Manuel Komnenos Mavrozomes and His Descendants at the Seljuk Court: The Formation of a Christian Seljuk-Komnenian Elite[1]

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"Elite interaction", observes Keith Hopwood, "had long been a means by which Byzantine and Turkish cultures had merged in the frontier zone."[2] Hopwood aptly attributes the frontier as a space of intense intermingling and interaction between two cultural entities of vastly different origins and identities. Byzantine-Seljuk elite interaction, however, was not a phenomenon relegated to the frontier alone. In fact, Seljuk rulers welcomed renegade Byzantine aristocrats at the center of Seljuk power as members of the imperial household and court. Following the fall of Constantinople to the Latins in 1204, dislocated Byzantine aristocrats such as Manuel Komnenos Mavrozomes found unique opportunities for elite advancement in the Seljuk realm. Drawing upon Byzantine and Seljuk sources, this paper traces the integration of the Mavrozomes clan into the highest echelons of the Seljuk elite after Manuel Komnenos Mavrozomes assisted Ghiyāth al-Dīn Kaykhusraw I (r. 1192-1196; 1205-1211) in regaining the Seljuk throne in Konya in 1205. Furthermore, the Komnenian identity of the "Seljukicized" descendants of Mavrozomes is examined as a strategy of symbolic capital for the centralizing Seljuk polity amidst the fractionalized world of Byzantium during the 13th century.

The Byzantinists' perspective: Mavrozomes as rebel in the frontier

Much has been written about provincial separatism in Anatolia before and after the Fourth Crusade.[3] Akropolites considers the confusion ensuing from the Latin

1 This paper owes much to Scott Redford's ideas and research, as well as to extensive discussions with him and Suzan Yalman, who both brought to my attention some sources I may have otherwise overlooked. I am likewise grateful to Niels Gaul for his expertise in Greek, and indebted to Himmet Taşkömür for his superb skills in Arabic.

2 Hopwood, Keith 2006, "Nicaea and Her Eastern Neighbours", in: *The Ottoman Empire: Myths, Realities and 'Black Holes'. Contributions in Honour of Colin Imber*, Eugenia Kermeli and Oktay Özel, eds., Istanbul, 39-45, at 42.

3 See Hoffmann, Jürgen 1974, *Rudimente von Territorialstaaten im Byzantinischen Reich (1071-1210): Untersuchungen über Unabhängigkeitsbestrebungen und ihr Verhältnis zu Kaiser und Reich*, Munich; Brand, Charles M. 1968, *Byzantium Confronts the West, 1180-1204*, Cambridge (Mass.), 86ff. For the case of the local landowning magnate Sabbas Asidenos' assertion of independence in Sampsôn (Priene), near Miletos along the Maeander in 1204, known only from Akropolites' account, see Orgels, Paul 1935, "Sabas Asidénos, dynaste de Sampsôn",

conquest of Constantinople as the main factor underlying the phenomenon of the emergence of independent rulers, or *proichontes* ("prominent men"), or, as Akropolites puts it, those "who seized power for themselves, either on their own initiative or 'summoned to the defence of the land by its inhabitants'."[4] As Akropolites points out, these men either had family interests in the areas where they seized power, or had held local office, often of a military nature.[5] Indeed, this phenomenon goes back more than a decade following the death of Manuel I Komnenos I in 1181. Byzantinists have regarded Manuel Komnenos Mavrozomes primarily in such terms – yet another Byzantine aristocrat asserting his independence in western Asia Minor following the deterioration of Byzantine authority.[6] Mavrozomes' historical importance, according to the prevailing view, derives from his fleeting control of the Maeander valley as an independent or rebellious ruler, supported by Seljuk power against his rivals for the legacy of Byzantium, his kinsmen, the Laskarids.[7] Hopwood presents Manuel Mavrozomes as a 13th-century Byzantine counterpart or predecessor to the Turkish warlords or *bey*s, who later emerged as independent entities and created mini-states in the border region, such as with the founding of the Menteshid, Aydinid and Ottoman principalities on the Byzantine-Turkish frontier in the 14th century. According to Hopwood, Mavrozomes' case demonstrates how the "frontier zone would welcome charismatic leadership which built on personal ties of loyalty/protection and links with the other major rulers".[8] This view of Mavrozomes, nevertheless glosses over the fact that, after 1204, Mavrozomes entered Seljuk service and, as such, he and his descendants refashioned themselves as Seljuk elites without es-

Byzantion 10, 67-80 and Akropolites/Macrides, Ruth, trans. 2007, *George Akropolites: The History. Introduction, translation and commentary*, New York, 85. The most outstanding example of this trend is seen with Theodore Mankaphas (Mangaphas), also known as Morotheodoros, a local notable from a military family. Ruth Macrides surmises that he may have been a *doux* (duke) of the Thrakesion theme. He assumed power twice in his native city of Philadelphia (Alaşehir). He first rebelled against Isaac II in ca. 1188-1190, minting coins and claiming the title of emperor. He began operating independently again in 1203 (Angold, Michael 1999, "The road to 1204: the Byzantine background to the Fourth Crusade", *Journal of Medieval History* 25,3, 257-278, at 271; Akropolites/Macrides 2007, 85). See also Cheynet, Jean-Claude 1984, "Philadelphie, un quart de siècle de dissidence, 1182-1206", in: *Philadelphie et autres études*, (Byzantinea Sorbonensia 4), Paris, 39-54; repr. in: idem 2006,*The Byzantine Aristocracy and its Military Function*, Aldershot / Burlington, IX.

4 Akropolites/Macrides 2007, 84.

5 Ibid.

6 I have not had access to Hoffmann 1974. Hoffmann treats Mavrozomes as a separatist from Byzantium (Brand, Charles M. 1977, "Review of Jürgen Hoffmann, Rudimente von Territorialstaaten im Byzantinischen Reich (1071-1210): Untersuchungen über Unabhängigkeitsbestrebungen und ihr Verhältnis zu Kaiser und Reich", *Speculum* 52,3, 698f., at 699).

7 Finlay, George 1877, *A history of Greece, from its conquest by the Romans to the present time, B. C. 146 to A. D. 1864*, vol. 3, part 2: *The Byzantine and Greek Empires, 1057-1453*, Oxford, 288f.

8 Hopwood 2006, 43.

chewing their Byzantine and Christian identity; rather their Komnenian credentials were prominently displayed in the Seljuk realm.[9]

Manuel Komnenos Mavrozomes, indeed, possessed an impressive lineage. He was a descendant of the Mavrozomes ("black broth") family, provincial magnates believed to have emerged into prominence in the Peloponnesos in the 12th century and who subsequently became associated with the most intimate circles of Komnenian power. In the 1170s, his father Theodore[10] rose to the post of top general of Manuel I Komnenos (1143-1181),[11] and, as a favorite of the emperor, was granted the status of son-in-law, or *gambros*[12] with his marriage to an unnamed daughter Manuel had with his wife, Theodora Vatatzina. Theodore Mavrozomes also briefly served as chief of the imperial secretaries under Andronikos I Komnenos (1183-1185). As a result of his father's high posts under both Manuel I Komnenos and Andronikos I, and as a maternal relative of both the Komnenoi and the Vatatzes, Manuel Mavrozomes must have moved within the highest aristocratic circles of Byzantium. Furthermore, as a maternal descendant of Manuel I Komnenos, Manuel Komnenos Mavrozomes had the right to the Komnenos name, as was the custom of the time.[13]

In contrast to his father, who remained at the heart of imperial power as a general and son-in-law, or *gambros*, of Manuel I Komnenos, Mavrozomes' role in the Byzantine state remains obscure. One may speculate that with the rise of the Angeloi from 1185 onwards, Mavrozomes may have distanced himself from the imperial center. He may have withdrawn to a family estate, where he was, according to Ibn Bībī's testimony, when he became the host of the wayward Seljuk sultan, Kaykhusraw I. It is, therefore, not surprising that the sources reveal little of

9 Akropolites/Macrides 2007, 84; Cumont, Franz 1895, "Note sur une inscription d'Iconium", *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 4,1, 99-105, at 103.

10 Sophie Métivier raises the possibility that Manuel Mavrozomes was the son of the *sebastos* John Mauvrozomes, rather than of Theodore (Métivier, Sophie 2009, "Les Maurozômai, Byzance et le sultanat de Rūm. Note sur le sceau de Jean Comnène Maurozômès", *Revue des Études Byzantines* 67, 197-207, at 204).

11 Kazhdan, Alexander P. 1991a, art. "Maurozomes", in: *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*, vol. 2, New York / Oxford, 1319f.; Magdalino, Paul 1993, *The empire of Manuel I Komnenos, 1143-1180,* Cambridge, 210ff., 257f.; Birkenmeier, John W. 2002, *The Development of the Komnenian Army: 1081-1180*, Leiden / Boston / Köln, 129; Brand 1968, 9, 59, 61, 165. A certain John Mavrozomes led an army from the Peloponnesos to the relief of Thessalonike in 1185. Theodore Mavrozomes was the commander of the left wing of Manuel I's army during the battle of Myriokephalion (1176). Sophie Métivier raises the possibility that Manuel Mavrozomes was the son of the *sebastos* John Mauvrozomes, rather than of Theodore (Métivier 2009, 205).

12 *Gambros*, related to the ancient Greek term *kedestes*, refers to any male relative who is related through marriage, such as a son-in-law, brother-in-law or father-in-law (Miller, M. 1953, "Greek Kinship Terminology", *The Journal of Hellenic Studies* 73, 46-52, at 46).

13 See Oikonomidès, Nicolas 2001, "Pictorial propaganda in XIIth c. Constantinople", *Glas 390 de l'Académie serbe des sciences et des arts. Classe des sciences historiques* 11, 93-102; repr. in: idem 2005, *Society, Culture and Politics in Byzantium*, Elizabeth Zachariadou, ed., (Variorum Collected Studies Series 824), Aldershot / Burlington, XII.

his earlier career, for at this time he may have been far removed from the centers of power. It was only with the fall of Constantinople that Mavrozomes began to play an active role in events in Asia Minor. According to Choniates, Mavrozomes emerged in the Maeander river valley as a rival to Theodore I Laskaris, the son-in-law of the deposed emperor Alexios II Angelus (1195-1203) and founder of the Byzantine empire at Nicaea in 1205. Theodore I defeated Mavrozomes in 1205,[14] and after having been proclaimed emperor at Nicaea, he made a truce with Mavrozomes the following year in order to avoid further clashes, allowing him to keep the border fortresses of Chonae and Laodicea as a vassal under the recently restored Kaykhusraw I.[15]

Choniates' account of Manuel Komnenos Mavrozomes

The main sources for Manuel Komnenos Mavrozomes' activities are Choniates'[16] and Ibn Bībī's accounts.[17] These two sources, however, have little accord with one another. Byzantinists assume that Choniates' account, the Byzantine source most contemporary to the events, provides the most reliable information for tracing Manuel Mavrozomes' relations with the Seljuks. Scholars of Seljuk history, on the other hand, have primarily relied on Ibn Bībī's narrative. The two separate fields have thus co-existed somewhat independently of one another. Rather than reconstructing a seamless narrative of events by extracting material from both works,[18] I subject the written accounts to analysis with the goal of re-

14 Akropolites/Macrides 2007, 84. The individual mentioned by Choniates as wielding authority in the Maeander valley and fighting against Theodore Laskaris was Manuel Mavrozomes, not Theodore Mavrozomes as Macrides states.

15 Treadgold, Warren 1997, *A History of the Byzantine State and Society*, Stanford (Cal.), 714.

16 Intimately connected with the court as secretary *logothetes con sekreton* and head of the senate under Alexios III (1195-1203), Niketas Choniates wrote the *Historia*, which is considered the most important Byzantine source for the 12th and early 13th centuries, covering the late Comnenian and Angelan periods, as well as the Fourth Crusade and its aftermath, to which he was an eyewitness. His lengthy, complex and highly elaborate account has been praised for its penetrating insight and cultivation (Simpson, Alicia 2006, "Before and After 1204: The Versions of Niketas Choniates' 'Historia'", *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 60, 189-221, at 200f.). The monumental critical edition of the Greek text of Niketas Choniates' *Historia* was produced by Jan-Louis van Dieten (Choniates/van Dieten, Jan-Louis 1975, *Nicetae Choniates Historia*, Berlin). I have relied on Harry J. Magoulias' translation (Choniates/Magoulias, Harry J. 1984, *O City of Byzantium, Annals of Niketas Choniates*, Detroit).

17 Ibn Bībī's Persian dynastic chronicle of the Seljuks of Anatolia, *al-Avāmir al-ʿalāʾiyya fī l-umūr al-ʿalāʾiyya*, the main source for 13th-century Seljuk Anatolia, was completed in 1282. Ibn Bībī's work is a notoriously difficult text composed in an ambiguous and complicated Persian, which in some ways parallels that of Choniates, with its subtle manipulation of the narrative for didactic purposes. For more on the ideological contours of Ibn Bībī's historical framework, see Yıldız, Sara Nur 2011, *Mongol Rule in Seljuk Anatolia: the Politics of Conquest and History Writing, 1243-1282*, Leiden / Boston.

18 One such recent attempt to integrate the disparate Byzantine and Seljuk narratives may be seen in Korobeinikov, Dimitri 2007, "A sultan in Constantinople: the feasts of Ghiyāth al-

vealing how ideological concerns and generic considerations shaped the two somewhat incongruent narratives of events.

Choniates' presentation of Mavrozomes is shaped by his intent of chronicling the fall of Byzantium. The *Historia* accomplishes this narrative goal by tracing the crimes of the Komnenoi and subsequent emperors. The work culminates with the dispersal of the empire upon the 1204 debacle, and the victorious emergence of Theodore I Laskaris of Nicaea in 1206-07.[19] Choniates completed the final version of his history sometime after Theodore I Laskaris' 1211 victory over Kaykhusraw I at Antioch-on-the-Maeander. With this victory, Laskaris thwarted the Seljuk sultan's attempt to oust him from the throne in favor of his father-in-law, Alexios III. Presented as a miraculous work of God, Laskaris' victory over the Seljuks, as well as his spectacular slaying of the sultan, is loaded with great symbolic value, with the victory granting divine legitimacy to Theodore I Laskaris' reign despite his usurpation of the emperorship from his father-in-law. Highly conscious of the precariousness of the Laskarid claims to rulership in its early years, Choniates likewise sought to present Mavrozomes along narrative lines which emphasized Laskaris' legitimacy affirmed by divine approval as manifested by victory in battle. Mavrozomes is also framed according to Choniates' anti-Komnenian rhetoric. Choniates depicts Mavrozomes, together with David and Alexios Komnenos, as one of Theodore's three main illegitimate rivals in Asia Minor. Choniates attributes the factionalizing and fragmenting of Byzantine Anatolia to the "corrupt mind" of these men, who, as a result of their short-sighted ambition, ignored the good of the people as well as the obligations of their own kinship ties: "And once again Polyarchy spread over the East, a three-headed monster constituted of the stupid."[20] Mavrozomes, thus, is just another example of the general problem afflicting Byzantium, the result of Komnenian rule:

> "It was the Komnenos family that was the major cause of the destruction of the empire; because of their ambitions and their rebellions, she [the empire] suffered the subjugation of provinces and cities and finally fell to her knees. These Komnenoi, who sojourned among the barbarian nations hostile to the Romans, were the utter ruin of their country, and whenever they attempted to seize and hold sway over our public affairs, they were the most inept, unfit, and stupid of men."[21]

Choniates employs a wide definition for the Komnenoi, including aristocrats from the Komnenian maternal line such as Alexios III Angelos, whom he deni-

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Dīn Kay-Khusraw I", in: *Eat, Drink and Be Merry (Luke 12:19). Food and Wine in Byzantium. In Honour of Professor A. A. M. Bryer*, Leslie Brubaker and Kallirroe Linardou, eds., Aldershot / Burlington, 97-108.

19 Simpson, Alicia 2009, "Introduction, Niketas Choniates: The Historian", in: *Niketas Choniates. A Historian and a Writer*, Alicia Simpson and Stephanos Efthymiadis, eds., Geneva, 13-34, at 17.

20 Choniates/Magoulias 1984, 343.

21 Ibid. 290.

grates for trying to capitalize on Komnenian charisma: "The emperor repudiated his patronymic of 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."[22] Choniates and his contemporary audience likewise must have been well aware of Mavrozomes' maternal Komnenian line. Thus, Choniates presents Mavrozomes as typical of the ruinous Komnenoi, who, in order to gain the title of empire, "contrived all kinds of plots".[23] Thus, with no qualms for the ruination of Byzantium, he cast his lot with the Turks. As typical of the Komnenoi, Mavrozomes was not averse to sojourning "among the barbarian nations hostile to Romans", as seen with his intimate association with Kaykhusraw I.[24] Thus, according to Choniates, Mavrozomes was so base as to insinuate "himself into favor with Kaykhusraw", and bestow his daughter in marriage to the sultan.[25] And, as typical of the Komnenoi, he remained unconcerned as to the consequences of this ambition fostered by Turkish support. Mavrozomes, nevertheless, was not strong enough to match Theodore I Laskaris. Sometime in the summer of 1205, Laskaris overthrew Mavrozomes and was proclaimed emperor in Asia Minor.[26]

Ibn Bībī's saga of Kaykhusraw I and Mavrozomes

We learn nothing of Mavrozomes' activities in the Maeander valley as narrated by Choniates in Ibn Bībī's work. Indeed, Ibn Bībī presents us an entirely different perspective, with Kaykhusraw I's alliance with Mavrozomes framed according to the sultan's adventures at Byzantium just before the fall of Constantinople in 1204. Deposed from the throne in 1196 by his older brother Rukn al-Dīn Sulaymānshāh (r. 1196-1204), Kaykhusraw I spent many years wandering in exile, seeking military aid from neighboring rulers by which to reclaim his sultanate. Not bothering to provide his name (most likely Alexios III Angelos), Ibn Bībī describes the Byzantine emperor as relishing in the opportunity to offer refuge to the Seljuk sultan in exile, regarding him as precious booty (*maghnam-i buzurg*) adorning his court. He thus extended great favor to the sultan as well as his retinue-in-exile of *mulāzim*s (young courtiers in attendance), *khavāṣṣ* (favorites), and *ḥujjāb* (chamberlains; most likely *ghulam* attending to the sultan).[27]

22 Ibid. 252.
23 Ibid. 343.
24 Ibid. 290.
25 Ibid. 343.
26 Ibid.
27 Ibn Bībī, Nāṣir al-Dīn Ḥusayn b. Muḥammad/Erzi, Adnan Sadık and Necati Lugal, eds. 1957, *İbn-i Bībī. El-Evāmirü'l-ʿAlā'iyye fi'l-Umūri'l-ʿAlā'iyye*, Ankara, 51 (translation here and in the following by the author).

Every evening the Byzantine emperor lavishly feted and feasted Kaykhusraw I and his entourage, and in this atmosphere of intimacy, strong bonds between the two developed. The Christian emperor even reminded his court that religion had no bearing on his relationship with Kaykhusraw, declaring: "Do not suppose that the difference of religion and belief will pose an obstacle to our sincere friendship and bonds of alliance and unity."[28]

Conflict with Latins at the Byzantine court, however soon brought an end to the sultan's sojourn at the Byzantine capital. Kaykhusraw I, as Ibn Bībī tells us, was found brawling with the Franks after punching an unnamed knight for insulting both himself and the emperor. Afterwards, lamenting to the emperor his unhappy fate for having to endure the insults of a lowly Latin – he himself of noble Seljuk lineage going back to Malikshāh – Kaykhusraw I instilled upon the emperor that his illustrious Seljuk lineage demanded revenge. He thus redeemed his honor by challenging the Frank to one-on-one combat. Needless to say, Kaykhusraw I emerged as the winner in the contest with the Latin knight, staged in front of a large crowd in the city.[29] Ibn Bībī's detailed description of the sultan's duel with the Frankish knight, composed in an artful mix of prose and verse, likewise reveals the vestiges of an entertaining heroic epic originally meant for oral delivery, and which may have been in circulation at the Seljuk court.

Kaykhusraw I's victory over the Latins, however, was not without a price. Immediately after the duel, the emperor urged the sultan to absent himself from the capital city until the wrath of the Franks dissipated. The emperor recommended that the sultan go before the lord Mavrozomes, a man "of noble lineage from the emperors of Rum, whose moral probity and generosity of association is renowned throughout the world".[30] Kaykhusraw I left with his retinue and household for the island where Mavrozomes had his estates – a heavenly spot with lush gardens, according to Ibn Bībī, reminiscent of the Garden of Eden.[31] Although he does not mention the impending Latin occupation of Constantinople, Ibn Bībī nevertheless emphasizes the weak position of the Byzantine emperor vis-à-vis the Latins, with the emperor unable to command obedience or respect from Latins in his service and pay. Indeed, despite his occupation of the illustrious throne of Byzantium, the emperor's weakness and inability to assert his imperial will are an important dynamic in Ibn Bībī's narrative leading up to the sultan's acquaintance with Mavrozomes.

Ibn Bībī's account of Kaykhusraw's adventures in Byzantium concludes at Mavrozomes' estate, with the appearance of the sultan's former chamberlain,

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28 Ibid.

29 Ibid. 52-56.

30 Ibid. 57: *nazd-i Malik-i Mafrozōm kih az najād-i akābir-i qayāṣara-yi Rūm-ast va bi-ḥusn-i akhlāq u lutf-i muʿāsharah shuhra-yi āfāq shuda[…]*.

31 Ibid. 57f. While Ibn Bībī gives us no clue regarding the location of this island, it may have been somewhere between Constantinople and Nicaea.

Ḥājib Zakariyyā, disguised in the garb of a common monk complete with a walking stick.[32] Bringing the sultan news of his brother's death and the enthronement of his nephew, ʿIzz al-Dīn Qılıç Arslan III, the figure of Ḥājib Zakariyyā finds a counterpart in Akropolites' text (yet without the location of Mavrozomes' estate). Akropolites claims that, after having fled Constantinople with Alexios, a few days later, a man secretly approached the sultan, reporting to him his brother's death. "And Iathatines, dressed in pitiful rags, returned with the man and when he had made himself known to his followers, he was acclaimed ruler of the Persians."[33]

Ḥājib Zakariyyā, according to Ibn Bībī, had been sent by the Saljuk *malik al-umarā'*, or commander-in-chief of the imperial armies, Muẓaffar al-Dīn Maḥmūd b. Yaghıbasan, in order to deliver before the sultan the *taʿahhudnāmah* (letter of oath), recalling the sultan to the throne now occupied by Rukn al-Dīn's minor son, ʿIzz al-Dīn Qılıç Arslan III, with the sworn support of many followers, whose association with Kaykhusraw I probably began when he, as a young prince, served as imperial governor of the western frontier region centered at Uluborlu (Sozopolis, Burghulu),[34] a region conquered by his father in 1180-1182. Indeed, Kaykhusraw was anxious to return to his realm now that he had the backing of the powerful frontier chiefs, Muẓaffar al-Dīn Maḥmūd and his brothers Ẓāhir al-Dīn İli and Badr al-Dīn Yūsuf – known collectively as the sons of Yaghıbasan. Ibn Bībī describes Muẓaffar al-Dīn Maḥmūd as the lord (*malik*) of the frontier provinces (*vilāyāt-i ūj*), ruling over the governors (*sarvar*), military commanders (*sarlashgar*), administrative officials (*farmanravā*), amirs (*umarā'*) and cavalrymen (*sarkhaylān*).[35]

With Kaykhusraw now set on returning home, Mavrozomes decided likewise to abandon the Byzantine realm and his own estates and join the sultan, offering him his assistance. Although Ibn Bībī makes no mention of the Latin occupation of Constantinople and its hinterland, Mavrozomes must have feared losing his estates to the Latins, if not to Laskaris. To seal the deal, Mavrozomes gave the sultan his daughter in marriage, and offered his sons in service.[36] As they set out

32 Ibid. 77.

33 Akropolites/Makrides 2007, §8, 124.

34 When Sultan Qılıç Arslan divided his realm among his 12 sons sometime in the 1180s, he granted possession of Uluborlu/Borghulu and its impressive stronghold to Kaykhusraw I (Ibn Bībī/Erzi and Lugal 1957, 22). Lying to the southwest of Akşehir (Philomelion), and immediately west of Eğridir Lake (Limnai), the fortress of Sozopolis/Borghulu, was a major bulwark of the Byzantine Phrygian frontier, and likewise played an important role in Anatolian Seljuk history in defense of the western borders of the empire. Of particular significance was its location along the ancient great road, the Pisidian Highway heading east towards Konya (Foss, Clive 1998, "Byzantine Reponses to Turkish Attack: Some Sites of Asia Minor", in: *AetoΣ: Studies in honour of Cyril Mango*, Ihor Sevcenko and Irmgard Hutter, eds., Stuttgart / Leipzig, 154-171, at 158; Ramsay, William Mitchell 1923, "Geography and History in a Phrygo-Pisidian Glen", *The Geographical Journal* 61,4, 279-296, at 280).

35 Ibn Bībī/Erzi and Lugal 1957, 76f.

36 Ibid. 80.

for Konya, the party, however, ran into trouble at Nicaea. Theodore I Laskaris detained them, claiming that he was obliged to prevent Kaykhusraw I from returning to Konya with the purpose of ousting the young sultan from the throne according to a treaty he had just officiated with ʿIzz al-Dīn Qılıç Arslan III. After several days of negotiations, Kaykhusraw struck up a deal with Laskaris: Kaykhusraw would be allowed free passage to the Seljuk realm on the condition that he surrender all the recently conquered Byzantine territories stretching from Chonai (Honas, Khunas)[37] and Ladik (Denizli)[38] up to the borders of Konya. Until all the fortresses and lands were firmly in the hands of the emperor's representatives, the sultan's sons, escorted by Ḥājib Zakariyyā, would remain with the emperor as hostages. The sultan thus proceeded together with Mavrozomes to the Seljuk frontier to arrange for the transfer of territories. Ḥājib Zakariyyā's cunning, however, served the sultan well. Proficient in the five languages of Rūm, and "eloquent in speech and convincing in word", Zakariyyā fooled Laskaris, bribed his men, and escaped with the princes unharmed. He sent a messenger informing the sultan not to surrender the fortresses and surrounding territories to the Byzantines since they had escaped the clutches of the emperor.[39] Overjoyed by this news, Kaykhusraw directly made his way to Konya. After securing the throne, the sultan rewarded Mavrozomes with a top military commandership, and likewise appointed his relatives and members of his retinue to high posts.[40] With this episode coming to a close, Ibn Bībī tells us nothing further about Manuel Komnenos Mavrozomes.

The major discrepancies between the accounts of Choniates and Ibn Bībī lie in the framing of Kaykhusraw I's initial contact with Mavrozomes. Thus, whereas Ibn Bībī situates Kaykhusraw I's meeting with Mavrozomes within the context of

37 During the Byzantine period, Chonae (Khunas, Honas, Honaz) was an important highway fortress which served as a bastion of the south-western Asia Minor theme of Thrakesion. Located in the Lycus valley at the headwaters of the Maeander (Menderes) River, and in the vicinity of the ancient city of Kolossae, Chonai was the neighboring town of Laodicaea (Ladik, Denizli). After the region fell into Seljuk control ca. 1206-07, it served as the center of the Seljuk governateship (Foss, Clive 1991, art. "Chonai", in: *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*, vol. 1, New York / Oxford, 427; Baykara, Tuncer 1979, "Honaz Şehri ve Selçuklu devrindeki önemi", *İslâm Tetkikleri Enstitüsü Dergisi* 7,3-4, 207-210, at 207-209; Baykara, Tuncer 1994, art. "Denizli", in: *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi*, vol. 9, Istanbul, 155-159, at 155f.).

38 Ladik lies nine kilometers to the east of Laodicaea ad Lycum (Laodikeia), the ruins of which stand at Eski Hisar. An important center for the development of early Christianity, Laodicaea lies in the lower valley of the Lycus River (Çürük Su), on the fertile plain of the Maeander (Menderes) River, some one hundred miles from the south-central Aegean coast (Johnson, Sherman E. 1950, "Laodicea and Its Neighbors", *The Biblical Archaeologist* 13,1, 1-18, at 1ff.; Darkot, Besim 1979, art. "Denizli", in: *İslam Ansiklopedisi*, vol. 3, Ankara, 527-531, at 527; Mélikoff, Irene 1965, art. "Deñizli", *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, new ed., vol. 2, Leiden, 204f., at 204; Baykara 1994, 155ff.; Gökçe, Turan 2000, *XVI ve XVII. Yüzyıllarda Lâzikiyye (Denizli) Kazâsı*, Ankara, 14-20).

39 Ibn Bībī/Erzi and Lugal 1957, 77-81.

40 Ibid. 81-83, 90.

the sultan fleeing Alexios III's court due to the incident with the Frankish knight, Choniates remains silent on this point.[41] Indeed, Choniates make no mention of the exiled Seljuk sultan's visit to Alexios III's court. Thus, the reader of Choniates is left to presume that, in accordance to the usual topos of the Byzantine rebel, Mavrozomes may have approached the Seljuks at the frontier. Although he glosses over the sultan's stay at Alexios III's court just before the fall of Constantinople to the Latins in 1204, Choniates, however, tells us that the sultan came to Constantinople in 1197 to negotiate a peace with Alexios III Angelos; in fact, it was during this absence from Konya that his brother Rukn al-Dīn Sulaymānshāh ousted him from the throne.[42] Choniates makes it clear, however, that the Seljuk sultan was not well received:

> "But Kaykhusraw's hopes were not realized, for he met with a response that was less than anticipated. He received but few favors […]; finding no support in his opposition to his brother he returned home."[43]

That Choniates chose to relate the earlier less friendly reception of Kaykhusraw I by the Byzantine emperor ca. 1196, yet neglected to mention Alexios III's subsequent warm reception of him in ca. 1203, may reveal the author's deep-seated ideological objection to Byzantine alliances with Muslim rulers.[44] Choniates' silence is all the more conspicuous considering that, as secretary to the grand logothete, he must have been intimately familiar with the goings-on at Alexios III's court.[45]

Akropolites, on the other hand, partly echoes Ibn Bībī's account, stating that Kaykhusraw I was received with great honor by the Byzantine emperor. He adds, however, that the emperor had the Seljuk sultan baptized as his godson, a detail absent from Ibn Bībī's account. Akropolites, on the other hand, makes no mention of Mavrozomes, or of his association with Kaykhusraw I. Instead he claims that the sultan fled the city with Alexios III in September 1203, and then headed for his own realm.[46] Ibn Bībī's work thus remains the sole source for Mavozomes' and Kaykhusraw's relationship, with the latter acting as host to the Seljuk sultan after Alexios III had been forced to abandon this role due to his impotence vis-à-vis the Latins. Ibn Bībī's Mavrozomes remains, nevertheless, a shadowy figure, for his

41 Dimitri Korobeinikov claims that Choniates states that Kaykhusraw I married the daughter of the great *patriokios*, Manuel Mavrozomes (Korobeinikov 2007, 101).

42 Savvides, Alexios G. S. 2003, "Soleyman Shah of Rûm, Byzantium Cilician Armenia and Georgia (A. D. 1197-1204)", *Byzantion* 73, 96-111, at 100.

43 Choniates/Magoulias 1984, 286.

44 In an oration he delivered at court in 1190, Choniates openly opposed Isaac II's tactical alliance with Saladin in the 1190s, exhorting him instead to seize the holy land of Jerusalem from the infidel Muslims (Angelov, Dimiter G. 2006, "Domestic opposition to Byzantium's alliance with Saladin: Niketas Choniates and his epiphany oration of 1190", *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 30,1, 49-68, at 68).

45 Choniates/Magoulias 1984, xiv.

46 Akropolites/Macrides 2007, §8, 124.

narrative function is that of side-kick to the narrative's main hero, Kaykhusraw I, in an episode which serves to extol Seljuk dynastic glory and its rising fortunes. Here we see Kaykhusraw I emerging triumphant against his opponents, in contrast to Byzantium on the verge of collapse. That Mavrozomes, a displaced Byzantine aristocrat of distinguished lineage, chose to join Seljuk service reaffirms the rise of fortunes of the Seljuk ruling house under Kaykhusraw I.

Thus consigned by Ibn Bībī to a secondary role in the exploits of Kaykhusraw I, Mavrozomes' high position at the Seljuk court is intimated yet not elaborated. Indeed, Ibn Bībī's lack of information regarding Mavrozomes' activities while in Seljuk service presents the second troubling discrepancy with Choniates' account. Choniates specifically states that after Laskaris made a peace treaty with Kaykhusraw I, the sultan then "assigned a part of his dominion" to his father-in-law, territory which included Chonai, Laodicaea and "the lands through which the Maeander wends to discharge its waters into the sea".[47] The treaty must have also been officiated in February 1205, immediately after the sultan's enthronement in Konya that same month. Choniates also relates that sometime in 1205,[48] presumably after Kaykhusraw had granted him command of the frontier, Mavrozomes "contrived all kinds of plots to gain the title of emperor", and "[m]arching out with Turks, he plundered and laid waste the land watered by the Maeander River."[49] By that summer however, in 1205, Choniates tells us that Laskaris defeated Mavrozomes and his Turkish troops in battle.[50] Presumably the lower Maeander valley was then put under Byzantine rule again, with the border set at Laodicaea and Chonai, which remained in Seljuk hands.

While there is nothing in Ibn Bībī that contradicts Choniates' claim that Mavrozomes was assigned to the western frontier by Kaykhusraw, and put in command of Turkish troops, and, in addition, pursued his own agenda in making claims to the imperial title in western Anatolia, the absence of any subsequent trace of the Mavrozomes along the frontier is curious.[51] Rather than Mavrozomes or his son(s), we see a commander of *ghulām* origins, Asad al-Dīn Ayāz b. ʿAbd Allāh al-Shihābī appointed to the post of Seljuk governor in Chonai, as epigraphic evidence dating from 1214-15 testifies.[52] Indeed, that there is no further association of

47 Choniates/Magoulias 1984, 350.

48 Magoulias dates the treaty as occurring sometime before March 1205 (Choniates/Magoulias 1984, 350). Korobeinikov dates it to March 1206 (Korobeinikov 2009, 106).

49 Choniates/Magoulias 1984, 343.

50 Ibid.

51 Based on Choniates' *Orationes* (127.15-17), Korobeinikov states that Manuel Komnenos Mavrozomes was imprisoned by Theodore I Laskaris after his defeat in 1206, and Mavrozomes subsequently disappeared from the political scene, presumably dying while imprisoned (Korobeinikov 2009, 106).

52 Rogers, J. M. 1976, "Waqf and Patronage in Seljuk Anatolia. The Epigraphic Evidence", *Anatolian Studies* 26, 69-103, at 89; Baykara 1994, 155ff.; Aslanapa, Oktay 1991, *Anadolu'da İlk Türk Mimarisi: Başlangıcı ve Gelişmesi*, Ankara, 121; Özergin, M. Kemal 1965, "Anadolu'da Selçuklu Kervansarayları", *Tarih Dergisi* 15, 20, 141-170, at 146f. Also known

any Mavrozomes along the western frontier is curious, for one would expect that Mavrozomes' son(s) would have assumed the frontier lordship just as the Danishmandid descendants, the sons of Yaghıbasan, did in the former Danishmandid lands. The absence of any subsequent trace of the Mavrozomes on the western frontier remains a puzzle, which, due to the lack of evidence, may prove impossible to solve.[53]

Manuel Komnenos Mavrozomes at the Seljuk court

Although Ibn Bībī does not provide any information on Mavrozomes' subsequent years at the Seljuk court, one may assume nevertheless that Mavrozomes, his sons, household and retinue must have played an important role in assisting Kaykhusraw I in reestablishing his authority at the Seljuk capital and enhancing his power among the military and administrative elite at the Seljuk court. In addition to Kaykhusraw's marriage to Mavrozomes' daughter, additional kinship relations were established between the Seljuk ruling house and the Mavrozomes clan. Ibn Bībī tells us that Manuel Komnenos Maurozomes' son, "Amīr Kumnanōs Mafruzōm",[54] likewise married a daughter of Kaykhusraw I:

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as Asad al-Dīn al-Ghālibī (with the al-Ghālibī referring to his origins as a *mamlūk* of Kaykāʾūs I, who himself was known as *al-sulṭān al-ghālibī*), he was among the amirs whose names were inscribed on the walls of Sinop following the Seljuk conquest in 1215. It may be possible that Asad al-Dīn Ayāz/Ayās is the same as Ayāz al-Atabegī, known from an inscription at the Konya Alaeddin Camii dated 1220, and possibly the atabeg of ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn Kayqūbad (Parla, Canan and Erol Altınsapan 2008, "Atabak Ayaz ve Figürlü Bezemeleriyle Denizli Çardak Han", *Erdem* 51, 195-215, at 195ff.; Gün, Recep 1999, *Anadolu Selçuklu Mimarisinde Yazı Kullanımı*, Ph.D. dissertation, Samsun Ondokuzuncu Mayıs Üniversitesi, 31, 33).

53 Mikâil Bayram's misguided attempt to identify Mehmed of Denizli, the Turkmen chief who rebelled against Seljuk sovereignty and sought Hülegü's confirmation of his independent rule at Ladik in 1259, as a son of Manuel Komnenos Mavrozomes, appears to be based on wishful thinking rather than substantial evidence and must be contested on two points. First, in an unspecified manuscript identified as Naṣīr al-Dīn Maḥmūd al-Khuyī's *Manāḥij-i Sayfī*, Bayram reads a name written in a barely legible hand as Mehmed el-Mevrāzomī, whom he identifies as the very same Mehmed of Denizli (Bayram, Mikâil 2003, "Türkiye Selçukluları Uc Beği Denizlili Mehmet Bey", in: *Turkiye Selçukluları Üzerine Araştırmalar*, Konya, 132-142, esp. 137f.). This reading is clearly incorrect. A more likely reading would be Muḥammad al-Valvājī (I would like to thank Ümit Taşkömür for his assistance in deciphering this name). Secondly, even if the name could be read as Bayram proposes, the use of Mavrozomes as a *nisba* would indicate this individual as a *ghulām* of Mavrozomes, rather than a member of that family, as Scott Redford has pointed out (personal conversation).

54 Although Claude Cahen identifies Amīr Kumnanōs as a descendant of Isaac Komnenos, the original unabridged text of Ibn Bībī clearly refers to this commander as both Amīr Kumnanōs Mafruzōm and Amīr Kumnanōs, thus making it highly probably that he was a son of Manuel Komenos Mavrozomes (Cahen, Claude 1968, *Pre-Ottoman Turkey: A general survey of the material and spiritual culture and history, c. 1071-1330*, J. Jones-Williams, trans., London, 125). Due to his reliance on the abridged version of Ibn Bībī's text, which leaves

> "[Kaykhusraw I] himself granted him [Amīr Komnenōs] a princess from among his chaste womenfolk in the ties of marriage (*dar ḥibāla-yi ḥukm-i tazavvuj*, and was thus distinguished by the honor of proximity and kinship with the sultanate. Following the martyrdom of Ghiyās al-Dīn Kaykhusraw, in respect to Sultan ʿIzz al-Dīn Kaykāʾūs and Sultan ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn Kayqubād, he was regarded with honor and affection and admitted to the source of favor."[55]

Intermarriage between the Mavrozomes clan and the Seljuk ruling family thus led to the integration of Byzantine elites in the heart of the nascent Seljuk empire in the early 13th century. Prior to defecting to the Seljuks, Manuel Komnenos Mavrozomes appears to have been the possessor of a vast estate, which must have provided him with the necessary financial means to keep in his employ a large complex of aristocratic clients and servants, and possibly detachments of mercenary soldiers.[56] Since it may be presumed that Mavrozomes and his family traveled with their household servants and entourage of dependents to the Seljuk realm, one may surmise that the fusing of the Mavrozomes and Seljuk households through marriage likewise facilitated a significant transference of Byzantine manpower to the Seljuk palace, court and realm. Filling high military and administrative posts, the Mavrozomes clan thus comprised a ready-made faction of

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out the designation Mafruzōm as found in the original unabridged addition, Cahen was unable to connect him with the Mavrozomes clan. There remains much confusion in the secondary literature over the identity of Amīr Kumnanōs. Speros Vryonis likewise considers him to be John Comnenus, the nephew of Emperor John II Comnenus, who deserted to the sultan at Konya, converted to Islam, and married the sultan's daughter (Vryonis, Speros 1975, "Nomadization and Islamization in Asia Minor", *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 29, 41-71, at 63).

55 Ibn Bībī, Nāṣir al-Dīn Ḥusayn b. Muḥammad/ Erzi, Adnan Sadık, facs. ed. 1956, *El-Evāmirü'l-ʿAlāʾiyye fi'l-Umūri'l-ʿAlāʾiyye*, Ankara, 305: *Sultān Ghiyās al-Dīn Kaykhusraw shahīd [anāra allāh burhānahu] chunānkih dar sābbiqa dhikr rafta ast karīmaī-rā az mukhaddarāt-i ū dar ḥibāla-yi ḥukm-i tazavvuj khud āvarda būd; bi-sharaf-i qarābat va muṣāharat-i salṭanat ikhtiṣāṣ yāfta va baʿd az ayālat-i sultān daraja-yi shahādat-rā dar naẓar-i sulṭān ʿIzz al-Dīn Kaykāʾūs va sulṭān ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn Kayqubād malḥūẓ-i bāṣira-yi ihtirām va manẓūr-i ʿayn-i ikrām būdī.*

56 Theodore Mavrozomes was sent by Manuel I Komnenos in 1169 to Acre in command of 60 ships transporting horses for the Frankish cavalry in Byzantine service as part of the fleet sent in support of Amalric I of Jerusalem's assault against Egypt (Pryor, John H. and Elizabeth M. Jeffreys 2006, *The Age of the ΔΡΟΜΩΝ. The Byzantine Navy, ca. 500-1204*, Leiden / Boston, 415f.). Considering his father's role in commanding the imperial Byzantine Frankish cavalry, Manuel may have had his own supply of military detachments, including Frankish mercenary cavalrymen. Furthermore, as a possessor of vast estates, Manuel Maurozomes seems to have had the financial resources to support his own forces. Ostrogorsky observes that "[t]he size of the *pronoiar*'s estate must have corresponded to that of the suite which accompanied him on campaign. The existence of personal suites and, indeed, of military detachments belonging to Byzantine noblemen and generals is amply attested" (Ostrogorsky, George 1971, "Observations on the Aristocracy in Byzantium", *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 25, 1-32, at 12, [emphasis in the original]). For more on the use of Frankish mercenaries by the Byzantines, see Shepard, Jonathan 1993, "The Uses of the Franks in Eleventh-Century Byzantium", *Anglo-Norman Studies* 15, 275-305; repr. in: Haldon, John, ed. 2007, *Byzantine Warfare*, Aldershot / Burlington, 189-219.

loyal dignitaries solely dependent on their benefactor's patronage. If one also considers that, during his impoverished years of exile, the sultan's supply of *ghulāms* must have dwindled, then the fresh infusion of loyal aristocratic supporters, together with their servants and military detachments, may have been instrumental in consolidating the sultan's authority at the Seljuk capital. Indeed, after being absent from Konya for almost a decade, Kaykhusraw I had to renew bonds with the Seljuk elite of the capital, many of whom had previously sworn allegiance to his rival, Sulaymānshāh, as well as to his son, Qılıç Arslan III. Indeed, it was the frontier lords, the sons of Yaghıbasan, who called Kaykhusraw I back to the throne – not the urban elite of Konya. Upon his return to Konya, Kaykhusraw's relations with the city's Muslim community, and especially, the religious elite, appear to have been severely strained. The newly reinstated sultan felt insecure enough to go to the extreme measure of ordering the execution of a popular religious figure for having issued *fatwa*s condemning him as unfit for the throne after having led a lifestyle contrary to Islam while living in Byzantium.[57] Considering the precariousness of Kaykhusraw's position, and opposition among certain sectors of the urban population, the Mavrozomes clan must have provided a greatly needed additional source of elite support for the sultan at court.

The Mavrozomes clan: Christian Byzantine aristocrats in Seljuk service

While we learn nothing of the subsequent fate of Manuel Komnenos Mavrozomes from Ibn Bībī's account, Mavrozomes' son is later given an important supporting role to the Seljuk sultan, ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn Kayqubād (1220-1237). Manuel's son, Amīr Kumnanōs Mafruzōm, is described as a powerful man "who had land and territories in Rūm, and was a lord to be obeyed (*malik-i muṭāʿ*), a possessor of fortresses and followers (*aṭbāʿ*)".[58] Unfortunately Ibn Bībī neglects to tell us which territories he governed, which fortresses he held, and which administrative posts he had been granted. As husband of a Seljuk princess, Amīr Kumnanōs was a member of the inner circle of the imperial house. In fact, he was an intimate confidant of the sultan, ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn Kayqubād (1220-1237), and played a pivotal role in the newly enthroned young sultan's plot to purge the realm of its powerful and dangerous *amīr*, Sayf al-Dīn Ay-aba *chashnigīr*,[59] and his faction

57 Ibn Bībī/Erzi and Lugal 1957, 94; Turan, Osman 1993, *Selçuklular Zamanında Türkiye: Siyâsi Tarih Alp Arslan'dan Osman Gazi'ye (1071-1318)*, 3rd ed., Istanbul, 276.

58 Ibn Bībī/Erzi 1956, 305: *Amīr Komnenōs Mafrozōm-rā ki dar bilād u biqāʿ-i Rūm malik-i muṭāʿ va ṣāḥib-i qilāʿ va aṭbāʿ būd.*

59 Ibid. 271. Sayf al-Dīn Ay-aba *chashnigīr* (imperial food-taster) was the commander of Ankara, and was responsible for building the original structure of the Arslanhane Camii (Ahi Şerafeddin Camii) in Ankara in 1211. See Eyice, Semavi 1988, art. "Ahî Şerafeddin Camii", in: *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi*, vol. 1, Istanbul, 531f., at 531, and Öney, G. 1990, *Ankara Arslanhane Camii*, Ankara, 1ff.

of senior commanders and officials. After the brutal murder of Sayf al-Dīn Ayaba (Ayba/Aybe) *chashnigīr*, Amīr Kumnanōs was promoted to his post of *beylerbegi* (commander-in-chief).[60] Together with the seasoned commander Mubāriz al-Dīn Chavlī, he was put in charge of the Seljuk campaign against Cilicia Armenia in the mid-1220s.[61] No further mention is made of him by Ibn Bībī, however, after this campaign.[62]

The discovery of an Arabic inscription originally on the walls of Konya dating from ca. 1220 recently deciphered by Scott Redford sheds valuable light on the identity of Amīr Kumnanōs. The inscription refers to him specifically as "Kumnanūs Kalūyān Mafruzūm" (more phonetically correct as Komnanōs Kalōyān Mafrozōm), or as John "the Good" Komnenos Mavrozomes,[63] and provides solid evidence that he was among ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn Kayqubād's entrusted amirs given the task of rebuilding the Seljuk capital city's walls. Indeed, this epigraphic evidence of John Komnenos Mavrozomes' association with ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn Kayqubād (1220-1237) resonates with Ibn Bībī's textual portrayal. Redford points out that the inscription, grandiose in size and expertly executed, is more on par with sultanic inscriptions than the more humble inscriptions generally characteristic of emirial buildings. This, Redford reasons, is indicative of the elevated position in the realm that this Byzantine aristocrat held as the sultan's favorite. Redford also points out that the prominent display of the Komnenian designation on the city walls of Konya may be interpreted as an "intentional act exceeding personal ties of friendship and loyalty"[64] which served to link the Seljuks to the past glory of one of the most militarily successful Byzantine dynasties, defunct since the death of Manuel I Komnenos in 1180.

In addition to this inscription, another clue regarding Amīr Kumnanōs' identity has also recently come to light in the form of a lead seal, housed at the Niğde Museum, which is identified by Sophie Métivier as having belonged to John Komnenos Mavrozomes, or Amīr Kumnanōs. Although Métivier dates the seal to the second half of the 13th century, it seems more likely that it was issued in the mid-13th century, considering that John Komnenos Mavrozomes is known to have been active only during the early part of Kayqubād's reign.[65] The portrait

60 Ibn Bībī/Erzi 1956, 266f., 271.

61 Ibid. 305, 334.

62 For more on this campaign, see Yıldız, Sara Nur 2005, "Reconceptualizing the Seljuk-Cilician Frontier: Armenians, Latins and Turks in Conflict and Alliance during the Early Thirteenth Century", in: *Borders, Barriers, and Ethnogenesis: Frontiers in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages*, Florin Curta, ed., Turnhout, 91-120, at 107.

63 Redford, Scott 2010, "Mavrozomês in Konya", in: *1. Uluslararası Sevgi Gönül Bizans Araştırmaları Sempozyumu Bildiriler, İstanbul, 25-26 Haziran 2007=First International Byzantine studies symposium proceedings, Istanbul 25-26 June, 2007*, Ayla Ödekan, Engin Akyürek, and Nevra Necipoğlu, eds., Istanbul, 48ff.

64 Ibid.

65 Métivier 2009, 197.

of Saint John Prodromos (Ioannis Prodromos), or John the Baptist, decorates one side of the seal.[66] A Greek inscription on its reverse side refers to the issuer of the seal as John,[67] of the Komnenoi from his mother's side, and of the Mavrozomes from his father's side, employing a phrasing similar to that found on seals issued by 11th-century members of the Mavrozomes clan, as Métivier points out.[68] Thus, whereas Amīr Kumnanōs' inscription on the walls of Konya asserts his Seljuk identity as an intimate associate of the sultan almost on a par in grandeur, this seal clearly emphasizes his Byzantine Christian identity. And both items attest to the importance of this amir's Komnenian identity, a feature found in Ibn Bībī's text as well.

With a funerary inscription executed on a marble block of a sarcophagus dating from 1297, we have evidence of members of the third and fourth generation of the Komnenos Mavrozomes clan in the Seljuk realm. The grave is attributed to a young boy, Michael, the Amīr Arslan,[69] who was "a descendant of aristocrats" (the *Porphyrogennetos*, that is, those 'born in the purple'), and "the grandson of the very noble grandson of the illustrious emperors born in the purple, the Lord (*Kyr*) Ioannis Komnenos Mavrozomes, and son of this lowly one, Ioannis Komnenos".[70] Of additional significance is that the inscribed sarcophagus slab was found lying before the portal of the Church of Panaghia Spiliotissa of the monastery of St. Chariton.[71] Situated under a perpendicular precipice on the north side of a glen, and carved out of rock within what had been the mountain stronghold of Gevele, just outside of the important Christian center of Sille (Sil-

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66 This side also contains the acronymn IΔΕΟΑ , which stands for *ἰδὲ ὁ ἀμνὸς τοῦ θεοῦ ὁ αἴρων τὴν ἁμαρτίαν τοῦ κόσμου* (Métivier 2009, 198ff.). This passage is from John 1:29: "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world."

67 The inscription specifically states that the seal issuer is a homonym of John the Baptist, who is extorted to protect him (*Ομ[ώ]νυμον σκέποις με*). Although Métivier provides the Greek text on the inscription, she deprives us of a translation.

68 Métivier 2009, 198.

69 Wittek, Paul 1935, "L'épitaphe d'un Comnène Konia", *Byzantion* 10, 505-515; idem 1937, "Encore l'épitaphe d'un Comnène Konia", *Byzantion* 12, 207-211, at 207ff.; Cumont 1895, 99. Ever since the late 19th century when it was discovered, this Greek funerary inscription has been interpreted differently by various scholars. Wittek first rendered Cumont's reading of Amīr Arslan as Amīr Oghlan, then corrected it back to Amīr Arslan, defining the term as a sobriquet for a young man. Wittek, however, erroneously considers the grandfather of Michael Mavrozomes, John Komnenos Mavrozomes, to be the grandson, rather than the son of Manuel Mavrozomes. Scott Redford conclusively demonstrates that the individual buried in this sarcophagus was indeed the grandson of Amīr Komnenos, or John Komnenos Mavrozomes (Redford 2010, 49).

70 Wittek 1935, 507 (author's translation of Wittek's French translation of the original Greek).

71 The monastery of St. Chariton is also known as Hagia Chariton, Dayr-i Aflatūn, and Akmanastır. The monastery is believed to have been first built by St. Chariton in 274 A.D. The church of Maria Spiliotissa ("Maria of the Cave") is one of the three rock-carved grotto churches within the walled monastic complex. The rock-carved *masjid* found in the complex is believed to have been built by Mawlanā Jalāl al-Dīn al-Rūmī (Sarıköse, Barış 2009, *Sille. Bin Yıllık Birliktelik. Tarihçesi ve Sosyal-Ekonomik Yapısı*, Konya, 179, 181).

laion),[72] a mountain town some eight kilometers northwest of Konya, this church was used as a catacomb, or underground burial chamber.[73] The presence of a monastic complex within the Gevele fortress, a stronghold which played a very important role in the defense of Seljuk Konya, points to a parallel between the churches in the citadels of Konya and Alanya.

The presence of churches in the citadels of Konya (Church of St. Amphilochios[74]), Gevele and Alanya in close vicinity to Seljuk residential palaces served to meet the worship needs of the substantial number of Christians attached to the Seljuk imperial household and court. Not only did the sultans have Christian wives and mothers, such as Kaykhusraw I; these Christian members of the imperial family also had entourages and retinues comprising a large number of Christian companions, churchmen and servants.[75] Although the existence of churches or chapels in the citadels of Seljuk centers has received some attention by scholars, the relationship between the churches, their congregations and the Seljuk ruling elite has not been well understood. Scholars such as William Ramsay and F. W. Hasluck have pointed to this phenomenon as indicative of the syncretistic nature of Seljuk and Anatolian Turkish Islam.[76] According to Ramsay, who visited the Chariton monastery and noted the shrines of the Virgin Mary, of St. Saba, and of St. Amphilochius, the monastic complex was regarded "as holy even by the Moslems".[77] Mevlevi associations with the Chariton monastery have likewise been noted.[78] The relationship between the Chariton monastery and the Seljuk elite should likewise be seen in the context of Sille's relationship with Konya. Ottoman records indicate that the predominantly Christian town of Sille had the prestigious status of being an endowed property attached to ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn Kayqubād's *waqf* in Konya.[79] One may assume that requirements

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72 As one of the stopping points for pilgrims traveling from Constantinople to Jerusalem in the Byzantine period, Sille has long been an important Christian center. While passing through Sille on her way to Jerusalem on a pilgrimage, Emperor Constantine's mother established a church in Sille in the early 3rd century, known today as the Hagia Elena or Aya Eleni Church. During the Seljuk period, as part of ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn Kayqubād's endowed properties, the town of Sille underwent great settlement during Kayqubād's reign (Sarıköse 2009, 27, 167, 556ff.).

73 Ibid.183.

74 The church contained a tomb, identified as that of Plato or St. Amphilochios, the bishop of Ikonion (ca. 373 A.D., d. after 394) (Tekinalp, V. Macit 2009, "Palace churches of the Anatolian Seljuks: tolerance or necessity", *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 33,2, 148-167, at 154).

75 Tekinalp, V. Macit 2009, 148, 154.

76 Hasluck, F. W. 1912-13, "Christianity and Islam under the Sultans of Konia", *The Annual of the British School at Athens* 19, 191-197.

77 Ramsay, William Mitchell 1907, *The Cities of St. Paul: Their influence on His Life and Thought. The Cities of Eastern Asia Minor*, London, 375.

78 Eyice, Semavi 1989, art. "Akmanastır", in: *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi*, vol. 2, Istanbul, 281f.

79 Sarıköse 2009, 167, 556ff.

of the *waqfiyya* date back to its establishment in the mid-13th century, including the duty of select members of Sille's Christian community to perform special services for the sultan, his palace, as well as the Alaeddin Mosque in the citadel of Konya.

What we see here, regarding the so-called syncretistic nature of early Turkish Anatolian Islam, is a complex set of political and social networks between Christians and Muslims who served the Seljuk state. Redford raises the possibility that the Panaghia Spiliotissa church in the Chariton Monastery may have served as a dynastic burial ground for this branch of the Mavrozomes family.[80] In addition to being servants of the Seljuk state, the Mavrozomes must have wielded much socio-political capital among all levels of Seljuk Christian society. What kind of intermediary role did the Mavrozomes, as Christian members of the Seljuk ruling elite, play between the Seljuk state and these Christian communities? Unfortunately it remains obscure how this Seljuk elite of Byzantine background continued to enact its Christianity according to the parameters of Seljuk Muslim society. Joint research between historians, art historians and archaeologists may further reveal the murkier aspects of this problem.

Conclusion

Uprooted from his estates in the vicinity of Constantinople or Nicaea following the tumult in Byzantium as a result of the Fourth Crusade, Manuel Komnenos Mavrozomes may have initially sought independence in the Maeander river valley, as Choniates claims. Yet, this is only a small part of the story. Seljuk narrative and epigraphic evidence reveals that Mavrozomes and his descendants refashioned themselves as Seljuk courtiers and commanders, without relinquishing their Byzantine and Christian identities. The Mavrozomes represent a particularly salient case of Seljuk-Byzantine elite interaction.[81] While much has been said about the assimilation of Turks into Byzantine ruling ranks, we nevertheless know little of the absorption of Byzantine elites by the Seljuks. The high number of marriages of Seljuk sultans and princes to Byzantine princesses indicates an ongoing pattern of Seljuk integration of Byzantine elites into their imperial

80 Redford 2010, 50. Unfortunately no survey or further investigation of this monastery is now possible since it falls within a military zone (Sarıköse 2009, 181). For more on Gevele, Yıldız, Sara Nur 2009, "Razing Gevele and Fortifying Konya: The Beginning of the Ottoman Conquest of the Karamanid Principality in South-Central Anatolia, 1468", in: *The Frontiers of the Ottoman World*, A. C. S. Peacock, ed., Oxford, 307-329.

81 It was, however, not the first time Byzantine military and bureaucratic elites joined the Seljuks, as earlier isolated cases demonstrate, such as that of *sebastokrator* Isaak Komnenos, the brother of the Byzantine emperor John II Komnenos (1118-1143). Not only did Isaak Komnenos take refuge at Masʿūd I's (1116-1155) court in Konya in 1123, but he was later joined by his son John in 1140, who, in turn, converted to Islam and married the daughter of the sultan (Jurewicz, Oktawiusz 1970, *Andronikos I. Komnenos*, Amsterdam, 30).

households throughout the Seljuk period.[82] Presumably the Seljuks, just like the Byzantines, relied on fresh infusions of aristocracy from time to time to bolster their own imperial power vis-à-vis more established notables. Integrating foreign elites into the dynastic household through kinship ties formed an additional protective ring around the sovereign in face of dynastic competition and other dangers to the authority or personhood of the ruler. Periodic infusions of new aristocratic blood, regardless of religious orientation, likewise enriched the elite culture of the court, and bestowed additional prestige to its members. This is a phenomenon that may be seen throughout the medieval Eastern Mediterranean.[83]

The induction of the members of the Mavrozomes clan into high military and administrative posts during the early 13th century, however, represents a new phase of intensified integration of Byzantine elites into the Seljuk elite. Despite their integration into the highest echelons of the Seljuk ruling elite, the Mavrozomes did not subsume their Byzantine and Christian identities into a Muslim Seljuk one, for, as the 1297 inscription shows, Christian descendants of Manuel continued to publicly display their Komnenian lineage. Post-1204 Byzantine splinter states rivaling with the Laskarids over the legacy of Byzantium likewise emphasized links to the Komnenian dynasty;[84] indeed, Choniates found the strategy of harkening back to one's Komnenian credentials, as Manuel Komnenos Mavrozomes presumably did, quite objectionable. Indeed, by forging intimate links with the Komnenoi Mavrozomoi, the Seljuks likewise participated in this ideological strategy, finding that it had resonance among Christian subjects of the former Byzantine lands. As Redford has argued, the prominent display of Amīr Kumnanōs' inscription on the capital city walls is a salient example of the Seljuk attempt to capitalize on their Christian kinsman's Komnenian credentials. The manipulation of ancestral memory by linking the illustrious name of the Komnenoi with the Seljuks was a way of evoking the military power of the Komnenians and of linking the Seljuks to the Komnenian age, when Byzantium was at its height in the late medieval period.

The case of the Mavrozomes is instructive in how cultural boundaries were negotiated in the process of becoming Seljuk, and points to the assimilation of the Komnenian legacy into the Seljuk system as a symbolic resource. The fall of Byzantium in 1204 presented a unique opportunity for the Seljuks to capitalize on the symbolic capital of Byzantine aristocracy by integrating the Komnenoi Mavrozomoi into their political and military ranks. One may consider, therefore,

82 Shukurov, Rustam 2012 (forthcoming), "Harem Christianity", in: *Court and Society in the Medieval Middle East: The Seljuks of Anatolia*, A. C. S. Peacock and S. N. Yıldız, eds., London / New York.

83 See Brand, Charles M. 1989, "The Turkish Element in Byzantium, Eleventh-Twelfth Centuries", *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 43, 1-25; and Savvides, Alexios G. S. 2000, art. "Tourkopo(u)loi", in: *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, new ed., vol. 10, Leiden, 571f.

84 Redford 2010, 48ff.

the possibility that Seljuk political culture underwent a more intense "Byzantinization" than previously witnessed. It is interesting to note that the "Byzantinization" likewise coincides with Seljuk efforts to solidify rule over Anatolia. Further research is necessary for a better understanding of how Byzantine political culture may have contributed to the reconstitution of the Seljuk state as a centralizing and unifying polity during the first half of the 13th century at a time when Byzantine power in Anatolia and the eastern Mediterranean witnessed extreme fragmentation.

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