b, 123–137; Takirtakoglou 2021, 200–201. And while Romanos did persecute Jacobites (ANT3, 488–490; Michel le Syrien, III XIII 6–7; Aristakes, VI; Matthew of Edessa, I 57; Sawīrus Ibn al-Muqaffā' (Michael of Tinnīs), *Tārīḥ Baṭārikat al-Kanīṣah al-Miṣriyyah*, ed., trans. 'I. 'Abd al-Masīḥ, 'A.S. 'Aṭīyya, Cairo 1948, II pars 2, 143–147/216–222), the treatment of the Armenians was different, and he married his niece to John-Smbat (Garsoīan 1998, 78–79, 114 n. 222, and also 80 n. 107 disagreeing with G. Dagron's claim that Romanos persecuted the heretics after the failed expedition; but in fact, if this expedition failed because of the persecution, it could not have preceded it). Aristakes' (VI) mention of Romanos' turning of miaphysite monks into archers is explained by Todt (2018, 209, 213): The Armenians were valued for their archery skills, useful against Bedouins.

¹⁶¹ Thus, the result of the battle was not as bad as in other sources: ANT3, 496–498. Canard (1973, 308) indicates that Yahyā (also Kamāl al-Dīn) distinguishes the first defeat, where the losses were high, and the second one, where Byzantines' own losses were moderate, and the enemy ones high.

¹⁶² Honigmann 1935, 112 n. 2; Bianquis 2002a, map 3.

¹⁶³ Todt and Vest 2014, 1844, after Dussoud. See also Czyż 2015, III 313–314. It is a less hilly way, thus good for ambushing, than via Tibil or directly between Laylūn and Barṣāyā.

¹⁶⁴ Bianquis (2002a, IV map 3) places Qaybār in the valley of 'Afrīn, but it seems to be Qibare/Al-Hawā, located strategically between the valley of 'Afrīn and the plains of Aleppo: Czyż 2015, III, 257, name confirmed by: Maisel 2017, 21. Perhaps earlier it was close to the bridge.

¹⁶⁵ He might have attempted this, or was expected to. But most likely he simply besieged its fort, and the Arabs tried to repeat the battle against Spondyles.

¹⁶⁶ Czyż 2015, III, 313–314. It also explains the small losses. Not many people could die, because the border and safety was close.

¹⁶⁷ Kamāl al-Dīn, 282.

¹⁶⁸ Which indicates it was a place beyond the border and a natural obstacle: both Tibil and Nubbul fit this description; Kamāl al-Dīn, 78–79.

¹⁶⁹ ANT1, 784–785; Kamāl al-Dīn, 78–79.

Romanos' path from Antioch did not head directly East towards Aleppo, but to the North-East, which seems odd.¹⁷⁰ Kamāl al-Dīn claims that when Naṣr withdrew his invitation, Romanos got scared, gave up besieging Aleppo,¹⁷¹ and marched on Qaybār instead. This explains not going to Aleppo, but does not explain why Romanos went to Qaybār and further North East. One of the reasons for this indirect route may have been to cause surprise. Also, by going towards A'zāz, Romanos avoided direct confrontation, either out of fear of the steppe heat, or the Bedouins, or maybe he was unwilling to waste men and resources in the hope that attacking the peripheries would result in surrender. Byzantium, as John Haldon claims, tended to avoid direct confrontation – especially in unfavourable conditions, as the empire could not afford to lose manpower and resources it often lacked – and to win through a combination of delaying, exploiting enemy weaknesses and the landscape, seasonal factors and diplomacy.¹⁷²

East from A'zāz lay the famous Meadows (Marǧ) of Dābiq.¹⁷³ This may explain why the cavalry separated from the emperor – they could have been sent there (which would explain why the army had so much trouble dealing with the Arabs). But why did Romanos not go for Aleppo?¹⁷⁴ Perhaps he did. A road from the Roman times existed between¹⁷⁵ Antioch and A'zāz which went by the 'Afrīn valley to A'zāz, via Qūrus. The road was still used, and one could continue to Aleppo.¹⁷⁶ Romanos thus did go to Aleppo, but he went via the 'Afrīn valley, across the Baršāyā hills, and through the Quwayq plain, probably along the Quwayq and its tributaries. Albeit longer, this route would provide water, most important in the summer, and perhaps fish.¹⁷⁷ None of the rivers in Syria were navigable, unless by ferries,¹⁷⁸ the Quwayq – which passes Aleppo – could be used by boats, but likely not in summertime, when it partly dried up.¹⁷⁹ Other rivulets are of even less use. Yet, when the crusaders besieged A'zāz (1117/8), “the Aleppines were heartbroken, as there was no help left for Aleppo but from A'zāz [...] there was very little food in Aleppo [...],” and it was the attack

¹⁷⁰ Kaldellis 2017, 161 Strategically, it is unclear why he went there.

¹⁷¹ If Aleppo was going to surrender, why would he besiege it (unless it was Ṭimāl that called Romanos for help)?

¹⁷² Haldon 1999, 36–37.

¹⁷³ Yāqūt, II 416–417 (Yāqūt = Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī, *Muḡam al-Buldān*, Beirut 1977). Known from the 1516 battle.

¹⁷⁴ If we do not accept Kamāl al-Dīn's claim, dependant on the brotherly fight happening before the war.

¹⁷⁵ McCormick *et al.*, 2013.

¹⁷⁶ Eger 2015, 72; somewhat Forsyth 1977, 127.

¹⁷⁷ Porphyrogenitus, 129 about this factor.

¹⁷⁸ Al-Muqaddasī, 150 (Al-Muqaddasī = Al-Muqaddasī, *The Best Divisions for Knowledge of the Regions*, trans. B. Collins, Beirut 2001).

¹⁷⁹ Yāqūt, IV 417.

on A'zāz that made them call and pay Ilgāzī to return, even though earlier they “did not want anyone from the East” and repelled forces from Mosul and Damascus with the crusaders’ help. Aleppo was “on the verge of collapse,” and only when the crusaders, after a truce, sowed the fields of A'zāz and provided help for the peasants, the hunger in Aleppo ended.¹⁸⁰ The situation in 1030 was not so dramatic, because in 1117/8, its eastern provinces were ravaged, and there were fewer western provinces. Yet the story shows the importance of A'zāz for the replenishment of the city. Also, A'zāz linked Aleppo with lands it could get replenishment from,¹⁸¹ although a connection through Bālis also existed. What is more, Marǧ Dābiq would provide Romanos with pastures for his cavalry, thus depriving the Kilāb of their use. They had their pastures there, as mentioned by Thierry Bianquis.¹⁸² By taking A'zāz, Romanos would control Aleppo’s supply of food, wood, horses and even water. He could exert pressure on the city, forcing it to yield without a fight, or facilitate a siege. Jean-Claude Cheynet suggests that it was the loss of A'zāz that forced Aleppo to submit after the Tubbal battle.¹⁸³ Marǧ Dābiq was used by Basil II in 995¹⁸⁴ and allegedly in 1021.¹⁸⁵

Romanos thus moved south from Qūrus through the Baršāyā hills, and stopped in a waterless and hilly place, even though it was usual to camp in a flat terrain with water.¹⁸⁶ However, there was water in the vicinity, just outside the camp perimeter, and the mention of Skylitzes about the audacity of the Arabs, attacking people wanting to find something to eat or drink in open terrain, indicates it was not expected.¹⁸⁷ Additionally, this negates another possible interpretation: since there is mention of Arabs stealing from the army,¹⁸⁸ Pieter Smoor interprets the building of the camp as a way to stop it.¹⁸⁹ While surely this would be a general reason, one cannot imagine that the emperor just stopped where he stood, he would have to go anyway. It was probably a temporary place to stay, just for a night.¹⁹⁰

¹⁸⁰ Kamāl al-Dīn, 267–270.

¹⁸¹ Or help from the North-East, as in the Numayr.

¹⁸² Bianquis 2002a, 57.

¹⁸³ Skylitzes, XVIII 6, n. 41.

¹⁸⁴ ANT2, 442.

¹⁸⁵ Kamāl al-Dīn, 124 (assuming that Marǧ ad-Dībāǧ is Marǧ Dābiq, which is possible, since Yāqūt [V 101] puts it close to Al-Maššīša, but this is because it was used for expeditions through it [Yāqūt, II, 416]). Forsyth (1977, 596–597 n. 42) has the same idea. Moreover, some of the mentions of Al-Ma'arrī about Fātik are reminiscent of 1030.

¹⁸⁶ Nicéphore Phocas, I 4; McGeer 1995a, 357–358.

¹⁸⁷ Skylitzes, XVIII 5.

¹⁸⁸ Kamāl al-Dīn, 137.

¹⁸⁹ Smoor 1981, 185.

¹⁹⁰ Especially if we apply the remark of Skylitzes (XVIII 5) about searching for a new camp for the entire army, but – as mentioned, in the light of ANT3 (496), it refers to the troops delegated to besiege A'zāz.

Camp

There was awareness of the relationship between the allocation and redistribution of resources and the military capabilities.¹⁹¹ The Byzantines relied on local resources – food, and wood for fuel and construction – during the expeditions.¹⁹² The army consumed more timber than the fleet.¹⁹³ It was needed for cooking, heating,¹⁹⁴ barricades,¹⁹⁵ bridges, roads, siege equipment¹⁹⁶ (rams, towers, ladders, logs for sapping the walls,¹⁹⁷ embankments for the stone-throwers and other artillery troops,¹⁹⁸ chicken bowls,¹⁹⁹ and probably arrows). One could use wagons for transport,²⁰⁰ but making or repairing them also required wood. Romanos IV transported wood in the wagons,²⁰¹ perhaps Romanos did as well, and he prepared siege engines in Antioch.²⁰² However, the fact that he considered how much wood he should send to Aʿzāz indicates that, despite his great effectiveness, he had none to spare, and perhaps not all of the needs were met. The forest in the hills, which to a certain degree was still extant, could have provided an opportunity to get more timber before entering the flat and relatively woodless terrain ahead.

Bedouins

Psellos mentions that certain high commanders tried to discourage Romanos from the expedition, “fearing the barbarians greatly”.²⁰³ This befits the Fāṭimids rather than Aleppo, unless it refers to the size of the enemy and not his fighting style. Psellos mentions that the Arabs in 1030 fought out of line and seemed numerous, and this scared the army,²⁰⁴ while Al-Maʿarrī stressed that the Byzantine cavalry fought only as a group, while the Arabs could fight individually.²⁰⁵ As Leo’s *Taktika* strongly recommends, a third support line should be

¹⁹¹ Haldon 1999, 35.

¹⁹² Kaegi 2016a, 393 (41).

¹⁹³ About antiquity, but applicable.

¹⁹⁴ Even in hot summer the nights could be cold.

¹⁹⁵ Madgearu 2021, 121 and n. 71.

¹⁹⁶ Meiggs 1982, 6.

¹⁹⁷ Sullivan 2021, 316, also 317: wooden palisade during siege of Constantinople, 319: house-like siege construction; Makrypoulias (2021, 262–263 and n. 67) surmises a wooden palisade or stone wall in a camp at Larissa.

¹⁹⁸ Haldon 1999, 186: wooden frame of a mound; Sullivan 2021, 319.

¹⁹⁹ Porphyrogenitus, 105.

²⁰⁰ Sullivan 2021, 320.

²⁰¹ Kamāl al-Dīn, 179: 3000 wagons with baggages and siege engines; Sullivan 2021, 320.

²⁰² ANT3, 494.

²⁰³ Psellos (III 7) claims that Coele-Syria was the target, but wrongly considers Aleppo to be its main city.

²⁰⁴ Psellos, III 9.

²⁰⁵ Smoor 1981, 192.

used when fighting against the Arabs, to prevent them from outflanking.²⁰⁶ Also, as Christos G. Makrypoulias mentions, *De re militaria* advised to strengthen the flanks in case of Arab or Turkish attacks,²⁰⁷ and the issue of the Byzantine tactics not being suitable for fighting nomads – Turks, which may also apply to Arab Bedouins to an extent – is described by Łukasz Różycki, who indicates that the main issue was the charge of the heavy cavalry, which was ineffective, as the nomads were quicker and could quickly break away from it, and the heavy cavalry would strike at the centre of the enemy lines, while nomad cavalry was mostly placed at the flanks.²⁰⁸ This is visible in the Arab attack on the Byzantines (995), as they were sure that the Byzantine forces would not be fast enough to reach them, but Basil II's Bulgarians ambushed them.²⁰⁹ In 1030, it may be visible in the mention of Abū 'Ulyān Difā' Ibn Nabhān al-Kilābī, who – despite the fact that he had few horses with him – got everything he wanted from Romanos' troops.²¹⁰ It is worth noting that the nearby region of Al-Ġazīra had the best horses in the Muslim world,²¹¹ and the Kilāb received help from the Numayr tribe that lived there,²¹² while Zonaras attributes the Arab victory against Romanos III to their good horses and their (scary?) naked look.²¹³ Skylitzes mentions that his advisers, like John Chaldos,²¹⁴ counselled him to accept the peace offer and discouraged a summer campaign, as

²⁰⁶ Dennis 2016, 228 (170).

²⁰⁷ Makrypoulias 2021, 263 and n. 76.

²⁰⁸ Różycki 2021, 19. Haldon (1999, 209) and Kaegi (2016) ascribe the Byzantine strategy of avoiding conflict with the Arabs in 7th c. to the tactical advantages of the Arabs, especially their use of horse-archers and camels alongside the cavalry. Perhaps one can apply this to the 11th c. Kaldellis (2017, 297) equates Turkish tactics from the crusader times with the Arab tactics from the Tubbal battle. See also Todt 2018, 209, 213, 268 about the usefulness of (Armenian) archers against Bedouins.

²⁰⁹ ANT2, 442–443. They were punished by having their arms cut off, the Islamic punishment for stealing.

²¹⁰ Kamāl al-Dīn, 137. This is what Smoor (1985, 185) referred to when he claimed the emperor made camp at Tubbal, halfway to Aleppo, because of Bedouin attacks, who were lured by his treasures. But note that the Byzantines usually made such a camp, to protect themselves from night attacks (Porphyrogenitos, 94) and tallow the army to sleep.

²¹¹ Al-Muqaddasī, 115.

²¹² Al-Maqrīzī, II 179; Kamāl al-Dīn (138) mentions Banū Qaṭan of Banū Numayr arriving at the moment of Romanos' flight, capturing the baggage train of the emperor; Bianquis (2002b: 180) ascribes the victory to them; Zakkar (1969, 50) mentions in an earlier context the affinity of Numayr and the Kilāb and that fighting the Kilāb would mean fighting Numayr as well; Kamāl al-Dīn (143) and Heidemann (2002, 95) write about the marriage of Naṣr and a Numayrid princess. Perhaps it was their arrival that frightened the emperor (Ibn al-Aṭīr [VI 54–55] mentions the excuse of the emperor was the arrival of a hostile army), as he thought all the Numayr supported the Kilāb, and was close to their territory. Note that the legends of Ibn an-Numayr that Romanos dreamt of, and was recognised by Maṣṣūr Ibn Lu'lu', may have been a distorted echo of this event that the author himself mentioned both for 1030 and 981 (Kamāl al-Dīn, 101–102) and may have been influenced by the local topos of ascete saving a city (Edessa, St Jacob and Nisibis). The later attack on Edessa can be seen as revenge on Numayr. Note that Numayr may have been lured to attack not just by the imperial treasures, or wanting to help the Kilāb, but also by the news of the earlier (8th of August) Byzantine failure.

²¹³ Zonar., 176 (Zonar. = Ioannes Zonaras, *Annales* [in:] J.-P. Migne, *Patrologia Graeca*, CXIII, Paris 1864); Bianquis 1993, 117.

²¹⁴ Probably the doux of Thessalonike (which possibly explains his dislike of the Syrian weather), see Mokhov 2000, 181.

the Arabs, unlike the Byzantines, are accustomed to the heat.²¹⁵ This could be a retrospective claim, to explain the defeat, and blame Romanos. But while the Greek sources claim Romanos was discouraged from fighting, the Arab ones mostly mention the encouragement Romanos kept receiving to invade Syria: from people belittling the strength of the Arabs, as this was what he wanted to hear from his army,²¹⁶ from Maṣṣūr Ibn Lu'lu', from Ibn al-Ġarrāḥ, and even from the emirs of Aleppo themselves. Even Psellos, in his oration to Constantine X from 1043–1047, praises Romanos, and blames bad advice for the expedition and the “most shameful defeat” and was only the flatteries, illness and the defeat that changed the emperor for the worse.²¹⁷

Ibn al-Dūqs

While both Al-Maqrīzī and Ibn al-Aṭīr mention the separation²¹⁸ from the army of *Ibn Dūqs* and 10,000 men, in Al-Maqrīzī it is the cause of Romanos' fear, while in Ibn al-Aṭīr, it is only when the emperor learns about a plot against him that he starts to worry. Matthew of Edessa does not mention Ibn Lu'lu' or Ibn Dūqs at all, but says the army was angry at Romanos for not fighting the Arabs (as well as the persecution of miaphysites). Both Matthew of Edessa and Ibn al-Aṭīr mention a plot, and it being exposed – Matthew of Edessa mentions it was Abukab²¹⁹ that saved the emperor. Al-Maqrīzī does not mention the plot, and in Matthew of Edessa it was to leave Romanos to the Arabs. The army did not want to sabotage the expedition; it was the emperor's behaviour that did that. In Al-Maqrīzī it was also the emperor's lack of will to fight that caused the army's wrath; in Ibn al-Aṭīr, news of the plot made the emperor leave, provoking anger in the army, which became further agitated when he arrested Ibn Dūqs and Ibn Lu'lu', which the Arabs used as an excuse to attack.²²⁰ Thus in Al-Maqrīzī and Matthew of Edessa, the plot or anger of the army resulted from not wanting to fight, and in Ibn al-Aṭīr, the plot is the cause of it, but the anger of the army was the result of it. Ibn Lu'lu' is more prominent in Al-Maqrīzī: it was him who convinced Romanos to come,

²¹⁵ Skylitzes, XVIII 5. They did not ask him to move the date of the expedition to a cooler season, but to forego it completely.

²¹⁶ ANT3, 492–494.

²¹⁷ Koutrakou 2011, 326–329, quote 328.

²¹⁸ Ibn al-Aṭīr says they went a different way.

²¹⁹ Matthew of Edessa, I 57 (later made him strategos of Edessa: I 59, 55, which may explain the legend of making a peasant who saved his life a governor of Dulūk). Mokhov 2000 (179, 181) claims Abukab was the commander of an Armenian detachment, and Matthew of Edessa creates an image of Romanos protected by Armenian troops, but it is not in the English text, it is in Kamāl al-Dīn.

²²⁰ In Rosen's (1883, n. 272) version of Ibn al-Aṭīr, there is no mention of the arrest, and it was the decision to leave that disturbed the army.

and it was Ibn Dūqs that accompanied him. Al-Maqrīzī gives the date and the number of Bedouins (2000), and crucially – like Kamāl al-Dīn – mentions that Numayr participated in the combat. Ibn al-Aṭīr mentions that the excuse for retreating given by Romanos to *Ibn al-Dūqs* was that a big Bedouin army had been gathered against them.²²¹

Ibn al-Dūq(a)s (ابن الدوقس) means son of Doukas, or son of doux. The current doux of Antioch was the brother-in-law of Romanos, Constantine Karantenos. As the doux, he was the commander of Manṣūr, and could be useful for explaining why Romanos III decided to intervene in Aleppo, and it would be logical to send him. But we know from Skylitzes²²² that Constantine Dalassenos was sent with some of the forces, and was routed.²²³ So it is possible, as indicated by J.-Cl. Cheynet,²²⁴ that it was the story of C. Dalassenos that inspired the story of army betrayal. Victor Rosen believed him to be *Ibn al-Dūqs*.²²⁵ Note that it was him who had sent support for Ṣāliḥ, the father of the emirs, while he was besieging Fāṭimid Aleppo, something which Basil II disapproved of.²²⁶ Thus he had good relations with the Mirdāsids,²²⁷ but that would make his plotting with Manṣūr even stranger – especially since he was not arrested. The idea that Manṣūr convinced Romanos to both undertake the expedition and sabotage it, despite having a personal interest in its success seems bizarre. Victor Rosen claims that Manṣūr was a reliable ally of the Byzantines, but was probably bribed by enemies of Rome, who promised to return him to power in Aleppo.²²⁸ But, if the expedition of Romanos was successful, he would have a chance to retrieve the throne; he already had a chance, or surety, of what V. Rosen expects him to be bribed with; unless it was obvious that Romanos wished to annex Aleppo, the idea of V. Rosen makes little sense. Or if he (as in Matthew of Edessa) wished to retreat, and Ibn Lu'lu' was against that.

²²¹ Ibn al-Aṭīr, VI, 55. Possible captivity of Karantenos, or Numayr intervention, or Fāṭimid one (Bar Hebraeus, 83 [Bar Hebraeus = Abū ʿāl-Faraġ Ġamāl al-Dīn Ibn al-ʿIbrī, *Tārīḥ al-Zamān*, trans. I. Armala, Beirut 1986] speaks of two Slav leaders being ambushed, and claims that a grand army, including Egyptians [Fāṭimids], is coming – but this is a late source and it is unlikely that a Fāṭimid army was expected) would explain panic. Matthew of Edessa (I 57) mentions the existence of a grand army.

²²² Skylitzes, XVIII 5. Unless he mixed up (deliberately, to blame Dalassenos?) two doukes of Antioch.

²²³ Mokhov (2000, 182) claims that Ibn al-Aṭīr reports he was sent to help ambush Choïrosphaktes, but did not dare to join the fight, and returned to the camp. He means Skylitzes, but he does not say that either: he did join the fight but was forced to retreat.

²²⁴ Cheynet 1986, 417.

²²⁵ Rosen 1883, n. 272; Adontz 1935, 173–174; Kazhdan and Epstein 1985, 64; with reservations Cheynet 1990, 43 (about the second one 43–44) and Skylitzes XVIII 5 n. 34: notes that he was a former doux, thus very experienced in fighting Bedouins, and his failure makes one think of a plot.

²²⁶ ANT3, 474–476.

²²⁷ One can even think of axes: Argyroi-Lu'lu', Dalassenoi-Mirdās.

²²⁸ Rosen 1883, n. 272.

Anton S. Mokhov claims that *Ibn al-Dūqs* could have been a son of Andronikos Doukas Constantine, as John was too young, and adds (citing Demetrios I. Polemis) that Andronikos participated in the Skleros revolt.²²⁹ A more relevant piece of information is that C. Doukas was the son-in-law of C. Dalassenos and was involved in C. Doukas' conspiracies after 1034.²³⁰

Anton S. Mokhov believes that the son of doux is Nikephoros Karantenos, and that he was punished by becoming a mere *strategos* of Naupaktos and compares it to the transfer of C. Diogenes from Thessalonike to Thrace.²³¹ But it would make more sense if Nikephoros previously held a higher title, and the dismissal of his father in August 1030²³² can be explained simply by his failure as a doux and was not necessarily a conspiracy. The same applies to A.S. Mokhov's point that after the debacle Romanos stopped extensively appointing family members to the most important posts:²³³ Romanos ceased to engage in the expedition himself,²³⁴ A.S. Mokhov also notes, which suggests that it was his own failure or that of his relatives (which may result in plots against them) that he wanted to avoid, and not their plots. Secondly, Nikephoros' case is partly contrary to this claim, as he was nominated, and it would be strange after a revolt. Also, if Manṣūr was arrested for such a plot,²³⁵ he would not have been able to tell this story. And if he and Karantenos were away, then they would lose influence over what happens in the camp and forfeit their chance to claim the throne. Additionally, the more trustworthy sources do not mention such plots, even though (Skylitzes – Dalassenos, Kamāl al-Dīn – Manṣūr) they mention the participation of the alleged plotters in the expedition.²³⁶

In my opinion the story of *Ibn al-Dūqs* is a distorted memory of the battle itself, when the doux Leo Choïrosphaktes was defeated and his routing caused panic and the withdrawal of the army, and of the time after the battle when Romanos, who was afraid of a revolt, went to Constantinople and attempted a new expedition, and returned to deal with an alleged plot by ex-duke of Thessalonike Constantine Diogenes and the emperor's sister-in-law Theodora.²³⁷

²²⁹ Mokhov 2000, 179–180.

²³⁰ Polemis 1968, 29.

²³¹ Mokhov 2000, 181, 195.

²³² He disappears (perhaps he died), which would influence the expedition or its course.

²³³ Mokhov 2000, 196–197.

²³⁴ Mokhov 2000, 197.

²³⁵ The part about their arrest is missing from Rosen's (1883, n. 272) translation, but why would the emperor not react?

²³⁶ Adontz 1935, 173–174.

²³⁷ Skylitzes, XVIII 9.

Short vowels are usually not written in Arabic, so *al-dūqs/doux* became *al-Dūqas/Doukas*.²³⁸ Because of the Arabic custom when writing family names,²³⁹ it became *Ibn al-Dūqs/Son of Doukas*. And this, together with the similarity of the names Romanos III and IV, who were both abandoned by a part of the army during a major battle against Muslims, as well as the existence of two important Andronikoi Dukai in both periods,²⁴⁰ got Leo Choïrosphaktes and/or Constantine Dalassenos, both blamed for the flight (and the latter suspected of treason later on), confused with Constantine Diogenes, accused of betraying Romanos III. But what also contributed to the story was the battle of Mantzikert (1071), where Andronikos Doukas betrayed Romanos IV Diogenes.²⁴¹ *Ibn al-Dūqs* was a literary figure crafted out of historical noise, and the relations by late historians (aside from Kamāl al-Dīn) do not bring actual information. Note the transposition of the legends about Ibn (Abī) Numayr from the attack on Aleppo of 1030 to 981, and many similar mistakes. These are interesting indicators of how literary *topoi* may be born out of confusing analogous events.²⁴²

Return?

The emperor stayed for 40 more days (till 19-27 October 1030), then returned to the capital, fearing a plot that could result from his defeat. He left the *protovestiaros* Simon in his stead²⁴³ and ordered him to prepare a new expedition against Aleppo “when the air is cool, and the water abound”.²⁴⁴

But Naṣr asked Romanos for forgiveness, offered submission and renewed his offer of “marching in front of his soldiers and armies wherever he goes within the lands of Syria, without provisions or reimbursement”. Thus, he assumed that after peace was made with Aleppo, the emperor would still want to invade Syria. He asked the imprisoned envoy and *katepano* Niketas for mediation.²⁴⁵ In September 1031, the emir’s son came to Constantinople to submit, paying as much as on the previous occasion. The emperor sent Theophilactes of

²³⁸ Short vowels are not written in Arabic. Also late authors did not have to know what a *doux* was. But even in ANT2, 417 (in the French edition) most manuscripts write *dūqās*, and only manuscript C (which often brings good variants) uses the proper *dūqs*.

²³⁹ E.g. ANT2, 372: “son of Maleinos” equals Maleinos.

²⁴⁰ Thus not only the sons of Andronikos, but he himself could be considered; and even Leo Choïrosphaktes, because he was the *doux* of Thessalonike.

²⁴¹ Angold 2008, 608. Note that Alb Arslān came there from Aleppo: Kamāl al-Dīn, 174–180.

²⁴² Kamāl al-Dīn, 101–102, 138.

²⁴³ Probably *parakoimomenos* Simon, a eunuch sent by Constantine VIII to Georgia, who returned when the emperor died (Aristakes, V) and *domestikos scholon* Simon, a servant of Constantine VIII, whom Romanos left in Syria with Nicetas (Skylitzes, XVIII 7).

²⁴⁴ ANT3, 500.

²⁴⁵ ANT3, 500.

Athens, who concluded the treaty.²⁴⁶ But it only happened after Niketas destroyed Aʿzāz and Tubbal (1-29 December 1030) in revenge. Afterwards they were lenient due to Naṣr’s letter, and mediated peace (1-25 April 1031),²⁴⁷ from then on focusing on Naṣr Ibn Muṣarrāf. Al-Maqrīzī claims the reason for Naṣr’s submission, despite his victory, was the Fāṭimid danger;²⁴⁸ Jean-Claude Cheynet believes it was the fall of Aʿzāz,²⁴⁹ but Skylitzes and Yaḥyà show that Naṣr submitted before that. The routing of the emperor was a spectacular event, but the Byzantine losses were not great, and Byzantium was still dangerous. It would have been imprudent to expect that this victory would reverse the trend of Byzantine victories of the last century or so.²⁵⁰ The alleged words of the Arabs, frightened with their victory, who said this blood will not benefit them, and they should sue for peace,²⁵¹ seem fitting. Also, S. Zakkar rightly points to the division of the emirate, which most likely happened after the battle; Naṣr needed help against his brother.²⁵² Also, Byzantium still had Maṣṣūr and Ḥamdānids.

Peace with Aleppo did not mean peace with Egypt. Romanos wrote to the Ṭayyi’ right after his return, confirming his intention to return to Syria. It was sent right after his return from the expedition, so not necessarily after the peace with Aleppo, but he reached them after peace was agreed. This suggests that the target of Romanos was the Fāṭimids. Romanos *pretended* to invade Syria again and went as far as Mesanakta (after September 1031),²⁵³ but was stopped due to the plotting of his sister-in-law Theodora and C. Diogenes. Skylitzes mentions it after the peace with Aleppo, and it seems to adhere to the chronology,²⁵⁴ thus the target of the expedition was not Aleppo, but likely the Fāṭimids again, to fulfil the promises

²⁴⁶ Skylitzes, XVIII 9.

²⁴⁷ ANT3, 506–508. Naṣr was to send 500,000 dirhams (60 for 1 *miṭqāl* of gold according to the current rate in Aleppo), paid in two instalments a year. The envoys were released, and the emperor accepted the old gift of Naṣr. See also Kamāl al-Dīn, 139–140; Al-Maqrīzī, II 180.

²⁴⁸ Al-Maqrīzī, II 180.

²⁴⁹ Skylitzes, XVIII 6 n. 41.

²⁵⁰ Even if this was the case.

²⁵¹ Matthew of Edessa, I 16.

²⁵² Zakkar (1969, 110–111), which is accepted by Kaldellis (2017, 161). This is another possibility of the origin of the story of the emperor being invited – it could have happened after the war.

²⁵³ The earlier event (the visit of the son of the emir of Aleppo to Constantinople, which also confirms that the expedition was directed against the Fāṭimids; note that B. Flusin puts them in one paragraph: Skylitzes, XVIII 3). Treadgold (1997, 585) claims the expedition took place (next) spring, 1032. Kaldellis (2017, 163) misdates it to summer 1032 (probably due to this next mentioned date, unrelated comet sighting, 28 July 1032), but the emperor would not go in the summer again.

²⁵⁴ Skylitzes, XVIII 9. Skylitzes thinks he was pretending, even though this is incompatible with being warned, as if he went out to expose the conspirers, then he knew already. Thinking Romanos’ goal was Aleppo, and knowing that peace with it was already signed, he did not consider the possibility that Romanos was, as Treadgold (1997, 585) says, going to Syria to profit from the Fāṭimid problems. Kaldellis (2017, 163) does not see any strategic objective, but perhaps to avert a revolt by keeping the army busy and close. It could have been started in order to exert pressure on the Fāṭimids, or on Aleppo, because the peace was signed only after Tubbal was ravaged. Also, note a similar history in ANT3, 460–462 (1021).

given to the Ṭayyi', and use the help offered by Aleppo, which are things Skylitzes was not quite aware of (he mistakes Ibn al-Ġarrāh/Pinzarah for the governor of Tripoli).²⁵⁵ Fulfilling the suggestion of Romanos, the Ṭayyi', as well as the Kalb (who broke with the Fāṭimids and allied with the Ṭayyi'), entered Byzantium, where they were attacked by the Fāṭimids. The war continued at a local level, but negotiations were started with the Fāṭimids and were concluded by Michael IV.²⁵⁶

Aftermath

The Syrian campaign changed the politics and the alleged personality of Romanos III, among other things. Kaldellis' claim that it all turned out as if the Byzantines had won,²⁵⁷ is false. Aleppo was already subject to the Byzantines,²⁵⁸ and an opportunity to conquer Syria was lost. I agree that Byzantium was a *status quo* power;²⁵⁹ it did not plan to retrieve its losses, apart from the most recent ones,²⁶⁰ and it did not plan crusades. But it was reacting to circumstances: defending itself, but also profiting from strokes of good luck. And the appeals of the three tribes sucked Byzantium into the Syrian void. If it was not for the failure at Aleppo, Romanos would have engaged in direct confrontation with the Fāṭimids, but the Mirdāsids proved to be a valuable buffer, in both ways. Thus, the battle did not just stabilise relations with Aleppo,²⁶¹ but with the Fāṭimids as well, and Byzantium was content with its border, just like the Fāṭimids were beginning to adopt a strategic view similar to that of earlier dynasties that ruled Egypt.²⁶² The border stabilised, even earlier, on the natural barriers of Antitaurus and the Syrian Coastal range, and the climatic border they bring to life, which also corresponds with the border between settled and nomadic life. But these barriers are not unsurmountable, although this defeat – also due to the heat – must have made Byzantium realise its limitations.²⁶³ Even if their conquests started as a response to attacks,²⁶⁴ the

²⁵⁵ Probably because of earlier histories: ANT1, 816 (year 968); ANT2, 443 (year 995).

²⁵⁶ ANT3, 424, 430–438, 500, 528–534. The ambassador sent to the Ṭayyi' had to go through the Syrian Desert (510), which may have influenced his, and Romanos' view of the lands he would wage war in.

²⁵⁷ Kaldellis 2017, 161, 163.

²⁵⁸ ANT3, 494; Kamāl al-Dīn, 136.

²⁵⁹ Kaegi 2016a, 50.

²⁶⁰ Czyż 2011, 37–55. Byzantine attitude to former territories, comparing the words of Photios in *Eisagoge* about lands that were to be kept and protected, lands to be retrieved, and missing lands that were to be acquired, with the mentions of Byzantine chronicles about retrieving land. Kaldellis (2017, 61) presents similar view.

²⁶¹ Beihammer 2017, 59–60.

²⁶² Bianquis 1991, 50.

²⁶³ Czyż 2013, 222–227 (climate), 215–222 (other reasons); fuller version in Czyż 2011, 80–101. Bianquis (1992, 139–141) noticed the link between the geography and climate and the borders at this time before I did. Also Bianquis 1996, 49; Beihammer 2017, 140; Krallis 2012, 130 and n. 148, and Izdebski 2018, 14, 43–44, 147–148 (analogy with the claim about Bulgaria being lost in 6th c.), and Kennedy (1991, 105–113) provides context.

previous emperors – bar the *intermezzo* of Constantine VIII – were conquerors. It was not Romanos III that was exceptional,²⁶⁵ Basil II was, with his focus on Bulgaria. While Tubbal may have taught new emperors not to engage in warfare, it was the imperial armies that did most of the conquering. If the attempt had not ended up failure, perhaps this would have been continued.

Bibliography

Abbreviations

EI2 = *The Encyclopaedia of Islam: New Edition*, I–XII, 1960–2005.

ZRVI = *Zbornik Radova Vizantološkog Instituta*, 1952–.

Secondary sources

Adontz N., 1935: “Notes Arméno-Byzantines”, *Byzantion* 10, 161–203.

Aliquot J., Alexidzé Z., 2012: “La reconquête byzantine de la Syrie à la lumière des sources épigraphiques: autour de Balātunus (Qal‘at Mehelbé)”, *Revue des études byzantines* 70, 175–208.

Angold M., 2008: “Belle Époque or Crisis? (1025–1118)”, [in:] J. Shepard, *The Cambridge History of the Byzantine Empire*, Cambridge, 583–627.

Beihammer A.D., 2017: *Byzantium and the Emergence of Muslim-Turkish Anatolia, ca. 1040–1130*, Abingdon.

Biały K., 2005: “Konstantyn Dalassen w zarysie historii Jana Skylitzesa”, *Res Historica* 40, 41–59.

Bianquis Th., 1991: “Pouvoirs arabes à Alep aux Xe et XIe siècles”, *Revue du monde musulman et de la Méditerranée* 62, 49–59.

Bianquis Th., 1992: “Les frontières de la Syrie au XIe siècle”, *Castrum* 4, 135–150.

Bianquis Th., 1993: “Mirdās”, [in:] *EI2*, VII, 115–123.

Bianquis Th., 1996: “Méditerranée arabe, Asie musulmane. Où passe la frontière ?”, *CEMOTI* 22, 12–50.

Bianquis Th., 2002a: *Damas et la Syrie sous la domination fatimide (359–468/969–1076). Essai d'interprétation de chroniques arabes médiévales*, Damas.

²⁶⁴ Shepard 2001, 19–40.

²⁶⁵ Cheynet 1991, 64.

- Bianquis Th., 2002b: “Waththāb b. Sābiḳ al-Numayrī”, [in:] *EI2*, XI, 180.
- Canard M., 1961: “Les sources arabes de l'histoire byzantine aux confins des Xe et XIe siècles”, *Revue des études byzantines* 19, 284–314.
- Canard M., 1973: *Byzance et les musulmans du Proche Orient*, London.
- Cappel A.J., 1994: “The Byzantine Response to the ‘Arab (10th–11th Centuries)’”, *Byzantinische Forschungen* 20, 113–132.
- Cheyne J.-Cl., 1986: “Les Dalassenoi”, [in:] J.-Cl. Cheyne and J.-F. Vannier 1986 (www.academia.edu/30160346/LES_DALASSÉNOI_2006_), 413–471.
- Cheyne J.-Cl., 1990: *Pouvoir et contestations à Byzance (963–1210)*, Paris.
- Cheyne J.-Cl., 1991: “La politique militaire byzantine de Basile II à Alexis Comnène”, *ZRVI* 29–30, 61–74.
- Cheyne J.-Cl., Vannier J.-Fr., 1986: *Études prosopographiques*, Paris.
- Cheyne J.-Cl., and Vannier J.-Fr., 2004: “Les Argyroi”, *ZRVI* 40, 57–90.
- Crawford R.W., 1953: “Reconstruction of a Struggle within the Mirdāsīd Dynasty in Ḥalab”, *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 73.2, 89–95.
- Czyż M., 2011: *Granica bizantyńsko-arabska za Dynastii Macedońskiej. Wybrane zagadnienia*, MA thesis, Univ. of Warsaw.
- Czyż M., 2013: “Rzeźba terenu i klimat jako jedne z czynników wpływających na zatrzymanie ekspansji Bizancjum i kształtujących granicę Cesarstwa w Syrii”, [in:] M. Klimiuk, *Azja i Afryka. Religie, kultury, języki*, Warszawa, 215–227.
- Czyż M., 2015: *Bliski Wschód w kronice Yaḥyī al-Anṭākīego*, PhD thesis, Univ. of Warsaw.
- Czyż M., 2021: “The Murder of Fātik and the Fāṭimid Takeover of Aleppo”, [in:] M. Woźniak-Bobińska, *Bliski Wschód w świecie. Historia, polityka, kultura*, Łódź, 17–34.
- Dadoyan S.B., 1997: *The Fatimid Armenians: Cultural & Political Interaction in the Near East*, Leiden–New York–Köln.
- Daftary F., 1999: “The Ismaili Da‘wa Outside the Fatimid Dawla”, [in:] M. Barrucand, *L’Égypte Fatimide, son art et son histoire. Actes du colloque organize à Paris les 28, 29 et 30 mai 1998*, Paris, 29–43.
- Dawson T., 2016: “Suntagma Hoplôn: The Equipment of Regular Byzantine Troops, c. 950 – c. 1204”, [in:] J. Haldon, *Byzantine Warfare*, Abingdon–New York, 379–388 (81–90).
- De Biberstein Kazimirski, A., 2004: *Dictionnaire arabe-français*, II, Paris, 686.
- De Giorgi A.U., Eger A.A., 2021: *Antioch: A History*, Abingdon–New York.
- Dennis G.T., 2016: “The Byzantines in Battle”, [in:] J. Haldon 2016a, 223–236 (165–178).

THE SYRIAN CAMPAIGN OF ROMANOS III ARGYROS IN 1030 CE

- Drocourt N., 2011: “L’ambassadeur maltraité. Autout quelques cas de non-respect de l’immunité diplomatique entre Byzance et ses voisins (VIIe–XIe siècle)”, [in:] Societe des Historiens Medievistes de l’Enseignement Superieur Public, *Les relations diplomatiques au Moyen Âge. Formes et enjeux*, Paris, 87–98.
- Eger A.A., 2015: *The Islamic-Byzantine Frontier*, London–New York.
- Farag W., 1979: *Byzantium and its Muslim Neighbours during the Reign of Basil II (976–1025)*, PhD thesis, Univ. of Birmingham.
- Farag W., 1990: “The Aleppo Question: a Byzantine-Fatimid Conflict of Interest in Northern Syria in the Later Tenth Century AD”, *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 44.60, 44–61.
- Felix W., 1981: *Byzanz und die islamische Welt im früheren 11. Jahrhundert. Geschichte der politischen Beziehungen von 1001 bis 1055*, Wien.
- Forsyth J.H., 1977: *The Byzantine-Arab Chronicle (938–1034) of Yaḥyā b. Sa’īd al-Anṭākī*, PhD Thesis, Univ. of Michigan.
- Forsyth J.H., 1983: “Reviewed Work: Byzanz und die Islamis[c]e Welt im früheren 11. Jahrhundert by Wolfgang Felix”, *Speculum* 58.2, 458–460.
- Garsoïan N.G., 1998: “The Problem of Armenian Integration into the Byzantine Empire”, [in:] H. Ahrweiler, A.E. Laiou, *Studies on the Internal Diaspora of the Byzantine Empire*, Washington, 53–124.
- Gibb, H.A.R., 2004: “Arab-Byzantine Relations under the Umayyad Caliphate”, [in:] M. Bonner, *Arab-Byzantine Relations in Early Islamic Times*, Aldershot, 65–80.
- Gilmer J.M., 2012: *Lazarus Rising: Nikephoros Phokas and the Tenth Century Byzantine Military Renaissance*, MA thesis, American Public University System, Charles Town, West Virginia.
- Haldon J., 1999 (2003): *Warfare, State and Society in the Byzantine World 565–1204*, London.
- Haldon J., 2014: *Critical Commentary on The Taktika of Leo VI*, Washington.
- Haldon J., 2016a: *Byzantine Warfare*, Abingdon–New York.
- Haldon J., 2016b: “The Organisation and Support of an Expeditionary Force: Manpower and Logistics in the Middle Byzantine Period”, [in:] J. Haldon 2016a, 409–449 (111–151).
- Hamdani A., 1974: “Byzantine-Fatimid Relations before the Battle of Mantzikert”, *Byzantine Studies* 1.2, 169–179.
- Heidemann, S., 2002: *Die Renaissance der Städte in Nordsyrien und Nordmesopotamien*, Leiden–Boston–Köln.

- Holmes C., 2005: *Basil II and the Governance of the Empire (976–1025)*, Oxford.
- Holt P.M., 1980: “The Treaties of the Early Mamluk Sultans with the Frankish States”, *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 43.1, 67–76.
- Honigmann, E., 1935: *Die Ostgrenze des Byzantinisches Reiches*, Bruxelles.
- Howard-Johnson J., 2017: “The Peira and Legal Practices in Eleventh-Century Byzantium”, [in:] M.D. Lauxtermann, M. Whittow 2017, 104–123.
- Izdebski A., 2018: *Średniowieczni Rzymianie i przyroda*, Kraków.
- Jenkins R., 1993: *Byzantium: The Imperial Centuries 610–1071*, New York.
- Kaegi W.E., 2016a: “Byzantine Logistics: Problems and Perspectives”, [in:] J. Haldon 2016a, 391–407 (39–55).
- Kaldellis, A., 2017: *Streams of Gold, Rivers of Blood*, Oxford.
- Kazhdan A.P., Epstein A.Wh., 1985: *Change in Byzantine Culture in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries*, London.
- Kennedy H., 1991: “Nomads and Settled People in Bilād al-Shām in the Third/Ninth and Fourth/Tenth Centuries”, [in:] M.A. al-Bakhit, R. Schick, *Proceedings of the Fifth International Conference on the History of Bilad Al-Sham, Amman 4–8 March 1990*, Amman, 105–113.
- Kennedy H., 2004: *The Prophet and the Age of the Caliphates*, Harlow.
- Koutrakou N., 2011: “Psellus, Romanus III and the Arabs’ ‘Absurd Victory’: Some Remarks on Psellus’s Perception of Foreign Relations”, *Graeco-Arabica* 11, 319–346.
- Krallis D., 2006: *Attaleiates as a Reader of Psellos*, 167–192, Leiden–Boston.
- Krallis D., 2012: *Michael Attaleiates and the Politics of Imperial Decline in Eleventh Century Byzantium*, Tempe.
- Laiou A.E., 2016: “On Just War in Byzantium”, [in:] J. Haldon 2016a, 17–41 (153–177).
- Laurent V., 1962: “La chronologie des gouverneurs d’Antioche sous la seconde domination byzantine (969–1084)”, *Mélanges de l’Université Saint Joseph*, 38, 219–254.
- Lauritzen F., 2009: “The Miliarsion Poet: The Dactylic Inscription on a Coin of Romanos III Argyros”, *Byzantion* 79, 231–240.
- Lauxtermann M.D., Whittow M., 2017: *Byzantium in the Eleventh Century*, Albingdon–New York.
- Lev Y., 1987: “Regime and Society in Fatimid Egypt, 358–487/968–1094”, *Middle East Studies* 19, 337–365.
- Littlewood A.R., 2006: “Imagery in the Chronographia of Michael Psellos”, [in:] Ch. Barber, D. Jenkins, *Reading Michael Psellos*, Leiden–Boston, 13–56.

- Madgearu A., 2021: “The Enemy Within: The Crisis Management of the Centrifugal Movements in the European Provinces of the Byzantine Empire”, [in:] G. Theotokis, M. Meško 2021, 111–136.
- Maisel S., 2017: *Yezidis in Syria: Identity Building among a Double Minority*, Lanham, Boulder, New York–London.
- Makrypoulias, Ch.G., 2021: “Boots on the Ground: Byzantine Infantry in the Eleventh Century”, [in:] G. Theotokis, M. Meško 2021, 241–266.
- McCormick, M. et al., 2013: “Roman Road Network (version 2008)”, <https://doi.org/10.7910/DVN/TI0KAU>, Harvard Dataverse, V1.
- McGeer E., 1995a: *Sowing the Dragons’ Teeth*, Washington.
- McGeer E., 1995b: “The Legal Decree of Nikephoros II Phokas Concerning Armenian Stratiotai”, [in:] T.S. Miller, J. Nesbitt: *Peace and War in Byzantium: Essays in Honor of George T. Dennis, S.J.*, Washington, 123–137.
- Meiggs R., 1982: *Trees and Timber in the Ancient Mediterranean World*, Oxford.
- Mokhov A.S. (Мохов А.С.), 2000: “КОМАНДНЫЙ СОСТАВ ВИЗАНТИЙСКОЙ АРМИИ В XI В. ПРАВЛЕНИЕ РОМАНА III АРГИРА (1028–1034)”, *Античная древность и средние века* 31, 173–197.
- Patlagean É., 2007: *Byzance IX^e–XV^e siècle*, Paris.
- Polemis D.I., 1968: *The Doukai*, London.
- Rosen V. (Розен В.Р.), 1883: Император Василий Болгаробойца, Санкт-Петербург.
- Rózycki Ł., 2021: “Between the Old and the New: Byzantine Battle Tactics in the Times of the Battle of Manzikert”, [in:] G. Theotokis, M. Meško 2021, 9–36.
- Schlumberger, G., 1900: *L’Épopée Byzantine a la fin du dixième siècle*, Paris.
- Shea J., 2020: *Politics and Government in Byzantium: The Rise and Fall of the Bureaucrats*, London.
- Shepard J., 2001: “Constantine VII, Caucasian Openings and the Road to Aleppo”, [in:] A. Eastmond, *Eastern Approaches to Byzantium*, Aldershot, 19–40.
- Shepard J., 2010: “Azaz, Battle Near”, [in:] C.J. Rogers, *The Oxford Encyclopaedia of Medieval Warfare and Military Technology*, I, Oxford–New York, 102.
- Shepard J., 2012: “Holy Land, Lost Lands, Realpolitik: Imperial Byzantine Thinking about Syria and Palestine in the Later 10th and 11th Centuries”, *Al-Qanṭara. Revista de estudios árabes* 2, 505–545.

- Shepard J., 2016: “Emperors and Expansionism: From Rome to Middle Byzantium”,
[in:] J. Shepard, *The Expansion of Orthodox Europe: Byzantium, the Balkans and Russia*,
London–New York, 65–92.
- Smoor P., 1985: *Kings and Bedouins in the Palace of Aleppo as Reflected in Ma‘arrī’s Works*,
Bandoeng.
- Sullivan D., 2021: “Technical Aspects of Siege Warfare in the Eleventh Century”,
[in:] G. Theotokis, M. Meško 2021, 315–332.
- Takirtakoglou K., 2021: “The Armenians in the Byzantine and Fatimid Militaries in the
Eleventh Century”, [in:] G. Theotokis, M. Meško 2021, 196–217.
- Telelis I.G., 2007: “Weather and Climate as Factors Affecting Land Transport and
Communication in Byzantium”, *Byzantion* 77, 431–462.
- Theotokis G., Meško M., 2021: *War in Eleventh-Century Byzantium*, London–New York.
- Todt Kl.-P., 2018: *Dukat Und Griechisch-Orthodoxes Patriarchat Von Antiocheia in
Mittelbyzantinischer Zeit (969–1084)*, Mainz.
- Todt, Kl.-P., Vest B.A, 2014: *Syria (Syria Prōtē, Syria Deutera, Syria Euphratēsia)*, Wien.
- Treadgold W., 1997: *A History of the Byzantine State and Society*, Stanford.
- Zakkar S., 1969: *The Emirate of Aleppo 392/1002 – 487/1094*, PhD Thesis at the Univ. of
London.

Maciej Czyż
Uniwersytet Wrocławski
maciej.czyz@uwr.edu.pl
ORCID: 0000-0001-9160-9847