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THE LOWER DANUBE IN THE BYZANTINE NAVAL CAMPAIGNS IN THE 12TH C.

Abstract: The present study focuses on the naval actions that took place within the context of the restored Byzantine power over the Black Sea and the Northern Balkans in the 11th -12th c. and more precisely, throughout the 12th c., when most of the naval operations were concentrated not in the Black Sea basin proper but at the Lower Danube. Thus, the analysis of the recorded miltray campaigns in the region has thrown light on a number of characterstics of the Byzantine naval activity there, such as the predominantly logistical employment of the Byzantine ships and the combination of the naval actions with military operations on land yet not always well coordinated. Apparently, the employment of naval forces at the Lower Danube was not of a primary concern for the Byzantine emperors in the 12th c. Perhaps one of the reasons might have been the fact that the Byzantines did not face a real naval power there and thus, the ships were needed mostly in logistics and to respect the enemy. Moreover, the fleet had got involved in crippling naval operations far from the Lower Danube region and the Black Sea—against the Normans in Sicily, in support to the Crusaders in Egypt, and against the Venetian fleet in the Aegean sea.

Keywords: campaigns, naval, byzantine, military.

Almost forty years ago in a footnote in his article dedicated to the interaction between Vlachs, Cumans and Byzantines in the time of Manuel I Komnenos (1143-1180), the Romanian historian P. Năsturel mentions that the actions of the Byzantine navy at the Lower Danube are still lacking their well-written history and therefore, he and P. Diaconu were planning to approach this rather interesting topic.[1] Some twenty-five years later I. Barnea came up with a comprehensive overview of the appearance of the Danube as an important Byzantine communication between the 4th and 14th c. yet not putting an accent on the Byzantine naval operations there. [2] The present study is not as much ambitious as to answer the need of an exhaustive study of the Lower Danube in the Byzantine military strategy and campaigns throughout the centuries. Rather it focuses on the naval actions that took place in the region within the context of the restored Byzantine power over the Black Sea and the Northern Balkans in the 11th -12th c. and more precisely, in the 12th c. when the most of the naval operations were concentrated not in the Black Sea basin proper but at the Lower Danube. [3]

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The Byzantine navy against the Hungarians

The first action of Byzantine ships against the Hungarians happened in the course of the conflict in AD 1127-1129.[4] Despite the differences in the accounts on the events provided by Choniates and Cinnamus, the chronology of the first Byzantine-Hungarian war in the 12th c. has been generally settled.[5] According to it, the attempt of the Byzantines to interfere in the internal Hungarian affairs by providing a refugee to Prince Álmos, a brother and rival to the throne of King Stephen II, as well as the hostility demonstrated by the citizens of Braničevo to the Hungarian merchants, made the Hungarian king in the spring of AD 1127 to attempt an audacious raid to Belgrade, Braničevo (near present-day Kostolac), and Serdica advancing as far as Philippopolis. There the Hungarians were stopped and retreated back by the emperor John II Komnenos (1118-1143) who spent in the town the rest of the year in preparing his counter-offensive.[6] According to Choniates, that was a well-planned campaign on land and water: in the spring of AD 1128 "he sailed the swift-moving ships (nêaß taxunautoúsaß) he had outfitted into the Istros by way of the Pontos and there suddenly came upon the enemy on both land and water." The emperor himself crossed the river with his imperial trireme (têß strathgídoß trërouß), while the rest of the ships ferried the troops to the left bank of the Danube where the Hungarians were severely defeated.[7] The dispatch of ships against the Hungarians in AD 1128, however, has not been noted by Cinnamus. Yet, he states that the Byzantines crossed the Danube and the decisive battle took place on the opposite bank of the river as well as that after the sack of Chramon (present-day Bačka Palanka on the left bank of the Danube) the emperor "crossed back to the Romans' territory".[8] Apparently, such maneuvers could not have been accomplished without ships. Indeed, the active participation of Byzantine naval ships in that operation is further stated by the "Hungarian Chronicle" according to which the Hungarian ships were showered on with sulphureous fires.[9] Thus, summing up the information provided by the sources it can be assumed that on the order of John II Komnenos in the spring of AD 1128 a fleet of swift-moving ships fitted and equipped with "Greek fire" had been dispatched from Constantinople "by way of the Pontos (dià toû Póntoụ)" along the West Black Sea coast to the Danube delta. From there, thanks to the high spring waters, the ships sailed upstream the river to Chramon where they destroyed the Hungarian ships with "Greek fire". In addition, the Byzantine ships ferried to the left bank of the river both the emperor and the Byzantine troops (the cavalry, according to Choniates).[10]

The treaty which put the end of that campaign was followed by almost twenty peaceful years in the Byzantine-Hungarian relations. Yet, the ambition of Manuel I Komnenos (1143-1180) to secure his rear in the north-western Balkans before concentrating his efforts in a total military campaign against the Normans in Italy had led to a conflict first with the Serbs in AD 1149, and later with the Hungarians who supported them and were also an ally of the Normans.[11] The chronology of the Byzantine-Hungarian conflicts in the 1150s has been a subject of a long-going

discussion finalized with the chronology proposed by F. Makk and further revised by P. Stephenson.[12] According to it, the first military conflict between Manuel I Komnenos and Geza II happened in the late autumn of AD 1150 when, after his victory over the Serbs at the river Tara, the emperor went back to Constantinople in order to organize in that same autumn the penalizing offensive against the Hungarians for their support to the Serbian rebellion.[13] Similarly to the campaign in AD 1128, the logistics of that offensive envisaged the participation of the fleet which must have ferried the emperor and the troops across the river. As noted by Cinnamus, however, the ships (neôn) prepared in Constantinople did not appear when the emperor was back to the Danube. Therefore, he and the troops had to cross the river Sava on skiffs (lembádión) available on the shores and thus, to start their attack on the Hungarian territories between the Danube and the Sava.[14] Though any territorial acquisitions had not been made by the Byzantines, the waste of the Hungarian territories between the Danube and Sava as well as the threat to Geza's power demonstrated by the raids of the Hungarian pretender Boris in the course the Byzantine offensive, seemed to have neutralized Hungary as an active military and political factor in the north-western Balkans. Yet, very soon, Geza II tried to change the humiliating situation with his intention to attack the "Paristrian cities". There is no common opinion when exactly that incident happened: in the spring of AD 1152,[15] in AD 1153,[16] or already in the spring of AD 1151.[17] The plans of Geza II, however, became known to Manuel I Komnenos who marched swiftly to the Danube and camped with his army along the shore waiting again for ships (neôn). Since they did not appear, the Byzantines "constructed as many light boats as possible out of available materials and dragged them to the river". Thus, facing the possibility to suffer devastation similar to that in AD 1150 if the Byzantine troops would have reached the Hungarian lands, Geza II proceeded to negotiations without launching a battle.[18]

As can be seen, the Byzantine military response to the first two incidents provoked by Geza II envisaged the action of the Constantinopolitan fleet to ferry the emperor and the troops to the Hungarian lands. Yet, in both cases the ships fitted in Constantinople did not appear. What might have been the reason? Having in mind the approximate speed of a Byzantine trireme sailing on the Black Sea (ca. 225 km per day), the distance from Constantinople to the Dabube delta (ca. 600 km) must have been sailed by the Byzantine ships for ca. 3-4 days.[19] Much more problematic, however, was the navigation on the Danube. As noted previously, the sea craft would have had no problems in navigating in the so-called "maritime Danube", that is the sector from the branches of the estuary (more precisely, the branch of Sulina) upstream to present-day Brâila, while farther one had to rely either on waters high enough, or to employ smaller river ships. Moreover, the speed of sailing on fluvial waters was considerably lower, normally 25-45 km per day or 60-90 km per day in the best case. [20] In other words, the time necessary for the swift ships to reach Belgrade starting from the delta (ca. 1100 km) would have been ca. 4-7 weeks in the worst case, or 2-3 weeks in the best case. Thus, if we turn back to the incident from AD 1150, the ships ordered by Manuel I Komnenos must

have started from Constantinople in late October at earliest and in any case they had to navigate on the Danube during early November at best.[21] In that case, it is very likely that they faced serious problems in the fluvial navigation due to fogs and frozen sectors typical for that season and therefore, the danger to get trapped along the hostile banks of the Danube might had have made them to turn back at a certain point.[22] As for the second incident, according to the most reliable chronology it happened in April AD 1151, a period that can be considered appropriate for navigation on the Danube since in May and June the waters of the river usuallu reach their highest level.[23] However, the fact that the Byzantines intended to cross the Danube with kind of light boats made on the spot suggests that the level of the waters was not as high as to endanger such an improvised ferry.[24] If that was the case, the insufficient level of the Danube might have had disabled the appearance of the ships dispatched from Constantinople.

In contrast to the above discussed cases, the Constantinopolitan fleet successfully joined the troops headed by Manuel I Komnenos in the last episode in the Hungarian-Byzantine conflicts during the reign of Geza II. According to the chronology convincingly argued by F. Makk and P. Stephenson, after the misfortunate Byzantine campaign against the Hungarian siege of Braničevo at the end of AD 1154, in the spring of AD 1155 the emperor came back to the Danube, camped at the shores with his army and this time "the ships (nêeß) he had set out from Byzantion anchored there in great numbers, waiting to carry the armed force across". However, the conflict ended without a battle since Geza II realized the military superiority of his enemy and sent an embassy.[25]

The active participation of the fleet in the Hungarian-Byzantine conflicts can be further traced in the second half of the 12th c. This time, however, Manuel I Komnenos interfered in the internal affairs of the Hungarian Kingdom by supporting the expelled king Stephen IV and Béla, the younger son of the late Géza II. In this way, the Byzantine emperor tried to put under control the strategically important regions of Sirmium and Dalmatia.[26] Thus, when Stephen III broke the treaty with Byzantium and invaded Dalmatia at the beginning of AD 1164, Manuel I Komnenos aided the pretender Stephen IV to raid the Hungarian territories along the Danube. More precisely, as stated by Cinnamus, "Stephen [István IV], whom the Hungarians had previously expelled from office, crept back to Hungary through Anchialos (di 'Agxiálou pólewß)".[27] The most natural identification of Anchialos with the Byzantine port at the West Black Sea coast implies the action of the fleet in that campaign.[28] Yet, there is another interpretation according to which the name of Anchialos refers to Akimink, a place near Petrovaradin (to the south of Novi Sad on the right bank of the river).[29] But such an assumption contradicts seriously the fact that after his short period of reign in AD 1163 Stephen IV fled again to Byzantium.[30] The area of Petrovaradin (*Petrikon*), however, as noted by Cinnamus himself, is "the outermost limit of the approach to inner Hungary" and thus, was a rather unsuitable refuge for a pretender to the Hungarian throne.[31] Therefore, it seems much more likely that Cinnamus meant exactly Anchialos on the West Black Sea coast as a starting point for the Byzantine fleet which had brought

"surprisingly" to the Hungarian territories via Pontos and on the Danube not only Stepehen IV, but also the Byzantine troops. As narrated in Cinnamus' *Epitome*, a bit later the emperor himself marched to the Danube and after crossing the Sava he advanced to the northwest along the south bank of the Danube encamping first opposite to *Titelion* (Titel on the Tisza river) and then, at *Petrikon* (Petrovaradin).[32] That was the point where Manuel I Komnenos crossed the Danube, most likely on the ships that came earlier with Stephen IV. The vivid description provided by Cinnamus of the accident that happened while the boats (te nausìn) were crossing the Danube loaded with "arms and cargo", indicates that the waters of the river were rather high and even "violent". [33] Thus, it can be assumed that those events happened during the high-water period of the Danube, namely in May-June. The final stop in the campaign was at *Pagatzion* (Bač on the river Mostonga in present-day Vojvodina) on the left bank of the river, where, facing the threat of the Hungarian, German, Russian and Bohemian alliance, the Byzantine emperor stepped back across the Danube and signed a peace treaty according to which Prince Béla got back his patrimony (i. e. Dalmatia and Sirmium) and *sebastokrator* Michael Gabras was entrusted with the assurance of those possessions.

Yet, Stephen III violated the peace treaty already in the spring of AD 1165 seizing the entire Sirmium except for Zemun defended by the pretender Stephen IV himself. Manuel I Komnenos reacted in the usual manner dispatching "numerous ships (naûß) with soldiers and supplies" by way of the Danube. This time the ships did not only ferry the troops and the supplies for the besieged defenders of Zemun, but also fight in a real battle with the Hungarian ships (nêeß) employing naval tactics and "Greek fire".[34] In the same time, the land march of the emperor started from Serdica towards Belgrade and there he crossed the river Sava on a skiff (lembadíö) as well as did the rest of his army.[35] The dramatic fights for Zemun which passed from hand to hand, ended with a defeat for the Hungarians and the establishment of Byzantine control over Dalmatia and Sirmium.

However, the end of the confrontation between Hungary and Byzantium during the reign of Stephen III came two years later. In response to the Hungarian invasion of Sirmium in the spring of AD 1166 the Byzantine emperor organized a rather unusual counter-offensive. He dispatched three armies: the one of them commanded by the *protostrator* Alexius Axouchos and joined by Prince Béla-Alexius, marched to the Danube thus misleading the Hungarians that they will attack "by way of the customary regions", most likely at Sirmium (mod. Sremska Mistrovica).[36] As implied by the text of Cinnamus, the other army under John Ducas must had have also launched its attacks but rather to the north. More precisely, as suggested by P. Năsturel, John Ducas passed the Danube at Vidin and attacked the region between the rivers Mureş and Timiş.[37] A third army under Leo Batatzes also brought a terrible surprise to the Hungarians by attacking them from the northeast. As stated by Cinnamus, the force of Leo Batatzes which included a large group of Vlachs "falls upon Hungary by way of the regions near the so-called Euxine [Black] Sea (tþ Euxeínö kalouménö póntö)."[38] It can be suggested that ships were employed to ferry the Byzantine troops and the Walachian mercenaries

to the Danube estuary and perhaps upstream the river to a certain point. In fact, there are two main opinions about the route of Batatzes' army. According to I. Nistor, the Byzantines passed rather to the north along the valley of Siret to Poiana, then continued along the valley of Trotuş to Oituz-Bretzc (ancient Augusta), and finally reached the area between the rivers Cerna and Timiş.[39] According to E. Frances, the route went rather to the south and passed through Buzău.[40] In both cases, the ships must have had left the Byzantine troops and the Vlachs at Dinogetia. If the ships, however, stopped at Hiršova, the army of Batatzes might have followed the valley of Ialomița, well-known to the Byzantines since the 8th c. onwards,[41] and then have entered the Southern Carpaths. There they might have launched the devastating raid as described by Cinnamus and took a lot of captives, most likely because attacked the Hungarians from behind. A probable place that the surprising attack might have happened is modern Stara Palanka opposite to Braničevo, the usual focal point of the Hungarian-Byzantine clashes.[42] Whatever the case, in the spring of AD 1167 the fleet acted as a real force supporting the army under Andronikos Kontostephanos in the heavy defeat of the Hungarians near Zemun and the river Sava.[43]

Thus summing up the remarks on the action of the fleet in the Byzantine campaigns against the Hungarians during the second half of the 12th c. one should noted that in contrast to the 1150s, the ships had never failed to appear in the time and at the place they were expected. It seems that Manuel I Komnenos and the commandment of the fleet got accustomed to the seasonal and local peculiarities of the navigation from the estuary of the Danube up to Belgrade and even farther to the north and thus managed to plan well the naval actions. In this way, the employment of the fleet was much more effective not only in logistics, but also in actual battles.

Byzantines, Crusaders and Cumans on the Lower Danube

In addition to the Hungarian-Byzantine conflicts, Byzantine naval activity at the Lower Danube has been recorded on two more occasions. On the first, Byzantine ships ferried across the Danube the forces of the German emperor Conrad III (1138-1152) in the course of the Second Crusade in the summer of AD 1147. Once ensured by his envoys sent to Conrad that the Crusaders' target was not Byzantium and the Greeks but rather Palestine and the Seljuk enemy, the emperor organized very carefully the transfer of the German troops trying to get precise information about the strength of the foreign army with the help of a number of secretaries who had to make records for each ship's (neýß) cargo.[44] Most likely the Germans crossed the Danube and entered the Byzantine territory proper at Braničevo where they, as witnessed by the French chronicler Odo de Deuil, had to leave their numerous ships in order to be ferried by the Byzantines.[45]

Very soon after those events, just at the beginning of his campaign against the Normans in the spring of AD 1148, Manuel I Komnenos had to face unexpected Cuman raids across the Danube. He dispatched ships (naûß) from Constantinople

via Anchialos to the Danube and marched from Philippopolis to the Danube. However, since the ships did not arrive the emperor proceeded in a manner similar to that he employed against the Hungarians in AD 1151: he ferried five hundred soldiers with the horses to the left bank of the river by means of primitive boats (toùß lémbouß) bounded together.[46] The place where the Byzantines crossed the river is not mentioned by Cinnamus yet the clues provided by the text is the references to *Demnitzikos* as the fortress seized by the Cumans and to the two navigable rivers encountered by the emperor while marching forward already after crossing the Danube. The localization of *Demnitzikos* and the two rivers, however, turned to be a subject of a long going discussion in which a variety of suggestions have been made.[47] Recentely, the most widely accepted identification of *Demnitzikos* with the modern Romanian town of Zimnicea has been questioned by P. Năsturel. More precisely, he claims that the Cumans seized two towns: one "digne de ce nom" and that was *Axiopolis* (mod. Cernavoda), and another one, *Demnitzikos*, which might be a fortress nearby *Axiopolis*.[48] However, the interpretation of the phrase pólin lógou ˜cían in the sense of "a town distinguished by its name" is very disputable. In fact, the exact meaning of ˜ciólogoß is that of "remarkable, distinguished" and the correct translation must be "a reamrakable/distinguished town".[49] Thus, the identification of the "notable" town seized by the Cumans with Axiopolis appeared to be unreasonable and purely speculative. Moreover, Cinnamus definitely points out that *Demnitzikos* was the name of that same fortress seized by the Cumans.[50] Therefore, I think that the most reliable interpretation of the above described military events in AD 1148 is that proposed by P. Diaconu according to whom, they happened in the region of Teleorman in the proximity of the Danube, most probably in the vicinity of Zimnicea, and the two navigable rivers most likely were two arms or channels of the Danube.[51]

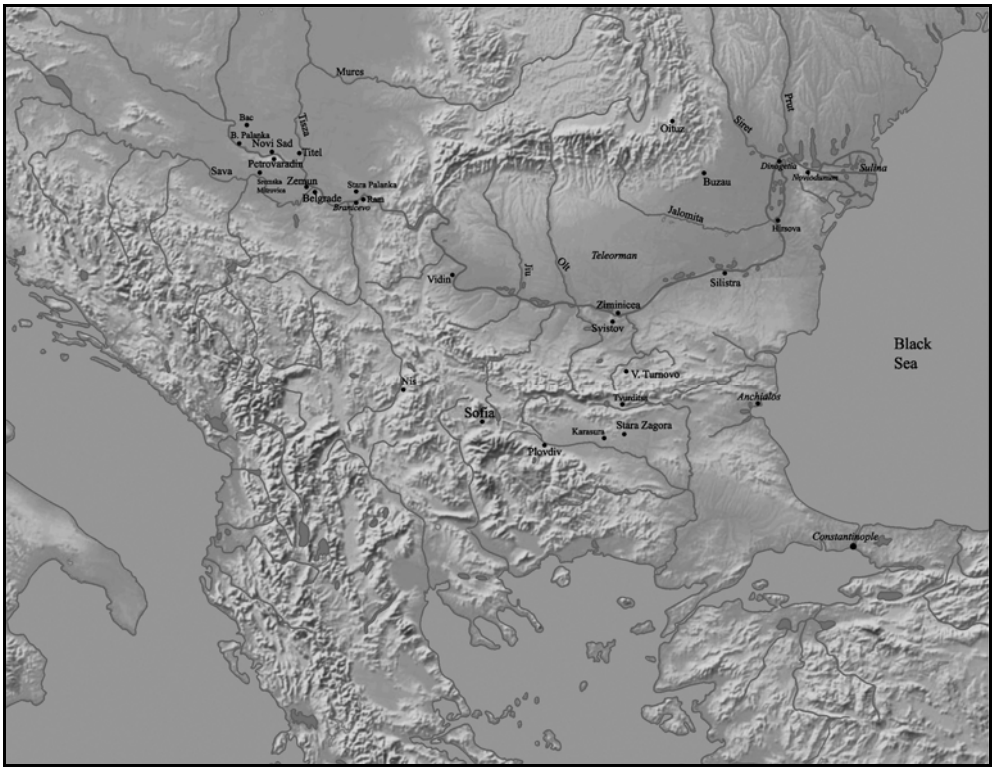
Apparently in the last two cases one can hardly speak about naval activity proper yet both of them can be considered very common for the way the Byzantine navy had been employed in military operations at the Lower Danube in the 12th c. in general. If one analyzes all the military conflicts in which the participation of the Byzantine navy had been envisaged, one can make the following statistics: in three cases (AD 1148, 1150, 1151) the ships prepared in Constantinople had never entered the Danube, in one case the ships arrived yet a battle did not take place (AD 1155), in one case the ships were used only to ferry troops (AD 1147), and in three cases the ships did not only carried the forces, but also participated in naval battles (AD 1128, 1165, 1167). One may see a kind of reflection of that predominantly logistical employment of the Byzantine ships also in the terminology used in the sources. Thus, in the majority of the cases the term used is that of "naûß, neýß, h" (AD 1147, 1148, 1150, 1151, 1164) which is usually applied for designating "ships" without specifying their particular function. Only in the account on the campaign of AD 1128 Choniates used the term nêaß taxunautoúsaß which emphasizes the rapidity typical only for the naval ships.[52] Furthermore, only for two naval clashes with the Hungarians the sources provide

some evidence about the naval tactics of the Byzantines such as the use of Greek fire (AD 1128) and the keeping the formation in order ("a type of a battle array") while attacking the enemy with arrows (AD 1165). As witnessed by the written sources, the naval ships were always dispatched from Constantinople and in two cases it became clear that they passed by Anchialos perhaps for loading troops and supplies. As argued above, most likely they entered the Danube River through the branch of Sulina. It can be speculated, however, that a number of transport ships might have stationed in some of the greater ports at the Lower Danube, such as Durostorum (mod. Silistra). An indirect evidence for such a suggestion is the seal of Alexander Gravina found in Silistra. As suggested by I. Barnea, Gravina's seal might have been related to his diplomatic mission to Conard III in Hungary he took on order of Manuel I Komneos in AD 1146/1147.[53] Perhaps Alexander Gravina informed the governor of Durostroum about the positive result of the talks with Conrad III which gave a reason for outfitting transport ships to Braničevo to ferry the crusaders.

In addition to the frequent employment of ships for ferrying the Byzantine forces across the Danube, another characteristic feature of the Byzantine naval actions at the Lower Danube in the 12th c. was the combination with military operations on land. The land forces of the Byzantines usually headed by the emperor used the communications to the Danube well-established since the Romans times. Thus, in the course of the Hungarian-Byzantine conflicts the most frequent starting point of the marches to the river bank was Philippopolis and thus, the most frequent communication was *Via Diagonalis* through Serdica, Niš, up to Braničevo, Belgrade and even farther to Petrovaradin, Titel on Tisza river and Bač on Mostonga river in Vojvodina (AD 1164) as well as its branches such as the road Philippopolis-Karasura-Beroe (mod. Stara Zagora)-Stilbnos (mod. Tvŭrditsa)-Turnovo-Svištov (AD 1148).[54] The most complicated campaign, however, was that of AD 1166/1167 when the land forces attacked not only from the south bank of the Danube but entered Transylvania with the help of the Vlachs and managed to surprise the Hungarians from behind. In many of the cases above discussed, however, the coordination between the naval and land forces did not work properly and the Byzantine troops as well as the emperor himself had to improvise with the available boats and skiffs.

In conclusion, one can clearly see that the employment of naval forces at the Lower Danube was not of a primary concern for the Byzantine emperors in the 12th c. Perhaps one of the reasons might have been the fact that the Byzantines did not face a real naval power there and thus, the naval ships were necessary mostly in the logistics and to respect the enemy. Moreover, the way the Byzantine navy had acted in all those events to a great extent was determined by the changes in its organization and commanding throughout the 11th and 12th c.[55] Until AD 1118 the maritime *strategoi* were replaced by *dukai*, the simple 'dux of the fleet' disappeared and the *megas dux* remained the chief of the whole Byzantine fleet.[56] Thus, by the 12th c. the naval command, financing and recruitment was centralized in Constantinople. This centralization enabled John II Komnenos (1118-1143) to

redirect the taxes raised for maintaining the navy into the imperial treasury. His devastating financial policy was followed by the attempt of Manuel I Komnenos to enforce the Byzantine navy and to raise its efficiency by constructing a new fleet in AD 1147. That was the last attempt of Byzantium to acquire a strong Constantinopolitan fleet and to restore to some extent its domination in the Mediterranean. The fleet had got involved in severe naval warfare on other fronts far from the Lower Danube region and the Black Sea—against the Normans in Sicily, in support to the Crusaders in Egypt, and against the Venetian fleet. That activity, however, exhausted the potential of the Byzantine naval forces and was followed by a gradual decay after AD 1180 the sad end of which was the sack of Constantinople in AD 1204 by the Fourth Crusade with the decisive support of the Venetian fleet.[57]



Toponyms and hydronims in the region of the Lower Danube mentioned in the article

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[1] P. Năsturel, "Valaques, Coumans et Byzantins sous le règne de Manuel Comnène", *Byzantina*, 1 (1969): 170, n. 2.

[2] I. Barnea, "Le Danube, voie de communication Byzantine", in *H EPIKOINWNIA STO BUZANTION* . Athens, 1993, 577-595.

[3] The present article is a part of a larger study on the naval campaigns along the West Black Sea coast and the Lower Danube during the last period of the Byzantine hegemony in the Northern Balkans which I have started with a piece on the naval activity in the area in the 11th c.: Kostova, R. "'Bypassing Anchialos': The West Black Sea coast in naval campaigns 11th to 12th c.", in *Tangra.*

Sbornik v čest na 70-godišnina na akad. Vasil Gjuzelev. Sofia, 2006, 579-597. Both articles resulted from a research project entitled 'Crossroads in periphery: the West Black Sea coast 11th to 15th c.' which I have accomplished as a Research Fellow of the Alexander von Humboldt-Stiftung in 2005/2006 at the Institut für Byzantinistik und Neogräzistik at the University of Cologne and the Institut für Byzantinistik und Neogräzistik at the University of Vienna.

[4] Ioannis Cinnami *Epitome rerum ab Ioanne et Alexio Comnenis gestarum*, rec. A. Meinike. CSHB. Bonn, 1836, 10-11. English translation: *Deeds of John and Manuel Comnenus by John Kinnamos*, trans. Ch. M. Brand. New York, 1976, 17-19; Nicetae Choniatae *Historia*, rec. J. A. Van Dieten. CFHB, 11/1. Berlin and New York, 1975, 17-18. English translation: *O City of Byzantium. Annals of Niketas Choniates*, trans. Harry J. Magoulias. Detroit, 1984, 11-12.

[5] According to Al. Kazhdan, the two chronicles are rather close to each in their parts dedicated to the reign of John II Komnenos which can be explained with the eventual use of Cinnamus' text on John II Komnenos by Choniates or, with the employment of a lost common source for that emperor both by Cinnamus and Choniates: Al. Kazhdan, "Eschche raz o Kinname i Nikite Honiate", *Byzantinoslavica*, 24 (1963): 4-31, esp. 9-18, 28-31. However, the rather laconic narration of Cinnamus on the Byzantine-Hingarian conflict in AD 1127 -1129 ignoring to a great extent the role of the emperor in contrast to the text of Choniates has been stressed and explained by P. Stephenson with the general neglectful attitude of Cinnamius towards John II Komnenos in favor to his son, Manuel I Komnenos: P. Stephenson, "John Cinnamus, John II Komnenos and the Hungarian campaign of AD 1127-1229", *Byzantion*, 66/1 (1996): 177-187.

[6] F. Chalandon, *Les Comnène. Études sur l'empire byzantin au XIe et au XIIe siècles. II (1). Jean II Comnène (1118-1143) et Manuel I Comnène (1143-1180)*. Paris, 1912, 57-60; G. Moravcsik, *Byzantium and the Magyars*. Amsterdam, 1970, 78-79; F. Makk, *The Árpáds and the Comneni. Political relations between Hungary and Byzantium in the 12th c.* Budapest, 1989, 21-27.

[7] Choniates, p. 17; trans., p. 11-12.

[8] Cinnamus, p. 11; trans., p. 17-19. According to P. Stephenson, the "Romans" (as they were called by Cinnamus) who crossed the river must have been the mercenaries (Lombards and Seldjuks) summoned and actively employed in that campaign by John II Komnenos: Cinnamus, p. 10-11; P. Stephenson, "John Cinnamus," 179, n. 14. For the identification of Chramon, see F. Chalandon, *Les Comnène*, II (1), 59, n. 2.

[9] P. Stephenson, "John Cinnamus," 183, n. 20.

[10] Choniates, 17.

[11] According to the wide-spread opinion, the reason for the Byzantine-Hungarian conflicts in AD 1150-1155 was not the territorial expansionism of the Byzantines but rather the need to inspire respect in the Hungarians in order to keep them away from an active co-operation with the Normans and the Serbs: F. Chalandon, *Les Comnène*, II (1), 404; F. Makk, *Árpáds*, 55-56; P. Stephenson, "Manuel I Comnenus and Geza II: a revised context and chronology for Hungaro-Byzantine relations 1148-1155", *Byzantinoslavica* , 55 (1994): 261-276.

[12] F. Makk, "Contributions à la chronologie des conflits Hungaro-Byzantins au milieu du XIIe siècle", *ZRVI*, 20 (1981): 25-39; id., *Árpáds*, 52-62; P. Stephenson, "Manuel I Comnenus and Geza II", 251-275. In addition to the Byzantine sources, both authors used also Greman and Russian sources in order to make a precise the chronology of the events.

[13] Cinnamus, 105, 113-114; Choniates, 92; F. Makk, "Contributions", 33-34; id., *Árpáds*, 55; P. Stephenson, "Manuel I Comnenus and Geza II", 260-261.

[14] Cinnamus, 114. It is generally assumed that the emperor and the troops waited for the fleet at Belgrade and since the ships did not come, they crossed on skiffs the river Sava and launched their attack on two directions: against the area of Hungarian Sirmium (i. e. the territory between Sava and Danube) and against Zemlin (Zemun) which was seized by Theodore Vatatzes: F. Chalandon, *Les Comnène*, II (1), 404; F. Makk, "Contributions", 30; P. Stephenson, "Manuel I Comnenus and Geza II", 261, n. 62. For Zemun, see J. Kalić, "Zemun u XII veku", *ZRVI*, 13 (1971): 27-56.

[15] F. Chalandon, *Les Comnène*, II (1), 407.

[16] F. Makk, *Árpáds*, 58-59; Z. J. Kosztolnyik, *From Coloman the Learned to Béla III (1095-1196). Hungarian domestic policies and their impact upon foreign affairs*. New York, 1987, 148-149.

[17] P. Stephenson, "Manuel I Comnenus and Geza II", 263-265.
[18] Cinnamus, p. 119-120; trans., p. 95.
[19] In my previous article I have made an incorrect reference to the estimation of the traverse of the Black Sea made by A. Poppe. In fact, the overall traverse along the West Black Sea coast from the Danube delta to Bosporus is 343 nautical miles, or ca. 600 km: Kostova, R. 'Bypassing Anchialos', I, 592, n. 63; A. Poppe, "La dernière expédition russe contre Constantinople," *Byzantinoslavica,* 32 (1971): 243-244. See also, El. Todorova, "More about Vicina and the West Black Sea coast", Etudes Balkanique, 2 (1978): 124-138, esp. Table II.
[20] Kostova, R. "'Bypassing Anchialos'I", 585, n. 25, 586, n. 31.
[21] According to P. Stephenson, Manuel I Komnenos went back to Constantinople in October while his army remained in Braničevo and after preparing the fleet in the capital, he returned back the very same autumn to launched his attack against the Hungarians: P. Stephenson, "Manuel I Comnenus and Geza II", 260-261. According to the other chronology, the incident also took place in autumn yet in AD 1151: F. Chalandon, *Les Comnène*, II (1), 404.
[22] In AD 1148 the Cumans raided the Byzantine territories along the Danube crossing the river without problems: Cinnamus, 93-96. See also here below.
[23] P. Stephenson, "Manuel I Comnenus and Geza II", 263-264, n. 77.
[24] For instance, during the Byzantine-Hungarian conflict at the end of AD 1154, the Hungarians were not able to withdraw over the Danube because they "found it swollen": Cinnamus, 131; trans., 103.
[25] Cinnamus, 133; trans., 105. According to some scholars, these events happened at the end of AD 1155 and the spring of AD 1156: F. Chalandon, *Les Comnène*, II (1), 414-415; G. Moravcsik, *Byzantium and the Magyars*, 82; Z. J. Kosztolnyik, *From Coloman the Learned to Béla III*, 149-150. For the arguments of F. Makk and P. Stephenson for an earlier chronology, see F. Makk, "Contributions," 38-39, n. 72-73; id., *Árpáds*, 62-63; P. Stephenson, "Manuel I Comnenus and Geza II", 267-268.
[26] G. Moravcsik, *Byzantium and the Magyars*, 82-83; F. Makk, *Árpáds*, Chapter V.
[27] Cinnamus, 216; trans., 164. There are again different opinions on the chronology of those events. According to F. Chalandon, the conflict happened in AD 1163: F. Chalandon, *Les Comnène*, II (1), 477-78. The same dating is supported by Ch. M. Brand in his translation of Cinammus' work: *Deeds of John and Manuel Comnenus*, 164. G. Moravcsik and F. Makk, however, claim that there was a Hungarian-Byzantine conflict already in AD 1162 which ended with a treaty in AD 1163 and namely with the break of that treaty started the military conflict in AD 1164 in which Stephen IV took part: G. Moravcsik, *Byzantium and the Magyars*, 82-83; F. Makk, *Árpáds*, 88-91.
[28] F. Makk, *Árpáds*, 90, n. 114.
[29] F. Chalandon, *Les Comnène*, II (1), 477, n. 1; J. A. Fessler, *Die Geschichte der Ungarn und ihrer Landsassen*. II Teil. II. Band. Leipzig, 1815, 104.
[30] Cinnamus, 202-203; G. Moravcsik, *Byzantium and the Magyars*, 82.
[31] Cinnamus, 217; trans., 165. Let us recall that by that time Zemun was also in Hungarian possession: J. Kalić, "Zemun", 38-40.
[32] Cinnamus, 217; trans., 164. According to F. Chalandon, Manuel I Komnenos crossed the Danube rather than the Sava yet the first two stops of his army, opposite to Titelion and at Petrikon indicate that the march was following the south bank of the Danube: F. Chalandon, *Les Comnène*, II (1), 477, n. 2; *Deeds of John and Manuel Comnenus*, 164, n. 20.
[33] Cinnamus, 221; trans., 167.
[34] Cinnamus, 238-239; trans., 179-180.
[35] Cinnamus, 240; trans., 181, n. 45.
[36] P. Năsturel, "Valaques," 177.
[37] P. Năsturel, "Valaques," 180.
[38] Cinnamus, 258-260; trans., 195; Choniates, 132.
[39] I. Nistor, "Bizantinii în luptâ pentru recucerirea Daciei şi Transdanubiei", *Analele Academiei Romîn*e, 25 (1943): 721.
[40] E. Frances, "Les relations russo-byzantines au XII[e] siècle et la domination de Galicie au Bas-Danube", Byzantinoslavica, 20 (1959): 59.

[41] J.-Cl. Cheynet, C. Morrison, "Lieux de trouvaille et circulation des sceaux", in *Studies in Byzantine Sigillography*, 2. Ed. N. Oikonomides. Washington, D.C., 1990, 124, 127, 129.
[42] The most probable routes that might have been followed by Leo Batatzes from Transylvania to the Danube might have been the Roman road Tibiscum (mod. Timişoara)-Lederata (Ram, mod. Serbia). In fact, Stara Palanka lies on the left bank of the Danube opposite to Ram: E. Tóth, *"The Roman Province of Dacia," in History of Transylvania. I. From the beginnings to 1606*. Eds. L. Makkai, A. Mócsy. New York: Columbia University Press, 2001, 74-77.
[43] Cinnamus, 265-274; Choniates, 151-157.
[44] Cinnamus, 69-70; trans., 60. According to John Cinnamus, the number of the crusaders was more than 90 00, while the relevant Latin sources note various yet smaller numbers: F. Chalandon, *Les Comnène*, II, 271, n. 3.
[45] Odo de Deuil, *La Croisade de Louis VII, roi de France*, II-III, ed. Henri Waquet, *Documents relatifs à l'histoire des croisades*, Vol 3 (Paris: Paul Guethner, 1949), 30-32, 35-37, translated by James Brundage, *The Crusades: A Documentary History*. Milwaukee, WI: Marquette University Press, 1962, 106-109; F. Chalandon, *Les Comnène*, II, 271; S. Runciman, *A History of the Crusade, II*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1952, 259. According to E. Koytcheva, the crossing of the Danube by the German took place at Belgrade: E. Koytcheva, *The First Crusades and the Balkans* (in Bulgarian). Sofia:Vekove, 2004, 97-98.
[46] Cinnamus, 93-74; trans., 76-77.
[47] F. Chalandon, *Les Comnène*, II, 324, n. 2 (Zimnicea with a reference to the identification proposed by A. Vasilijevskij); V. N. Zlatarski, *Istorija na bŭlgarskata dŭržava prez srednite vekove*, II. Sofia: Nauka i izkustvo, 1971 (reprint), 384-385, n. 2 (mod. Tutrakan on the right bank of the Danube); E. Frances, "Les relations russo-byzantines au XII[e] siècle et la domination de Galicie au Bas-Danube", *Byzantinoslavica* 20 (1959): 56; A. Bolşakov-Ghimpu, "La localization de la cite Byzantine de Demnitzikos," *RESEE* V (3-4) 1967: 543-51 (Dinogetia-Garvă); I. Barnea, "Le Danube," 592, n. 43 (Zimnicea); P. Năsturel, "Valaques," 170-175 (Turnu Măgurele known in the medieval period as Holăvnic). As for the two navigable rivers, with respect to the proposied location of *Demnitzikos* they have been identified either with Vedea and Teleorman, or with Argeş and Dâmboviţa, or with Prut and Siret.
[48] P. Năsturel, "Axiopolis sur le Comnène. Une relecture de Kinnmos (III 3)," in *Prinos lui Petre Diaconu la 80 de ani*, I. Cândea, V. Sîrbu, M. Neagu eds. (Brăila, 2004), 521-535. I would like to thank Dr. Alexandru Madgearu for calling my attention to this article.
[49] Cinnamus, 93. See, for instance, the English translation by Ch. M. Brand, p. 76 ("a notable city") and the Bulgarian translation by G. Cnakova-Petkova and G. Batakliev in *Fontes graeci historiae bulgaricae*, ed. G. Cankova-Petkova, P. Tivčev, T. XIV (Sofia, 1968), 226 ("dosta zabelezhitelen grad").
[50] Cinnamus, 93: "…"ouk Àn ½ te Demnítzikoß ¢álw (o¾tw gàr tò toîß Skúqaiß, ¿sper eÍrhtai, a¥reqèn Ÿnomáceto froúrion).."
[51] P. Diaconou, "À propos de l'invasion Cumane de 1148," in *Études Byzantines et post-byzantines* I, E. Stănescu, N.-Ş. Tanaşoca eds. (Bucharest, 1979), 19-29.
[52] For the terms for naval ships used in the Byzantine sources, see H. Ahrweiler, Byzance et la mer. La marine de guerre, la politique et les institutions maritimes de Byzance aux VII[e]-XV[e] siècles. Paris, 1966, 409-412.
[53] I. Barnea, "Sceaux byzantins inedits de Dobrudja", in *Studies in Byzantine Sigillography*, 3. Ed. N. Oikonomides. Washington, D.C., 1993, no. 10; Iv. Jordanov, *Corpus of Byzantine seals from Bulgaria.* Vol. 2. *Byzantine seals with family names*. Sofia, 2006, no. 150.
[54] For the routes, see P. Soustal, *Thrakien*.Tabula Imperii Byzantini 6. Wien, 1991, 135, 139.
[55] Throughout the 11th c. the distinction between the imperial fleet, the thematic fleets, and the provincial fleets disappeared. In fact, by the second half of the 11th c. one can distinguish the Constantinopolitan and the provincial fleets yet the latter were also subjected to the commandment in Constantinople and had been presented at the spot by officers dependent on the centre: H. Ahrweiler, *Byzance et la mer*, 117-163.

[56] H. Antoniadis-Bibicou, *Études d'histoire maritime de Byzance, à propos du"Thème des Caravisiens"*. Paris, 1966, 159-60; N. Oikonomides, "L'évolution de l'organisation administrative de l'Empire byzantin au XI[e] s. (1025-1118)", *TM*, 6 (1976), 146-47.
[57] H. Ahrweiler, *Byzance et la mer*, 175-297.