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BLOOD MONEY: TRADE WARS AND THE FOURTH CRUSADE

A Thesis

Presented for the

Master of Arts

Degree

Arch Dalrymple III Department of History

The University of Mississippi

Alexander Stalowski

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ABSTRACT

The historiography of the Fourth Crusade has neglected long-term macroeconomic developments and its influence on the Fourth Crusade within the Byzantine Empire and the Italian states of Venice, Pisa, and Genoa. It is well-established that the Venetians rerouted the crusading forces to Constantinople which caused political, religious, and economic challenges that altered the Mediterranean world. Yet, the trend of writing on political events and short-term microeconomics and macroeconomics from 1180 to 1204, has done great disservice to the larger trans-regional disputes that engulfed the Mediterranean during the eleventh and twelfth centuries. This thesis will attempt to fill the void of the historiography by examining the effects of long-term financial warfare by the Italian states and the Byzantine Empire, through the analysis of macroeconomic factors, urban geography and planning, and political disputes caused by ever-changing alliances and loyalties, which influenced the decision of the Venetians to reroute the crusading forces to Constantinople.

To provide evidence to support this thesis, an examination of the Chrysobulls ratified in the late-eleventh and twelfth centuries, Byzantine laws on produce and goods sold in the markets of Constantinople, and macroeconomic factors (i.e., taxation, tariffs, currency circulation and minting) will generate a holistic picture of economic developments that influenced the sack of Constantinople in 1204. The examination of these factors through a different perspective, provided evidence that the Venetians used the trade war to justify rerouting the crusaders to Constantinople through political cunning and economic savvy.

The sources provide further evidence that the Republics of Pisa and Genoa aided, albeit to various extents and often neglecting the Chrysobulls, in both the political and economic objectives of the Venetians and Byzantines, respectively. This demonstrates that the sack of Constantinople was not caused by a single event, as historians tend to suggest, but rather by several important moments throughout the century that fed into the anger and hostility that all participants held.

This thesis is dedicated to Peter Frank Sorce, your love and passion for history will never be forgotten. May you rest in peace dear friend.

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I. INTRODUCTION

Imagine a city so marvelous in size that its high walls project so much power and influence you feel intimidated and dizzy. You see its ports filled with ships unloading with luxurious goods as people impatiently await to buy them. Imagine walking down a street and seeing hundreds of shops full of goods just waiting to be sold to eager customers. You are dressed in the softest of silks dyed in red and purple. You wear a gold ring, emerald necklace, and ruby bracelets as a heavy coin purse dangles from your side. As you smell the air, you are taken aback by the fresh produce and flavored meats sold by street vendors. Continuing down the street, you notice the architectural wonders that so many famous authors had written poems about centuries prior. You stare up at the enormous churches, statues, and forums dedicated to emperors and saints from the empires of antiquity. The people walking around are a melting pot of racial, ethnic, and religious groups: Greeks, Latins, Persians, Egyptians, Christians, Jews, and Muslims all living together in relative harmony. Now imagine that same city in ruins. Streets are drenched in blood as bodies litter the roads. The stores that were once teeming with customers now void of products. The once magnificent buildings and statues burned to a pile of rubble. You think you are standing in Rome, Jerusalem, or Alexandria, but soon you realize you are wrong. You are standing in the ruins of Constantinople, and what you are witnessing is the Fourth Crusade.

Originally named Byzantium after the legend of Byzas who founded the city in 667 BCE, the city was intended to be a colonial settlement of the Greek city-state Megara. For the next five hundred years, the city would trade hands among Megara, the Persian Empire, Sparta, and

Athens before finally being conquered by the Roman army under Septimius Severus in 196 CE. The city would eventually be rebuilt to house an imperial residence for the emperors of Rome. After the death of Emperor Constantine I (d. 337), the city was renamed Constantinople to commemorate his role in Christian toleration and conversion. Towards the end of the fourth century, the Constantinian and Valentinian dynasties divided administrative control of the empire along an east-west axis. The eastern Roman Empire would later be reorganized into the Byzantine Empire, and its capital, Constantinople.

So how did this magnificent city turn to ruin and why did a crusade target a Christian city? The answer is both complex and simple. As Constantinople grew and prospered under the Byzantine empire, it was able to retain its economic and political infrastructure throughout the early Middle Ages. This allowed the city to seek new trade partners who were eager to acquire goods from Asia and the Middle East. Bolstered by the First Crusade in 1096, Constantinople's economy saw immense growth from the European armies travelling through the city en route to Jerusalem. On the surface, the city was an economic power, yet in reality, the seeds of discord and violence were planted. The Italian states of Pisa, Genoa, and Venice began heavily investing in the city, which caused the local Byzantine market shares in several significant industries to shrink to a minority. The ensuing trade war engulfed the region and created the conditions that led to the destruction of Constantinople.

Then what does the Fourth Crusade have to do with twelfth-century trade wars? The short answer might appear to be – nothing – and yet the crusaders were rerouted to sack Constantinople. Initially, the Fourth Crusade had all the justified intentions to reconquer the Holy Lands from the Ayyubid Caliphate. Under the direction of Pope Innocent III (r. 1198-1216) the armies of Europe were to capture the Egyptian cities of Cairo and Alexandria to weaken the

political and military strength of the Caliphate before capturing Jerusalem. The crusaders were set to sail from Venice to Egypt in 1202 but after they fell into debt, the entire operation was diverted. No longer was the army's objective to capture Egypt but rather to capture Zara and Constantinople to repay their debts.

The historiography of the Fourth Crusade is incomplete as historians have failed to connect the long-term economic effects of the trade wars and the crusade. Rather than examining in these long-term economic wars, historians have focused their arguments primarily around two general concepts: the convergence of political and economic factors from 1180-1202 and Byzantine economic failures from 998-1204.

The political and economic influences between 1198 and 1202 focus entirely on the relations between Doge Enrico Dandolo of Venice and Emperor Isaac II Angelos of the Byzantine Empire. Historians have heavily stressed that the cause of the sack of Constantinople was because of the differences on economic trade. Thomas F. Madden is one of the foremost proponents of this argument. His work *Enrico Dandolo & the Rise of Venice* shows how the Venetian Doge used his political cunning to persuade the crusaders into attacking Constantinople, while reforming the Venetian economy in its entirety.¹ Other historians suggest that Doge Dandolo's economic reforms were rejected by the Byzantines, influencing the decision to conquer the city rather than continuing to trade with them.² These arguments support Susan A. Throop's argument that the crusades were no longer religious but rather could be used as an act of vengeance. When examining the Fourth Crusade, Throop analyzes the role the Massacre of

¹ Thomas F. Madden, *Enrico Dandolo & the Rise of Venice*, (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2003), xiv.

² Louise Buenger Robbert, "Reorganization of the Venetian Coinage by Doge Enrico Dandolo," *Spectrum* 49, no. 1 (January 1974): 48-50. For similar arguments see J.K. Fotheringham, "Genoa and the Fourth Crusade," *English Historical Review* 25 (1910); and Gerald W. Day, "Manuel and the Genoese: A Reappraisal of the Byzantine Commercial Policy in the Late Twelfth Century," *Journal of Economic History* 37 (1977).

the Latins played in the Venetian psyche and its remembrance during the Fourth Crusade.³

The other argument that historians tend to suggest is the failure of the Byzantine economy from 998-1204. While scholars like Angeliki Laiou and Cecile Morrisson showed the Byzantine economy growing through numerous economic reforms meant to strengthen the role of the merchants, they tended to miss an important factor.⁴ While the reforms were meant to expand trade and ensure political and economic protections for the merchants and businessmen, the role of overseas trade with the Italian states proved detrimental to Byzantine imperial growth. Daphne Penna's work *Byzantine Imperial Acts to Venice, Pisa, and Genoa, 10th-12th Century: A Comparative Legal Study* examines in the legality and the precedence of the many Chrysobulls, or trade deals, between the Italian states and the Byzantines.⁵ Yet despite this impressive investigation into the Chrysobulls and their legal repercussions, Penna does not incorporate the economic repercussions that the Chrysobulls inadvertently caused. This omission is important because it influenced the decisions of the Italian states to seek aggressive and often violent actions against the Byzantines that eventually led to the sack of Constantinople.

The historiography had failed to understand the importance of the long-term economic factors that resulted in trade wars between the Italian states and the Byzantine Empire. These economic factors, (i.e., customs taxes and tariffs, price regulation, financial exchange rates, market share, geography, etc.), were at the core of the late-eleventh-and twelfth-century trade wars. It is these factors that explained why the Venetians decided to reroute the crusading army from Egypt to Constantinople. Therefore, this thesis will argue that the Fourth Crusade and the

³ Susan A. Throop, *Crusading as an Act of Vengeance, 1095-1216*, (Burlington: Ashgate, 2011), 3-5.

⁴ Angeliki Laiou and Cecile Morrisson, *The Byzantine Economy* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 3-6. See also Angeliki Laiou (ed.), *The Economic History of Byzantium: From the Seventh throughout the Fifteenth Century* (Washington D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks, 2002).

⁵ Daphne Penna, *The Byzantine Imperial Acts to Venice, Pisa and Genoa, 10th-12th centuries: A Comparative Legal Study* (Hague: Eleven International Publishing, 2012), 1-5.

sack of Constantinople were influenced by macroeconomic factors established through Chrysobulls that led to the trade wars, Byzantine economic reforms meant to restructure urban geography and planning, and financial manipulation by the Venetians to reroute the crusaders to Constantinople.

II. THE BYZANTINE EMPIRE AND CONSTANTINOPLE

The Byzantine Empire unintentionally created the conditions necessary for the Venetian military to justify the sack of Constantinople. Before the beginning of the twelfth century, Emperor Alexios I Komnenos (r. 1081-1118) requested military assistance from the Venetians to help defeat the Norman Kingdom of southern Italy and the Papacy in central Italy. Venetian leaders saw this proposition as beneficial to their growing mercantile trade, believing that a weakened Norman Kingdom would increase Venetian control over the Adriatic Sea. With both parties signing a Chrysobull in 1082, Byzantine-Venetian economic relations started.

The capital city of Constantinople was the center of the economic tensions throughout the twelfth century. Located on the western shore of the Bosphorus Strait, Constantinople connected trade between European and Asian markets. The city's *agoras* and *forums*, public centers that housed markets, sold a plethora of goods and commodities from the "exotic" Middle East and Asia. The city developed numerous ways to ensure the markets flourished and functioned considerably well. A central avenue that ran east to west provided the merchants a location to establish shops, industries, and slaughterhouses for trading. The avenue was connected from the Acropolis in the east where the emperor resided, to the Forum of Theodosius in the center of the city and further west to the Forum of Arcadius. To ensure the city flourished in trade, the Byzantines invited neighboring powers to open ports in Constantinople. The Chrysobull of 1082 allowed the Venetians a trading quarter within the city; this was the first of many serious

financial gambles that would lead to open hostility. Although the Byzantines found a trade partner, the geography of Constantinople and of the Aegean Sea had to be overcome to grow the economy.

II.i. GEOGRAPHY OF CONSTANTINOPLE

Throughout history, geography has played an integral part in economics and trade. Mountains, deserts, rivers, and jungles were the barriers that empires faced when establishing trade outside their territories. The Byzantine Empire faced many geographic hurdles to propel itself economically. By the eleventh and twelfth centuries, the geographic hurdles, (i.e., diversifying crop yields based on weather patterns, the construction of deep-water anchorages and ports on the mountainous shorelines, and maritime innovations to traverse the Mediterranean during the winter months) had been cleared.⁶ With the hurdles cleared and urbanization beginning, the Byzantines sought to expand trade across the Mediterranean. Maritime trade focused entirely on east-west/west-east shipping routes as trade winds heavily restricted north-south/south-north sailing, and Muslim empires were thus almost entirely excluded from direct maritime trading in Constantinople.⁷ This focus on seafaring trade allowed the economy to accelerate during the eleventh century and provided the motivation to expand influence across the Mediterranean.

Constantinople's geographic layout further played a prominent role in the economic expansion and later violent disputes with the Italian states. The city as a whole sits on a peninsula

⁶ Laiou and Morrisson, 8-16.

⁷ Laiou and Morrisson, 15. While maritime trading with Muslim empires was largely excluded in Constantinople, Muslim merchants still traded with the Byzantines in Anatolia (Trebizond, Antioch, Cyprus). Muslim merchants could travel over land to trade in Constantinople's *agoras* and forums.

and incorporates seven hills that stretch along the northern half of the city and straddles the Golden Horn.⁸ The easternmost side of the city houses the Acropolis, Hippodrome, and other government buildings connected to the main road that travels across the southern half of the city, parallel to Marmara Sea's coastline. This main road was built near the larger ports and supports the majority of the agoras and forums throughout the city. Because the southern half of the city was the economic hub of Byzantine trade and commerce, the Italian states were subjected to the abandoned quarters in the northern half of the city, along the Golden Horn.

The Golden Horn, the major waterway along the northern shoreline of the city, was not ideal for commerce during the twelfth century. Previously, the area served as the commercial center of the city before a series of ecological factors rendered the area unsuitable for extensive, long-term trade. The first issue was the slowing down of water currents which made it more difficult for ships to traverse the waters and hampered mercantile vessels from leaving the ports once docked. The issue was exacerbated by the increase in traffic from the ferries transporting workers from Pera on the northern shore of the Golden Horn. Movement from the shorelines now had to cope with mercantile ships sailing through the waterway. Secondly, since the currents slowed, various airborne diseases could travel to the northern shores, establishing a presence that could kill hundreds. Faster currents pushed diseases from reaching the shores, instead pushing them eastward. Most likely, many of the diseases came from the neighborhoods in Pera, Sycae, and Galata. The importance of the water currents helps explain why the Byzantines gave a trade quarter to Venice along the Golden Horn. With the increased risk of disease and the near stagnation of currents, Byzantine merchants relocated to the southern half of the city where the Marmara Sea offered faster currents and disease was pushed out towards the sea. The hills that

⁸ See Appendix.

stretched across the city acted as a buffer that prevented airborne disease from travelling south. In effect, the hills allowed disease to settle on the northern coastline, increasing the potential for plagues to form and disperse.⁹

Another ecological factor the Golden Horn faced was the buildup of silt along the coast, which rendered the northern ports useless. Water currents carried the sediment downstream and changed the layout of the coastlines. Since the currents on the Golden Horn slowed, silt began to build up, especially the closer one got to the Aegean Sea. Harbors became useless and unsuitable for mercantile trade despite several attempts by the Byzantines to remove it, specifically in the Harbor of Neorion.¹⁰ The presence of silt buildup on the southern coastline of the Golden Horn, along with a slowed current and increase in disease, signaled to the Byzantine merchants to relocate their shops to the southern half of Constantinople. The resettlement of merchants gave the Byzantine emperors an opportunity to develop the abandoned lands into trade quarters. The emperors could then grant immovable property to the Italian states, knowing the Italians would not think twice about why they are receiving so much property.¹¹

The importance geography had on an economy is profound, especially throughout the Middle Ages. Mercantile trade had become essential for Mediterranean empires and republics, allowing them to bypass mountains, forests, and marshes and to attain greater economic expansion and an increase in profits. During the early Middle Ages, the Golden Horn played an important role for the Byzantine Empire in maritime expansion. Yet, as the Golden Horn's currents began to slow, it became harder for ships to traverse, effectively increasing the time that

⁹ Paul Magdalino, "The Maritime Neighborhoods of Constantinople: Commercial and Residential Functions, Sixth to Twelfth Centuries," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 54 (2000): 218.

¹⁰ Magdalino, 215.

¹¹ Immovable Property grants involved one entity giving physical buildings (including, churches, harbors, etc.), and the land on which the building rests, to another entity for a period of time. In this situation, the Byzantines granted immovable property to the Venetians in the northern, mostly abandoned, buildings in Constantinople.

goods were onboard. This became increasingly important during the Byzantine economic recession of the seventh and eighth century because the slower currents forced an increase in market prices for mercantile goods. The current's slow pace exacerbated the rise of disease north of the city's hills. This stagnation drove the need to relocate the merchants south, decreasing the liability of economic contraction during outbreaks.

II.ii. ECONOMIC POLICY BEFORE MANUEL I KOMNENOS, TENTH TO MID-TWELFTH CENTURY

Prior to the reign of Manuel I Komnenos, Byzantine economics decelerated and condensed. While still reliant on its geographic proximity in Eurasia, its status as a gateway to the east, and the start of the Silk Road in Europe, the empire reformed its economic policies to accommodate a shifting Eurasian economy.¹² Beginning with agricultural reforms outlined in the Farmer's Law and Fiscal Treatise of the eighth and tenth centuries, respectively, Byzantine emperors sought to realign and consolidate farming practices that benefited wealthier peasants and relied less on the need of smaller independent peasant farmers.¹³ Farmer's Law set the precedent of securing private property rights for Byzantine farmers. While its focus centered on farmers in Anatolia, its private property protections influenced twelfth-century emperors to reform Byzantine policy. The Fiscal Treatise, which further established strong property rights for wealthier peasant farmers, enabled future emperors to justify broad economic reforms that

¹² See Appendix.

¹³ Leo III the Isaurian, *Leges Rusticae*, trans.W. Ashburner, "The Farmer's Law," *Journal of Hellenic Studies* 32 (1912): 87-95.

protected Byzantine property rights.¹⁴ These imperial laws laid the foundations for the proto-capitalist economic reforms that Manuel I Komnenos enacted to protect Byzantine trade during the late-twelfth century.

By the time the first Chrysobull was signed with Venice, the economic reforms from the eighth to tenth centuries had strengthened Constantinople's markets. Prompted by the stagnation of disease and sediment build up along the Golden Horn, Byzantine emperors undertook massive infrastructure projects in the neglected southern ports. Many of these ports had been constructed during antiquity with no real renovations since, preventing the expansion of mercantile trade. The Harbors of Theodosius and Julian/Sophia, which were built centuries prior during the Roman Empire and subsequently neglected, were the first to undergo reconstruction. The Harbor of Theodosius was renovated to accommodate the growing aristocratic residents along the southwestern shores, while the Harbor of Julian/Sophia was originally built to provide trade with the large markets and private businesses that flourished along the southeastern shores.¹⁵ The new ports attempted to weaken the economic power of Italian trade in the city by allowing the Byzantines to rely less on their northern ports, controlled by the Italians, by gaining economic freedoms. Despite the reconstruction of harbors to boost their economy, Byzantine emperors soon realized the need for drastic financial reforms that allowed bilateral trade.

For Constantinople to reform itself past a primarily agricultural distribution center of trade in the early Middle Ages, Emperor Alexios I Komnenos (r. 1081-1118) profoundly transformed the empire's market exchanges during the 1090s, and the greatest effect was on Constantinople and Thessalonike. The annual celebrations of St. Demetrios in Thessalonike

¹⁴ Alan Harvey, *Economic Expansion in the Byzantine Economy* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 35-6.

¹⁵ Magdalino, "Maritime Neighborhoods," 215.

brought foreign merchants to the city and trade overflow caused the markets to adjust.¹⁶ First, the city reduced its agricultural footprint, redistributing its markets throughout the empire, notably at Raidestos, Halmyros, Ochrid, Dyrrachio and others.¹⁷ As a result, monetized gross product in Constantinople increased by forty percent during the late eleventh and early twelfth centuries as manufacturing and trade replaced agriculture. This increase provided the Byzantines the necessary financial profits to refit the northern suburbs for trade quarters and allow Italian merchants into the city. Additionally, the market transformation increased demand for alimentary products and raw materials in the industrial sector of the city, as the revitalization encouraged European merchants from Spain, Lombardy, Palestine, Persia, Russia, Hungary, and Italy to trade goods and services within Constantinople.¹⁸ The economic progress of Constantinople was the heartbeat of the eastern Mediterranean, and its economic power drew the lustful eye of Italian merchants.

The debasement of the *nomisma* by Michael VII Doukas (r. 1071-1078) and Nikephoros III Botaneiates (r. 1078-1081)¹⁹ forced Byzantine tax-collectors to request systematic reforms on taxation laws. The *nomisma* consisted of lightweight silver coins with low-grade fineness, ensuring that economic expansion lasted only during a shorter period. With the finished construction of the new ports, increased agricultural innovations in Asia Minor (three-field crop rotations, improvements to the windmill, etc.), an increase in demand for foreign investment, and a decrease in pirating, the *nomisma* lost its value. At first, the effects occurred in the country-

¹⁶ Laiou and Morriison, *Byzantine Economy*, 137.

¹⁷ Laiou and Morriison, *Byzantine Economy*, 136.

¹⁸ Benjamin of Tuleda, *Itinerary of Benjamin of Tuleda*, trans. Marcus Nathan Adler (New York: Philipp Feldheim, Inc., 1907), 11-14.

¹⁹ Nikephoros III Botaneiates usurped Michael VII Doukas after disagreements regarding issues in Anatolia. He led his provincial army and additional Turkish mercenaries to remove Michael VII after declaring himself emperor on 2 January 1078. On 24 March 1078, Michael VII was removed from the throne and Nikephoros III was coronated immediately. For further reading, see Michael Attaleiates, *The History*, trans. Anthony Kaldellis and Dimitris Krallis, (Washington D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks, 2012).

side, as landowners exploited the worthlessness of the silver coins by using them to pay their farmers. All forms of fiscal obligation were paid in gold, as will be discussed later, which hindered tax collectors' ability to generate regional tax income for the empire.²⁰ Furthermore, the devalued currency discombobulated the uniform tax collection system, greatly reducing imperial revenue and restricting imperial expenses. As the tax revenue slowed due to the disorder that the provincial tax policy created, emperor Alexios I Komnenos recalled all devalued *nomisma*, quickly replacing them with the stronger *hyperpyron*. This coin greatly increased the amount of gold fineness compared to the outdated *nomisma*. The results were twofold. First, the *hyperpyron* increased the value of merchants' goods and services sold in the *agoras* while simultaneously expanding the economic power of the empire. Secondly, the increase in gold fineness allowed Byzantine landowners to pay their farmers higher wages which resulted in increases in both tax revenue and purchasing power for the Byzantine subjects which revitalized both the countryside and the markets within Constantinople.

The conclusion of the First Crusade in 1101 created new opportunities for the *megalopolis* to capitalize on the travels of European armies, merchants, and pilgrims that passed through the city towards the new crusader kingdoms. Byzantine emperors throughout the twelfth century established provisional markets of exchange to withstand the periodical swell of traffic and maximize trade. Since each European kingdom coined its own currency, the markets were tailored to the specific army arriving en masse.²¹ The problem herein was that the Byzantine exchange system favored the *hyperpyron*, as the exchange system was unregulated which caused

²⁰ Alan Harvey, *Economic Expansion in the Byzantine Empire, 900-1200* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 90.

²¹ Angeliki E. Laiou and Cecile Morrisson, "Byzantine Trade with Christians and Muslims and the Crusades," in *The Crusades from the Perspective of Byzantium and the Muslim World*, edited by Angeliki E. Laiou and Roy Parviz Mottahedeh (2001): 166-7.

corruption. The unregulated exchanges angered the Italian merchants because the rates artificially decreased the value of not just the Venetian coins but of all foreign coins. While the provisional markets existed only during large influxes of Europeans, the financial success of the markets enabled the emperors to permanently establish larger markets. The crusades of the twelfth century along with the increased Italian presence empowered Byzantine merchants to demand the markets become permanent and expand them to sustain market demand. The monetary exchange, which favored the Byzantine *hyperpyron*, angered Italian merchants who saw the blatant coercion of price-fixing by the Byzantine banks to heighten their economic power. Imperial refusal to regulate the exchanges were met with hostile actions, a subject which will be latter discussed. These markets within Constantinople caused and exacerbated disruptions between the Italian states and the empire, establishing a foundational dispute that increased during the reign of Manuel I Komnenos. Additionally, the currency exchanges in Constantinople were forced to reform as the markets became permanent. The exchanges sought to use the Byzantine *hyperpyron* as the only currency in Constantinople, since it was widely accepted in the Middle East and the empire traded heavily with the Muslim kingdoms, compared to the gold and silver ingots the Europeans used.²² The unregulated exchange rates influenced the Italian states to justify violence as a method of negotiating for better rates.

Investment and banking policies and reforms provided additional revenue that complemented the market exchanges within the city and heightened competition with foreign merchants. The increase in crusading allowed the Constantinopolitan merchants to demand a change in banking policies. With the city's administration approving the requests, merchant wealth exploded. First, investment banking complemented the increased activity in the *agoras*,

²² Laiou and Mottahedeh, "Byzantine Trade with Christians and Muslims and the Crusades," 169.

as sales and product demand soared during the late eleventh and twelfth centuries, leading many merchants to request credit.²³ Credit allowed the merchants to increase their purchasing capacity, using their businesses as collateral to obtain loans for renovations or manufacturing supplies or purchasing more land for animal husbandry. Banking propelled many to become extremely wealthy, if not challenging the wealth of the emperor then at least challenging his economic influence. The availability of credit increased as a result, as bankers' lust for increased finances led to both larger quantities of credit given and larger credit payments sent. While the banks primarily issued traditional types of credit and capital, contracts of *chreokoinomia* became highly desired by Constantinopolitan merchants.²⁴ The contracts were tailored for each individual or business and offered unique solutions to solve financial problems. These allowed Byzantine merchants to establish their various practices and carve out both a commercial niche in the ever-expanding economy and to capitalize on the large influx of foreign merchants.

While investment banking rose during the eleventh and twelfth centuries, interest rates (which remained unchanged since the sixth century), began to rise, albeit unofficially.²⁵ Despite the interest rates doubling to 8.33 percent for all loan types except maritime (16.67 percent) and aristocratic (5.55 percent), merchants still demanded them.²⁶ This is significant for two reasons. First, while rising interest rates were an indicator of market expansion, they created unfavorable conditions for individuals attempting to start a business in Constantinople. They primarily

²³ Laiou and Morrisson, *Byzantine Economy*, 140.

²⁴ Laiou and Morrisson, *Byzantine Economy*, 140. The *chreokoinomia* is considered by many historians as the ancestor of the Italian *commenda*.

²⁵ Laiou and Morrisson, *Byzantine Economy*, 141.

²⁶ Angeliki E. Laiou, "Byzantium and the Commercial Revolution," in Girolamo Arnaldi and Guglielmo Cavallo (ed.), *Europa medievale e mondo bizantino: Contatti effettivi e possibilita di studi comparati*, (1997): 239-253. For more on early-Byzantine interest rates, see Justinian's landmark legislation, *Ecloga Privata Aucta*. See also, A. E. Laiou, "God and Mammon: Credit, Trade, Profit and the Canonists," in Angeliki E. Laiou (ed.), *Economic Thought and Economic Life in Byzantium* (New York:Routledge, 2013): 261–300. Aristocratic loans are private loans given by nobles and use their own private fortune. By law, aristocratic loans were lower than bank loans. This was to ensure that aristocrats did not hoard their monies as they did during the eleventh century before the reforms of Alexios I Komnenos.

targeted foreign merchants looking to expand their business to Constantinople's markets.

Secondly, *The Book of the Eparch*, written by Leo VI the Wise (r. 886-912), established strict regulations for bankers. The regulations stated:

§ I. Any person seeking admission to the corporation of bankers must produce the evidence of honorable and honest men who will answer for him that he will not contravene the regulations, that is to say that he will not sweat or clip either *nomismata* or *miliaresia*, that he will not “coin”, and, in case a public duty demands his service, he will not entrust to any of his slaves the duties of his craft since that might lead to grave abuses. Anyone contravening this will have his hand cut off.

§ II. Money-changers (καταλλάκται) are expected to denounce to the eparch the itinerant vendors of cash (σακκουλλάριοι) who stand on the market squares of public streets. They must be prevented from infringing obligations and service; and if such changers wittingly fail to notify the eparch they shall be liable to the above-named punishments.

§ VI. Bankers are forbidden to give credit or cash to their employees and then instruct them to stand in the squares or streets to obtain any profit that they may be able to secure. They are also forbidden to quit their banks or to entrust them to other persons even on the days of largesse, or of his service. Any person contravening this shall be flogged, shaved and have his property confiscated.²⁷

These three subsections of title three, “bankers, money-changers” (Τραπεζίται) demonstrate the strict codes bankers were obligated to follow. They show why the interest rates increased in the twelfth century and why Constantinople underwent an economic expansion. First, the interest rates rose because the emperor prevented the bankers from giving credit and capital to any Byzantine subject regardless of traits that would otherwise be rejected (i.e., debts, immoral character, non-Constantinopolitan, lack of business awareness, slave without consent from his master, etc.). Secondly, the number of banks in the city did not rise as rapidly as previously

²⁷ Leo VI the Wise, *The Book of the Eparch*, in *Roman Law in the Later Roman Empire: Byzantine Guilds, Professional and Commercial*, trans. E.H. Freshfield (Cambridge, 1938): 13-5.

thought. The first subsection prevented a majority of the people from entering the corporation of bankers because those considered “honorable and honest men” were probably aristocrats or wealthy merchants. This regulation prevented an increase of new banks in Constantinople which caused the increase in interest rates. As more people needed credit and loans from the banks, the rate of return on the bankers’ loans had to increase. Thirdly, banks’ inability to loan money to their employees prevented the banks from increasing their revenue streams. The verse, “stand in the squares or streets to obtain any profit,” refers to the *agoras*. Bank employees could not use loans to establish businesses in the *agoras*, unless they were to increase the number of banks. By restricting banks from increasing their revenue streams, *The Book of the Eparch* effectively separated the role of the banks from large multi-purpose corporations, limiting the former to strictly credit-and-capital lending and business savings accounts. Furthermore, the laws stifled expansion, controlled the rate of growth in Constantinople, and affected imperial revenue. These policies would be discarded under the reforms of Manuel I Komnenos and contributed to the Italian state’s increasingly hostile reactions to economic policy and reforms in Constantinople.

The Byzantine mints failed to supply the increased demand for coin and the severely disconnected process and unregulated market forced the city to halt expansion. After the first crusade established the crusader states, the new kingdoms began minting their own currencies, forcing the Byzantines to alter their minting standards. They began minting the Byzantine hyperpyron in gold and silver to attract the crusaders, hoping to standardize the coins throughout the crusader states.²⁸ While the administration circulated monies throughout the empire, they were not distributed equally. The Byzantine treasury accepted gold-based monies, as imperial expenses dealt exclusively with gold-based currency and discarded the need for the lower-value

²⁸ Laiou and Motahedeh, “Byzantine Trade with Christians and Muslims and the Crusades,” 170-1.

denominations, typically silver and copper.²⁹ As a result, Byzantine merchants created their own exchange system on the lower-valued coins, resulting in unacceptably undermanaged regulation that favored the Byzantine *hyperpyra*. Archaeological discoveries of large quantities of silver and copper coins throughout the empire prove that the lesser-value denominations were the standard among Byzantine merchants and common people.³⁰ The undermanagement and regulation was caused by the unwillingness to use the lower-value currency as a source of taxation. Moreover the emperor could hoard the gold coins as treasure and regulate their output.³¹ The archaeological discoveries support this claim since the hoarded collections of gold coins were only found within the major provincial cities throughout the empire. These issues created a drastic need to increase foreign investment and trade, leading emperors to grant trade quarters in Constantinople to the Italian states.

Since the imperial administration focused on gold-based monies, laws regulating private ownership of gold coins were extreme. Dealers in bullion and money-lenders were subject to laws that both hampered economic expansion and regulated commercial activity. Stifling the expansion of monetary circulation hindered economic growth rate and angered both Constantinopolitan merchants and their Italian counterparts, because it both prevented balanced monetary exchanges and led to hyperinflation. While the laws in *The Book of the Eparch* were from the early tenth century, their outdated regulations were enforced in the early twelfth century under the reforms of Manuel I Komnenos. The laws in title two regarding the dealers of bullion and money-lenders (*Αργυροπάται*) stated:

§ I. We decree that goldsmiths are authorized, when requested, to buy objects which come within their special scope, gold, silver, pearls, and precious stones. They may not buy copper or linen

²⁹ Harvey, *Economic Expansion*, 80.

³⁰ Harvey, *Economic Expansion*, 86.

³¹ Harvey, *Economic Expansion*, 81.

cloth and generally any articles which belong to the commerce of other traders. But that shall not prevent them acquiring such articles for their own use.³²

§ V. Whoever takes upon himself to sell silver to be manufactured and sold shall have his hand cut off.³³

§ VIII. We Ordain that every goldsmith is forbidden, whether he be a freeman, or in servile status, to buy for the purpose of his business more than a pound of gold not coined whether the same is manufactured or not.³⁴

§ X. Any person wishing to set up a goldsmith's workshop shall, if he is a slave, have his master as his guarantor. The latter shall justify his guarantee. If he is a freeman he shall produce five guarantors who will of course be subject to the same liabilities as the person for whom they stand surety.³⁵

Dealers in bullion and money-lending faced rigid regulation that hurt the monetary exchanges and angered Constantinopolitan and Italian merchants. As previously mentioned, the imperial treasury dealt entirely with gold-based denominations and dealers thus were encouraged to buy gold coins. The caveat was that dealers could not buy more than a pound of gold for each transaction. This restriction stemmed from the paranoid suspicion of the Byzantine emperors, who saw merchants' desire for wealth as concerning. During the eleventh century, emperors grew suspicious of the increasing wealth and power of the merchant class, resulting in regulations that decreased the merchants' ability to make monetary transactions. Furthermore, the laws were counterproductive, limiting the ability of the companies to mint and circulate silver-based coins and restricting copper-based denominations. Despite the empire's economy growing and expanding (primarily due to an increase in foreign trade), domestic policies on interest rates, monetary exchanges, minting, and investment banking, greatly hindered growth

³² "Dealers in bullion and money-lenders - *Άργυροπάται*," *The Book of the Eparch*, 10-1.

³³ "*Άργυροπάται*," *The Book of the Eparch*, 11.

³⁴ "*Άργυροπάται*," *The Book of the Eparch*, 12.

³⁵ "*Άργυροπάται*," *The Book of the Eparch*, 12.

and caused relations to sour between the Empire and the Italian states. The restrictions of monies eventually caught up with the increased foreign trade, creating a financial crisis that altered the relationships between the Italian states and the Byzantine Empire.

During these crisis years, economic recession influenced foreign actions that changed the power balance in Constantinople. This change in balance was caused by two significant issues. First, the failure to mint and distribute large quantities of gold *hyperpyra* prevented goods and services from gaining any real value and slowed the empire's economic expansion. Secondly, the secondary market for silver and copper coins prevented fair exchange rates which reduced the value of goods and led to stagnation in wages in the major cities, among them the Constantinopolitan merchants. These issues were made worse with the arrival of the Italian merchants who, using gold-based Veronese coins, caused the lesser-valued currency to hyperinflate. The Venetian attempt to push the Veronese coins in Constantinople saved the Byzantine financial system from total economic collapse but strained relationships, leading to the economic reforms under Manuel I Komnenos.

II.iii. AGORAS OF CONSTANTINOPLE

The *Agoras* of Constantinople provide a wholistic picture of why trade feuds existed between the Byzantine Empire and the Italian states. Because this section deals primarily with the composition of the *agoras*, it will naturally be more narrative, examining the many different items sold, their demands in Italy, and finally the reasoning for the hostile actions by the Italian states to seize control of the markets in Constantinople.

The growth of Constantinople is attributed to two events: increased diversification of goods and services provided and increased trade networks across Europe, North Africa and the Middle East, and Asia. As both trends developed throughout the late eleventh and twelfth centuries, the *agoras* found themselves increasing in size. As was typically the case with emerging medieval empires and kingdoms, the foundations of an increasing economy began with agricultural production. The Byzantine Empire lost territory in both southern Italy to the Norman Kingdom and in eastern Asia Minor to the Seljuk Turks, and cereal production was concentrated in the territories of Bulgaria, Thessaly, Thrace, Macedonia, and Bithynia.³⁶ These regions, considered a breadbasket, allowed Constantinople to flourish as it increased its stock of cereal ten-fold. Further, the *agoras* benefited from the Greek territories along the Aegean and Mediterranean Seas, where olive oil and wine were the traditional production staples. Additionally, due to the richness of soil and the warm seasonal temperatures, legumes, livestock, various types of fats, beekeeping (which produced honey), and cheeses were also produced within the empire and diversified the products sold in the markets.³⁷ With the Byzantines losing territory during the eleventh century, the empire witnessed a population decrease. This allowed two major agricultural reforms to occur as the number of subjects to feed diminished: first, the shift from the “village community of landowning, tax-paying peasants...to the estate,”³⁸ and second, the increase in the construction of mills. The transformation of lands into estates, primarily owned by either the state or church, allowed for a cohesive and standardized agricultural practice that ensured both financial success in the markets and an ample food supply. Not only did this transformation prevent famine throughout the twelfth century but the over-

³⁶ Laiou and Morrisson, *Byzantine Economy*, 97.

³⁷ Laiou and Morrisson, *Byzantine Economy*, 97-8. Ptochoprodromos' poems included descriptions of several types of cheeses and wines sold in Constantinople from these territories.

³⁸ Laiou and Morrisson, *Byzantine Economy*, 101.

production of agricultural products allowed Constantinople, and thus the empire, to export the goods to struggling neighbors.³⁹ This was made possible only by the organization of the tenant farmers (*paroikoi*). The organization of the estates allowed peasants to construct intricate mills that exponentially reduced labor costs while increasing production. While undoubtedly the Italian states had their own means of acquiring various agricultural products, typically from the Norman Kingdom in southern Italy and various city-states in southern Germany, the *agoras* in Constantinople sold a richer variety that drew many merchants to supply wealthy Italian aristocrats with the finest wines, olive oils, honey, etc.

While the abundant agricultural produce allowed the markets to generate wealth, state intervention provided guidelines for several specialties of agriculture, meats, and fish. The *Book of the Eparch* outlined laws surrounding the following specialties: grocers (σαλδαμάριοι), butchers (μακελλάριοι), pork butchers (χοιρέμποροι), fishmongers (ίχθυοπράται), and bakers (άρτοποιοί). Each specialty, despite heavy regulations, became extremely profitable and contributed to the rise of Venetian merchants attempting to home in on these favorable markets.

The laws on grocers include:

§ I. Grocers may keep their shops throughout the city as well in the squares as in the streets, so that the necessities of life may be easily procurable. They shall sell: meat (κρέας); salt fish (ίχθύας τεταριχευμένους); meal (νεϋρον); cheese (τυρόν); honey (μέλι); olive oil (έλαιον); vegetables of all kinds (όσπρίων πάν είδος); butter (βοϋτυρον); dry and liquid resin (ξηράν πίσσαν και ύγράν); cedar oil (κεδρίαν); camphor (κανάβην); linseed oil (λινάριον); gypsum (γύψον); earthenware (σκαφίδια), bowls, vessels, etc.; nails (καρφία); bottles (βουττία); in fact every article which can be sold by steelyards (καμπανοίς) and not by scales (μτί ξυγοίς). They are forbidden to sell any article which comes within the trades of perfumers, soap-chandlers, linen-drapers, taverners or butchers. Any contravention is punished by flogging, shaving, and exile.

³⁹ Laiou and Morriison, *Byzantine Eocnomy*, 101.

§ III. Every grocer convicted of fraud in completing a sale or who raises the agreed price, shall pay a fine of ten *nomismata*. Anyone exposing his wares for sale on a Sunday or a feast day shall be liable to the same penalty.

§ IV. Grocers are to watch over the special commodities of their trade imported from abroad so that anyone, whether or not a member of the guild, who hoards against a time of scarcity may be denounced to the eparch and punished by him.

§ V. Grocers shall sell their wares and make a profit of two *miliaresia per nomisma*. If their measures show that they have exacted a greater profit they shall be flogged, shaved and cease to trade as grocers.⁴⁰

Section one's acknowledgement shows not only what the grocers were legally permitted to sell, but also the Byzantine Empire's capacity for production. The economic advantages of the variety of goods explains why the Italian states were drawn to Constantinople. Economic markets in Venice, Genoa, and Pisa typically revolved around shipbuilding (primarily Venice), banking and investment, arts and literature, and other services. By trading in Constantinople, the Italians could use what little land they controlled to increase their financial infrastructure rather than on animal husbandry and agriculture. It is clear that many goods in northern Italy did not originate from there which shows the extent of the Byzantine's economic power and influence in Italian markets. Cedar oil, camphor, and linseed oil all most likely were imported goods that were sold to the grocers in Constantinople as cedar oil, and specialized timbers were imported from Asia Minor. Although the Byzantines controlled the western third of the region in the twelfth century, the oils and timber were most likely from the Seljuk Turks or the remaining crusader kingdoms in the Levant or Holy Lands. Camphor and linseed oil are found primarily in the Caucasus regions and the greater Middle East, again suggesting that these items sold in the *agoras* were

⁴⁰ "Grocers - Σαλδαμάριοι," *Book of the Eparch*, 35-6.

from expansive trade networks. Since the trade networks spanned three continents, it is understandable that the Italian states would look to Constantinople to acquire these exotic goods.

Sections three through five further support the argument that the economic expansion during the twelfth century provided Venetian merchants their profit-driven mentality. The *Book of the Eparch* attempted to regulate the markets to prevent overseas merchants from acquiring too much power in the city. By restricting profit margins on transactions, which the Italian merchants had to obey while trading in the city, the Byzantine emperors attempted to prevent the merchant class from both acquiring and maintaining economic control. The success of the economy, coupled with the growing threat of Italian lust for profit, allowed Manuel I Komnenos to loosen the enforcement of the laws regarding the grocers to ensure Byzantine shops stayed competitive against the encroaching Italians.

Butchers and pork butchers were specifically distinguished through the sales and costs of sheep and swine, respectively. The laws made it clear that the differences were to ensure that purchasing of both meats remained competitive so that the sales price of both meats remained low and allowed the consumer to acquire the meats which were considered a God-given right.

The laws on the butchers stated:

§ I. Butchers are forbidden to buy swine. They shall repair to the “*Strategion*” (ἐν τῷ στρατεγίῳ), with the knowledge of the eparch, and having paid the tax of one gold nomisma they shall purchase all the cattle indicated by his orders.

§ II. Butchers will buy according to the fixed tariff depending on the quality of the cattle and sell accordingly. They shall slaughter cattle and cut up one animal out of every lot in the presence of the eparch. They may retain as their perquisite the head, feet, and entrails of the slaughtered animals and shall sell the remainder at the rate fixed according to the market purchase price.

§ V. Sheep owners shall sell their animals at the *Strategion* till the first day of Lent (ἀποκρέας) and lambs at the market square

Tauros from Easter to Whitsunday, paying a tax of one gold nomisma for sheep and a percentage thereof for lambs. Sheep and lambs shall in the first place be marked and counted by the eparch's orders.⁴¹

The laws and regulations against the butcher show two things. First, it shows that the state understood the importance of meats in the Greek diet, thus placing restrictions to ensure that people had enough basic foods. Secondly, the issuance of meat taxes suggests that sheep and lamb was a high commodities not just to Greeks, but to Europeans in general. By creating a price floor for sales on sheep and lamb, stores were forced to sell to all economic classes in Constantinople. Pork butchers faced similar regulations regarding fixed prices and taxes, but there were two notable differences:

§ IV. Any pork butcher introducing his animals into the house of a nobleman to sell them secretly shall be liable to the like punishment (flogged, shaved and expelled from the guild).

§ V. Persons who slaughter swine and sell pork must not retain a stock of it against times of scarcity. Anyone contravening this rule shall be liable to the above-named penalties.⁴²

The laws and regulations against pork butchers were more severe probably for two reasons. The first is that pork was less abundant than mutton in the empire. This means that pork was likely an imported meat from the regions north of Macedonia, as Islam forbids the consumption of pork.⁴³ The second is the delicacy of pork in the Greek diet. If pork was primarily imported from eastern Europe and the law explicitly stated that one shall not secretly sell pork in a house of a

⁴¹ "Butchers - Μακελλάριοι," *Book of the Eparch*, 38-9.

⁴² "Pork Butchers - Χοιρέμποροι," *Book of the Eparch*, 40.

⁴³ Henriette Kroll, "Animals in the Byzantine Empire: An Overview of the Archaeozoological Evidence," *Archeologia Medievale* (2012): 97-98. Kroll suggests that pork was a luxury because the regions of Asia Minor, Syria, and Palestine were too hot to raise pigs. As Greece was too mountainous for large livestock husbandry, the only logical conclusion is that pork was imported from Byzantine territories in Bulgaria where more land was available for husbandry. For further reading on Byzantine diets, see Andrew Dalby, *Siren Feasts: A History of Food and Gastronomy in Greece* (New York: Routledge, 1996); and Andrew Dalby, *Tastes of Byzantium: The Cuisine of a Legendary Empire* (New York: I.B. Tauris & Co Ltd, 2010).

nobleman, then reason suggests that pork was either a delicacy to the Greeks or noble households were hoarding the meat. The regulations against sheep, lamb, and pork offer further support to the argument that the Byzantine administration was fearful of prices increasing. As previously mentioned, the Byzantine nobles were reluctant to engage in trade and the growing wealth of the merchants made the position of the nobles unstable. These laws and regulations were therefore attempts to reduce the wealth and power of the merchants in Constantinople. Manuel I Komnenos' reforms strengthened the merchants by granting several rights and protections that ensured Constantinopolitans would benefit from trading with the Italian states.

The last groups of agricultural and food-based shops in the *agoras* were those of the fishmongers and bakers. The Aegean and Black Seas were rich in fish, allowing Greek Catholics to diet according to papal doctrine, while non-Catholics could supplement their diets with fish. Fishing was a large industry in the Byzantine Empire and given its historical significance to the Greeks, the laws regarding fishing and the fish markets were relatively relaxed:

§ III. Fishmongers shall make their purchases on the sea beach or the piers from fishing smacks at anchor. They shall not go directly to the fishing grounds to buy on the high seas, but they shall wait till the fishing smacks make fast ashore. Indeed, the sale of fish shall not be made too much in retail. Their remuneration shall be two *follies* per gold *nomisma* and the master of the guild shall receive four *follies*.⁴⁴

Since fish and fishing has always been a source of food for Europeans, little will be said about the regulations of fishing and their impacts on Italian merchants in Constantinople. The organization of the fish markets, which were located on the southern coast of Constantinople, closest to the Byzantine *agoras* and furthest from the Italian quarters, points to the Byzantine authorities protecting fishing from external trade. The regulations on the fisheries allowed the

⁴⁴ "Fishmongers - Ἰχθυοπράται," *Book of the Eparch*, 41.

Byzantines to protect important markets from further Italian dilution. Perhaps the most interesting series of laws and regulations were placed upon the bakers. Due to the nature of baking breads, bakers had to follow strict, while sometimes protective, regulations:

§ II. Bakers are never to be liable to be called upon for any public service, neither themselves nor their animals, to prevent any hindrance to baking bread.

§ III. Bakers must not have their ovens under any dwelling-house; and this rule is made because of the inflammable character of the materials used. Moreover, private persons shall not keep their stores of kindling wood and rushes (φρύγανον καί παπύρου ύλην) otherwise than in open places or in buildings built of large stones, so as to prevent the risk of conflagrations in the city owing to the inflammable character of the materials.

§ V. Let this important decree obtain universally. Persons who contravene the following rules shall from this day forward, upon conviction before the eparch of contravention, be flogged, shaved, and perambulated through the city, and then exiled in perpetuity: I) Any person attempting to raise the rent of a bakery, II) Anyone coveting the wares of another trader who tries to reduce the price thereof below the tariff value to get them at a cheaper rate, III) Anyone following a trade who wishes to follow another trade and refuses to elect to follow one or the other or to apply himself solely to the trade of his choice.⁴⁵

Bakers received a disproportionate number of protections granted by the Byzantine authority for two reasons. First, the baker's production of bread, another staple of Greek diet, was a difficult and laborious task that, if derailed, could lead to catastrophic damage to the city. Due to the risk of fire, the bakers most likely placed their shops away from the *agoras*, opting instead for locations near the corn warehouses, or *horrea*, which were likely near the Harbor of Kaisarios or

⁴⁵ "Bakers -- Άρτοποιί," *Book of the Eparch*, 42-3.

Theodosian Harbor.⁴⁶ Further, due to the intense precision and training that bakers underwent, their exemption from public service, most likely from military service, allowed the bakers to continue selling their product without worry from Italian actions.

While the food-based sectors of the *agoras* were the most prominent in Constantinople, they produced a minority of exported goods from the city. Despite this, their significance to the trade wars in the twelfth century was profound. Many Greek foods were seen as a delicacy in western Europe and, given the geographic proximity to Italy, were a high demand sector. The various types of foods sold in the markets, which wealthy Italians sought as luxuries, increased the Italians' lust for profits. Since the Greeks were barred from raising the prices of these foods to avoid impoverishing consumers, Italian merchants were able to buy large quantities of foods at relatively low prices, after currency conversion. Merchants took the low-cost goods back to Italy and sold them at incredible prices, creating hefty profits. This lust for wealth was evident not only in the commerce of food commodities but also in the trade of other material items.

The first of these material items sold in the *agoras* was marble, whose quarries were in great abundance throughout the Aegean Sea. Historically, marble quarries were found in nearly every Greek island, but by the twelfth century marble had become scarce. However, the region of Boeotia still produced an immense quantity of marble blocks and hard limestone at Hosios Meletios, from which they were sent to Constantinople to be traded.⁴⁷ Given the financial luxury

⁴⁶ *Notitia Dignitatum*, edited by Otto Seeck, 233. From the text, "Regio V. Regionis quiantae non modica pars in obliquioribus posita locis planitie excipiente producitur; in qua necessaria ciuitatis aedificia continentur. Continet in se: Thermas Honorianas, Cisternam Theodosianam, Prytanteum, Thermas Eudocianas, Strategium, in quo est forum Theodosiacum et obeliscus Thebaeus quadrus, Horrea olearia, Nympheum, Horrea Troadensia, Horrea Ualentiaca..." See Marlia Mundell Mango, "The Commercial Map of Constantinople," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 54 (2000): 200-1. While most locations have either been repurposed/renamed or destroyed, both *horrea* still remained near the harbors.

⁴⁷ Jean-Pierre Sodini, "Marble and Stoneworking in Byzantium, Seventh-Fifteenth Centuries," in *The Economic History of Byzantium: From the Seventh Through the Fifteenth Century*, ed. Angeliki E. Laiou (Washington D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks, 2002): 143.

of marble blocks and the scarcity of it, Italian merchants, many of whom worked for guilds operated by nobles, saw it fit to purchase marble in large quantities. While Italian nobles used marble to decorate their abodes, churches used marble as decoration around the altars. Thanks to the demand for marble from the wealthy and the church in Italy, marble remained a consistent commodity on the markets in Constantinople despite the decreased quantity being garnered. Bricks were another important commodity in construction, and the manufacture of bricks increased exponentially during the Komnenian dynasty in the twelfth century.⁴⁸ The value of brick and its popularity among the middle and lower classes allowed marble and limestone to retain their luxury status and appreciated over time. It was during this period of artificially high marble and limestone prices when Manuel I Komnenos was forced to create regulations that prevented the sales of marble to foreign merchants, which angered the Italian states.

The industries of art, particularly metal-working, were another sector that saw growth during the twelfth century as Italian merchants' demand for icons grew. Since the Byzantine coins were struck using gold, silver's value declined and metal workshops began using silver as a material to sculpt iconographic statues and small trinkets. Byzantine mints struck silver that contained 1.5-10% copper to ensure the strength of the metal was formidable enough to craft intricate items for buyers.⁴⁹ The inclusion of copper not only ensured a strong metal, but also further increased the price of the icons or trinkets, as the price of mixing both alloys increased as proper proportions were calculated. The increase in cost for these items, which saw a high demand in northern Italy, further contributed to the increased hostility by the Italian states. The increased cost of manufacturing, shipping, and tariffs placed on exports, decreased the clientele for those products to only the wealthiest of Italians.

⁴⁸ Sodini, 140.

⁴⁹ Anthony Cutler, "The Industries of Art," in *Economic History of Byzantium*, ed. Angeliki Laiou, 157.

Glassmaking and pottery further expanded and complicated trade relations with the Italian states. Glassmaking was considered a rarity, based on archaeological evidence that concludes that glass products were luxury goods.⁵⁰ Since glassmaking is a complicated and delicate process, Emperor Constantine (r. 306 – 337) exempted glassmakers from paying taxes.⁵¹ The *Book of the Eparch* does not have any regulations establishing protections and laws on glassmaking and Manuel I Komnenos never issued reforms on glassmaking, so it can be inferred that they retained tax-exempt status throughout the twelfth century. As glass was a luxury good, the only sustainable evidence of its transactions exists in three different markets: the church, the aristocracy, and the scientific community. The use of stained glass in church mosaics suggests that glassmakers were contracted by the diocese, specifically at the Church of the Pantokrator-Zeyrek Camii from 1124-1136 and the monastery of Chora Kariye Camii in 1120.⁵² Aristocrats and wealthy merchants also purchased glass-based products like “amulets of molded glass, bracelets of spun glass, small jewels, and fake cameos.”⁵³ While Byzantine aristocrats certainly bought these products, they were also exported to Syria, Palestine, and the Italian states, showing not only the empire’s extensive trade, but also the importance and value of Constantinople glass.⁵⁴ The scientific and academic community purchased glass tubes and cups for research purposes (i.e., experimentation, chemistry, and other sciences). All three sectors ensured glass production thrived during the twelfth century and influenced Italian materialistic ambitions.

⁵⁰ Veronique Francois and Jean-Michel Spieser, “Pottery and Glass in Byzantium,” in *Economic History of Byzantium*, ed. Angeliki Laiou, 593.

⁵¹ Francois and Spieser, 594.

⁵² Laiou and Morrisson, *Byzantine Economy*, 122.

⁵³ Francois and Spieser, 595.

⁵⁴ For more on the extent of Byzantine glassmaking trade, see Hiromi Kinoshita, “Foreign glass excavated in China, from the 4th to 12th centuries,” in *Byzantine Trade, 4th – 12th Centuries*, ed. Marlia Mundell Mango (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2009).

As with most ancient and medieval civilizations, pottery is the object found most often by archaeologists, besides coins. Pottery has always been an indicator of a civilization's wealth and culture, and the Byzantine Empire was no different. Pottery was never considered a luxury, but the abundance of pottery found suggests that the average Greek household's purchasing power increased throughout the twelfth century. Archaeological finds of pottery-based products -- plates, bowls, cups, storage, cooking pots and pans, and tableware -- indicate increasingly thriving urban classes.⁵⁵ Byzantine red and white wares such as the sgraffito wares, were commonly sold not just in the empire but also in Russia (the cities of Cherson, Kertch, Tmutarakan, Sarkel, Novgorod, and Kiev)⁵⁶ and in the gateway city of Zeugma that led into Persia.⁵⁷ Byzantine red and white wares were exported in large quantities because of the speed of manufacturing which improved throughout the twelfth century and because of their durability which improved with the use of a lead-based glaze to increase its strength.⁵⁸ Pottery became a highly sought commodity outside the empire, and the Italian states increased their purchasing of pottery throughout the twelfth century. Pottery played an important role in trade wars and, as with glass, the *Book of the Eparch* had no protections for the pottery guild. This made pottery one of the significant sectors that the Venetians invested in to fight for economic control of Constantinople.

The last commodity that will be discussed is perhaps the most significant in the development of not only the Byzantine but also the Venetian economy – silk and the raw material indigo. Silk and indigo were the most highly demanded product throughout northern

⁵⁵ Francois and Spieser, 599.

⁵⁶ Ioanna Dimopoulos, "Trade of Byzantine red wares, end of the 11th – 13th centuries," in *Byzantine Trade*, ed. Marlia Mundell Mango, 182.

⁵⁷ Philip M. Kenrick, "On the Silk Route: imported and regional pottery at Zeugma," in *Byzantine Trade*, ed. Marlia Mundell Mango, 263.

⁵⁸ Francois and Spieser, 599.

Italy in the twelfth century as Venice's wealth was built on them. Throughout the early Middle Ages, Constantinople built its wealth primarily on silk, which was viewed as a status symbol. Byzantine envoys would present silk clothes to European monarchs as gifts, thus increasing the status of silk as a status of wealth.⁵⁹ As much of Europe was still using woolen cloth for clothing, silk was seen as an alternative fashion choice for the upper-class elites and nobles. Accordingly, silk began to grow in popularity among the European elites, which increased the demand of silk clothes from Constantinople. Silk is universally acknowledged as the primary industry in Constantinople, and it drove the Byzantine economy for centuries. However, as Italian demands for silk clothes increased in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, so did the need to ensure protections and regulations for the silk guilds. The *Book of the Eparch* dedicated five chapters to the various secondary sectors in the production of silk. Merchants of silk stuffs (Βεστιοπράται) were considered the middle-men throughout the process of silk manufacturing. Of the several laws that regulated and protected their field, only two are pertinent for this study. They stated:

§ IV. Any person who fails to inform the eparch of a sale of an article destined for aliens of the Empire, so that the eparch may certify (βουλλωθησομένη) the transaction, shall be held responsible.

§ VIII. Care must be taken to ensure that the strangers who lodge in caravanserais do not purchase prohibited or unsewn garments, unless for their personal use; and in the latter case the articles must have been manufactured in Constantinople. When strangers leave the city their departure must be notified to the eparch so that he may take cognizance of the articles they have purchased. Anyone helping them to evade this obligation shall be flogged, shaved, and have his property confiscated.⁶⁰

The protections and regulations indicate the seriousness of the Byzantine emperor's desire to protect the most valuable and highly sought-after industry in Constantinople. Section four shows

⁵⁹ Laiou and Morriison, 125.

⁶⁰ "Chapter 4 – Merchants of Silk Stuffs -- Βεστιοπράται," *Book of the Eparch*, 16-7.

that the empire deemed it necessary to track the sales of all silk items from leaving Constantinople and targeted the attempts to smuggle the valuable silk from the empire to the Italian states. This supports the eighth section which dictated the heavy regulation of silk products and ensured that only approved sales of “silk stuffs” could be exported. These two laws suggest that the illegal trade of silk, most likely by the Italian states (specifically Venice and Genoa), hampered the Byzantine efforts to maintain the price of silk and the quantity available for locals throughout the eleventh and twelfth centuries. Raw silk merchants (Μεταξοπράται), a separate yet similar class of silk merchants, followed similar laws forbidding the sales of silk to various entities. Despite the similarities, raw silk merchants differed in one important way from merchants of silk products. The regulation in question states, “raw silk merchants are forbidden to sell raw silk to Jews or to tradesfolk who would resell it outside the city. Persons contravening will be flogged and shaved.”⁶¹ This difference is significant for two reasons. First, the anti-Semitic law indicates a distrust of the Jewish neighborhood in Pera, north of the Golden Horn, to conduct business effectively. Second, the law targets Venetian merchants from purchasing silk to resell at a higher price back in northern Italy. This shows a growing distrust between the Byzantine Empire and the Italian states well before the twelfth century, which later sparked aggressive and hostile actions in the city regarding the purchase and resale of silk products.

Regulations concerning silk dyers (Σηρικάριοι) and their role in meeting Italian demands for silk clothes and silk products help explain how the trade wars of the twelfth century created a vile atmosphere that ended in military action in 1204. The laws pertaining to the silk dyers were extremely specific, which suggests that the demand for indigo far exceeded Byzantine supply. The law mandated:

⁶¹ “Chapter 6 – Raw Silk Merchants – *Μεταξοπράται*,” *Book of the Eparch*, 23.

§ I. Dyers are forbidden to make up the purple of the so-called prohibited grades, that is to say in the series of great mantles, including those of self-color or those where the purple alternates with dark green or yellow in half-tint. They may dye peach tint where that color is combined with others, or common turbans of Slavonian style slashed with scarlet bands. Peach-colored purple and fine dresses of two palms' length must be declared to the eparch and also the cloaks worth more than ten *nomismata*, even if of divers colors.

§ II. All noblemen and simple citizens are forbidden to make cloaks of purple of six or eight lyes. This prohibition does not extend to cloaks of ten or twelve lyes provided the tints are unmixed purple and are of small type and such as would not come within the category of dyed material which the eparch must reserve for the use of the imperial house of the sovereign. And this includes the cloaks rounded at the lower part reserved for the prince's use, excepting those of shorter model which fall in folds on the tunic, counting at least ten lyes and colored in different tints. Whoever is convicted of making articles which we forbid shall be liable to have his goods confiscated and shall cease trading.

§ III. Whoever refuses to open his premises for inspection by the inspector of seals or the inspector of cloths, or who sells to aliens to the city a cloak worth more than ten *nomismata* shall be flogged and shaved.

§IV. Whoever dyes raw silk with blood or converts it into parti-colored purple, double, triple, or two-thirds red, shall have his hand cut off.

§ V. Whoever sells goods to aliens without the knowledge of the eparch shall have his goods confiscated.

§ IX. Should bales of cloaks be found in the store-shops of the dyers which do not bear the eparch's stamp the same shall be confiscated and the workman who had them shall have his goods confiscated.⁶²

⁶² "Chapter 8 – Silk Dyers – Σηρικάρσιοι," *Book of the Eparch*, 25-7.

Silk dyers were heavily regulated because the silk in both the primary and secondary markets was so valuable.⁶³ Section one outlines the prohibition of the use of indigo on silk of a certain grade unless indigo is mixed with certain other dyes. Indigo, since antiquity, was the symbol of power for leaders (Roman emperors dressed in purple *trabea* which purportedly showed not only their power as emperor, but their connection to the gods). As indigo was viewed as a symbol of royal power in Europe, wealthy Italians demanded the indigo silks to display their own power. Demand for indigo silks increased throughout the twelfth century influencing Venetian efforts to control the manufacturing of the dye. Additionally, the high demand influenced regulations on the quantity of indigo that could be used for each product as well as all companion colors associated in the manufacturing process. This is important because as Venetian demand for richer silk increased, the Byzantines were forced to innovate the manufacturing techniques that reduced the quantity of indigo in each product while simultaneously increasing the richness of dyeing the color. Dyeing, discussed in section two, involved the process of “immersing the material or causing the coloring liquid to percolate through the silk tissues.”⁶⁴ This preservation by the Byzantines to withhold indigo from the Italian states eroded trade relationships and was justification for Pisa and Genoa to raid Byzantine mercantile ships, stealing larger quantities of indigo to meet the demands in Italy.

Section three outlined protections for the textile guilds to prevent illegal smuggling of silks to foreign lands. The protections allowed guild members to regulate the sales of indigo silks

⁶³ Primary markets are where the goods are initially created and sold (manufacturer to market). Secondary markets are where goods are resold after their initial purchase. In this context, silk sold on the primary market refers to silk sold in the *agoras* in Constantinople. Venetian merchants would purchase silk products in Constantinople and resell them in a secondary market (northern Italy).

⁶⁴ *Book of the Eparch*, 27. E.H. Freshfield defines the term “lye” to mean “the process of dipping or immersing the material or causing the coloring liquid to percolate through the silk tissues.” Additionally, regulations prohibited manufacturers of silk to lye the cloths more than ten times unless the cloth were to be given to the Byzantine emperor.

and restricted members from profiting from silk. Again, these restrictions on price floors for the silk industry were loosened during Manuel I Komnenos' reforms to increase prices on silk and indigo, suggesting that the Byzantines wanted to discourage Italian merchants from buying them. Section four, the most severe of the laws on silk dyers, showed that false dyeing of silk was a serious crime. The bastardization of indigo to accomplish sales by using blood as an alternative to red dyes indicate that non-guild members attempted to increase their sales of indigo-based silk by mixing blood to increase their profit margin. The last two sections were to combat the illegal smuggling and "black market" sale of indigo and silk, which benefited the Italians. By protecting the dyers' businesses from underground markets, Constantinopolitans saw wages increase throughout the twelfth century as business was directed towards legitimate channels, but also led to a decrease in Italian lust for indigo and silk reduced.

The *agoras* of Constantinople saw a wealth of commodities and services that impacted the city's and empire's economy. In the twelfth century, these markets flourished as laws regarding the opening of businesses were eased to allow Byzantines a chance to increase their standards of living, while supplying goods to overseas markets. However, due to Italian demand for Byzantine and far Eastern goods in the city's *agoras*, laws became more stringent to restrict Italians from encroaching on various commercial sectors. Unfortunately for the Byzantines, these laws did not establish the restrictions as they intended, and Venetian merchants flooded into the city, establishing either strong majority shares or large minority shares in business sectors. It was not until the reign of Manuel I Komnenos that Byzantine economic policy changed to bring back majority ownership of markets to Byzantine businesses, to tax heavily foreign investments and goods entering the city, and to return Constantinople to Byzantine economic control.

II.iv. ECONOMIC POLICY UNDER MANUEL I KOMNENOS, 1143-1180 CE

Under Manuel I Komnenos, relations turned sour with Venice as the Byzantines attempted three major economic reforms designed to weaken Venetian trading in Constantinople and strengthen domestic output. These reforms were intended to further hinder Italian trading because they not only relaxed several laws within the *Book of the Eparch* but also reorganized Byzantine guilds and manufacturing sectors to prevent encroaching Venetian dominance. While these reforms were met with hostility, they undoubtedly saved the markets from Venetian control.

The first reform was the formation of guilds for most industries. Mandatory guild organizations became commonplace, as many artisan shops began organizing to protect their products.⁶⁵ Previous to this reform, Leo VI the Wise regulated their profits, which suggests the guilds were both non-mandatory and weak. True, the *Book of the Eparch* mandated the organization of guilds for artisans and other vitally important industries in the Byzantine economy, but this was not regularly enforced.⁶⁶ Since non-guild members were able to run their business relatively freely, Italian merchants managed to increase competition within those markets. Prior to Manuel I Komnenos' reforms, other emperors had allowed the creation of voluntary associations (σωματεία) for non-guild members to try to organize the remaining businesses, hoping to protect them from Italian encroachment.⁶⁷ This attempt at voluntary associations, however, actually created a worse situation for the local Byzantine economy for two reasons. First, since these associations were voluntary, most businesses did not join to avoid

⁶⁵ Maniatis, "The Domain of Private Guilds in the Byzantine Economy, Tenth to Fifteenth Centuries," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 55 (2001): 343-5.

⁶⁶ Maniatis, "Private Guilds," 343.

⁶⁷ Maniatis, "Private Guilds," 344-5.

paying a guild tax. Second, the association was organized and operated under the office of the eparch, which was an elected position. There were situations in which the eparch, influenced by Italian merchants, regulated local merchants more strictly while taking a laissez-faire approach to the Italians. Under Manuel I Komnenos, the voluntary associations were absorbed into the guilds and subject to the emperor. This action prevented Italians from increasing their presence in the city and protected and expanded the output of goods from the guilds. It was this reform which allowed Byzantine businesses to compete on an equal field with their Italian competitors. The large-scale organization efforts by the Byzantine artisans caused friction with the Venetians who now had to compete with strong organized guilds backed by the Byzantine government, rather than with individual stores. Public sentiment against the Venetians pressured the Byzantine Emperor to create the protective laws establishing the guilds.

Manuel I Komnenos' second major economic reform to strengthen Byzantine merchants was to issue new Chrysobulls with the Venetians and Pisans. Realizing the need for new reforms that are not unilateral, Manuel forced the Italians into new contracts. These new Chrysobulls were designed both to dissuade the Venetians from selling their goods in Constantinople (as new regulations and paperwork were required with every transaction) and to increase Byzantine profits from foreign markets. It further granted Venice a *scala*, or a port, connected to its trade quarter.⁶⁸ This was significant to Byzantine fish markets and exports for two reasons. First, the Venetians were forced out of the same ports as Byzantine merchants, decreasing their ability to intimidate local merchants. With the Venetians trading in the same ports, they could leverage the imperial office to refuse paying tariffs and taxes upon arrival, while intimidating Byzantine merchants by reducing prices and dissuading them from selling fish and other goods. As all

⁶⁸ Pozza and Ravegnani, *I Trattati*, prepared and translated by Daphne Penna, *The Byzantine Imperial Acts*, 41.

Venetians were forced to relocate to the northern ports near their own trade quarter, so too did their influence on Byzantine merchant's ability to conduct trade. Second, the separation of merchants allowed the empire to increase leverage on Venetian merchants. The imperial office could now effectively retrieve payments from Venetian merchants systematically. The Chrysobull regulated transactions by verifying every sale. The Venetians must ratify all sales and deliveries with the imperial office in the city, which angered Venetian merchants as trade became more expensive.⁶⁹ The purpose of the paperwork was to introduce a new sales and delivery tax on all Venetian goods to increase revenue and product costs at market as well as to hinder Italian trade. This would discourage Byzantines from buying Venetian goods as their retail prices increased, while domestic goods remained low. The new regulations were also significant because the costs the imperial officials imposed on the paperwork also increased the time spent on each transaction. By increasing the time for each transaction, the Byzantines were able to control the speed at which Venetian merchants conducted business. Manuel's blatant hostility towards Venetian commerce, however, ultimately hurt Byzantine power, because after the issuance of the new taxes and regulations, Venetian merchants began raiding ports throughout the Aegean Sea, causing outrage among the Byzantine population.

Manuel I Komnenos also established laws regarding sanctions against the Venetians with the Chrysobull of 1148, the text of which outlines the actions that constitute penalties and the corresponding fines paid.⁷⁰ This demonstrated the seriousness of the Chrysobull and its restrictions on the Venetians. By calling for harsh sanctions on the Venetians, Manuel I

⁶⁹ Daphne Penna, *Byzantine Imperial Acts*, 41.

⁷⁰ Pozza and Ravegnani, *I Trattati*, prepared and translated by Daphne Penna, 45. From the text, "Si vero quispiam forte infestationem eis induxerit gratia convicendi aut auferendi quicquam eorum, que eis ut dictum est data sunt, inremissibiliter multabitur a secreto epi ton ykaikon in decem libris auri, firmo et rato existente presente chrisobulo verbo clementine nostre."

Kommenos hoped to dissuade any wrongdoing towards the Venetians in the previous Chrysobulls of his predecessors. Yet, the sanctions were met with open hostility in Venice, as piracy and raiding throughout the Aegean Sea commenced following the ratification of the measure. These raids further cemented Manuel I Komnenos' disdain for Venice and incited him to enact harsher penalties on Venetian merchants. He further reached out to the Venetian rival, the Republic of Genoa, to open trade with them, hoping to cease hostilities in the region.⁷¹

The last major economic reform under Manuel I Komnenos that caused tensions, albeit inadvertently, between the Venetians and Byzantines was the introduction of a Genoese trade quarter in northeastern Constantinople. The Chrysobull of 1169, which established the Genoese trade quarter in city, was a direct threat to the Venetian merchants. By granting the quarter, the emperor effectively diluted the Venetian share of the market even further, as Venice had to compete with the Pisan, Genoese, Amalfitan (a southern Italian city-state), and Byzantine merchants. Continuing to weaken the Venetian quarter, Manuel I Komnenos granted several exclusive rights to the Genoese, like full reimbursement on lost or sunken goods, reductive tax laws, among others.⁷² These exclusive rights demonstrated the resolve of Manuel I Komnenos to reduce the Venetian share of the Constantinople markets. Additionally, the rights provided to Genoa (detailed more thoroughly in chapter three) were designed to subdue the Venetians and prevent them from both overtaking market shares, as they had previously attempted, and to ensure economic cooperation. Despite the ongoing battles between the Venetian and Byzantine governments, Constantinople still needed the Venetian market, as two centuries of trade with Venice solidified a consumer base for Byzantine goods.

⁷¹ Despite Manuel I Komnenos' disdain for the Venetians, expelling them from the city would have been economically catastrophic. Instead, the emperor reached out to Venetian rivals hoping to dilute Venetian market shares and allow Byzantine subjects access to different merchants.

⁷² Daphne Penna, *Byzantine Imperial Acts*, 149.

Within two years of the establishment of the Genoese quarter, Venetian merchants organized with the Pisans and destroyed it. This was most likely due to the hatred the Venetians had against Manuel I Komnenos for welcoming the Genoese into the city and providing them with exclusive rights. The destruction of the quarter allowed the emperor to take unprecedented action. Furious, Manuel I Komnenos banished the Pisans from their own trade quarter in Constantinople and relocated them to the neighborhoods of Pera and Scutari across the Golden Horn.⁷³ As Pisan merchants were effectively puppets for the Venetians in the late twelfth century, any disruption to them would cause a recession in the Venetian markets. Emperor Manuel I Komnenos' actions after the burning of the Genoese quarter caused financial restrictions for Venetian merchants and the Pisan economy, and essentially ruined any chance of Italian reconciliation. The significance of Manuel I Komnenos' attempts to add Genoa to the list of Italian trade partners forced Venetian shares to diminish. Further, the relocation of the Pisan quarter prevented Venetian merchants from dominating markets. The establishment of the Genoese trade quarter by Manuel I Komnenos caused tensions between the Venetians and Byzantines to erupt into violence, causing significant retaliation efforts by the emperor.

After the three major economic reforms under Manuel I Komnenos, public sentiment in Constantinople became increasingly violent, a direct change in attitudes towards the Venetians. By 1170, Constantinopolitans and other Greeks throughout the Aegean Sea changed their attitudes towards the Venetians. Initially jubilant at having a new commercial partner, Venice in 992 and again with Pisa in 1111, Greeks changed towards open hostility during the latter half of Manuel I Komnenos' reign. Writing shortly after the reign of Manuel I Komnenos, Niketas Choniates openly criticized the Venetians in the Byzantine Empire by likening them to pack of

⁷³ Gerald W. Day, "Manuel and the Genoese," 293. As the Pisan quarter had become a puppet for the Venetians, the expulsion to Pera proved to be financially disruptive towards Venetian profits.

animals flocking to the city.⁷⁴ By comparing the Venetian peoples to barbaric clans, swarming in flocks, Niketas dehumanizes the Venetians, showing this dramatic change in the attitudes of the Byzantines from jubilation to revulsion. This sentiment was evident throughout the Byzantine Empire and helped influence Manuel I Komnenos' actions against the Venetians. Relations collapsed after the Massacre of the Latins which saw the systematic arrest of all Latins in the empire along with all Italian assets seized. Niketas Choniates wrote how the surviving Venetians within Constantinople fled on a ship and sailed back to Venice. He writes, "Unfurling the sails, they returned home thanks to the winds. Fire-bearing ships and imperial triremes filled with men carrying one-edged axes on their shoulders pursued them closely."⁷⁵ This open hostility towards retreating civilians demonstrated the violent attitudes of the Byzantines against Venetians at the end of the twelfth century. Byzantine public sentiment against the Venetians was extremely hostile and created the conditions for the Venetians to gather support to declare war on the Byzantines.

The death of Manuel I Komnenos enraged the Byzantines who channeled their anger against the Italians and created a situation that the Venetians used to declare war.⁷⁶ Incited by the Byzantine usurper, Andronikos Komnenos (r. 1183-85), the Greeks were encouraged to seek revenge on the Italians for a century of unfair economic practices. Greek mobs organized in Constantinople and began attacking the Italian quarters. Since the Pisan quarter was relocated to the suburbs, it did not bear much damage, but the Genoese and Venetian quarters were destroyed. While most of the 60,000 Italians fled the city, roughly ten thousand Italians perished

⁷⁴ Niketas Choniates, *O City of Byzantium*, trans. Harry J Magoulias (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1984), 97.

⁷⁵ Choniates, *O City of Byzantium*, 98.

⁷⁶ During the reign of Manuel I Komnenos, the Byzantine people were enjoying anti-Venetian financial regulations along with prosperity of their own stores. With Manuel's death, the people were scared that the new emperor would concede demands from the Italians. Their strong held beliefs created riots along the Aegean Sea, where the Venetian population resided.

in the massacre. This widespread massacre of western peoples was significant for two reasons in understanding why the Venetians retaliated in 1204. First, the massacre was caused by Greek hysteria influenced by the anti-Italian rhetoric preached by Andronikos Komnenos during his coup. Despite the rhetoric's blatant call for the murder of the Latins, not even the Komnenos family, including Andronikos, realized the full effect of the Greek people's actions. The massacre gave the Venetians the final justification for a military campaign against the Byzantine Empire. The murder of thousands of Italians was viewed as a preemptive attack on the Italian city-states. This event created the conditions necessary for the Venetians to gather support from the Pisans and Genoese to declare war on the Byzantine Empire.

III. THE REPUBLIC OF VENICE

Before the Chrysobull of 1082 was signed, Venice had already shared a history with the Empire. As the tenth province of Roman Italy under Augustus, *Venetia et Istria* found itself under multiple kingdoms throughout the fifth century until the province was finally absorbed by the Byzantines in the late-sixth century when Ravenna became the regional capital.⁷⁷ Venice's relations with Constantinople slowly deteriorated beginning with the reign of the Galbairi family (r. 764-804) under Doge Maurizio Galbaio. Since the Venetian province was far removed from the Byzantine Empire's capital, and thus outside the emperor's political interest, Venice sought separation. According to the writer John the Deacon (940-1009), Doge Pietro Tribuno (r. 887-912) successfully completed the severance of Venice from the Byzantines.⁷⁸ While they wanted independent rule, Venetian leaders understood that to ensure continued economic growth, they needed to maintain financial relations with Constantinople.

This desire for continued economic growth led to the first official Chrysobull between the Byzantines and Venice in 992. Under the leadership of Doge Pietro II Orseolo (r.991-1009) and co-Emperors Basil II (r. 976-1025) and Constantine VIII (r. 962-1025), the normalization of economic relations were solidified. The three leaders understood the importance of economic

⁷⁷ Donald M. Nicol, *Byzantium and Venice: A Study in Diplomatic and Cultural Relations*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 1-4.

⁷⁸ Nicol, *Byzantium and Venice*, 35-6.

development in the long-term and agreed to provide favorable conditions to the Venetians. The Chrysobull declared, in part:

Therefore we order and we mandate that those who serve in the office of the Eparch . . . and all of those persons falling under the imperial service until the lower services, yet that of the public, and also no other person has the license at any time throughout any occasion of whatever kind to touch, search or investigate any man of these Venetians or any of their boats or to inquire them on any occasion of whatever kind.⁷⁹

The Chrysobull of 992 had two important implications that would drive the Venetians in a more hostile direction against the Byzantines in the twelfth century. First, the Chrysobull allowed no member under the management of the eparch to investigate and manage incoming Venetian maritime goods. The only individual who could examine the cargo from the Venetian ships was the *Logothetes tou Dromou*.⁸⁰ By granting only one individual in the Byzantine administration the power to inspect goods arriving on Venetian ships, the Byzantine government effectively allowed Venetians to enter the city without any regulations and custom taxes and tariffs that the other departments under the Eparch managed. The second issue was that the refusal to impose taxes and tariffs on goods would create the foundation for the political arguments in the twelfth century about Venetians' economic privileges in Constantinople. When the Byzantines attempted to increase the taxes and tariffs in the twelfth century, Venetian merchants, spoiled by earlier Chrysobulls, were not willing to give up their economic privileges and fought aggressively to maintain them.

⁷⁹ Pertusi, *Venezia e Bisanzio*. 104. From the text: "Ideo iubeamus, et omnibus mandamus de ipso secreto eparchali - ut ipsi cartularii, qui sub illo sunt, et notarii parathalassii, limenarchi, hypologi de destructo et illi qui dicuntur xylocalami, commerclarii de Avido-, aut alios homines quibus rductus est in imperiali servitio usque in minimo servitio, verum hoc de publico, etiam nullum hominem habere licentiam unquam tempore per qualemcumque occasionem aut ipsis Veneticis aut illorum navigiis tentare aut tangere aut scrutare aut dicere illis pro quibus aut qualemcumque occasione perquirere."

⁸⁰ Pertusi, *Venezia e Bisanzio*. 104. The *Logothetes tou Dromou* was the head of the Byzantine *Magister Officiorum* and controlled customs, domestic security and foreign affairs. See J.B. Bury, *The Imperial Administrative System of the Ninth Century - With a Revised Text of the Kletorologion of Philotheos* (New York: Burt Franklin, 1958).

III.i. GEOGRAPHY OF THE REPUBLIC OF VENICE

In contrast to the Pisans and Genoese, the Republic of Venice benefited from closer geographic proximity to Constantinople. Venice, located on the northwestern side of the Italian peninsula, already controlled maritime trade in the Adriatic Sea by the beginning of the twelfth century. Given the geographic situation in northern Italy, the Venetians needed to find new ways to support their economy. Given its proximity to the Aegean Sea and the larger eastern Mediterranean, Venice sought expansion. The Adriatic's gateway into the Mediterranean is only 72 miles wide stretching from Apulia to Albania.⁸¹ With its strong navy, Venice was able to control this rather narrow strait but had to deal with problems stemming from the Adriatic winds. Three main wind patterns; the bora, the maestral, and the sirocco were extremely dangerous for navigation between November and February, which prevented long-term maritime shipping within the Adriatic and shortened the sailing season.⁸² The Venetians determined the best way to counter the winter winds was to establish a series of colonies along the Adriatic coastline, thus allowing mercantile vessels to move slowly and safely through the sea and not risk sinking due to the unpredictable wind patterns. By establishing these colonies, the Venetians could increase the sailing season year-round and not have to risk an economic contraction during the winter months.

The expansion of the Republic of Venice along the eastern Adriatic also had an important economic purpose to its expansionist plans. As the three wind patterns were easterly, the Italian coastline proved inoperable for ships, whereas Dalmatia, with its numerous islands, provided a

⁸¹ Rowan W. Dorin, "Adriatic Trade Networks in the Twelfth and Early Thirteenth Centuries," in *Trade and Markets in Byzantium*, ed. Cecile Morrisson (Washington D.C: Dumbarton Oaks, 2012) 236.

⁸² Dorin, "Adriatic Trade Networks," 237.

refuge for ships attempting to escape storms, pirates, or foreign ships.⁸³ Therefore, the Venetians constructed several cities and fortresses in these island chains to provide safe passage throughout the Adriatic. The new cities and fortresses served as a military buffer and allowed the navy to respond quickly to any hostile threat. Secondly, the cities allowed Venice to expand its population outside the geographic confines of the capital. Together, the Adriatic Sea's geographic importance was crucial to the economic expansion of the Venetians throughout the eleventh and twelfth centuries – in short, the Adriatic Sea was key to the Republic of Venice's economic expansion.

The city of Venice is on a cluster of small islands connected to the mainland, which prevented the Venetians from having a strong agricultural economy that was common in medieval Europe. Instead, the Venetians relied primarily on banking, investment, and trade. The city's urban layout, which did not have many markets, allowed for the increase in banks, mints, and other financial institutions. As the wealth of Venice grew and the reliability of the financial institutions increased, Venetian Doges sought to expand and diversify the republic's economy. During the eleventh century, Venice expanded its territory along the northern shores of the Adriatic, which provided land to increase agricultural output. However, because the Venetian economy still relied heavily on finances and trade, political administrations spent more time gaining trade privileges with the Byzantines than diversifying their economy.

⁸³ Dorin, "Adriatic Trade Networks," 238.

III.ii. VENETIAN-BYZANTINE RELATIONS, 1098-1192

Extensive trade between Venice and Byzantium began with the Chrysobull of 1082 as part of efforts by the Republic and the Empire to expand economic opportunities. The Chrysobull was signed after the Venetians accepted a Byzantine request for military assistance in defeating the Norman Kingdom in southern Italy and Sicily. As Venetians wanted the southeastern Italian shoreline to control the entire Adriatic and protect maritime shipping lanes, they quickly agreed. Thankful for the help, Byzantium granted a new Chrysobull to Venice. Officially granted by Alexios I Komnenos (r. 1081-1118), first ruler of the Komnenian dynasty, the trade deal established a commercial quarter in Constantinople for Venetian merchants, free market trade, and other generous privileges.⁸⁴ This decree began the pursuit of the Venetians and of other Italian states to pursue aggressive trade policy in Constantinople. The development of the new trade quarter in the rundown neighborhoods along the Golden Horn began construction immediately.⁸⁵ The buildings were remodeled to fit the commercial and residential needs of the merchants. The location, at first glance, was ideal for Venice as its location across the Golden Horn from Pera allowed a steady stream of consumers. Further, the quarter was, at least initially, close enough to the metal works and several *agoras* to ensure a persistent and thriving trade in the city. The most important note about the Chrysobull of 1082 was the exclusion of an independent landing-stage for Venice. This had two practical effects. First, it meant that the Venetians, like other merchants trading in the city, had to pay tariffs on all imported goods. Second, it prevented the Byzantines from losing a harbor, and as such, losing revenue from the

⁸⁴ Penna, *Byzantine Imperial Acts*, 26.

⁸⁵ Magdalino, "Maritime Neighborhoods," 212-3.

tariffs imposed on the merchants. However, the Chrysobull protected Venetian merchants, unlike the Arab merchants, from potential aggressors. The statute specified:

Allowing, then these grants, our pious Majesty ordered and commanded that nobody is to oppose them since they are honest and true servants of our Clemency and assistants against the enemy and have promised that they will continue to be so till the end of time; and absolutely nobody is to entertain hostile feelings towards them or exercise any allegations against them because of what has been conferred to them, namely the workshops and landing-stages (scalai).⁸⁶

The protective measure ensured that the Byzantine population should in no way harm the Venetian merchants as they were considered faithful servants of the Emperor of Byzantium.⁸⁷

The term “faithful servants” is in reference to their agreement to help defeat the Norman Kingdom; by no means were they literally servants of Byzantium. These protections allowed Venetian merchants to establish strong commercial dominance in the early twelfth century. Initially beneficial for the Italians, these protections created the foundations for the financial disasters a century later. The economic consequences that arose from the creation of the Venetian quarter foreshadowed the commercial hostility in the eastern Mediterranean during the latter half of the twelfth century.

The Chrysobull of 1082 also imposed sanctions on those who would do harm to the Venetian quarter, the merchants, or the merchant goods. These sanctions emboldened Venetian merchants and created financial instability to the Byzantine economy when enforced. The most important sanction mandated:

⁸⁶ Borsari, *Il Crisobula*, trans. Daphne Penna, *Byzantine Imperial Acts*, 29. From the text, “Hec igitur Imperii nostri pietas sic dispensas sancit et precipit nullum eis repugnare tamquam rectis et veris clementiae nostre dulis et contra hostes auxiliatoribus et usque in finem seculi tales se fore pollicitis, nec quemquam omnino talibus sentire contraria vel alligationes aliquas contra eos exercere collatorum eis hic gratia ergasteriorum videlicet et scalarum.” Penna’s interpretation of “*videlicet et scalarum*” may refer to the Venetian merchant access to the harbors. They would not have control over the harbor and still have to pay tariffs on all goods entering the city. The Venetians did not get a *scala* for another few decades.

⁸⁷ Penna, *Byzantine Imperial Acts*, 29.

If anyone in particular infringes anything that is ordained in this Chrysobull, he will be scorned, he will be forced irretrievably by the *Sekreton* of the *epi ton oikeiakon* to pay 10 *librae* of gold, and from which there will be payment to them [the Venetians] the worth that has been taken away in fourfold.⁸⁸

The repayment that Venetian merchants were entitled to from the destruction of goods caused by Constantinopolitans was too extreme. While it can be argued that the purpose was to deter doing harm to the Venetians, in practice the financial cost of repayment on a large scale was detrimental to the economy. Venetian merchants were encouraged because the sanction did not specify the extent of damage. Which suggests that if Venetian merchandise was dropped upon inspection or otherwise damaged, the incident could have bankrupted the average Constantinopolitan. While this may seem trivial and have no purpose in the broader argument, the financial cost incurred by the Byzantines after the Byzantine-Venetian War (1171-2) and the Massacre of the Latins (1182) financially strained the local economy and forced the Byzantines to capitulate to the demands of the Venetians. These demands allowed the Venetian merchants, who over time became increasingly employed by the aristocracy in Venice, propelled them into acquiring large minorities in several sectors of the Byzantine economy and eventually, after the Byzantine-Venetian War, a majority share in maritime trade.

For the next thirty years, the Venetian trade quarter flourished and benefited from trade deals and the access to the many commercial markets throughout the city. This nearly unimpeded access allowed Venetians merchants and aristocrats to invest substantially in several fields, primarily those of silk, dyes (almost exclusively indigo), glass, and banking/finance. Venetian access to the Fora of Amastrianus and the Theodosian Forum was essential for Venetian

⁸⁸ Borsari, *Il Crisobullo*, 131. From the text, “Si vero quispiam forte aliquid in hob chrisobulo ordinatorum contempserit, irremisibiliter cogetur dare a secreto epi ton ikiakon auri libras decem, et ex eo solvetur ablati pretium in quadruplum.”

merchants to compete with the other Italian states, who began to trickle into the city to secure minority shares of various industries in competition with the Venetians.⁸⁹ Both locations offered abundant markets for meat, fish, and grain, necessities for feeding the Venetian quarter in the city and their satellite quarters throughout Greece. The market's western location in the city allowed Venetian merchants to bypass the crowded Strategion market where Pisa and Genoa were slowly increasing their footprint until their quarters were established in 1111 and 1169, respectively. Furthermore, the areas surrounding these two markets consisted of numerous materialistic goods specializing in the sales of anything from oils, spices, and wines to glass, honey, and pottery.⁹⁰ The plethora of stores helped cement Venetian economic dominance in the city because the Venetians forced Byzantine shops to close. The arrival of the Pisan merchants to the city and lack of significant reforms in the early-twelfth century by the Byzantine emperors further exacerbating Venetian dominance.

In 1119 the Venetians elected a new Doge, Domenico Michiel (r. 1119-1130), whose main priority was to renegotiate the previous deal made by Alexios I Komnenos. As Alexios I passed and his heir, John II Komnenos (r. 1118-1143), balked at renegotiations, tensions began to mount and Byzantine attitudes began to shift against the Venetians. The emperor refused to renegotiate because he understood the previous deal to be both suitable and fair because, like previous Chrysobulls, it granted the Venetians immovable property rights and widespread financial protections on their goods.⁹¹ Immovable property was important to long-term trade relations, because it assured a permanent trade partner and reduced the hassle of continuous

⁸⁹ Mango, "Commercial Map," 198-9.

⁹⁰ Mango, "Commercial Map," 200-1.

⁹¹ Penna, 35.

negotiations over land for the foreign merchants.⁹² After John II Komnenos refused the new deal in 1119, Doge Domenico Michiel, angered by the refusal, ordered attacks on the Aegean ports of Rhodes, Lesbos, and Kephallonia. As the Venetian navy proved too powerful to stop, John II Komnenos was forced to capitulate and renegotiated the Chrysobull, granting two primary deals. First, he enforced the previous Chrysobull, specifically the granting of merchant trading in the *agoras*. Second, he granted Venice more trade privileges, including an exemption to pay a custom tax and free trade for Venetian merchants in Crete and Cyprus.⁹³ While this new Chrysobull was an extension of Alexios' deal, its significance was twofold. First, the revisions reduced total tax expenditures for Venetian merchants, directly supporting the monopolization of Venetian businesses in several important sectors in Constantinople. Second, the Chrysobull was signed 15 years after Pisa's Chrysobull, demonstrating Venetian attempts to control all trade with Byzantium. Pisan emergence angered the Venetians as it was seen as a method to dilute the Venetian share of the Constantinople markets. These issues caused the Venetians to find new ways to control market shares and suppress competition in the city.

Venetian hostility continued with the increase in trade activity among the Pisans, forcing the Byzantines to sign another Chrysobull to avoid the ire of the Venetian merchants, who wanted to retain their superiority in the city. The root of the hostility can be traced to the Pisan Chrysobull of 1111, which granted Pisa a *scala* next to the northern ports and waived all custom taxes on imported goods. Venice, on the other hand, was not granted a *scala* until 1147. The Chrysobull of 1147 did not explicitly grant economic benefits to the Venetians, but they did create a foundation for the Chrysobull of 1148. Since the Venetians helped defeat King Roger II

⁹² Previous trade deals in the early Middle Ages saw no such grant of immovable property and thus the time spent on negotiating the hospitality of foreign merchants proved both time-consuming and cost ineffective.

⁹³ Penna, 35-38.

of Sicily (r. 1130-1154), Emperor Manuel I Komnenos granted additional trade privileges to Venetian merchants. In addition to continued access to free trade in Cyprus and Crete, the Venetians finally acquired their own *scala*. The Chrysobull stated:

Our Imperial Majesty bestows on [the Venetians] by the present Chrysobull what they requested, the houses and free places and the landing stage, which is expressed to be counted and to be written down in this, *praktikon of corporal delivery* of them, this command is to be done by the *desimotatos* Epyphanio Tuglica, which should be certified by the superscription of the intimacy of our Majesty, John Pepagomenos and has to be registered at the appropriate *sekreta*, and among them our Highness should register this Chrysobull.⁹⁴

The Chrysobull of 1148 was a Venetian victory. The merchants finally acquired the *scala* after thirty years of continued mercantile raiding and open hostilities with Pisan and Byzantine shipping. Additionally, the Chrysobull granted more immovable property rights and increased the size of the Venetian quarter, as more Italian merchants flooded into the city to take part in the thriving trades. This increase included the establishment of Venetian courts and new Venetian markets that encroached upon Byzantine shops and warehouses. The Venetian courts allowed all criminal cases and civil and economic disputes to be prosecuted under Venetian law rather than Byzantine law. However, despite the victory for Venetian merchants, the Chrysobull still restricted trade. As the treaty was written after Venetian raids on Greek islands, the Byzantines included stricter documentation of Venetian sales of goods and services. Imperial offices were tasked with verifying all Venetian transactions and ledgers on all goods imported to the city, which were then submitted to the Constantinople treasury for the purpose of documenting

⁹⁴ Original text is from the Chrysobull of Manuel I Komnenos, preserved in Latin. The transcription is prepared in Penna, *Byzantine Imperial Acts*, 40-1. From the text: "...largitur eis imperium nostrum per presens chrisobulum suum que petierunt, habitacula et libera loca et littoralem scalam, que expresse numeranda et scribenda sunt in eo, quod iussum est fieri, practico traditionis eorum corporalis ab adesimotato Epiyphanio Tuglica, certificari debente per superscriptionem familiaris hominis clesitudinis nostre Ioannis Pepagomeni et sterna in congruis secretis, in quibus et presens nostre serenitatis chrisobulum sterna debet.." Penna's translation is more modern.

Venetian activity.⁹⁵ The strict documentation of Venetian goods could be a result of the Byzantines cracking down on Venetian monopolization efforts in targeted sectors of the economy. By recording all transactions, the Eparch could submit quantitative reports to the imperial court, helping the emperor understand the state of the city's economy. In turn, the emperor issued protectionary laws for the private guilds throughout the city, as noted previously. The Venetian demands imposed upon the Byzantines allowed Venice to acquire more trade privileges, expand their trade quarter, and decrease competition. They gave the Byzantines a foundation upon which they could reform their economy to dissuade Venetian merchants from investing in the city, increase local businesses, and reestablish Byzantine economic majority in Constantinople.

Following the death of Manuel I Komnenos and the political coup by the Angelos dynasty, Isaac II Angelos sought to repair trade relations that Manuel I Komnenos destroyed. Isaac II granted five privilege acts starting in 1187. The first three Chrysobulls were granted in 1187 and were titled: 1) *Privilegium Ysaakii Constantinopolitani Imperatoris*, 2) *Privilegium Confirmationis de Concessione Imperatoris Constantinopolitani*, and 3) *Privilegium Ysachii Imperatoris Romanorum*.⁹⁶ These Chrysobulls restored all previous privileges that the Venetians had in Constantinople including the return of the Venetian trade quarter that was sacked by the Constantinopolitans. To the great anger and dismay of the Byzantine population, it also returned all seized assets under Venetian control, stating:

[the emperor] allows by his own Chrysobull...that [the Venetians] have all the districts which they had at the time of the everlasting memorable emperor and uncle of my Majesty Manuel Komnenos and were taken, and also that all their goods will be returned to the Venetians which were held in palaces and monasteries or that had

⁹⁵ Penna, 41.

⁹⁶ Penna, 46-7.

been transferred to the imperial vestiary or any other place, whether proved in writing or not.⁹⁷

Again, this was a Venetian victory and a Byzantine defeat. Venetian merchants were allowed to resume their economic monopolization of Constantinopolitan commerce which only benefited Venice. The return towards Italian dominance was an indicator that any Byzantine actions against the Venetians would result in war. Further, the Venetian return signaled to the Pisans, who were effectively puppets for the Venetian quarter, and the Genoese that they were no longer able to compete against the Venetian merchants in the city.

Two years later in 1189, Isaac II Angelos finalized the remaining two (the fourth and fifth) Chrysobulls to the Venetians. While the fourth has not been preserved, the fifth was. The Venetian version of the fifth Chrysobull is titled, *Privilegium Isaachii Imperatoris Constantinopolitani*,⁹⁸ and provided the last series of economic privileges to the Venetians.⁹⁹

This last document, primarily consisting of legal matters, does have one clause that is noteworthy:

The emperor allows the Venetians to receive the income of these [of the emboloi and of the scalai], while said Venetians should not undergo any kind of disturbance from the fiscus or from any of the person's to whom they now belong and from whom they will be taken when they are given to them.¹⁰⁰

The protection of income from items originally confiscated a decade prior were guaranteed by Isaac II, which further shows the Venetians' success in pressuring the Byzantines to pay

⁹⁷ Pozza and Ravegnani, *I trattati*, prepared and translated by Penna, 52. From the text: "...promittit per suum chrisobulum verbum...habere et omnes districtus, quos habebant tempore illate eis ire semper memoranda impertoris et patris imperii nostril, domini Manuelis Comnani, ipsisque Veneticis redid et omnes res eorum, que in palatiis et monasteriis fuerunt, et que in vestiatium intraverunt et in alia loca scripto et non scripto."

⁹⁸ Penna, 56.

⁹⁹ The last official Chrysobull granted to Venice was from Alexios III Angelos in 1198. However, that dealt entirely with judicial proceedings and other legal matters, and therefore will not be discussed in this paper.

¹⁰⁰ Pozza and Ravegnani, *I trattati*, in *Byzantine Imperial Acts*, 60. The text states: "concedens...et omnem introitum eorum accipere, nequaquam a fisco vel ab aliqua personarum, quibus hec attinent et quibus hec ablata ipsis dantur, infestationem aliquam manifestis Veneticis subire debentibus."

reparations for all goods confiscated. Venetian power in Constantinople was actually displayed in all five Chrysobulls. Because the Venetians could afford to establish monopolies in several important sectors, their presence was needed to support the Byzantine economy. After the Massacre of the Latins and the declaration by Manuel I Komnenos to seize all Venetian property in Greece, the Byzantine economy faltered. It was this downturn that allowed the Venetians to return and receive the restoration of economic privileges resumed.

For the Byzantines, the betrayal of Isaac II Angelos was not supported by the population. Under Manuel I Komnenos, Byzantine merchants and business owners were growing in the city and it appeared as if they might retake majorities in all major economic sectors. With the Angelos coup and the restoration of commercial privileges by Isaac II, Byzantine growth reversed. Venetian-Byzantine political and civil relations under the Komnenos dynasty were initially joyous and welcoming but turned vile and rotten by the time Manuel I Komnenos died. After the Angelos coup, political relations improved yet were still fragile, but civil relations grew worse. Civic unrest and open hostilities against the Italians, primarily the Venetians, continued throughout the late-twelfth and into the thirteenth century.

III.iii. ECONOMIC POLICY UNDER DOGE ENRICO DANDOLO, 1192-1205

By 1192 Venice had become the premier economic power in Europe. The restoration of economic privileges in Constantinople following the death of Manuel I Komnenos proved costly to the Byzantines. Now unmatched, the republic dominated Italian commerce. Venice's naval strength in the Adriatic was envied by many, its banking system venerated by all Europeans, and its political ruthlessness studied by future kings. In Constantinople, Venetian merchants ruled the

agoras while systematically strengthening their political power in Byzantium. Greek merchants worked at the whims and wishes of the Venetians merchants. Despite the stalwart Venice had become, upon further inspection, cracks appeared that threatened its supremacy. Of these, the persistence of the Veronese Penny in northern Italy, discussed below, and the constant hostility of the Greeks towards the Venetians, showed the potential for a cataclysmic clash between the Venetians and Byzantines.

In 1192 the Venetian aristocracy elected Enrico Dandolo, a prominent and ruthless businessman, as Doge of Venice.¹⁰¹ His first economic action was to reconfigure Venetian coinage to exert total control of Constantinople and also of northern Italy. At the time of his election, the Veronese Penny was the primary currency of northern Italy and was widely accepted and even preferred in Byzantium. This was made possible by the actions of Doge Dandolo's predecessors, Vitale Michiel II (r. 1156-72) and Orio Malipiero (1178-92), who oversaw the reduction of Venetian minting after Doge Ordelafo Faliero de Doni (r. 1102-17) sold the mint lands to a private investor.¹⁰² The mint lands were rich in gold and silver deposits, meaning that the Venetian mint saw a substantial decrease in coin output and thus circulation in the city. When coupled with the Byzantine currency reforms that introduced the *hyperpyron* as the Greek standard, Venetian banks were teetering on bankruptcy. Doge Dandolo's mission was simple; devalue the Byzantine *hyperpyron* and standardize a new Venetian currency, the *Grosso*. This would allow the Venetians to strengthen their markets domestically and, simultaneously, to

¹⁰¹ The Venetian aristocracy announced several reforms to the election process to consolidate power of the Doge to the aristocratic businessmen. This political move allowed Venice to continue its economic dominance, as more businessmen in the aristocracy were elected as Doge.

¹⁰² Alan M. Stahl, *Zecca: The Mint of Venice in the Middle Ages* (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 2000), 8. For a description of the transaction, see Roberto Boldu, *Atto di vendita fatta da Ordelafo Falier, doge di Venezia, dell'edificio ad uso di zecca sito a S. Bartolomeo* (Italy, 1857).

continue their control of the Constantinopolitan markets. This attempt would later be used to justify military action against the Byzantines.

The problem for Venetian merchants was that there was not a universal coin among the Italian states, as the mints of Milan, Pavia, Verona, Pisa, and Lucca were accepted throughout the peninsula, creating a complex exchange market that hampered fast trade.¹⁰³ As the previous Venetian coins held only half the value of the Veronese, the Venetians were more inclined to use the Veronese *Denarii*.¹⁰⁴ Furthermore, the Venetian currency was entirely dependent on the Veronese *Denarii* so when the coin was devalued in 1180, the Venetian penny was threatened. Doge Dandolo acted quickly, seeking to base the *grosso* on the Carolingian model of weight, where one pound of gold equaled either 20 shillings or 240 pennies, which were issued in silver.¹⁰⁵ The weight of the coins was significant because it established a strong currency exchange rate that was both competitive and resistant to inflation and because their value strengthened by reducing the amount of gold in the *grosso* and mixing the coins with silver and copper. While this may seem counterintuitive, the purpose was to base the value of the coins not on the quantity of gold in them, but rather base the worth on established by the government.¹⁰⁶ The Carolingian model was becoming the standard for new coins in Italy, causing the Italian states to circulate new coins. Making matters worse for the Venetian merchants, during this period of devaluation and new minting, they relied on the circulation of coins in Byzantium and the Kingdom of Jerusalem.¹⁰⁷ As Islamic forces made gains in the Holy Lands threatening the existence of the kingdom, Venetian merchants, too, feared the possibility of recession. These

¹⁰³ Stahl, 9.

¹⁰⁴ Frederic Chapin Lane and Reinhold C. Muller, *Money and Banking in Medieval and Renaissance Venice* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985), 108.

¹⁰⁵ Robbert, "Venetian Coinage," 48-9.

¹⁰⁶ Since the coins were not valued based on the quantity of gold, the Venetian *Grosso* can be viewed as an early form of fiat money, or government-back currency not based on a commodity like gold.

¹⁰⁷ Madden, *Enrico Dandolo and the Rise of Venice*, 109.

events created panic among the bankers in Venice and forced Dandolo to circulate the new currency quickly.

The lighter coins were significantly more popular than the hyperpyron because the stylistic model favored accessibility and portability. While the coins were modeled after the weight of the Carolingian models, their physical appearance was modeled after the Byzantine *nomisma* (devalued in 1080).¹⁰⁸ The *grosso* was struck like modern coinage, circular, with the face of the Doge in the center and text along the edges, unlike the *hyperpyron* that was cup-shaped.¹⁰⁹ This difference immediately made the new coins more popular in Constantinople for two reasons. First, the coins' dramatic weight difference allowed more coins to be carried by each person, which impacted the quantity of goods one could purchase at a given time. Second, the physical design of the *hyperpyron* made it difficult to carry, as the cup-shaped coins were cumbersome. The Venetian *grosso*, reflecting the Byzantine *nomisma*, allowed the coins to be easier to store and transport. Additionally, because the *nomisma* was popular among the Constantinopolitans, the *grosso* struck a familiar feeling which allowed it to circulate more in the Greek islands. Despite the popularity, the Byzantine administration in Constantinople refused to allow its circulation, as their attempts to maintain economic independence from Venetian control increased.

As the Byzantines continued to restrict Venetians goods in Constantinople, Doge Dandolo retaliated similarly. On August 16, 1192, he expelled all foreigners living within Venice's lagoon who had taken up residence after 1190.¹¹⁰ Additionally, the decree forbade any

¹⁰⁸ See Appendix.

¹⁰⁹ Robbert, 50.

¹¹⁰ Thomas F. Madden, *Venice: A New History* (New York: Penguin Publishing, 2012), 426. It is unclear exactly how many Greeks were residing in Venice at the time of the expulsion.

lending of money to foreigners for more than fifteen days.¹¹¹ While the decree's reasoning is unknown to scholars, it can be inferred that it sought to halt the growing population of Greek residents in the city. Doge Dandolo's political involvement prior to his Dogeship was heavily interwoven with actions directed at the Byzantines. He was involved in military action during the Byzantine-Venetian War of 1171 and was named Ducal Legate in 1183 during the negotiations to restore the economic rights following the Massacre of the Latins the previous year.¹¹² His previous interactions with the Byzantines appear to have been only during periods of war and violence, imprinting a spitefulness against the Greeks. That could be why the decree in August of 1192 was directed at the foreigners within Venice.

While Doge Enrico Dandolo's economic reforms certainly helped in maintaining the power of Venice, the results had a direct impact on Venice's adversaries. The restructuring of the Venetian coins fixed the problem that plagued their coins throughout the twelfth century following the horrendous land grant. The new Venetian *grosso* dominated the markets in northern Italy immediately upon its circulation. However, the Byzantine State's refusal to accept the new currency forced Dandolo into negotiations. As retaliation, perhaps not just because of the refusal of a new coin, the Doge expelled all foreigners from Venice and restricted money-lending. Unfortunately for Doge Dandolo, these efforts only strengthened the resolve of the Byzantines to refuse Venetian influence. The actions by the Byzantines finally provoked the Doge, whose long political history with the Greeks was immensely biased, to prepare plans for the conquest of Constantinople.

¹¹¹ Madden, *Enrico Dandolo*, 106.

¹¹² Madden, *Enrico Dandolo*, 87.

IV. THE REPUBLICS OF PISA AND GENOA

As historical rivals of Venice, the Republics of Pisa and Genoa emerged from the early Middle Ages as economic competitors against their eastern Italian adversary. The Republic of Genoa was granted legal freedoms by Berengar II of Italy (r. 950-61) in 958 but did not experience the immediate rise of power as its Tuscan neighbor did.¹¹³ Instead Genoa built its wealth slowly, an apparent means to ensure a strong legal foundation for economic activity. The Republic of Pisa established its sovereignty in 1000 and only a few years later, in 1005, became an influential economic force following the sack of Reggio di Calabria: Pisa became a political power a decade later with the conquest of Sardinia in 1016 as a part of a joint-attack with Genoa against Muslim pirates.¹¹⁴ What appeared as a strong alliance between the Pisans and Genoese quickly collapsed. Despite their joint operation against the Muslims, certainly the only reason to set aside political differences during this period, the fragile relationship shattered shortly afterwards causing both republics to compete for economic supremacy. This competitive behavior among the small republics hurled them into complex alliances, violent betrayal, and aggressive piracy operations in the Aegean Sea.

During the twelfth century, Pisa's wealth increased as part of its ongoing commercial competition with Genoa and Venice. Its most notable achievement was the construction of the

¹¹³ Gina Fasoli and Francesca Bocchi, *La città medievale Italiana* (Florence, 1973), 13.

¹¹⁴ Christopher Tyerman, *God's War: A New History of the Crusades* (New York: Penguin Books, 2007), 55. Pope Benedict VIII (r. 1012-24) approved the Pisan and Genoese joint conquest of Sardinia from Muslim pirates operating on the island to safeguard their mercantile fleets operating in the region.

Tower of Pisa, which showcased its wealth and power. It should be noted that Pisa, like Genoa, had multiple overseas economic outposts and their merchants traveled throughout Europe. This vast trade network allowed Pisa and Genoa to construct magnificent buildings and generate wealth among their subjects. Despite their strong economic influence overseas, Pisan merchants had little power in Constantinople. The merchants' struggle with other Italian states throughout the Mediterranean shaped Pisan responses to the economic opportunities in the city of Constantinople. The Republic of Genoa, however, used its established economic practices that were cultivated through trade with the western European kingdoms to significantly disrupt Venetian control of the Constantinople markets. Yet, the Genoese would not arrive in the city until fifty years after the Pisans. Both republics influenced Venetian aggression towards the Byzantines and helped persuade the Venetian Doge to reroute the crusading forces to Constantinople.

IV.i. THE REPUBLIC OF PISA

During the twelfth century, the Republic of Pisa dominated as an economic city-state. Located on the western side of the Italian peninsula, Pisa acquired a large sphere of economic influence.¹¹⁵ Pisa's geographic location was not advantageous for commerce because the city was far removed from the thriving empires along the eastern Mediterranean. To combat this growing challenge, the Pisan government began rapidly expanding its control over territories in Corsica, Sardinia, Carthage, and various cities along the southwestern coast of Italy between 1130 and 1150. By directly controlling these territories, Pisa secured mercantile shipping routes

¹¹⁵ See Appendix.

along the entire western coast of Italy. Its dominance along the central Mediterranean coastlines allowed the Pisan military the finances needed to build and support a large naval armada. This naval force would become instrumental in the protection of Pisan mercantile shipping against the harassment by Genoese ships throughout the Aegean Sea.

As Venice was beginning to dominate the Byzantine markets, Alexios I Komnenos needed to circumvent the economic takeover. His response was finding a new trade partner, specifically one that had longstanding trade disputes with Venice and understood its methods. After searching for years, the Byzantines formally signed a Chrysobull with Pisa. The Chrysobull of 1111 granted the Pisans rights similar to the Venetians which ensured equal commercial rights to decrease Venetian control. The only notable difference between the Pisan and Venetian Chrysobulls was that the Pisans were given a landing-stage (*scala*) along the Golden Horn.¹¹⁶ Pisa was also given exemptions on taxes paid on bullion imported to the empire and a reduction in taxes on imports brought from foreign countries from ten to four percent, but was still required to pay the *Kommerkion*, the full amount (most likely ten percent) on exports from the city.¹¹⁷ The *scala* most likely referred to the floating platforms built adjacent to the Harbor of Neorion to provide indefinite access to the Pisan merchants. It was likely built on the western side of the harbor to decrease congestion and confusion with Byzantine vessels. The tax exemptions on imported bullion were meant to increase the power of the imperial treasury and, thereby, increase the supply of imperial loans to Byzantine subjects in hopes of stopping Venetian commerce. The reduction of taxes paid on imports brought from foreign kingdoms and

¹¹⁶ Penna, 101.

¹¹⁷ David Jacoby, "Italian Privileges and Trade in Byzantium Before the Fourth Crusade: A Reconsideration," *Anuario de Estudios Medievales* 24 (1994): 357. The Chrysobull of 1111 is retained in the Greek version of the Chrysobull of 1192 and can be found in the Archivio di Stato Firenze. For a more in-depth analysis of the Chrysobull of 1111, see Ralph-Johannes Lilie, *Handel und Politik* (Spain: A.M. Hakkert, 1984).

empires suggests that the Byzantines understood the commercial reach of the Pisans and sought to diversify the quantity of goods in the city. In this fashion, the city's markets would quickly dilute the Venetian's commercial share and thus reduce their economic power.

Despite these grants aimed at slowing Venetian influence, the refusal by the Byzantines to accept Pisan demands on tax-exemptions for outbound goods was significant for three reasons. The refusal weakened Pisan commercial abilities in the city and hindered commercial growth. Unlike Venetians who retained tax-exemptions on outbound goods from Constantinople, the Pisans were required to pay the full tax amount. While it is possible that the Byzantines did so as a safeguard against another Italian republic dominating the city, this prevented the Pisans from quickly expanding their activity in Constantinople. Second, it weakened the Byzantine imperial government and its response to thwart Venetian dominance. The Chrysobull of 1111 was designed to prevent another Venetian-like takeover, but it prevented both an immediate economic response to the Venetians and an economic relief to Constantinopolitans and their businesses. Lastly, the Chrysobull actually strengthened Venetian influence. The Pisans' position was immediately weakened as they did not establish economic rights equal to their Venetian counterparts'. If the Pisan position was equal to its Venetian counterpart, it might have allowed the markets to repel the Venetians' influence and provided Byzantine businesses financial relief. This disadvantageous position likely depressed Pisan enthusiasm in investing within the city and consequently prevented Pisa from expanding trade in Constantinople. What the Chrysobull did accomplish was an increase in Pisan enthusiasm for trading throughout the empire, which conflicted with Venetian interests.

With the accession of Manuel I Komnenos, the Pisans returned to negotiate a fairer deal as they saw the new emperor's disdain for Venice and his desire to make Constantinople great

again for the Byzantine subjects. Signed in 1170, the new Chrysobull extended Pisan economic privileges while granting more immovable lands to increase the size of the Pisan quarter, hoping to bring more merchants into the city.¹¹⁸ After the Chrysobull of 1170, the now-larger trade quarter in Constantinople was beneficial to Pisa for two reasons. First, the location of the quarter was economically and politically beneficial as it was situated along the eastern wall of the Venetian quarter. This permanently denied Venice access to the Harbor of Neorion and increased the costs for Venetian merchants to export and import products to the city. Since Pisan markets were not subject to certain trade regulations imposed on their Venetian counterparts, there was a higher incentive to trade with the Byzantines in Constantinople.

Despite Manuel I Komnenos' attempts to rectify the mistakes made decades earlier, Pisan merchants were still not enthusiastic about investing within Constantinople. Even with the larger trade quarter, unrestricted access to the Harbor of Neorion, and tax-exemptions on goods, the Pisans never saw much opportunity. Pisa had already expanded trade throughout the Mediterranean and enjoyed lucrative trade in the Crusader States, Egypt, and North Africa, which suggests that Constantinople was less attractive economically. Pisan merchants could not exert their influence and lower the prices to compete with Venice in the homogenous markets (i.e., those involving meat, fish, bread, oils, and certain non-food goods) as they did not have as strong a rapport with Byzantine businesses as did the Venetians.¹¹⁹ The lack of enthusiasm, inability to influence homogenous markets, and the subsequent lack of capital to continue investing in the city forced Pisan merchants either to leave Constantinople for other Byzantine

¹¹⁸ Penna, 115.

¹¹⁹ Mango, "Commercial Map," 198-205. A homogenous markets is where the products and services that are traded have few differences and are generally sold at fixed prices with little deviation creating perfection market competition. These markets are typically seen with food products. For more about medieval market competition see Dennis Romano, *Markets and Marketplaces in Medieval Italy 1100-1400* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2015); and George C. Maniatis, *Guilds, Price Formation and Market Structures in Byzantium* (New York: Routledge, 2009).

cities or to join their stores with the Venetians' to turn a profit. By the 1180s the Pisan quarter had effectively become a puppet for Venetian merchants.

The near instantaneous rise and fall of the Pisan quarter in Constantinople is regrettably chalked up as a mere footnote by historians, never amounting to more than a sentence or two in the historiography. Yet Pisa's role in the twelfth-century trade wars was highly significant for a few reasons. The Pisans' involvement in Constantinople shows that their initial purpose for occupying a trade quarter in the city was not only to generate profits but was also to compete with Venice. For an Italian republic that had established enormous wealth trading throughout the Mediterranean to suddenly want to invest in a city that was economically controlled by Venice, shows the relationship and competition between the Italian city-states. For the Byzantines, Pisa was a means of pushing Venetian merchants out of the city and restoring Byzantine commercial dominance. The investment did not pay off as the Pisans soon realized they entered the city in a weakened position and could not rise above the power of Venice. Constantinople was therefore a tertiary investment, an experiment meant to irritate and annoy their Italian adversary, and to serve as an economic colony in the outer boundaries of their commercial influence. Pisa's short run in Constantinople shows how far the Italians were willing to go to compete with each other but also how willing the Byzantines were to look outside their imperial borders to find a suitable investor to upend Venetian commercial dominance. Pisa's failure in Constantinople can therefore be seen as a trial or test run for the Byzantines in how to manage commercial competition. This trial would be understood and refined over the years, culminating in 1169 with the welcoming of a new trade partner to Constantinople that unveiled Venice's true endgame. The Republic of Genoa had arrived.

IV.ii. THE REPUBLIC OF GENOA

The great city-state of Genoa was founded half a century before Pisa and would become the suitable alternative trading partner to counter the Venetian dominance in Constantinople. Genoa's economic foundations were stronger than Pisa's because of its longer, more carefully established legal code, naval and maritime experience, and economic investment strategies. Located on the opposite side of the northern Italian Peninsula, neighboring Pisa to the north, the city resides in the Liguria region.¹²⁰ Like Venice and Pisa, Genoa had to find trade partners to sustain its economic power. While Venice sought Byzantium and Pisa pursued the Crusader States and North Africa, Genoa looked to the western kingdoms for trade. Trading with the kingdoms of France and England, Al-Andalus (Islamic Iberia) and other western and central powers, Genoa found its commercial niche as a partner of the west. It should be noted that the Genoese also conducted considerable trade with the Crusader States,¹²¹ but the republic focused on the western European powers. These trade partners helped Genoa retain both its autonomy and its status as a strong Italian economic republic. Further, Genoa's geographic location and its influential economic and political powers in northern Italy made the small republic a good prospect for Manuel I Komnenos to formalize trade with. In 1160 Genoa was the last Italian city-state to enter the Constantinople's markets before the Fourth Crusade.

The legal foundations for the strong economic success experienced in the eleventh and twelfth centuries stemmed from one law regarding the funding of commercial expeditions. While the law itself has not been preserved, the business dealings of Giovanni Scriba from the 1160s

¹²⁰ See Appendix.

¹²¹ Quentin van Doosselaere, *Commercial Agreements and Social Dynamics in Medieval Genoa*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 48-9.

show how the laws worked. In his writings, all business propositions and expeditions required two participants: one primary financier and the party conducting the operation. Scriba described the arrangement:

Oliverius Nivetella and Oliverius Ferretus on the directive and authority of their lord Oto Dormacagar contracted a *societas* in which this Oliverius Nivetella states that he contributed 25 pounds and Oliverius Ferretus and his lord and the same Oliverius [Ferretus] contributed 17-1/2 pounds. Oliverius [Nivetella] must take this *societas* to Palermo and then Sicily and from there this ship and its crew will return without exception and after the capital has been divided [among the crew] he will divide the profits of this venture equally with Oliverius [Ferretus] or his agent.¹²²

This shows several important aspects of Genoese trade and how they conducted themselves in Constantinople. The *societas* was a key development in Genoese trade and ventures, which set them apart from the other Italian states. These legal documents, called *commenda*, established a sort of check-and-balance on commercial investment and ventures. It checked individuals who wanted to engage in commercial ventures by ensuring they were fiscally responsible, evident in the law's requirement that the venturer must provide one third the cost. The law further checked the venturers by forcing them to find an investor to fund the remaining two-thirds of the commercial endeavor. This allowed both parties to create a business plan that would yield profits and force individuals to conserve their money. This fiscal responsibility was what separated Genoa from the other Italian states because it created protections and regulations that ensured their citizens were held accountable. Venice had no such regulations within its legal system, while the Chrysobulls did not contain any legal repercussions for failed businesses, piracy, fraud, or other acts of theft. Pisa, with its quick economic rise and fall in Constantinople, also did not

¹²² Giovanni Scriba, *Il cartolare di Giovanni Scriba II*, in *Readings in Medieval History* 3rd edition, ed. Patrick J. Geary (New York: Broadview Press, 2003), 813. The document was transcribed and reproduced by M. Chiaudano and M. Moresco in 1935 and subsequently translated by Patrick Geary.

have any sort of laws mimicking those of Genoa. This allowed the Genoese to invest strategically in Constantinople's markets, rather than enter without deliberation.

The legal procedures for Genoese merchants created protectionist policy for their subjects. Genoa differed from Pisa and Venice, whose merchants funded themselves. Venetian merchants made strong returns on investments and influenced how they achieved continued profits. This included using monopolistic methods, such as absorbing all competition and controlling several key industries in the city. As Pisa was not trading in the city as an independent participant for long, there are no records of legal procedures regarding trade and investment. Instead, an examination of Pisan trade throughout the Mediterranean would be necessary to understand if there were any laws for overseas investment. Therefore, what Genoa had was exceptional. The investor-venturer joint relationship was both unique and important: unique in that it was the only known two-party investment strategy before the Renaissance and predated the British joint-stocks by centuries, and important in that the investment strategy called for targeted investment, a scheme that allowed Genoa to aggressively fight off Venetian interests.

The two-party investment strategy allowed the Genoese to enter into numerous markets and establish a substantial presence almost immediately. As the republic was established a half century prior to Pisa, Genoa effectively perfected its economic model well before its entrance into Constantinople. By dividing the cost of the venture unevenly, with the venturer financing a third and the investor two-thirds and dividing the profits evenly, the incentive of the venturer to look overseas grew. The primary incentive was that both participants were able to profit faster as

their rate of return was substantially higher.¹²³ This method was how Genoa, the small city-state in northwestern Italy, created a powerful economy that was revered by kingdoms throughout western Europe. The investor, likely a wealthy and educated Italian banker, businessman, merchant, or noble, saw the investments as sound and signed onto overseas ventures. Profits were divided equally among both participants and losses were born equally.¹²⁴ This clause allowed Genoese merchants and investors to carefully plan and analyze the market they wished to enter. This targeting strategy worked, especially in Constantinople. As industrial innovation thrived in the twelfth century, Venetian merchants were vulnerable. Instead of innovating their techniques, Venetian merchants grew accustomed to their strong profit margins within the city's industries. This made them vulnerable in several key sectors, allowing Genoa to latch onto and target these openings. The specialized and strategic targeting of Venetian-controlled industrial sectors in Constantinople forced Venice to respond, escalating relations and leading to war.

This refined economic laws and policies were, for the most part, a means to justify the historical military might of Genoa. Its naval strength was supreme in the Mediterranean by the twelfth century, as protection against seaborne raiders was paramount to its survival.¹²⁵ Genoa's history of maritime warfare attracted the interest of Manuel I Komnenos for a few important reasons. First, the Genoese's constant wars with the Islamic states, evident from their participation in the First Crusade in 1095, and their attacks on Bugia in 1136, Almeira in 1137, and Iberia in 1146-48, fueled their passion for naval supremacy and regional dominance in

¹²³ The rate of return was much lower in Venice and Pisa because the venturer bore the entire financial burden. Therefore it took longer for the Venetians and Pisans to see a profit on their initial investment, whereas the Genoese received a faster return.

¹²⁴ Caffaro di Rustico da Caschifellone, *Annals of Genoa*, trans. Jonathon Phillips and Martin Hall, *Caffaro, Genoa and the Twelfth-Century Crusades*, (Ashgate, 2013), 23-4. The text can be found in L. Belgrano, ed., *Annali Genovesi di Caffaro e de suoi continuatori*, volumes 11-14 (Rome, 1890-1929).

¹²⁵ The Genoese navy, while small in quantity, was substantially stronger than the Venetians, and yet as the Genoese sphere of economic influence increased, its navy was overstretched. The Venetian navy was able to focus its navy in the Adriatic and western Aegean Seas rather than the entire Mediterranean.

maritime trade.¹²⁶ This passion drove Genoa's lust for power which aggressively sought hostilities with Pisa. Wars between Genoa and Pisa broke out during the early-twelfth century as Genoese fleets raided Pisan vessels after papal decrees favored the archbishop of Pisa instead of Genoa, shattering once again the delicate relationship between the two maritime powers.

Second, the Byzantines needed a maritime power to counterbalance Venetian control of Constantinople's markets. Rather than looking towards simply an economic adversary of Venice, as they did with Pisa, the Byzantines appeared to look for a rival with a strong navy to disrupt trade. As the Genoese refined and enhanced their fleet, using a combination of Byzantine-styled heavy galleys (*dromone*) and the Italian-styled light galleys augmented with an impressive array of armed mercantile cogs, the navy could conduct numerous attacks and raids quickly and leave at a tremendous pace. This fleet was tested during the Genoese-Pisan Wars in the twelfth century, cementing Genoese naval supremacy in the western Mediterranean and further demonstrating its power in the east. By the time Manuel I Komnenos granted the first Chrysobull to Genoa, the Genoese fleet had already begun raiding Venetian ships.

The third reason for the inclusion of the Genoese into the Constantinopolitan markets was less about naval strength and its ability to disrupt Venetian trade and more about Genoa's friendly relationships with the Crusader States, the Holy Roman Empire, and the Byzantine Empire. Genoa's participation in the First Crusade was strictly naval as it provided the western armies with protections against the Egyptian navy and raided fortified positions along the coasts.¹²⁷ The successful crusade helped Genoa establish itself as a regional naval power which

¹²⁶ Quentin van Doosselaere, *Commercial Agreements*, 49.

¹²⁷ Caffaro, *Annals of Genoa*, 23-4.

gained favor with the Byzantines who saw Genoa as a potential ally in reestablishing the Roman Empire.¹²⁸

The Chrysobull of 1169 marked the beginning of Genoese trade activities with Constantinople. The treaty granted typical economic rights that Venice and Pisa acquired in their respective Chrysobulls, but Genoa obtained more privileges.¹²⁹ The most significant grant given was Genoa's ability to choose the location of its trade quarter. The significance was twofold: first, the Genoese quarter was established within the Severan Wall and second, the Genoese quarter lay directly south of the Harbor of Neorion and the Harbor of Prosporon.¹³⁰ Within the Severan Wall resided all imperial administration buildings, the Great Palace (residence of the emperor), the Acropolis, Hagia Sofia, and the Hippodrome. The close proximity to Byzantine imperial power showed that Manuel I Komnenos both trusted and respected the Genoese enough to grant the immovable property within the Severan Wall and saw the Genoese as an important southern European ally. This suggests that Manuel I Komnenos understood that Genoa's economic protections and regulations could compete with the Venetians' and dilute Venice's market share in Constantinople. The location of the quarter is also important in understanding the economic and political composition of Constantinople in the late-twelfth century. Both harbors of Neorion and Prosporon were used by the Venetian and Pisan merchants for decades until each were granted a *scala*, and even after this, the landing-stages were still meant to be built

¹²⁸ The Byzantine perspective of the First Crusade was mixed. In the beginning of the crusade, the Byzantines had requested that they should gain all territories conquered by the crusading armies as the Holy Lands had been a part of the Roman Empire. The establishment of the Crusader States sent political relations between the western kingdoms and the empire into disarray. Genoa's navy, stronger than the Byzantines', was viewed by the empire as a potential ally in their quest to reconquer the Roman Empire. For further reading see, Christopher Tyerman, *God's War: A New History of the Crusades* (2006).

¹²⁹ Penna, 134.

¹³⁰ See Appendix 1. The Severan Dynasty ruled the Roman Empire from 193 to 235 beginning with Septimus Severus (r.193-211). For more on the Severan Dynasty see, Eric DeSena (ed.), *The Roman Empire During the Severan Dynasty: Case Studies in History, Art, Architecture, Economy, and Literature*, (Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias, 2013).

within the harbors. Venice's and Pisa's quarters were further west which meant Constantinopolitans were less likely to purchase goods from them. The Genoese quarter, on the other hand, lay directly between the city's markets and the harbor, allowing merchants and Byzantines to trade fluidly from market to port and vice versa. The Chrysobull of 1169 marked a substantial shift in foreign trade and Italian political relations through the establishment of a Genoese trade quarter and its proximity to the imperial administration and the two harbors that Venice and Pisa relied on for trade. This treaty influenced the Venetians' systematic retaliation to fight off the ongoing trade war between themselves and the Byzantines.

The hostility by the Venetians towards the opening of the Genoese quarter was felt immediately. In 1171 an armed mob of Venetian and Pisan subjects in Constantinople entered the Genoese quarter, burning buildings, looting stores, and killing Genoese merchants. The massacre set in motion several important events that followed, and many historians consider this the first event that led to the Fourth Crusade (though this essay argues that, the first step was simply the granting of immovable property to the Venetians in Constantinople). The reaction to the massacre was swift as Manuel I Komnenos ordered, in secret, the arrest of all Venetians and Pisans residing within the boundaries of the Byzantine Empire and the confiscation of all Venetian and Pisan goods, property, and other belongings.¹³¹ Manuel I's actions were important to understanding the political motivations as his desire for economic reforms drew him to despise the Venetians. This shows that the Byzantines no longer believed that Venice should retain any

¹³¹ Choniates, *O City of Byzantium*, 97. From the translation, "Buffeted by a series of villainies, one worse than the other, the emperor now recalled their offensive behavior on Kerkyra and turned the scales against them, spewing forth his anger like the tempestuous and stormy spray blown up by a northeaster or north wind. The misdeeds of the Venetians were deemed to be excessive, and letters were dispatched to every Roman province ordering their arrest, together with the confiscation of their communal properties, and designating the day this was to take place. On the appointed day they were all apprehended, and a portion of their possessions were deposited in the imperial treasury, while the greater part was appropriated by the governors." See also, Judith Herrin, *Byzantium: The Surprising Life of a Medieval Empire*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007).

political and economic relationships with the empire, turning instead towards their trustworthy ally Genoa.

After the Byzantine-Venetian War of 1171, which was a direct result of the mass incarceration of Venetian subjects, both Venice and Genoa began taking their hostilities out in the Mediterranean Sea. Piracy against the Venetians became the standard operations as the Genoese fleet was built for such actions. To aid the Genoese in disrupting the Venetian maritime shipping and trade routes, Manuel I Komnenos enacted and enforced a clause in the 1169 Chrysobull that reimbursed Genoa for any captured or destroyed merchant ship within imperial waters. The Chrysobull affirmed, “if some Genoese ship passes from some part and is wrecked within Romania (i.e., in Roman lands), and it happens that goods are removed by someone, then an imperial order follows that the lost goods will be recovered and regained.”¹³² The Genoese acquired this privilege for two specific reasons. The rise in piracy from Venetian ships justified adding the provision to safeguard Genoese ships and to encourage Genoese merchants to continue trading despite the risks involved. The Byzantines also needed to ensure relations with Genoa remained stable as part of their desire not only to reconquer the west but also to keep a strong ally.¹³³ By removing fears of Venetian piracy in open waters with legal provisions designed to reimburse Genoese merchants, the Byzantines buttressed their relationship both politically and economically with Genoa.

After attempts to distance himself from Venice, Manuel I Komnenos presented a new Chrysobull in 1170 that granted further legal protections on economic privileges between

¹³² Prepared by Penna, 149. The Chrysobull was translated in Latin for the Genoese merchants and is in the *Codice Diplomatico dell Repubblica di Genova*. From the text: “Et si aliqua navis Ianuensium a quacumque parte venerit, naufragum passa fuerit in Romaniam et contrigerit de rebus eius auferri eis ab aliquo, fiet preceptum imperii eius vindicandi et recuperandi res amissas.”

¹³³ Whether or not the reimbursement of goods came from the seized possessions from 1171 is unknown but given Manuel I Komnenos’ hatred for the Venetians, it can be inferred that the Byzantines would deplete the Venetian holdings before tapping into their own gold reserves.

Constantinople and Genoa. By now the Genoese began expanding trade into the Crusader States and the Egyptian Caliphate. The emperor allowed Genoese merchants the use of Constantinople as a half-way point between Italy and the Middle East. To ensure their quarter remained secure, the Chrysobull mandated, in addition to protections for the Genoese en route to Jerusalem, numerous legal and financial protections on all Genoese merchants and their goods. The Chrysobull stated the following:

The law orders, that if Peter suits Paul asking from him a good worth 100 nomismata and the defendant Paul has not any immovable property, such as a house or a field, the judge forces Paul to give a guarantee. The guarantee which is required from the defendant Paul is of the following kind: Paul will have to give as a guarantor someone wealthy and important, who will guarantee for him as follows: “I, X, (for example John), guarantee completely that Paul does not come to the court; if Paul does not come to the court, then I, John will give the amount that Peter is asking from Paul.”¹³⁴

This section of the Chrysobull was a scheme by the Byzantines and Genoese merchants to ensure two economic goals. Allowing the Genoese to take no responsibilities in their transactions with other merchants in Constantinople ensured that merchants could purchase products from Venetian and Pisan stores and divert payments, leaving the debts to be paid by a third party, typically wealthy Byzantine nobles and Venetian merchants.¹³⁵ The treaty also allowed Genoese

¹³⁴ Prepared by Penna, 144-5. The text is originally written in Greek with no Latin translation. The Greek states, “χελεύει δ νόμος, ἵνα, ἐάν ἐνάγη δ Πέτρος χατά τοῦ Παύλου ἀπαιτῶν ἀπ’ αὐτοῦ πράγμα ρ’ νομισμάτων ἀξιον, ὁ δέ ἐναγόμενος Παῦλος οὐκ ἔχει ἀκίνητον, οἷον ὀσπήτιον ἢ κτήμα, ἀναγκάζη αὐτόν Παῦλον ὁ δικαστής, ἵνα δώσει ἀσφάλειαν. Ἡ δέ ἀσφάλεια, ἦν ἀπαιτοῦσι τόν ἐναγόμενον Παῦλον, τοιαύτη ἐστί δίδωσι γάρ ἐγγυητήν ὁ Παῦλος εὐπορον καί ἀξιόλογον ἐγγυώμενον ὑπέρ αὐτοῦ οὕτως “ἐγὼ ὁ δεῖνα, ὁ Ἰωάννης τυχόν, ἐγγυώμαι τόν Παῦλον, ὅτι ἐκ παντός, ἵνα παρίστατι εἰς τό δικαστήριον εἰ δέ φύγη ἀπό τοῦ δικαστήριου ὁ Παῦλος, ἵνα δώσω ἐγὼ ὁ Ἰωάννης, ὅσον ζητεῖ ποσόν ὁ Πέτρος ἀπο τοῦ Παύλου.” The use of names such as Peter, Paul, and John is likely rooted in Christianity as the three were disciples of Jesus Christ.

¹³⁵ Wealthy Byzantine merchants who were arrested for various crimes and had possessions confiscated by the emperor were used to pay for some of the debts, yet most third-party payers were wealthy Venetians who had a financial stake in Venetian and Pisan stores operating in the city. The legal problems that developed as a response to the diversion of payments was that they were not enforced as the treaty was intended. Corruption within the imperial offices allowed wealthy Venetians to pay the debts under the table to ensure their financial records were not made public to the Byzantine Emperors.

merchants who were not regularly trading in the city to divert payments to other Italian merchants. Since the city was viewed as a rest stop, Genoese merchants who primarily dealt with trade in the Middle East could avoid some financial burden by diverting costs. This scheme had a definitive effect on relations among Venice, Pisa, and the Byzantines, because the diversion of costs meant that the Venetians would bear the financial burden of Genoese merchants. To remedy the effects of piracy conducted against Genoese merchant vessels by their adversaries, the Byzantines established shipwreck and piracy clauses to bolster trade and further degrade relations with Venice and Pisa. Like the 1169 Chrysobull, the Chrysobull of 1170 mandated prosecution of piracy against Genoese ships. Protections against piracy or shipwreck from Venetians included the complete restitution of goods by the Byzantines.¹³⁶ This was an economic victory for Manuel I Komnenos because he realigned all political powers against Venice while shifting all economic powers to Genoa and Constantinople. The Chrysobull of 1170 provided the Genoa with legal protections on financial transactions which allowed its merchants to divert payments to Venetian and Pisan merchants. This mandate influenced retaliatory actions against Genoese mercantile ships traversing in the Aegean and Mediterranean Seas.

Unfortunately, Byzantines' relations with the Genoese soon followed the pattern of relations with Pisa when in 1182 the Greek population entered the Latin trade corridor (the three Italian quarters) and massacred the entire population. The tragedy left all the trade quarters burnt and destroyed, angering the Genoese and the other Italian states. The cause of the massacre is widely debated by historians, with many suggesting that the Constantinopolitans were to blame

¹³⁶ Penna, 156. The clause is similar to the one stated in the Chrysobull of 1169. The difference between the two is the first treaty states that the goods will be salvaged from the wreck instead of paying restitution for the sunken goods. The Chrysobull of 1170 proclaimed, "Et si navigium Genuense a quocumque loco veniens in Romaniam periclitetur et contingerit ut liquid ex iis quae in ipso sunt ablatum fuerit a quocumque, fiat de his vindicta a maiestate mea et restauratio huiusmodi rerum."

due to their hatred of the Venetians, while others suggest that the Venetians were to blame because of their economic takeover and disregard for Greek merchants.¹³⁷ Regardless of the differing views, the Pisans and Genoese did eventually reduce their presence in the city while Venice was still bent on maintaining a strong foothold. Genoa reduced its presence by the turn of the century as profits from previously established trade in the west increased while trade in the Islamic world continued to grow concurrently. It was not until ten years later that the Genoese were financially compensated, albeit with a caveat. Isaac II Angelos ratified a Chrysobull in 1192 that compensated, at most, a fraction of the value of lost goods because the emperor placed fault at the feet of the Italian states rather than his own subjects.¹³⁸ In seeking to change the economic and political catastrophes caused by the Komnenian Dynasty, Isaac II Angelos hoped to cut ties once and for all with the Italian states, which reacted with aggressive attacks against all Byzantine ships.

Despite the Chrysobull of 1192's attempt at partial financial restoration, the Genoese and Pisans had already eroded any chance of recompense. By the time of the 1192 Chrysobull, piracy in the Aegean had reached its peak as Genoa and Pisa rejoined their previously shattered alliance and focused on raiding Byzantine ships. Focusing on the plethora of Greek islands in the Aegean, many of which were uninhabited, Genoa and Pisa used their navies to establish

¹³⁷ Nicol, *Byzantium and Venice*, 104. Nicol suggests that the attack of the Genoese quarter in 1171 was the work of the Byzantine subjects not Venetians, and the retaliation against the Venetians by the emperor only emboldened the people to attack again.

¹³⁸ Prepared by Penna, 166-7. From the text, located in the *Codice Diplomatico dell Repubblica di Genova*: “deductis iis quae iuste solvenda sunt a publico. Si vero non receperint, non contra singulos Genuenses debitores procedatur, sed contra publicum ipsum intra statutum tempus, et si quidern obtigerit compensari, habeant iustrum ratione dati: si vero non obtigerit, acquiescant in protection maiestatis meae, quae potest ex legibus scienter largiri etiam aliena, et sic tribuentur talia populo Genuensi.”

advantageous positions to raid Byzantine ships.¹³⁹ The actions were most likely targeted to reclaim the cost of damages incurred during the massacre in 1182, which explains why the 1192 Chrysobull restituted only partial financial costs. Regardless of what the Byzantines tried politically, Genoa would continue to raid various islands and cities across the Aegean Sea until the commencement of the Fourth Crusade.¹⁴⁰ The attitudes of the Genoese changed from accepting and supporting Byzantine economic reforms to antagonistic for their lack of support after raids against the Genoese quarter in 1171 and the Massacre of the Latins in 1183.

From a small republic to a Mediterranean economic power, Genoa's ascension nurtured the determination of the Byzantines under Manuel I Komnenos to fight Venetian aggression in Constantinople. The inclusion of Genoa into the city cemented its status as an economic power that rivaled Venice and unveiled the curtain of hatred that the Venetians had kept hidden for decades. The culmination of Genoese raids on Venetian ships, Byzantine reforms meant to bolster Greek businesses, and the collapse of the Pisan quarter gave way to a war that altered the political and economic fabric of the Mediterranean.

¹³⁹ Benedict of Peterborough, *Gesta Henrici II et Ricardi I*, volume 2, ed. William Stubbs, (1867) 198-199. Originally published by Her Majesty's Stationery Office, London and reprinted in 1965 by Kraus Reprint Ltd. This version can be found at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. The text states, "Nomina autem quarundam principalium insularum sunt haec; insula de Creta quae magna est et fertilis: et in medio insulae hujus videtur mons magnus qui dicitur mons Cameli; insula de Rodes, insula Cipre, insula Mil, insula Hiscopiae, insula Yski in qua crescit copia speciei quae dicitur Masitc: insula Ysame, insula Ynixea, insual Stuple, insula Cuverfu, insula Serfent, insula Sasent, insula quae dicitur Fale de Compar, insula Andre, insula Tine. Sed in multis insularum instarum nemo habitat propter metum piratarum. In quibusdam illarum habitant piratea. Sunt et Aliae in mari Graeco insulae quae hic non scribuntur."

¹⁴⁰ Fotheringham, "Genoa and the Fourth Crusade," 29-32.

V. THE FOURTH CRUSADE

The past three chapters have examined the prolonged and often violent trade war between the Italian states and the Byzantine Empire in the twelfth century, yet the question over why this economic conflict merged with the Fourth Crusade still remains unanswered. The situations in the Holy Lands and the Aegean Sea were stochastically independent in all facets of life. The economic struggles in the Aegean Sea had no tangible correlation with the religious and political situations developing in Rome and Jerusalem. So then how did these two worlds suddenly collide and engulf the Mediterranean into a whirlwind of uncertainty and chaos? The answer lies in understanding how the following three disconnected events became intertwined: the religious motivations of Pope Innocent III, the political turmoil following the usurping of Isaac II Angelos (r.1185-95, 1203-4), and the financial manipulation by Doge Enrico Dandolo.

The historiography has suggested that the Massacre of the Latins (c. 1171) was the primary root cause for the sack of Constantinople thus offering an overly simplistic explanation for the Fourth Crusade. This has contributed to a substantial gap between the political and religious motivations in Rome, France, and Egypt. The massacre was an event in which the Greek population began killing Italians throughout the empire after the Byzantine imperial administration ordered the seizure of all lands and assets owned by Italians. The historiography failed in understanding that the Massacre of the Latins did not occur spontaneously nor was it the result of a singular event. Instead, the massacre was the culmination of decades of open hostility

and civil unrest against the Venetian merchants in Constantinople. The origins of the massacre can be traced to the ever-growing population and economic influence the Italians had in the city in the mid-twelfth century. Their influence became intolerable and influenced Manuel I Komnenos to seize all Italian holdings.¹⁴¹ The popular coup by Andronikos in 1171 brought out a state of hysteria among the Greeks, which broke out into widespread killings. As the massacre was carried out by Greek subjects and not the Byzantine imperial administration, the Doge of Venice did not see justification for war, and yet historians still suggest that this event was the root cause of the sack of Constantinople. Instead, as will be shown, the Massacre of the Latins played no substantial role in the reasoning behind Doge Dandolo's diversion of the crusaders to Constantinople. Rather, a series of events had descended upon the city of Venice that created or reinforced existing motivations.

V.i. POPE INNOCENT III AND THE HOLY LANDS

Prior to his coronation as Pontiff, Lotario de' Conti di Segni was a young member of a powerful family from Gavigliano, Italy.¹⁴² As nephew to Pope Clement III (r.1187-91), Lotario studied scripture in Rome and Paris before concluding his studies in Bologna and later joining the priesthood. As the nephew of His Holiness, Lotario was promoted quickly and by 1191, at

¹⁴¹ Choniates, *O City of Byzantium*, 97. From the text, "Buffeted by a series of villanies, one worse than the other, the emperor now recalled [the Venetians'] offensive behavior on Kerkyra and turned scales against them, spewing forth his anger like the tempestuous and stormy spray blown up by a northeaster or north wind. The misdeeds of the Venetians were deemed to be excessive, and letters were dispatched to every Roman province ordering their arrest, together with the confiscation of their communal properties, and designating the day this was to take place [12 March 1171]. On the appointed day they were all apprehended, and a portion of their possessions was deposited in the imperial treasury, while the greater part was appropriated by the governors."

¹⁴² John C. Moore, *Pope Innocent III (1160/61-1216): To Root Up and to Plant* (Boston: Brill, 2003), 3-5. The Conti di Segni family was an immensely powerful Italian house from the thirteenth to seventeenth century before the last bloodline went extinct in 1808. The family is credited with producing numerous Cardinals and four Popes.

the young age of twenty-nine, he acquired the title of Cardinal-Priest of Santa Pudenziana in Rome.¹⁴³

His election as Pontiff in 1198 was controversial and his selection of name, Innocent III, shocked many within the College of Cardinals.¹⁴⁴ Pope Innocent III, only 37 years of age at his coronation, immediately began consolidating his power within the Church by regaining papal authority over the armies of Europe. His dissatisfaction with the Islamic reconquest of the Holy Lands was enough to justify his desire to assume command of the armies of the Papal States and the crusader armies in the Holy Lands. This dissatisfaction was based on two issues. First, after learning of the mistakes in previous crusades, Innocent III recognized that the squabbling among kings and emperors had bogged down military operations, slowed troop movement, and ultimately hindered efforts to conquer and reconquer the Holy Lands. Rather than allowing the kings and emperors to command the crusader armies, Innocent III demanded that all soldiers who took part in the campaigns be under his authority. Second, as the armies were controlled by kings, emperors, and lords, the task of organizing a cohesive offensive proved difficult and allowed the Islamic armies to successfully counter the crusaders.¹⁴⁵ Together, these issues

¹⁴³ Anonymous, *Gesta Innocenti III*, trans. James M. Powell (Washington D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 2004), 3-4.

¹⁴⁴ His predecessor, Pope Celestine III (r. 1191-98), requested before his death that Cardinal Giovanni di San Paolo be elected as pope by the college. Lotario successfully prevented this and was himself elected after the second round of ballots. Lotario chose the name Innocent because of his dissatisfaction with Clement III's policies and his reverence for Innocent II's (r.1130-1143) success during the Second Lateran Council in 1139 and the *Omne Datum Optimum* in which the Papacy formally endorsed the Knights Templar.

¹⁴⁵ The most recognizable event was the Second Crusade (1147-1150). Over thirty kings, emperors, and lords led military operations in three different regions (Iberia, Holy Lands, and northeastern Europe) which saw catastrophic defeats as political squabbling allowed the Islamic armies to out-manuever their opponents. Iberia was the only region considered a partial success. See Michael Gervers (ed.), *The Second Crusade and the Cistercians* (London: Palgrave MacMillan, 1992); Ibn Al-Qalanisi, *The Damascus Chronicle of the Crusades*, trans. by H.A.R. Gibb (New York: Dover Publications, 2002); Jonathan Philips, *The Second Crusade: Extending the Frontiers of Christendom* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010); and Jason T. Roche and Janus M. Jensen, *Second Crusade: Holy War on the Periphery of Latin Christendom* (Belgium: Brepols Publishing, 2015).

influenced the Pope's decision to assume control over all crusading efforts. With the control of the armies, Innocent III began formulating an operation to reconquer the Kingdom of Jerusalem.

After his coronation, the Byzantine Emperor Alexius III Angelos (r. 1198-1203) sent messengers to demand military action be taken against the Islamic armies in Syria and Palestine. To the Byzantines, the reasoning was simple: the empire was threatened on all sides and needed relief, particularly in Anatolia and Syria.¹⁴⁶ In return for military action by His Holiness, Innocent III demanded the Greek church return "back to the obedience of the Apostolic See, its mother, from whose magisterium it had withdrawn."¹⁴⁷ Innocent III desired the reunification and the end of the East-West Schism that had hindered relations. In his correspondence with the Byzantine emperor, the Pope called on the Greeks to end the schism and rejoin the Roman Church, stating:

You have asked, because you are in doubt and desirous to learn the reason we call the Roman Church one and universal in our letters, as it is now divided in certain particular ways; since the shepherd is one and the flock is one, even if there are several pastors appointed under one prince of pastors, Christ. But we respond thus to your questions. The church is called universal for two reasons. For the understanding of things said must be taken from the reason for speaking, since the thing is not subordinate to the word but the word is subordinate to the thing. The church, which is made up of all the churches, is called universal, which in Greek is called by the word catholic. And, according to this understanding of the word, the Roman church is not the universal church but part of the universal church, namely, first and particularly like the head in the body, since the fullness of power is in it, while some share of the plenitude devolves on the others. And that the universal church is called one, which contains all of the other churches under it; and according to this reckoning of the name, only the Roman church is called universal since it alone by the privilege of its singular dignity is in charge of the others. Just as God is called the universal

¹⁴⁶ John Van Antwerp Fine, *The Late Medieval Balkans: A Critical Survey from the Late Twelfth Century to the Ottoman Conquest* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1994), 29-46. While Anatolia and Syria were enveloped in war between the Islamic armies of Egypt and Arabia, the Seljuk Turks, and the Byzantines, the empire faced potentially catastrophic invasions in the Balkans from the Kingdoms of Bulgaria and Hungary.

¹⁴⁷ Anonymous, *Gesta Innocenti III*, 77.

Lord, not as if He is now divided into very special or subordinate types, but because all things are under his dominion.¹⁴⁸

The correspondence between Innocent III and Alexios III Angelos demonstrates the important religious motivations of both participants regarding the assistance of military forces in the Holy Lands. Innocent III's authoritative prose suggests his strong desire for reunification with the eastern church. The reunion of the Greek church with Rome would both strengthen the political power of the Papacy and extend Christian influence in the Middle East. While the Crusader States had either waned or collapsed, a Roman Catholic Byzantine Empire would bring military and economic relief to them. The absorption of the Greek church would allow the Papacy to increase a military presence in the region and protect economic trade routes in Anatolia and Syria and Christian pilgrims journeying to Jerusalem and would decrease the political influence of the Ayyubid Sultanate. For Innocent III, the deal would have been a non-zero-sum game. His Holiness would finally reunify the Greek church into one universal church, while simultaneously completing his personal goal of reconquering the Holy Lands.

For Alexios III Angelos, the prospect was conflicting. The need for military aid in the eastern territories was of critical importance to retain the empire and its influence in the region. The aid would also allow the Byzantines to redeploy their forces west to quell insurgency in the Greek territories against the Bulgarians and Vlachs who were encroaching upon the borders.¹⁴⁹ Politically, the agreement would have allowed the Byzantines to mend relations with western European kingdoms. Since the end of the First Crusade, Byzantine relations with the west

¹⁴⁸ Anonymous, *Gesta Innocenti III*, 86.

¹⁴⁹ This encroachment was caused by the usurping of Isaac II Angelos. As emperor, he successfully arranged numerous dynastic marriages including his niece Eudokia Angelina to Stefan Nemanja of Serbia and his sister Theodora to Conrad of Montferrat. In 1186, he married Margaret of Hungary, the daughter of King Bela III (r. 1172-1196). After Alexios III Angelos took the throne, the Hungarians sought retaliation, demanding Isaac II Angelos be reinstated as emperor. See Gerhard Jaritz and Katalin Szende (eds.) *Medieval East Central Europe in a Comparative Perspective: From Frontier to Lands in Focus* (New York: Routledge, 2016).

crumbled due to a failure in upholding the treaties regarding the reallocation of conquered lands to the Papacy. By agreeing to the terms demanded by Innocent III, the Byzantines would restore relations and increase political power and influence throughout Europe and the Middle East.

Religiously, Alexios III Angelos was conflicted. The Great Schism in 1054, caused by political and religious differences between the Papacy and the Byzantine Empire, established the eastern Orthodox Church and effectively divided Christianity in Europe. Since then, attempts were made to reunify the two churches under one leader, but no such success had occurred. This created numerous tensions during crusading efforts throughout the eleventh and twelfth centuries and only hurt Byzantine relations with the west. By reunifying with the Roman church, the Byzantines would reduce their expenditures on religious structures by allowing the Papacy to fund the churches. Yet, Alexios III Angelos practiced the Greek Orthodox beliefs and still supported a divided Christian church.

Pope Innocent III's correspondence with the emperor continued to deteriorate because Alexios III Angelos refused church reunification, insisted that the Greeks have administrative control over Cyprus, and made other demands that would strengthened Byzantine influence.¹⁵⁰ To remedy this situation, the pope instructed that letters be sent to the Bulgarian Emperor Kaloyan (r.1196-1207) to persuade his empire to rejoin the Roman church. Kaloyan responded enthusiastically about rejoining with the church by stating:

In the Name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, Amen. Since it has pleased our Lord Jesus Christ to make me lord and emperor of all Bulgaria and Wallachia, I have enquired in the writings of our ancients and the books and laws of our predecessors, emperors of blessed memory, how they established the kingdom of the Bulgars and the imperial foundation, and, on careful investigation, we have found in their writings that those emperors of the Bulgarians, Simon, Peter, and Samuel, and our

¹⁵⁰ Anonymous, *Gesta Innocenti III*, 89-92. See also, Jonathan Harris, *Byzantium and the Crusades* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2014).

predecessors received the crown for the empire and the patriarchal blessing from the most Holy Roman Church of God and the Apostolic See, Peter the Prince of the Apostles. So, also, my empire has desired to receive the blessing and the foundation of the imperial crown as head of his empire, and the patriarchal blessing from the Roman church and from the Apostolic See, Peter, the Prince of the Apostles, and from our most Holy Father, the universal pope, Innocent III, and the mandate of the Lord Pope shall have been given and granted in the city of Trnovo of my Empire, for the making and consecrating of archbishops, metropolitans, and bishops, and the remaining ecclesiastical sacramental obedience he granted to my empire so that they may have the fullest power in every holding and things belonging to my Empire.¹⁵¹

The purpose of reconverting the Bulgarians was clear. The empire bordered the Byzantine territory in Greece, which suggests that Innocent III was attempting to surround the Byzantines and isolate them religiously and politically. Converting Bulgarians to Roman Catholicism meant that the Byzantines could no longer rely on other eastern Orthodox rulers for support.¹⁵²

Reunifying eastern empires and kingdoms back into the Roman church allowed Innocent III to increase his political influence and put more pressure on the Byzantines to accept his proposal.

This strategy would come to fruition during the Fourth Crusade as the Bulgarians and Hungarians supported and supplied the crusading armies at Zara and Constantinople. Further correspondence with the Bulgarians strengthened their relations and continued to isolate the Byzantines.¹⁵³

While Innocent III was corresponding with the eastern European empires, the Holy Lands had descended into turmoil. In 1193, Saladin died and his Sultanate descended into disarray as

¹⁵¹ Anonymous, *Gesta Innocenti III*, 102.

¹⁵² King Emeric of Hungary (r.1196-1204), successor of Bela III, continued the claim that Alexios III Angelos was the illegitimate ruler of the Byzantine Empire and thus continued to support the efforts of the Papacy, despite Hungarian rulers practicing either pagan or orthodox faiths.

¹⁵³ See Alexandru Madgearu, *Byzantine Military Organization on the Danube, 10th-12th Centuries* (New York: Brill, 2013); and A. Madgearu, *The Asanids: The Political and Military History of the Second Bulgarian Empire (1185-1280)* (New York: Brill, 2017).

his sons and brother fought over succession.¹⁵⁴ His eldest son al-Afdal, Governor of Damascus, attempted to consolidate his power against his siblings Zahir al-Ghazi (controlled Aleppo), al-‘Aziz ‘Uthman (controlled Egypt), and Saladin’s brother al-‘Adil (controlled upper Mesopotamia).¹⁵⁵ The following war between al-Afdal and Uthman resulted in the reduction of military and political influence. Uthman’s untimely death in 1198 sparked al-‘Adil to declare himself the Sultan of Egypt and Syria and declare war on his nephews al-Afdal and al-Ghazi in Damascus. By 1201, the war had concluded; Damascus lay in ruins, Byzantium made small gains in Anatolia, the Khwarazmian Empire expanded into the Levant, and the once impressive Ayyubid Sultanate could only muster a fraction of its strength.¹⁵⁶

Four months prior to Uthman’s death, aware of the situations in the Holy Lands and the decline of the Ayyubids, Pope Innocent III issued the bull *Post Miserabile*, which formally declared war against the Sultan of Egypt and Syria. Understanding the failures of the second and third crusades in 1147/50 and 1189/92, respectively, Innocent III determined that any effort to reconquer Jerusalem would be futile so long as the Egyptian capital remained. Therefore, the crusade’s primary objective was to conquer the Egyptian cities of Alexandria and Cairo, which would have effectively unseated Islamic control over the Holy Lands. The capture of Egypt would thus weaken the defenses surrounding Jerusalem, Aleppo, Acre, and the other Palestinian cities. While the military objectives were meticulously planned, gathering support proved difficult. Innocent III never acknowledged the need for European kings to join the military efforts in *Post Miserabile*, opting instead to have local bishops recruit soldiers by granting

¹⁵⁴ For more on Saladin’s life and success see Baha’ al-Din Ibn Shaddad, *The Rare and Excellent History of Saladin or al-Nawadir al-Sultaniyya wa’l-Mahasin al-Yusufiyya*, trans. by D.S. Richards (Burlington: Ashgate, 2002).

¹⁵⁵ Ross Burns, *Damascus: A History* (New York: Routledge, 2005), 179.

¹⁵⁶ Despite not receiving help from the Papal States, the Byzantines successfully reclaimed a portion of Anatolian territory from the Seljuk Turks. The Seljuk Turks were later destroyed by internal rebellion in Persia and replaced by the Khwarazmian Empire in 1077. See Homa Katouzian, *The Persians: Ancient, Medieval, and Modern Iran* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010).

remissions of sin to those who joined.¹⁵⁷ To help spread the word of the crusade, the pope ordered Cardinal-Priest Soffredus, Cardinal-Deacon Gratian, and Cardinal-Priest Peter Dianus to gather the armies of Venice, Pisa and Genoa, and France and England, respectively.¹⁵⁸ It was then that the focus of the crusade shifted from Egypt to Constantinople.

V.ii. VENETIAN EXPLOITATION OF THE FOURTH CRUSADE

The arrival of emissaries to all three northern Italian states with economic holdings in Constantinople was cause for concern. By the turn of the century, Venice, Genoa, and Pisa were actively engaged in economic warfare in Constantinople, piracy in the Aegean Sea, and economic reforms in northern Italy. Their arrival invited each republic a new objective, namely, to use the crusade as leverage to gain favor both politically and economically. Politically, the crusade was advantageous to the Italian states for two reasons. Accepting the pope's decree meant their armies would aid in the capture of territory throughout the Holy Lands, which would increase their influence in the Middle East while also gaining favor with the pope. Religiously, the northern Italian states were not seen as pious, which suggests the pope had believed the republics prioritized economic profits over a religious life. Improving relations with the papacy would enhance their position both in northern Italy and in Constantinople.

The possible economic advantage was obvious. The emissary's purpose was to secure a contract with one of the republics to construct a fleet large enough to carry the crusading force. As the Byzantines had refused all requests for reunification with the Roman church, they simultaneously had refused all access of their territory for crusading efforts. This meant that

¹⁵⁷ Anonymous, *Gesta Innocenti*, 61-3.

¹⁵⁸ Anonymous, *Gesta Innocenti*, 62-3.

Pope Innocent III's armies could not travel through the Byzantine Empire to reach the Holy Lands, as had been done during the First Crusade. Therefore, securing a contract to build a fleet was important to the papacy. The Italian states' financial and military gains from the contract would enforce their claims in the Aegean Sea and increase their strength to combat the other participants.

The negotiations between the crusading armies and the Italian states provided evidence to why Venice exploited the crusaders. Robert of Clari's account of the crusade gave a vague explanation why the Venetians were able to accept the emissaries' negotiations:

They commanded the messengers to hire vessels to transport four thousand knights and their harness and one hundred thousand men on foot. The messengers got ready their gear and went straight on until they came to Genoa, and they spoke to the Genoese and told them what they were seeking, and the Genoese said they could not help them in it at all. Then they went to Pisa and spoke to them of Pisa, and they answered them that they did not have so many vessels and could not do anything for them. Then they went on to Venice and spoke to the doge of Venice and told him what they were seeking: that they wanted to hire passage for four thousand knights and their harnesses and for one hundred thousand men on foot. When the doge heard of this, he said he would think on it, for so great an affair ought to be well considered.¹⁵⁹

While Robert of Clari's account does not give the exact reason why the Pisans and Genoese refused to build the navy, several factors can be implied. The late-twelfth century saw extensive naval conflict in the Aegean Sea by the Italian states. Piracy operations by Genoa and Pisa were met with the large Venetian and Byzantine fleets which led to many casualties. Merchant ships had protection against enemy activity in various parts of the Aegean and Mediterranean Seas, which meant that Pisa and Genoa faced a gradual deterioration of both their naval and mercantile fleets. The loss of their naval capacity meant they could not sufficiently secure transportation for

¹⁵⁹ Robert of Clari, *The Conquest of Constantinople*, trans. Edgar Holmes McNeal (New York: Columbia University Press, 1969), 37.

the crusading armies. The logistical barriers for providing enough vessels were another issue that Pisa and Genoa faced. Both republics did not have territory capable of producing the quantity of lumber the crusaders wanted and while they certainly had a large network of territories abroad, they could not rely on them to supplement the resources. Further preventing their ability to construct the fleet was the lack of infrastructure. Pisan and Genoese ports were fitted primarily for commercial use, which suggests that naval shipyards were either in Corsica or Sardinia.¹⁶⁰ The location is important because the delay in both construction and transportation would hinder military operations and lead to delayed departure.

Venice, meanwhile, had all the necessary logistical parameters required to undertake such a gargantuan task. By 1200, the republic was no longer merely a city-state and had amassed numerous holdings in the Balkans and along the eastern shores of the Adriatic Sea. Shipyards were built along the coast for to increase the naval strength of the republic and to establish a network of ports to protect Venetian merchants. This network allowed Venice to construct the vessels requested by the crusaders more quickly. Acquiring lumber was not an issue either as the Balkan territories and northeastern Italy provided the Venetian navy with an abundance of materials. But without a labor force willing to construct the fleet, the crusaders would be stranded in Italy. The Venetians suspended all commercial activity in the city and, perhaps to a lesser extent throughout the republic, redirecting all subjects to work on the construction of the fleet.¹⁶¹ This ensured the crusaders that the Venetians were willing to honor the agreement between both parties.

¹⁶⁰ The islands of Corsica and Sardinia had an abundance of forests for ship building, whereas the lands surrounding Pisa and Genoa were either less abundant or were used for animal husbandry and farming.

¹⁶¹ Robert of Clari, 38.

The terms of the contract indicate the Venetians knew that the crusaders were unable to finance the voyage. Geoffrey of Villehardouin presented a different perspective from Robert of Clari, implying that the terms were grossly one-sided. While Robert of Clari wrote that the Venetians agreed to a cost of eighty-seven thousand marks,¹⁶² Geoffrey of Villehardouin suggested a higher sum:

We [Venice] will build horse transports to carry 4,500 horses and 9,000 squires, with 4,500 knights and 20,000 foot sergeants travelling in ships. And we will agree to provide food for all these horses and people for nine months. This is the minimum we would provide in return for a payment of four marks per horse and two marks per man. The total cost of what has just been outlined would amount to 94,000 marks. And what's more we will provide, for the love of God, fifty armed galleys, on condition that for as long as our association lasts we will have one half of everything we capture on land or at sea, and you will have the other.¹⁶³

The difference between both sources is key to understanding why the Venetians exploited the crusaders. First, Robert of Clari's account of the Fourth Crusade was more focused on the religious perspectives and thus presented the preparations in an overview. Villehardouin's account was more narrative and detailed and provided a more coherent understanding of the reasons behind the Venetian's financial prowess. Villehardouin's account indicated that the Venetians purposefully increased the quantity of vessels to be built to force the crusaders into debt. Robert of Clari's account shows that the crusaders needed a fleet for only four thousand knights and a hundred thousand foot soldiers, yet Villehardouin showed that the emissaries agreed to 4,500 knights, and roughly 130,000 foot soldiers.¹⁶⁴ While this may seem trivial, it is important because the Venetians sought payment in terms of how many soldiers each vessel

¹⁶² Robert of Clari, 37.

¹⁶³ Geoffrey of Villehardouin, *The Conquest of Constantinople*, trans. Caroline Smith (New York: Penguin Group, 2008), 9.

¹⁶⁴ In medieval warfare, a foot sergeant typically led about five men in a formation. This suggests that for 20,000 foot sergeants, there would have been 100,000 infantrymen.

could support rather than how many actual soldiers partook in the crusade. This had created a situation in which the crusading army could not financially afford the vessels and were forced, by legal contract, to find a way to pay Venice.

The collection of coins from each soldier arriving in Venice had further influenced the Venetian's financial exploitation of the crusaders. As the army was so large, many of the crusaders were sent to other ports to stay until they would depart. This meant that only a fraction of the crusaders were physically within Venice, and as such, only a fraction of the debt was paid.¹⁶⁵ Doge Dandolo, now in control of the fate of the crusaders, met with the other lords in Venice and suggested a new offer, stating:

The king of Hungary has captured Zara in Slavonia from us, which is one of the strongest cities in the world. We will never recover the city with our own forces except we have the help of these men. Let's ask them to help us take Zara, in return for which we will suspend their debt to us of 34,000 marks of silver until such time as God allows us and the pilgrims to win sufficient booty together.¹⁶⁶

In 1183, Zara, a Catholic city along the eastern Adriatic coast in the Balkans, had successfully rebelled and broken off from Venice and was under the protection of the Hungarians. Venice had previously used the city to increase its military, economic, and political influence in the region. Economically, Zara had stored much of the excess wealth that was generated in Venice between the eleventh and twelfth centuries. Its rebellion left Venice in fear of recession which had influenced Dandolo's decision to recapture the city.

A few days after Dandolo's offer was accepted, a man arrived in the city and changed the entire trajectory of the crusade. As previously mentioned, Alexios III Angelos had usurped his

¹⁶⁵ Geoffrey of Villehardouin, 18. In fact, the crusaders in Venice mustered less than half the costs owed.

¹⁶⁶ Geoffrey of Villehardouin, 19. By the time Doge Dandolo spoke with the Venetian lords, the crusaders had been able to collect another 20,000 to 30,000 marks from the forces residing in different ports.

brother Isaac II Angelos and sentenced him to prison along with Isaac's son, the future emperor Alexios IV Angelos (r.1203-04). After a few years in prison, Alexios IV Angelos had escaped and fled the empire with the help of a group of loyalists. He arrived in Venice and immediately sought the aid of the crusaders. The Marquis Boniface of Montferrat, later the king of Thessalonica (r. 1205-07), listened to his plea and persuaded Dandolo to help Alexios IV Angelos after the armies had conquered Egypt.¹⁶⁷ This development had serious implications for the crusaders, the papacy, and the Byzantine empire. Alexios IV Angelos had agreed that for the crusader's support in crowning him emperor, he would reunify the Greek church with Rome, something that Pope Innocent III desired and Alexios III Angelos despised. This was enough to convince the pope to allow the armies, upon completion of the Egyptian campaign, to lead the effort in removing the usurper from Constantinople. Dandolo saw the arrival of Alexios IV Angelos positively and used the heir's presence for his own political gains. With the arrival of Alexios IV Angelos in Venice, his commitment to reunify the two churches, and the signing of new contracts between the crusading leaders and the doge, the armies were finally able to sail towards Zara.

The crusaders' military operations and strategic planning for Zara are outside the focus of this thesis, yet the religious, political, and economic consequences leading up to and following the siege are important. Prior to the battles, it was customary for all crusading soldiers to make a vow to God, typically requesting protection and strength from God, remission of sins, and entrance into Heaven.¹⁶⁸ These vows by the soldiers were considered the only contracts they needed during the campaign. So when the leaders formalized contracts aiding Alexios IV

¹⁶⁷ Geoffrey of Villehardouin, 21.

¹⁶⁸ Thomas F. Madden, "Vows and Contracts in the Fourth Crusade: The Treaty of Zara and the Attack on Constantinople in 1204," *International History Review* 15 (1993): 442.

Angelos, many soldiers felt betrayed. Desertion became common even before the armies left Venice and were exacerbated following the capture of Zara. As religious tensions continued among the lower ranks, the political negotiations that occurred simultaneously between Venice and the Kingdom of Hungary had stalled. The Hungarians had joined the crusade at the request of the papacy, most likely to persuade the Byzantines to reunify with the Roman church. If the city was predominantly Christian and the Hungarians had joined the crusade, why then did the crusaders attack Zara? The only plausible answer was that the Doge of Venice wanted to recapture the city and expand Venice's economic influence in the Balkans, while simultaneously paying off the crusaders' debts.

The successful capture of Zara caused new problems for the crusaders, Doge Dandolo, Alexios IV Angelos, and Innocent III. The battle had raged throughout November of 1202 which meant that the armies had to wait until the spring of 1203 to sail towards Egypt and Palestine.¹⁶⁹ During that winter, thousands of rank-and-file soldiers deserted along with several barons and lords, many of whom fled towards Hungary. Others felt wary and sinful of their actions against other Christians. This posed many difficulties that the Venetians and Alexios IV Angelos had to overcome. For Enrico Dandolo, the Treaty of Venice was set to expire in September 1203 and most of the conditions had already been met. The only condition that was still outstanding was the repayment of the Venetian fleet, for which a majority of the costs had already been paid following the capture of Zara. Final completion of the payment would therefore have to come from Constantinople. The Massacre of the Latins still influenced Dandolo's desire for retaliation and the city's repeated abuses against the Venetian quarter had to be solved. For Alexios IV Angelos, the army's general unrest forced him to capitulate on certain demands from the enlisted

¹⁶⁹ As winter settled in, the weather prevented ships from sailing through the Adriatic Sea until the springtime.

as he desperately needed their aid in recapturing Constantinople. That winter the Treaty of Zara was signed as more of an extension to the Treaty of Venice than a new agreement. The deal outlined the plan for the crusading army to take Constantinople, crown Alexios IV Angelos co-emperor with his imprisoned father, and then sail to Egypt.¹⁷⁰

The papacy was rightfully angered at the Venetians' attack on Zara. Innocent III issued orders of excommunication against both the Venetians and crusaders, yet the order did not reach the army.¹⁷¹ The guilty consciences of the enlisted soldiers weighed heavily and many feared their contracts with God were in jeopardy. The crusading bishops sought to mitigate this issue and reassure the crusaders that their contracts with God were still intact by absolving all soldiers of their sins.¹⁷² These effects led many to demand additional concessions in the Treaty of Zara and while the leaders included the provision to attack Egypt after Constantinople, no additional concessions were granted.

The crusaders arrived in Constantinople in the spring of 1203 with the desire for vengeance against the Greeks. After an unsuccessful siege in 1203 caused three separate fires that scorched the city, the crusaders finally captured the city in 1204.¹⁷³ It was at that moment when tens of thousands of Venetians and Franks began to sack the city. Geoffrey of Villehardouin wrote on the pillaging that ravaged the city:

There too [in the palace of Blachernae] were found treasures so very great that there were no fewer than in Bucoleon. Each man garrisoned the castle that had been given up to him with his own men and had the treasure guarded. The other men had scattered

¹⁷⁰ Geoffrey of Villehardouin, 25-27.

¹⁷¹ Donald E. Queller and Thomas F. Madden, *The Fourth Crusade: The Conquest of Constantinople*, 2nd edition (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1997), 79-82.

¹⁷² Queller and Madden, 81-82.

¹⁷³ Geoffrey of Villehardouin, 66. From the text; "During the night, near to Marquis Boniface of Montferrat's camp, certain men – I'm not sure who – set a fire between themselves and the Greeks, fearing the Greeks might attack them. The city began to catch fire and burned very fiercely. It burned all that night and the next day until vespers. This was the third fire in Constantinople since the Franks arrived in that country, and more houses were burned than there are in the three largest cities in the kingdom of France."

throughout the city and seized much booty, and the spoils were so great that no one could tell you how much it amounted to in gold, silver, tableware, precious stones, samite, silk cloth, garments of vari, grey fur and ermine, and all the fine things that were ever found on Earth. And Geoffrey of Villehardouin, marshal of Champagne, bears faithful witness in accordance with his certain knowledge, that no such spoils were won in any city since the creation of the world. . . for those who had been in poverty were now in wealth and luxury.¹⁷⁴

The sack of Constantinople was the result of poorly organized retribution on the part of the Doge of Venice and the leaders of the crusading army. The original intent that was agreed upon at Zara was that the armies would acquire only enough gold and silver to pay off any remaining debts owed to the Venetians – between 30,000 and 35,000 marks. Instead, the soldiers ransacked every building that was still standing and hoarded more than was intended. The leaders of the crusade and Pope Innocent III became worried about the vengeance taken out on the Greeks and attempted to remedy the situation. The leaders organized three collection points and demanded the soldiers return any excess loot that exceeded the predetermined pay from the Treaty of Zara. Still, many of the Venetians kept their spoils, which forced Innocent III to threaten any soldiers who failed to return their loot with excommunication. Yet despite these efforts by the papacy and crusading leaders, the Venetians still held onto their gold.¹⁷⁵

The purpose for the collection points was both economically and politically important. The Treaty of Zara demanded that the crusaders repay any outstanding debts that they owed Venice and acquire the necessary funds and supplies needed to conquer the Holy Lands.¹⁷⁶ Their

¹⁷⁴ Geoffrey of Villehardouin, 67.

¹⁷⁵ Geoffrey of Villehardouin, 67-8. From the text; “It was then made known throughout the camp that all valuables should be brought forward for collection, as had been promised with the sworn oaths and on pain of excommunication. Three churches were named as the sites for this collection . . . and individuals began to come forward with their booty and it was gathered together. Some were honest in presenting their spoils, others deceitful. Greed, which is the root of all evil, knew no restraint; for themselves, and Our Lord started to love them less. . . . The money and booty were gathered, but you should know that that nearly all of it was brought forward.”

¹⁷⁶ Queller and Madden, 99.

attempt to uphold the treaty was also politically motivated, with the coronation of Alexios IV Angelos and Isaac II Angelos as co-emperors being at the forefront. Alexios IV Angelos had promised to reunify the Greek church with Rome, yet to ensure that this and other concessions were met, the crusading leaders and the Doge of Venice had to give a quid-pro-quo. If the leaders did not give the concessions and allowed the soldiers to keep their loot, relations between both churches and all participants may have ended in an altercation. This also made sense economically. The need to rebuild the empire was one of Alexios IV Angelos' most pressing issues. A depleted treasury and no money in circulation would have severely hindered any attempt to rebuild the empire and defend its Anatolian territories. The logistics of such transportation would have slowed down the crusaders' campaign and worsen an already evaporated morale.

When the crusaders finally repaid their debts and set off towards Egypt, the Mediterranean had already changed immensely. The Byzantine Empire lay in ruins, destroyed by a Christian army on its way to Egypt. The Venetians acquired Greek territories and restored trade rights in Constantinople which allowed them to increase their economic and political influence throughout the Mediterranean. The influence of the pope had suffered a major setback from which it never fully recovered. The Pisan and Genoese advanced their economic influences throughout Europe, while the Ayyubid Caliphate regained its strength and defeated the French armies in Egypt. So what happened to all the participants of the trade wars and the Fourth Crusade? How did the crusade fundamentally alter the political sphere throughout the Mediterranean?

VI. CONCLUSION

Throughout the history of the eastern Mediterranean the Fourth Crusade was ranked among the most significant geo-political transformations. In the twelfth century, trade wars between the Italian states and the Byzantine Empire had become so extensive and violent that war appeared as the most plausible outcome. While the Byzantine-Venetian War of 1171 was entirely limited to naval conflicts, the tensions between the two powers did not cease and instead only demonstrated the hostilities the ongoing trade war emphasized. The next thirty years continued to underline the economic disparities in Constantinople between the Italian and Greek merchants. It was during these decades that the historiography suggested that the roots of the sack of Constantinople originated. Yet, as shown, the twelfth-century trade wars involving Venice, Genoa, Pisa, and the Byzantines influenced the decisions by Enrico Dandolo to reroute the crusading army to the Byzantine capital. For all participants of the Fourth Crusade -- the Republics of Pisa, Genoa, and Venice, the Byzantine Empire, the Papacy, the French Empire, and the Ayyubid Caliphate -- the events of 1202-04 produced lasting consequences that shaped the Mediterranean.

The establishment of the Pisan and Genoese trade quarters in Constantinople stressed the economic problems Greek subjects faced when trading with the Venetian merchants. Pisan merchants were at a disadvantage immediately upon arriving in the city. The Chrysobull of 1111 did not include several important privileges that Venice already obtained; instead Pisan

merchants entered Constantinople with a weakened mercantile infrastructure that failed to garner enthusiasm for trade. This allowed Venetian merchants to dominate the few Pisan businesses that were established in the capital. That supremacy, coupled with an absence of interest in trade by Pisan merchants with the Greeks, drove the Venetian merchants to absorb Pisa's trade quarter to use as a proxy for continued economic influence. The disconnect between the Pisan government and its merchant class was definitive; Pisan merchants would rather trade with their pre-established trade partners across the Mediterranean than trade in Constantinople.

After the Fourth Crusade, the Pisan republic saw a period of territorial, economic, and religious expansion. It maintained its territorial possessions in Corsica and Sardinia yet lost the Balearic Islands. The general political stability throughout the Mediterranean allowed the Pisans to increase their economic activity and acquire trade rights to several cities. The republic's most notable areas of economic expansion included southern Italy (Salerno, Naples, and Palermo) and the Holy Lands, (Antioch, Tyre, and Acre).¹⁷⁷ Even the Ayyubid Caliphate granted trade rights to Pisa and its merchants began trading in Alexandria and Cairo by the beginning of the thirteenth century. The economic expansion of Pisa following the crusade showed the ability of the merchants to redirect their efforts and to secure the political support of other kingdoms and empires.

The Republic of Genoa was in a similar situation to that of the Pisan Republic. Genoese merchants preferred trading with France, Egypt, England, and the Holy Roman Empire, because the government acquired suitable and bilateral trade agreements.¹⁷⁸ These relationships proved profitable which suggests that Genoese trade in the eastern Mediterranean was secondary to

¹⁷⁷ Armando Lodolini, *Le Repubbliche Del Mare*, (Rome, 1967) 48-67.

¹⁷⁸ While Genoa traded primarily with western and central Europe, the Egyptian markets provided exotic goods to supplement with traditional European commodities. The exotic goods were also more expensive and typically reserved for the wealthier classes, reducing the number of Genoese merchants in the region.

western European trade. Genoa's longstanding legal code on financial investment proved to be the factor that allowed Genoese merchants to survive and thrive after 1204. The joint-investment strategy allowed Genoa to seek out more cities for trade while maintaining minimal financial risk to investors. Unlike the Venetians, who had a higher financial risk associated with trade and thus had to aggressively influence specific markets, the Genoese could focus their attention on multiple cities at once. Genoa's first Chrysobull granted commercial and trade rights similar to Venice's which, combined with the joint venture model, produced strong profits and increased incentive to trade.

After the Fourth Crusade, Genoese trade was briefly diminished as the Venetians established the Latin Empire in Constantinople. Genoa's trade routes throughout the eastern Mediterranean were severely impacted as a result. After failed attempts to divert their investments elsewhere, Genoa reached an alliance with Emperor Michael VIII Palaiologos of Nicaea (r. 1259-61). Angered by the Venice's actions in the Fourth Crusade, Michael VIII Palaiologos sought to recapture Constantinople and reinstall a Greek emperor in the city. Upon the successful recapture of Constantinople in 1261, the Genoese enjoyed immense commercial power in the eastern Mediterranean.

The Papacy's role in politics fundamentally changed after the Fourth Crusade. The beginning of this transformation of political power began with Innocent III's uncle, Pope Clement III, and his liberalization of papal authority. Clement III's reforms attempted to decrease the political power of the papacy within the Christian kingdoms. This attempt was met with mixed results within Rome and the European kingdoms. When Innocent III was elected as pontiff, he had attempted to strengthen papal authority over the Christian kingdoms throughout Europe. These attempts initially proved to be successful with the Kingdom of Hungary and the

Empire of Bulgaria and Wallachia reconverting from the Greek to the Roman church.¹⁷⁹ Yet, despite these successful attempts at reconversion, the papacy suffered enormous repercussions after the Fourth Crusade. Papal authority had been mostly relegated to the Papal states and its territories. Continued attempts to restore papal authority by issuance of more military actions by Innocent III failed.¹⁸⁰ The result was that many western European kingdoms distrusted not only papal bulls calling for holy wars but also the pope's authority over the European kingdoms.

Since the end of the Fourth Crusade, the papacy never regained its prominence and authority in everyday life nor succeeded in raising a large enough crusading force to reclaim the Holy Lands. The following crusades never reached the success nor size of their predecessors and all failed more spectacularly. The Fifth Crusade (1217-21) attempted to replicate the original plans of the Fourth Crusade, but because the Ayyubid Caliphate had roughly twenty years to rebuild from the infighting, the crusaders were heavily defeated.¹⁸¹ The Sixth Crusade (1228-9) saw almost no military actions, instead opting for political maneuvering that saw minimal success in regaining lands for the Kingdom of Jerusalem.¹⁸² The Seventh Crusade (1248-54) did not garner any popularity and as such, failed to recapture Jerusalem.¹⁸³ Other crusades included the Children's Crusade (1212), which had failed spectacularly, and the Baron's Crusade (1239),

¹⁷⁹ The Kingdom of Hungary, while officially reconverted to the Roman church, still practiced paganism and Greek orthodoxy. Additionally, the Kingdom of Aragon had signed a treaty with the papacy that officially recognized papal protection of the kingdom, effectively making Aragon a protectorate or vassal of the Papal States.

¹⁸⁰ Innocent III sought numerous anti-Semitic policies to curb the growth of the European Jewish population. The pope also sought extensive persecutions against pagans and heretics.

¹⁸¹ For more on the Fifth Crusade, see E.J. Mylod, et al. (eds.), *The Fifth Crusade in Context: The Crusading Movement in the Early Thirteenth Century* (New York: Routledge, 2017); and Megan Cassidy-Welch, *War and Memory at the Time of the Fifth Crusade* (Pennsylvania: Penn State University Press, 2019).

¹⁸² For more on the Sixth Crusade, see David Abulafia, *Frederick II: A Medieval Emperor* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992).

¹⁸³ For more on the Seventh Crusade, see Jean de Joinville, *The Life of Saint Louis*, in *Chronicles of the Crusade*, trans. Caroline Smith (New York: Penguin Publishers, 2008); and Peter Jackson, *The Seventh Crusade, 1244-1254* (New York: Routledge, 2007).

which was the most successful campaign in terms of territorial gains since the First Crusade.¹⁸⁴ Despite these crusades and their various successes and failures, one thing was clear: the military and political power of the papacy had evaporated.

The Republic of Venice, the only true “winner” of the Fourth Crusade, emerged as a continental power. Its geographic advantage allowed the republic to invest heavily in seaborne mercantile trade. The conquest of the eastern Adriatic and the political alliances in central and southern Italy secured a prominent shipping route for Venice’s merchants while also establishing protection for land routes. Venice used its trade networks across the eastern Mediterranean, particularly the Venetian quarter in Constantinople, as a midway point for its merchants to stop between Venice and the Crusader States and Egypt.

Venice’s trade relation with the Byzantines was initially celebrated because it was the first major European power to establish a trade quarter within the city’s walls. The introduction of the Venetian trade quarter was complemented with several financial privileges that had allowed trade to thrive and profits to increase. Despite these privileges and initial enthusiasm from the Byzantines, the Venetian economic ambitions grew. Venice demanded new Chrysobulls meant to increase its shares in several important industries while increasing profits for Venetian merchants. The new Chrysobulls were also meant to compete with and dissuade Pisan and Genoese merchants from trading in Constantinople. These included tax exemptions on imported goods, acquiring immovable property to increase the size and influence of the trade quarter, and the creation of a *scala* to circumvent export taxes. While these privileges certainly helped drive higher income and revenue, competition with the Pisan and Genoese merchants created more

¹⁸⁴ For more on the Children’s Crusade and the Baron’s Crusade, see Gary Dickson, *The Children’s Crusade: Medieval History, Modern Mythistory* (London: Palgrave MacMillan, 2008); and Michael Lower, *The Baron’s Crusade: A Call to Arms and its Consequences* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005).

unilateral Chrysobulls that descended into a century-long trade war that influenced the sack of Constantinople.

This trade war, primarily between the Venetians and Byzantines, was exacerbated by the election of Enrico Dandolo as Doge of Venice. Dandolo's objectives were to increase the financial influence in Constantinople and Byzantine dependence on Venetian markets. The Venetian merchants demanded a new currency that did not rely on the Veronese coins which threatened Venetian commerce when the Veronese coins were devalued in 1180. Dandolo instructed to mint a new currency that was more portable and less volatile. The new Venetian *grosso* proved effective in reforming the Venetian economy and increased the dependency of Byzantine subjects on the Venetian currency.

The Fourth Crusade proved successful for the Venetians. Doge Dandolo was repaid in full for the cost of the Venetian fleet that was intended to transport the crusaders to Egypt. With the city occupied by the Venetian and crusading armies, Dandolo began to introduce new economic reforms that were meant to rebuild the city after the siege and those reforms favored Venetian commerce. Venetian commercial dominance in the Aegean became absolute and the republic's influence began to spread throughout the entire eastern Mediterranean. Politically and territorially, the small republic had become an empire. After 1204, Venice had acquired a significant amount of territory that fortified its mercantile shipping and cemented its economic power. These included the island of Crete (1204-1669), Euboea (1204-1470), and several port cities in Crimea (1204-mid thirteenth century).¹⁸⁵ The success at Constantinople allowed Venice the economic, political, and cultural foundations to thrive as an important European power from the thirteenth to the sixteenth century.

¹⁸⁵ See Appendix.

The Byzantine Empire suffered the greatest in all measurable facets: economic, political, religious, and cultural. The twelfth-century trade wars with the Italian states proved too difficult to curb for the Byzantine leaders. The Byzantines' hopes for strong trade partners led to several Chrysobulls that granted exceptional trade privileges from 1100 to 1140. These privileges were too generous and as trade increased during this time, so too did the Italians' market shares in important industries within Constantinople. The economic reforms under Manuel I Komnenos attempted to redirect control of the Byzantine markets from Venetian control. The reforms included a systematic redesign of the urban geography which saw the relocation of the *agoras* to the southern half of the city, away from the Italian trade quarters. The construction of new ports was designed to give the Byzantine merchants greater access to shipping and trade. Manuel I Komnenos mandated that all stores be reorganized into guilds, backed by the imperial administration, which strengthened the influence of Byzantine artisans who were competing with Italian merchants. While these reforms were successful at protecting Byzantine merchants and goods, they also aggravated the Italian states and emboldened them to take increasingly hostile actions.

After Manuel I Komnenos' death, Byzantine attempts to reduce Venetian economic influence only caused often violent reactions. These actions influenced Doge Dandolo, whose reforms punished Byzantine merchants. With the announcement of a new crusade against the Ayyubid Caliphate, Doge Dandolo gladly accepted the request to provide a navy to transport the armies. Using political cunning and financial savvy, he successfully negotiated a contract with the crusaders, a contract that put the army into debt. The debt allowed Dandolo to control the army and reroute it from Egypt to Constantinople.

The sack of Constantinople was devastating for the Byzantines politically. The empire was occupied by the Venetians and crusading leaders who crowned Alexios IV Angelos as co-emperor with his father Isaac II Angelos. As the crusaders were in control of the city and the Greek church temporarily absorbed into the Roman church, the Latin Empire emerged. The result of the reorganization into the Latin Empire was the division of the lands into three successor states: the Despotate of Epirus, the Empire of Nicaea, and the Empire of Trebizond.¹⁸⁶ All three claimed to be the legitimate successors to the Byzantine Empire as all three maintained the Greek church. It would be the Empire of Nicaea that would successfully recapture Constantinople and dissolve the Roman church. Simultaneously to this period of political chaos, the Mongol invasion drove a mass migration of Muslims into Anatolia leading to the Ottoman rise in the fifteenth century.

At the beginning of this thesis you stood on a blood-stained street, laying witness to unbearable death and destruction. The great city of Constantinople was burning as soldiers ransacked stores and homes. The Fourth Crusade was an event long remembered as the crusade that attacked a Christian city, a crusade that was not like the others, and a crusade spoiled by greed and vengeance. For every participant of the trade wars and crusade, the events of 1204 proved to be either the beginning or the end of their economic, political, and cultural identity. The Fourth Crusade's greatest impact was on the Byzantine Empire and whether because of the political or economic reasons suggested, the picture is nonetheless clear. For every reform the Byzantines enacted, for every step towards economic sovereignty, the heirs of the Roman

¹⁸⁶ For more on the three successor states, see Donald M. Nicol, *The Despotate of Epiros 1267-1479: A Contribution to the History of Greece in the Middle Ages* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1984); Michael Angold, *A Byzantine Government in Exile: Government and Society under the Laskarids of Nicaea, 1204-1261* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1975); and William Miller, *Trebizond: The last Greek Empire of the Byzantine Era: 1204-1461* (Argonaut Inc., 1969).

Empire regrettably took two steps backward. Perhaps the simplest way to understand the tumultuous events of the eleventh and twelfth centuries can be best described thus: when one great empire falls, another rises in its place. Indeed, the Byzantine Empire had fallen and the Republic of Venice rose up in its place.

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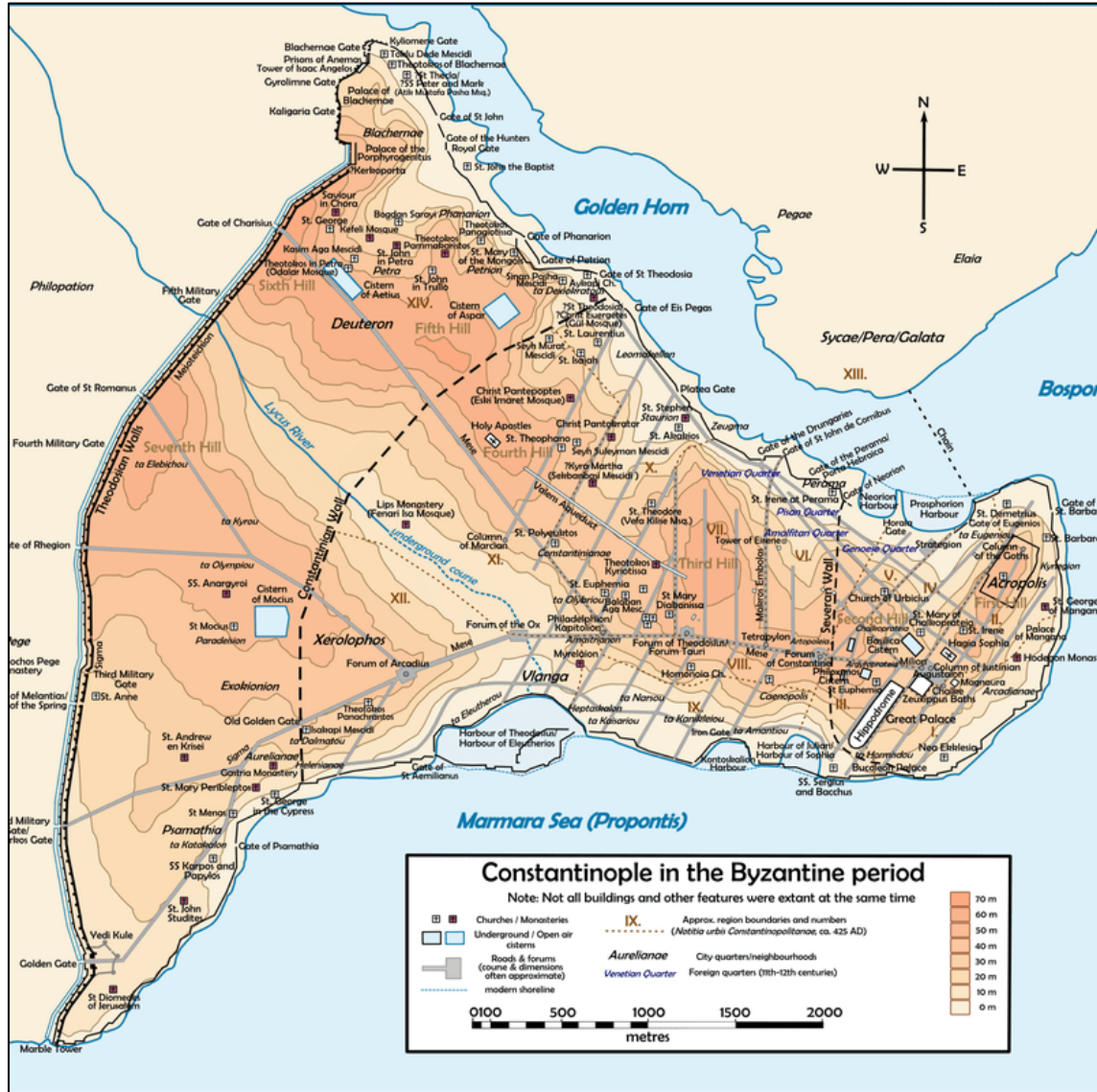
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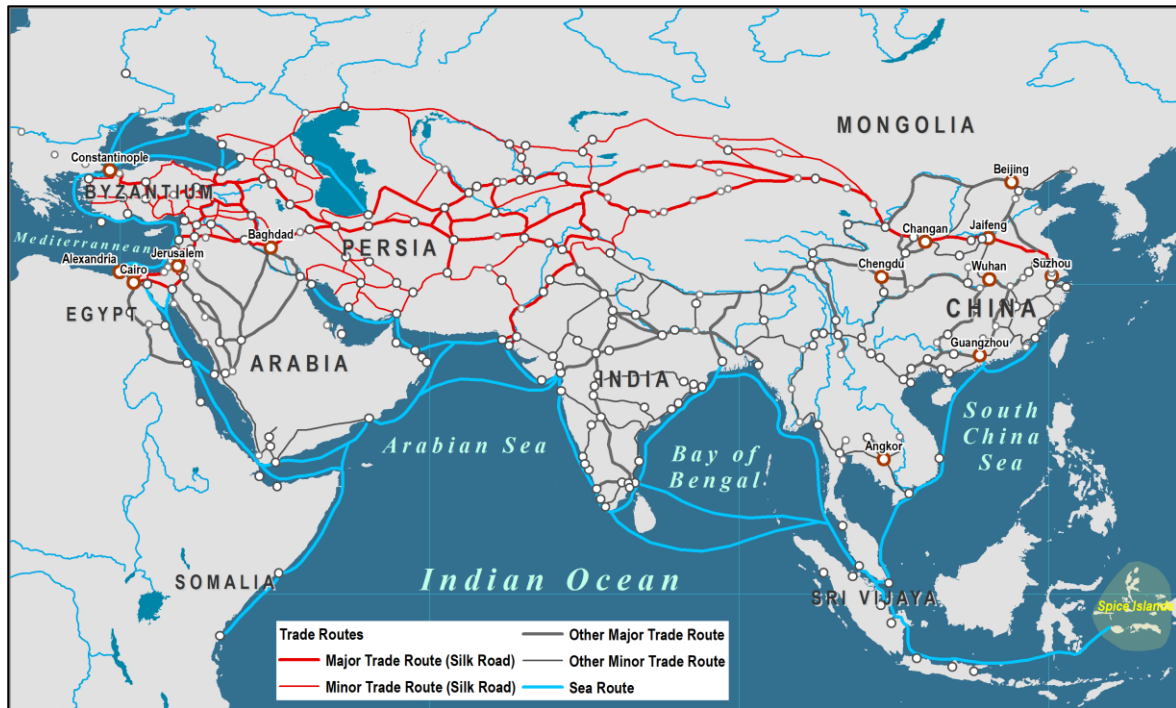
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APPENDIX

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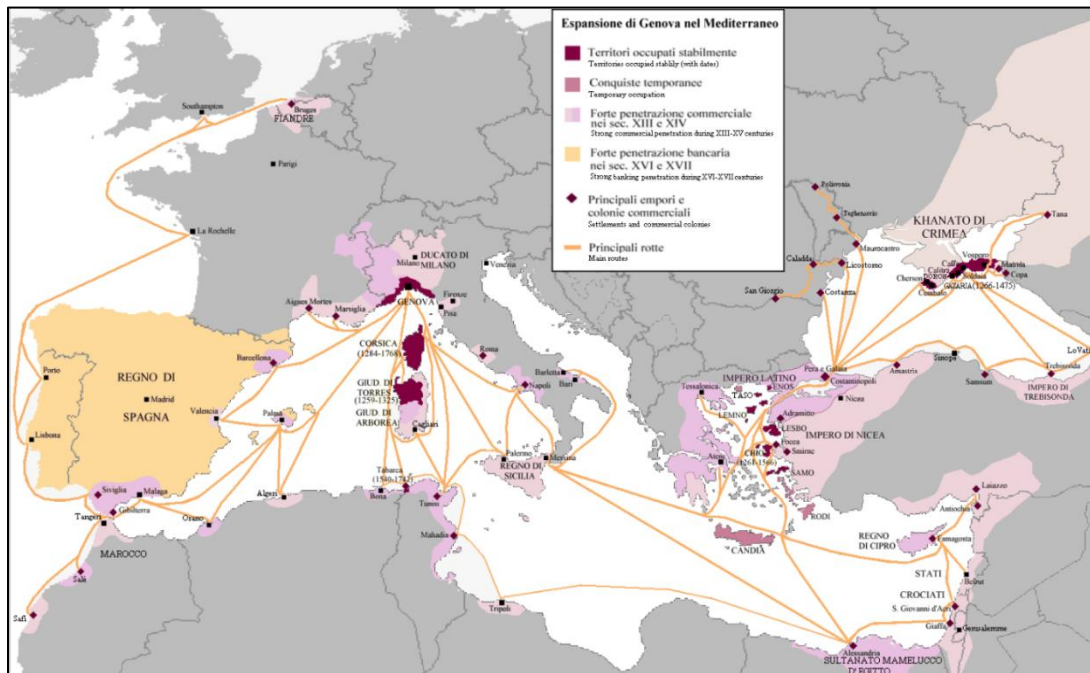
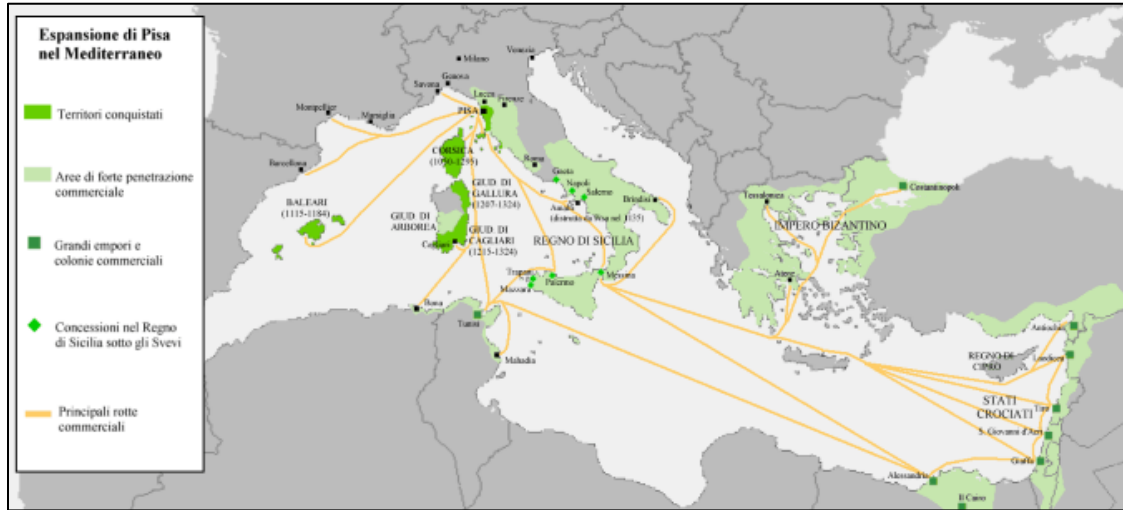


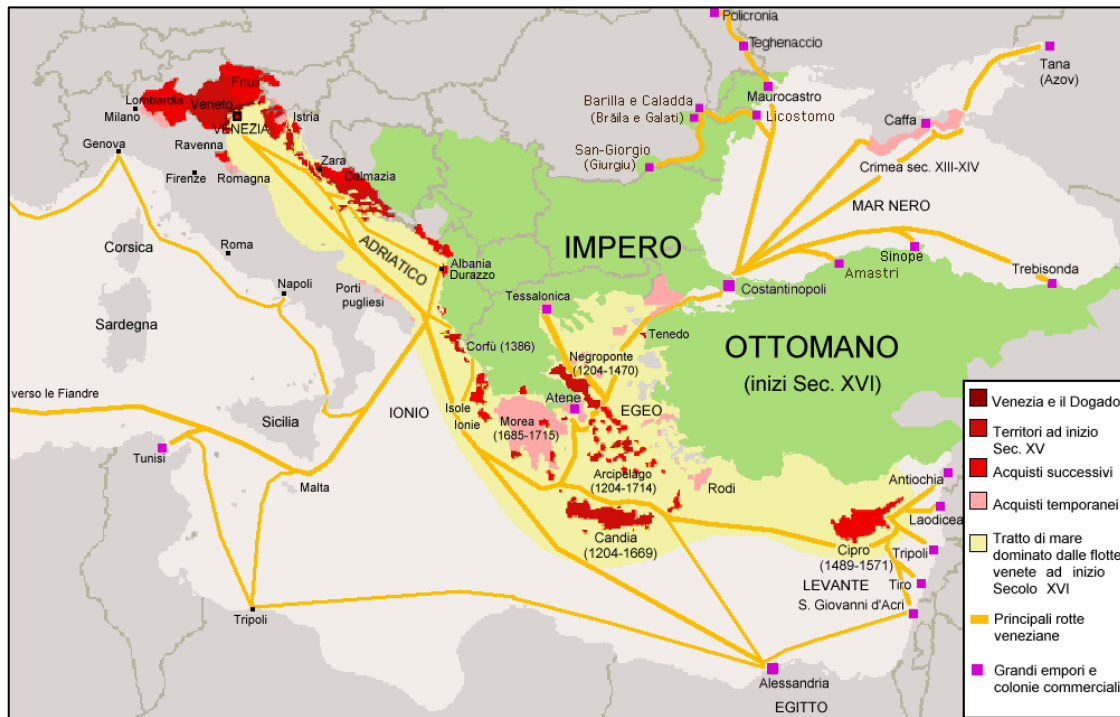












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