

# Angelos in Halych: Did Alexios III Visit Roman Mstislavich?

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**R**OMAN MSTISLAVICH, the prince of Halych/Galicia and Volhynia (1199–1205), was not merely a bystander during the Fourth Crusade, the major European event of the day. He maintained continuous relations with Byzantium. This is evident from several reports provided in both Russian and foreign sources.

*The evidence of Jan Długosz and the Hustynia Chronicle*

According to the fifteenth-century Polish chronicler Jan Długosz, after Constantinople was conquered by the crusaders the deposed emperor Alexios III Angelos (whom Długosz called Askarius or Aschkarius) fled to Halych, where Roman Mstislavich rolled out the red carpet for him:

After the city was seized Aschkarius, the emperor of Constantinople, moved to Tersona near the Pontic Sea. From there he proceeded to Galacia or the Halych land, which is a part of Rus' still under the Polish kingdom. On being kindly and favorably received and accommodated by the Prince of Rus' Roman, he stayed there for a while.<sup>1</sup>

Later the Polish chroniclers Martin Kromer and Martin Bielski borrowed these data from Długosz' account.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> “Aschkarius autem Constantinopolitanus imperatur capta urbe versus Ponticum mare Tersonam transiit, et abinte postea Gallaciam alias Halicziensem provinciam, que est pars Russia hactenus sub Polonorum Regno consistens, pervenit et a Romano Russie duce benigniter et humane susceptus, tractatus atque habitus aliquanto tempore illic permansit”: *Ioannis Długosii Annales, seu Cronicae incliti regni Poloniae*, ed. J. Dąbrowski V–VI (Warsaw 1973) 177.

<sup>2</sup> *Kronika Polska Marcina Kromera, biskupa Warmińskiego ksiąg XXX*, ed. K. J.

The *Hustynia Chronicle*—a seventeenth-century Ukrainian compilation, named for the copy found in the Hustynia Monastery in the Poltava region—tells about Alexios III’s flight to Roman Mstislavich in Halych. Under the year 1204, in the account of the conquest of Constantinople by the crusaders, we read:

They came to Tsarigrad by sea and were unprepared to capture Alexios Angelos, the Greek Emperor. Nevertheless, Alexios was afraid of them. Moreover, there was nobody among the Greeks who was welcoming to him. Therefore he left the tsardom to Isaac, his blinded brother, and with his boyars and copious riches and treasures fled to Rus’, to Roman Mstislavich in Halych.<sup>3</sup>

Historians have different opinions concerning the reports of the flight of the deposed emperor to Halych, and most prefer to ignore them. V. N. Tatishchev did not deign to cite the report that he had found in Bielski’s *Chronicle* (he was not familiar with the *Hustynia Chronicle*) in the body of his text of his *Russian History*. Instead, he confined himself to a brief reference in the footnotes: “As for Alexios the emperor, Bielski says that he came to Roman and asked for help. However, he does not report either where the emperor left or with what. I do not find the same in the foreign [chronicles].”<sup>4</sup>

Only a few historians have trusted the reports of Długosz and the *Hustynia Chronicle*. However, they have not analyzed these

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<sup>3</sup> Turowski (Sanok 1857) I 360; *Kronika Marcina Bielskiego*, ed. K. J. Turowski (Sanok 1856) I 228.

<sup>3</sup> “Они же приидоша ко Цариграду морем и обретоша Алексея Аньгела, царя Греческаго, неготова, Их же Алексей убося, к сему же, яко не имея во Грецехъ никого же себе приязного, сего ради оставив царство Исаакию, ослепленному брату своему, а самъ со своими бояры и со множеством богатства и сокровищъ побеже въ Рускую землю ко Роману Мстиславичу въ Галичь”: *Hustynskaia letopis’*, ed. V. A. Kuchkin (*Polnoe Sobranie Russkikh Letopisei* 40 [St. Petersburg 2003]) 108.

<sup>4</sup> V. N. Tatishchev, *Istoriia Rossiiskaia III* (Moscow/Leningrad 1963) 257 n.573.

sources.<sup>5</sup> M. S. Hrushevs'ky, without examining the sources, expressed doubts concerning the possibility that Alexios Angelos visited Halych: "It was probably the compiler's misunderstanding that served as the basis for the *Hustynia Chronicle* report that Caesar Alexios Angelos fled 'to the Rusian Land, to Roman Mstislavich in Halych' after Tsarigrad had been seized." As for the origin of this report, he noted only that he could not establish its provenance.<sup>6</sup>

N. F. Kotliar also rejected the possibility that Alexios III stayed in Halych. Using Byzantine and Western European sources, he traced the activities of the former emperor starting with his escape from the besieged Constantinople in July 1203 and ending with his death in 1211. He found that after a number of unsuccessful attempts to reclaim the Byzantine throne Alexios was captured by Boniface of Montferrat in 1205 and taken to Italy.<sup>7</sup>

G. Prinzing studied Alexios III's biography after his escape from Constantinople more thoroughly. He considered the "Galician theory" among other theories of the emperor's temporary disappearance from the historical chronicles after his stay in Adrianople (in August 1203) and until his appearance in Mosynopolis (in 1204). Prinzing did not agree with Kotliar's reasoning. He thought it probable that the former emperor

<sup>5</sup> D. I. Zubritsky, *Istoriia drevnego Galichsko-Russkogo kniazhestva III* (Lviv 1855) 20; N. P. Dashkevich, *Kniazhenie Daniila Galitskogo po russkim i inostrannym izvestiiam* (Kiev 1873) 96; A. M. Andriiashev, *Ocherk istorii Volynskoi zemli do kontsa XIV stoletiiia* (Kiev 1887) 152; V. V. Mavrodin, "Ocherk istorii Drevnei Rusi do mongol'skogo zavoevaniia," in *Istoriia kul'tury Drevnei Rusi I*, ed. B. D. Grekov (Moscow/Leningrad 1948) 35; J. Forssmann, *Die Beziehungen altrussischer Fürstengeschlechter zu Westeuropa* (Bern 1970) 126; B. A. Rybakov, *Kievskaiia Rus' i russkie kniazhestva XII–XIII vv.* (Moscow 1982) 515; P. P. Tolochko, *Kyiv'ska Rus'* (Kiev 1996) 59; L. V. Voitovych, *Kniazha doba: portrety elity* (Bila Tserkva 2006) 480.

<sup>6</sup> M. S. Hrushevs'ky, *Istoriia Ukrainy-Rusi III* (Lviv 1905) 12 n.2.

<sup>7</sup> N. F. Kotliar, "Do pytannia pro vtechu vizantiis'kogo imperatora v Halych u 1204 r.," *Ukrains'kyi istoryshnyi zhurnal* 3 (1966) 112–117, and his *Diplomatiiia Iuzhnoi Rusi* (St. Petersburg 2003) 89–97.

travelled to Galicia—the land that extended as far as the mouth of the Danube and the Black Sea and was ruled by Roman, who was Alexios' military ally against the Cumans.<sup>8</sup>

H. Grala did analyze the former emperor's trip to Roman Mstislavich in Halych reported by Długosz and the *Hustynia Chronicle*, and concluded that Długosz' Ascarus was not Alexios III but the future Nicene emperor Theodore I Lascaris who fled from Constantinople, not to Chersonesus of Tauria and to Halych, but to Chersonesus of Thrace and to Galatia in Asia Minor.<sup>9</sup> Grala's conclusions were adopted by some of the most recent Polish researchers.<sup>10</sup> N. F. Kotliar called Grala's theory "artificial and poorly grounded from the point of view of source studies," but did not provide any proof for such a claim.<sup>11</sup> Grala's reasoning has not thus far been properly verified.

The discussion of Alexios Angelos' possible visit to Halych has not yet found a response in the works of medievalists. In the latest quite extensive literature on the history of relations between Byzantium and the West during the time of the Fourth Crusade, one can find considerably detailed information on the fate of the former emperor after his escape from Constantinople. However, these works have ignored the reports of Długosz and the *Hustynia Chronicle* concerning his stay in Galicia and do not raise the question of the trustworthiness of these reports.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>8</sup> G. Prinzing, *Die Bedeutung Bulgariens und Serbiens in den Jahren 1204–1219* (Munich 1972) 7, 19 n.32, and "Byzantinische Aspekte der mittelalterlichen Geschichte Polens," *Byzantion* 64 (1994) 459–484, at 469–470.

<sup>9</sup> H. Grala, "Tradycja dziejopisarska o pobycie władcy Bizancjum w Haliczu (Jan Długosz i kronikarz Hustyński)," *Kwartalnik Historyczny* 93 (1986) 639–661.

<sup>10</sup> See W. Swoboda, "Bizancjum w przekazach Annales Jana Długosza," *Balcenica Posnaniensia* 4 (1989) 38–41; Z. Pentek, "Cesarstwo Łacinskie w oczach polskich dziejopisów od Jana Długosza do Macieja Strykowskiego," *Balcenica Posnaniensia* 20 (2013) 42–43.

<sup>11</sup> Kotliar, *Diplomatia* 96.

<sup>12</sup> See S. Runciman, *A History of the Crusades III* (Cambridge 1962) 117–

Examination of this question it is important in order to better understand the nature of Rus'-Byzantine relations and to confirm the military-political and dynastic union between the Byzantine Emperor and Galician-Volhynian Prince.

Our recent studies have shown that the Galician-Volhynian prince Roman Mstislavich became the main military ally of the Byzantine Empire in the early thirteenth century. The circumstances and the time of Roman's campaign (to protect the northern borders of the empire against the attacks of the Danube Cumans) in Niketas Choniates' account are the same as in the Rus' chronicles reporting the steppe campaigns of the prince. All the Byzantine sources name Roman Mstislavich the "igemon of Galicia." The term *igemon*, unlike other Byzantine titles of Rus' princes, meant the emperor's ally and relative (or in-law). The alliance between Alexios III and Roman led also to more stable relations with the Rus' population of the Lower Dniester and the Lower Danube.<sup>13</sup> The military aid that Roman rendered to Alexios III was guaranteed by Roman's marriage to the niece of Alexios III, the elder daughter of the overthrown emperor Isaak II.<sup>14</sup> The alliance between Rus' and Byzantium founded by Roman retains its value at least until the mid thirteenth century.<sup>15</sup>

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118, 120, 122; Ch. M. Brand, *Byzantium Confronts the West, 1180–1204* (Cambridge [Mass.] 1968) 241, 244; J. Godfrey, *1204: The Unholy Crusade* (Oxford 1980) 109; T. F. Madden and D. E. Queller, *The Fourth Crusade: The Conquest of Constantinople* (Philadelphia 1997) 129–130, 144; M. Angold, *The Fourth Crusade: Event and Context* (Harlow 2003) 93; J. Phillips, *The Fourth Crusade and the Sack of Constantinople* (London 2004) 341, 356.

<sup>13</sup> See A. V. Maiorov, "The Alliance between Byzantium and Rus' before the Conquest of Constantinople by the Crusaders in 1204," *Russian History* 42 (2015) 272–303.

<sup>14</sup> A. V. Maiorov, "The Daughter of a Byzantine Emperor – the Wife of a Galician-Volhynian Prince," *Byzantinoslavica* 72 (2014) 188–233.

<sup>15</sup> A. V. Maiorov, "Ecumenical Processes in the mid 13<sup>th</sup> Century and the Union between Russia and Rome," *ЖКГ* 126 (2015) 11–34, and "The Cult of St. Daniel the Stylite among the Russian Princes of the Rurik Dynasty," *Slavic and East European Journal* 59 (2015) 345–366.

In light of these data, we may re-examine the controversial statements of our sources on the visit of Alexios III to Rus’.

*The report of Bartolomeo Fiadoni*

The statements of Długosz and the *Hustynia Chronicle* concerning the visit of Alexios Angelos to Halych are confirmed by a Western-European source that is not well known to specialists in Russian history.

A. Semkowicz, in a monograph on the sources of the *Polish History* of Jan Długosz, found that the report on the deposed emperor’s flight to Halych has its direct parallel in the work of an Italian church historian of the thirteenth-early fourteenth centuries, Bartolomeo Fiadoni, nicknamed Ptolemy da Lucca for his high erudition.<sup>16</sup>

His works were widely known and popular in Europe not only in the Middle Ages but also during the Renaissance. Dante Alighieri and other European authors and scholars frequently consulted his writings. The *New Church History* of Ptolemy of Lucca, compiled in 1294–1313,<sup>17</sup> is among the outstanding historiographic records of medieval Italy. It was used by historians in the early eighteenth century after it was published in L. A. Muratori’s corpus of Italian historians—the publication that significantly influenced the national studies of early texts (archeography) in Europe in the modern period.<sup>18</sup>

In one of the copies of the *New Church History*, after the description of the fourth crusaders’ attack on Constantinople, the author dwells on the subsequent fate of the Byzantine Empire, the deposed emperor’s flight to Chersonesus and from there

<sup>16</sup> A. Semkowicz, *Krytyczny rozbiór Dziejów Polskich Jana Długosza (do roku 1384)* (Krakow 1887) 203. See also J. Girgensohn, *Kritische Untersuchung über das VII. Buch der Historia Polonica des Długosch* (Göttingen 1872) 65.

<sup>17</sup> O. Lorenz, *Deutschlands Geschichtsquellen im Mittelalter seit der Mitte des dreizehnten Jahrhunderts* (Berlin 1866) 266.

<sup>18</sup> See O. Clavuot, “Zur Bedeutung und Erforschung der *Historia ecclesiastica nova* des Tholomeus von Lucca,” in *Tholomeus Lucensis Historia Ecclesiastica Nova*, eds. O. Clavuot and L. Schmugge (*MGH Script.* XXXIX [2009]) IX–XI.

further on to Galicia that was a part of Rus' (21.2):

In the occupied city [Constantinople], by the general consent of the Franks and also of the Venetians, the Count of Flanders [Baldwin] became the emperor, as narrated by Martin and Vincent. This happened, I understand, with the consent of the said pontiff [Pope Innocent III]. The empire was ruled by the Latins continuously up to the time of [Pope] Alexander IV, i.e. for 57 years, as it is reported there. At the time of its fall, according to Cusentinus, Ascharus was its ruler, and immediately after its fall he travelled across the Black Sea to Chersona and from there to Galatia [variant: Galicia], which is now part of Russia.<sup>19</sup>

There is no doubt that the reports of Fiadoni and Długosz are related to each other. They refer to the same year 1204, contain the same geographic names Chersonesus and Galicia in describing the route that the deposed emperor took, and call the emperor by the same name, Ascharus. Długosz only added the remark that the refugee was given a warm welcome by the Rus' prince Roman.

Bartolomeo Fiadoni (ca. 1227–ca. 1327) lived about two centuries earlier than Długosz and could speak directly to the eyewitnesses of the described events. Besides, the Catholic authors at the head of the Roman Church (Fiadoni, who was a favorite student and follower of Thomas Aquinas, served as bishop of Torcello and as librarian of Pope John XXII) were well aware of the issues of the Curia's foreign policy and extremely attentive to the details of the Fourth Crusade, in particular to the circumstances surrounding the conquest of

<sup>19</sup> “Capta igitur civitate de communi consensu tam Francorum quam Venetorum comes Flandrie ibidem factus est imperator, ut Martinus et Vincentius scribunt. Quod intelligo cum assensu dicti Pontificis. Dictum autem imperium tenuerunt Latini usque ad tempora Alexandri III., quod fuit spatium LVII annorum, ut ibi dicitur. Tempore autem sue captionis imperabat Ascharus, ut Cusentinus scribit, qui statim se transtulit versus Ponticum mare Chersonam et inde postea se contulit in Galatiam, que hodie est pars Russie” (509–510). Cf. *Ptolomaei Lucensis Historia ecclesiastica nova*, ed. L. A. Muratori (*Rerum Italicarum Scriptores XI* [Milan 1727] 1119).

Constantinople.<sup>20</sup>

It is important to note that Fiadoni was bishop of Torcello for many years, close to Venice in the northern part of the Venetian lagoon. The city had very close trading relations with Byzantium and in its prime was much bigger and richer than its famous neighbor. In the twelfth century, when the harbor at Torcello began silting up, its inhabitants started moving to Venice. Together with the Venetians, they participated in the Fourth Crusade.<sup>21</sup> Fiadoni, as the bishop in Torcello, could have learned the details of the conquest of Constantinople from his parishioners.

As is evident from the extract above, Fiadoni borrowed the report on the Byzantine emperor's flight to Chersonesus and Galicia from an earlier source—the work of a certain Cusentinus (“ut Cusentinus scribit”). According to B. Schmeidler, Fiadoni used the name Cusentinus to denote a particular chronicler from Cosenza in Calabria. This name could refer to one of several persons who lived there at that time. Medieval sources more often use the name Cusenza to refer to the city, which was a large religious and cultural center. Cusentinus' chronicle, cited many times by Fiadoni, should be understood as the continuation of the *Annals* of Archbishop Romoald of Salerno (d. 1181), compiled in Cosenza and covering the period 1177 to 1264. This work was completed by Tomaso of Leontino, Archbishop of Cosenza in 1267–1272, who, like Fiadoni, was a Dominican belonging to the Order of Preachers.<sup>22</sup>

Unfortunately, the chronicle of Cusentinus has not survived, so there is no way to verify Fiadoni's report about Ascharus.

<sup>20</sup> For biography and the creativity characteristic of Ptolemy da Lucca see H. Rossmann, “Bartholomeus (Ptolemeus) von Lucca,” *Lexikon des Mittelalters* I (1978) 1495–1496.

<sup>21</sup> See K. Kleinhenz (ed.), *Medieval Italy. An Encyclopedia* II (New York/London 2004) 1085–1087.

<sup>22</sup> B. Schmeidler, “Der sogenannte Cusentinus bei Tolomeus von Lucca,” *Neues Archiv der Gesellschaft für ältere deutsche Geschichtskunde* 32 (1906–1907) 252–261.

*Galician-Volhynian Rus' or Galatia of Asia Minor:  
the first mentions of Galicia in West-European sources*

It would seem that the parallel text in the authoritative Western-European source should have strengthened historians' trust in Długosz' account. However, H. Grala objects to considering the reports of Długosz and Fiadoni as trustworthy. In his opinion, the author of the *New Church History* confused the Old Russian Halych and Galicia with another region of a similar name, Galatia in Asia Minor, while Emperor Ascharus in fact was the future Nicaean Emperor Theodore I Laskaris. Accordingly, Grala concludes that the reports of Fiadoni and Długosz are not about Alexios Angelos' stay in Chersonesus of Tauria and in Halych, but rather about Theodore Laskaris' stay in Chersonesus of Thrace and in Galatia of Asia Minor. These were the territories with which Theodore's activities after his escape from Constantinople were closely connected.<sup>23</sup>

H. Grala points out that the use of the geographic term Galatia/Galacia was widespread in Western-European medieval writing for the region of the Galatians to whom the apostle Paul addressed his letter. Moreover, in his opinion, in Western Europe of the thirteenth-fourteenth centuries the terms Galatia and Galicia might be confused. As an example, he cites the work *On the Properties of Things* written by the Franciscan monk Bartholomew of England. This was a popular encyclopedia from the first half of the thirteenth century. Theoretically, Fiadoni might have used it.<sup>24</sup>

Bartholomew of England relied on the *Etymologies* of Isidore of Seville, the great Christian encyclopaedist of the early Middle Ages. Bartholomew confused Galatia of Asia Minor and European Galacia, which was also called Ruthenia. But he believed that Galacia/Gallacia or Ruthenia was located in Europe and not in Asia Minor (15.64):

<sup>23</sup> Grala, *Kwartalnik Historyczny* 93 (1986) 639–661.

<sup>24</sup> Grala, *Kwartalnik Historyczny* 93 (1986) 649.

Gallacia is a region in Europe occupied by ancient Gallic tribes and named after them ... And this region is most extensive and most productive. It includes a large part of Europe that is now called Ruthenia by many.<sup>25</sup>

Unlike Anatolian Galatia, the entire region of Galacia/Ruthenia is in Europe “bordering on the Roman territories in the East, Gotia in the North, Pannonia in the West and Greece in the South”; Bartholomew places it in the province of Moesia, which only borders on Asia Minor: “Ruthia or Ruthenia, i.e. the province of Moesia, is located along the border of Asia Minor ... A part of it is called Galatia, and its inhabitants used to be called Galatians. It is said that the Apostle Paul sent an epistle to them” (15.131, p.802).

European Latin texts of the early thirteenth century use the forms Galacia, Gallacia (Bartholomew), Galicia (Wincenty Kadłubek, Gervase of Tilbury),<sup>26</sup> and Galiziae, Galiciae, Galitiae (papal bulls, Hungarian royal charters)<sup>27</sup> to denote Galicia of the Carpathian region and the town of Halych. Galatia is the prevailing name for the Galatia in Asia Minor.

H. Grala cites a number of other wrong localizations of Galatia, Rutheni, and Rusini that he found in the works of certain medieval European authors.<sup>28</sup> But are these data (which require, in our opinion, a more detailed investigation) sufficient to prove that Bartholomew del Fiadoni confused the Galatia of Asia Minor with the Galicia of the Carpathian region in his report on the flight of the emperor from the crusaders? We should not assume that as a general rule medieval European

<sup>25</sup> M. C. Seymour et al., *On the Properties of Things: John Trevisa's Translation of Bartholomæus Anglicus De Proprietatibus Rerum* II (London 1975) 762–763.

<sup>26</sup> S. Kętrzyński, “Ze studiów nad Gerwazym z Tilbury (Mistrz Wincenty i Gerwazy. Provinciale Gerwasianum),” *Rozprawy Akademii Umiejętności. Wydział Historyczno-Filozoficzny* 21 (1903) 172.

<sup>27</sup> G. Fejér, *Codex Diplomaticus Hungariae ecclesiasticus ac civilis* III.1 (Buda 1829) 31–32, 57; A. Theiner, *Vetera Monumenta Historica Hungarum Sacram Illustrantia* I (Rome 1859) 9–11.

<sup>28</sup> Grala, *Kwartalnik Historyczny* 93 (1986) 650–651.

writers confused the Galatia in Asia Minor with the Galicia that was a part of Rus'. On the contrary, such confusion should be considered as a mistake made by only certain authors.

The Western-European cartographers of the eleventh-thirteenth centuries placed Galatia in Asia Minor. Its territory bordered on Bithynia, Isauria, Cappadocia, and sometimes extended to the west coast of the peninsula. But it never extended across to Europe. Such a location for Galatia can be seen in the eleventh-century Oxford map, in the maps showing the Danube and the famous towns from Sallust's *Jugurthine War* (eleventh-thirteenth centuries), in the Arnstein Bible map of 1172, in the map with a thirteenth-century poem about Alexander, in the thirteenth-century English map in the Bodleian Library, and in the thirteenth-century Vercelli map from southern France.<sup>29</sup>

The same localization of Galatia can be seen in the Italian portolan charts of the fourteenth-fifteenth centuries.<sup>30</sup> It is well known that medieval Italian navigators and cartographers improved European geography and cartography significantly by developing a new kind of cartographic charts—marine navigational maps (portolans) that became widespread in Europe.<sup>31</sup> Galatia is placed in Asia Minor in the famous map of Angelino Dulcert (better known as Angelino de Dalorto) of 1325–1330,<sup>32</sup> in the map of Marco and Francesco Pizigano of 1367, in the

<sup>29</sup> L. S. Chekin, *Kartografiia khristianskogo srednevekov'ia viii–xiii vv.* (Moscow 1999) 35, 48, 50, 53, 57, 136.

<sup>30</sup> T. Campbell, "Portolan Charts from the Late Thirteenth Century to 1500," in J. B. Harley and D. Woodward (eds.), *The History of Cartography I* (Chicago 1987) 371–458.

<sup>31</sup> According to the latest data, there have reached us from the first period of development of portolan charts (up to 1500) more than 180 maps and atlases: I. Kupcik, *Münchner Portolankarten: Kunstmann I–XIII und zehn weitere Portolankarten* (Munich 1998) 9–10.

<sup>32</sup> R. D. Oldham, "The Portolan Maps of the Rhône Delta: A Contribution to the History of the Sea Charts of the Middle Ages," *GJ* 65 (1925) 403–427.

anonymous maps and atlases of the sixteenth century in the Vatican Library, etc.<sup>33</sup>

Medieval Galatia is placed in almost the same borders as the Roman province, named for the eastern Kelts, who settled in the central part of Asia Minor in the first half of the third century B.C. For centuries, Galatia and its capital Ankyra were the center of important historical events and well known to the Mediterranean countries of Europe.<sup>34</sup> According to both Western-European and Byzantine sources, during the Fourth Crusade, Galatia, already conquered by the Seljuk Turks, paralleled the former themes of Asia Minor—Bucellarian, Armenia, Charsianon, and Cappadocia.<sup>35</sup>

On Italian maps of the early fourteenth century, Galicia of the Carpathian region with its capital of Lviv is also depicted. This “Galatia,” in the opinion of the authors, was a part of Rus’. Galicia and Lviv, for example, are shown on the above-mentioned portolan of Angelino de Dalorto. This appears to be the first known occasion when these places were recorded in Western-European cartography. Galicia in Dalorto’s map is named *Rutenia sive Gallacia*, which is different from the Latin identifications of the Galatia of Asia Minor that were made in Europe.<sup>36</sup>

Fiadoni rendered the name in accordance with the spelling that was traditional for the Galatia of Asia Minor (“Galatiam, quae hodie est pars Russiae”). A similar form (“Galatha”) is however found in the documents of Pope John XXII, namely in two letters, dated 1320 and 1321, to Heinrich, the elected bishop of Kiev: “ecclesia Kiowiensis in confinibus Ruthenorum

<sup>33</sup> V. Dimitrov, *Bulgaria v srednovekovnata morska kartografiia (XIII–XVI vv.)* (Sofia 1984), Table 7, 10, 43, 54, 61, 66.

<sup>34</sup> Ch. Wickham, *Framing the Early Middle Ages: Europe and the Mediterranean 400–800* (Oxford 2005) 406–411, 418, 426, 435, 439–440, 461–462, 529, 567–568, 599.

<sup>35</sup> K. Belke, *Galatien und Lykaonien (TIB IV [Vienna 1984])* 39–40.

<sup>36</sup> For a color reproduction of Angelino de Dalorto’s portolan see Ia. Isaevych, *Istoriia L’vova I* (Lviv 2006), between pp.56–57.

et Tartarorum, qui antiquitus Galathae vocabantur.”<sup>37</sup>

It is difficult to imagine that the high-ranking hierarchs of the Roman Catholic Church—Tomaso from Leontino and Bartholomew del Fiadoni, who wrote its history in the 1260–1270s and in the very early fourteenth century respectively, could confuse the region located in Asia Minor with the Galicia of Rus’ only because of a similarity in their names.

By this time information about Halych-Volhynian Rus’ had already been brought by the special envoy of Pope Innocent IV, the Franciscan monk Giovanni da Pian del Carpini, who in November 1247 returned from his trip to Mongolia and Rus’. Soon after his return Carpini wrote his *Istoria Mongalorum* where, along with the rulers of Chernigov and Suzdal, he mentioned the princes of Halych and Volhynia, Daniel and Vasil’ko Romanovichi. Daniel was the only one from among the Rus’ princes whom the papal envoy called the “Russian king.”<sup>38</sup>

In November 1253, Daniel of Galicia was crowned with the royal crown delivered by the envoy of Innocent IV.<sup>39</sup> A few decades earlier (around 1214) another ruler of Halych, the Hungarian Prince Koloman, obtained the royal crown from Innocent III.<sup>40</sup> It is unlikely that the hierarchs of the Roman Catholic Church, the bishops of Cosenza and Torcello who were contemporaries of Carpini and Daniel of Galicia, did not know these facts.

Indeed, in Italy or in the pope’s residence at Avignon (where Fiadoni evidently worked as papal librarian) it would be im-

<sup>37</sup> A. G. Welykyj, *Documenta Pontificum Romanorum historiam Ucrainae illustrantia* I (Rome 1953) 56–57, nos. 37–38.

<sup>38</sup> Giovanni di Pian di Carpine, *Storia dei Mongoli*, eds. E. Menesto et al. (Spoleto 1989) 304, 328, 330.

<sup>39</sup> *Ipat’evskaia letopis’*, ed. A. A. Shakhmatov, in *Polnoe Sobranie Russkikh Letopisei* II (Moscow 1998) 827.

<sup>40</sup> J. Ptašník, *Analecta Vaticana, 1202–1366* (Krakow 1914) 2, no. 3. See further A. V. Maiorov, “Rex et Regnum Galiciae: Kogda Galitskaia zemlia stala korolevstvom?” *Drevniaia Rus’. Voprosy medievistiki* 3 (2015) 79–80.

possible to think that royal crowns intended for the rulers of Galicia, Koloman and Daniel, were sent and delivered by the papal legates not to Rus', but to somewhere in Asia Minor. That is why, when using the form *Galatia* that was identical to the name of the Roman-Byzantine province in Asia Minor, Fiadoni and after him Długosz, in reporting the flight of the emperor from Constantinople, specifically stipulate, in order to avoid any misunderstanding, that the fugitive fled to the Galatia that was part of Rus'.

Note that in one of the manuscripts of Fiadoni's *History*, dating back to the fifteenth century, in lieu of "Galatiam" (so in the earliest manuscripts of the fourteenth century) is written: "Galiciam."<sup>41</sup> This spelling eliminates any misunderstandings.

*The name and identity of Emperor Ascharus*

O. Clavuot and L. Schmutge identified Ascharus (21.2) as Alexios V Doukas Mourtzouphlos (d. December 1205), the Byzantine emperor from 5 February to 12 April 1204.<sup>42</sup> This view is unsupported by evidence, and it seems unlikely.

H. Grala's supposition that the name Ascharus/Aschkarius in the reports of Fiadoni and Długosz could refer to Theodore Laskaris (ca. 1174/5–1221/August 1222), the future ruler of Nicaea, also does not stand up to criticism. Although this nobleman became related to Alexios III by marrying his daughter Anna,<sup>43</sup> he never ruled in Constantinople. Therefore he could not be described as being the emperor when the crusaders besieged and seized the capital. For example, Geoffroi de Villehardouin spoke of him as a "certain Greek" who seized the land "on the other side of the Arm" (i.e. the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles).<sup>44</sup>

<sup>41</sup> *Tholomeus Lucensis Historia ecclesiastica nova* 510 n. m.

<sup>42</sup> *Tholomeus Lucensis Historia ecclesiastica nova* 510 n.14, 725.

<sup>43</sup> *Nicetae Choniatae Historia*, ed. I. A. van Dieten (Berlin/New York 1975) 508.

<sup>44</sup> Geoffroi de Villehardouin, *La Conquête de Constantinople*, ed. H. de Valenciennes (Paris 1872) 186; the French marshal calls Theodore Laskaris

Consideration of Theodore's biography shows that he could not have fled from Constantinople during the crusaders' siege. Unlike Alexios III, Theodore Laskaris and his brother Constantine actively participated in the defense of the city. Between July 7 and 17 of 1203, during one of the Byzantines' sallies, Theodore was captured by the Latins and spent a few months as their prisoner. Niketas Choniates describes these details of Theodore's biography;<sup>45</sup> it is not clear, however, when and how Theodore was released.<sup>46</sup>

Theodore Laskaris ruled neither the capital nor any other part of the Empire. Therefore the European chronicles could by no means identify him as an emperor during the crusaders' siege. At best, he could have been a contender for power in one of the parts of the Empire that was subject to the crusaders. According to Alberic of Trois-Fontaines, after Constantinople was conquered and the Latin Empire was formed, Theodore Laskaris remained in the capital and attempted to persuade Baldwin of Flanders to appoint him emperor of the Romans. In return, he promised to conquer the territory of Asia Minor and to annex it to the Latin Empire.<sup>47</sup>

Laskaris became a sovereign only after he asserted himself in Nicaea after a number of unsuccessful attempts. He received the title of emperor even later: in the opinion of most modern historians, he was hailed emperor of Nicaea only in the spring

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*Toldres li Ascres.*

<sup>45</sup> *Nicetae Choniatae orationes et epistulae*, ed. I. A. van Dieten (Berlin/New York 1972) 126.

<sup>46</sup> On the various versions of the activities and status of Theodore Laskaris in 1203–1205 see B. Sinogowitz, "Über das byzantinische Kaisertum nach dem Vierten Kreuzzug (1204–1205)," *BZ* 45 (1952) 345–352; N. Oikonomides, "La décomposition de l'empire byzantin à la veille de 1204 et les origines de l'empire de Nicée," in *XV<sup>e</sup> Congrès International d'études Byzantines* (Athens 1976) 23–25; O. Lampsidis, "Wunderbare Rettung des Theodores Laskaris durch den Erzengel Michael," *JÖB* 26 (1977) 125–127.

<sup>47</sup> *Albrici monachi Triumphantium Chronikon*, ed. P. Scheffer-Boichorst (*MGH Script.* XXIII [1874]) 885–886.

or summer of 1206.<sup>48</sup> After a number of years of persistent struggle he subdued his main rivals, made peace with the Latin Empire, and in March 1207 was crowned as emperor.<sup>49</sup>

Surely, when reporting the escape of the Byzantine emperor from Constantinople during its first siege, Fiadoni and his predecessor Cusentinus referred to the *basileus* who was ruling it at the time of the siege, and not to somebody who would become the emperor after a few years and would reign in another part of the Empire. Otherwise, one would have to admit that Fiadoni and Cusentinus thought that Theodore Laskaris ruled the Empire before the crusaders conquered Constantinople.

This seems to be the conclusion that H. Grala has reached; but the proof he suggests is unfounded. He might be right in suggesting that during the late thirteenth/early fourteenth centuries the Nicene emperor Theodore I Laskaris was better known in Italy than his predecessor, the Byzantine emperor Alexios III.<sup>50</sup> However, the conclusion that Grala drew from this supposition (which, in our opinion, requires additional proof), that Fiadoni mistakenly believed Theodore Laskaris to be the ruler of Constantinople during the first crusaders' siege, is groundless.

These two different rulers were never confused in any European chronicle reporting on the events of the Fourth Crusade. In the extant thirteenth-century sources, both Byzantine and Western-European, Alexios III is referred to as the emperor during the first siege of Constantinople. He was the one who fled the city on a July night in 1203. Other rulers with the title of emperor would appear on the territory of Byzantium only later.<sup>51</sup>

<sup>48</sup> M. Angold, *A Byzantine Government in Exile* (London 1975) 13, 37; A. Σταυρίδου-Ζαφράκα, *Νίκαια και Ήπειρος τον 13ο αιώνα* (Thessaloniki 1990) 55.

<sup>49</sup> P. I. Zhavoronkov, "Imperiia v izgnanii," *Georgii Akropolit, Istoriiia* (St. Petersburg 2005) 7.

<sup>50</sup> Grala, *Kwartalnik Historyczny* 93 (1986) 651.

<sup>51</sup> Thus Niketas Choniates and George Akropolites as well as Geoffroi de

The Italian sources of the thirteenth-fourteenth centuries present on the whole a similar picture. They draw a clear distinction between Emperor Alexios III and other rulers with the title of emperor (the annals of Genoa and Pisa, Salimbene de Adam's *Chronicle*, etc.). For example, a contemporary of Cusentinus and Fiadoni, the Franciscan monk Salimbene de Adam (Salimbene of Parma) in his chronicle, written between 1283 and 1288, recorded the escape of Alexios III from Constantinople and the coronation of Alexios IV under the year 1203. Under the following year he reported that the Greeks had elected a new emperor named Askari, who soon fled the capital.<sup>52</sup> The name *Ascarus*, used by Cusentinus and Fiadoni (and then by Długosz) to refer to the emperor who fled from Constantinople, is one of the spelling variants for the name of the Laskaris family in the Western-European sources (above all the French and the Italian).<sup>53</sup>

Theodore Laskaris had a brother named Constantine (d. 1205), who also enjoyed a high position at the court of Alexios III.<sup>54</sup> On the night of 13 April 1204, after Alexios V

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Villehardouin, Robert de Cléry, *Devastatio Constantinopolitana*, Arnold of Lübeck, the *Gesta episcoporum Halberstadensium*, the *Anonymus de Soissons*, Alberic of Trois-Fontaines, Ralph of Coggeshall, etc. The current emperor of Byzantium during the preparation of the Fourth Crusade and the first siege of Constantinople was given as Alexios III in the letters of Pope Innocent III, in a report of Hugo de Saint-Paul, and others. See P. S. Noble, "Eyewitnesses of the Fourth Crusade – the War against Alexius III," *Reading Medieval Studies* 25 (1999) 75–89; A. J. Andrea, *Contemporary Sources for the Fourth Crusade* (Leiden 2000); M. Whitby, *Byzantines and Crusaders in Non-Greek Sources, 1025–1204* (Oxford 2007).

<sup>52</sup> *Chronica fratris Salimbene de Adam*, ed. O. Holder-Egger (*MGH Script.* XXXII [1905–1913]) 24–25.

<sup>53</sup> Prinzing, *Die Bedeutung* 18 n.20; Grala, *Κwartalnik Historyczny* 93 (1986) 643–644.

<sup>54</sup> On Constantine Laskaris and his political activities in 1203–1205 see P. I. Zhavoronkov, "U istokov obrazovaniia Nikeiskoi imperii," *Vizantiskii Vremennik* 38 (1977) 30–35; A. G. C. Savvides, "Constantine XI Laskaris. Uncrowned and Ephemeral 'Basileus of the Rhomaioi' after the Fall of Constantinople," *Βυζαντιακά* 7 (1987) 141–174, and "Συμπληρωματικά

Mourtzouphlos fled Constantinople, Constantine was declared emperor. However, seeing the insecurity of his position he escaped from the city a few hours later.

Thus there would be far more compelling grounds for believing that Constantine Laskaris was the “Emperor Ascarus” who fled from the crusaders and Constantinople (in Fiadoni and Długosz’s report), rather than his brother Theodore. However, the biographical data on both brothers exclude the possibility that either stayed in Galician-Volhynian Rus’.<sup>55</sup>

Although the form *Ascarus* used by Fiadoni and Długosz first of all refers to the representatives of Laskaris’ family, it does not necessarily mean that this name could not be used with respect to a representative of a different dynasty. In this connection, the observation of N. F. Kotliar is worth noting. He remarked that in some foreign sources, especially Arabic ones, starting from the thirteenth century, all Byzantine emperors were referred to as Laskaris no matter what their real names were. This collective name was used to refer not only to the rulers from the Laskaris family but also to the Palaeologi.<sup>56</sup>

We can add that Rus’ chroniclers sometimes used the name Laskaris to refer to rulers from other dynasties, including the Angeli. For example, in the Russian chronicle of 1512 Theodore Laskaris is identified as the ruler of Thessaly, Illyria, and Thessaloniki.<sup>57</sup> But in reality these lands were under the rule of Theodore Doukas Angelos, the emperor of Thessaloniki.<sup>58</sup>

It may be possible that foreign authors later transferred the name of the famous dynasty not only to its descendants but also to the nearest predecessors, in particular to Alexios III, who

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στοιχεία για τόν εφήμερο Βυζαντινό αυτοκράτορα Κωνσταντίνο ΙΑ Λάσκαρι,” *Βυζαντιακά* 19 (1999) 195–210.

<sup>55</sup> Grala, *Κwartalnik Historyczny* 93 (1986) 647–649.

<sup>56</sup> Kotliar, *Diplomatia* 95.

<sup>57</sup> *Russkii Khronograf*, ed. S. P. Rozanov (*Polnoe Sobranie Russkikh Letopisei* 22 [Moscow 2005]) 392.

<sup>58</sup> K. Βάρζος, *Η γενεαλογία των Κομνηνών II* (Thessaloniki 1984) 548–637.

was Theodore Laskaris' father-in-law. This is most likely in that Alexios avoided using his patronymic of Angelos; after becoming emperor, he replaced it with the name of the dynasty that, in his opinion, was more glorious than his. Niketas Choniates points out this preference of the basileus: "The emperor repudiated his patronymic Angelos and chose that of Komnenos instead, either because he held the former in low esteem in comparison with the celebrated name of Komnenos, or because he wished to have his brother's surname disappear with him."<sup>59</sup> In official documents and on coins Alexios III is also named Komnenos.<sup>60</sup> There was a custom among the Byzantine rulers to change their family name based on considerations of prestige.<sup>61</sup>

According to Alberic of Trois-Fontaines, Alexios III also used the name Andronikos that he had taken in honor of his predecessor from the Komnenos dynasty, Emperor Andronikos I. In describing Alexios' rule and exile, Alberic often used his second name Andronikos along with the name Kyralexius.<sup>62</sup>

Returning to the question of the possible confusion regarding the name of the emperor who fled from Constantinople, we should acknowledge that even if several decades after the end of the Fourth Crusade in the papal milieu they could forget and confuse his name, the report on the basileus' flight from the besieged capital must have been about the ruler who was emperor during the first siege of the city.

That emperor could be only Alexios III. Fiadoni and Dłu-

<sup>59</sup> *Niketae Choniatae Historia* 459; transl. H. J. Magoulias, *O City of Byzantium: Annals of Niketas Choniates* (Detroit 1984) 252.

<sup>60</sup> K. Treu, "Byzantinische Kaiser in den Schreibernnotizen griechischer Handschriften," *BZ* 65 (1972) 19; D. R. Sear, *Byzantine Coins and their Values* (London 1974) 356–368.

<sup>61</sup> N. P. Chesnokova, "Vizantiiskaia dinasticheskaia ideia epokhi Komninov i Angelov (XI – nachalo XIII vv.)," in *Drevneishie gosudarstva Vostochnoi Evropy. 2002* (Moscow 2004) 196.

<sup>62</sup> *Albrici monachi Trifontium Chronikon* 879–887.

gosz give only his family name, but not his first name. In our opinion, later chroniclers' use of the family name of Laskaris (well known in Western Europe because of the many years of the dynasty's struggle against the Latin Empire) in relation to Alexios III is more probable than any possible identification of him with some other contemporary representative of this dynasty, whether it be Theodore or Constantine.

*Chersonesus of Thrace or Chersonesus of Tauria?*

Grala's suggestion that Ascarus allegedly first fled to Chersonesus of Thrace and then to Galatia is clearly contrary to Fiadoni's indication that the escapee made his way from Constantinople across the Black Sea.

Chersonesus of Thrace or Gallipoli (Gelibolu, Çanakkale, Καλλιπόλις) are the names of the city and the peninsula washed by the Aegean on the west and the Dardanelles on the east. It is south of Constantinople, i.e. in the opposite direction from the Black Sea.<sup>63</sup> Clearly, it is impossible to get from Constantinople to Chersonesus of Thrace across the Black Sea. Moreover, if we assume that the emperor fled from the capital to Chersonesus of Thrace, we will have to admit that he sought safety by heading towards the troops of his enemies.

All Western-European authors of the thirteenth century, whose works are the main source of information for the Fourth Crusade (Geoffroi de Villehardouin, Robert de Cléry, Alberic of Trois-Fontaines, etc.), when describing how the crusaders proceeded to Constantinople, unanimously state that the troops came from the south—the Aegean and the Dardanelles. At the end of May 1203, the crusaders' fleet left the island of Corfu, where the knights spent about three weeks on their way from Zadar. Having rounded the Peloponnesus, the ships approached the Dardanelles from Andros and at the beginning of June seized Abydos at the entrance to the strait. This city became the base for further advancement to the capital. Having brought up reserves and replenished their food, the crusaders

<sup>63</sup> See P. Soustal, *Thrakien* (*TIB* VI [Vienna 1991]).

proceeded further along the strait and at the end of June reached the Monastery of St. Stephan five miles to the south of the Fortress of the Seven Towers. From there the crusaders' ships entered the harbor of Constantinople and moored.<sup>64</sup>

H. Grala's assumption that Fiadoni and Cusentinus could confuse the Chersonesus of Tauria with the Chersonesus of Thrace, and the Black Sea with the Aegean Sea or with the Dardanelles, is also very doubtful. It is based only on the agreement made by the crusaders in 1204 concerning the division of the Byzantine lands amongst themselves. According to it the territory of the Chersonesus of Thrace went to the Venetians. As this important acquisition was well known in Italy, it is alleged that the name Chersonesus in the time of Cusentinus was in the first place associated with the Chersonesus of Thrace.<sup>65</sup>

No less known in Italy and across Europe were the numerous Italian colonies founded in the areas of the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov in the thirteenth-fourteenth centuries by Venice, Genoa, and Pisa. The center of these colonies was the Crimea. The exploration of this territory by Italian merchants began in the twelfth century and continued on a large scale immediately after Constantinople was conquered and the Latin Empire was created.<sup>66</sup> Under the Venetians and then the Genoese, the ancient Crimean trade centers—first of all Theodosia (Caffa), Bosphorus (Kerch), and Soldaia (Sudak)—developed into the largest centers of medieval international trade.<sup>67</sup>

<sup>64</sup> Villehardouin, *La Conquête* 68–70; Robert de Clari, *La conquête de Constantinople*, ed. J. Dufournet (Paris 2004) 215–216, 234–235; *Albrici monachi Triumphantium Chronikon* 883.

<sup>65</sup> Grala, *Kwartalnik Historyczny* 93 (1986) 652.

<sup>66</sup> A. Schaube, *Handelsgeschichte der romanischen Völker des Mittelmeergebiets bis zum Ende der Kreuzzüge* (Munich/Berlin 1906) 238–239.

<sup>67</sup> S. Sekirinsky, *Očerki istorii Surozha v IX–XV vv.* (Simferopol 1955); N. P. Sokolov, *Obrazovanie Venetsianskoi kolonial'noi imperii* (Saratov 1963) ch. 12; A. L. Iakobson, *Krym v srednie veka* (Moscow 1973); A. G. Emanov and A. I. Popov, "Ital'ianskaia torgovlia na Chernom more v XIII–XV vv.," in V. N. Korolev (ed.), *Torgovlia i moreplavanie v basseine Chernogo moria v drevnosti i srednie*

Successful trade provided new geographical knowledge and more accurate descriptions and maps of the northern Black Sea region and the Crimea. Thirteenth-century Italy had detailed charts of the Black Sea indicating the main navigable rivers, capes, channels, and lagoons along its western and northern coasts.<sup>68</sup> The Italian portolans of the first decades of the fourteenth century depict realistically the coast lines of the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov with all the harbors, capes, and peninsulas (the portolans of Giovanni da Carignano of the early fourteenth century, Pietro Vesconte 1311, Paolino Minorita 1320, Marino Sanudo 1321, the already mentioned portolan by Angelino de Dalorto, etc.).<sup>69</sup>

One could assert that the early-fourteenth-century Italian chronicler confused the Chersonesus of Thrace with the Crimea, and Galicia with Galatia, and used the name of Emperor Ascarus to refer to Theodore Laskaris if one could provide facts to confirm that the latter had stayed in Gallipoli and Galatia after being released from Latin captivity. However, there are no such facts.

Although the activities of Theodore Laskaris in 1204–1205 took place in Asia Minor, they were in no way connected with the region of Galatia. Rejected by the inhabitants of Nicaea, who had already recognized his brother Constantine as emperor, Theodore made his way to the area of Prusa. Southern Bithynia and Mysia as well as the region of Smyrna became his strongholds against the Latins and his rivals from the Greek aristocracy. These territories became the cradle of the future

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*veka* (Rostov-on-Don 1988) 76–87.

<sup>68</sup> E. Todorova, “More about Vicina and the West Black Sea Coast,” *Etudes balkaniques* 14 (1978) 123–138.

<sup>69</sup> T. M. Kalinina and A. V. Podosinov, “Azovskoe more v antichnoi, srednevekovoi evropeiskoi i v arabskoi kartografii,” in S. O. Schmidt (ed.), *Ad fontem/U istochnika* (Moscow 2005) 112 n.27. See also I. K. Fomenko, *Obraz mira na starinykh portolanah. Prichernomor’e. Konec XIII – XVII v.* (Moscow 2007).

Nicene Empire.<sup>70</sup> Galatia, farther to the east, was part of the Sultanate of Iconium by the time of these events.

The latest editors of Fiadoni's *History* believe that Ascarus fled from Constantinople to the Chersonese situated in Crimea (Cherson in Krim). Fiadoni repeatedly in his *History* mentions the city of Chersona, implying that it is Chersonesus of Tauria (2.11, 12.15, 16.12, 21.2).<sup>71</sup>

*Emperor Alexios III in exile*

On the night of July 18, after failing to repulse the attackers, Emperor Alexios III fled the capital. All the contemporaries of the events, the participants and the eyewitnesses of the siege of Constantinople, report his flight. The historian and courtier Niketas Choniates provides the most comprehensive account with important details of the event, including the place where the escapee sought sanctuary (pp.546–547):

Having told his decision to some of his confidants and family members, and having deposited with his daughter Irina ten centenaria of gold and some royal adornments made of precious stones and bright pearls, setting out at about the first watch of the night he fled hastily to Develt, where he had prepared shelter for himself beforehand.

Develt is today's Burgas, the port city on the Black Sea coast near the Bulgarian border.<sup>72</sup>

According to Choniates (p.556), Alexios III did not stay in Develt long. Soon after his arrival there the "former emperor" travelled to Adrianople. However, the new emperor Alexios IV, together with the mercenary army of Boniface of Montferrat, immediately marched out against his dethroned uncle, forcing him to leave Adrianople and to "flee with greater haste and farther than before." The historian apparently means that Alexios Angelos fled beyond the borders of the Empire. This is evident from the next statement, according to which Alexios IV

<sup>70</sup> Zhavoronkov, *Vizantiiskii Vremennik* 38 (1977) 32.

<sup>71</sup> Clavuot and Schmugge, *Tholomeus Lucensis Historia* 769.

<sup>72</sup> Cf. Magoulias, *O City of Byzantium* 404 n.1462.

when pursuing the escapee “made a round of the cities of Thrace, arranged for their administration or, more precisely, robbed them completely.” Not finding his uncle, he returned to Constantinople (p.557).

Further in his narrative Choniates switches to other events and loses sight of the dethroned emperor for a considerable length of time. Alexios III reemerges in the historian’s account only a year later when, in the fall of 1204, he appeared in Larissa and joined the troops of Corinth’s ruler Leo Sgouros (p.608).

Choniates’ successor, George Akropolites, to some extent fills the gap in the report of Alexios Angelos’s travels. However, his record of the emperor’s route from Constantinople differs from that of Choniates: “Emperor Alexios Angelos..., having secretly fled from Constantinople, arrived at Philippopolis, but after being rejected by its citizens, headed for Mosynopolis and decided to stay there.”<sup>73</sup> There is a chronological gap in Akropolites’ rendering of the events. Alexios’ stay in Mosynopolis should be dated to the spring-summer of 1204.

This is confirmed by a further statement of Akropolites, and also by Villehardouin who recounts that during Alexios Angelos’ stay in Mosynopolis he was visited by another emperor, Alexios V Mourtzouphlos, who had killed his predecessor Alexios IV and seized the throne for a short period.<sup>74</sup> On Alexios Angelos’ order, Mourtzouphlos was blinded while taking a bath in Mosynopolis.<sup>75</sup>

If Mourtzouphlos fled from Constantinople on 12 April 1204 and travelled to Mosynopolis to his father-in-law (shortly before these events Mourtzouphlos had married Alexios III’s daughter Eudokia: *ODB* I 66), then the arrival of Alexios III in Mo-

<sup>73</sup> *Georgii Acropolitae Opera*, eds. A. Heisenberg and P. Wirth (Stuttgart 1978) I 8.

<sup>74</sup> About this ruler see B. Hendrickx and C. Matzukis, “Alexios V Doukas Mourtzouphlos: His Life, Reign, and Death (?–1204),” *Ελληνικά* 31 (1979) 108–132.

<sup>75</sup> *Georgii Acropolitae Opera* I 8–9; Villehardouin, *La Conquête* 159–160.

synopolis should probably be dated to April 1204.<sup>76</sup> In mid-June the Latin emperor Baldwin I arrived at Mosynopolis with his army and forced Alexios to flee to Thessaloniki.<sup>77</sup>

In early August 1204 Baldwin I asserted his rule over Thessaloniki but later gave it to Boniface of Montferrat.<sup>78</sup> Meanwhile, Alexios Angelos fled again and, according to Choniates, “found sanctuary in the Tempe gorge in Thessaly.” In the late fall of 1204, in the Thessalian city Larissa, Alexios joined the troops of Leo Sgouros, who seized power in central Greece and the Peloponnesus. Leo then married Alexios’ daughter Eudokia.<sup>79</sup>

After that, Alexios Angelos travelled to Corinth, where his new son-in-law ruled. In the early spring of 1205, however, Corinth was besieged by the army of Boniface of Montferrat. Alexios attempted to escape from the city but was captured and exiled to the Thessalian city Almir (on the coast of the Gulf of Volo).<sup>80</sup> Moreover, Boniface seized Alexios’ royal insignia and sent them to Emperor Baldwin in Constantinople.<sup>81</sup>

Not long after, the former emperor was transferred to Thessaloniki and from there was sent to Genoa on a galley. He was imprisoned in the Montferrat castle where he spent a number of years. It was not until 1208 or 1209 that his cousin Michael I Angelos, the ruler of Epirus, was able to ransom Alexios from captivity for an enormous sum of money.<sup>82</sup>

George Akropolites (I 12–16) describes the events of the emperor’s last years. Alexios III lived with Michael I for a short

<sup>76</sup> Prinzing, *Die Bedeutung* 5.

<sup>77</sup> *Georgii Acropolitae Opera* I 9–10; Villehardouin, *La Conquête* 160.

<sup>78</sup> Villehardouin, *La Conquête* 167–168, 177–180.

<sup>79</sup> *Nicetae Choniatae Historia* 608.

<sup>80</sup> M. E. Κορδώσης, “Ο έκπτωτος Βυζαντινός αυτοκράτορας Αλέξιος Γ στη Μακεδονία και Θεσσαλία,” in *Βυζαντινή Μακεδονία, 324–1430* (Thessaloniki 1995) 168–169.

<sup>81</sup> Villehardouin, *La Conquête* 183–184.

<sup>82</sup> R.-J. Loenertz, “Aux origines du despotat d’Epire et de la principauté d’Achaïe,” *Byzantion* 43 (1973) 370–376.

time; then, around 1210 he joined the sultan of Iconium Ghiyath al-Din Kaykhusraw I. On 17 June 1211 they participated in the battle of Antioch against the Nicene emperor Theodore I Laskaris; Kaykhusraw was killed and Alexios captured.<sup>83</sup> According to Theodore Skoutariotes (the author of the additions to Akropolites' *History*: I 278), Alexios was blinded in Nicaea at the demand of the senate and the army. After that he was locked up in a monastery where he died.<sup>84</sup>

*Alexios III's stay in Bulgaria and negotiations with Tsar Kaloyan*

In the turbulent life of Alexios Angelos, during the time when he was deprived of the emperor's throne, there is one period, albeit a comparatively short one, that was not covered by the thirteenth-century Byzantine historians' chronicles. It is the interval between August 1203, when he left Adrianople, and April 1204, when he arrived in Mosynopolis. Evidently, the absence of data on Alexios III in the Byzantine sources can be explained by the fact that he spent all this time outside of the Empire.

The evidence of another witness can fill the gap in the reports of the Byzantine historians. This is provided by the author of the anonymous chronicle known as Baldwin of Constantinople, and dedicated to the life of the first Latin emperor. According to this source, soon after his flight from Constantinople, Alexios Angelos made his way to the Bulgarian tsardom of Tsar Ivan (Kaloyan). At least that was the information available to the crusaders who were pursuing the escapee: "And so having entered Constantinople and searched for Alexios, [the crusaders] did not find him, as together with five thousand people he had fled to John, the king of Wallachia."<sup>85</sup>

<sup>83</sup> See P. I. Zhavoronkov, "Nikeisko-latinskie i nikeisko-sel'dzhukskie otnosheniia v 1211–1216 gg.," *Vizantiiskii Vremennik* 37 (1976) 48–50.

<sup>84</sup> For more on the biography of Alexios III after fleeing Constantinople see B. Ferjančić, "Rapports entre Grecs et Latins après 1204," *Zbornik radova Vizantoloshkog instituta Srpske akademike nauk* 10 (1967) 174–176; Prinzing, *Die Bedeutung* 1–15.

<sup>85</sup> "Et sic intrantes Constantinopolim et Alexium quaerentes minime

This evidence is credible as it comes from the source that, according to the available data, dates back to no later than 1219.<sup>86</sup> Consequently, the report on Alexios' flight to Bulgaria is one of the closest in time to the described event. Moreover, it was reported by an eyewitness.

A thirteenth-century Italian source confirms the statement of the anonymous Latin chronicle. The Genoese *Annals* (in the part compiled by Caffaro's successor and completed up to 1293) report the flight of the emperor from Constantinople to "Wallachia."<sup>87</sup> Moreover, two documents from the archbishopric of Ohrid dated 1218–1219 confirm Alexios III's stay in Bulgaria and his negotiations with Tsar Kaloyan. One of the acts of the Synod of Ohrid and Archbishop Demetrios Chomatianos' letter to the Metropolitan of Corfu, Basileios Padiadites, mention the recent negotiations of the Byzantine emperor and the patriarch of Constantinople with the tsar and the patriarch of Bulgaria.<sup>88</sup>

In particular, in the two documents,<sup>89</sup> which replicate each other almost word-for-word, we read that at an unspecified date "all of the emperor's power in the West" was "transferred to Bulgaria." This happened when "the emperor, an escapee from Constantinople, was in difficulty." At the same time the

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inveniunt; nam cum quinque millibus hominum fugam capit versus Johanem, regem Valahiae": Balduinus Constantinopolitanus, in *Fontes rerum Austriacarum*, zweite Abt.: *Diplomataria et acta* XII.1 (Vienna 1856) 297.

<sup>86</sup> J. Klimke, *Die Quellen zur Geschichte des 4. Kreuzzuges* (Breslau 1875) 58; Z. Mirdita, *Vlasi u historiografiji* (Zagreb 2004) 42.

<sup>87</sup> *Cafari et continuatorum Annales Ianuenses*, ed. G. Pertz (*MGH Script.* XVIII [1862]) 123.

<sup>88</sup> See I. Snegarov, *Istoriia na Ohridskata arkhiepiskopiia* I (Sofia 1924) 100, 130, 207; V. N. Zlatarski, *Istoriia na blgarskata drzhava prez srednite vekove* III (Sofia 1994) 171.

<sup>89</sup> *Demetrii Chomateni Ponemata diaphora*, ed. G. Prinzing (Berlin/New York 2002), nos. 8 and 146. See also P. Nikov, "Prinos km istoricheskoto izvo-roznanie na Blgariia i km istoriata na blgarskata crkva," *Spisanie na Blgarskata akademiia na naukite* 20 (1921) 46–47, 54–55.

patriarch of Constantinople “was conducting negotiations with the tsar of Bulgaria and with the patriarch of Bulgaria.” “At that time these negotiations were natural because they [the Bulgarians] had [their] bishops in the regions that were under their rule, as they had given up hope for the restoration of imperial power in Byzantium.” For the dating of these events, the information that they happened during the attack of the Latins and the collapse of imperial rule is decisive.

The reports state that the Patriarch of Constantinople, John X Kamateros, was to join the negotiations with the Bulgarian tsar and patriarch at a later date, as he had stayed in the besieged Constantinople until the crusaders seized it for the second time. He left the city with other refugees only in April 1204.<sup>90</sup>

In the opinion of V. N. Zlatarski, Alexios III began negotiating with the Bulgarian tsar Ivan (Kaloyan) for military assistance against the crusaders immediately upon his arrival at Develt. Despite all his efforts, however, the negotiations were in vain. Kaloyan showed little interest in the fugitive emperor and his suggestions. Prinzing reaches a similar conclusion, noting, however, that Alexios’ efforts were not totally futile.<sup>91</sup>

Kaloyan, who in 1204 was granted the title “king of the Bulgarians and the Wallachians” by Pope Innocent III, played a very important role in the struggle against the crusaders. In the battle of Adrianople on 14 April 1205, he inflicted a crushing defeat on the army of the Latin Empire and captured its emperor Baldwin.<sup>92</sup> The fact that in 1204 a large group of

<sup>90</sup> Th. Niggel, “Joannes X. Kamateros (1198–1206),” *Lexikon für Theologie und Kirche* V (1959) 1048. Cf. P. Wirth, “Zu Frage eines politischen Engagement Patriarchs Johannes X. Kamateros nach dem vierten Kreuzzuge,” *ByzF* 4 (1972) 248–254.

<sup>91</sup> Zlatarski, *Istoriia* III 170–171; Prinzing, *Die Bedeutung* 6.

<sup>92</sup> A. P. Kazhdan and G. G. Litavrin, *Ocherki istorii Vizantii i iuzhnykh slavian* (St. Petersburg 1998) 235–237; V. Paskalev, *Istoriia na Blgariia* III (Sofia 1979) 139–144; P. Petrov, *Vzstanoviavane na Blgarskata derzhava, 1185–1197* (Sofia 1985) 326; P. Mutafchiev and V. Giuzelev, *Istoriia na blgarsia narod, 681–1323* (Sofia 1986) 274; P. Angelov, *Blgarskata srednovekovna diplomacia*

Byzantine aristocrats from among the deposed emperor's supporters turned to Kaloyan for military support also suggests that close contacts may have existed between Alexios III and the Bulgarian tsar. It is due to Kaloyan's alliance with the Thracian nobility that, in 1205, he resolved to wage war against the Latins.<sup>93</sup>

These reports give us reason to believe that the former emperor Alexios III was in Bulgaria seeking military assistance against the crusaders from August 1203 until April 1204 (i.e. for over seven months). During that period he had enough time and opportunities to establish contacts with the neighboring principality of Galicia-Volhyn and to visit Halych in person.

One cannot agree with Grala who argues that Alexios III, when conducting negotiations with Kaloyan, would not have visited Roman Mstislavich in Halych because the Bulgarian tsar would have objected to any contact of the basileus with the Galician-Volhynian prince: the latter was a military ally of Byzantium in the struggle against the Cumans and, in Kaloyan's view, an alliance between Byzantium and Rus' might also be directed against Bulgaria.<sup>94</sup>

These arguments seem far-fetched. One has to take into account the new political balance of power in the Balkans, which changed dramatically after the crusaders seized Constantinople. As a refugee Alexios III could not pose the same threat to Bulgaria as he had when in power, while the new enemy, the Latins, did pose a threat.<sup>95</sup>

The primary aim of the deposed Byzantine emperor was to

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(Sofia 1988) 103, 123, 125; D. Angelov and B. Cholpanov, *Blgarska voenna istoriia ot vtorata chetvrt na X do vtorata polovina na XV v.* (Sofia 1989) 89–90; D. Angelov, *Vizantiia: politicheska istoriia* (Stara Zagora 1994) 249–254, etc.

<sup>93</sup> Prinzing, *Die Bedeutung* 8 ff.

<sup>94</sup> Grala, *Kwartalnik Historyczny* 93 (1986) 646.

<sup>95</sup> On the role of the Latins in Byzantine-Bulgarian relations in 1204–1206 see A. Κραντωνέλλη, *Η κατά των λατίνων Ελληνο-Βουλγαρική σύμπραξις εν Θράκη 1204–1206* (Athens 1964); A. Dancheva-Vasilieva, *Bulgaria i Latinskata imperiia (1204–1261)* (Sofia 1985) 43–44, etc.

find new military allies and further his struggle against the Latins. Not only did Alexios III refuse to acknowledge his defeat but evidently he was determined to return himself to the imperial throne. As we have seen, in all the subsequent years until his death he persistently sought help, turning to the rulers of various states that had emerged both within the territory of the Byzantine Empire and beyond.

It can be assumed that, sensing the danger, Alexios III in early autumn 1203 returned from Adrianople to Develt, where he, according to Choniates, had prepared shelter for himself beforehand. From here by sea he could reach the Chersonesus of Tauria. This voyage would last no more than two weeks. As is known, in 1253 William of Rubruck sailed from Constantinople to the Crimea (to Soldaia) in fourteen days (from May 7 to 21).<sup>96</sup>

The southern borders of the Galician principality in the early thirteenth century extended to the lower reaches of the Dniester. The waterway from Chersonesus of Tauria through the Black Sea and further along the Dniester to Halych could not take more than two weeks. Theoretically, it might be assumed that, arriving in autumn 1203 in Halych, Alexios could ride out the winter here, i.e. stay in Halych until the spring of 1204.

*The role of Halych in supporting candidates for the Byzantine and Bulgarian thrones and the alliance of Roman Mstislavich and Alexios III*

It is most unlikely that in such circumstances, when he was near the border of Galician-Volhynian Rus', Alexios would not have used the opportunity to ask his long-standing ally Roman Mstislavich for support. Moreover, it is most unlikely that the report of his trip to Halych that Cusentinus and Fiadoni made only a few decades later was just a fiction or a misunderstanding.

In the history of the relationship between Rus' and Byzan-

<sup>96</sup> Guglielmo di Rubruk, *Viaggio in Mongolia*, ed. P. Chiesa (Milan 2011) 6–7, 12–13.

tium it was a known practice for candidates for the Byzantine throne to turn to Galician and other princes of Rus' for assistance. For example, according to Niketas Choniates and John Kinnamos, in late 1164 Alexios III's recent predecessor Andronikos I Komnenos, when he was being pursued by his cousin Emperor Manuel I, fled to Galicia.<sup>97</sup> Rus' chronicles confirm his stay in Halych, reporting also that the Galician prince Yaroslav Osmomysl welcomed the Byzantine tsarevich honorably and gave him several cities "for consolation."<sup>98</sup> At a later date, Emperor Manuel sent two metropolitans to Halych, who persuaded Andronikos to return to Constantinople.<sup>99</sup>

When in 1185 Andronikos Komnenos, who by that time had become emperor, found himself in danger of losing his throne, he attempted to flee to Rus', apparently again to Yaroslav Osmomysl in Halych. He boarded ship and set off for the Black Sea. Because of the rough seas, however, his ship could not make progress and the supporters of the new emperor, Isaak II Angelos, overtook him. Andronikos was seized, taken back to the capital and there cruelly killed.<sup>100</sup>

Some eighteen years later, Emperor Alexios III escaped from Constantinople by the same route. He certainly knew about his predecessor's connections with Halych and the support he had found there, because Alexios' father, Andronikos Doukas Angelos, was among Emperor Andronikos I's closest confidants.<sup>101</sup>

Alexios III maintained ongoing contacts with the Galician-Volhynian prince Roman Mstislavich. A Novgorodian boyar,

<sup>97</sup> *Ioannis Cinnami epitome rerum ab Ioanne et Alexio Comnenis gestare*, ed. A. Meineke (Bonn 1836) 234–236; *Nicetae Choniatae Historia* 129–131.

<sup>98</sup> *Ipat'evskaia Letopis'* 524; *Nikonovskaia Letopis'*, ed. A. F. Bychkov, in *Polnoe Sobranie Russkikh Letopisei IX* (Moscow 2000) 232.

<sup>99</sup> See R. Macrides, "Dynastic Marriages and Political Kinship," in J. Shepard and S. Franklin (eds.), *Byzantine Diplomacy* (Aldershot 1992) 276–277. Cf. O. Iurevich, *Andronik I Komnin* (St. Petersburg 2004) ch. 4; M. Tiuliumeanu, *Andronic I Comnenul* (Iasi 2000).

<sup>100</sup> *Nicetae Choniatae Historia* 347–349.

<sup>101</sup> Βάρζος, *Η γενεαλογία* II 726–727; *ODB I* 64–65, 97–98.

Dobrynya Yadreikovich, who later became Archbishop Antony, during one of his visits to the Byzantine capital saw there the ambassadors of “the grand prince Roman,” led by boyar Tverdyata Ostromirich.<sup>102</sup> Scholars date Dobrynya’s first visit to Constantinople to May 1200. In that year he certainly could have met there the ambassadors of the Galician-Volhynian prince.<sup>103</sup>

Niketas Choniates describes Roman Mstislavich as the savior of the Empire sent by God. When narrating the attack of the Wallachians and Cumans that almost ended in the capture of the Byzantine capital, the historian writes (pp.522–523):

It was Roman, the Prince of Galicia, who prepared quickly, assembled a brave and numerous armed force, attacked the Cumans and, passing through their land without stopping, plundered and devastated it. After repeating such attacks several times to the glory and the magnificence of the holy Christian faith ... he stopped the raids of the Cumans and put an end to those terrible miseries that the Romans suffered from them. He therewith rendered to the people of the same faith an unexpected assistance, an unforeseen defense, and, so to say, protection sent by God.

Roman Mstislavich evidently had agreed to perform long-term duties as an ally for Byzantium, for the military assistance he provided was of a systematic nature. The Galician-Volhynian prince led numerous military expeditions against the Cumans for the benefit of the Empire and had significant success against them.<sup>104</sup> Moreover, he participated as Byzantium’s ally in its conflict

<sup>102</sup> *Puteshestvie novgorodskogo arkhiepiskopa Antoniiia v Car’grad v kontse 12-go stoletiiia*, ed. P. Savvaitov (St. Petersburg 1872) 88–89.

<sup>103</sup> See O. A. Belobrova, “‘Kniga Palomnik’ Antoniiia Novgorodskogo: (K izucheniiu teksta),” *Trudy Otdela Drevnerusskoi Literatury Instituta russkoi literatury (Pushkinskii Dom) Akademii Nauk SSSR* 29 (1974) 178–185; K. D. Seemann, *Die altrussische Wallfahrtsliteratur* (Munich 1976) 213–221, 413, 449–450.

<sup>104</sup> Brand, *Byzantium 132*; I. Vásáry, *Cumans and Tatars: Oriental Military in the Pre-Ottoman Balkans, 1185–1365* (Cambridge 2005) 48–49; cf. Kotliar, *Diplomatiiia* 88–89.

with Bulgaria.<sup>105</sup>

The alliance between Roman and Alexios III was strengthened by the marriage of the Galician-Volhynian prince to a relative of the emperor. As already noted, there are solid grounds for believing that this was Isaak II's daughter Euphrosyne (Anna).<sup>106</sup> Nevertheless, one cannot exclude the possibility that Roman's new wife was, as Grala believes, a member of the noble Byzantine family of Kamateros named Maria. If so, she would have been related to the Angelos dynasty and also to the Patriarch of Constantinople, John X.<sup>107</sup>

Galician-Volhynian Rus' provided refuge not only for Byzantine emperors and members of their families but also for Bulgarian rulers. According to George Akropolites, the famous future Bulgarian tsar Ivan II Asen and his younger brother Alexander spent their childhood and youth in Rus', most likely in Galicia, hiding from the persecution of Tsar Boril. The brothers lived there for about ten years, from 1207 until 1217. With the help of "Russian fugitives," whom scholars believe to have been the Galician "Vygontsy" who inhabited the lower Dniester region, Ivan seized the Bulgarian throne.<sup>108</sup>

We do not know what help Alexios III expected to gain from Roman Mstislavich in 1203–1204. Possible it could be military intervention by the Galician-Volhynian prince in the fight for Constantinople on the side of the deposed emperor. Perhaps another explanation: Alexios, driven by fear, sought a safe

<sup>105</sup> H. Grala, "Rola Rusi w wojnach bizantyńsko-bulgarskich przełomu XII i XIII w.," *Balkanica Posnamensia* 2 (1985) 128–131.

<sup>106</sup> Maiorov, *Byzantinoslavica* 72 (2014) 188–233.

<sup>107</sup> H. Grala, "Drugie małżeństwo Romana Mściśławicza," *Slavia Orientalis* 3–4 (1982) 126.

<sup>108</sup> *Georgii Acropolitae Opera* I 32–33. Cf. Iu. A. Kulakovskiy, "Gde nakhodilas' Vichinskaia eparkhiia?" *Vizantiiskii Vremennik* 4 (1897) 333; V. T. Pashuto, *Ocherki po istorii Galitsko-Volynskoi Rusi* (Moscow 1950) 169; I. O. Kniaz'ky, *Slaviane, volokhi i kochevniki Dnestrovsko-Karpatskikh zemel', konets IX–seredina XIII vv.* (Kolomna 1997) 209–210; M. V. Bibikov, *Byzantinorossica: Svod vizantiiskikh svidel'stv o Rusi* I (Moscow 2004) 263.

haven, which would be located as far as possible from his enemies. In any case, the actions of the former emperor at this time cannot be considered forward-looking, based on a profound political calculation. Perhaps that was the main cause of the disaster that befell in the end.

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