

The path to Antioch: an analysis of the Norman and Greek relationships of Bohemond of Taranto

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## **Abstract**

Bohemond of Taranto has been painted by modern scholars as an opportunistic knight who embarked for the east from Sicily with the Latin armies of the First Crusade in order to acquire a significant lordship for himself. However, the details of his early life and other factors which influenced his decision to abandon his holdings in Italy and journey to the east have not received adequate examination. Scholars simply mention Bohemond's early context in passing but do not investigate the important relationships with his family and other Norman leaders that forced him to depart. These include his father, Robert Guiscard de Hauteville, half-brother, Roger Borsa, stepmother, Sichelgaita, and uncle, Count Roger I of Sicily.

In addition, his subsequent relationship with the Byzantine emperor Alexios I Komnenos has, for the most part, been presented negatively as one in which both individuals distrusted each other and were unwilling participants in their alliance. While this interpretation may hold some credibility, it has become too influenced by the hindsight of knowing that Bohemond would eventually take control of the city of Antioch instead of returning it to the emperor. As a result, scholars have tended to disregard the mutual benefit they offered one another. Bohemond's desire to receive an estate in the east would profit from a powerful patron to sponsor his aims, while Alexios required an able military leader to manage his eastern borders, as had been his common practice, and defend against the encroaching Seljuk Turks. In this thesis I thus argue that the element of mutual benefit suggests their early relationship was not tense or distrustful at the outset, despite their past history, but rather cordial. I suggest this relationship only changed, once Bohemond realized the opportunity to hold Antioch for himself had become too great to ignore.

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## Introduction

Bohemond of Taranto is a controversial and, in some ways, a unique figure in the history of the expedition that comes to be known as the First Crusade (1095-1101). He is simultaneously lauded by scholars as the most experienced knight of the expedition, while also considered one of the lowliest leaders, unsupported by his kin.<sup>1</sup> As a Norman, Bohemond came from a people full of rich history: tracing their heritage from the Norse Vikings, they had settled in Normandy and, by the later eleventh century, expanded into England and southern Italy, gaining a reputation among contemporaries and early scholars as skilled and cunning mercenaries.<sup>2</sup> He was born sometime in the 1050s to Robert “Guiscard” de Hauteville, the duke of Apulia, Calabria, and Sicily (r. 1057-1085) and his first wife Alberada of Buonalbergo. Bohemond was not his given name; he was born with the more traditional Christian name Marc. His father heard about a tale of a legendary giant named Bohemond during a joyous feast, and the merriment of the banquet caused him to describe his large son in the same terms. It is not known how early in his life he received this name, but history has held on to it to the point that he is rarely, if ever, referred to as Marc in any of the traditional sources.<sup>3</sup> As the eldest son of Guiscard, the undisputed ruler of all southern Italy, Bohemond was set to take over from his father. Had this arrangement remained in place, one can only speculate if he would have ever embarked on the First Crusade, since he would have held a vast territory in southern Italy and been preoccupied

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<sup>1</sup> Georgios Theotokis notes that due to their experience against the Byzantines in the Balkans and the Muslims in Sicily, the Normans were best suited for the First Crusade. Georgios Theotokis, *The Norman Campaigns in the Balkans* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2014), 187; Luigi Russo examines the financial state of Bohemond prior to embarking on the First Crusade and concludes that Bohemond had the least financial support behind him. Luigi Russo, “Norman Participation in the First Crusade: A Re-examination” in *Warfare in the Norman Mediterranean*, ed. Georgios Theotokis (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2020), 176-198.

<sup>2</sup> John Norwich, *The Normans in the South* (London: Longmans, 1967), 70.

<sup>3</sup> Orderic Vitalis refers to him as Marc Bohemond on occasion. Orderic Vitalis, *The Ecclesiastical History of Orderic Vitalis*, ed. and trans. Marjorie Chibnall (Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1969), Book XI.12, 71, Book VII.5, 17, Book IX.4, 35.

with consolidating his position against competing Normans. However, the politics of the medieval world and the de Hauteville ambition to become the unquestionable rulers of southern Italy changed Bohemond's future. Instead of governing this vast territory in southern Italy, he found himself far to the east, holding the Principality of Antioch against the Byzantine Empire, ruled by Alexios I Komnenos (r. 1081-1118), and the various disunited emirates of the Seljuk Turks. This thesis seeks to explore what caused Bohemond to make this shift and what actions were necessary for him to accomplish this.

Before going east was ever a prospect, Bohemond was destined to inherit his father's estate and become the ruler of southern Italy. However, due to circumstances which will be discussed, his birthright was given to his half-brother, Roger "Borsa" de Hauteville. Bohemond used his military and leadership abilities in an attempt to regain his father's inheritance from his brother, but he failed to displace Roger who was able to maintain control of southern Italy and conceded only a small territory to Bohemond in Apulia. Chapter 1 will examine Bohemond's relationship with the de Hauteville family and show how his ambitions shifted from southern Italy to the east. Attempts to expand in Italy were challenged by Roger Borsa or Count Roger I of Sicily, and he had been thwarted by Alexios when he tried to advance into the Balkans. Therefore, when the opportunity of the expedition called by pope Urban II in 1095 arrived, Bohemond realized that the greatest opportunity for him lay in the east. With Latin and Greek support, he could potentially acquire territory in the Seljuk or Arab world. In order to achieve this, however, he would need to submit to the authority of Alexios. Chapter 2 will thus examine Bohemond's attempt to garner Alexios' favour at Constantinople in order to become a Byzantine-appointed leader of the expedition and with the ultimate hope of receiving command of a key city in the east from which he could expand. Chapter 3 will show that, despite having

his request for a Byzantine military title rejected, Bohemond remained loyal to the Byzantines during the crossing of Anatolia and continued setting himself up to receive the city of Antioch. It will argue that his eventual seizure of the city of Antioch from the Byzantine Empire was not premeditated from the beginning of the expedition but rather came about at Antioch only once the opportunity to do so became too great for him to resist.

## Literature and Source Review

The narrative that modern scholars of the First Crusade have tended to provide for Bohemond's early life is simply that he journeyed east after his inheritance was lost to Roger Borsa. They note the disenfranchisement he suffered and the opportunity the crusade offered him to find new lands for himself, yet they do not analyze the people and events which pushed him to join the expedition to the east. Ralph Yewdale, the author of the first monograph on Bohemond written in 1917, spends precious little time explaining the political influences which pitted significant players against the ambitious eldest son of Guiscard.<sup>4</sup> Historians writing in the mid- to late-twentieth century, such as Steven Runciman, Alan Murray, and Emily Albu, only dedicate a paragraph to Bohemond's familial situation.<sup>5</sup> Jonathan Shepard and Graham Loud simply reveal the context surrounding the civil war between Bohemond and Roger Borsa after

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<sup>4</sup> Ralph Bailey Yewdale, *Bohemond I, Prince of Antioch* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1924), 23-33. In chapter III, Yewdale focuses more on the conflict between Bohemond and Roger Borsa, rather than examining why many Norman nobles including Count Roger of Sicily supported Roger Borsa over Bohemond.

<sup>5</sup> Steven Runciman, *A History of the Crusades, Volume 1, The First Crusade and the Foundation of the Kingdom of Jerusalem* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1951), 154; Alan Murray, "The enemy within: Bohemond, Byzantium and the subversion of the First Crusade," in *Crusading and Pilgrimage in the Norman World*, ed. Kathryn Hurlock and Paul Oldfield (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2015), 37; Emily Albu Hanawalt, "Norman views of Eastern Christendom: from the First Crusade to the Principality of Antioch," in *The Meeting of Two Worlds: Cultural Exchange Between East and West during the Period of the Crusades*, ed. Vladimir P. Goss (Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute Publications, 1986), 116.

Guiscard's death, but they do not explain why he lost his inheritance.<sup>6</sup> William McQueen and Richard Upsher Smith describe how the Balkan Campaign (1081-1085) against the Byzantines had the goal of acquiring a new inheritance for him, but they do not explain why he even needed to find a new one.<sup>7</sup> John France examines the Norman involvement in the First Crusade and its link to Norman expansionism, but he leaves out the cause for Bohemond's expedition east.<sup>8</sup> In more recent scholarship, Luigi Russo notes the lack of support Bohemond received from his close family while on the First Crusade, while Daniel Franke and Georgios Theotokis describe how the expedition presented him with an opportunity to escape the pressures from his brother and uncle Count Roger I of Sicily.<sup>9</sup> However, they do not analyze the backstory deeply enough. Other authors simply skip his context altogether or mention his lost inheritance in passing, instead jumping straight into his actions during the First Crusade.<sup>10</sup> In other words, while authors have suggested possible reasons for why Bohemond likely joined the expedition to Jerusalem, they have not adequately examined those reasons.

Only a few authors have begun to examine the influences leading to Bohemond's journey east. John Norwich briefly mentions the influence his stepmother, Sichelgaita of Salerno, had on ensuring that Roger Borsa received his father's title after Guiscard's death.<sup>11</sup> Patricia Skinner develops this theme further, detailing Sichelgaita's Lombard influences and her ability to

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<sup>6</sup> Jonathan Shepard, "When Greek meets Greek: Alexius Comnenus and Bohemond in 1097-98," *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies*, 12 (1988): 242-243; Graham Loud, *The Age of Robert Guiscard: Southern Italy and the Norman Conquest* (London: Routledge, 2000), 255-260.

<sup>7</sup> William McQueen, "Relations between the Normans and Byzantium 1071-1112," *Byzantion* 56 (1986): 443-449; R. Upsher Smith, "Nobilissimus and warleader: the opportunity and the necessity behind Robert Guiscard's Balkan expeditions," *Byzantion* 70, no. 2 (2000): 515-517.

<sup>8</sup> John France, "The Normans and Crusading," in *The Normans and Their Adversaries at War: Essays in Memory of C. Warren Hollister*, ed. R. P. Abels and B. S. Bachrach (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2001), 87-101.

<sup>9</sup> Russo, "Norman Participation in the First Crusade," 202; Daniel Franke, "Strategy, the Norman Conquest of Southern Italy, and the First Crusade," in *Warfare in the Norman Mediterranean*, ed. Georgios Theotokis (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2020), 220; Theotokis, *The Norman Campaigns in the Balkans*, 185.

<sup>10</sup> Such authors include Jonathan Riley-Smith, Natasha Hodgson, Thomas Asbridge, Nicholas Paul, John Pryor, Jay Rubenstein, Rebecca Slitt, Brett Whalen, Christopher Tyerman, and Kenneth Wolf.

<sup>11</sup> Norwich, *The Normans in the South*, 187.

convince a disunified Norman aristocracy to recognize the weaker Roger over a much stronger Bohemond.<sup>12</sup> However, no author has carried out a detailed analysis of Bohemond's early life and the situation surrounding his lost inheritance.

This study does not lack in an abundance of primary source information. Hints to these relationships are present in key Norman chroniclers, most notably Geoffrey Malaterra, William of Apulia, and Amatus of Montecassino.<sup>13</sup> Additional information can be derived from near-contemporary sources such as Orderic Vitalis and William of Malmesbury.<sup>14</sup> These authors have their own biases, however. William of Apulia and Amatus lean their support towards Roger Borsa. William, who wrote his poem on the deeds of Robert Guiscard after his death, dedicates it to Roger, who was duke at the time, and promises allegiance to him.<sup>15</sup> He presents Roger as the rightful heir throughout his poem. Francesca Petrizzo suggests that William makes up for Roger's lack of military experience, in comparison to Bohemond's, by exaggerating his brave behaviour and martial qualities.<sup>16</sup> Similarly, Amatus of Montecassino, who wrote his chronicle when Guiscard was still alive, never even mentions Bohemond by name. Even though he only records Roger a handful of times, he describes how all the Norman nobles and Pope Gregory VII desired for him to succeed Guiscard, indicating his support for the younger brother.<sup>17</sup> In contrast,

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<sup>12</sup> Patricia Skinner, "'Halt! Be Men!': Sikelgaita of Salerno, Gender and the Norman Conquest of Southern Italy," *Gender & History* 12, no. 3 (November 2000): 626-632, ISSN 0953-5233.

<sup>13</sup> Geoffrey Malaterra, *The Deeds of Count Roger of Calabria and Sicily and of his Brother Duke Robert Guiscard*, trans. Kenneth Baxter Wolf (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2005); William of Apulia, *The Deeds of Robert Guiscard*, trans. G.A. Loud (Leeds Medieval History Texts in Translation: University of Leeds, 2002); Amatus of Montecassino, *The History of the Normans*, trans. Prescott N. Dunbar and ed. Graham A. Loud (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2004).

<sup>14</sup> William of Malmesbury, *Chronicle of the Kings of England*, trans. and ed. J.A. Giles (London: H.G. Bohn, 1847).

<sup>15</sup> William begins the poem with his dedication: "Pardon your poet who sings of these great deeds as best he can, illustrious Roger, worthy son of Duke Robert; it is my wish to serve your rule." William of Apulia, *The Deeds of Robert Guiscard*, 3.

<sup>16</sup> Francesca Petrizzo, "Conquest in Their Blood: Hauteville Ambition, Authorial Spin, and Interpretative Challenges in the Narrative Sources," in *Warfare in the Norman Mediterranean*, ed. Georgios Theotokis (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2020), 40.

<sup>17</sup> Amatus of Montecassino, *The History of the Normans*, Book VII.20, 175.

Orderic and William of Malmesbury write negatively about Roger Borsa and Sichelgaita but show admiration for Bohemond. For example, they both accuse Sichelgaita of conspiring against Bohemond and Guiscard to put her son as the successor.<sup>18</sup> They are not the most accurate sources, as they were not eyewitnesses to the events they wrote about concerning Bohemond, likely never leaving England. They probably wrote their chronicles from firsthand accounts and pro-Bohemond chronicles, which will be discussed below. Their admiration of Bohemond may have been influenced by the reputation he gained during the First Crusade. The accuracy of their accounts can be questioned, but they provide a different perspective than Amatus and William of Apulia. Geoffrey Malaterra, on the other hand, is a much more balanced source for examining the relationship between Roger and Bohemond, since he is fair to both brothers and does not appear to favour one over the other. He is, rather, an apologist for the Normans themselves, highlighting the strengths of both the brothers and the strategies the de Hautevilles employed to ensure control of southern Italy.<sup>19</sup> My first chapter will therefore examine these sources and the limited scholarship written on this topic to examine why Bohemond lost his inheritance and what people and events caused him to join the First Crusade and establish the Principality of Antioch.

While Bohemond's Norman relations have not received adequate examination by modern scholars, his relationship with Alexios has undergone significant attention. The issue with modern scholarship on this topic is that authors have tended to present one or the other party as unwilling participants in the alliance. Many scholars have stated that Bohemond was always intent on creating his own principality in the east and may not have been concerned with the Byzantines. Richard Smith, for example, claims that his main goal was always to carve out a

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<sup>18</sup> Ordericus Vitalis, *The Ecclesiastical History*, Book VII.7, 29-31; William of Malmesbury, *Chronicle of the Kings of England*, Book IV.2, 365-366.

<sup>19</sup> Geoffrey Malaterra, *The Deeds of Count Roger*, Book 3.42, 172; Petrizzo, "Conquest in Their Blood," 43.

territory at the edge of the Byzantine state.<sup>20</sup> Emily Albu insists that he had intended on taking Antioch independently from the Byzantines before ever reaching the city walls.<sup>21</sup> Jonathan Riley-Smith maintains that Bohemond desired his own principality and was likely willing to do it at the expense of the Byzantines.<sup>22</sup> Jay Rubenstein suggests that Bohemond had planned to begin the expedition with an attack on Constantinople and claims that he grew up with the thought that he could be a future emperor. He later concludes that Bohemond decided to be a loyal servant to Alexios only after securing promises of land in the east.<sup>23</sup> Others, like Nicholas Paul and Christopher Tyerman, tell the story of Bohemond and simply avoid the question of what his intentions may have been.<sup>24</sup>

The majority of scholars have now recognized that Bohemond must have realized the importance of Byzantine support in order for the crusade to succeed, and they suggest that he reluctantly committed his loyalty to Alexios until the backing of the empire was no longer necessary for his ambitions to be realized. Steven Runciman claims that Bohemond understood that Byzantine support was necessary for the campaign to be successful but jumped at the opportunity to get the city for himself.<sup>25</sup> Jonathan Shepard also notes that he was always suspicious of the Byzantines and gladly took advantage of the opportunity to betray Alexios at Antioch.<sup>26</sup> Ferdinand Chalandon suggests that Bohemond knew that he needed to use the Byzantines to create his own principality but was willing to carve out his own land at their

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<sup>20</sup> Smith, "Nobilissimus and warleader," 516.

<sup>21</sup> Emily Albu, "Antioch and the Normans," in *Crusading and Pilgrimage in the Norman World*, ed. Kathryn Hurlock & Paul Oldfield (Woodbridge, Suffolk: Boydell Press, 2015), 167.

<sup>22</sup> Jonathan Riley-Smith, *The Crusades: A History* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2014), 51.

<sup>23</sup> Jay Rubenstein, *Armies of Heaven: The First Crusade and the Quest for Apocalypse* (New York: Basic Books, 2011), 71, 96.

<sup>24</sup> Nicholas L. Paul, "A warlord's wisdom: literacy and propaganda at the time of the First Crusade," *Speculum* 85, no. 3 (2010): 536-537; Christopher Tyerman, *God's War: A New History of the Crusades* (London: Penguin Books, 2006), 111.

<sup>25</sup> Runciman, *A History of the Crusades*, 158, 225.

<sup>26</sup> Shepard, "When Greek meets Greek," 187, 275.

expense.<sup>27</sup> Thomas Asbridge acknowledges that Bohemond entered Byzantine service but nursed dreams of having his own lordship in the east, and he suggests that the Norman acquisition of the areas surrounding Antioch was the first step in creating the Principality of Antioch.<sup>28</sup> John Pryor and Michael Jeffreys go so far as to suggest that Alexios actively sought Bohemond's loyalty to use him to reclaim territory, while Bohemond only went along with it because he had nothing to lose from such an alliance. They claim that he did not hesitate to go back on his loyalty once he saw how easy it would be to gain Antioch on his own.<sup>29</sup> Alan Murray cautions that it cannot be known what his initial intentions were or when they changed, but he concludes that there is little reason to doubt that he saw the benefit of Byzantine employment. However, he goes on to say that by the beginning of 1098, several months before the city was taken, Bohemond had already decided not to return the city to Alexios.<sup>30</sup> Evalyn Jamison states that Bohemond wished to cooperate with the Byzantines, but she is silent on when during the expedition the decision changed.<sup>31</sup> William McQueen notes that Bohemond must have realized the need to establish strong relations with Alexios, but claims that once it was clear to him that the emperor was not going to trust him with any Byzantine authority, he decided to continue to carve out a territory for himself without the blessing of the Byzantines.<sup>32</sup> Authors like John France and Luigi Russo all seem to agree with this.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> F. Chalandon, *Essai sur le règne d'Alexis Ier Comnène (1081-1118)* (Paris: A. Picard et Fils, 1900), 94, 183-184.

<sup>28</sup> Thomas S. Asbridge, *The Creation of the Principality of Antioch, 1098-1130* (Boydell Press, Woodbridge: 2000), 16. Thomas Asbridge, *The Crusades* (New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 2010), 45.

<sup>29</sup> John H. Pryor and Michael Jeffreys, "Alexios, Bohemond, and Byzantium's Euphrates Frontier: A Tale of Two Cretans," in *Crusades, Volume 11*, ed. Benjamin Z. Kedar, Jonathan Phillips, and Jonathan Riley-Smith (Farnham: Ashgate, 2012), 77-78.

<sup>30</sup> Murray, "The enemy within," 39-41.

<sup>31</sup> Evalyn Jamison, "Some Notes on the Anonymi *Gesta Francorum*, with special reference to the Norman Contingent from South Italy and Sicily in the First Crusade," in *Studies in French Language and Medieval Literature presented to professor Mildred K. Pope*, ed. Mildred K. Pope (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1939), 193.

<sup>32</sup> McQueen, "Relations between the Normans and Byzantium," 451-452.

<sup>33</sup> France, "The Normans and Crusading," 94-95; Russo, "Norman Participation in the First Crusade," 200.

The problem with these interpretations is that they picture Bohemond and Alexios' relationship in a negative light and appear to be influenced by the hindsight of knowing that Bohemond would eventually terminate his relationship with Alexios. In fact, I argue that there is enough evidence to suggest that he willingly entered an alliance with Alexios and intended to keep it even after he could not immediately attain a Byzantine title, since he continued to be motivated by the hopes of later receiving command of a city as reward for his loyalty. It can be argued that it was not until Antioch actually fell that Bohemond decided, out of sheer opportunism, to claim the city in his own right. This is the issue that the second and third chapters will address.

These are difficult questions to answer, especially with the state of original sources. The history of the expedition that came to be known as the First Crusade boasts a plethora of completed manuscripts detailing the expedition from Latin and Greek perspectives. In fact, it is one of the earliest events to be comprehensively chronicled.<sup>34</sup> The issue in dealing with Bohemond's relationship with the Byzantine Empire is that individual sources are diametrically opposed either to Bohemond or Alexios, leading to strong embellishments and misleading biases that force the reader to take their information with caution.

The reason for this can be explained by looking at the immediate consequences of Bohemond's acquisition of Antioch. When Bohemond finally acquired complete control of the city in January 1099 after months of debate with Count Raymond IV of Toulouse, his refusal to commit it to Alexios resulted in years of conflict against the Byzantines. He would later return to the west in 1104 and recruit men to join him on an expedition against the Byzantines. Scholars have suggested that Bohemond commissioned the writing of some Latin sources as propaganda

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<sup>34</sup> Jay Rubenstein, "What is the *Gesta Francorum*, and who was Peter Tudebode?" *Revue Mabillon* 16 (2005): 180.

to support him against the Byzantines, influencing their negative treatment of Alexios.<sup>35</sup> Whether or not this is true cannot be said for certain, but it is clear that the authors speak ill of the emperor. Writing in hindsight, they paint Bohemond's early relationship with Alexios as contentious, when in reality his relationship with the emperor may have been positive and mutually beneficial.

Of these sources, the oldest known record of the First Crusade is the *Gesta Francorum*, written by a member of Bohemond's army as early as the winter of 1101-1102. The author calls Alexios a "miserable" (*iniquus*) and "wretched" (*infelix*) emperor who was "planning how to entrap these Christian knights by fraud and cunning." He also calls him "a fool as well as a knave."<sup>36</sup> This source became so readily available in Europe that several other authors are thought to have copied it extensively, thereby also adopting its anti-Byzantine rhetoric.<sup>37</sup> Early writers include Peter Tudebode, Guibert of Nogent, Baldric of Bourgueil, Robert the Monk, and Ekkehard of Aura.<sup>38</sup> Tudebode, for instance, calls the emperor "despicable" and a man "dominated by deceptive and unjust thinking."<sup>39</sup> Guibert intensifies the depictions of him, calling him a tyrant at each mention of his name. He calls him a greedy man who was "pleased...because he had heard that those [Franks] whom he hated no less than the Turks had

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<sup>35</sup> August C. Krey, "A neglected passage in the *Gesta* and its bearing on the literature of the First Crusade," in *The Crusades, and other historical essays presented to Dana C. Munro by his former students*, ed. Louis John Paetow (New York: F.S. Crofts, 1928), 59-62; Jay Rubenstein, "The Deeds of Bohemond: reform, propaganda, and the history of the First Crusade," in *Viator: Medieval and Renaissance Studies* 47, no. 2 (2016): 116, doi:10.1484/j.viator.5.111229. This theme will be further developed in chapter 2.

<sup>36</sup> Anonymous, *Gesta Francorum*, ed. Rosalind Hill (London: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1962), Book 1.3, 6, Book 2.5, 10-11, Book 2.8, 17; Jamison, "Some notes on the Anonymi *Gesta Francorum*," 183.

<sup>37</sup> Rubenstein, "The Deeds of Bohemond," 113.

<sup>38</sup> Peter Tudebode, *Historia de Hierosolymitano Itinere*, trans. John Hugh Hill and Laurita Hill (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1974); Guibert of Nogent, *The Deeds of God Through the Franks*, trans. Robert Levine (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 1997); Baldric of Bourgueil, *History of the Jerusalemites*, trans. Susan B. Edgington and Steven J. Biddlecombe (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2020); Robert the Monk, "Historia Iherosolimitana," in *Robert the Monk's History of the First Crusade*, trans. Carol Sweetenham (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005); Ekkehard of Aura, "Hierosolymita," in *A Translation, Commentary, and Essay Concerning The Hierosolymita by Ekkehard of Aura*, trans. Matthew LaBarge King (Washington: University of Washington, 2011).

<sup>39</sup> Peter Tudebode, *Historia de Hierosolymitano*, Book 2, 23, Book 3, 33.

been killed,” when speaking about the defeat of Peter the Hermit’s troops at Civetot in 1096.<sup>40</sup> Baldric, in turn, says that Alexios “was constantly plotting wickedness against Christ’s army in his heart.”<sup>41</sup> Robert the Monk also frequently vilifies the Byzantines, often putting the worst possible interpretation on “crafty” Alexios’ actions. He calls him “wicked,” also accusing him of delighting in Peter the Hermit’s defeat.<sup>42</sup> Ekkehard even claims that Alexios’ friendliness was “wrought with lies,” saying that all the crusader armies “called him not an emperor but a traitor.” One description is particularly noteworthy: “Then the jealous persecutor of the church, Alexius, unsheathed the poisoned madness of his arrogance, which had been concealed for a long time.”<sup>43</sup> Other Latin sources less reliant on the *Gesta*, but still possibly influenced by it, include Raymond d’Aguilers, Fulcher of Chartres, Albert of Aachen, and Ralph of Caen.<sup>44</sup> These sources also express bias against the empire, although the latter authors to a lesser extent. Raymond d’Aguilers, for example, says: “We believed that Alexius and his followers were our Christian brothers and confederates. But truly, with the savagery of lions they rushed upon peaceful men who were oblivious of their need for self defense.” He also describes how “Alexius acted as such an ingrate to the army that as long as he might live people would ever revile him and call him a traitor.” He claims that Alexios “always harmed, deceived, and connived against us.”<sup>45</sup> Not all the authors are as militant. Fulcher does not say anything negative about Alexios. Albert of

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<sup>40</sup> Guibert of Nogent, *The Deeds of God Through the Franks*, Book 5, 105.

<sup>41</sup> Baldric of Bourgueil, *History of the Jerusalemites*, Book 1.15, 57.

<sup>42</sup> Robert the Monk, “*Historia Iherosolimitana*,” Book 1.13, 88, Book 2.9, 94.

<sup>43</sup> Ekkehard of Aura, “*Hierosolymita*,” Chapter 13, 56, Chapter 24, 75, Chapter 33, 90.

<sup>44</sup> Raymond d’Aguilers, *Historia francorum qui ceperint Jerusalem*, trans. John Hugh Hill and Laurita L. Hill (Philadelphia: The American Philosophical Society Independence Square, 1968); Fulcher of Chartres, “The Chronicle of Fulcher of Chartres,” in *The First Crusade: the chronicle of Fulcher of Chartres and other source materials*, ed. and trans. Edward Peters (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1998); Albert of Aachen, *Historia Ierosolimitana*, trans. Susan B. Edgington (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2007); Ralph of Caen, “The Gesta Tancredi,” in *The Gesta Tancredi of Ralph Caen*, trans. Bernard S. Bachrach and David S. Bachrach (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005).

<sup>45</sup> Raymond d’Aguilers, *Historia Francorum*, Book 1, 18, Book 3, 27, Book 13, 106.

Aachen perhaps hints that the Greeks were weak, but he is not very harsh towards them.<sup>46</sup> Ralph calls Alexios shrewd, but he is overall mild towards him.<sup>47</sup> Thus, taken overall, these Latin sources, while full of detail and character, tend to picture Alexios as one of the crusaders' main antagonists, which can be argued to have led to a misinterpretation of Bohemond and Alexios' early relationship.

The Greek perspective also depicts a misguided view of Latin and Greek relations. This is exemplified in the work of Alexios' daughter, Anna Komnene. Her book, *The Alexiad*, was written around thirty years after Alexios' death and at least forty years after the events of the First Crusade. She was not an eyewitness, although she would likely have had access to imperial documents and eyewitness testimonies. However, her goal was to defend her father's reign and present Bohemond as a traitor. As John France notes, "Her entire account of the crusade is coloured by her anxiety to defend her father from the charge of oath-breaking, a charge which had the gravest political implications for Alexios and for the Byzantine Empire."<sup>48</sup> For this reason, while she adds valuable perspective, her hindsight is another barrier in understanding the true relationship between Bohemond and Alexios. There is no shortage of quotes in which Anna insists that Bohemond was always disloyal to Alexios. For instance, she claims that "he wished to win the emperor's goodwill, but at the same time to conceal his own hostile intentions against him." She accuses him of "disturbing the morale of many nobler men because he still cherished his old grudge against the emperor." She also says, "But the others (and in particular Bohemond) cherished their old grudge against Alexius and sought a good opportunity to avenge the glorious

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<sup>46</sup> Albert of Aachen, *Historia Ierosolimitana*, Book 4.6, 255.

<sup>47</sup> Ralph of Caen, "The Gesta Tancredi," Chapter 9, 30.

<sup>48</sup> John France, "Anna Comnena, the Alexiad and the First Crusade," in *Reading Medieval Studies* 10 (November 1984): 20-21. She claims that her information came from veterans who knew Alexios. She also includes copies of several imperial documents, indicating that she had access to the Imperial Archives.

victory which the emperor had won at Larissa.”<sup>49</sup> She claims that he only wanted to get what he could from the empire and showed no genuine concern for Byzantine interest.<sup>50</sup> Yet, as will be seen, there is plenty of evidence that Bohemond actually was, or at least wanted to be, involved in Byzantine affairs.

Academic caution is therefore advised when examining these sources. They bring immense value in understanding the perspectives of the Latins and Greeks both during and after the events of the First Crusade, but it is important to distinguish between the details that the sources give and their biases. This study will be diligent to highlight when an author’s account may have been influenced by a particular hindsight or loyalty.

## **Background in the West and the Middle East**

Before beginning this discussion, a few points of clarification are necessary to recognize the nuances that appear in examining the events of what came to be known as the First Crusade. First, while we call this event a ‘crusade,’ it needs to be recognized that this term was not applied to the expedition by the crusaders themselves nor by their close contemporaries. In fact, the earliest record of *crucesignatus* does not appear until the very end of the twelfth century.<sup>51</sup> For this reason, even though this thesis will refer to this event as the First Crusade, the reader should be aware that the Latin soldiers did not consider themselves crusaders nor did they recognize it as a coherent movement of united armies with the same aims. Second, while the ultimate destination of the majority of crusaders appeared to be Jerusalem, it is important to note that they did not all have the same goal. The crusaders were a mixture of French, German, Norman,

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<sup>49</sup> Anna Comnenus, *The Alexiad of Anna Comnena*, trans. E.R.A. Sewter (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1969), Book 10.11, 326, Book 10.5, 311, Book 10.9, 319.

<sup>50</sup> France, “Anna Comnena,” 24.

<sup>51</sup> Christopher Tyerman, *The Invention of the Crusades* (Hampshire: Palgrave MacMillan, 1998), 12, 28.

Italian, and English armies who are often blanketed under the term “Franks.” They were thus not a united force with the same motivations. Some were pilgrims to the Holy Land desiring to liberate Jerusalem and atone for their sins, or a similar kind of “idealism,” as Riley-Smith describes it.<sup>52</sup> Others undoubtedly saw an opportunity for glory or new lands in the east. Some again seem to have been genuinely inspired by the element of Pope Urban II’s message which called for aid to the Christian brothers of the East and may not have even intended on going all the way to Jerusalem. Peter Frankopan brilliantly explains how, despite Alexios’ efforts to maintain authority in the east just prior to the First Crusade, he needed aid to recover lands in Anatolia previously lost to the Seljuk Turks.<sup>53</sup> His call to the east may have been an attempt to hire Latin mercenaries to aid him in reconquering Anatolia, and if Jerusalem was mentioned at all, it may have just been to show that if Constantinople fell, so would any hope of retrieving Jerusalem.<sup>54</sup> Scholars have suggested that Pope Urban then used it for his own advantage to demonstrate his papal authority and consolidate his power by calling for an expedition to Jerusalem.<sup>55</sup> The aims of the crusaders likely held a mixture of these diverse motives.<sup>56</sup> It is important to remember that the crusading force also did not consist of only Latins; the Greek contingents which accompanied the expedition as it crossed Anatolia could be considered part of

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<sup>52</sup> Jonathan Riley-Smith, *The First Crusade and the Idea of Crusading* (London: Continuum International Publishing, 2001), 1, 41-42, 47.

<sup>53</sup> Peter Frankopan, *The First Crusade: the call from the East* (Cambridge: The Belknap Press, 2012), 42-86. Chapters 3-5 describe in detail the situation surrounding the empire.

<sup>54</sup> Jonathan Harris, *Byzantium and the Crusades* (London: Bloomsbury, 2014), 54; Joan M. Hussey, “Byzantium and the Crusades, 1081-1204,” in *The Crusades, II*, ed. Kenneth Setton (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1969), 126.

<sup>55</sup> Tyerman, *God’s War*, 61-62; Jonathan Shepard, “Aspects of Byzantine Attitudes and Policy towards the West in the Tenth and Eleventh Centuries,” in *Byzantium and the West c.850-c.1200: Proceedings of the XVIII Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies*, ed. J.D. Howard-Johnston (Amsterdam: Adolf M. Hakkert, 1988), 105, 111; Harris, *Byzantium and the Crusades*, 54.

<sup>56</sup> Asbridge, *The Crusades*, 11.

the crusade. These differences in motivation and background may help to understand the tensions that would exist throughout Bohemond's relationship with Alexios and the other crusader lords.

If the notions of crusade and crusader need unpacking, so does the term "Turks," which can also become a blanket term overlooking the disunity that existed among the diverse Muslim powers in Anatolia and the Middle East. The Turks were not the only ones with influence in the area. Near the end of the tenth century, an Arab Shi'ite faction in North Africa called the Fatimids had seized control of the region, quickly taking Egypt, Jerusalem, Damascus, and areas of the eastern Mediterranean against the Sunni Abbasid Arab regime situated in Baghdad.<sup>57</sup> In the 1040s the Seljuk Turks, a loose grouping of Oghuz tribal units from Central Asia, expanded into the Middle East, adopted Sunni Islam, and quickly encompassed what would become known as the Great Seljuk Sultanate of Baghdad. They would become the main rivals of the Fatimids. However, the Seljuks never were closely united, and this characteristic of their political organisation continued over time. Prior to the First Crusade, the Sultanate of Baghdad was ruled by Malik-Shah, son of Alp Arslan, the sultan who greatly expanded Seljuk territory. After Malik-Shah's death in 1092, his sons contested control over Iran and Iraq. His brother Tutush, sultan of Damascus, maintained control for a few years, but when he died in 1095, his two sons Ridwan and Duqaq also struggled over their inheritance, with one snatching Aleppo and the other taking Damascus.<sup>58</sup> Thus this sultanate quickly fell into smaller warring factions. It is important also to distinguish between the Great Seljuk Sultanate of Baghdad and the Sultanate of Rûm situated in Anatolia.<sup>59</sup> Alp Arslan's cousin Sulayman ibn Qutalmish, after failing to secure the sultanate from Malik-Shah in 1075, fled into Anatolia and established the Sultanate of Rûm in the wake of

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<sup>57</sup> Tyerman, *God's War*, 1-2.

<sup>58</sup> Asbridge, *The Crusades*, 21-22.

<sup>59</sup> A.C.S. Peacock and Sara Nur Yildiz, "Introduction," in *The Seljuks of Anatolia: Court and Society in the Medieval Middle East*, ed. A.C.S. Peacock and Sara Nur Yildiz (London: I.B. Tauris, 2013), 6.

the civil war happening between the Byzantine rulers Romanos IV Diogenes and Michael VII Doukas, two emperors who will receive some focus in this thesis. Sulayman's support of Nikephoros Botaniates' (r. 1078-1081) rebellion in 1077 ensured him control of the area, first in suzerainty to the Byzantines, but then later independently but in alliance with Alexios.<sup>60</sup> His son, Kiliç Arslan, was the governor of Nicaea when the crusaders arrived and had decimated Peter the Hermit's army when they entered Anatolia ahead of the other crusaders.<sup>61</sup> Sulayman and Kiliç's main Turkic rivals were the Danishmends, a beylic situated in north eastern Anatolia who, unlike Sulayman, refused to ally with the Byzantines in any way. Not much is known about them, but they held several key cities and were in conflict with Kiliç when the Latins arrived.<sup>62</sup> The Fatimids also had their succession crisis with the death of their caliph and vizier in 1094 and 1095.<sup>63</sup> Therefore, it is important to recognize that neither the crusaders nor the Turks were unified, making it difficult, if not impossible, to fully understand the various relationships that developed throughout the expedition that comes to be known as the First Crusade.

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<sup>60</sup> Frankopan, *The First Crusade*, 46-49, 51-53; Demitri Korobeinikov, "The Kings of the East and the West": The Seljuk Dynastic Concept and Titles in the Muslim and Christian Sources," in *The Seljuks of Anatolia: Court and Society in the Medieval Middle East*, ed. A.C.S. Peacock and Sara Nur Yildiz (London: I.B. Tauris, 2013), 71-72; Claude Cahen, *Pre-Ottoman Turkey: A general survey of the material and spiritual culture and history c. 1071-1330*, trans. J. Jones-Williams (New York: Taplinger Publishing Company, 1968), 74-78.

<sup>61</sup> Rubenstein, *Armies of heaven*, 71.

<sup>62</sup> Korobeinikov, "The Kings of the East and the West," 73.

<sup>63</sup> Asbridge, *The Crusades*, 22.

## Chapter 1 – Norman Relations and Lost Inheritance

There is a multiplicity of reasons for why Bohemond embarked on the First Crusade, but chief among them was likely his lost inheritance. Bohemond was set to receive the dukedom from his father and control southern Italy – an area which covered Calabria in the west, Apulia in the east, and Benevento in the north. However, Guiscard abdicated his marriage to his first wife, Alberada of Buonalbergo, shortly after Bohemond's birth, entering instead into a political marriage with Sichelgaita.<sup>1</sup> She was a Lombard princess – a group that dominated the population of southern Italy. With the birth of his half-brother Roger Borsa, Bohemond lost his inheritance. Guiscard would later attempt to carve out land for Bohemond in the Balkans (1081-1085), but this expedition failed.<sup>2</sup> With the coming of the First Crusade, Bohemond perhaps saw an opportunity to claim land for himself in the east.

To fully understand how this all unfolded, it is important to examine Bohemond's relationship with the principal people who influenced this decision – namely his father Robert Guiscard, his half-brother Roger Borsa, his stepmother Sichelgaita, and his uncle Count Roger I of Sicily. It was under his father's tutelage that Bohemond learned to become an able knight, leader, and warrior that made him capable of becoming a recognized leader in the expedition that came to be known as the First Crusade. It was also the political pressure forced upon Guiscard as he tried to unite the south Italian peninsula under his rule that removed Bohemond's inheritance, forcing him to look to new areas for his own land. Bohemond's relationship with Roger Borsa naturally developed into a rivalry to take the inheritance after Guiscard's death. Bohemond was militarily capable of securing the inheritance for himself, whereas Roger was considerably

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<sup>1</sup> Loud, *The Age of Guiscard*, 127.

<sup>2</sup> McQueen, "Relations between the Normans and Byzantium," 437, 442.

weaker and less experienced. Roger owed his capacity to maintain Guiscard's inheritance to his mother Sichelgaita's ability to convince the other Norman nobles to appoint him as the inheritor of the dukedom. It was also partly due to the threat that Bohemond represented to these nobles. Roger was timid and accommodating, while Bohemond was aggressive and self-serving. This suggests that the nobles saw Roger not as the better leader, but as the one less likely to interfere with their interests. This is what likely caused Guiscard's brother, Count Roger I of Sicily, to support Roger Borsa instead of Bohemond. Count Roger received land and cities from Roger Borsa in return for his support, a move that Bohemond likely would not have made. Therefore, these Norman relations all played an important part in directing Bohemond east.

### **Robert Guiscard**

Guiscard influenced Bohemond's journey to the east through more than simply failing to provide Bohemond with an inheritance. He not only tried to help Bohemond acquire a new inheritance in the Balkans, but he also trained him in the necessary skills to be a successful general. As will be discussed in chapter 3, Bohemond's military skill would enable him to acquire a territory in the east. If Guiscard had not trained Bohemond in the necessary skills of war, he would not have been able to succeed in the east. It should be no surprise that Bohemond received comprehensive military training; it was expected during his time. However, it appears that Bohemond's tactical brilliance was of a higher calibre than most knights received. The reasons why deserve due examination.

As Thomas Asbridge describes it, "Fighting alongside his father...Bohemond learned the realities of battlefield command and siege warfare. By the time of the First Crusade, he had an unequalled martial pedigree, prompting one near-contemporary [William of Malmesbury] to

describe him as ‘second to none in prowess and in the knowledge of the art of war’.<sup>3</sup> The Norman culture in Italy was founded on military skill; fathers trained their sons in military strength and leadership. Guiscard was the Norman leader, and Bohemond was his initial successor – he was no doubt trained in this skill since leaving Alberada’s care. While the main inheritor was normally expected to be the eldest son, the de Hauteville family history proved that the one who was the most militarily capable often received the title.<sup>4</sup> Guiscard would have been the main mentor for Bohemond’s military training, preparing him to defend his claims against anyone who would challenge him.

The descriptions of Bohemond’s early military life prove that Guiscard’s training prepared him for military victory. The chroniclers of the Norman conquest of Italy do not shed much light on Bohemond, but they do indicate that he was an able leader. Geoffrey Malaterra, for example, records that Guiscard “was very happy with the knowledge that his son was his equal in war.”<sup>5</sup> William of Apulia, upon the first mention of Bohemond, describes him as a “mighty offspring...powerful and distinguished for his courage.”<sup>6</sup> These descriptions were not because of their knowledge of Bohemond’s successes on the First Crusade, because these authors do not mention the crusade outcome, likely writing before the results of the expedition reached Europe. Only Geoffrey Malaterra notes that Bohemond even left for the crusade.<sup>7</sup> These

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<sup>3</sup> Asbridge, *The Crusades*, 44; William of Malmesbury says of Bohemond, “He was a man firm in adversity, and circumspect in prosperity.” William of Malmesbury, *Chronicle of the Kings of England*, Book IV.2, 415.

<sup>4</sup> The dukedom of Apulia initially passed from brother to brother. William, the eldest de Hauteville brother, attained it first. Drogo took the title after his death, and Humphrey received it after him. Robert Guiscard took over as duke after the death of Humphrey instead of safeguarding the title for Humphrey’s eldest son Abelard, who constantly challenged Guiscard for the title throughout his reign. For a detailed account, see Graham Loud, *The Age of Robert Guiscard*, chapter 3, 92-130.

<sup>5</sup> Geoffrey Malaterra is keenly impressed with Bohemond once he enters the story, using epithets like “that most vigorous knight,” showing the natural tenacity that Bohemond held. Geoffrey Malaterra, *The Deeds of Count Roger*, Book 3.40, 170, Book 3.33, 163.

<sup>6</sup> William of Apulia, *The Deeds of Robert Guiscard*, Book II, 26.

<sup>7</sup> Geoffrey Malaterra, *The Deeds of Count Roger*, Book 4.24, 204.

descriptions are thus likely because of Bohemond's successes in the Balkan Campaign with his father, an event to which most of the contemporary authors devote considerable time.

However, it is important to also consider his experiences before the Balkan Campaign, since they address the question of why Guiscard even chose Bohemond to lead the expedition. He was certainly involved in other Norman battles, but this does not automatically qualify him as a recognized leader capable of heading the Balkan Campaign. Guiscard sent Bohemond at the head of the expeditionary force into Albania, and this was no small undertaking.<sup>8</sup> In fact, it was a major assault which required an able and experienced commander. There was no demand for top generals anywhere else, which means Guiscard would have chosen one of his best. At this point, the Norman frontiers were relatively stable. The Byzantines had already been pushed out of Italy since 1071. In addition, Pope Leo IX, who had attempted to limit Norman expansion, had died. The current pope, Gregory VII, recognized Norman rule in southern Italy and had Guiscard swear loyalty in exchange for his fealty.<sup>9</sup> The only major threat was the Fatimid presence in Sicily, which Guiscard's brother, Count Roger, was focused on defending against. The only other threats the Normans faced were occasional pockets of Lombard and Byzantine resistance. Therefore, the Balkan expeditionary invasion force required the best Norman general, and Bohemond must have already proven himself capable of being that.

If so, Bohemond must have been involved in key battles prior to the Balkan Campaign, yet the evidence of these battles is hard to find in the major Norman chronicles. Amatus of Montecassino, whose history of the Normans ends at the death of Richard Drengot in 1078, does

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<sup>8</sup> Anna Comnena, *The Alexiad*, Book I.XIV, 66; Interestingly, the major Norman chroniclers, like Geoffrey Malaterra and Amatus of Montecassino, do not mention that Bohemond led this expeditionary force. William of Apulia mentions that a group had gone before Guiscard, but he does not indicate who led this group. William of Apulia, *The Deeds of Robert Guiscard*, Book IV, 50.

<sup>9</sup> Loud, *The Age of Robert Guiscard*, 119. The Normans had faced off against Pope Leo and a Lombard alliance at the Battle of Civitate in 1053.

not even mention Bohemond by name.<sup>10</sup> Amatus' silence concerning him could indicate that he had done nothing of note to earn a leadership role by 1078, leaving only three years before the invasion of the Balkans, which started in 1081 under Guiscard and Bohemond, for him to have been able to do so. Yet William of Apulia and Geoffrey Malaterra, who mention Bohemond frequently in their accounts during and after the Balkan Campaign, do not mention any other involvement in battles by him prior to that either. By the time of the invasion, Bohemond would have been in his mid to late 20s, more than old enough to have led battles in a Norman society that constantly served as mercenaries. Ralph Yewdale notes an obscure source, the *Chronicon Breve Nortmannicum*, that describes Bohemond commanding some troops at Troia against his rebellious cousin Abelard, the son of Humphrey, in 1079.<sup>11</sup> This would then be the first recorded instance of Bohemond as a military leader. However, he lost this key battle to Abelard. Therefore, the sources do not indicate a successful battle led by him before he took command in the Balkans.

Even if he did not lead in any major successful battles, he was almost certainly involved in some of his father's victories during his young adult life. Young boys in the medieval world trained in arms already as young as seven.<sup>12</sup> They served as a page until around the age of fifteen, apprenticing in the arts of war and diplomacy until they finished their training as a squire under an experienced knight. By the time he was 21, a man was ready and capable to begin fighting as a knight, and as a result, also lead armies.<sup>13</sup> Bohemond's exact year of birth is not

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<sup>10</sup> Amatus of Montecassino, *The History of the Normans*, Book VIII.36, 205.

<sup>11</sup> Yewdale, *Bohemond I*, 8. This is recorded in the anonymous *Anonymi Barensis Chronicon*, which no longer survives except for a transcription made by Camillo Pellegrino. It is kept in volume 5 of Ludovico Antonio Muratori's *Rerum Italicarum scriptores*, 278.

<sup>12</sup> Barbara A. Hanawalt, *The Middle Ages: An illustrated history* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 58.

<sup>13</sup> Hanawalt, *The Middle Ages*, 96; Robert Lawrence Nicholson, *Tancred: A Study of his Career and Work in their Relation to the First Crusade and the Establishment of the Latin States in Syria and Palestine* (Chicago: The University of Chicago, 1938), 16.

recorded, but a conservative estimation puts it at 1054.<sup>14</sup> This means he was around 25 when he faced Abelard at Troia. By this estimation, he could have been fighting as early as 1069.

Bohemond could thus have joined his father already in the siege of Bari in 1071 and the takeover of Palermo in 1072. After Bari fell in 1071, Guiscard dealt with troubles from Richard of Capua and rebellions from his nephew Abelard, which Bohemond would also likely have been involved in, particularly in 1075 when Count Roger besieged Abelard's base of Santa Severina.<sup>15</sup> After Guiscard became the territorial ruler, insurrections broke out in 1067-8, 1072-3, 1079-80, and 1082-3. Bohemond almost certainly would have been involved in at least the middle two. This is mostly conjecture but, based on the Norman fighting society and the fact that Bohemond was the firstborn of the Norman duke, this was likely the case.

Orderic Vitalis, an English monk who wrote a history of the English and Normans during the eleventh and early twelfth centuries, may offer a glimpse into Bohemond's previous military exploits. He is by no means an eyewitness of the accounts, likely never visiting Italy, but he certainly had access to witnesses and the spread of stories coming from abroad. He recounts the last conversation between Guiscard and Bohemond on the former's deathbed. This was certainly a fictitious conversation, as Guiscard died in Kefalonia from fever while Bohemond was recovering from an illness in Bari. In this conversation, Orderic lists the various battles Bohemond had supported his father in.

Call to mind what great deeds you have done under my leadership in Italy and Sicily, when you conquered Salerno and Bari, Brindisi and Taranto, Bisignano and Reggio, Syracuse and Palermo, Cosenza and Castro-Giovanni and many other towns and fortresses. Under my command and by God's help you also overcame Gisulf, duke of Salerno, the Neapolitan count Wazo and other powerful princes.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> A date proposed by John Julius Norwich, *The Normans in Sicily* (London: Penguin Books, 1992), 116-117.

<sup>15</sup> Loud, *The Age of Robert Guiscard*, 167.

<sup>16</sup> Ordericus Vitalis, *The Ecclesiastical History*, Book VII.7, 37.

Regardless of whether this conversation happened, Orderic likely had an idea of what battles Bohemond engaged in. However, Orderic clearly favours Bohemond over Roger Borsa.<sup>17</sup> Academic caution is, therefore, advised, since by the time Orderic is writing, Bohemond's deeds in the east were already well known. He may have just been writing about Bohemond's successes based on what he heard from exaggerated accounts without researching its accuracy. He may have simply assumed that Bohemond joined Guiscard in his important battles. Still, he likely would have known the age a Norman son joined his father in battle and safely assumed Bohemond followed the same order.

Therefore, it seems probable that Bohemond gained significant military experience from his father prior to the Balkan Campaign, earning him a leading role in the expedition. Part of the military tactics that Bohemond learned from his father was evidently the art of the ruse. Robert is said to have received the nickname Guiscard, which means 'wily', due to his clever tactics and tricks.<sup>18</sup> Bohemond's military life would make use of at least two of his father's acts of cunning. During the Balkan Campaign, when Guiscard joined Bohemond at the siege of Durazzo (or Dyrrachium) in 1081, Guiscard convinced a Venetian named Dominic to betray the city to him. By offering his niece, the daughter of William of the Principate, Guiscard convinced Dominic to let down a rope and allow the Normans to scale the walls.<sup>19</sup> Bohemond would use a similar tactic to gain entry into the city of Antioch almost 30 years later when he convinced a tower guard named Firuz to let the crusaders enter the city in exchange for wealth.<sup>20</sup> This was not the only

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<sup>17</sup> Orderic mentions several controversial events surrounding Sichelgaita and Roger Borsa. These will be discussed further.

<sup>18</sup> William of Apulia, *The Deeds of Robert Guiscard*, Book I, 15; Yewdale, *Bohemond I*, 3.

<sup>19</sup> Geoffrey Malaterra, *The Deeds of Count Roger*, Book 3.28, 158-159; William's story has Dominic simply letting the Normans into the city, probably through a gate. William of Apulia, *The Deeds of Robert Guiscard*, Book IV, 55-56; Yewdale, *Bohemond I*, 16.

<sup>20</sup> *Gesta Francorum*, Book 8.20, 44-47; Robert the Monk, "Historia Iherosolimitana," 36; Raymond d'Aguilers, *Historia Francorum*, 46-47.

ruse Bohemond learned from his father. William of Apulia introduces the famous Norman “fake corpse” trick. During his conquests in Calabria, Guiscard approached a city that contained a large monastic community which refused to allow in strangers. He told them one of their numbers had died and requested to bury him near the monastery. They gained permission to enter without their weapons for as long as it took to conduct the funeral. Hiding their swords under the covered body, they proceeded to take the city once they were inside.<sup>21</sup> Bohemond would use a version of this trick in 1104 after the First Crusade. Anna Komnene records that in an effort to return to Italy incognito, he spread the rumour that he had died. Hiding in a coffin, he sailed back to Italy and had a dead rooster put in the coffin with him whenever they came into port to mimic the putrid stench of a rotting body.<sup>22</sup> When Bohemond arrived suddenly in Italy, he was able to convince many to join him in his campaign against Byzantium.

Bohemond, it appears, was therefore an able warrior, generating military skills through the campaigns of his father and equipping himself to lead the Balkan Campaign. The skills learned from his father set Bohemond up to become a leader in the First Crusade despite his lack of wealth and resources. As will be discussed in the third chapter, Bohemond’s innate leadership set himself up to either receive Antioch from Alexios or take the city for himself.

The previous section may suggest that Bohemond was chosen to lead the Balkan Campaign due to him being an able leader, but there is an equally valuable suggestion among scholars that Guiscard planned to use the lands gained in the Balkans as a new inheritance for

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<sup>21</sup> William of Apulia, *The Deeds of Robert Guiscard*, Book II, 24; Jack Titterton, “‘The Arts of Guiscard’: Trickery and Deceit in the Norman Conquest of Southern Italy and Outremer, 1000-1120,” in *Warfare in the Norman Mediterranean*, ed. Georgios Theotokis (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2020), 65.

<sup>22</sup> Anna Comnena, Book 11.12, 366-368; Emily Albu, “Bohemond and the rooster: Byzantines, Normans, and the artful ruse,” in *Anna Komnene and Her Times*, ed. Thalia Gouma-Peterson (New York: Garland, 2000), 157-158.

Bohemond. By having Bohemond lead the campaign, Guiscard was putting him in a position to claim any land that they would conquer.

Guiscard's decision to remove Bohemond's inheritance in Italy is arguably the biggest influence which caused him to join the expedition to Jerusalem. This disenfranchisement was evidently a political move, since Guiscard needed to maintain his control over the area against the other Norman families, lingering pockets of Byzantine resistance, and the Lombard principalities. His alliance with the Lombard family of Guaimar IV through his marriage to Sichelgaita certainly helped strengthen his political hold on the area.<sup>23</sup> By vocalizing his desire for Roger Borsa to inherit his title and holdings, he could appease the Lombards who would then have a Norman with Lombard blood representing them. It is possible that Guiscard personally wished for Bohemond, as his eldest son, to be his heir due to his highly proven military abilities, but this cannot be known for certain. What is certain is that Guiscard did not remove the inheritance out of any aversion towards Bohemond, and it is not implausible to think that Guiscard wished to find an alternative inheritance for his eldest son.

There is little evidence that Guiscard left anything aside for Bohemond after removing his inheritance, but he did provide for Bohemond's mother. After Guiscard repudiated his marriage with Alberada, Amatus of Montecassino explains that Guiscard "endowed [her] with *castelli* and much land, so that she might live richly with her son."<sup>24</sup> He does not indicate which lands Alberada received, but it would likely have been in southern Italy. This is an interesting

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<sup>23</sup> Amatus of Montecassino, *The History of the Normans*, Book II.35, 80. Guiscard was not the originator of this alliance, for his brothers also joined in marriage alliances with Guaimar's family. Drogo married Guaimar's daughter Gaitelgrima in 1046.

<sup>24</sup> Amatus of Montecassino, *The History of the Normans*, Book IV.23, 118. Although Amatus does not mention Bohemond by name, this son was almost certainly Bohemond. There is enough controversy around this passage, however. Presscott N. Dunbar's translation from 2004 does not include Alberada's name, but he assumes it. The original translation reads "Duke Robert left in anger and took his wife with him into Calabria..., whom he greatly endowed with and much land, so that she might live richly with her son." (Book IV.18, 117n).

passage to note, for it is curious to wonder who that land was meant to go to after her death. If the land was to be given to one of her children, that child would be Bohemond, since the only other thought to have been born to Guiscard and Alberada was Emma, the mother of Tancred.<sup>25</sup> If this was the case, then Bohemond did receive a small inheritance in Italy from Guiscard. Bohemond may have also claimed the area when he began carving out his own territory in Apulia from Roger Borsa after Guiscard's death. However, it is also possible that Alberada's *castelli* was to revert to Roger Borsa after her death. The land eventually went to Roger Borsa's successor, William II, since Alberada outlived both Bohemond and Roger.<sup>26</sup>

Even if this land was meant to go to Bohemond, it would not have been large enough to satisfy his ambitions. Therefore, it is reasonable to assume that Guiscard's Balkan Campaign had the goal of acquiring an alternative inheritance for Bohemond.<sup>27</sup> The Lombards would not have been concerned over who held those areas, since it fell outside their influence. Bohemond would have little opposition or competition from the Lombards or Normans in receiving the land. By leading the campaign himself, he would solidify his claim on the area if the de Hautevilles managed to succeed. Guiscard's final goal may have been a Norman empire stretching from Sicily under his brother Count Roger, southern Italy under Roger Borsa, and parts of the Balkans

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<sup>25</sup> There is debate over whether Emma was born of Guiscard's first or second wife. In older scholarship, Yewdale and Nicholson suppose that she was Sichelgaita's daughter, while Saulcry and E. Rey hold that she was Alberada's. Yewdale, *Bohemond I*, 5; Nicholson, *Tancred*, 13-14. Today, most scholars attest that she was born of Alberada.

<sup>26</sup> Bohemond and Roger both died in 1111, while Alberada lived until around 1122.

<sup>27</sup> McQueen, "Relations between the Normans and Byzantium," 440. This is one of three possible reasons that W.B. McQueen lists for why Guiscard planned a campaign into the Balkans. He also insists that Guiscard attacked the Balkans because Apulian rebels opposed to Guiscard's rule took refuge there. However, this is not enough reason for him to further aggravate the Byzantine Empire, especially with the rebels no longer in Apulia. His second reason, which highlights the military culture of Norman society, is that Guiscard, as leader of the Normans, was required to provide land and bounty for the members of his warband; Richard Smith notes that the opportunity for aggrandizement was becoming scarcer in Italy. Count Roger was directing the campaign in Sicily, his nephew Robert of Loritello was focused on the Abruzzi, and the Norman princes of Capua held Campania. This left very little territory for Guiscard to obtain this bounty. Smith, "Nobilissimus and warleader," 509-510.

under Bohemond. Bohemond, being perhaps the most ambitious of the three, had the best chance of defending that border against the Byzantine Empire.

Some even suppose that Guiscard's end goal was Constantinople itself. This is what Anna Komnene claims is the case, leading scholars like Ferdinand Chalandon and John Norwich to suggest the same.<sup>28</sup> However, this seems too ambitious for the Normans to try and attempt, at least until their power grew. It can be argued, as noted by Smith, that the course of the first part of the Balkan Campaign (1081-1083) did not follow one they would have taken if they planned to overthrow the empire. They took Corfu and Durazzo to establish a beachhead in the Balkans, and then Bohemond engaged with the Byzantine Emperor Alexios I Komnenos at Arta, Larissa, and Thessaly. Instead of heading to Thessalonica and then Constantinople, as a party wishing to take the throne would likely have done, Bohemond and Guiscard instead appear to be trying to carve out a territory stretching from Durazzo in the north, Thessaly in the east, and Arta in the south.<sup>29</sup> Had they consolidated this area, it would have made a strong territory to occupy.<sup>30</sup>

For these reasons, it seems likely that Guiscard intended on obtaining an inheritance for Bohemond in the Balkans, and an examination of key primary sources supports this. William of

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<sup>28</sup> "He seized on the pretext of his connexion by marriage with the Emperor Michael and dreamed of ascending the throne himself." Anna Comnena, *The Alexiad*, Book 1.12, 57; John Norwich and Ferdinand Chalandon use this quote to explain that Guiscard utilized his daughter as a purpose for attacking the Empire in the Balkans. Norwich, *The Normans in the South*, 227-8; Ferdinand Chalandon, *Histoire de la Domination Normande en Italie et en Sicile* (Paris: Librairie Alphonse Picard et Fils, 1907), 279; McQueen recognizes that Guiscard may have seen himself as the successor of the emperor in Italy but denies that he would have planned to take the imperial throne. McQueen, "Relations between the Normans and Byzantium," 439. Anna was defending her father and provides a biased perspective towards the marriage agreement with Michael. This agreement will be discussed below.

<sup>29</sup> Smith, "Nobilissimus and warleader," 515. This is the likely targeted area based upon the trajectory of the Norman armies. They may have wished to push further east, but Alexios halted their progress at Larissa in April 1082.

<sup>30</sup> Even though the Adriatic Sea lay between southern Italy and this territory in western Albania and Greece, it still made for a strategic and manageable territory. Nicholas Purcell and Peregrine Horden introduce the idea of viewing the Mediterranean as a series of microregions, defined not by cities, but by natural barriers and travel routes. The area spanning southern Italy, Albania, and Greece was considered one of those microregions. Nicholas Purcell and Peregrine Horden, *The Corrupting Sea: A Study of Mediterranean History* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 2000), 133-134. See also the maps on pgs 141 and 524.

Malmesbury, for instance, writes that Bohemond claimed the territory from Durazzo to Thessalonica in light of the inheritance he lost to Roger Borsa. He records that “Bohemond claimed them as his due, since he obtained not the inheritance of Apulia, which his father had given to his younger son, Roger.”<sup>31</sup> Even Anna Komnene indicates that when Guiscard left the campaign to aid the pope against the German king Henry IV, he gave Bohemond full control of Dyrrachium, Valona, and all the other cities the Normans had taken in Albania.<sup>32</sup>

William of Apulia perhaps also subtly hints at the idea that Guiscard intended on taking parts of the Balkans for Bohemond to possess as an inheritance. Immediately after describing the event when Guiscard announced Roger Borsa as the heir of his inheritance, William continues in the very next paragraph to describe the appointment of Bohemond as the leader of the Balkan Campaign. William states, “The duke placed Bohemond, his other son, born of his first wife, a knight of great bravery, in command of the force of cavalry and infantry [to besiege Durazzo].”<sup>33</sup> William may have purposely juxtaposed this story of Bohemond directly after Guiscard’s appointment of Roger Borsa as his heir, highlighting what Bohemond’s intended inheritance would be. The wording he used is very particular, prefacing the story with “his other son, born of his first wife” as a way to indicate that Guiscard still intended to supply Bohemond with an inheritance.

Regardless of whether this was his intention, Guiscard launched his invasion. His *casus belli* for attacking the Byzantine Empire in the Balkans took the guise of avenging the deposed emperor Michael VII Doukas (r. 1071-1078), with whom he had made a marriage agreement in 1074. Michael had offered his son and junior emperor, Constantine Doukas, to Guiscard’s

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<sup>31</sup> William of Malmesbury, *Chronicle of the kings of England*, Book IV.2, 356.

<sup>32</sup> Anna Comnena, *The Alexiad*, 5.3, 161.

<sup>33</sup> William of Apulia, *The Deeds of Robert Guiscard*, Book IV, 50.

daughter Helena. This would keep southern Italy within the Byzantine orbit and promise Guiscard influence and title in the Byzantine courts.<sup>34</sup> It is possible that Michael was more interested in the Normans' mercenary skills and wished to have them in Byzantium's arsenal instead of one of their enemies. In 1071, the Byzantine Empire under Romanos Diogenes (r. 1068-1071) lost its dominion in Italy to Guiscard. In the same year, the Byzantines also lost the key battle at Manzikert to the Seljuk Turks which decreased their power in Anatolia. Perhaps Michael saw value in making peace in the west so that the empire could focus on the east.<sup>35</sup> This marriage alliance would also be beneficial to Guiscard, as becoming father-in-law to the emperor's designated successor would earn him a sufficient title of honour and a steady source of income which he could apply to his warband.<sup>36</sup> It would also allow Guiscard to find an alternative inheritance for Bohemond, for as will be discussed in the next chapter, Norman mercenaries often did well in Byzantine employ.

Byzantine emperors had attempted marriage alliances with the Normans before, likely to prevent them from advancing into Byzantine territory.<sup>37</sup> A few years earlier, Romanos Diogenes had attempted a marriage contract with Guiscard. The offer by Romanos may have been an attempt to keep Guiscard from advancing on Bari, which he was intent on taking. Michael had already made three attempts before Guiscard finally agreed to a marriage contract.<sup>38</sup> The initial refusal to accept this agreement could indicate that Guiscard intended to invade the Balkans and

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<sup>34</sup> Smith, "Nobilissimus and warleader," 512. This was one of the highest honours a foreigner could receive from the emperor.

<sup>35</sup> McQueen, "Relations between the Normans and Byzantium," 428-429.

<sup>36</sup> Smith, "Nobilissimus and warleader," 513.

<sup>37</sup> McQueen, "Relations between the Normans and Byzantium," 429-430.

<sup>38</sup> McQueen, "Relations between the Normans and Byzantium," 432-434. McQueen goes on to explain how Michael wrote to Pope Gregory VII for help. Gregory had envisioned leading a campaign of western knights to aid the Eastern Empire against the Saracens but knew that before he could convince the Italian lords to embark, the Norman force under Guiscard needed to be satisfied. Gregory established an alliance with the Lombards and the Norman family of Richard of Capua against Guiscard. While this alliance fell apart, McQueen supposes that this threat prompted Guiscard to consider the marriage deal with Michael Doukas.

was hesitant to compromise this until an offer came that favoured the Normans and offered a lordship for Bohemond. Michael's final offer did not prevent Guiscard from setting his claim over Bari, and it also presented him with imperial benefits. Richard Smith suggests that if the marriage deal worked out, Guiscard may have intended to award the title *kouropalates* to Bohemond, destining him to a career in Byzantium.<sup>39</sup> This would award Bohemond land and title that would replace his lost inheritance, making an invasion of the Balkans unnecessary. This was a common relationship between the Normans and Byzantines. As will be seen in the next chapter, the Normans were constantly employed by the Byzantines, particularly those who could not attain proper land holdings in Italy, such as Bohemond. However, the Norman and Byzantine relations were often contentious. Ever since the de Hautevilles arrived in Italy, they were either in the employment of the Byzantines or in open rebellion against them. Even when the last Byzantine city of Bari fell to Guiscard, the Byzantines encouraged constant revolts in previously Byzantine-held areas.<sup>40</sup> Guiscard likely approached any potential marriage alliance with caution.

This marriage deal never came to fruition, however. Nikephoros Botaneiates (r. 1078-1081) deposed Michael Doukas before the marriage deal with Guiscard could be completed, sending Michael into a monastery and Guiscard's daughter into a convent. William of Apulia states that "many felt this to be a grave injury done to the duke, and he wished to take vengeance for it."<sup>41</sup> This quote has led scholars to posit that Guiscard used this as an excuse to attack the

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<sup>39</sup> Smith, "Nobilissimus and warleader," 513. This was not uncommon for nobles in the realm of the Empire to pursue. Notable Normans who served in the Byzantine court during this time were Hervé, Robert Crispin, and Roussel of Bailleul. Bohemond's half-brother Guy also entered into Byzantine service after the failure of the Balkan Campaign. These men will be discussed in detail in chapter 2.

<sup>40</sup> McQueen, "Relations between the Normans and Byzantium," 437.

<sup>41</sup> William of Apulia, *The Deeds of Robert Guiscard*, Book IV, 47; Interestingly, William of Apulia did not speak favourably of Michael, accusing him of treating the innocent Greeks cruelly and unworthily. William of Apulia, *The Deeds of Robert Guiscard*, Book IV, 45.

empire in the Balkans.<sup>42</sup> He further bolstered this reason by producing a monk who pretended to be the deposed Michael who escaped the monastery and urged his Norman allies to return him to the throne.<sup>43</sup> The final step was garnering the approval of his spiritual lord, Pope Gregory VII, who gave the expedition his blessing and encouraged the Italian bishops to assist him in whatever way they could.<sup>44</sup>

Yet this apparent justification for invasion did not last long. John Norwich notes that when Alexios Komnenos, who had been a close friend of Michael, took the throne from Botaneiates in 1081, Guiscard no longer had a viable excuse for invading the Balkans. One of Guiscard's ambassadors in Constantinople, Raoul, sent back to him noting that his daughter was treated well by Alexios and that Michael's son Constantine was given a share in the empire and made co-emperor.<sup>45</sup> Guiscard could have still made the same marriage deal with Alexios, as Alexios' son John Komnenos would not be born until 1087, meaning that Constantine would remain the emperor's heir, and Guiscard's daughter would still become the emperor's wife. However, the possibility that Alexios would have a son to replace Constantine was very high, and Guiscard might not have been willing to take that chance. Even if Constantine were to be replaced as heir, Bohemond would still likely receive a respectable position, but it would not be as impressive as a territory in the Balkans. In any case, by the time Guiscard received the news

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<sup>42</sup> Yewdale first posited the ideas that Guiscard took this as a reason to invade the empire. Yewdale, *Bohemond I*, 10-11; John Norwich also picks up on this, noting that his daughter's revoked position and subsequent treatment gave Guiscard the pretext for intervention. Norwich, *The Normans in the South*, 224; Matthew Bennet, "Norman Battle Tactics in the Mediterranean Theatre of Operations: Fighting Lombards, Greeks, Arabs, and Turks c.1050-c.1100," in *Warfare in the Norman Mediterranean*, ed. Georgios Theotokis (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2020), 142.

<sup>43</sup> This was likely another tactic used by Guiscard to both justify his attack and motivate men to join his campaign. Norwich, *The Normans in the South*, 225; Yewdale, *Bohemond I*, 10-11. Almost every scholar admits that this was a pretender, including some primary sources. William of Apulia, *The Deeds of Robert Guiscard*, Book IV, 49.

<sup>44</sup> Norwich, *The Normans in the South*, 225.

<sup>45</sup> Anna Comnena, Book 1.15, 67-68; William notes that once Alexios took the capital, he showed honour to Guiscard's daughter in order to pacify him. William of Apulia, *The Deeds of Robert Guiscard*, Book IV, 49; Norwich, *The Normans in the South*, 226.

that Nikephoros Botaneiates had been deposed, his army was equipped and ready to sail. The expeditionary force under Bohemond may have already been invading the Albanian coast.<sup>46</sup> Instead of pursuing a deal with Alexios or requesting the return of his daughter, Guiscard launched his invasion.<sup>47</sup>

He did not immediately join the campaign, but rather sent Bohemond ahead of him across the Adriatic while he tied up loose ends with the pope and Henry IV. Bohemond indeed showed his military skills during this campaign. He left Italy in March 1081 and besieged Corfu. Once his father and brother joined him, the island surrendered on May 21. Continuing down the Albanian coast, the Normans laid siege to Durazzo on June 17. Alexios employed the assistance of the Venetians, who defeated the Norman naval support and prevented supplies coming from Italy. After a lengthy battle in which Guiscard, Bohemond, and Alexios all led their own contingents, the Greek army was eventually overpowered and Alexios was defeated on October 18.<sup>48</sup> The siege on Durazzo would last until February 1082. After this, the Normans continued to Kastoria, when Guiscard and Roger Borsa were recalled to Italy to aid the pope against Henry IV.<sup>49</sup> This left the campaign in the hand of Bohemond and his constable Briennus. Within a month after Guiscard departed, Bohemond met and defeated Alexios in a pitched battle near Ioannina in the end of April, where despite Alexios' superior numbers, Bohemond was able to quickly rout the Greek army.<sup>50</sup> They met again in Arta, where Bohemond devastated the vanguard and again emerged as victor.<sup>51</sup> William of Apulia notes how Bohemond was able to skillfully – or perhaps through pure luck – maneuver around Alexios' defensive caltrops by

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<sup>46</sup> Norwich, *The Normans in the South*, 26; William of Apulia, *The Deeds of Robert Guiscard*, Book IV, 48.

<sup>47</sup> Norwich, *The Normans in the South*, 227.

<sup>48</sup> Geoffrey Malaterra, *The Deeds of Count Roger*, Book 3.27, 157-158.

<sup>49</sup> Geoffrey Malaterra, *The Deeds of Count Roger*, Book 3.33, 163.

<sup>50</sup> Anna Comnena, *The Alexiad*, Book 5.4, 163.

<sup>51</sup> Geoffrey Malaterra, *The Deeds of Count Roger*, Book 3.39, 170.

splitting his cavalry into two wings, completely bypassing the Greek defenses.<sup>52</sup> He then took Ochrid and Trikkala. Bohemond arrived at Larissa November 3 and laid siege to it. Alexios would arrive with reinforcements from Constantinople in July, and instead of engaging in a pitched battle as he had done in all the skirmishes so far, he changed his tactics and resorted to guerrilla style fighting. He outmaneuvered Bohemond by retreating, drawing his cavalry out, and then ambushing them with Turkish mounted archers, leading to the Norman's defeat.<sup>53</sup> Near the end of 1083, the Norman holdings collapsed and Bohemond was forced to return to Italy.<sup>54</sup> The de Hautevilles would attempt another attack on the Balkans in October 1084. They managed, with difficulty, to establish a beachhead in Albania, but the winter months triggered an epidemic forcing Bohemond to recover in Bari and eventually leading to Guiscard's death on July 17, 1085, ending the campaign for good.<sup>55</sup>

It is clear that the campaign solidified Bohemond's experience as an able leader and warrior, leading to a favourable reputation by the time he joined the First Crusade. His successes in this campaign by himself and with his father's help are a testament to the skills Bohemond received from Guiscard. As will be discussed in the next chapters, Bohemond's abilities during the campaign would have impressed upon Alexios his military skills, which would both increase the emperor's suspicion of Bohemond but also present him as a strong choice to receive a Byzantine title or govern an eastern city on Alexios' behalf. Unfortunately, Guiscard was unable to provide an inheritance for Bohemond before his death, leaving Bohemond with the option to either usurp his own territory in Italy or journey to a new land to find his own estate.

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<sup>52</sup> Anna Comnena, *The Alexiad*, Book 5.4, 164-165; William of Apulia, *The Deeds of Robert Guiscard*, Book 5, 58.

<sup>53</sup> William of Apulia, *The Deeds of Robert Guiscard*, Book 5, 59-60; Anna Comnena, *The Alexiad*, Book 5.6, 170-171.

<sup>54</sup> Loud, *The Age of Robert Guiscard*, 218-219.

<sup>55</sup> Loud, *The Age of Guiscard*, 222-223.

## Roger Borsa

Although Bohemond had lost his inheritance to Roger Borsa, ultimately forcing him to find new lands in the east, he did not simply acquiesce and allow Roger to keep the inheritance that he believed was rightly his. Bohemond ultimately decided to go east only after he failed to carve out a suitable inheritance in southern Italy from his half-brother. Roger owes a lot of his ability to maintain his inheritance to Sichelgaita, who supported her son and convinced the nobles to recognize him as the next duke, even though he was not as experienced as his main rivals, like Bohemond or Abelard. Further credit also goes to Roger's uncle and namesake, Roger of Sicily, who personally supported Roger's claim to the title and militarily backed him up against Bohemond's rebellions.

Before examining how these individuals helped Roger secure his inheritance and hinder Bohemond from claiming it, it is important to examine why he needed this support. In 1073, Guiscard fell ill and a false rumour spread that he had died.<sup>56</sup> According to John Norwich, Roger was a young and inexperienced 13-year-old at the time, making him less than ideal to take over as Duke of Apulia instead of the ambitious and experienced Bohemond or any of the other possible contenders.<sup>57</sup> Roger would still have had military training but likely no leadership experience.<sup>58</sup> Bohemond had a much greater chance of usurping the inheritance from him. Sichelgaita, however, managed to convince the nobles to appoint Roger before they realized that Guiscard was still alive.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> Amatus of Montecassino, *The History of the Normans*, Book VII.20, 175.

<sup>57</sup> Norwich, *The Normans in the South*, 195; Geoffrey Malaterra describes Roger Borsa as young and naive towards family and kin. He often treated those who attempted rebellion against him with mercy, including Bohemond. Malaterra presents Roger Borsa as trusting and optimistic, which often led to his downfall. However, Malaterra considers it one of his strengths. Geoffrey Malaterra, *The Deeds of Count Roger*, Book 4.24, 203.

<sup>58</sup> Hanawalt, *The Middle Ages*, 96. He would not yet have reached the age that a young man became a squire under an experienced knight.

<sup>59</sup> Amatus of Montecassino, *The History of the Normans*, Book VII.20, 175.

This scene had changed when Guiscard died twelve years later in 1085, as by this time Roger had a lot more military and leadership experience. The sources attest to this. William of Apulia, a clear supporter of Roger, uses careful words to present him as an experienced warrior before Guiscard's death. He describes him as "the duke's noble heir, who was distinguished for his good sense and skill at arms" and "who made every effort to imitate his father's courage in war as well as his affability and kindness towards all."<sup>60</sup> He depicts Roger as a valuable leader when Guiscard was consolidating his rule in Italy in the late 1070s, including staving off rebellions in Troia and Ascoli.<sup>61</sup> When rebels attempted to take the city of Giovinazzo, they were warded off after a false rumour spread about Norman reinforcements approaching under the command of Roger Borsa.<sup>62</sup> Even though this army did not exist, the fact that they spread the rumour that he was coming instead of Bohemond or Guiscard shows that he was well respected at this point. William also includes his leadership during the Balkan Campaign. He specifies that Roger led the same number of men as Bohemond and Count Roger against the Venetians when they attacked Durazzo a second time in 1084.<sup>63</sup> After that, Guiscard sent Roger to capture Kefalonia, successfully ending a rebellion there.<sup>64</sup> This is likely the reason why he was on the island when Guiscard died. As noted above, William's bias is important to identify when he talks about Roger. He dedicated his poem to him and was therefore careful to emphasize that he was rightly appointed as Guiscard's heir.<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> William of Apulia, *The Deeds of Robert Guiscard*, Book IV, 57, Book V, 61.

<sup>61</sup> William of Apulia, *The Deeds of Robert Guiscard*, Book IV, 57.

<sup>62</sup> William of Apulia, *The Deeds of Robert Guiscard*, Book III, 42.

<sup>63</sup> William of Apulia, *The Deeds of Robert Guiscard*, Book V, 62.

<sup>64</sup> William of Apulia, *The Deeds of Robert Guiscard*, Book V, 63.

<sup>65</sup> He called him "a most worthy heir of his great father, showing the good qualities of both his father and of his uncles. His character was such that from an early age he had shown his love of virtue." William of Apulia, *The Deeds of Robert Guiscard*, Book IV, 49. He records that just before Guiscard left to join Bohemond at Corfu in 1081, he publicly appointed Roger as his heir, (Book IV, 50).

Geoffrey Malaterra and Amatus both also pay their respects to Roger, lauding him as a generous and wise leader, skillful in speech and effective in battle.<sup>66</sup> Amatus records that Guiscard sent Roger in 1079 against Gradilon, who was Guiscard's nephew by his sister and one of the competitors for the dukedom.<sup>67</sup> When Guiscard returned to Italy from the Balkan Campaign to aid the pope against the German king Henry IV, Geoffrey Malaterra records that Roger Borsa joined his father in the defense.<sup>68</sup> Therefore, Roger would be a considerable challenge to Bohemond receiving his inheritance.

Although older and more experienced in 1085 than he was when Guiscard almost died back in 1073, Roger still faced pressure from Norman elites when gathering support for his title. According to John Norwich, the other Norman families in South Italy were not always fond of the de Hautevilles, and they only remained loyal to Guiscard because of his strength and leadership, which Roger Borsa lacked.<sup>69</sup> They rebelled against Guiscard whatever chance they got. Norwich fails to offer any reason for this, but Guiscard and the other de Hautevilles caused tensions during their early history in Italy. The Lombards were often bitter to the Normans due to their harsh treatment. It was the cruelty of the Normans in Benevento which sparked the Battle of Civitate in 1053, an alliance of the Lombards, Byzantines, and Pope Leo IX against the Normans, which resulted in Norman victory.<sup>70</sup> The other major Norman family, the Dengrots, who held Aversa and Capua, once equal in power and allies with the de Hautevilles during Civitate, swayed between supporters and competitors as they realized that Guiscard's power began to outstrip their own.<sup>71</sup> When Guiscard ended Byzantium's Italian presence in 1071,

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<sup>66</sup> Geoffrey Malaterra, *The Deeds of Count Roger*, Book 3.42, 172.

<sup>67</sup> Amatus of Montecassino, *The History of the Normans*, Book VII.25, 177; Guiscard and Roger eventually captured him at Vico and had him blinded and castrated. William of Apulia, *The Deeds of Robert Guiscard*, Book III, 43.

<sup>68</sup> Geoffrey Malaterra, *The Deeds of Count Roger*, Book 3.37, 168.

<sup>69</sup> Norwich, *The Normans in the South*, 195; 258.

<sup>70</sup> Loud, *The Age of Robert Guiscard*, 116.

<sup>71</sup> Loud, *The Age of Robert Guiscard*, 235.

Richard of Capua encouraged a Norman revolt against him in Apulia. Shortly after, they came to an agreement so that Guiscard could focus on Sicily.<sup>72</sup> Then in 1075, Richard and Guiscard besieged Salerno and Naples together.<sup>73</sup> The Drengots relied on the de Hautevilles against Lombard families but did what they could to remove or limit their power. Other Norman families also rebelled against Guiscard when they had the chance, including the family of Count Peter I of Trani.<sup>74</sup> Even the other de Hauteville families harbored some antagonism towards Guiscard, as they believed that he had taken the dukedom from the sons of his brother Humphrey.<sup>75</sup> William of Apulia sums up the struggle: “Robert's glory, which had been so greatly increased, began to invite not a little envy, where there should instead have been praise. His virtues were envied by those elected counts by the people...and they wickedly conspired together to murder him when they could find a suitable opportunity.”<sup>76</sup> Roger lacked a lot of his father's military skill, and to the Normans, his blood was tainted with that of the Lombard race. As a result, many of the Normans of Apulia had little affection and respect for Roger Borsa.<sup>77</sup> He needed help to receive his promised inheritance.

## **Sichelgaita**

Sichelgaita played a major role in ensuring Roger Borsa's succession after Guiscard's death, having already established her authority as Guiscard's wife and the right of her son to be his heir. She became the link between the Lombards and Normans, and she used that link to

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<sup>72</sup> Loud, *The Age of Robert Guiscard*, 159.

<sup>73</sup> Loud, *The Age of Robert Guiscard*, 137-138.

<sup>74</sup> Count Peter I and his son Peter II of Andria rebelled against Guiscard. Other examples of Normans include Peter's nephew Count Amicus of Molfetta. Loud, *The Age of Robert Guiscard*, 235

<sup>75</sup> Kenneth Baxter Wolf, *Making history: the Normans and their historians in eleventh-century Italy* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1995), 2; Count Geoffrey of Conversano, Guiscard's other nephew from one of his sisters, also joined in the Apulian rebellions. Loud, *The Age of Robert Guiscard*, 235.

<sup>76</sup> William of Apulia, *The Deeds of Robert Guiscard*, Book II, 27.

<sup>77</sup> Norwich, *The Normans in the South*, 195, 258.

decrease rival claims to Guiscard's title while promoting Roger's. She was prepared to defend his right to the dukedom as soon as Guiscard passed away, convincing the nobles that Roger was the best choice and acting as regent to consolidate Roger's position against Bohemond.<sup>78</sup>

Sichelgaita became the link between the Normans and Lombards through her political marriage with Guiscard, putting her in a position to eventually promote her son as his heir. Her brother Gisulf II of Salerno sought the marriage contract with Guiscard in 1058 after the assassination of Gisulf's father Guaimar IV. Tensions grew between Gisulf and his uncle Guido and Guiscard's brothers, who had previously been responsible for installing Gisulf as the prince. These tensions caused him to seek another Norman ally.<sup>79</sup> The treaty between Guiscard and Gisulf lasted until May 1076, when Guiscard besieged Salerno and defeated Gisulf.<sup>80</sup>

One editor of the *Codex Cavensis* argues that Sichelgaita's influence on Guiscard began to increase after her brother Gisulf's defeat in 1076.<sup>81</sup> Amatus of Montecassino relates a story about how this influence began during Gisulf's rebellion against Guiscard. After attempting to

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<sup>78</sup> Anna Komnene speaks highly of Sichelgaita, recording how she fought alongside her husband in battles and inspired bravery amongst the troops. Anna Comnena, *The Alexiad*, Book 1.15, 66, Book 4.6, 147; For a detailed examination of the accuracy of these accounts, see Valerie Eads, "Sichelgaita of Salerno: Amazon or Trophy Wife?" in *Journal of Medieval Military History: Volume III*, ed. Kelly DeVries and Clifford J. Rogers (Rochester: Boydell & Brewer, 2005), 72-76.

<sup>79</sup> Loud, *The Age of Robert Guiscard*, 121, 127-128; Before the wedding ceremony could take place, Guiscard destroyed two fortresses that his brother William "Iron Arm" had constructed in Gisulf's territory. Geoffrey Malaterra, *The Deeds of Count Roger*, Book 1.31, 72.

<sup>80</sup> Guiscard had earlier received tribute from Amalfi in return for protection against Gisulf, who had not forgiven them for the assassination of his father in 1052. Norman chroniclers depict Gisulf as a cruel tyrant who provoked the Norman attack, most notably Amatus, who is very aggressive towards him: "I must mention the general sin whereby Gisulf was moved to do evil, so that his actions can be recorded. He was full of envy and deceit... Arrogance, pride, greed, gluttony, avarice, murder, perfidy, sacrilege, rendering good for evil, discord, and false chastity – all abided in this man, and each in order showered its presence in Prince Gisulf." Amatus of Montecassino, *The History of the Normans*, Book IV.34, 123, see more, Book VIII.2, 187ff; Loud, *The Age of Robert Guiscard*, 137-138; Geoffrey Malaterra explains that Gisulf was hostile to Guiscard, who patiently bore it in hopes of a peaceful resolution, but eventually "realized that his lenience was only making the situation worse, [and] renounced the treaty and prepared to engage in hostile actions of his own." Geoffrey Malaterra, *The Deeds of Count Roger*, Book 3.2, 134. These sources are pro-Norman and should be viewed as such. The blame for this altercation cannot entirely be put upon Gisulf, for Guiscard also saw the opportunity to take advantage of the local tensions and finish his conquest of southern Italy.

<sup>81</sup> Skinner, "Halt! Be Men!," 629, quoting from S. Leone and G. Vitolo (eds), *Codex Diplomaticus Cavensis*, X (Badia di Cava, Cava de Tirreni, 1990), xxiii.

convince her brother to end his aggression, she was met with the threat from him that he would make her a widow. Instead of retaliating with anger, she instead calmed Guiscard's rage and convinced him to show mercy to Gisulf. Realizing her value, he asked what she wanted in return for her counsel. Her first request already aimed to support her son, for she asked Guiscard to give the important trading port of Amalfi to Roger Borsa.<sup>82</sup>

After gaining control of Salerno, Guiscard used his wife's Lombard heritage to appease the misgivings the Lombards had about him. He gave gifts to the inhabitants and included in the charter the phrase *per interventum domne Sichelgaita duci/ducisse*, or "at the intervention of lady Sichelgaita the duchess (sometimes duke)."<sup>83</sup> Patricia Skinner suggests that she sometimes labeled herself as duke as a way to indicate her legitimate role in Guiscard's court.<sup>84</sup> In any case, Guiscard certainly used his wife's Lombard heritage as he transitioned the people into his rule.

In this way, Sichelgaita was keen on making a name for herself so that after Guiscard's death she and her son could maintain authority. She did this by remaining active in local patronage, independently from her husband, in order to acquire respect in southern Italy. For instance, Sichelgaita retained her own property in Salerno which she managed independently of Guiscard. She also gave lands near Maiori to the church of St. Trophimena, which she listed "in the sixth year of Robert and Roger's rule," a date before Salerno fell to Guiscard.<sup>85</sup> By backdating Roger's rule in Salerno, Skinner argues that Sichelgaita was attempting to ensure that Roger would inherit the Salernitan patrimony.<sup>86</sup> Sichelgaita also patronized the monastery of

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<sup>82</sup> Amatus of Montecassino, *The History of the Normans*, Book VIII.13, 194.

<sup>83</sup> Skinner, "Halt! Be Men!," 629, quoting from *Codex Diplomaticus Cavensis* CC, X, document 119 (Menager, Recueil, document 27).

<sup>84</sup> Skinner, "Halt! Be Men!," 629-630.

<sup>85</sup> Patricia Skinner, "Daughters of Sichelgaita: the women of Salerno in the twelfth century," in *Salerno nel XII Secolo: Istituzioni, Società*, ed. Paolo Delugo and Paolo Peduto (Cultura, Salerno, Italy, 2004), 120. The pope appointed Guiscard as duke in 1059. The sixth year of his reign was 1065, while Salerno fell in 1076.

<sup>86</sup> Skinner, "Halt! Be Men!," 630.

Montecassino and gave it to the church of St. Peter in Taranto under the names of Guiscard and Roger. In addition, she offered a grant in May 1086 to Orso, the archbishop of Bari, and to the Abbey of La Cava, which were also signed by Roger and Bohemond.<sup>87</sup> They also sent a grant to the Monastery of the Holy Trinity in Venosa.<sup>88</sup> Through these acts of patronage and displays of authority, Sichelgaita showed herself as a successful ruler in her own rite, capable of safeguarding the will of her husband after his death.

As a result of her growing influence over the Normans and Lombards, Sichelgaita was instrumental in having the Norman nobles elect Roger as the successor. When, as mentioned above, Guiscard was falsely reported to have died in 1073, an assembly of Norman knights came together to confirm a successor. They decided to recognize Guiscard's appointed heir, Roger.<sup>89</sup> Sichelgaita may have been the one to assemble this gathering, and at the very least was present in the meeting and instrumental in assuring the outcome. At this assembly, only Guiscard's nephew Abelard refused to recognize Roger Borsa as the next duke, claiming to deserve the title himself. According to Amatus, this prompted Sichelgaita to encourage the very much alive Guiscard to continue his attacks against Abelard, since it was now clear that he would continue to be a major rival against Roger Borsa once Guiscard did eventually pass away. At the constant persuasion from Sichelgaita, Guiscard "grew more impatient to destroy Abelard. He strengthened the siege-castles; he encircled the city with great ditches and palisades, and he kept watch on all the roads."<sup>90</sup> Guiscard would likely have focused on defeating Abelard regardless of Sichelgaita's interference, since he knew his nephew would vie for Apulia after his death regardless of which

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<sup>87</sup> Yewdale, *Bohemond I*, 26, quoting from *Codice Diplomatico Barese* (Bari, 1897-1914), I, 56-58.

<sup>88</sup> Yewdale, *Bohemond I*, 27, quoting from Giuseppe del Giudice, *Codice diplomatico del regno di Carlo I e II d'Injio* (Naples, 1863-1902), I, XXV.

<sup>89</sup> Amatus of Montecassino, *The History of the Normans*, Book VII.20, 175.

<sup>90</sup> Amatus of Montecassino, *The History of the Normans*, Book VII.20-21, 175.

son was ruling. Yet this event recorded by Amatus shows how involved Sichelgaita was in preserving Roger's claim to the title. Abelard would die a few years later in 1081, leaving Bohemond as the only major competitor for the dukedom.

Sichelgaita's work in safeguarding Roger's position paid off, for when Guiscard died in 1085 at Kefalonia with her and Roger at his side, Roger was immediately recognized as his heir. However, he and Sichelgaita likely suspected that he would be challenged shortly after arriving back in Italy where Bohemond, who had been recovering from an illness in Bari, waited.<sup>91</sup>

William of Apulia records that Roger announced to the knights that he would return home or else "he would be deprived of his rightful lordship, to which his father had designated him the heir."<sup>92</sup>

Sichelgaita and Roger arrived in Italy and took the body of Guiscard back to be buried at Venosa.<sup>93</sup> However, power did not appear to immediately be given to Roger, nor did a civil war instantly break out, but instead, Sichelgaita appears to have held a temporary regency for him.

Herbert Cowdrey records that there were three Apulia charters issued in March 1086 which named Sichelgaita the duke and a *de facto* regent on Roger's behalf.<sup>94</sup> One example of this was a charter in which Sichelgaita gave control of the Jewish community in Bari to the archbishop.<sup>95</sup>

This charter was witnessed by both Roger and Bohemond, which could indicate that both men recognized this regency. By May 1086, Cowdrey suggests that this regency ended after an accommodation was made with Bohemond, allowing Roger to peacefully receive the dukedom.<sup>96</sup>

However, he does not mention what this accommodation was. It could possibly be a group of

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<sup>91</sup> Donald Matthew, *The Norman Kingdom of Sicily* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 18.

<sup>92</sup> William of Apulia, *The Deeds of Robert Guiscard*, Book V, 66.

<sup>93</sup> Geoffrey Malaterra, *The Deeds of Count Roger*, Book 3.41, 171.

<sup>94</sup> H.E.J. Cowdrey, *The Age of Abbot Desiderius Montecassino, the Papacy, and the Normans in the Eleventh and Early Twelfth Centuries* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983), 180.

<sup>95</sup> Skinner, "Halt! Be Men!," 631, quoting from F. Nitti di Vito (ed.), *Codice Diplomatico Barese*, I–II (Vecchi, Bari, 1897–9), document 30.

<sup>96</sup> Cowdrey, *The Age of Abbot Desiderius Montecassino*, 180.

castles in Apulia, as William of Malmesbury makes a distinction between castles possessed “through his brother’s indulgences” and land acquired “by his own courage and prudence.”<sup>97</sup>

This idea of Sichelgaita’s regency has some difficulties, notably because regents normally only served when the successor was too young to administer the duties of the office. Roger was well into his twenties and now experienced in military service. Yet this was a special occasion in which two brothers needed to avoid an all-out civil war, and while Sichelgaita may not have been an impartial mediator, she was likely the best person to represent the Norman and Lombard concerns.

Another way in which Sichelgaita was able to safeguard Roger’s inheritance was through the papacy. Pope Gregory VII had invested her to appoint the successor back when Guiscard was believed to have died in 1073. He had written condolences to her and requested that she bring Roger to him to receive from the Holy Church the benefits that Guiscard had received from the previous popes.<sup>98</sup> This signaled that the pope recognized Roger Borsa as the rightful duke after Guiscard. Pope Gregory died shortly before Guiscard, but Sichelgaita likely took the opportunity of the papal turnover to assume that the papacy still wished the same. Gregory and his successor Victor III were also both Lombards and may have understood the unique position Roger and Sichelgaita would hold in dealing with tensions between the Lombards and Normans. The two people groups were important vassals to the papacy, so peace in the south was important to them, especially with the threat of Henry IV of Germany in the background.<sup>99</sup>

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<sup>97</sup> William of Malmesbury, *Chronicle of the Kings of England*, Book IV.2, 414. This implies that Roger gave Bohemond some land in Apulia in order to appease him from trying to take land by force.

<sup>98</sup> Amatus of Montecassino, *The History of the Normans*, Book VII.8, 168.

<sup>99</sup> Loud, *The Age of Robert Guiscard*, 200-201. Tensions existed between the papacy and the German monarchy because of the Investiture Controversy (c.11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> centuries), which attempted to limit secular control in religious institution. The papacy especially rejected simony, which was the selling of religious positions to influential people.

Before ending this section on Sichelgaita's influence in the life of Bohemond, it is interesting to note another way in which Sichelgaita is recorded to have attempted to help Roger attain the inheritance. Orderic Vitalis, along with William of Malmesbury, makes some surprising accusations against Sichelgaita that are unique to their accounts.<sup>100</sup> Orderic presents her as having been so desperate to safeguard Roger Borsa's inheritance, that she "conceived a violent hatred of Bohemond her step-son, apprehending that he was much braver and superior in sense and worth, [and was afraid that] her son Roger would forfeit in his favour the duchy of Apulia and Calabria to which he was heir."<sup>101</sup> Orderic claims that, due to this fear, when Bohemond returned to Salerno to heal from the wounds he received in battle at Durazzo, Sichelgaita compelled the physician caring for him to administer poison. Orderic continues that Guiscard caught wind of Sichelgaita's treachery and threatened that "if Bohemond dies of the malady under which he labours, I will plunge this sword into your bosom." Sichelgaita responded by preparing an antidote which healed Bohemond. Yet Orderic goes on to claim that Sichelgaita proceeded to poison Guiscard himself, leading to his death.<sup>102</sup> Clearly a supporter of Bohemond, likely due to his knowledge of Bohemond's subsequent successes in the east, the accuracy of Orderic's account can be questioned. There is very little evidence supporting this event, despite her presence at Kefalonia when Guiscard died. Sichelgaita was married to Guiscard for over a quarter-century and fought alongside him in many accounts.<sup>103</sup> The remaining five years of her widowed life were indeed spent preserving her son's claim to Guiscard's title, but her loyalty during his life does not support her going so far as to poison her

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<sup>100</sup> William of Malmesbury, *Chronicle of the Kings of England*, Book IV.2, 365-366. He does not mention that she poisoned Bohemond, but he does indicate that Alexios had promised her gold to poison Guiscard.

<sup>101</sup> Ordericus Vitalis, *The Ecclesiastical History*, Book VII.7, 29-31.

<sup>102</sup> Bohemond returned to Salerno to recover from his wounds in late 1084. Robert died in July 1085.

<sup>103</sup> Norwich, *The Normans in the South*, 118, 250-251; Anna Komnene in particular notes her intensity in battle. Anna Comnena, *The Alexiad*, Book 4.6, 147.

own husband to secure Roger's title. In fact, it would have been more beneficial to her if Guiscard, who wanted Roger to take over after him, stayed alive long enough for him to strengthen his own position. Guiscard was leading a successful campaign that would have acquired an inheritance for Bohemond, thus having the potential to remove him as a contender to Roger's inheritance. Had Guiscard survived his illness, this campaign could have been successful. Still, despite this account likely being false, it does highlight the tensions between Bohemond and his stepfamily.<sup>104</sup> Marjorie Chibnall suggests that Bohemond even concocted this rumour himself.<sup>105</sup> From what we know, Sichelgaita remained faithful to Guiscard, and there is no evidence that she was the cause of his death. She often joined him on campaign and in battle, encouraging the men who fought with her.<sup>106</sup> Their marriage was diplomatic, but their military compatibility was an added benefit to their marriage.

One final controversial suggestion on how Sichelgaita helped Roger secure the title was by commissioning Amatus of Montecassino to produce a chronicle on the *History of the Normans*. Patricia Skinner supposes that this source was also a piece of propaganda meant to establish Sichelgaita and her son as the legitimate successors to Guiscard, thereby discrediting Bohemond as a legitimate contender to Guiscard's inheritance in the eyes of the Norman and Lombard readers.<sup>107</sup> Sichelgaita had ties to the Abby of Montecassino, as the abbot Desiderius and Amatus had both been monks in her family's foundation at Cava for several years. Amatus was also writing right when Guiscard took full control of Apulia and when Roger Borsa came of age. This would be the best time for Sichelgaita to attempt a polemic in support of Roger Borsa's

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<sup>104</sup> William of Apulia records that Sichelgaita joined Guiscard just before he became ill and died. Therefore, to the supporters of Bohemond, it could look suspicious. William of Apulia, *The Deeds of Robert Guiscard*, Book V, 65.

<sup>105</sup> M. Chibnall, "Women in Orderic Vitalis," *Haskins Society Journal* 2 (1990): 108; Skinner, "Halt! Be Men!," 631.

<sup>106</sup> Anna Comnena, *The Alexiad*, Book 4.6, 147.

<sup>107</sup> Skinner, "Halt! Be Men!," 634.

inheritance. Skinner's hypothesis is unique and difficult to support, precisely because the rivalry between Bohemond and Roger is hardly mentioned by Amatus, a counterpoint even Skinner acknowledges. To her credit, Amatus mentions Roger several times, while he is silent on Bohemond. Most helpful to her argument, Amatus notes that when Guiscard became very sick in 1073 and was rumoured to have died, "all the Norman knights assembled and elected the duke's son Roger as their lord, and they swore fealty to Roger and were made his vassals."<sup>108</sup> Therefore, there is some hint of support for Roger over Bohemond recorded in Amatus. However, for a source as long as Amatus, if he was compelled by Sichelgaita to write in support of Roger Borsa, he would surely have included a lot more on both Roger and Bohemond to support Roger's inheritance and to delegitimize Bohemond further. Therefore, it seems reasonable to conclude that Amatus was not writing primarily to legitimate Roger Borsa; at best, he was influenced to support Roger whenever it was relevant to do so.

The Balkan Campaign had ended in failure, abandoned as soon as its leader fell. Bohemond now had nothing. Roger received the title with his mother's support, but Bohemond was prepared to use his power and influence to take back his inheritance. Roger and Sichelgaita appear to have tried to appease him with his own lordship in Apulia, but soon enough, by late 1087 or early 1088, Bohemond began attacking Roger's territories.<sup>109</sup> This is where Count Roger of Sicily's support comes into play.

### **Count Roger I of Sicily**

As was previously suggested, Roger Borsa may have had difficulty securing his title due to the antagonism the Lombards felt towards the Normans in general and the de Hautevilles in

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<sup>108</sup> Amatus of Montecassino, *The History of the Normans*, Book VII.20, 175.

<sup>109</sup> Loud, *The Age of Guiscard*, 256.

particular. However, this could have also worked to his advantage. Even though Bohemond was arguably stronger and more suited to be duke, Roger Borsa's willingness to reward land for peace and loyalty may have been more attractive to the nobles. As Geoffrey Malaterra describes him, "he was generous with his gifts... [and] judged all matters fairly, except when his sense of pity led him to be somewhat lax in his execution of justice."<sup>110</sup> To the nobles, if a de Hauteville was to be duke, then Roger Borsa would be less likely to interfere with their interests than Bohemond would.<sup>111</sup> This is what likely ensured the support of Roger's uncle Count Roger I of Sicily, who perhaps knew that Roger Borsa would not interfere with his business in Sicily and would allow him a greater influence on the mainland.

Count Roger had a vested interest in the successor to the dukedom as it concerned his own areas of control. He had only a secondary interest in the Italian mainland, as his focus was primarily on the island of Sicily. Yet he still controlled half of the fortresses in Calabria.<sup>112</sup> His possession of these areas was vital as a buffer against any competing Normans and as a fallback and future launch point if his Sicilian campaign began to collapse. It is possible that Count Roger suspected that if Bohemond received Guiscard's title, he would claim control of all of Calabria, cutting off Roger's connection to the mainland. Worse still, Count Roger could have feared that the aggressive Bohemond might attempt to usurp his control of Sicily. Count Roger likely thought that if Roger Borsa took over Guiscard's lands, he (Count Roger) would not only retain his own holdings in Calabria, but he would also likely gain additional lordships in Calabria and Apulia. Count Roger, therefore, offered his support to Roger Borsa and continued to focus on Sicily.

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<sup>110</sup> Geoffrey Malaterra, *The Deeds of Count Roger*, Book 4.4, 180.

<sup>111</sup> John Norwich supposes that the nobles supported Borsa precisely because he was less likely to interfere with their aspirations than Bohemond. Norwich, *The Normans in the South*, 195, 258.

<sup>112</sup> Geoffrey Malaterra, *The Deeds of Count Roger*, Book 3.42, 172.

Geoffrey Malaterra claims that Count Roger also supported Roger Borsa because he promised while Guiscard was still alive that he would do so.<sup>113</sup> Malaterra further explains that Count Roger offered his services to Roger Borsa in order to strengthen his position in Apulia and Calabria against his rivals.<sup>114</sup> In return for his service, he received full control of the fortresses in Calabria, cementing his influence on the mainland.<sup>115</sup>

This is a pattern that existed between Count Roger and Duke Roger Borsa during the next decade and a half, with the duke asking the count for help, and the count receiving land in return. Yewdale and McQueen note that Roger Borsa's weakness was revealed by his reliance on Count Roger, and it can be argued that he would not have held his position without his uncle.<sup>116</sup> As Geoffrey Malaterra notes, Roger Borsa "used the count as if he were a scourge against all his adversaries in an effort to frighten them."<sup>117</sup> As will be discussed below, this pattern of help and reward during the constant challenges faced by Roger Borsa is explained in several events detailed in the final book of Geoffrey Malaterra.

Without Count Roger, Roger Borsa was quick to appease his rivals. Despite having received part of Apulia from Sichelgaita and Roger Borsa as part of the appeasement deal, Bohemond took advantage of Count Roger's absence in 1088 and began raiding throughout Taranto and Otranto.<sup>118</sup> Instead of meeting his half-brother in battle, Roger Borsa made another attempt to buy off Bohemond by conferring on him, in addition to the territories already given to him before his rebellion, the cities of Oria, Taranto, Otranto, and Gallipoli. Geoffrey Malaterra claims this choice was made because the funds were not available for this kind of sustained

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<sup>113</sup> Geoffrey Malaterra, *The Deeds of Count Roger*, Book 3.42, 172.

<sup>114</sup> Geoffrey Malaterra, *The Deeds of Count Roger*, Book 4.1, 177.

<sup>115</sup> Geoffrey Malaterra, *The Deeds of Count Roger*, Book 3.42, 172.

<sup>116</sup> Yewdale, *Bohemond I*, 25; McQueen, "Relations between the Normans and Byzantium," 447.

<sup>117</sup> Geoffrey Malaterra, *The Deeds of Count Roger*, Book 4.10, 186.

<sup>118</sup> These citizens willingly surrendered their cities to Bohemond. Count Roger was fighting in Sicily at this time.

conflict.<sup>119</sup> Yet this event serves as an example of the policy of appeasement Roger Borsa was willing to consider in order to preserve his title when his uncle was not present. These cities were important for control in Apulia, and by making these concessions to his clearly ambitious brother, he cemented Bohemond's influence in southern Italy.

After Roger Borsa capitulated to Bohemond and offered him cities in Apulia, the rest of the rebellions recorded by Geoffrey Malaterra involve Count Roger's aid against both Bohemond and other rebellious nobles. Count Roger aided Roger Borsa against Mihera, son of Hugh Falloc, commander of the fortresses of Catanzaro and Rocca outside of Saint Severina. Mihera rebelled around 1088, attacking the duke's fortress of Maida and becoming a vassal of Bohemond.<sup>120</sup> Bohemond in turn occupied Cosenza, whose inhabitants were no longer satisfied with Roger Borsa's rule. The leaders of the city swore loyalty to Bohemond in exchange for his promise to destroy the fortresses that guarded their city.<sup>121</sup> Roger Borsa and his uncle defeated Mihera in 1090 and appeased Bohemond with yet more land concessions, and Count Roger received most of the territory controlled by Mihera.<sup>122</sup> Count Roger besieged Cosenza in May 1091, which

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<sup>119</sup> Geoffrey Malaterra, *The Deeds of Count Roger*, Book 4.4, 180.

<sup>120</sup> Geoffrey Malaterra, *The Deeds of Count Roger*, Book 3.5, 136, Book 4.9, 185.

<sup>121</sup> Roger Borsa had built a fortress in the city which the people hated, and lured with the promise of having it destroyed, they surrendered the city to Bohemond who promptly defeated the garrison and destroyed the fortress. This was a surprising move by Bohemond, as Cosenza was in Calabria, a significant distance away from Bohemond's current holdings. Roger Borsa and Count Roger met Bohemond there, who fled to Rocca and established a fifteen-day truce to attempt reconciliation with his family. The truce failed and conflict ensued for two years before they finally made peace. Geoffrey Malaterra, *The Deeds of Count Roger*, Book 4.10, 185-186.

<sup>122</sup> Geoffrey Malaterra, *The Deeds of Count Roger*, Book 4.11, 187. Bohemond was able to receive Maida and Cosenza from Roger in exchange for peace. However, Bohemond and Roger later exchanged Cosenza for Bari, providing that neither fortified their respective cities, at the request of the citizens. This exchange made logistical sense for Bohemond. Cosenza was far away from his other holdings, while Bari was close. It is not clear why Roger made this deal, as Bari was a significant city and one of the last Apulian cities to fall to his father. Its strength and connected sea routes were vital to the Apulian economy. Perhaps Roger feared that Bohemond would attempt to take Bari and decided to make this deal and gain back Cosenza instead of eventually losing both.

continued to rebel even after Bohemond left, eventually enticing the city to surrender. He received control of half the city from Roger Borsa in return for his efforts.<sup>123</sup>

Rebellions increase when Roger Borsa fell ill in 1093, and news spread that he had died. Bohemond attempted to claim control of his land, but again Count Roger intervened and prevented him from doing so.<sup>124</sup> Malaterra does not record any reward given to Count Roger, but this event shows that he was active in safeguarding Roger Borsa's land from Bohemond. Another Norman noble, William of Grandmesnil, brother-in-law of Bohemond and future crusader, also took the opportunity of Roger Borsa's illness and claimed Rossano, refusing to return it when he found out that Roger Borsa had recovered.<sup>125</sup> Count Roger took the lead in the siege and secured the city, receiving the fortress of Saint Marco Argentano as a reward.<sup>126</sup>

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<sup>123</sup> Geoffrey Malaterra, *The Deeds of Count Roger*, Book 4.17, 194-196. This was the last bit of aggression between Bohemond and Roger Borsa. Bohemond had already proven that he had the respect and ability to take more from Roger, even with his backing by Count Roger. Perhaps it was after this truce that Bohemond began looking for other areas for himself. Maybe he considered that with his current holdings in Apulia and the backing of his brother and uncle, he could prepare for another assault on the Byzantine Empire and continue his father's ambitions. Perhaps he fully intended on continuing his ambitions in Italy, only waiting for his influence to grow.

<sup>124</sup> Bohemond claimed that he intended to serve as regent until his nephews were old enough to rule. Bohemond was the most qualified to be regent, with only Count Roger in a position to challenge him. On his way, he took over some fortresses belonging to his brother and supplied them with garrisons. Count Roger, enraged that Bohemond did not consult him on this decision and afraid that ambition would tempt him to usurp the title, sent his men to pursue Bohemond and keep him out of Calabria. Bohemond, learning that his brother was still alive, immediately visited Roger Borsa and returned the fortresses he had taken. Geoffrey Malaterra, *The Deeds of Count Roger*, Book 4.20-21, 198-199.

<sup>125</sup> William of Grandmesnil, who married the niece of Count Roger, attacked and fortified the Calabrian city of Rossano and refused to return it to Roger Borsa. Bohemond and Count Roger eventually succeeded in helping Roger Borsa take back the city. William was stripped of his title and fled to Constantinople, from where he later returned and became reconciled with Roger Borsa. He would later reappear as one of the knights on the First Crusade, eventually deserting the campaign. His desertion during the siege of Antioch and subsequent meeting with Alexios convinced the emperor to call off his reinforcing army. This, as will be seen in another chapter, was used by Bohemond in his bid to rule Antioch. Loud, *The Age of Robert Guiscard*, 257; Geoffrey Malaterra is good at noting that the brothers were not the only ones involved in the struggle, for others sought to take advantage of the duchy and increase their own holdings from the duchy. He notes that "The fidelity – or lack thereof – of many Apulians became clear." Geoffrey Malaterra, *The Deeds of Count Roger*, Book 3.42, 172. Loyalty amongst the Normans was fluid and unreliable.

<sup>126</sup> Count Roger had sent a request to Roger Borsa requesting him to start a campaign against William, only to find out that Roger Borsa was already planning it. Geoffrey Malaterra, *The Deeds of Count Roger*, Book 4.21-4.22, 199-202.

Amalfi rebelled against Roger Borsa in 1096, and yet again Count Roger readily came to his assistance in return for half the city.<sup>127</sup> It was at this point that Bohemond left the Italian theatre and took many of the “war-oriented young men of the duke’s and count’s armies” along with him on the First Crusade, leaving his brother and uncle without enough troops to finish the siege.<sup>128</sup> Even with Bohemond out of the picture, Roger Borsa still relied on his uncle to keep control. He sent Count Roger to assist Richard II of Aversa in retaking Capua from the Lombards, who in return gave Naples to Roger Borsa. Although not stated, it can be assumed that Count Roger received at least part of the city. He also sent his army to help Roger Borsa quell the rebellions in Apulia which had been largely ignored by the duke, likely because of Bohemond’s presence there.<sup>129</sup> Now that Bohemond was distracted in the east, Apulia was left unguarded. Perhaps Count Roger hoped to gain an influence in Apulia, strengthening his control on the mainland.

These events collected by Geoffrey Malaterra highlight Roger Borsa’s dependence on his uncle. Count Roger challenged each of Bohemond’s attempts to rebel against his brother, but whenever the count was not present, Roger Borsa appeased Bohemond with more land. Even when Bohemond was not the threat, Roger Borsa needed the count to defend his territory; he

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<sup>127</sup> Due to his trusting nature, Roger Borsa entrusted the stewardship of certain cities to Lombard rulers. Himself part Lombard, he wished to continue strengthening the ties between them and the Normans. One of these cities was the very prosperous trading city of Amalfi. Before the Normans originally took the area, Amalfi enjoyed a strong level of autonomy. Their trading empire focused on the Muslims of North Africa and the Byzantine Empire, bringing much wealth into the area. Norman occupation was a hindrance to their freedoms. Seeing an opportunity to loose some of those restrictions, they rebelled against Roger. He responded by attacking every side of the city and establishing a naval blockade. He requested the help of Count Roger and Bohemond, promising the count part of the city. During this siege, a band of men on their way to Jerusalem passed through. Bohemond, likely already aware of Pope Urban’s Crusade, and the most war-oriented men of the Norman armies left the siege and prepared to join them. Geoffrey Malaterra notes that this was not Bohemond’s original intention, but after noticing that the army lacked a leader and that the cause was so great, he desired to take whatever men he could and journey to the holy land. Geoffrey Malaterra, *The Deeds of Count Roger*, Book 4.24, 203-204.

<sup>128</sup> Geoffrey Malaterra, *The Deeds of Count Roger*, Book 4.24, 204; *Gesta Francorum*, Book 1.3, 7; Guibert of Nogent, *The Deeds of God Through the Franks*, 57; John H. Pryor, “Introduction: Modelling Bohemond’s march to Thessalonike” in *Logistics of Warfare in the Age of the Crusades*, ed. John H. Pryor (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006), 1.

<sup>129</sup> Geoffrey Malaterra, *The Deeds of Count Roger*, Book 4.26, 207-209.

provided frequent protection for Roger Borsa and was a constant deterrent to possible challengers. This suggests that Count Roger willingly supported Roger Borsa over Bohemond in order to retain and grow his influence in Italy, as he received land during each recorded battle where he aided his nephew. Roger Borsa was willing to give up land in return for loyalty and service, a quality which Bohemond likely would not have shared.

I do not mean to suggest that Count Roger only supported his nephew in order to safeguard his interests in Calabria and receive more land. The familial bond between Count Roger and Guiscard cannot be discounted. The two brothers relied on each other in their respective conquests, with Guiscard aiding Count Roger in Sicily and Count Roger assisting Guiscard on the mainland. While political opportunity influenced Count Roger to support Roger Borsa, his wish to honour Guiscard's chosen heir likely also had an impact on his decision. While helping his nephew strengthen his position against his rivals after Guiscard's death, the emir of Syracuse, Benarvet, sailed to Nicotera and Reggio and laid waste to the area.<sup>130</sup> If Count Roger only cared about land, he would not have left his primary goal of Sicily with minimal defense to aid his nephew. Count Roger would retaliate and take Syracuse in October 1085, but unlike Guiscard several years earlier, Roger Borsa did not help the count in Sicily.<sup>131</sup>

This, then, is the situation Bohemond found himself at the time he decided to join the expedition that would come to be known as the First Crusade. He had lost his original inheritance, failed to create a new one in the Balkans, and had proved unable to retrieve his former inheritance from his half-brother as long as his uncle, Count Roger, was intervening. Bohemond was now on the First Crusade, motivated by Pope Urban's mission and intent on earning his own territory in the east. Bohemond's journey brought him into close contact with his

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<sup>130</sup> Geoffrey Malaterra, *The Deeds of Count Roger*, Book 4.1, 177.

<sup>131</sup> Geoffrey Malaterra, *The Deeds of Count Roger*, Book 4.2, 179.

former enemy, Alexios Komnenos and the Byzantine Empire. He now faced the challenge of working with this former adversary to acquire a new city in the east far away from any Norman influence and support.

## **Chapter 2: Bohemond and Alexios – Established Loyalty**

After attempting to gain a prominent inheritance in Italy and the Balkans, Bohemond's prospects were diminishing. He had failed to secure the dukedom from his brother and needed to begin considering other possible avenues to enfranchise himself. He could remain in Apulia and govern his small estate, perhaps later attempting to usurp the dukedom from his brother Roger once his power had increased. From what we know of Bohemond from his later activities, it seems likely he still intended to increase his power, for his plot of land in Apulia was not enough to satisfy his ambitions. Thus, when Pope Urban II began gathering Latin armies to embark on the First Crusade, Bohemond saw an opportunity to better himself in another area of the world. While he would eventually acquire Antioch and refuse to return it to the Byzantine Empire, it cannot be said that this, or something like it, was Bohemond's intention from the start. This would have been a very difficult goal for him to achieve with little resources and few, although experienced, troops. He did not have the strength or wealth necessary to go into Byzantine or Seljuk territory, conquer land, and protect it from reconquest. In order for Bohemond to receive land in a foreign country, he would first need the support of a foreign lord. This chapter will therefore examine the ways in which he set himself up to receive a lordship, which centered around employment in the Byzantine Empire.

### **Foreigners and Normans in Byzantine Service**

Entering Byzantine service was not an idea that originated with Bohemond. His father had likely looked to Constantinople to find a lordship for him before embarking on the Balkan Campaign. By making a marriage deal with the then emperor, Michael VII Doukas, Guiscard would have created a way for Bohemond to enter Byzantine political administration. By having

his daughter as the wife of the future emperor, Guiscard would likely hold the title of *nobilissimos*, one of several often given to foreign rulers. This would give him the power to appoint one of his sons to a high position as well. As mentioned above, several authors have suggested that Guiscard would have given Bohemond the title of *kouropalates*.<sup>1</sup> These were significant titles that gave the holders potential in Byzantine politics. *Kouropalates* was one of the highest titles attained in Byzantine government and was originally only given to close members of the emperor's family. It later evolved into a position that was given to foreign rulers. *Nobilissimos* was also a significant position usually reserved for members of the imperial family and was just inferior to *basileus*.<sup>2</sup> These titles were two of the highest in the middle Byzantine period, and although they had lost some of their value by the eleventh century, they were still prestigious positions.<sup>3</sup> Rodolphe Guiland suggests that Guiscard initially refused the title for Bohemond when Michael offered it.<sup>4</sup> As was mentioned in the previous chapter, this may have simply been because Guiscard feared that he would be forced to return Bari to the Byzantines. Once it was clear that Michael no longer intended to retrieve Bari from the Normans, Guiscard would have likely considered the potential of having Bohemond enter Byzantine service instead of trying to acquire new lands by force. It is possible that he only launched the Balkan Campaign once it was clear that the marriage deal was no longer possible.

It was not uncommon for foreigners to enter Byzantine service. In fact, it was very common, as the regime in Constantinople and the empire it controlled was one of the most open

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<sup>1</sup> Smith, "Nobilissimus and warleader," 512-513.

<sup>2</sup> Cyril Toumanoff, *Studies in Christian Caucasian History* (Washington: Georgetown University Press, 1963), 388.

<sup>3</sup> They were no longer the highest positions, as Alexios had created a few that were higher, such as *Sebastocrator*. However, they still held significance. George Ostrogorsky, *History of the Byzantine State*, trans. Joan Hussey (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1968), 367.

<sup>4</sup> R. Guiland, "Etude sur l'histoire administrative de l'empire byzantin. Le curopalate," *Byantina* 2 (1970): 220; A.P. Kazhdan and Ann Wharton Epstein, *Change in Byzantine Culture in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries* (Berkeley: University of California, 1985), 179.

to cultural and ethnic diversity of its time. Armenians, Persians, Slavs, Turks, and Normans constantly held high offices in the empire throughout its existence. They served in a variety of different capacities. One of their primary roles was in the administration of the areas of their origin on behalf of the emperor, especially in the early periods of the empire. This allowed for easier government, since the people saw a member of their own group governing them instead of a foreign ruler. However, they also frequently intermarried with the Greeks and established important families that would serve in military, religious, and governmental positions, with some foreigners, mostly Armenians, even achieving the ultimate rank of *basileus*.<sup>5</sup> Two common ways for a foreigner to attain a high position in the empire were through marriage alliances and military prowess. The two often went together. Men who showed excellent military skill and amassed loyalty from troops, particularly foreign ones with no hereditary ties to Constantinople, would be strategically married to the daughters of high-ranking individuals in order to secure their allegiance. These foreigners received high military titles and would obtain from the emperor yearly lifetime wages and often their own estates.<sup>6</sup> Additionally, they would be able to keep a percentage of the plunder in any cities that they subdued.<sup>7</sup> Therefore, even if a foreigner had no ties to the Byzantine emperor initially, they could still create a career for themselves in allegiance to the empire through their bravery and skills alone.

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<sup>5</sup> Jean-Claude Cheynet, "Bureaucracy and Aristocracy," in *The Oxford Handbook of Byzantine Studies*, ed. Elizabeth Jeffreys, John Haldon, and Robin Cormack (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 520; Emperors of Armenian descent included Maurice, Heraclius, Leo V "the Armenian," Michael III, Basil I, Nikephoros II Phokas, and John I Tzimiskes. Basil I's line is also considered Macedonian, but its founder originated from Armenia. Alexander Vasiliev, *History of the Byzantine Empire, 324-1453, Volume 1* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1964), 301; Anthony Kaldellis, *Romanland: Ethnicity and Empire in Byzantium* (Harvard University Press, 2019), 185.

<sup>6</sup> Cheynet, "Bureaucracy and Aristocracy," 521. The Norman knight Hervé is one such examples of a knight who received an estate for his service. See more on Hervé below.

<sup>7</sup> They would keep, and often hide from imperial officials, treasures in the shape of coin, jewels, spices, and precious clothes. Plundering not only increased their wealth in addition to what they earned from the emperor, but it also added revenue to employ mercenaries and bribe military troops to increase their authority or plan any coup. Cheynet, "Bureaucracy and Aristocracy," 521.

It is noteworthy that there were quite a lot of Normans who had entered Byzantine politics, particularly those who could not find a lordship in England, Normandy, or Italy. Jonathan Shepard surmises that the Normans began serving substantially in Byzantine affairs as early as the 1040s.<sup>8</sup> However, they had already been used as mercenaries a few decades before that. Shortly after joining Melus of Bari's failed rebellion against the Byzantines in 1017, a group of Normans received a fortress in Troia from Basil Boioannes. His hope was that they would provide a strong buffer against the encroaching German Empire.<sup>9</sup> The Normans were later employed by the Byzantines again against the Emirate in Syracuse in their attempt to retake Sicily from the Muslims, invading the island from 1038-1040.<sup>10</sup> The major Norman and Lombard families in southern Italy quickly rebelled against the Byzantines and began vying for independence, and as the Byzantine presence began to diminish in Italy and territory became increasingly difficult to obtain, many Norman knights began going to Constantinople to find further mercenary employment.<sup>11</sup> Notable Normans who served in the Byzantine court prior to the First Crusade were Hervé Frankopoulos, Robert Crispin, and Roussel of Bailleul.<sup>12</sup> These men saw the potential that existed in Byzantine employment and took the necessary steps to set

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<sup>8</sup> He notes that they quickly gained a reputation for their military skill and trustworthiness among the Byzantines. Jonathan Shepard, "The Uses of the Franks in Eleventh-Century Byzantium," in *Anglo-Norman Studies: Proceedings of the Battle Conference*, ed. Marjorie Chibnall (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 1993), 294.

<sup>9</sup> The first recorded instance of Norman mercenaries in Italy was during the rebellion of Melus of Bari. William of Apulia records that he met a group of Norman pilgrims travelling through Gargano to the ancient shrine of St. Michael the Archangel and employed them in his rebellion. Boioannes saw the benefit of these skilled mercenaries as appointed them to Troia as a buffer against the encroaching Holy Roman Empire of the Germans. This decision proved beneficial for both Basil and the Normans, as the Normans successfully kept back German invasion attempts. William of Apulia, *The Deeds of Robert Guiscard*, Book I, 3-4; Loud, *The Age of Robert Guiscard*, 61ff.

<sup>10</sup> It is during this invasion that the de Hautevilles arrived in Italy and distinguished themselves as mighty warriors and skilled leaders. Guiscard's eldest brothers William and Drogo fought alongside the Byzantine, with William earning the title "Iron Arm" after he fought the Emir in single combat, killing him, and ultimately winning the battle. Robert Guiscard would not arrive in Italy until around 1046, already after William's death. Loud, *The Age of Robert Guiscard*, 95.

<sup>11</sup> When Robert Guiscard arrived in Italy, his brother Drogo was not willing to cede Robert an endowment of land, leading Guiscard to seek out land for himself, eventually carving out through conquest areas of Calabria. Loud, *The Age of Robert Guiscard*, 110-111.

<sup>12</sup> Shepard, "The Uses of the Franks," 296-301; Smith, "Nobilissimus and warleader," 513.

themselves up for success. The stories of each of these Normans showed that entering Byzantine service was risky, and the payout often depended on which emperor was ruling. They also knew where to look for other opportunities and were not afraid to shift or turn their allegiance away if it served their interests better. The experiences of these Normans were likely well known by Bohemond and provided an example of the benefits and dangers of entering Byzantine service. It seems that he employed several of their strategies, setting himself up for success both in the service of the Byzantines and later in opposition to them.

Hervé Frankopoulos was a Norman commander who served as a mercenary under George Maniakes during the Byzantine campaign to retake Sicily from 1038-1040.<sup>13</sup> He entered Byzantine service again in 1050 when Emperor Constantine IX Monomachos sent him out against the Pechenegs.<sup>14</sup> John Skylitzes records that when Michael VII Doukas ascended the throne, he failed to honour Hervé's allegiance to Byzantium, despite the ongoing Norman/Byzantine aggression in Italy, and refused to heed Hervé's request to be appointed the title of *magister* in 1056. Instead, "the emperor dismissed him with sneers and derision."<sup>15</sup> Hervé returned to his estate at Dagarabe, somewhere in the Armeniakon theme, and solicited the support of certain Franks and Turks against the emperor, but was betrayed by his Turkish allies and turned over to the emperor.<sup>16</sup> He later re-entered Byzantine service, however, through his support for Isaac I Komnenos, as a lead seal exists which reads "thy servant Hervé Frangopolos

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<sup>13</sup> Alexander Kazhdan, "Hervé Frankopoulos," in *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium Vol. 2*, ed. Alexander P. Kazhdan and Alice-Mary Talbot (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 922.

<sup>14</sup> John Skylitzes, *A Synopsis of Byzantine History 811-1057*, trans. John Wortley (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), Chapter 21.22, 436.

<sup>15</sup> John Skylitzes, *A Synopsis of Byzantine History*, Chapter 23.4, 452.

<sup>16</sup> John Skylitzes, *A Synopsis of Byzantine History*, Chapter 23.4, 452-453. Hervé made an alliance with the Turkish leader Samouch and fought with him against the Greeks, but they eventually fell into conflict against one another. After a certain battle, Hervé and his men entered the city of Chleat, governed by the Turkish Emir Apoansar, who they had a treaty with. Aponasar sided with his fellow Turk and betrayed Hervé to Samouch.

*magistros, vestes* and *stratelates*.”<sup>17</sup> Through his title of *stratelates*, it appears that he was also given command of Byzantine troops, which he likely never had before. It was short-lived, however, as he was executed by Constantine X.<sup>18</sup>

Another Norman mercenary employed by the empire was Robert Crispin.<sup>19</sup> Arriving from Italy, he quickly became dissatisfied with the lack of honour shown by emperor Romanos Diogenes and rebelled against him in 1069.<sup>20</sup> After beating back the emperor’s attacks, Crispin requested and received amnesty.<sup>21</sup> However, he was quickly accused of planning treachery again and was dismissed from the emperor’s service and exiled to Abydos.<sup>22</sup> When Michael VII began his ascension to the throne, he recalled Crispin from exile and lavished him with favours and honours to “strengthen his allegiance to him.”<sup>23</sup> Crispin would then support him in defeating Diogenes and securing the throne for him, serving him until he [Crispin] died in 1073.

Amatus of Montecassino records that Crispin’s success influenced many Normans to become mercenaries for the Byzantine Empire.<sup>24</sup> Roussel of Bailleul was one of these men. He

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<sup>17</sup> This seal also depicted the head of St. Peter, a figure rarely seen on Byzantine seals but often used by the Normans. G. Schlumberger, *Sigillographie de l’empire byzantine* (Paris: Ernest Lerous, 1884) 656–660; Shepard, “The Uses of the Franks,” 297.

<sup>18</sup> Shepard, “The Uses of the Franks,” 297.

<sup>19</sup> Robert Crispin first appeared in Amatus of Montecassino, who records him fighting against the Muslims in Aragon, eventually capturing the city of Barbastros for the Franks in 1064. However, they quickly lost the city to the Saracens because, according to Amatus, “the knights gave themselves to the love of women... which angered Christ.” Due to this defeat, Crispin went to Constantinople to serve the emperor. Amatus of Montecassino, *The History of the Normans*, Book 1.5-8, 46-47.

<sup>20</sup> Michael Attaleiates, *The History*, trans. By Anthony Kaldellis and Dimitris Krallis (London: Harvard University Press, 2012), 18.2, 225.

<sup>21</sup> Michael Attaleiates, *The History*, 18.4, 227.

<sup>22</sup> He was accused of treachery because, according to Attaleiates, the “nature of the Frankish race is faithless.” Attaleiates was a Greek author and had a clear bias against the Latins in how he generalized them. However, he presents Crispin as a fairly faithful Latin and indicates that he was innocent of the accusations against him. He in fact condemns the emperor and his men, who attacked the Normans on Easter Sunday, when Christians were forbidden from attacking foreigners, let alone fellow Christians. Michael Attaleiates, *The History*, 18.5, 229.

<sup>23</sup> Michael Attaleiates, *The History*, 21.5, 309-311; Michael Psellos also records Crispin’s loyalty to Michael against Romanos, detailing a skillful cavalry charge which cut through the enemies ranks and scattered them. This was a common Norman strategy which Crispin utilized. Michael Psellus, *Fourteen Byzantine Rulers*, trans. E.R.A. Sewter (London: Penguin Books, 1966), 363-364.

<sup>24</sup> Amatus of Montecassino, *The History of the Normans*, Book I.9, 47. Roussel first appears in Geoffrey of Malaterra fighting alongside count Roger in Sicily against the Muslims in 1063. After Roger’s nephew Serlo

was received by Romanos Diogenes who put him in charge of a German contingent and sent him east to meet the Turks at the infamous Battle of Manzikert in 1071. Norman chroniclers indicate that he was taken prisoner by Alp Arslan after their defeat, and instead of returning to Byzantine service after his release, he established an estate for himself in Armenia and kept a close alliance with the local Turks who eventually betrayed him to the Byzantines.<sup>25</sup> The Greek sources do not mention his capture at Manzikert, but they claim that he instead rebelled against the Greeks while on campaign for Michael with Isaac Komnenos and carved out his own territory from the Turks.<sup>26</sup> The Turks eventually overpowered Roussel and imprisoned him, but his wife was able to pay for his freedom before Michael could.<sup>27</sup> Roussel returned to Armenia and reclaimed his former castles and continued raiding the Turks until he was betrayed again by a Turkish ally and handed over to Alexios Komnenos and brought to Constantinople.<sup>28</sup> Instead of executing him, Michael tortured him and put him in prison.<sup>29</sup> Despite this harsh treatment, Michael later released

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defeated the fortress of Cerami, Roussel convinced Roger to ignore the cowardice of some of his knights and threatened to “never again give military service to him there or anywhere else if he did not go after the enemy and continue to fight.” Heeding this advice, Roger and Roussel led a charge against the Muslims and defeated the rest of the defenders. Geoffrey Malaterra, *The Deeds of Count Roger*, 2.33, 108-110.

<sup>25</sup> Michael Attaleiates, *The History*, 20.9, 271; Amatus goes on to explain that he raided near Constantinople in order to have them release his wife to him. Amatus of Montecassino, *The History of the Normans*, Book I.9, 47, Book I.14-15, 49.

<sup>26</sup> Michael Attaleiates, *The History*, 23.1-5, 333-338, 23.9, 343. Roussel defeated the Greek contingent in that area, even capturing the Caesar, John Doukas, who then began fighting alongside Roussel. Attaleiates explains that he garnered the support of many Franks and encamped across Constantinople at Chrysopolis, gaining territory in Lykaonia and Galatia. According to the Norman sources, Michael was only able to prevent Roussel from invading the city by returning his wife and children to him and convincing the Turks to fight against the Frankish army. However, the Greek sources record that it was because of his desire to control the city, not because he wanted to rescue his family. Scholars have debated whether or not Roussel had intended on trying to take the throne himself. This may have been the case, as Attaleiates claims that Roussel planned to put John on the throne. Shepard suggests that Roussel knew well the rivalry and distrust in the Doukas family and intended to use it for his own gain. Shepard, “The Uses of the Franks,” 300.

<sup>27</sup> Michael Attaleiates, *The History*, 23.11, 349-351.

<sup>28</sup> Michael Attaleiates, *The History*, 25.2, 363, 26.3-4, 377-379. Anna Comnena describes that this was Alexios’ first command, despite his earlier attempts to go into battle under the royal banner. She explains how he caught the attention of the new emperor Michael and saw him as a “worthy opponent for Roussel.” Anna Comnena, *The Alexiad*, Book 1.1, 32.

<sup>29</sup> Michael Attaleiates, *The History*, 26.3-4, 377-379; Anna adds that in order to calm an uproar after trying to convince the nearby city of Amaseia to help pay the Turks for delivering Roussel to them, he devised a strategy to pretend to blind Roussel. He publicly had the executioner pretend to use a branding instrument on Roussel, commanding him to howl in pain, when in reality the rod only went near his face. This convinced the inhabitants,

Roussel, poured on him “many promises, gifts, and honours, thereby turning him to a favourable disposition and instilling in him unshakable loyalty.”<sup>30</sup> Using his skill, they attacked and defeated the Varangians at Athyra. He served Michael faithfully until the emperor was deposed by Botaneiates.<sup>31</sup>

Hervé, Crispin, and Roussel thus all served as an example and a warning for Bohemond in entering Byzantine service. They showed that military and financial prospects could await Bohemond in the Byzantine government. Hervé received an estate for his service, a goal which Bohemond wished to attain, and was bestowed with military titles. Crispin and Roussel also received various favours, titles, and honours for their services. However, they also showed that their treatment depended on the emperor. Hervé was invested by Constantine IX, disregarded by Michael VI, valued by Isaac I, and executed by Constantine X. Crispin was ignored by Romanos IV but respected by Michael. Roussel was received by Romanos, hunted by Michael, and then used by him when it benefitted him. Yet they all also demonstrated that if they did not receive what they desired from the Byzantines, they could then rebel and attempt to carve out land for themselves. Hervé expanded his estate in the Armeniakon theme, and Crispin and Roussel began carving out territory from the Byzantines and Turks in Armenian. They even showed Bohemond that if any attempt of rebellion failed, there was still hope for recompense with the current or next emperor and a reestablishment to an honourable position, as all three of them had experienced. Bohemond’s prospect depended on the emperor he served. Perhaps he hoped that since Hervé gained favour from the first Komnenoi emperor, he would also receive it from Alexios. In the end, his path followed a similar track to these other Normans. Granted only

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who had previously been loyal to Roussel and wished to have him back as their leader, to give money to the fund. It also prevented insurgents from stealing Roussel from him. Anna Comnena, *The Alexiad*, Book 1.2, 35.

<sup>30</sup> Michael Attaleiates, *The History*, 31.11, 461.

<sup>31</sup> Michael Attaleiates, *The History*, 32.16, 493-495.

superficial promises by Alexios, Bohemond found a greater opportunity in rebelling against the Byzantines and carving out his own territory in Antioch.

There are a few other examples of Normans previously serving Guiscard who joined Byzantine service. Anna Komnene records how a certain Norman named Roger, son of Dagobert, revealed to Alexios the invasion plans of Robert Guiscard. As a reward, he was granted the title *sebastos* and founded a prominent noble Byzantine family called the *Rogerioi*.<sup>32</sup> His brother, Raoul, who had been Guiscard's legate to Constantinople and reported to Guiscard the positive treatment of his daughter in Alexios' courts, had tried to persuade Guiscard not to invade the Balkans. After Roger's betrayal of Guiscard, Raoul was forced to flee to Constantinople and serve there. The *Gesta* records that the crusaders granted Plastencia to Peter d'Aups, a knight who had previously served Guiscard before finding employment under Alexios.<sup>33</sup> William of Apulia also records that Guiscard's nephews Joscelin and Abelard fled to the Byzantines. Joscelin committed himself to Alexios once Guiscard uncovered a conspiracy that he was involved in.<sup>34</sup> After countless attempts of usurping the dukedom, Abelard also entered Alexios' service, dying shortly after.<sup>35</sup>

These men fought in the service of the Byzantine Empire just prior to Bohemond's journey east, but there were also a few Normans directly related to Bohemond who were serving in the Byzantine court when he arrived on the First Crusade. These were his half-brother Guy de Hauteville and brother-in-law William of Grandmesnil. Additionally, his sister Helena, who even though her political marriage with Michael's son Constantine fell through, still lived in Alexios'

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<sup>32</sup> Anna Comnena, *The Alexiad*, Book 1.15, 68; Pryor and Jeffreys, "Alexios, Bohemond, and Byzantium's Euphrates Frontier," 43.

<sup>33</sup> *Gesta Francorum*, Book 4.11, 25.

<sup>34</sup> William of Apulia, *The Deeds of Robert Guiscard*, Book 2, 27.

<sup>35</sup> William of Apulia, *The Deeds of Robert Guiscard*, Book 3, 44.

court for several years and had only been returned to Count Roger of Sicily a year or so prior to Bohemond's arrival.<sup>36</sup> While Hervé, Crispin, and Roussell received varied treatment during their Byzantine service, these Normans were respected by Alexios and were never forced to rebel against him.

Anna introduces Guy de Hauteville when Guiscard sent him and Roger Borsa to reinforce Bohemond during the Balkan Campaign. Anna indicates that Alexios had secretly offered Guy a marriage alliance and riches in order to gain his allegiance. She claims that Guy accepted but kept it to himself and continued fighting with the Normans. However, there is no evidence that Guy joined with the Byzantines that early, and there is no logical reason for him to have still fought with the Normans after accepting this offer. It is likely that he did not join Alexios until near the end of the campaign at Larissa in 1083.<sup>37</sup> There, Alexios devised a plan to convince Bohemond's knights, who were dissatisfied with him since he could not afford to pay their wages, to abandon him. Alexios instead promised them wealth and title in return for their allegiance. Guy was likely one of these men. Although Anna does not specifically indicate that Guy joined Alexios' service at this time, the contemporary historian of the First Crusade, Albert of Aachen, records that Guy along with several other nobles abandoned Bohemond after being bribed by the emperor with "money and flattery."<sup>38</sup>

Guy appears later in the Latin sources with Alexios when he was coming to the crusaders' aid at Antioch in 1098. They met a small band of crusaders at Philomelion led by Stephen of Blois, which included William de Grandmesnil, fleeing the siege. They reported to

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<sup>36</sup> Shepard, "When Greek meets Greek," 259.

<sup>37</sup> Anna Comnena, *The Alexiad*, Book 6.5, 188. Anna contradicts herself, for even though she claims that Guy committed his allegiance to Alexios before he joined the Balkan Campaign, she goes on to describe that Guy fought with the Normans against the Greeks. It is therefore likely that Guy only committed himself to the Empire after any prospect in the Balkans was unlikely, (see Book 3.6, 118).

<sup>38</sup> Albert of Aachen, *Historia Ierosolimitana*, Book 10.44, 758-759.

Alexios that the crusader army had likely already been annihilated. The Latin sources record the devastation felt by Guy, and indicate that he did not believe Stephen, accusing him of cowardice.<sup>39</sup> They note that Guy attempted to convince Alexios to continue their relief mission, and would have continued to Antioch on his own if he had not been recalled by Alexios.<sup>40</sup> While Anna does not record that Guy was with Alexios at Philomelion, she does indicate that the emperor was “all the more anxious to hurry to their aid” after hearing their report, likely at the spurring on of Guy, but was deterred at the report of a large Saracen force heading towards them.<sup>41</sup>

Guy appears again in *The Alexiad*, but this time it seems as if he had subsequently rejoined Bohemond’s army and assisted him in the battle of Dyrachium from 1107-1108 fought against Alexios.<sup>42</sup> It may be that Guy did not feel right campaigning against his own brother, especially since he had fought alongside Bohemond the first time the Normans invaded the Balkans. Perhaps, having seen how successful Bohemond had been in the east, he wished to reconnect his ties with the Normans. Guy would have had to separate himself from the Byzantines to put himself in a position to receive a high title from Bohemond in Antioch or any of the land Bohemond might have taken in the Balkans. If so, he picked the wrong side, as Bohemond lost this campaign with the signing of the treaty of Devol and died shortly after.

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<sup>39</sup> *Gesta Francorum*, Book 9.27, 63-65; Guibert of Nogent, *The Deeds of God Through the Franks*, Book 5, 105-106; Peter Tudebode, *Historia de Hierosolymitano Itinere*, Book 8, 82.

<sup>40</sup> William of Tyre, *A History of Deeds Done Beyond the Sea*, trans. Emily Atwater Babcock and A.C. Krey (New York: Columbia University Press, 1943), Book 6.11, 277; Ralph of Caen, “The Gesta Tancredi,” Chapter 72, 96-97.

<sup>41</sup> Anna Comnena, *The Alexiad*, Book 11.6, 348.

<sup>42</sup> Anna Comnena, *The Alexiad*, Book 13.4-5, 406-410. Alexios appears to have sent faulty letters to Bohemond addressed to his most trusted men, Guy included, to attempt to deceive him into thinking that these men were loyal to the emperor and were plotting to betray him.

William of Grandmesnil, as a second-born son of Hugh of Grandmesnil one of William the Conqueror's leading supporters, ventured to Apulia from Normandy to join Guiscard.<sup>43</sup> Orderic Vitalis records that he served Guiscard and Bohemond as one of the knights on the Balkan Campaign.<sup>44</sup> As mentioned in the previous chapter, William came into Byzantine service out of necessity rather than economic prosperity. According to Geoffrey Malaterra, William attempted to take Rossano in 1093 when it was reported that Roger Borsa had died, and instead of returning it once it was discovered that he was alive, he attempted to retain it for himself. When Bohemond and Count Roger eventually succeeded in helping Borsa take back the city, William was stripped of his title and fled to Constantinople.<sup>45</sup> He appeared again on the First Crusade, likely following Bohemond or Roger of Normandy when they arrived in Constantinople. Perhaps he thought that he would be able to gain greater opportunity and title under Bohemond than the Byzantines due to his close relation to Bohemond. However, William would abandon the crusade at Antioch with Stephen of Blois, as already noted, and warn Alexios' relief force that the crusade had been defeated by the Turks.<sup>46</sup> He does not appear again after this event.

Guy and William were thus more recent examples for Bohemond of Norman service in the Byzantine Empire.<sup>47</sup> He therefore already had family ties to members of the Byzantine

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<sup>43</sup> William married Mabel de Hauteville, daughter of Robert Guiscard and Sichelgaita. This is likely why he joined the de Hautevilles on this expedition. Interestingly, he was also offered the hand of King William's daughter. For reasons unknown, according to Orderic "frivolous reasons," he decided to journey to Apulia instead. Ordericus Vitalis, *The Ecclesiastical History of Orderic Vitalis*, Book V.17, 167, Book VIII.16, 231, Book VIII.28, 339.

<sup>44</sup> Orderic also indicates that William was one of the men present at Guiscard's bedside when Guiscard asked for advice about the future of the Balkan Campaign after his death. Ordericus Vitalis, *The Ecclesiastical History of Orderic Vitalis*, Book VII.5, 17, Book VII.7, 33.

<sup>45</sup> Geoffrey Malaterra, *The Deeds of Count Roger*, Book 4.21-22, 199-202; Loud, *The Age of Robert Guiscard*, 257.

<sup>46</sup> Anna Comnena, *The Alexiad*, Book 11.6, 348.

<sup>47</sup> Unlike Hervé, Crispin, and Roussel, there are no examples of them receiving varied treatment or lack of honour by the Byzantines. The major difference was likely due to Alexios' long reign. The Normans serving Alexios did not have to experience a new Byzantine government, which was one of the key similarities around the sudden negative treatment of Hervé, Crispin, and Roussel.

government and saw how fairly they had been treated. Despite their history of conflict, he knew that Alexios had relied on the military skill of these Normans and might perhaps use him in a similar way. This, therefore, supports the idea that Bohemond would not have been afraid to commit loyalty to Alexios. He knew that Normans were treated well under his reign, and if he desired to claim a territory in the east, then he likely would have seen that Alexios' support would be his best chance.

Not only would Bohemond have wanted to enter Byzantine service, but Alexios also likely would have recognized the advantage he would provide. Bohemond had shown his military skills through his campaigns and had proven himself able to gain the support of many troops. If all the Norman chroniclers are to be believed, Bohemond had managed to pry Roger Borsa and Count Roger's troops away in the middle of a siege to journey to an entirely new world and conquer a territory that most of them had never seen before.<sup>48</sup> Bohemond clearly inspired men. Alexios also would have known Bohemond's skill after battling him in the Balkans. Bohemond likely knew that Alexios would not simply see him as a threat, but as a highly beneficial and strategic ally, if utilized correctly. Since Bohemond had proven himself a military general, Alexios may have applied this common Byzantine practice and attempted to buy Bohemond's loyalty with a military title, lifetime wages, and an estate. Alexios had also increased the use of foreign mercenaries during his reign, appointing not only Latins and Armenians to positions of high rank, but even Turks.<sup>49</sup> The best example of this would be his close friend Tatikios, who was a Turk who grew up alongside Alexios and attained a high military position. As will be discussed, due to the situation developing in Anatolia, Alexios

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<sup>48</sup> Geoffrey Malaterra, *The Deeds of Count Roger*, Book 4.24, 204; *Gesta Francorum*, Book 1.4, 7; Guibert of Nogent, *The Deeds of God Through the Franks*, 57.

<sup>49</sup> Pryor and Jeffreys, "Alexios, Bohemond, and Byzantium's Euphrates Frontier," 43.

needed a skilled general in the east. For these reasons, Bohemond would have been a perfect candidate for a military position in the Byzantine Empire during the First Crusade. As a Latin able to secure the loyalty of other Latins, he could have been Alexios' representative on the expedition.

With clear prospects for himself in Byzantine service, Bohemond left Italy in October 1096 and journeyed to Constantinople, arriving in April 1097. His intentions for building a peaceful relationship with the Byzantines were clear as he traveled through Greek territory. Having campaigned there just a decade prior, Bohemond knew that he needed to make his intentions clear from the start in order to prevent conflict.<sup>50</sup> Therefore, according to the *Gesta Francorum*, whose author was likely an eyewitness, he commanded all his men to “be courteous and refrain from plundering that land, which belonged to Christians ... that no-one was to take more than sufficed for his food.”<sup>51</sup> Even so, the *Gesta* states that many of the inhabitants did not trust the Normans and refused to provide them with supplies, compelling Bohemond to take some by force. Alexios responded by sending Turkish and Pecheneg mercenaries to harass them.<sup>52</sup> However, Alexios also sent Greek messengers to guide the Normans safely through the territory, and they instructed the towns to sell provisions to the crusaders. Upon reaching one wealthy city, the Greeks would not let the army in, and when some of them planned to enter the city by force, the author of the *Gesta* claims that “Bohemond would not allow this, for he wished to treat the country justly and to keep faith with the emperor.”<sup>53</sup> Bohemond's attitude towards the Greeks indicates that he was preparing to show his loyalty to Alexios in the hopes of receiving a military title.

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<sup>50</sup> McQueen, “Relations Between the Normans and Byzantium,” 451.

<sup>51</sup> *Gesta Francorum*, Book 1.4, 8.

<sup>52</sup> Ralph of Caen, “The Gesta Tancredi,” Chapter 4, 24-26.

<sup>53</sup> *Gesta Francorum*, Book 2.5, 10.

## Request for Grand Domestic

Upon reaching Constantinople, Bohemond immediately began setting himself up to enter Byzantine politics and seek a military title by proposing to make himself Alexios' representative on the campaign. According to Anna Komnene, Bohemond requested to be named the *Domestikos* of the East.<sup>54</sup> This was not simply a high-sounding but insubstantial title that Byzantine emperors often offered to foreigners in order to appease them. The title indicated a powerful position with a rich history of talented commanders also holding it.<sup>55</sup>

There were three distinct offices with this title – *Domestikos* of the East, *Domestikos* of the West, and *Megas Domestikos* – all of these originated from the *Domestikos* of the *Scholae*.<sup>56</sup> These offices had been established in the empire to create a united front against the Arabs and to provide a position that represented the emperor when he was absent or served as his lieutenant when he was present.<sup>57</sup> Men had served as *Domestikos* of the *Scholae* as early as Constantine V's reign in the eighth century, but it began to indicate a more specific appointment in the empire around the mid-tenth century, with Romanos II appointing Leo Phokas as the first *Domestikos* of the West in 960. Nikephoros Phokas appointed John Tzimiskes as *Domestikos* of the East a few years later.<sup>58</sup> The title *Megas Domestikos* came into play during the Komnenoi dynasty in the early eleventh century, with Isaac Komnenos giving that title to his younger brother John Komnenos.<sup>59</sup> During the eleventh century, the Byzantine Empire was repeatedly invaded on all

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<sup>54</sup> Anna Comnena, *The Alexiad*, Book 10.11, 329.

<sup>55</sup> Murray, "The enemy within," 38.

<sup>56</sup> Cheynet, "Bureaucracy and Aristocracy," 519.

<sup>57</sup> Pryor and Jeffreys, "Alexios, Bohemond, and Byzantium's Euphrates Frontier," 34.

<sup>58</sup> These titles would still have been under the overarching title of *Domestikos* of the *Scholae*. These are the first instances of West and East becoming part of the title.

<sup>59</sup> Rodolphe Guiland, "Le Domestique des Scholes," *Recherches sur les institutions byzantines, Berliner byzantinische Arbeiten* 35 (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag & Adolf M. Hakkert, 1967), 445-446; Rodolphe Guiland, "Le grand domestique," *Recherches sur les institutions byzantines. Berliner byzantinische Arbeiten* 35 (Berlin and Amsterdam: Akademie-Verlag & Adolf M. Hakkert, 1967), 405-406; Constantine X had appointed Romain Skleros

sides by the Turks, Pechenegs, and Normans. In order to sustain a strong defense on all fronts while still having an offensive focus, they changed their military operations from having army units based in each province to appointing units to smaller areas. The command structure then had small garrisons governed by the *strategoï* in each area with the *Domestikos* overseeing it all.<sup>60</sup> In essence, then, the *Domestikos* during Alexios' reign was the commander in chief of the Byzantine army of that region.<sup>61</sup>

Alexios was therefore very familiar with the position, for it was a large part of his administrative system and family history. His father John Komnenos and brothers Isaac and Adrianos Komnenos were all *Domestikoi*. Other *Domestikoi* during his lifetime were Philaretos Brakhamios, Andronikos Doukas, John Bryennios, and Gregory Pakourianos.<sup>62</sup> Alexios himself was *Domestikos* of the West under Nikephoros Botaneiates.<sup>63</sup> Because of his familiarity with the title and its effectiveness in their reconquest, Alexios appointed his own *Domestikoi*. He appointed Philaretos as his *Domestikos* of the East. Previously, under Romanos Diogenes, Philaretos served as a *doux*, then *strategos*, then *protosebastos*, and was eventually appointed as *Domestikos* in the 1050s.<sup>64</sup> His refusal to recognize Romanos' successor likely resulted in him losing the title, but once Alexios rose to power, he must have retained that title for Philaretos,

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as his Domestic of the West. Jean-Claude Cheynet, "La politique militaire byzantine de Basile II à Alexis Comnène," in *The Byzantine aristocracy and its military function* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006), 70.

<sup>60</sup> John Haldon, *Warfare, State and Society in the Byzantine World 565-1204* (London: Taylor and Francis Group, 1999), 118.

<sup>61</sup> John W. Birkenmeier, *The Development of the Komnenian Army, 1081-1180* (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 240; Men often moved between the various *Domestikoi* offices. Sometimes "of the East" was assumed, while "of the West" was always added. Often *Megas* simply indicated that there was only one *Domestikos* serving in the post. Pryor and Jeffreys, "Alexios, Bohemond, and Byzantium's Euphrates Frontier," 34.

<sup>62</sup> Pryor and Jeffreys, "Alexios, Bohemond, and Byzantium's Euphrates Frontier," 35.

<sup>63</sup> Alexios was named *Domestikos* of the *Scholae* and commissioned to end the rebellion of Nikephoros Bryennios. Anna Comnena, *The Alexiad*, Book 1.4, 38. Anna also calls him the *Megas Domestikos*, (Book 1.4, 43, Book I.7, 46). Later, she calls him "Great Domestic and Commander of the Armies of the West," (Book 1.15, 67). He is also called by the official title of *Domestikos* of the West, (Book 2.4, 79; Book 2.7, 90); Birkenmeier, *The Development of the Komnenian Army*, 7-8; Michael Attaleiates, *The History*, 34.4, 527.

<sup>64</sup> Pryor and Jeffreys, "Alexios, Bohemond, and Byzantium's Euphrates Frontier," 35.

keeping him in Anatolia, where he had created an estate for himself after losing the battle at Manzikert in 1071.<sup>65</sup> Philaretos resided in Antioch, which he reportedly received from a group of traitors after assassinating Vasak, the duke of Antioch.<sup>66</sup> He also controlled Mar'ash, Cilicia, and Edessa. Due to the instability in the empire resulting from the civil war between Michael and Romanos, Philaretos governed the area independently.<sup>67</sup> After serving Alexios for a short time, he eventually succumbed to Turkish attraction, abandoned Byzantium, committed to Islam, and eventually lost the city to Sulayman ibn Qutalmish in 1084.<sup>68</sup> He turned from being a valuable asset in the east to a traitor and a liability to Alexios. Matthew of Edessa describes how he began to tyrannize the countryside after Romanos fell from power.<sup>69</sup> He remained in the east, slowly losing cities until he died in Marash. He was the last person to hold the office of *Domestikos* of the East.<sup>70</sup>

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<sup>65</sup> It is likely that he was a *Domesikos* of the East before Alexios rose to the throne, as Anna indicates that he was appointed to this position by Romanos. Anna Comnena, *The Alexiad*, Book 6.9, 198; Pryor and Jeffreys suggest that his seals makes Anna's timeline incorrect, but that he was actually appointed by Alexios. Pryor and Jeffreys, "Alexios, Bohemond, and Byzantium's Euphrates Frontier," 38; According to Michael Attaleiates, he resisted the attempts by Michael VII to subdue him by assembling a band of Armenians and people of different origins and bringing the imperial cities under his command. He resisted Michael because he treated him and "others in a stingy and not an imperial fashion, enslaved as he was to the counsels of the *logothetes*." Michael Attaleiates, *The History*, Chapter 35.10, 549-551.

<sup>66</sup> Matthew of Edessa, *Chronicle*, trans. by Robert Bedrosian (Long Branch: Internet Archive, 2017), II.76.

<sup>67</sup> Alexander Beihammer, *Byzantium and the Emergence of Muslim-Turkish Anatolia, ca. 1040-1140* (London: Routledge, 2017), 285-286; Frankopan, *The First Crusade*, 43; 50.

<sup>68</sup> Anna claims that he seized control in Antioch after Romanos was overthrown and joined the Turks, "offer[ing] himself for circumcision, according to their custom." Her timeline does not seem to fit the narrative. In any case, she claims that his son opposed this decision so violently that he convinced Sulayman to take the city. Anna Comnena, *The Alexiad*, Book 6.9, 198; Matthew of Edessa tells the story of how Sulayman snuck into Antioch through a route that no one knew about. Philaretos was in Edessa with his men, leaving Antioch defenceless. The garrison held out for a time, but quickly lost to hunger and swore an oath of allegiance to Sulayman. Matthew of Edessa, *Chronicle*, II.79; Matthew also claims that he sent to Malik-Shah to offer his allegiance, but Malik-Shah refused to ally himself with him after hearing of Philaretos' wicked deeds. Matthew claims that none of the Turks allied with him. Matthew of Edessa, *Chronicle*, II.82. However, Matthew is likely wrong or biased in this assessment, and even though he likely did not join with Malik-Shah, who had a positive relationship with Alexios, he likely would have made alliances with some of the other competing Turkish factions.

<sup>69</sup> Matthew of Edessa, *Chronicle*, II.73.

<sup>70</sup> Pryor and Jeffreys, "Alexios, Bohemond, and Byzantium's Euphrates Frontier," 38.

Alexios also made use of the position of *Domestikos* of the West. He appointed Gregory Pakourianos, who fought against Bohemond during the Balkan Campaigns, to this office.<sup>71</sup> After Guiscard had left the Balkan Campaign to assist the pope against Henry and after Alexios returned to Constantinople, Alexios entrusted his army to the command of Pakourianos. Anna Komnene describes Pakourianos as deserving of the title. She calls him “tiny of body... but a mighty warrior.”<sup>72</sup> At the end of his life, she described him as “an extremely able commander with unusual powers of organization where masses of men were concerned, whether in battle-line or in intricate manoeuvres.”<sup>73</sup> After the Balkan Campaign, Alexios gave the same title to his brother Adrianos.<sup>74</sup> William of Apulia mentions that Adrianos was part of Alexios’ army when they finally defeated Bohemond at Larissa in 1083.<sup>75</sup> He was described as crafty and intelligent, helping Alexios expose traitors and leading the Byzantines to victory over the Pechenegs.<sup>76</sup> Therefore, Alexios knew the benefits of employing able men in these positions and likely would have wanted to replace them quickly.

The previous events lined up perfectly for Bohemond to make this request. Alexios needed someone in the east to manage what was left of the empire’s marcher lordships and provide Constantinople with a strong buffer against any invading Turks. Philaretos served Alexios there for a time, but after defecting to the Turks and dying just prior to the First Crusade,

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<sup>71</sup> Anna Comnena, *The Alexiad*, Book 5.3, 160. Pakourianos is introduced by Anna while Alexios was still *Megas Domestikos*. For his support in their rebellion against Nikophoros Botaneiates, Alexios promised to make him *Domestikos*, (Book 2.4, 81). He is then mentioned during the Balkan Campaigns, (Book 4.4, 140; Book 4.6, 146); Birkenmeier, *The Development of the Komnenian Army*, 45, 64; He was also appointed the title of *kouropalates* in 1090. Jean-Claude Cheynet, “The Byzantine Aristocracy (8<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> centuries),” in *The Byzantine Aristocracy and its Military Function* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006), 33-34.

<sup>72</sup> Anna Comnena, *The Alexiad*, Book 2.4, 81.

<sup>73</sup> Anna Comnena, *The Alexiad*, Book 6.14, 212.

<sup>74</sup> Anna Comnena, *The Alexiad*, Book 7.1, 218.

<sup>75</sup> William of Apulia, *The Deeds of Robert Guiscard*, Book V, 59.

<sup>76</sup> Alexios used Adrianos to try and convince a certain Diogenes to admit to plotting against Alexios. Anna Comnena, *The Alexiad*, 283; He also led the war against the Pechenegs (Anna calls Scythians) after Pakourianos died, (Book 7.2-3, 218-224).

the position of *Domestikos* of the East was vacant.<sup>77</sup> This also left the Byzantines without a strong launching point from which to recover Antioch and Cilicia, a goal that Alexios no doubt had as a primary concern.<sup>78</sup>

However, Alexios did not only rely on his own governors to guard his eastern borders. In 1081, he approached the Turkish chieftain Sulayman and made an alliance with him, where Alexios promised him lavish gifts in return for setting a border at the river Drakon, which the Turks were not allowed to cross.<sup>79</sup> He also likely played a part in convincing Sulayman to take Antioch from Philaretos after he rebelled. Therefore, even though he no longer had a *Domestikos* of the East, he still had someone guarding his eastern borders. However, Alexios lost this buffer when a rival Turkish chieftain, Tutush, defeated Sulayman at Antioch. Additionally, Sulayman's headquarters at Nicaea became occupied by the ambitious Abu'l-Kasim. In response to these events, the sultan of Baghdad, Malik-Shah, sent envoys to Alexios noting his concerns over the now unstable Anatolia.<sup>80</sup> What resulted was a loose but effective military alliance between the Byzantines and the Sultanate of Baghdad which secured the safety of the eastern borders and even resulted in the return of several eastern cities to the Byzantines.<sup>81</sup> However, Malik-Shah's grip on power began to weaken, and he was unable to recover it before his death. Two years of turmoil and civil war followed his death in 1092 as his children fought over who would become his successor.<sup>82</sup> Alexios likely knew that whoever did succeed Malik-Shah would be unwilling to

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<sup>77</sup> Frankopan, *The First Crusade*, 50.

<sup>78</sup> Pryor and Jeffreys, "Alexios, Bohemond, and Byzantium's Euphrates Frontier," 39.

<sup>79</sup> Frankopan, *The First Crusade*, 47; Anna Comnena, *The Alexiad*, Book 6.9, 199. It was Sulayman's horse archers that had helped Alexios defeat Bohemond at Larissa in 1083.

<sup>80</sup> Anna Comnena, *The Alexiad*, Book 6.9, 198.

<sup>81</sup> Frankopan, *The First Crusade*, 53-54; There is no clear record that an actual treaty was signed, but the resulting actions of Malik-Shah show that he treated Byzantium as an ally. His request for a marriage alliance, according to Anna, was denied, but Malik-Shah returned land to the empire and treated his Christian inhabitants with peace and tolerance. Anna Comnena, *The Alexiad*, Book 6.12, 208. Alexios, in turn, offered imperial titles and financial awards to Malik-Shah and many high-ranking Turkish leaders.

<sup>82</sup> Frankopan, *The First Crusade*, 64.

continue his father's mission of peace and tolerance. He needed someone stationed in the east, and the First Crusade presented him with an opportunity.

Bohemond may have believed himself the most qualified option to become the next *Domestikos* of the East. He likely knew Greek and had plenty of firsthand knowledge of Byzantine military and political practices. His unique mixture of Latin heritage and Greek knowledge put him in a good position to act as a negotiator between the Latin crusaders and the Greek locals.<sup>83</sup> Many of Bohemond's men also would have been familiar with Saracen fighting styles. A contingent of Count Roger's men joined Bohemond, and they would have fought against the Muslims in Sicily. Bohemond himself also would have been familiar with the fighting habits of the Turks, since Alexios had employed some of Sulayman's men against him during the Balkan Campaign.<sup>84</sup> Of course, the Muslims from Sicily would have fought differently than the Turks of Anatolia, but similarities between them would have existed, and the Latins tended to lump the Saracens into a single category without recognizing the distinctions.

This position would also potentially give Bohemond greater benefits while on the expedition. As *Domestikos*, he would be given a significant advantage over the other crusader lords and essentially have first pick of command over any city. As Alexios' representative, the other crusader lords would have a harder time denying him.<sup>85</sup> Since he was not well off and commanded a small but respectable force, this position could have ensured him adequate Greek military and financial support.<sup>86</sup> It was also not uncommon for a Latin commander to lead a contingent of Latin forces. Hervé, Crispin, and Roussel all led armies that were primarily

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<sup>83</sup> Murray, "The Enemy Within," 37-38.

<sup>84</sup> Frankopan, *The First Crusade*, 47.

<sup>85</sup> Murray, "The Enemy Within," 38.

<sup>86</sup> Riley-Smith, *The Crusades*, 55.

composed of Latin mercenary troops.<sup>87</sup> Perhaps this was why these commanders were able to easily convince their forces to rebel against the empire. Only Hervé was expressly given command over Byzantine troops through his title of *stratelates*.<sup>88</sup> Since the crusaders were initially intended as mercenaries for the Byzantines, it would have been feasible for a Latin knight to hold this title while on campaign. It was not uncommon for someone who was not a Byzantine to hold this title. Both Pakourianos and Philaretos, for instance, were Armenian.<sup>89</sup>

For these reasons, it is likely that Bohemond may actually have requested this title, or at least hoped to receive a similar one. Why none of the Latin sources record that he requested it is not clear. The only logical explanation would be that the authors chose not to include it so that Bohemond had a stronger claim to Antioch, or they found the details irrelevant to their vision of the narrative. By not recording that Bohemond tried to enter Byzantine service, they could more easily show that Bohemond did not owe the Byzantines any of his newly conquered land.

### **Alexios' Reaction to Bohemond's Request**

Alexios was indeed a clever strategist and made careful alliances with whoever benefitted him, regardless of their culture or religious affiliation. He had successfully maintained an effective buffer in the eastern border from the beginning of his reign up until this point. True to his strategy, Alexios needed to appoint another commander capable enough to provide those eastern defenses with the chances necessary to repulse Turkish advances. Ideally, this would be an Armenian, like Pakourianos, who would ensure the loyalty of the local Armenian population.

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<sup>87</sup> Shepard, "The Uses of the Franks," 288, 294.

<sup>88</sup> Shepard, "The Uses of the Franks," 297.

<sup>89</sup> Anna Comnena, *The Alexiad*, Book 2.4, 81.

However, Bohemond and his band of experienced soldiers would also have provided a strong defensive front.

Despite Bohemond's somewhat reasonable request, Anna records that Alexios denied it and instead offered him riches and vague promises of a future title. There are several reasons why he may have steered away from offering any Latin this title. Alan Murray notes that due to the disastrous loss of land in Anatolia over the previous 15 years, there was no substantial military force in the area that warranted the appointment of a high-ranking official in the crusader armies.<sup>90</sup> The role of the *Domestikos* of the East shrank greatly after the defeat at Manzikert to Alp Arslan in 1071, and Philaretos abandoned the position a decade before the crusaders gathered at Constantinople.<sup>91</sup> Perhaps because Alexios did not immediately appoint a replacement, he had decided to retire the position in exchange for his new strategy of allying with local Turkish chieftains. However, since reconquest in Anatolia was one of Alexios' key directives, hence his request for western aid, and his Turkish allies had all died, it could also be argued that appointing a new *Domestikos* of the East would be a crucial step in taking back land.

Yet Bohemond may not have been Alexios' first choice for this position. Adrianos Komnenos was likely still *Domestikos* of the West at that time.<sup>92</sup> Since most of the western threats, like the Pechenegs and Normans, had been dealt with or appeased, Alexios could have appointed him as *Domestikos* of the East instead of someone else. John Pryor and Michael Jeffreys suggest that the office of *Domestikos* of the West was actually vacant at this time and that Bohemond would have more likely requested that position instead. However, there is no evidence that Adrianos released this title. Anna does record that Alexios' brother Isaac had a

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<sup>90</sup> Murray, "The Enemy Within," 38.

<sup>91</sup> Pryor and Jeffreys, "Alexios, Bohemond, and Byzantium's Euphrates Frontier," 34.

<sup>92</sup> Guiland, "Le grand domestique," 407.

falling out with him over false allegations against Isaac's son John that he supported, but this was resolved by Alexios and no fault was found which would have warranted his removal from the office.<sup>93</sup> Adrianos survived until after the First Crusade, making him active in service when Bohemond arrived in Constantinople. It is thus not known when Adrianos left the office, and it is very possible that he held it until his death in 1118.<sup>94</sup> If so, it would have been possible for Alexios to still grant Bohemond the office of *Domestikos* of the East, especially since Adrianos did not go on the First Crusade. However, there were still other potential candidates whom Alexios would likely have trusted more than Bohemond.

One of these likely options was Tatikios, who had already been chosen by Alexios to guide the Latins through Anatolia to the Holy Land. If Alexios had wanted to appoint a new *Domestikos*, Tatikios would have been a better choice than Bohemond. Even though he was essentially born a slave in the Komnenoi family, as his father was captured by John Komnenos during a raid, Tatikios grew up alongside Alexios and fought with him during his earliest battles.<sup>95</sup> Alexios based his military and political structure on family relations to ensure loyalty, and Tatikios was evidently very much like a brother to him. Tatikios also had experience in various areas of the empire. In the west, he had fought against Guiscard and Bohemond at Durazzo in 1081 and was familiar with Latin military strategy.<sup>96</sup> He even took over the duties of Pakourianus, the *Domestikos* of the West, after his death in 1086, assuming the role as leader of the campaign against the Pechenegs. Anna records that this battle included Latin mercenaries,

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<sup>93</sup> Anna Comnena, *The Alexiad*, Book 8.8, 264-265.

<sup>94</sup> Frankopan argues that since Alexios and Bohemond had the discussion of appointing him as *Domestikos*, then Adrianos must not have been *Domestikos* anymore. Peter Frankopan, "Kinship and the Distribution of Power in Komnenian Byzantium," *English Historical Review* 112, no. 495 (February 2007): 20.

<sup>95</sup> Anna Comnena, *The Alexiad*, Book 4.4, 141.

<sup>96</sup> Charles M. Brand, "The Turkish Element in Byzantium, Eleventh-Twelfth Centuries," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 43 (1989): 3.

which means Tatikios was also familiar with leading Latin contingents.<sup>97</sup> He was also stationed in the east, retrieving territory from the Turks. He was the first Turk to achieve a high position of power in Byzantine service, and he knew Turkish military tactics, making him a good candidate for this position.<sup>98</sup> These are likely some of the reasons why Alexios sent him with the crusaders. He was a Turk in the Greek court familiar with Latin and Turkish tactics. It is not clear why he was not chosen by Alexios to serve as *Domestikos* of the East, but it seems likely that Alexios would have chosen him over Bohemond for this office if he was thinking of appointing someone to it, especially since Tatikios went on the expedition.

While there were several better options than Bohemond, there were also other concerns about appointing him to this position. Bohemond's past relationship with Alexios also cannot be ignored. After a long campaign against Bohemond only a decade prior, Alexios would surely have been cautious to offer such a powerful position to Bohemond.<sup>99</sup> The person who Alexios would want as his representative in the east needed to be someone who would not seek to take advantage of Alexios' preoccupations in the west or elsewhere in the empire. His past *Domestikoi* fit that requirement, but Bohemond did not. As has already been described in Chapter 1, Bohemond had campaigned relentlessly against Alexios in Greece and the Southwest Balkans from 1081-1085. If Bohemond was brave and capable enough to try to cut out a piece of the Balkans for himself, he was also capable of attempting to usurp an estate in the east.<sup>100</sup> This may well explain why instead of granting the position to Bohemond, Alexios offered him a wealth of riches and vague promises of a future title, likely in the hopes of keeping him loyal without giving him too much power.

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<sup>97</sup> Anna Comnena, *The Alexiad*, Book 6.14, 213 ff. Anna often calls the Pechenegs the Scyths.

<sup>98</sup> Brand, "The Turkish Element in Byzantium," 3.

<sup>99</sup> Shepard, "When Greek meets Greek," 247.

<sup>100</sup> Frankopan, *The First Crusade*, 50.

Bohemond's relationship with the other lords would also have to be held in check. There was legitimate concern that if Bohemond received too high a title, he would be able to use the other lords for his own benefit. Anna notes, with her obvious hindsight, that Alexios was afraid that if Bohemond received the authority of a *Domestikos*, "he might use it to subjugate all the other counts and thereafter convert them easily to any policy he chose."<sup>101</sup> Alexios had already fallen out with some of the other leaders of the expedition, so the fear that the leaders could band together if one of them was given significant authority was justified.

In particular, Alexios had difficulty establishing cordial relations with Hugh of Vermandois and Godfrey of Bouillon. He had extorted oaths from Hugh and attempted to persuade Godfrey to do the same. The *Gesta Francorum* indicates that the Greeks arrested Hugh at Durazzo and sent him to Constantinople to swear fealty to Alexios.<sup>102</sup> Likely knowing about Hugh's treatment, Godfrey refused to have a private meeting with Alexios and rejected his request to move his army to the other side of the Bosphorus. Alexios pressured him by cutting off Byzantine supply to his troops and closing the markets to him. Godfrey responded to Alexios' attempts of forced persuasion by having Baldwin raid the suburbs of Constantinople.<sup>103</sup> Alexios also employed the services of Turkish mercenary troops and instructed them to raid the Latins when they were foraging for supplies.<sup>104</sup>

Anna Komnene indicates a fear that Godfrey was waiting for Bohemond and the rest of the crusader lords so that they could avenge their grudges against Alexios and dethrone him. She writes that Alexios sent men to intercept any messages between Bohemond and Godfrey to

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<sup>101</sup> Anna Comnena, *The Alexiad*, Book 10.11, 329.

<sup>102</sup> *Gesta Francorum*, Book 1.3, 6.

<sup>103</sup> Riley-Smith, *The Crusades*, 55; Anna adds that Godfrey decided to raid the city after believing that his leading counts were held captive when they met with Alexios. She claims that Alexios tried to convince the counts to persuade Godfrey to accept the oath, and in their attempts to distract Alexios with long speeches, the rest of the army assumed that they were captured. Anna Comnena, *The Alexiad*, Book 10.9, 319.

<sup>104</sup> Albert of Aachen, *Historia Ierosolimitana*, Book II.14, 83; *Gesta Francorum*, Book 1.3, 6.

prevent them from colluding against him.<sup>105</sup> Albert of Aachen even suggests that Bohemond sent a legation to Godfrey urging him to delay meeting with the emperor so that the two groups could invade the city together.<sup>106</sup> This report was likely false, considering the weight of evidence, already discussed, which suggests that Bohemond seems to have had aspirations for service to the Byzantines. It is possible that Bohemond did not even know about what was going on at Constantinople until he arrived.<sup>107</sup> Rather, the authors' hindsight of future events may have caused them to exaggerate these events. Even so, they show that tensions were mounting as the Latin armies congregated near Constantinople. Anna adds that another crusader lord named Count Raoul, who is not mentioned in any other sources, also attempted to resist Alexios' demands but eventually was forced to capitulate.<sup>108</sup> There is enough evidence to assume that Alexios may have been concerned about offering any Latin a significant title.

Due to these interactions with the past crusader lords, it is not surprising to find that Alexios was cautious at the arrival of Bohemond and careful not to promise any authority to him, even if Bohemond requested it and his potential warranted it. In the circumstances, it may well be that Alexios would not trust anyone absolutely, especially a Latin, and would still want to maintain direct lines of communication with the other lords so as careful not to give any of them complete authority.<sup>109</sup>

In addition to this concern, yet another reason why Alexios denied Bohemond the position may have to do with the system of government he had imposed after taking control of the empire. The collapsing empire that Alexios stepped into meant that a new administration

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<sup>105</sup> Anna Comnena, *The Alexiad*, Book 10.9, 318-319.

<sup>106</sup> Albert of Aachen, *Historia Ierosolimitana*, Book II.14, 83; *Gesta Francorum*, Book 1.3, 6.

<sup>107</sup> Yewdale, *Bohemond I*, 42.

<sup>108</sup> Anna Comnena, *The Alexiad*, Book 10.10, 323-324.

<sup>109</sup> Shepard, "When Greek meets Greek," 249.

system needed to be established. As a result of the loss of territory in the east and west, many of the great offices suddenly lost their economic and political importance, and Alexios had used this opportunity to fill in the aristocracy with his own family and close supporters.<sup>110</sup> This was of course a strategy that many previous emperors had employed, but none of them had such an open canvas as Alexios, allowing him to institutionalize a system where high military positions became a reserve of the Komnenoi family.<sup>111</sup> This is why, as has been discussed, Alexios' brother Adrianos was *Domestikos* of the West at that time and why Anna Komnene's husband Nikephoros Bryennios was a general.<sup>112</sup> As Jean-Claude Cheynet aptly describes it, "All those who had the misfortune not to have concluded a marriage alliance with the Komnenoi before the reign of Alexios found themselves marginalized."<sup>113</sup> Therefore, even though Bohemond may have been a qualified general able to hold this position and gain a considerable status in Byzantine employment, Alexios' familial system prevented the idea of appointing a simple mercenary in such an important role.

Similarly, even though Bohemond had proven himself a capable leader in his campaign against Alexios, he had yet to prove his loyalty to the empire. John Skylitzes, in explaining the story of a Byzantine commander who was refused a title by Michael VII, recounts that the emperor recited a well-worn cliché, "Deeds first, then ask for a reward."<sup>114</sup> This suggests that

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<sup>110</sup> An example of this was the creation of the title *protosebastos* which was first given to Adrianos and then passed on to many of their descendants, including his nephew John Komnenos and great-grandson Alexios Komnenos. Adrianos was the only one to hold both *protosebasos* and *Megas Domestikos* at the same time. Jean-Claude Cheynet, "Aristocratic Anthroponymy in Byzantium," in *The Byzantine Aristocracy and its Military Function* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006), 11.

<sup>111</sup> Cheynet, "Bureaucracy and Aristocracy," 524. The habit of appointing relatives to the most important commands goes back well before the tenth century. For examples of this see Jean-Claude Cheynet, "The Byzantine Aristocracy," 13-14.

<sup>112</sup> His brother Isaac and brother-in-law Nikephoros Melissenos, along with Adrianos and Breynnios, also obtained land and tax revenue in Macedonia. Even the wives and daughters of the Komnenoi and Angeloi families received significant property from Alexios' administration. Jean-Claude Cheynet, "Aristocracy and Inheritance (11<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> Centuries)," in *The Byzantine Aristocracy and its Military Function* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006), 32.

<sup>113</sup> Cheynet, "Bureaucracy and Aristocracy," 523.

<sup>114</sup> John Skylitzes, *A Synopsis of Byzantine History*, Chapter 23.3, 452.

emperors may have been known to only grant military titles once a commander had proven their loyalty. Reward for loyalty therefore went both ways – the emperor bought the allegiance of a military commander through riches and titles, but the commander also earned those riches and titles through first proving their skill and trustworthiness in Byzantine service. Since Bohemond had yet to show his loyalty to Alexios, there was no insurance that Bohemond would remain loyal to Alexios after receiving the title of *Domestikos*.

Alexios, therefore, had several reasons to refuse a Byzantine title, but each source provides a slightly different account of how Alexios satisfied Bohemond's request. Anna indicates that Alexios responded with a vague promise by saying, "The time for that is not yet ripe, but with your energy and loyalty it will not be long before you have even that honour."<sup>115</sup> He won Bohemond over by flattering him with a room full of wealth and the promise of future riches. Perhaps Alexios believed that he could buy off Bohemond with gifts, even if these were more abundant than he was really worth, in order to be able to use Bohemond as his chief intermediary with the other crusaders, essentially making Bohemond his lieutenant over the Latins. After all, Bohemond lacked wealth compared to the other lords.<sup>116</sup> This is what Jonathan Shepard suggests, especially since Bohemond knew the Greek language and tradition better than the other lords.<sup>117</sup> Bohemond's need for wealth would then also limit the chances of him turning against Alexios. Since his main purpose for embarking on the Crusade was to enfranchise himself, a steady supply of Byzantine income and perhaps an added estate could satisfy his loyalty.

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<sup>115</sup> Anna Comnena, *The Alexiad*, Book 10.11, 329.

<sup>116</sup> Russo, "Norman Participation in the First Crusade," 176-198.

<sup>117</sup> Shepard, "When Greek meets Greek," 248.

Both Latin and Greek sources attest that Alexios offered Bohemond riches in return for his loyalty. While the Greek sources may indicate an intention of a future land grant for Bohemond, many of the Latin sources very plainly indicate that Alexios offered land. The *Gesta Francorum*, one of the earliest accounts of the First Crusade, states that Alexios offered Bohemond “lands beyond Antioch, fifteen days’ journey in length and eight in width, provided that he would swear fealty with free consent.”<sup>118</sup> This was certainly a possible thing for Alexios to offer. He had recently lost Greek and Turkish buffer states and needed a capable military leader to secure the marcher lordships in the east. Perhaps Alexios thought to establish a Latin buffer state, or at least have a Latin servant administer it.<sup>119</sup> Offering a land grant to Bohemond could plausibly have secured his loyalty, but scholars have been debating for the past century whether Alexios actually did so.

### **Land Grant**

As noted in the introduction, it is almost universally accepted that the *Gesta* was used as a primary source of information for certain other Latin sources. Of these sources, Peter Tudebode, Guibert of Nogent, and one manuscript of Baldric of Bourgueil record this land grant. Ralph of Caen, who also may have taken information from the *Gesta*, records this grant. However, the other Latin sources do not include it. This has led some scholars, originating with August C. Krey in 1928, to assume that this land grant by Alexios was interpolated into the *Gesta* and copied by other authors in order to support Bohemond’s bid for independent control of Antioch.<sup>120</sup>

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<sup>118</sup> *Gesta Francorum*, Book 2.6, 12; Guibert of Nogent, *The Deeds of God Through the Franks*, Book 3, 61.

<sup>119</sup> Peter Charanis, “Aims of the Medieval Crusades and How They Were Viewed by Byzantium,” *Church History* 21, no. 2 (1952): 128-129; Pryor and Jeffreys, “Alexios, Bohemond, and Byzantium’s Euphrates Frontier,” 51.

<sup>120</sup> Pryor and Jeffreys, “Alexios, Bohemond, and Byzantium’s Euphrates Frontier,” 47-48.

Krey's main argument is that the *Gesta Francorum* was altered to support Bohemond in recruiting Latins to join his campaign against the Byzantine Empire in 1108. Bohemond went back to the west to recruit soldiers to defend Antioch against the Byzantine Empire, and since the *Gesta*, which was circulated around western Europe, spoke highly of him and negatively of Alexios, it could have been a good propaganda tool. This led Krey to claim that Alexios' promise of land around Antioch was interpolated into the *Gesta* just before Bohemond reached the west, and the fact that some Latin sources which borrowed from the *Gesta* mentioned the grant while others did not is proof of this interpolation.<sup>121</sup> He claims that the Latin sources which did not mention the land grant simply used the version of the *Gesta* before the interpolation, while the sources that did include the land grant used the version of the *Gesta* that contained it.

Krey's main proof for this argument is Ekkehard of Aura, who Heinrich Hagenmeyer suggests used the *Gesta* as a source shortly after it was written. Since Ekkehard did not record the land grant, this supports the suggestion that the passage was interpolated after Ekkehard used it.<sup>122</sup> Krey notes that the author of the *Gesta* was almost certainly from Bohemond's band and would have been writing to further Bohemond's causes.<sup>123</sup> He also points out that the author never mentions this grant again. If Alexios had promised lands around Antioch, then Bohemond and the *Gesta* would surely have mentioned the offer when trying to convince the other expedition leaders to let him keep control of Antioch.<sup>124</sup> Krey also notes that Bohemond joined the other leaders in sending a letter to Alexios requesting him to come to Antioch, an event which the *Gesta* records. He concludes that Bohemond would not have agreed to this if he had already been promised the city. For these reasons, Krey argues that Bohemond must have had

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<sup>121</sup> Krey, "A neglected passage in the *Gesta*," 77.

<sup>122</sup> Krey, "A neglected passage in the *Gesta*," 59.

<sup>123</sup> Krey, "A neglected passage in the *Gesta*," 58.

<sup>124</sup> Krey, "A neglected passage in the *Gesta*," 59.

this added to the Latin chronicles in an attempt to present himself as a victim of Alexios' broken promises.<sup>125</sup>

Before examining the accuracy of Krey's timeless argument, the wording of all the sources should be considered. The *Gesta* reads:

Now the emperor was much afraid of the gallant Bohemond, who had often chased him and his army from the battlefield, so he told Bohemond that he would give him lands beyond Antioch, fifteen days' journey in length and eight in width, provided that he would swear fealty with free consent, and he added this promise, that if Bohemond kept his oath faithfully he would never break his own.<sup>126</sup>

Copying the *Gesta*, Guibert de Nogent records:

The emperor came to mighty Bohemond... and was ready to entice him whom he greatly feared with gifts, for Bohemond had often defeated him in battle; Alexios concentrated particularly on Bohemond, because he regarded him as his greatest rival. Therefore he offered him land the other side of Antioch, whose length would take fifteen days to cross, and whose width would take no less than eight days to cross.<sup>127</sup>

Peter Tudebode, another *Gesta* copyist, says it this way:

Alexios, who secretly feared Bohemond very much because he had often routed his forces, told that most valiant Norman that if he would freely swear to him, in return he would give him lands equivalent to fifteen days journey in length and eight such days in width from Antioch. In a like manner Alexios swore that, if Bohemond faithfully held his oath, he, in turn, would not violate his obligations.<sup>128</sup>

Baldric of Bourgueil also copied part of the *Gesta*, but only one of the seven manuscripts include this passage:

Also, to Bohemond, who he feared more than the others, he promised to grant land fifteen days journey in length and eight in width from Antioch beyond if he would freely make homage and an oath to himself.<sup>129</sup>

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<sup>125</sup> Krey, "A neglected passage in the *Gesta*," 68.

<sup>126</sup> *Gesta Francorum*, Book 2.6, 12.

<sup>127</sup> Guibert of Nogent, *The Deeds of God Through the Franks*, Book 3, 61.

<sup>128</sup> Peter Tudebode, *Historia de Hierosolymitano Itinere*, 30.

<sup>129</sup> This manuscript is found in Paris, *Bibliothèque nationale*, MS Lat. 5513. This section was translated by Pryor and Jeffreys, "Alexios, Bohemond, and Byzantium's Euphrates Frontier," 47. Interestingly, the recent translation done by Susan Edgington in 2020 does not include this manuscript in the text or in the appendix.

Ralph of Caen, who may have only used the *Gesta* minimally, briefly records the event:

He was given a portion of the Roman empire as a gift which was so large that a horse would require 15 days to cross its length and eight to cross its breadth.<sup>130</sup>

The biggest flaw with Krey's analysis is that he does not take much into consideration that the land grant may not have included Antioch itself.<sup>131</sup> The language can be difficult to interpret. The *Gesta* reads *in extensione ab Antiochia retro*. The word *extensione* could refer to lands beyond, but not including, Antioch, or lands as an extension of Antioch. Rosalind Hill translated it "lands beyond Antioch," which suggests that the grant did not include the city. Guibert also seems to interpret it as land near Antioch, but not the city itself. He writes *terram eidem se daturum citra Antiochiam*, which can be literally translated, "he would give the land to the other side (or short) of Antioch."<sup>132</sup> Robert Levine translates it "land the other side of Antioch." This would mean land close to, but not quite up to Antioch. The translators of Peter Tudebode and Baldric of Bourgueil simply translate ambiguously "lands...from Antioch." It is still not certain if this did excluded Antioch, even though John Pryor and Michael Jeffreys would have us assume that it clearly did not, since Bohemond would not use it when defending his claim to the city.<sup>133</sup> France notes, in contrast, that the size of land fifteen by eight days recorded in the *Gesta* was equivalent to the former duchy of Antioch, and it could have been assumed that this included the city.<sup>134</sup> Despite the ambiguity, it seems more likely that Antioch was not included in the grant.

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<sup>130</sup> Ralph of Caen, "The Gesta Tancredi," 1.10, 32.

<sup>131</sup> Pryor and Jeffreys, "Alexios, Bohemond, and Byzantium's Euphrates Frontier," 53; Jamison, "Some notes on the *Anonymi Francorum*," 194.

<sup>132</sup> Guibertus de Nouigento, *Historia quae inscribitur 'Dei gesta per Francos'*, (Brepolis,—LLT-A), lib.: 3, cap.: 4, linea: 193.

<sup>133</sup> Pryor and Jeffreys, "Alexios, Bohemond, and Byzantium's Euphrates Frontier," 53.

<sup>134</sup> John France, "The Departure of Tatikios from the Crusader Army," *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research* XLIV, no. 110 (November 1971): 141.

Another question that Krey does not consider is why this passage was not interpolated into other areas of the book.<sup>135</sup> If this passage would have supported Bohemond's claim to Antioch and Laodicea, and the passage was originally interpolated into the book to give Bohemond a reason to show that Alexios broke his oath, then it would make sense for the interpolator to add this point to all the applicable parts of the book. Since there does not exist a copy of the *Gesta* without this passage, there are no textual variants or manuscript traditions supporting Krey's thesis.

Regardless of the absence of textual support, most scholars tend to agree with Krey's analysis, but with due criticism. John France and Jonathan Harris note that the passage does interrupt the flow of the *Gesta*, going from explaining how regrettable it was for Bohemond to be forced into paying homage to suddenly explaining this significant land grant that Bohemond received.<sup>136</sup> Jay Rubenstein even tests this by taking the passage in the *Gesta* and removing the suspected interpolations, and the results show that the passage is not completely coherent or smooth without the land grant but rather becomes repetitive and even contradictory. He says, "The writer lampoons the leaders for claiming that necessity compelled them, and then he offers as an excuse the fact that necessity had compelled them."<sup>137</sup> Other scholars have suggested updates or modifications to Krey's thesis. Thomas Asbridge and Ralph-Johannes Lilie agree with Krey that the land grant was fabricated and that Alexios had a legal right to demand the return of

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<sup>135</sup> Shepard, "When Greek meets Greek," 222.

<sup>136</sup> John France, "The Anonymous *Gesta Francorum* and the *Historia Francorum qui ceperunt Iherusalem* of Raymond of Aguilers and the *Historia de Hierosolymitano itinere* of Peter Tudebode: An Analysis of the Textual Relationship between Primary Sources for the First Crusade," in *The Crusades and their Sources: Essays Presented to Bernard Hamilton*, ed. John France and William G. Zajac (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1998), 59; Harris, *Byzantium and the Crusades*, 70.

<sup>137</sup> Rubenstein, "What is the *Gesta Francorum*," 195-196. He transcribes it as such: "Perhaps we were always to be deceived by our leaders from this point forward. For what did they do at the end? They will say that necessity compelled them to humiliate themselves before the will of the most wicked emperor, whether they wanted to or not. Such strong and brave knights, why did they do this? It was because of the fact that necessity compelled them." Based on this, it shows there is a bigger disconnect in the passage without the land grant.

Antioch from Bohemond. However, Lilie suggests that it was not a later interpolation but rather existed in the original version.<sup>138</sup> This is a possible theory, since the Antioch controversy was ongoing when the author wrote the *Gesta*, and even if Bohemond had not yet planned to go back to the west to recruit more men to his aid, the author would still have wanted to present Bohemond as rightfully deserving control of the city.

Some scholars even note that it may not have been strictly made-up propaganda. There is little reason to doubt why such an agreement would have taken place, or at least been attempted, since it served both Bohemond and Alexios' interests. As suggested above, Bohemond would receive land and Alexios would have a capable general administering the marcher lordships in the east. Shepard concludes that Alexios was aware of Bohemond's potential usefulness in his military skills and Greek knowledge and may well have wanted to employ him to help restore former Byzantine lands.<sup>139</sup> Therefore, Alexios likely would have tried to reach an agreement with Bohemond to secure his loyalty.<sup>140</sup> At this point in time, he did not suspect Bohemond, as Anna would have her readers believe, but rather believed that he had bought off Bohemond with riches.<sup>141</sup> In turn, Bohemond wanted land and title. It would not have been surprising for the two to attempt a deal that benefitted them both.

Shepard notes that if it were a made-up interpolation, its author would surely have embellished the request to be a lot more favourable to Bohemond receiving Antioch. Alexios would have sworn the land to Bohemond, not simply made a vague promise. It also would have clearly included Antioch in the grant, not simply referred to the city in an ambiguous way.<sup>142</sup>

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<sup>138</sup> Asbridge, *The Creation of the Principality of Antioch*, 92; Ralph-Johannes Lilie, *Byzantium and the Crusader States, 1096-1204*, trans. J.C. Morris and J.E. Ridings (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), 9-10, n45.

<sup>139</sup> Shepard, "When Greek meets Greek," 224, 251-259.

<sup>140</sup> Harris, *Byzantium and the Crusades*, 70.

<sup>141</sup> Shepard, "When Greek meets Greek," 186; Paul, "A warlord's wisdom," 541-544.

<sup>142</sup> Shepard, "When Greek meets Greek," 221; Pryor and Jeffreys, "Alexios, Bohemond, and Byzantium's Euphrates Frontier," 52.

Since the land grant was ambiguous, as Alexios often liked to be, it is thus possible that he did offer a vague promise of land, which the Latin chroniclers have correctly recorded. The reason why Anna Komnene did not mention it would simply be so that her father would not be implicated in his mistake of offering land near Antioch when, with hindsight, she knew the usurper had stolen Antioch from him.

Regardless of whether the passage was interpolated or not actually makes little difference. It exists in all known versions of the *Gesta* and therefore at some point, either right away or shortly after an interpolation, was used as propaganda supporting Bohemond. The other authors who supported Bohemond, or at the very least despised Alexios, then included it in their accounts. Those who did not include it in their accounts either decided it was not important, had other sources to rely on, or left it out for other motives. Krey's main proof for an interpolation was Ekkehard of Aura, since he argues the author used an early version of the *Gesta* that did not contain the interpolation. While there is not a lot know about him, he had no ties to Bohemond and does not offer much information about him. Ekkehard rather focuses on Godfrey and Baldwin before launching into the Crusade of 1101.<sup>143</sup> He does talk about a little book from which he drew much of his information, which Krey suggests was the *Gesta*, but considering he focused mainly on Godfrey and very little on Bohemond, the main character of the *Gesta*, it actually leaves little evidence that it was.<sup>144</sup> Even if he did use it, since Ekkehard had little

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<sup>143</sup> Matthew LaBarge King in his introduction for Ekkehard of Aura, "Hierosolymita," 11.

<sup>144</sup> Mathew LaBarge King, Ekkehard of Aura, "Hierosolymita," 16; Some scholars have even suggested the existence of another, now non-existent text which was this book that Ekkehard speaks of. This view in particular has been championed by John and Laurita Hill and Jean Flori. While this is possible, there is little textual proof. Rubenstein notes that before the First Crusade, histories on an entire event were rare. Considering how well preserved many of these early First Crusade chronicles were, it would be likely that this source would also have been preserved, especially if so many of the chronicles that do exist used it. If this source was so readily available that multiple authors used it, it likely would have been better preserved to still exist today. John and Laurita Hill in their Introduction for Peter Tudebode, *Historia de Hierosolymitano Itinere*, 5; Jean Flori, *Pierre l'Ermitte et la Première Croisade*, Paris, 1999, pp. 9-10; Jean Flori, *Bohemond d'Antioche* (Biographie Payot, 2007), 9-10; Rubenstein, "What is the *Gesta Francorum*," 180.

interest in recording the accounts of Bohemond, then there was no reason for him to have included the land grant, something that he would have viewed as irrelevant to his story.

The same arguments can be applied to the other sources that do not record the passage, like Raymond d'Aguilers, Fulcher of Chartres, Robert the Monk, Albert of Aachen, and certain texts of Baldric of Bourgueil. Of the writers that went on the expedition, none of them travelled in Bohemond's retinue and therefore focused on other lords. Raymond of d'Aguilers was a chaplain in Count Raymond IV of Toulouse's contingent.<sup>145</sup> Similarly, Fulcher began on the crusade with Robert of Normandy, Stephen of Blois, and Robert of Flanders and later followed Baldwin to Edessa and then Jerusalem.<sup>146</sup> Of the authors that were not eyewitnesses, Robert, while still praising Bohemond for his feats, puts his emphasis on Godfrey, Hugh of Vermandois, and Robert of Normandy.<sup>147</sup> Baldric also did not have Bohemond as the main character of his narrative. He also promised his readers that he was writing to "please Christian posterity" and to "publish the truth in a moderate manner" to avoid any bias towards the Greeks and Muslims, and therefore he may not have included it because he could not find support for it.<sup>148</sup> As for Albert,

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<sup>145</sup> Raymond d'Aguilers, *Historia Francorum*, 6-7. As will be discussed later in this thesis, Raymond was the chief Latin objector to Bohemond's acquisition of Antioch and tried to persuade the other leaders to honour their oath to Alexios. Therefore, it is no mystery why Raymond chose not to record this passage if it was originally in the *Gesta*. Raymond likely supported Count Raymond's rhetoric against Bohemond and may not have wished to record any support in Bohemond's favour.

<sup>146</sup> Edward Peters, *The First Crusade: "The Chronicle of Fulcher of Chartres" and Other Source Materials* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1998), 47.

<sup>147</sup> Robert the Monk, "Historia Iherosolimitana," 19-20. He likely was not on the expedition, although he did witness Pope Urban's sermon. He also used the *Gesta*, and translator Carol Sweetenham admits that Robert also intended to raise enthusiasm for a new expedition to Jerusalem. He also frequently vilified the Byzantines. However, she assures the reader that Robert used the *Gesta* subtly and only as a way to begin his own story of the crusade. He omitted a lot of what he saw as unnecessary, including information about the southern Italian Norman contingents. He was not concerned about adding every single detail, which explains why he decided not to go into depth about Bohemond's meeting with Alexios, (12, 19-20).

<sup>148</sup> Baldric of Bourgueil, *History of the Jerusalemites*, 12, 18, 22, Prolouge.4, 40-41. He likely used the *Gesta*, but he called the source that he used "unsophisticated, rustic, uneducated and unpolished." He shows this in how he presents the Byzantines. Where most of the Latin sources depict Alexios as a brash and angry tyrant, Baldric acknowledges the difficult position he was in having to deal with the crusaders. Perhaps, then, he did not include the grant because he could not find enough proof to support it. For similar reasons to Ekkehard, it can be said that Baldric only chose what he thought was important from the *Gesta*, and therefore chose not to include the land grant by Alexios.

his translator Susan Edgington assumes that he did not know about the other contemporary narratives and therefore could not have known about the land grant from these sources.<sup>149</sup> For these reasons, even if they had known about a supposed land grant, they may not have seen it as relevant to their versions of the story.

As for the sources that do record it, Peter Tudebode copies the *Gesta* very closely. It is obvious why he would copy the land grant since his account is almost identical. Guibert of Nogent, too, follows the structure and content of the *Gesta* too closely for it not to have been directly based on it. Robert Levine calls it a rewriting or amplification of the *Gesta*, noting how even the title “The Deeds of God through the Franks” was a correction of the *Gesta*’s “Deeds of the Franks” in an attempt to show who was actually responsible for the crusaders’ deeds.<sup>150</sup> Ralph of Caen is more difficult, because his unique content makes it unlikely that he used much of the *Gesta*.<sup>151</sup> However, Ralph was recruited by Bohemond during his tour in France to serve as a chaplain for his entourage. This means that Bohemond and many of his knights may have served as some of Ralph’s sources, as Ralph would have his readers believe that he had a close relationship with Bohemond. Additionally, he joined Tancred’s staff after Bohemond’s death, dedicating the chronicle under Tancred’s name.<sup>152</sup> For these reasons, Ralph may have written to support Bohemond’s (and Tancred’s) claim to the areas around Antioch.

Therefore, my conclusion is that Krey is accurate in assuming that the *Gesta* was propaganda but wrong in assuming that this passage was interpolated. Since there are no existing texts without it, and because there are logical reasons why the other authors neglected to include

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<sup>149</sup> Albert of Aachen, *Historia Ierosolimitana*, xxi, xxiii-xxiv, Book I.1, 3. The structure and content of Albert of Aachen’s account is very different from that of the *Gesta*. He was not an eye-witness, for he admits in his prologue that, while he desired to join the campaign, he was prevented from doing so and had to settle with writing an account of it.

<sup>150</sup> Guibert of Nogent, *The Deeds of God Through the Franks*, 2-3.

<sup>151</sup> Shepard, “When Greek meets Greek,” 224.

<sup>152</sup> Ralph of Caen, “The *Gesta Tancredi*,” 2-4.

it in their accounts (or why some did), then it was likely in the original. While the *Gesta* and its similar sources may have embellished or altered the details in Bohemond's negotiations with Alexios, it would not be responsible to assume that no offer of land existed. Due to the situation that Alexios faced in the east and Bohemond's ambitions for himself, neither a request for a high military title nor an offer of significant land would have been impossible. This is important to discuss, because if a land grant was included in Bohemond's oath with Alexios, then he had even more of a reason to enter into Byzantine service and commit his loyalty even after being denied a title.

In the end, it is clear that Bohemond had aims in the east, and he knew that allegiance to Alexios was one of the surest ways to have his ambitions realized. He knew from recent history that foreigners were often successful in Byzantine affairs, and the promise of riches and a possible land grant would have confirmed to him that this was still the best path for him to follow, even despite having his request for a title denied. For this reason, he still likely continued on the expedition with his aim of finding a lordship for himself. Perhaps he hoped to earn his reward for loyalty to Alexios by taking command of a city and receiving it from Alexios in good faith. Alternatively, maybe he realized that Byzantine loyalty was futile and began conspiring to earn a city independently. In the end, Bohemond would eventually abandon his allegiance to Alexios and take command of the great city of Antioch, despite the emperor's wishes to have it returned. Yet the time and circumstances in which Bohemond made this decision is not clear and it would be wrong, as a number of scholars have done, to assume otherwise.

### Chapter 3 – Loyalty until Antioch

Bohemond had been denied a title in the Byzantine court and, to some, it seems as if his only remaining chance to gain a city in the east was through independent rule and rebellion against the Byzantines. Emily Albu and Jay Rubenstein, for instance, assume that Bohemond had intended to take the city before ever reaching the walls of Antioch.<sup>1</sup> However, as the First Crusade began its journey across Anatolia, it is quite possible that Bohemond still planned to remain loyal to the emperor. Even though his desire to be given a Byzantine title or command was denied, there is little reason to assume that Bohemond immediately began planning how to secure an independent city for himself. The result of the meeting with Alexios still gave him a strong chance to earn command of a major eastern city. This chapter will thus examine the evidence which shows the possibility that Bohemond intended to remain loyal to Alexios, even after being denied a title, in the hopes of receiving a territory in the east.

The Byzantine relationship with the Latins during the crusade will receive due examination, since Bohemond's involvement in organizing Greek systems of supply provides evidence of his continued loyalty. Bohemond's actions on the crusade will also be discussed, since he took every opportunity during the next phase of the First Crusade to increase his reputation and show himself as an invaluable leader of the campaign. It will show that his actions put himself in a strong position to either receive Antioch from Alexios or claim the city for himself. In this way, it could be suggested that Bohemond only began to consider abandoning his loyalty to Alexios once the opportunity to rule Antioch independently became clear. His established reputation which was meant to have him appointed to the city also allowed him to claim it independently once he made the decision to do so.

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<sup>1</sup> Emily Albu, "Antioch and the Normans," 167; Rubenstein, *Armies of Heaven*, 71.

## Early Crusader/Byzantine Relations

After most of the crusader lords committed their oaths to Alexios, the armies left Constantinople and marched united through Nicomedia towards Nicaea. Bohemond, however, stayed behind in Constantinople while Tancred led his Norman army marching with the rest of the crusading force. Tancred's initial avoidance of swearing the oath to Alexios by passing through Constantinople and crossing the Bosphorus without him knowing suggests that the Normans were not fully committed to the Byzantines.<sup>2</sup> However, Tancred would later swear the oath after being convinced by Bohemond when Alexios summoned them to Pelekanum after the siege of Nicaea. Bohemond's urging Tancred to take the oath suggests that he was trying to instill loyalty among his officers in order to maintain his own. Yet when Anna recounts the story, she presents it in such a way that Bohemond only did it for the ludicrous rewards that Alexios offered.<sup>3</sup> Anna often accuses Bohemond of greed, so her account cannot decide his intentions for us. Still, it is possible that Bohemond may have just been saving face in front of Alexios by urging Tancred to take the oath, when in reality his avoidance of it may have had Bohemond's approval.<sup>4</sup> It is even possible that Bohemond, who had gone to Constantinople ahead of Tancred, had even sent back to him, advising him to go through the capital unnoticed to avoid giving the oath. Even if this were true, it does not necessarily prove that Bohemond was no longer loyal to Alexios. It only shows that Bohemond either did not have full control over Tancred or did not have complete trust in the empire, causing him to limit the number of his commanders taking the oath to allow alternative options against the empire in case the alliance ever failed.

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<sup>2</sup> Ralph of Caen, "The Gesta Tancredi," Chapter 12, 33-34.

<sup>3</sup> Anna Comnena, *The Alexiad*, Book 11.3, 340-341.

<sup>4</sup> Albu, "Antioch and the Normans," 169.

While Tancred slipped through the Byzantine capital unnoticed, Bohemond lingered in Constantinople as the rest of the lords proceeded to Nicaea. As will be discussed below, it is probable that he stayed behind to both increase his standing in Alexios' sight and establish a leading role early in the crusade by organizing a lifeline of supplies from various Mediterranean ports and garrisons controlled by the Byzantines. This would begin his attempts to present himself as the best candidate on the expedition to receive a major office or eastern city from the emperor.

Bohemond completed two tasks in Constantinople which show that he remained loyal to Alexios. He first mediated a disagreement between Alexios and Count Raymond of Toulouse, who had refused to swear the oath that Alexios requested. Perhaps prodded by pride or suspicious of the negative treatment his troops had received by Byzantine mercenaries while approaching the city, Count Raymond's chaplain and chronicler wrote that the count, who was one of the most influential and powerful men on the expedition, claimed he "had not taken the Cross to pay allegiance to another lord or to be put in the service of any other than the One for whom he had abandoned his native land and his paternal goods."<sup>5</sup> Negotiations between Count Raymond and Alexios lasted from April 22-26, 1097, with the count being blamed for pillaging the countryside and the emperor being accused of ordering attacks on the Provençals.<sup>6</sup> To show his loyalty, Bohemond tried to appease the count and promised to support Alexios if any conflict between them arose.<sup>7</sup> Raymond d'Aguilers records that the count requested a trial in which

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<sup>5</sup> Raymond d'Aguilers records that Count Raymond's army was attacked by Alexios' mercenaries at Pelagonia and Rodosto. He also notes that Count Raymond's army retaliated by capturing and plundering Roussa. These events would likely have made Count Raymond cautious of committing an oath to Alexios. Raymond d'Aguilers, *Historia Francorum*, Book 2, 23; John Hugh Hill, *Raymond IV, Count of Toulouse* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1962), 47.

<sup>6</sup> John Hugh Hill and Laurita L. Hill, "The Convention of Alexius Comnenus and Raymond of Saint Gilles," *The American Historical Review* 58, no. 2 (January 1953): 322.

<sup>7</sup> Fulcher of Chartres, "The Chronicle of Fulcher of Chartres," Book 9.2, 62; Baldric of Bourgueil, *History of the Jerusalemmites*, Book 1.21, 62; Hill, *Raymond IV*, 50.

Bohemond was offered as a hostage on behalf of Alexios.<sup>8</sup> Once the trial ended in the emperor's favour, the count finally conceded that the oath was necessary for the expedition's future success and settled on a compromise to swear an altered oath that still promised to return former Byzantine lands to Alexios. This is important to remember, for Count Raymond would later use this same oath that he previously disagreed with to try and convince the other leaders to prevent Bohemond from acquiring Antioch.

These accounts challenge Anna Komnene's depiction that there was no tension between Alexios and Count Raymond, for she only records that the emperor tasked him to keep an eye on Bohemond to thwart his schemes.<sup>9</sup> It makes sense that Anna would choose not to include their early disagreements, since the count would later support Alexios against Bohemond's acquisition of Antioch. Yet her suggested cordial relations between her father and the count would have been a logical step for the emperor to take, and it stays in line with his foreign policies. It could be suggested that once Alexios and Count Raymond came to an agreement, the emperor then attempted to make a similar alliance with the count to promise him rewards in return for his loyalty. He was, after all, a safer option than Bohemond, who had already shown his ambitions against the empire in the past during the Balkan Campaign. If Alexios could secure the loyalty of both Bohemond and Count Raymond, it would increase the likelihood that all land would be returned to the emperor. John France notes that if we discount Anna's praise of Count Raymond and suspicion of Bohemond, and if we downplay the Latin sources' depictions of the count's distrust of Alexios, then this event reveals that Alexios carefully dealt with two influential leaders who may have been disinclined to work with the Byzantines but also willing to commit

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<sup>8</sup> Raymond d'Aguilers, *Historia Francorum*, Book 2, 24.

<sup>9</sup> Anna Comnena, *The Alexiad*, Book 10.11, 329-330.

loyalty to them if the circumstances were right.<sup>10</sup> Therefore, even if there was clear tension between Alexios and Count Raymond at the outset of the First Crusade, and even if Bohemond was a key contributor in relieving the friction between them, Alexios may have still attempted to negotiate both lords to his service.

The count can then be seen as the chief rival to Bohemond's ambitions. Perhaps Bohemond feared that he would also attempt to control a major city in the east. If the count secured Alexios' patronage, this would leave Bohemond with nothing. Therefore, by showing such outward support for Alexios early on in the expedition, Bohemond may have been ensuring that the emperor would favour him over any of the other leaders in a city appointment.

The second task that Bohemond accomplished while delaying at Constantinople was arranging important supply routes with the Byzantines so that provisions could swiftly be delivered to the crusaders as the expedition continued.<sup>11</sup> If he was to be one of Alexios' main representatives on the crusade, as his search for a Byzantine title suggests, then he would have been responsible for helping plan out supply routes for the crusaders. Before Bohemond made these arrangements, the *Gesta* indicates that a loaf of bread cost twenty or thirty pence, indicating that Byzantine supply was urgently needed.<sup>12</sup> Fulcher records that Alexios offered "as many coins and silken garments as he pleased; also some horses and some money, which they needed to complete such a great journey."<sup>13</sup> Many of the Latin sources attest that Bohemond was instrumental in arranging a clear agreement with the Byzantines.<sup>14</sup> Ralph of Caen even records

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<sup>10</sup> France, "Anna Comnena," 25.

<sup>11</sup> *Gesta Francorum*, Book 2.7, 14; Baldric of Bourgueil, *History of the Jerusalemites*, Book 1.21, 62; Robert the Monk, "Historia Iherosolimitana," Book 3.1, 103.

<sup>12</sup> *Gesta Francorum*, Book 2.7, 14.

<sup>13</sup> Fulcher of Chartres, "The Chronicle of Fulcher of Chartres," Book 9.3, 62.

<sup>14</sup> "The crusaders themselves were certain that they would be supported in their collective goal through military and economic aid from Alexius." Ekkehard of Aura, "Hierosolymita," Chapter 14, 58; Baldric of Bourgueil, *History of the Jerusalemites*, Book 1.22, 63.

that Bohemond was so invested in the task of organizing supplies that Tancred had to send two knights back to Constantinople to rebuke him for delaying so long.<sup>15</sup> According to Shepard, Bohemond was essentially acting as a liaison and quartermaster between Alexios and the crusaders.<sup>16</sup> Once Bohemond arrived with the necessary steady stream of supplies, the morale of the crusaders increased and the quintessential relationship between the crusaders and the Byzantines began.

The crusaders' relationship with the Byzantines is important to understand in order to recognize that Bohemond or any of the other leaders likely did not intend to reconsider their loyalty to Alexios at the start of the expedition. The Byzantine support of the campaign suggests that the Latins were willing to honour the oath they had given. An excellent example of this relationship is seen at the siege of Nicaea, which was a pivotal event in the First Crusade which defined the expectations of the Greek and Latin relationship.

Arriving at Nicaea on May 6, 1097, the crusaders set about their siege of the city. They launched their siege on May 14 and surrounded most of the city with siege camps and equipment. Instead of tightening their ranks around the walls and earning victory through a long siege, the crusaders quickly assessed the fortifications and made rushed attempts to breach the walls.<sup>17</sup> This was a surprising move, at least to Alexios, who insisted that the only way to conquer Nicaea was through a prolonged siege.<sup>18</sup> However, the crusaders' goal was Jerusalem.

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<sup>15</sup> Ralph of Caen, "The Gesta Tancredi," Chapter 13, 34.

<sup>16</sup> Shepard, "When Greek meets Greek," 213.

<sup>17</sup> Frankopan, *The First Crusade*, 139; The main crusader army sallied the city with siege equipment and rushed their attacks, but they could not scale the towering walls. Count Raymond and Adhemar of le Puy focused on the foundations of the city by sending in sappers and arbalists to undermine and collapse the walls. They successfully felled one of the main towers, but the Turks rallied that night and were able to rebuild the wall so that entry was impossible. *Gesta Francorum*, Book 2.8, 15; Raymond d'Aguilers, *Historia Francorum*, Book 3, 26.

<sup>18</sup> He had previously attempted to take back Nicaea many times through skirmishes and rushed attacks, but he could not take the city. Part of the reason why he requested Latin aid was so that he could have a force large enough to fully surround the city with a siege force. Anna Comnena, *The Alexiad*, Book 11.2, 33; Frankopan, *The First Crusade*, 139.

While Nicaea was still an important city to Christendom, it was not their primary focus.<sup>19</sup> They did not have time to waste months besieging it. After a few weeks of battle, the crusaders noticed that the Seljuks were able to resupply themselves by sending supply ships through Lake Ascania. Alexios, who set up headquarters nearby at Pelekanum, combatted this by sending ships to blockade the harbour. Alexios sent a contingent of Turcoples to take a fleet of ships from the Gulf of Nicomedia across dry land to Lake Ascania, where they proceeded to blockade the harbour.<sup>20</sup> According to multiple Latin sources, the Turks realized that they could not defeat a combined Greek and Latin assault and sent to Alexios offering their full surrender on June 18 in exchange for their lives.<sup>21</sup> Greek sources claim that Alexios had sent Manuel Boutoumites to the Turks and arranged this offer much earlier, but when news reached them that Kilij Arslan was on his way with reinforcements, they expelled the Greek diplomats and continued their defence.<sup>22</sup> After Kilij's sorties were thoroughly routed by the crusaders, with the defense led mainly by Count Raymond, the Turks surrendered to Boutoumites. The only condition that they requested was that they be able to keep the booty that they had maintained when they had taken the city from the Byzantines in 1084.<sup>23</sup> Alexios reportedly sent a garrison of his troops into the city and placed his imperial banner over the walls in the sight of the unsuspecting Latins, who were unaware of this arrangement.

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<sup>19</sup> Guibert explains that it was an important city for the Latins to recover as it was "famous for the synod of the 318 fathers, ... the declaration of *Omoision*, and the condemnation of Arius." Guibert of Nogent, *The Deeds of God Through the Franks*, Book 3, 62.

<sup>20</sup> Albert of Aachen records that the Greeks brought ships to the harbour of Civitot and used carts, men, and horses to carry these ships seven miles on dry land overnight in order to reach Nicaea without alerting the Turks to their presence. Albert of Aachen, *Historia Ierosolimitana*, Book 2.33, 117.

<sup>21</sup> Albert of Aachen, *Historia Ierosolimitana*, Book 2.25, 103ff. The governor of the city, Kilij Arslan, was away from the city during the siege.

<sup>22</sup> Anna Comnena, *The Alexiad*, Book 11.1, 334; Rubenstein, *Armies of Heaven*, 104.

<sup>23</sup> Ralph of Caen, "The Gesta Tancredi," Chapter 17, 40; The *Gesta* goes as far as to claim that Alexios had shown the Turks this kindness so that he could use them against the crusaders later on. *Gesta Francorum*, Book 2.8, 17. This is, of course, bias on the *Gesta*'s part, as Alexios was likely only ensuring that the city would not be harmed by the crusaders.

To prevent Latin dissatisfaction with the truce, Alexios ordered his troops to stage an attack on the city to make it appear as if he had taken it by sudden force instead of negotiation.<sup>24</sup> He did this to prevent plundering, which certain Latins may have felt entitled to since looting was often a reward and compensation for everything they had endured during the siege.<sup>25</sup> As was previously stated, mercenaries were permitted to part of the plunder of any city they helped conquer. This was part of the appeal for entering Byzantine service and, when this was prevented from happening, some of the Latins intent on plundering may have felt cheated, accusing Alexios of keeping them from what they were entitled to. To allay these grievances, Alexios had given significant gifts to the leaders and alms to the poorer members of their company as a reward for their victory, enough for them to replenish their supplies for the next leg of the journey. However, this reward only went to the leaders. Many of the common soldiers and knights were overlooked and not compensated for the rewards they would have otherwise gotten through looting.<sup>26</sup> Even if all the common soldiers had received rewards from Alexios, these likely would not have compared to what they would have otherwise obtained from plundering.<sup>27</sup> Therefore,

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<sup>24</sup> Anna Comnena, *The Alexiad*, Book 11.2, 337; Frankopan, *The First Crusade*, 142.

<sup>25</sup> William of Tyre records part of the agreement: “if, during their entire march to Syria, under the guidance of God, they should chance to take any one of the cities which had formerly belonged to his empire, that city with its adjacent dependencies should be restored to the emperor; but the booty, spoils, and everything else should be handed over intact to the armies without question, in remuneration for their labor and in payment of expenses.” There is no existing copy of the agreement made with Alexios, and considering William goes at pains to mention Alexios’ betrayal of this oath whenever he can, his retelling of the past event must be taken as partisan. William of Tyre, *A History of Deeds Done Beyond the Sea*, Book 3.12, 167, n. 10.

<sup>26</sup> Fulcher of Chartres, “The Chronicle of Fulcher of Chartres,” Book 1, Chapter 10.10, 65; Peter Tudebode recorded that some of the poorer crusaders died of starvation during the siege of Nicaea, indicating that not everyone was supplied. This would not have been just the fault of Alexios, but also of the crusade leaders. Peter Tudebode, *Historia de Hierosolymitano Itinere*, Book 3, 33-34; Guibert notes that “they had fought the battles; they were the ones who had carried out the entire siege, hauled the engines of war, fired the catapults; to conclude briefly, I say that they carried, ‘the burden and heat of the day’.” Guibert of Nogent, *The Deeds of God Through the Franks*, Book 3, 65.

<sup>27</sup> Rubenstein, *Armies of Heaven*, 112-113; Baldric of Bourgueil emphasizes this when he claims that Alexios gave the gifts to the crusaders to hide the amount that he had gained for himself through this arrangement. His credibility is weak on this topic, however. Baldric of Bourgueil, *History of the Jerusalemmites*, Book 1.27, 69.

even though early relations between the Latins and Greeks after Constantinople were mostly cordial, tensions between them were already evident at Nicaea.

Alexios, of course, had every right to take control of Nicaea and prevent the Latins from plundering it. For one thing, it clearly fell under the oath that all the leaders had sworn to Alexios promising to return any former land belonging to the empire. It may have only been a Seljuk city to the Latins, but to the Greeks it was a historic city that had only recently been taken from them. Alexios also had a vested interest in retaking Nicaea because it remained approximately 92 kilometers from Constantinople. Kilij Arslan made Nicaea his capital, so by retaking the city, Alexios would disrupt the Turkish command structure in the east and deprive them of a strong launching point against Constantinople and the remaining Byzantine areas in Anatolia.<sup>28</sup> Secondly, Nicaea also had a majority Greek citizenship, which meant that any plundering and massacring of the city would have been against fellow Christians. Anna Komnene even states that Alexios feared the brutal potential of the crusaders, and when Boutoumites was appointed as Duke of Nicaea, he only let the Latins enter the city ten at a time to visit the holy sites in order to prevent any violence.<sup>29</sup> Finally, Alexios was also very involved in the siege. As we will see during the debacle surrounding Antioch, Bohemond claimed that the oath no longer applied because the Byzantines did not aid in the city's capture, but rather abandoned it. This cannot be said for Nicaea, because Alexios and his army were very involved in this siege. While the crusader armies surrounding Nicaea occupied most of the Turks' focus, Alexios took up an advanced position at Pelekanum and directly monitored the actions of both the Turks and the crusaders. He secretly sent in Boutoumites to begin negotiations with the Turks, stating guarantees of how they would be treated if they surrendered. He also sent ships to blockade the

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<sup>28</sup> Frankopan, *The First Crusade*, 68-69; Cahen, *Pre-Ottoman Turkey*, 81-82; Rubenstein, *Armies of heaven*, 85-86.

<sup>29</sup> Anna Comnena, *The Alexiad*, Book 11.3, 340.

harbour and attack the city from the sea. Alexios further advised his troops to utilize trumpets and drums to mimic the sound of a heavy attack, and he even set waves of imperial standards in the distance to imitate the arrival of more invaders.<sup>30</sup> He also deployed Byzantine archers close to the walls to offer the Latins cover from the Turkish defenders. Bohemond may not have been very prevalent in the siege of Nicaea, apart from organizing the supplies, but this event is still important to include in this study because it highlights how involved the Byzantines were in the initial stages of the expedition.

The events at Nicaea set into motion the relationship between the Latins and Greeks that Alexios had hoped for. The Latins would be the main force sent against certain strategic Turkish cities, and the Greek forces would guide and support the Latins until the city could be peacefully returned to the empire. This event also set the Latins' expectations of the Greeks. While it was clear by this point that Alexios would not be directly leading the campaign, it still had his full support. They knew that Alexios would ensure, with the help of Bohemond, that supplies would constantly be sent either directly from Constantinople or other areas of the empire. Through his actions at Nicaea, Alexios was promising the crusaders that he would send a relief force when it was necessary. The Latins also knew that they would likely be awarded riches after any battle that they would win on Alexios' behalf. At the head of this relationship remained Bohemond. He was the quartermaster and maintained direct communication with the other lords, Tatikios, and Alexios.

Therefore, there is little reason to think that Bohemond or the other crusader lords began to reconsider their loyalty to the Byzantines at this point. As far as Bohemond was concerned, he was a valuable contributor to the Byzantine reacquisition of Nicaea, his supply lines remained

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<sup>30</sup> Anna Comnena, *The Alexiad*, Book 11.2, 336-337; Frankopan, *The First Crusade*, 141-142.

strong, and his standing in the Byzantine mind was not hindered. He would also have observed that someone who made large contributions to the conquest of a city might be granted command of it. Since Manuel Boutoumites had received the government of Nicaea for his work in gaining the surrender, Bohemond may also have been hoping for the same thing at Antioch. The actions of Bohemond leading up to Antioch can thus be observed in this light.

### **Leadership before Antioch**

As the armies left Nicaea and crossed Anatolia towards Antioch, Bohemond quickly became a valuable leader in the expedition. As will be seen, Bohemond established a strong reputation during the First Crusade through his tactical brilliance and systems of resupply throughout the journey to Antioch. He was not only pivotal in establishing provisions with the Byzantines, but he also was able to organize resource channels apart from the Greeks. It is possible that his success in this contributed to him becoming prince of Antioch, as it set him up to either receive the city from Alexios or hold it independently.<sup>31</sup> While he would eventually choose the latter, I argue that there is little evidence that his actions on the journey to Antioch show that he already intended to do this.

An excellent example of Bohemond's leadership abilities during the early part of the expedition was the battle at Dorylaeum. The vanguard of the crusader army leaving Nicaea consisted of Bohemond, Tancred, and Robert Curthose. On July 1, 1097, when they were traveling through the plains of Dorylaeum, the Franks were ambushed by a contingent of troops sent by Kilij Arslan.<sup>32</sup> Bohemond, with the support of Robert, immediately directed their knights

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<sup>31</sup> France, "The Normans and crusading," 94.

<sup>32</sup> Raymond d'Aguilers estimates that about one hundred and fifty thousand men attacked Bohemond's contingent. Raymond d'Aguilers, *Historia Francorum*, Book 3, 27; The *Gesta* claims 360,000, while Guibert gives an

to dismount, pitch a camp with all the non-combatants in the middle, and surround them in a phalanx-style defensive position.<sup>33</sup> He then led his knights to periodically leave the circle and skirmish with the Turks while they waited for reinforcements to come from the other armies. Soon Godfrey, Baldwin, Adhemar, and Count Raymond, who were about two miles behind, arrived with their mounted knights and set their men to charge from different sides of the valley, causing the Turks to flee.<sup>34</sup> Bohemond's skills and quick thinking saved the vanguard from annihilation, which would have otherwise almost undoubtedly caused the entire campaign to fail.

Bohemond continued to utilize various tactics to gain the upper hand on the journey to Antioch, and one skill to note was his experience in espionage. Although the most obvious example of this would be his ability to convince a tower guard to allow him entry into Antioch, there are other instances of his tactical brilliance before reaching the city. Bohemond, for example, made use of scouts in order to track the movements of the Turks and find the best way to ensure victory. Susan Edgington suspects that he recruited Greek and Arabic speaking men in Italy to join him on the crusade so that he could send them out as spies.<sup>35</sup> He was possibly the only leader to use this tactic, since after he abandoned his journey to Jerusalem and remained in Antioch in 1099, the sources no longer mention the use of scouts or spies by the crusaders until

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astounding 460,000. Guibert of Nogent, *The Deeds of God Through the Franks*, Book 3, 67. The accuracy of these estimates is likely very skewed.

<sup>33</sup> *Gesta Francorum*, Book 3.9, 18; Ralph of Caen, "The Gesta Tancredi," Chapter 22, 46.

<sup>34</sup> Peter Tudebode, *Historia de Hierosolymitano Itinere*, Book 3, 34; Albert of Aachen estimates that the Latins lost 4,000 men before the other crusaders arrived while the Turks lost 3,000 after they arrived. It is not clear if these are the totals during the battle or if more Turks were defeated by Bohemond before the other leaders arrived. Albert of Aachen, *Historia Ierosolimitana*, Book 2.41, 133; 2.43, 137; Ralph indicates that the Turks suffered much more casualties than the Latins, so Albert must not have been giving full accurate numbers. Ralph of Caen, "The Gesta Tancredi," Chapter 21, 46.

<sup>35</sup> Susan Edgington, "Espionage and military intelligence during the First Crusade, 1095-99," in *Crusading and Warfare in the Middle Ages: Realities and Representations. Essays in Honour of John France*, ed. Simon John and Nicholas Morton (Farnham: Ashgate, 2014), 77; Sources that mention Bohemond's scouts include: *Gesta Francorum*, Book 4.10, 23; Book 5.12, 28; Fulcher of Chartres, "The Chronicle of Fulcher of Chartres," Book 11.2-3, 34.

the battle at Ascalon.<sup>36</sup> This points to the idea that Bohemond was the only one to utilize this tactic.<sup>37</sup> These are some of the examples of leadership and foreplanning that he displayed while on the road to Antioch. He was by no means the only leader contributing to the success of the crusaders, but the focus that the authors put on Bohemond highlight the growing reputation that he had gained among his peers.

As the armies continued towards Antioch, no doubt encouraged by their victory at Dorylaeum, Bohemond already appears to have been considering the best ways for him to acquire the city. He may have begun doing this through the acquisition of strategic cities around Antioch. Certain key places of which he gained possession were the Armenian cities of Tarsus, Mamistra, and Adana. Control of these cities consolidated the area so that Antioch, if eventually taken, would be easier to keep in Christian hands, since they established allied resource centres with local Armenian Christians and presented a more direct route for reinforcements to reach Syria.<sup>38</sup> It also provided a new system of supply as the expedition continued.<sup>39</sup> Thomas Asbridge suggests that the occupation of these cities could be seen as the first step in gaining control of the Principality of Antioch. If Bohemond could control these strategic areas, I argue that he would either have a strong platform to be appointed to Antioch by Alexios or be in a good position to claim it for himself.<sup>40</sup> This is not to assume that he was already planning to betray his allegiance to Alexios, for control of this region would simply give him the best platform to be appointed to the city by the emperor.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> The crusaders used scouts at Ascalon, as recorded by Fulcher of Chartres, "The Chronicle of Fulcher of Chartres," Book 31.4, 11, 73-74.

<sup>37</sup> Edgington, "Espionage and Military Intelligence," 79.

<sup>38</sup> Asbridge, *The Crusades*, 60.

<sup>39</sup> Murray, "The enemy within," 41.

<sup>40</sup> Asbridge, *The Creation of the Principality of Antioch*, 16.

<sup>41</sup> Murray, "The enemy within," 41.

Bohemond sent Tancred to undertake this task. He separated from the main force in mid September, once the army had reached Herakleia, and journeyed to Antioch through the rich coastal plain of Cilicia along the northeastern corner of the Mediterranean.<sup>42</sup> It is possible that Tancred's quest in Armenia was based on his own aspirations instead of in the service to Bohemond.<sup>43</sup> Not everyone in Bohemond's retinue may have wanted to commit loyalty to Alexios, and Tancred's earlier action in attempting to avoid the oath may have been a sign of this. Indeed, Tancred's loyalty to his uncle may not have been as strong as sources depict; after all, Tancred failed to rescue Bohemond when he was captured by the Danishmendids in 1100, perhaps showing that he was more concerned with his own affairs than with helping his uncle.<sup>44</sup> However, if he had wanted land for himself, then he likely would not have left Cilicia to return to the main force, as he did. For this reason, Tancred was likely pursuing the aims of his uncle.<sup>45</sup>

The Normans were not the only ones interested in this area. Baldwin of Boulogne, Godfrey of Bouillon's younger brother, also departed towards Cilicia. Frankopan supposes that Baldwin was sent as a strategy planned by Alexios in order to give the crusaders a better chance to take Antioch, as well as to provide the empire with key bases to launch further reconquests into Anatolia.<sup>46</sup> He suggests that Baldwin defended Alexios' interests and planned to take the area and return it to him. This is difficult to accept considering Alexios and Baldwin got off to

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<sup>42</sup> For details of this event, see Albert of Aachen, *Historia Ierosolimitana*, Book 3.5-17, 145-67; Fulcher of Chartres, "The Chronicle of Fulcher of Chartres," Book 14.3-4, 69; Peter Tudebode, *Historia de Hierosolymitano Itinere*, Book 3, 39-40; Robert the Monk, "Historia Iherosolimitana," Book 3.20-22, 116-117; William of Tyre, *A History of Deeds Done Beyond the Sea*, Book 3.19-25, 178-186.

<sup>43</sup> This is insisted upon by H. Mayer, but Asbridge suspects it is not the case due to Tancred's consistent loyalty and the fact that Tancred left the cities to return to Bohemond. H. Mayer, *The Crusades*, trans. J. Gillingham (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), 48; Asbridge, *The Creation of the Principality of Antioch*, 17.

<sup>44</sup> This goes against Emily Albu's suggestion that Tancred and Bohemond were always in close cooperation. Albu, "Antioch and the Normans," 169; Bohemond had gone to relieve a siege on the town of Malatia, but he was ambushed by the Turks and taken by Danishmend and imprisoned at Nikisar. He would later be ransomed by Baldwin, instead of Tancred, who had been active in Armenia against the Byzantines. Matthew of Edessa, *Chronicle*, Chapter 97; William of Tyre, *A History of Deeds Done Beyond the Sea*, Book 9.21, 411-412.

<sup>45</sup> Asbridge, *The Creation of the Principality of Antioch*, 17.

<sup>46</sup> Frankopan, *The First Crusade*, 150-151.

such a difficult start during their skirmishes at Constantinople, as mentioned in the last chapter. Furthermore, Baldwin did not return Edessa to Alexios, which he would take after leaving Cilicia, even though the area fell under the oath. Jonathan Riley-Smith notes that Tarsus, Adana, Misis, Iskenderun, Ravanda, Tilbesar, and Edessa, all cities Baldwin was involved in taking, were all previously Byzantine. Yet no move was taken to return them to the empire or recognize their suzerainty.<sup>47</sup>

While it is up for debate if Alexios appointed Baldwin to focus on Cilicia, it is more likely that the crusaders sent Baldwin and Tancred to the area. Albert claims that the leaders universally agreed to allow Baldwin and Tancred to take the different route in order to extend the reach of supplies.<sup>48</sup> If this is true, then Bohemond likely sent Tancred to acquire these cities, especially if he wanted Alexios to appoint him to command of Antioch.<sup>49</sup> After all, Bohemond was likely involved in Tancred's quest. According to Albert, Tancred threatened the Turkish garrison at Tarsus with news that Bohemond's troops were on their way.<sup>50</sup> When Baldwin held Tarsus after forcing Tancred out, he refused 300 of Bohemond's knights entrance into the city, leaving them to be massacred by the Turks overnight.<sup>51</sup> Despite their loss and whether or not these knights were sent by Bohemond or just followed Tancred independently, Bohemond would still reap the rewards of Norman occupation of these cities later.

Tancred and Baldwin would struggle against each other for the predominantly Armenian cities there. After robbing Tancred of Tarsus and then engaging in bloody conflict with him at Mamistra, Baldwin would rejoin the main army and continue to Edessa, where he would go on to

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<sup>47</sup> Riley-Smith, *The Crusades*, 57.

<sup>48</sup> Albert of Aachen, *Historia Ierosolimitana* Book 3.3, 141.

<sup>49</sup> Nicholson, *Tancred*, 39-41.

<sup>50</sup> Albert of Aachen, *Historia Ierosolimitana*, Book 3.6, 147.

<sup>51</sup> Albert of Aachen, *Historia Ierosolimitana*, Book 3.11, 155-157; Rubenstein, *Armies of Heaven*, 137.

establish his own county, leaving the Armenian cities to Tancred and Bohemond. It is not clear why Baldwin decided not to maintain control of his cities in Cilicia. He likely did not simply lose interest in Tarsus, as Runciman suggests. Rather, as Asbridge argues, Baldwin probably left a substantial garrison and only relinquished his control once he was firmly situated in Edessa.<sup>52</sup> Pryor and Jeffreys go so far as to suggest that Baldwin was aware of the land grant that Alexios had promised Bohemond and agreed to swap Cilicia for Edessa. They further claim that Bohemond consented to this, even though Edessa also fell under the land grant, because Cilicia was more important for the defence of Antioch.<sup>53</sup> This is difficult to accept, since it assumes that there was a land grant, which has not been proven. It also assumes that Bohemond was already intending to take Antioch for himself, since Cilicia was important for the defense of Antioch against the Byzantines. It ignores the fact that Edessa was just as, if not more, important to the defense of Antioch, for it provided a buffer against the Sultanate of Baghdad. Regardless of how it happened, Tancred was able to establish Norman occupation of Tarsus and Mamistra and establish amicable relations with the Armenian ruler of Adana who, according to Matthew of Edessa, sent supplies to the crusaders at Antioch.<sup>54</sup> These Armenian cities remained in Norman hands and provided the de Hautevilles with a strong presence in southeastern Anatolia, setting them up for future service in Antioch.

### **Resupply before Antioch**

Bohemond's leadership abilities are frequently highlighted by the Latin sources to show his military skills and ability to govern. What is focused on less, but equally valuable, are his

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<sup>52</sup> Runciman, *The History of the Crusades*, 197-200; Asbridge, *The Creation of the Principality of Antioch*, 20.

<sup>53</sup> Pryor and Jeffreys, "Bohemond, Alexios, and Byzantium's Euphrates Frontier," 73-74.

<sup>54</sup> Matthew of Edessa, *Chronicle*, Chapter 93.

actions in resupplying the crusaders as they approached Antioch. As shown through his actions at Nicaea, he was the chief supplier of the campaign, and that responsibility continued as the armies journeyed through Anatolia.

Bohemond is shown in this role after the victory at Dorylaeum. The *Gesta* reports that the Turks fled so quickly that they abandoned their camps, leaving much “booty, gold, silver, horses, asses, camels, oxen, sheep and many other things about which we do not know.”<sup>55</sup> Albert also indicates that much food and supplies were collected from their plunder. Bohemond is recorded to have conferred with the other leaders and established a system of rations so that no army would have more than the others.<sup>56</sup> In this way, Bohemond not only provided for the crusading army by establishing supply lines with the Byzantines, but he also ensured that the armies could survive on their own when needed.

It is important to emphasize that Bohemond still arranged Byzantine supply lines, because the severe famine that the crusaders suffered as they journeyed through Anatolia can lead to the assumption that the Byzantines failed in their responsibility to resupply the expedition. After Dorylaeum, as the armies continued down the treacherous route towards Antioch, they became low on supplies. Horses and mules were lost, either to hunger or to the steep cliffs of the Taurus Mountains.<sup>57</sup> The *Gesta* describes how they “suffered greatly from hunger and thirst, and found nothing at all to eat except prickly plants which we gathered...on such food we survived wretchedly enough, but we lost most of our horses...used oxen as mounts, and...goats, sheep and dogs as beasts of burden.”<sup>58</sup> Albert of Aachen describes in

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<sup>55</sup> *Gesta Francorum*, Book 3.9, 20; Fulcher of Chartres records a similar account, “The Chronicle of Fulcher of Chartres,” 12.3, 67.

<sup>56</sup> Albert of Aachen, *Historia Ierosolimitana*, Book 2.43, 137; Fulcher of Chartres, “The Chronicle of Fulcher of Chartres,” Book 12.3, 67.

<sup>57</sup> Riley-Smith, *The First Crusade*, 64-65.

<sup>58</sup> *Gesta Francorum*, Book 4.10, 23.

horrible detail the kind of thirst the crusaders suffered: “many men, growing weak from the exertion and the heat, gaping with open mouths and throats, were trying to catch the thinnest mist to cure their thirst. It was no use at all. For a very great part, as we have said, is claimed to have died there on that day.”<sup>59</sup> Other sources record similar accounts.<sup>60</sup> If the Byzantines were failing in their commitment to supply the crusaders, than the argument could be made that this lack of support could have caused Bohemond to not only consider leaving his loyalty to Alexios but also to begin gathering the support of the other crusader lords to allow him to take Antioch for himself.

However, this was simply not the case. Alexios had committed to supplying the campaign by land and by sea, as he had clearly done at Nicaea, and there is no reason to assume that he stopped doing so after the city was taken.<sup>61</sup> Bohemond was a clever strategist, and since he oversaw organizing Byzantine supplies at Nicaea, it is doubtful to think that he did not plan for further supplies. After all, Ekkehard of Aura insists that the crusaders left Nicaea with a great abundance of supplies, presumably provided by the Byzantines.<sup>62</sup> Therefore, there must have been a reason for this apparent lack of supplies.

It is possible to understand why the crusaders suffered hunger even while being supplied by the Byzantines. The route the crusaders had taken was difficult to supply. If they had taken the coastal route, the Byzantine navy would have more easily been able to supply the crusaders. However, neither central Anatolia nor the Taurus Mountains could be easily reached by sea, and any supply caravan would have had great difficulty traversing the route due to the rough terrain

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<sup>59</sup> Albert of Aachen, *Historia Ierosolimitana*, Book 3.2, 141.

<sup>60</sup> Fulcher of Chartres, “The Chronicle of Fulcher of Chartres,” Book 12.6, 67, 13.3, 68; Peter Tudebode, *Historia de Hierosolymitano Itinere*, Chapter 3, 38, 42.

<sup>61</sup> Bernard Bachrach, “Some Observations on the Role of the Byzantine Navy in the Success of the First Crusade,” in *Journal of Medieval Military History Vol. I*, ed. Bernard Bachrach, Clifford Rogers, and Kelly DeVries (Boydell & Brewer, Boydell Press, 2002), 90.

<sup>62</sup> Ekkehard of Aura, “Hierosolymita,” Chapter 14, 58.

and the lack of Byzantine presence in the area. It is possible that the Byzantines supplied the crusaders here by planning out a route which provided the most opportunities for provisions. After all, Greek guides led by Tatikios and sent by Alexios were directing the armies through Anatolia.<sup>63</sup> During their mountainous trek, they led the crusaders through Iconium and Marash, which are described as brief oases in the desolate mountains.<sup>64</sup> The Armenian inhabitants, which would have included Greek minorities, welcomed the crusaders and provided supplies for them. Therefore, it is likely that the Byzantines were still involved in resupplying the crusaders here by planning their route through strategic cities. While this plan provided potential supplies, it did not remove the potential that the crusaders would experience short periods of hunger. Bohemond, as quartermaster of the campaign, was likely involved in planning this route.

### **Leadership at Antioch**

As the armies journeyed to Antioch, Bohemond proved himself a valuable leader whose actions put him in a strong position to earn control of the city. When the crusader vanguard finally reached the city on October 20, 1097, he continued with the same strategy.<sup>65</sup> I would argue that Bohemond made sure to be a major contributor to the siege of Antioch, first because he knew that the person who conquered Antioch had a strong chance of being granted command of it by Alexios, but second so that, if he was able to claim it from Alexios, he would have the support of the other lords to do so.

Upon reaching the city, Bohemond immediately placed his men in front of the main gate, preventing anyone from going in or out. The rest of the army arrived the next day and blockaded

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<sup>63</sup> Frankopan, *The First Crusade*, 145.

<sup>64</sup> *Gesta Francorum*, Book 4.11, 27; Robert the Monk, "Historia Iherosolimitana," 3.18, 115, 3.28, 119; Rubenstein, *Armies of Heaven*, 133-134.

<sup>65</sup> Raymond d'Aguilers, *Historia Francorum*, Book 4, 31.

the other two gates. They could not surround the entire city, for its eastern wall was guarded naturally by the steep Mount Silpius.<sup>66</sup> Instead of securing a fortified siege, which was nearly impossible to do with their size in comparison with the city's vast walls, the crusaders utilized the same strategy as at Nicaea and attempted to charge the defenses.<sup>67</sup> They set up siege camps at the main gate across the bridge and attempted to force a way into the city, but the Turkish defense easily rebuffed the equipment and successfully launched sallies from the gate to prevent the siege from gaining traction.<sup>68</sup>

Bohemond took a natural lead in defending against Turkish counterattacks by establishing defensive camps around the city and embarking on reconnaissance missions in order to give the campaign the best chance at succeeding.<sup>69</sup> He established a strategic fort at Mount Malregard near the Gate of St. Paul, where his troops were stationed, and another in the front of the Gate of St. George. Malregard, a large wooden tower on a hill northeast of the city, was guarded by a rotation of different lords, but Tancred took command of the other fort which became known as Tancred's Mountain.<sup>70</sup> In this way, Tancred also became a respected leader of the campaign. He is said to have prevented many soldiers from desertion, including Peter the Hermit and William the Carpenter, who were unable to leave the siege undetected by Tancred.<sup>71</sup> He reportedly also held Harim, 'Imm, and other strategic cities east of Antioch which were vital to the city's defense.<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>66</sup> *Gesta Francorum*, Book 5.12, 28.

<sup>67</sup> Raymond d'Aguilers, *Historia Francorum*, Book 4, 31.

<sup>68</sup> Albert of Aachen focuses heavily on the effective counterattacks and raids conducted by the Turks. Albert of Aachen, *Historia Ierosolimitana*, Book 3.42, 205, Book 3.44, 209ff. Albert includes stories about how the Turks were able to ambush the crusaders effectively. They utilized espionage well, sending spies into the crusader ranks to learn of their plans.

<sup>69</sup> Peter Tudebode, *Historia de Hierosolymitano Itinere*, Book 4.43.

<sup>70</sup> *Gesta Francorum*, Book 5.13, 30-31; Guibert of Nogent, *The Deeds of God Through the Franks*, Book 4, 76-77; Peter Tudebode, *Historia de Hierosolymitano Itinere*, Book 5, 59-60; Rubenstein, *Armies of Heaven*, 152.

<sup>71</sup> Peter Tudebode, *Historia de Hierosolymitano Itinere*, Book 4, 48.

<sup>72</sup> Ralph of Caen, "The Gesta Tancredi," Chapter 59, 85.

Bohemond, along with Count Raymond, also secured a route from Antioch to the port of St. Symeon where supplies were able to reach the city. Emily Albu argues that Bohemond joined the count in this task to ensure that Raymond would not gain control of such an important location.<sup>73</sup> There is merit to this suggestion, since Count Raymond can be seen as Bohemond's chief rival for Antioch. Control of this port was vital to the survival of the siege, as will be discussed below, so it is likely that Bohemond would have wanted to obtain it. It should also be noted that opening this route was part of his duty as the quartermaster of the campaign. By clearing the way to the port, he ensured that supplies from the Byzantines flowed to the siege at Antioch. This was a dangerous route, as it passed right in front of the Bridge Gate, which was vulnerable to Turkish assaults from the city, as La Mahomerie, the fort that the crusaders built to guard the gate, would not be created until after the port was accessible. When Raymond returned from the port, the Turks ambushed his army and nearly defeated them. Bohemond rushed from his location and managed to beat the defenders back, but not without much loss to both of their armies.<sup>74</sup> Therefore, Bohemond established an intricate system of Norman occupied areas which put him in a strong position to gain control of Antioch, either from Alexios or for himself.

It should be noted that the Normans were not the only Latins fortifying the area. In addition to this, Count Raymond encamped around the Bridge Gate and built fort La Mahomerie to defend against the Turks' regular sorties.<sup>75</sup> Robert of Flanders, too, attempted to take the strategic city of Artah, the "shield of Antioch," which was vital for the protection of Antioch due to its location east of the city. Hearing of Robert's approach, the Armenians revolted and drove

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<sup>73</sup> Albu, "Antioch and the Normans," 169; Asbridge, *The Creation of the Principality of Antioch*, 24-27.

<sup>74</sup> *Gesta Francorum*, Book 7.18, 39-40; Asbridge, *The Creation of the Principality of Antioch*, 26.

<sup>75</sup> Thomas S. Asbridge, "The Principality of Antioch and the Jabal as-Summaq," in *The First Crusade - Origins and Impact*, ed. Jonathan P. Phillips (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1997), 144.

the Seljuks out, giving the city into the hands of the crusaders.<sup>76</sup> Robert of Normandy also led an advanced party against the Iron Bridge which crossed the Orontes fourteen kilometers from the city and was a pivotal strategic site.<sup>77</sup> While Bohemond strove to bring many strategic areas under Latin control, he was not the only one to do so.

One way in which Bohemond appears to have stood out from the rest of the leaders, at least according to the Latin authors, was his leadership through the several skirmishes he was involved in against Turkish relief forces. His actions earned him the respect, not only of the crusaders, but also of the Turks. On December 28, for example, Bohemond led a foraging party in the outskirts of the city. The crusaders encountered a large relieving Turkish force led by Duqaq of Damascus, and Bohemond, along with Robert of Flanders, was able to route these armies and prevent them from reinforcing the city.<sup>78</sup> On February 9, 1098, the crusaders faced another relief force, this time led by Ridwan of Aleppo, in a conflict known as the Lake Battle. Some sources record Bohemond giving an inspirational speech while organizing the armies to face the oncoming attackers. Robert the Monk notes that Bohemond was very skillful at giving speeches and inspiring bravery.<sup>79</sup> Bohemond is recorded to have strategically placed five squadrons behind a hill to ambush the attackers, giving the crusaders an early upper hand.<sup>80</sup> The sources record that Ridwan's quick advance caused the crusaders to slowly retreat, prompting Bohemond to rally his standard-bearer, Robert, son of Gerard, to advance into the Turkish line.

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<sup>76</sup> Albert of Aachen, *Historia Ierosolimitana*, Book 3.28, 183-185; Ralph of Caen, "The Gesta Tancredi," Chapter 152, 168; Asbridge, *The Creation of the Principality of Antioch*, 24-25.

<sup>77</sup> Albert of Aachen, *Historia Ierosolimitana*, Book 3.33, 191-193; *Gesta Francorum*, Book 5.7, 28; Asbridge, *The Creation of the Principality of Antioch*, 26.

<sup>78</sup> *Gesta Francorum*, Book 5.13, 30-31; Guibert of Nogent, *The Deeds of God Through the Franks*, Book 4, 76-77; Albert of Aachen, *Historia Ierosolimitana*, Book 3.50-51, 217-219; Peter Tudebode, *Historia de Hierosolymitano Itinere*, Book 4, 45-47; Rubenstein, *Armies of Heaven*, 154.

<sup>79</sup> Robert the Monk, "Historia Iherosolimitana," Book 4.10, 126; Baldric of Bourgueil, *History of the Jerusalemites*, Book 2.14, 85-86.

<sup>80</sup> Bennet, "Norman Battle Tactics," 148.

The sight of Bohemond's standard among the Turkish army prompted the fleeing crusaders to rally to him, causing the Turks to retreat.<sup>81</sup> It is not certain how much of this story was exaggerated by the sources, but it is clear by their retelling of it that Bohemond had a great impact on the morale of the crusaders during the siege of Antioch.

As he did on the journey across Anatolia, Bohemond also showed his leadership during the siege by conducting espionage with scouts and spies. He also protected the crusader camps from Turkish infiltration. During both the sieges of Nicaea and Antioch, the Turks sent Greek, Armenian, and Turkish spies into the camp.<sup>82</sup> The leaders attempted to protect against this by confiding their plans to only a select few. Bohemond is recorded to have combatted this by emphasizing the false but brutal reputation of the besiegers when he loudly commanded that a group of Turkish spies be strangled, cooked, and then eaten. This reportedly caused many spies to flee the camp.<sup>83</sup> Bohemond's leadership at Antioch was vital, and while men like Count Raymond and Godfrey also contributed to the city's capture, the unique focus that Bohemond receives from the sources indicates that he had risen to one of the foremost leaders of the campaign.

### **Resupply at Antioch**

As at the Taurus Mountain range, the crusaders began to run low on food and provisions. Upon arriving at Antioch, they found the area plentiful. Raymond d'Aguilers claims that the

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<sup>81</sup> *Gesta Francorum*, Book 6.16, 36-37; Guibert of Nogent, *The Deeds of God Through the Franks*, Book 4, 84; Peter Tudebode, *Historia de Hierosolymitano Itinere*, Book 4, 51-52; Baldric of Bourgueil, *History of the Jerusalemites*, Book 2.15, 87-88.

<sup>82</sup> Rubenstein, *Armies of Heaven*, 104.

<sup>83</sup> William of Tyre, *A History of Deeds Done Beyond the Sea*, Book 4.23, 221-222; See also Emily Albu, "Probing the Passions of a Norman on Crusade: The *Gesta Francorum et Aliorum Hierosolimit Anorum*," in *Anglo-Norman Studies 27: Proceedings of the Battle Conference 2004*, ed. John Gillingham (Boydell & Brewer; Boydell Press, 2004), 6; Rubenstein, *Armies of Heaven*, 151.

soldiers in the camp enjoyed fine meat and many other delicacies.<sup>84</sup> Peter Tudebode also indicates that the Antiochene countryside was fresh with vineyards, grain fields, and apple trees. However, they had run out by Christmas.<sup>85</sup> Baldric of Bourgueil blames the crusaders' gluttony, noting that they were so thankful for the abundance of food that they failed to plan ahead and instead consumed this bounty by December.<sup>86</sup> The *Gesta* indicates that the Turks had also gone out and harvested or bought any potential provisions and brought it all into the city.<sup>87</sup> Despite the foraging attempts by the crusaders, they were unable to collect adequate supplies for the armies. This led to widespread famine throughout the camps, resulting in starvation, desertion, and the loss of many pack and war animals.<sup>88</sup>

Bohemond once again showed himself as a chief supplier for the campaign, as emphasized by the Latin sources. Some of the areas he took were lush with food, including the valley of Daphne, which yielded bountiful harvests that would have helped support the basic needs of the crusaders for a time.<sup>89</sup> He also volunteered himself and Robert of Flanders to go into the countryside and forage for food, which was a dangerous expedition. As Ralph of Caen describes, "Whenever a Frank went out to seek supplies or returned having found them, there were ambushes and harsh attacks on those who had been traveling."<sup>90</sup> Albert of Aachen records that Bohemond's army was the first to encounter stiff resistance. He writes that for the first two

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<sup>84</sup> Raymond d'Aguilers, *Historia Francorum*, Book 4, 35; Guibert of Nogent, *The Deeds of God Through the Franks*, Book 4, 31.

<sup>85</sup> Peter Tudebode, *Historia de Hierosolymitano Itinere*, Book 4, 43; 45.

<sup>86</sup> Baldric of Bourgueil, *History of the Jerusalemites*, Book 2.10, 81.

<sup>87</sup> *Gesta Francorum*, Book 5.14, 33; See also Fulcher of Chartres, "The Chronicle of Fulcher of Chartres," 15.11-12; 17, 72-73; Riley-Smith, *The First Crusade*, 65-66.

<sup>88</sup> Ralph of Caen records some of the ways in which the men found food for themselves. In one unique story, he accuses the Provençals of being so greedy for food that they would target fatter horses and wound them so that they would die, prompting their owners to fear demonic activity and refrain from eating it. The Provençals would then eat the animals themselves. Ralph of Caen, "The Gesta Tancredi," Chapter 61, 87.

<sup>89</sup> Ralph of Caen, "The Gesta Tancredi," Chapter 59, 85; Rubenstein, *Armies of Heaven*, 151.

<sup>90</sup> Ralph of Caen, "The Gesta Tancredi," Chapter 54, 81.

days of foraging, “They seized incredible quantities of plunder, of herds and every sort of livestock, which they carried off without hindrance.”<sup>91</sup> However, on the third day, assuming that all was safe, the foragers rested with little defense. The Turks suddenly ambushed Bohemond’s camp, causing his cavalry to abandon the infantry with the plunder. The Turks, therefore, annihilated much of the infantry and recovered most of the supplies, leaving the crusader armies with nothing. Only Robert of Flanders was able to bring back the supplies he had gathered in the initial days, but this was quickly consumed by the armies, and not many people were brave enough to return to the areas surrounding Antioch, prompting the famine to persist.<sup>92</sup>

Foraging attempts continued after these events, but Bohemond was forced to alter his strategy. Due to the many dangers the crusaders faced from Turkish ambushes, he instructed the foragers to remain together.<sup>93</sup> While this ensured better safety for the crusaders, it also prevented widespread foraging since they could not cover as much ground than if they spread out separately. Peter Tudebode records that despite his speeches and urgings, Bohemond failed to inspire his troops to remain foraging in the land for fear of the Turks.<sup>94</sup> Certain groups would occasionally venture into Turkish territory in the hopes of retrieving more plunder, but by that point the Turks had been sure to hide their goods in the mountains, making it almost impossible for the crusaders to find more loot.<sup>95</sup> The Turkish defenders utilized the strategy of ambushing the foragers, so that “a day did not go by when reports of the deaths of those having gone out to obtain supplies did not terrify the ears of the besiegers.”<sup>96</sup> This was easy enough for the Turks, since the southernmost gate, which was naturally guarded by the mountains, remained free of

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<sup>91</sup> Albert of Aachen, *Historia Ierosolimitana*, Book 3.50, 217.

<sup>92</sup> Albert of Aachen, *Historia Ierosolimitana*, Book 3.53, 219-221; Rubenstein, *Armies of Heaven*, 153.

<sup>93</sup> Guibert of Nogent, *The Deeds of God Through the Franks*, Book 4, 78.

<sup>94</sup> Peter Tudebode, *Historia de Hierosolymitano Itinere*, Book 4, 47.

<sup>95</sup> Albert of Aachen, *Historia Ierosolimitana*, Book 3.58, 229-231.

<sup>96</sup> Ralph of Caen, “The Gesta Tancredi,” Chapter 53, 79, Chapter 54, 81, Chapter 60, 85-86.

besiegers. Bohemond and the other leaders did what they could to provide for the armies, but they were largely unsuccessful. When Baldwin heard of their need, he sent many supplies from Edessa to aid the crusaders. However, this also did not last, and Baldwin would soon become preoccupied when the armies of Kerbogha attempted to take Edessa while on his way to reinforce Antioch.<sup>97</sup>

As foraged goods became less available, mass hunger increased among the besiegers. Fulcher recounts how the men resorted to eating shoots, thistles, rats, and even seeds of grain found in manure.<sup>98</sup> This again could lead to the assumption that the Byzantines failed in their responsibility to resupply the crusade, resulting in Bohemond leaving his Byzantine loyalty and petitioning for independent control of the city.

Byzantine supply during this time is admittedly difficult to identify, especially since the Latin sources only record Latin aid. None of the *Gesta* sources indicate any Byzantine ships arriving at St. Symeon after Bohemond and Count Raymond cleared the route. Raymond d'Aguilers writes that English and Genoese ships brought materials necessary to construct fort La Mahomerie to block the Bridge Gate at the city's southwestern walls.<sup>99</sup> He attests that food and supplies readily came from the port by Latin ships, but he remains silent on any Byzantine presence. By taking only the Latin accounts, it seems as if the Byzantines were no longer sending supplies.

However, since the Latin sources were predominantly anti-Greek, it is no wonder the Byzantine involvement in the siege of Antioch goes virtually unmentioned by them. Bernard

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<sup>97</sup> Albert of Aachen, *Historia Ierosolimitana*, Book 4.9-11, 263; For Kerbogha's attack on Edessa, see 4.11-12, 265-267.

<sup>98</sup> Fulcher of Chartres, "The Chronicle of Fulcher of Chartres," Book 16.1-2, 73; Riley-Smith, *The First Crusade*, 66.

<sup>99</sup> Raymond d'Aguilers, *Historia Francorum*, Book 5, 40-41.

Bachrach suggests that this has also led many modern scholars to discount their involvement.<sup>100</sup>

Yet Byzantine naval support was of utmost importance to the success of the First Crusade, and it can be argued that the crusaders would not have been able to take Antioch without their support. One Latin source, Ralph of Caen, does offer proof of Byzantine contribution and specifically credits them with valuable supplies. He says, “Syria, Cilicia, Rhodes, exceptionally rich Cyprus, certain islands, and certain kingdoms aided the army. But this amounted to very little even though Chios, Samos, Crete, Mitelene and innumerable other islands of lesser fame were joined in this effort. Emperor Alexios’ herald was also there urging people to bring grain by land and by sea.”<sup>101</sup> Ralph helps to conclude that the Byzantines were very helpful in resupplying the campaign, but he also recognizes that it was still not enough to cover the needs of the crusaders.

Ralph’s account is easy to accept, because while Latin ships undoubtedly came to the port, they did not command the seas. It is important to understand that the Byzantine navy dominated the eastern Mediterranean during the First Crusade. The Seljuk Turks had virtually no maritime presence, while the Fatimid base in Egypt, although serving as a challenge to the Byzantines, did not have much presence past Jerusalem.<sup>102</sup> The Byzantine headquarters in Cyprus allowed the Greeks to maintain control of the seas near Antioch.

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<sup>100</sup> Bernard Bachrach notes that the anti-Greek nature of the Latin sources has caused scholars such as Runciman and France to downplay Byzantine involvement while overemphasizing the crusaders’ suffering at Antioch. Bachrach, “Some Observations,” 83; He uses as examples Runciman, *A History of the Crusade*, 227, and John France, *Victory in the East: A military history of the First Crusade* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 210; Bachrach uses older examples, but recent scholars also tend to downplay this. Indeed, Frankopan, who focuses heavily on the Byzantines and the First Crusade, only offers minimal information on Byzantine supply. Frankopan, *The First Crusade*, 159; Asbridge also only mentions that there was occasional Greek supply without examining it in depth. Asbridge, *The Creation of the Principality of Antioch*, 26-27. Still, it is important to note that these scholars still recognize that Byzantine involvement is downplayed by the Latin sources because of their enmity towards the Byzantines.

<sup>101</sup> Ralph of Caen, “The Gesta Tancredi,” Chapter 54, 80-81.

<sup>102</sup> William Hamblin, “The Fatimid Navy During the Early Crusades: 1099-1124,” in *Medieval Ships and Warfare*, ed. Susan Rose (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008), 215-216.

John France surmises that the Byzantines had been active in the Mediterranean and had been securing important port cities in order to supply the crusading army at Antioch. He supposes that, since Alexios had planned the route and supply lanes with the crusader lords, he would likely have undertaken to occupy coastal cities along the way in order to supply the crusaders on their journey.<sup>103</sup> St. Symeon was the main port, but others included Cilicia, Alexandretta, Tarsus, and Laodicea. St. Symeon was the closest at 25 km, but Laodicea was also only 54 km away. Apart from Tarsus, none of the Latin sources claim that the crusaders took these ports. They show the crusaders clearing the path from Antioch to St. Symeon, but the port already appeared to be in Christian hands. For this reason, it is likely that Alexios commissioned the capture of these cities while planning the supply routes. If this is true, then Bohemond was likely involved in this planning.

For this reason, Alexios likely utilized Latin merchants along with his own to help supply the crusaders and to capture strategic ports. Due to the common logistical practices of the time, the Latin vessels mentioned by the Latin sources were likely sent under the orders of Alexios, or at the very least needed permission to trade as non-Byzantine entities.<sup>104</sup> Ralph of Caen hints that Laodicea was taken by English ships that were sent by Alexios.<sup>105</sup> The other coastal cities were therefore also likely captured by a similar fleet. Anna records that when Raymond of Toulouse took control of Laodicea after Jerusalem fell, he returned it to the empire. He may have done this mainly because it fell under the oath, but it is possible that he also did this because it had been

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<sup>103</sup> France, *Victory in the East*, 213.

<sup>104</sup> Bachrach, "Some Observations," 90; Fulcher notes that ships that resupplied the crusaders at Nicaea needed the emperor's permission. Fulcher of Chartres, "The Chronicle of Fulcher of Chartres," Book 10.6, 32; Reports of Alexios sending supplies through Latin ships at Nicaea show up in Albert of Aachen, *Historia Ierosolimitana*, Book 2.28, 111.

<sup>105</sup> Laodicea was taken by the English on August 19, 1097, just a few months prior to the crusaders reaching Antioch. France, *Victory in the East*, 215.

the Byzantines who commissioned its recapture.<sup>106</sup> In any case, the Byzantine capture of these cities was likely part of the bigger strategy to supply the crusaders as they travelled through previously Byzantine land, and it is possible that Bohemond was involved in planning this.

Therefore, evidence of the Byzantine presence near Antioch exists. It is also important to realize that the campaign would not have survived for so long if the Byzantines had not been actively supplying the crusade while at Antioch. Bernard Bachrach calculated that the foraging attempts by the crusaders would not have been enough to supply the armies. He estimates conservatively that the crusading force at Antioch was around 60,000. To feed this many men, the armies would need sixty metric tons of food per day. They would also need an additional 25,000 kilograms of grain for the horses and pack animals. To forage this kind of supplies, they would have had to venture 12-15 kilometers from the city each day.<sup>107</sup> This would have been impossible to collect for nine months in an area that had already been depleted of supplies before the crusaders even reached Antioch, especially when any foragers were mercilessly ambushed whenever they broke from the main force. For this reason, the crusaders needed outside support to provide for themselves. Bachrach concludes that with Latin and Greek ships coming from Cyprus and other areas of the empire and western Europe, the crusaders only needed one cargo ship a day to provide for all the armies.<sup>108</sup>

There is some inconsistency with Bachrach's conclusion and the sources, primarily that there still appears to be consistent hunger even after the way to St. Symeon was cleared. It is entirely possible that there were several days where a merchant ship never arrived at the port.

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<sup>106</sup> France, *Victory in the East*, 219.

<sup>107</sup> For a detailed analysis of the supplies needed by the crusaders, see Bernard Bachrach, "Some Observations," 86-88.

<sup>108</sup> He also notes that smaller ships would have been able to sail down the Orontes right to the crusader camps, allowing there to be little delay for the supplies to go from the coast to the camp. Bachrach, "Some Observations," 92-93; Fulcher also mentions small ships used by the crusaders. Fulcher of Chartres, "The Chronicle of Fulcher of Chartres," Book 15.4, 71.

However, even if occasional supplies arrived, it is not clear why the Latin sources would not have recorded it more. What is also interesting is that Anna does not seem to include Alexios' role in supplying the campaign either. She takes time to mention that Alexios provided for the crusader armies when they passed through Byzantine-controlled areas in the Balkans.<sup>109</sup>

However, she does not mention that Alexios ensured steady supply lines in Anatolia. For someone writing to defend Alexios' claims to Antioch, one would expect her to include Greek supply in order to add another strong reason for why Alexios never betrayed his oath. In any case, Bachrach's theory sheds helpful light on the daily needs of the crusaders and proves that the Byzantines needed to be involved in resupply in order for the campaign to have succeeded.

Therefore, Byzantine supply was an integral part of the siege of Antioch, and the city likely would not have fallen without the steady stream of supplies from the Byzantines. Bohemond appears to have remained responsible for providing for the crusaders in his role as quartermaster and Byzantine mediator through foraging and maintaining Greek supply lines.

### **Bohemond's Bid for Antioch**

By May 1098, the urgency for entering the city became very great. News reached the crusaders that a Turkish army from Mosul, led by the emir Kerbogha, Atabeg of Mosul, was nearing the city, and it was unlikely that the crusader army would be able to defend against both the forces in the city and this relieving army. Like the other lords, Bohemond was seeking a strategy for gaining entry to the city. At some point during the siege, Bohemond developed a friendship with a tower guard named Firuz. The *Gesta* explains that Bohemond converted Firuz and offered him riches if he betrayed his tower to the crusaders. He was either a Turk or a

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<sup>109</sup> Anna Comnena, *The Alexiad*, Book 10.10, 324.

renegade Armenian, the sources disagree. Antioch had only been taken by the Turks fourteen years earlier and had a large Greek and Armenian population, meaning that many of its inhabitants, including possibly Firuz, were still Christian and willing to help the crusaders.<sup>110</sup> Bohemond's friendship with him was difficult for the Latin sources to depict. Since the Turks were the enemies of the crusaders, in order to make a friendship like this be acceptable, they needed to present him as a nobleman who was either a Christian already or willing to convert to Christianity. For this reason, many of his details may have been altered.<sup>111</sup>

In any case, Bohemond made this deal and then called a conference and convinced the other leaders to agree to grant the city to anyone who could take it, so long as Alexios did not aid them. On June 2, 1098, Bohemond entered Antioch and opened the gates for the crusaders.<sup>112</sup> By the next day, the Latins controlled all of Antioch except the citadel. Bohemond, Count Raymond, and other Latin leaders controlled different areas of the city. However, before they could decide on the future of Antioch, they needed to defend it. On June 5, Kerbogha arrived and began his own siege of the city.

The crusaders were now pinned between the Turkish-controlled citadel and Kerbogha's army. With no sign of reinforcements and the supply routes from St. Symeon now blocked, the crusaders' prospects looked grim. A perceived miracle came on June 10 in the form of Peter Bartholomew who claimed that St. Andrew had shown him the place where the holy lance was

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<sup>110</sup> Thomas Asbridge, "The 'Crusader' Community at Antioch: The Impact of Interaction with Byzantium and Islam," in *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 9 (December 1999): 309, doi:10.2307/3679407.

<sup>111</sup> Rebecca L. Slitt, "Justifying cross-cultural friendship: Bohemond, Firuz, and the fall of Antioch," *Viator* 38, no. 2 (2007): 341; Murray, "The enemy within," 42.

<sup>112</sup> Bohemond made the deal with Firuz, and under the cover of darkness on June 3, he sent men up the ladder to take control of the gatehouse and let the rest of the army in. Guibert records an inspirational speech given to the troops before they ascended the ladder: "Go forward... seize the city you have been hoping for so long. Long under subjection to the Turks, it will now surrender, God willing, to your custody." Guibert of Nogent, *The Deeds of God Through the Franks*, Book 5, 92; The Gesta indicates that when Firuz did not see Bohemond coming up the ladder, he was afraid and requested that he come up as well. *Gesta Francorum*, Book 8.20, 46. Bohemond went joyfully up the ladder and opened the gates, allowing the crusaders to pour in and conquer the city.

buried. Most of the leaders doubted the accuracy of his vision, with only Count Raymond appearing to believe him. However, after days of digging, Peter produced the spearhead on the 14<sup>th</sup>. Regardless of whether this was planted or dug up, the actual lance or some random metal, the sources record that this raised the morale of the crusaders, prompting Raymond to begin preparing for a final charge that scattered Kerbogha's army.<sup>113</sup> Thomas Asbridge has recently doubted the effect that this had on the crusaders, noting that the distance of time from the discovery to the actual charge, despite the usual quick planning of Latin attacks, suggests that the effect of the lance has been greatly exaggerated by modern scholars. He argues that desperation rather than spiritual motivation prompted the Franks to charge.<sup>114</sup> While Asbridge has a strong argument, we cannot discount the almost unilateral agreement in sources that the discovery of the lance prompted excitement and confidence that God was on their side. In any case, Bohemond was chosen to lead this charge, perhaps because he had been instrumental in defeating the previous Turkish reinforcements, or because both Adhemar and Count Raymond were ill.<sup>115</sup> They launched their assault on Kerbogha's army on June 28, and through a mixture of inaction, disunity, and possible betrayal, he was caught completely by surprise.<sup>116</sup> His armies scattered, prompting the citadel to surrender and giving the crusaders complete control of the city.

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<sup>113</sup> Riley-Smith, *The First Crusade*, 95-96.

<sup>114</sup> Thomas Asbridge, "The Holy Lance of Antioch: Power, Devotion and Memory on the First Crusade," in *Reading Medieval Studies* 33 (2007): 8-14; This is a question introduced by John France which Asbridge develops. France, *Victory in the East*, 279.

<sup>115</sup> France, *Victory in the East*, 278-279.

<sup>116</sup> France notes that the disunity was caused by friction among the different Turkish factions, causing some of them to flee out of sheer irritation with Kerbogha. In particular, he opened negotiations with Ridwan, which annoyed his brother and rival Duqaq. France, *Victory in the East*, 293-294; Frankopan suggests that Kerbogha's incompetent leadership and poor communication resulted in a slow reaction to the crusaders' assault. Frankopan, *The First Crusade*, 165-166; Rubenstein mentions that certain armies joined Kerbogha reluctantly, and his desire to use this crisis to force them to remain loyal to him caused them to betray him. Rubenstein, *Armies of Heaven*, 226.

With Antioch captured and all Turkish threats disposed of, the crusaders immediately began to discuss the future of the city. By the details of their oath, the crusaders were expected to return the city to Alexios. However, certain leaders, most notably Bohemond, believed that Alexios had broken his end of the oath because he failed to reinforce the siege when the crusaders needed him. This view was, however, challenged by Count Raymond, who insisted that they remain loyal to their oath. This led to months of debate trying to decide if the oath to Alexios needed to be honoured.

By this point, it seems likely that Bohemond desired the city for himself and not in loyalty to Alexios. It is not clear when he changed from being faithful to the emperor to wanting the city himself, but I argue here that it likely happened sometime between his deal with Firuz and the capture of the citadel after Kerbogha's defeat. Even after making the deal with Firuz and convincing the leaders to hand the city over to him, this does not necessarily mean that he no longer planned to commit it to Alexios. Bohemond could have still handed the city over to him under the condition that he be able to govern it on his behalf. This would have been the safest option. Instead of risking a drawn-out war with the Byzantines for Antioch and harming the Christian unity that was necessary to hang on to control of the Holy Land, Bohemond could have achieved what he wanted by remaining a vassal of Alexios.

It is difficult to analyze why he decided to risk conflict with the Greeks and control Antioch for himself. Perhaps his aspirations and the opportunity that presented itself were too much for Bohemond to ignore. His time in Italy indicates that Bohemond jumped on any opportunity that came his way.<sup>117</sup> When he was still in southern Italy, he could have held

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<sup>117</sup> Geoffrey Malaterra, *The Deeds of Count Roger*, Book 3.42, 172; Russo, "Norman Participation in the First Crusade," 202; Franke, "Strategy, the Norman Conquest of Southern Italy," 220; Theotokis, *The Norman Campaigns in the Balkans*, 185.

significant land while committing loyalty to Roger Borsa. As discussed in chapter 1, Roger's timidity and loose hold on power would have ensured Bohemond whatever he asked for in exchange for his loyalty.<sup>118</sup> Yet Bohemond took the chance to rebel because he knew that controlling cities in his own right led to more opportunity than he would otherwise have if he had committed to serving another lord. Murray notes that by remaining independent of the Byzantines, Bohemond would be able to expand his territory in all directions and not just into land farther south and east that Alexios would allow.<sup>119</sup> This is admittedly speculation, but it seems to have been in Bohemond's nature to see the opportunity to lay claim to Antioch with Latin support. He also would have known that it was possible to hold the city independently of the Byzantines, as Philaretos Brakhamios had done the same thing only a decade before. Regardless of his reasons, Bohemond refused to return the city to Alexios and petitioned to keep the city for himself. His defense for keeping Antioch was twofold: Alexios had failed to support the campaign as he had promised, and the leaders had previously agreed to give the city to whoever had been able to take it.

Three aspects of support need to be analyzed, and I believe that Bohemond only considered that Alexios broke his oath through his lack of military aid. As has already been discussed in detail, the Byzantines had been actively supplying the crusaders. Since the beginning, Byzantine supplies reached the crusaders through land caravans and naval ships from Cyprus and other Mediterranean ports. While the Latin sources may ignore, if not actually try to hide, their involvement, it has been shown that the Byzantines were actively supporting the

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<sup>118</sup> Norwich, *The Normans in the South*, 195, 258; McQueen, "Relations between the Normans and Byzantium," 447.

<sup>119</sup> Murray, "The enemy within," 42.

crusade as much as was in their power. Therefore, Bohemond could not have thought that Byzantine resupply was enough to fulfill the oath.

Bohemond also could not have considered that Alexios' military advice, in itself, was enough to keep his oath. Anna records that the crusaders were "instructed in the methods normally used by the Turks in battle; told how they should draw up a battle-line, how to lay ambushes; advised not to pursue far when the enemy ran in flight. In this way, by means of money and good advice, he [Alexios] did much to soften their ferocious nature."<sup>120</sup> He also advised them to temper their blunt aggression when dealing with the Turks, and to instead invoke peaceful diplomacy.<sup>121</sup> One unique instance was when Alexios approached a Latin knight who dared to sit on his throne. Instead of berating him for the personal insult, Alexios calmly inquired about his heritage and then advised him to not "pursue the enemy too far, if God gave them the victory, lest falling into traps set by the Turkish leaders they should be massacred."<sup>122</sup> Since Alexios evidently prepared the crusaders through strategic advice and careful planning, Bohemond cannot have considered this enough to fulfill the oath.

Therefore, Bohemond must have considered himself to be absolved from Alexios' oath not because the emperor failed to supply the crusade or prepare the crusaders against the Turks, but because he did not reinforce the crusade with military aid when they needed it. Alexios came to their aid at Nicaea when they could not break through the walls, so it was expected that he would do the same at Antioch.<sup>123</sup> Since the ports were open, Alexios could have sent a naval

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<sup>120</sup> Anna Comnena, *The Alexiad*, Book 10.11, 329.

<sup>121</sup> Asbridge, *The Crusades*, 55-56; Edgington, "Espionage and Military Intelligence," 76.

<sup>122</sup> Anna Comnena, *The Alexiad*, Book 10.10, 326.

<sup>123</sup> Paul Magdalino, *The Empire of Manuel I Komnenos, 1143-1180* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 31; In fact, the crusaders even expected him to lead the crusaders himself. Anna insists that he only decided not to because he did not trust the treacherous nature of the Latin armies which outnumbered his own. This excuse would not have been enough for Bohemond to forgive Alexios for not providing military support. Anna Comnena, *The Alexiad*, Book 11.2, 336.

galley with troops and military supplies necessary to breach the walls. Most significant to Bohemond's argument was that Alexios had been en route to Antioch with a substantial relief force before turning back after hearing that the campaign was doomed. Even though Stephen of Blois and company described an impossible situation that the crusaders were in, it is not clear if he claimed that the campaign had already been annihilated. He may have implied that this was a likely case, but he did not say that they were dead for sure.<sup>124</sup> Bohemond could have easily argued that Alexios should have still continued to Antioch, because even if the crusaders had been defeated, the city would have still been recovering and therefore vulnerable to another attack.

Yet to understand Alexios' decision, it is important to recognize the situation that he faced. The Byzantine army was a lot weaker than it had been a few decades before, and with the major defeat at Manzikert in 1071 perhaps in mind, Alexios did not have the luxury to risk the annihilation of a major Byzantine army.<sup>125</sup> He likely knew that Kerbogha was on his way to Antioch with a combined Turkish army, and he had also received a report that the Sultan of Chorosan was on his way to intercept his troops.<sup>126</sup> If he lost to any of these forces, it would leave Constantinople vulnerable for a large Turkish army that would almost certainly take the opportunity to invade. Anna even recounts how the emperor desired to relieve the crusaders, even after Stephen of Blois told him that the siege of Antioch was hopeless. He only desisted

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<sup>124</sup> The *Gesta* has Stephen saying, "I expect...they have been killed by the Turks" *Gesta Francorum*, Book 9.27, 63; Peter Tudebode, *Historia de Hierosolymitano Itinere*, Book 8, 82; Ralph of Caen, "The Gesta Tancredi," Chapter 72, 96-97; While Anna claims that Stephen swore by an oath that the crusaders' "collapse was complete," there is still an air of uncertainty in his story. She even claims that Alexios did not believe Stephen, emphasizing that uncertainty. Anna may have embellished this story to assure her readers that Alexios had no reason to continue to Antioch. Anna Comnena, *The Alexiad*, Book 11.6, 348-349; Guibert has Stephen saying, "I do not know what happened between them after I left." Guibert of Nogent, *The Deeds of God Through the Franks*, Book 5, 105-106.

<sup>125</sup> Frankopan, *The First Crusade*, 31.

<sup>126</sup> Anna Comnena, *The Alexiad*, Book 11.4, 342-343.

after hearing the rumour of the sultan's approach.<sup>127</sup> Anna, of course, very likely embellished her father's helpless desire to reinforce the siege despite the risks, but since Antioch was an important target for him, we can understand Alexios' disappointment in the prospect of the expedition failing at this key city.

Despite Alexios' reasoning for abandoning the siege, even if he apparently desired to continue regardless of the risks, Bohemond likely would not have considered it a good enough excuse. He rather would have taken it as an indication that Alexios no longer had the right to demand Antioch from the crusaders. He had left southern Italy for the purpose of enfranchising himself with new opportunities in the east, and here was his opportunity to do so.

Bohemond may well also have considered Tatikios' departure as an indication of Byzantine betrayal. The Greek general joined the crusaders at Nicaea and stayed with them until Antioch. His role in crusader/Byzantine relations is obscure. He acted as their guide, as he knew the area well, and provided a tactical advantage, since he had already led Greek, Turkish, and Latin armies. Even though Alexios could not lead the campaign himself, Tatikios, who was very close to the emperor, served as proof that he supported the endeavor and wished to help its success. The Greek presence, although small, was essential for reaching Antioch. Guibert even praised a Greek martyr who he described as one of the bravest and most holy men on the campaign who was from "the court of Alexios, Emperor of Constantinople."<sup>128</sup> However, Tatikios left the expedition at Antioch, leaving Bohemond and the leaders to claim that this was reflective of Alexios' abandonment of the campaign.

The Latin sources are especially hostile to Tatikios. They picture him as fearful of the approaching Turkish army, causing him to flee under the guise of bringing back reinforcements.

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<sup>127</sup> Anna Comnena, *The Alexiad*, Book 11.6, 349.

<sup>128</sup> Guibert of Nogent, *The Deeds of God Through the Franks*, Book 4, 89.

The authors claim that he was lying and that he left them in their direst need.<sup>129</sup> Raymond d'Aguilers writes that Count Raymond and Tatikios both had alternate plans for attacking the city, but the count was able to bribe the other leaders to agree with his plan by promising supplies of horses, a commodity which was at that point very scarce. Tatikios is then accused of fabricating a story of leaving Antioch to bring back an imperial army led by Alexios that did not approach the city because they were afraid of the previous skirmishes that had happened between the Greek and Latin troops in the Balkans.<sup>130</sup> Raymond d'Aguilers is aggressively hostile to the Byzantines, so whether or not this story is true is up for debate. In any case, Tatikios' departure was seen as a betrayal by many of the Latin soldiers.

Yet these Latin sources are unfair to Tatikios and are likely influenced by the hindsight of knowing that Alexios would not come to the crusaders' aid at Antioch. They claim that Tatikios never intended on returning, but this was likely not the case. After all, Alexios would approach with troops a few months after he left, which could very well mean that he was keeping his promise of leaving to bring back reinforcements. The time that Tatikios left to the time that Alexios arrived in Philomelion is enough for him to have returned to Constantinople and arranged imperial reinforcements. Antioch was a key city that Alexios wanted to reacquire, so there is no reason why his general would abandon plans to secure it. In fact, even the Latin sources attest that Tatikios left some of his men and supplies with the crusaders as a sign that he would return.<sup>131</sup> It thus seems likely he intended on returning to the siege and was very possibly with Alexios at Philomelion but forbidden to return.

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<sup>129</sup> *Gesta Francorum*, Book 6.16, 35; Peter Tudebode, *Historia de Hierosolymitano Itinere*, Book 4, 49-50; Robert the Monk, "Historia Iherosolimitana," Book 5.13, 128; Baldric of Bourguiel, *History of the Jerusalemmites*, Book 2.13, 83.

<sup>130</sup> Raymond d'Aguilers, *Historia Francorum*, Book 4, 37; France, "The Departure of Tatikios," 138.

<sup>131</sup> Peter Tudebode, *Historia de Hierosolymitano Itinere*, Book 4, 50-51.

As for the Greek sources, Anna claims that Bohemond deceived Tatikios into leaving the campaign by telling him that the other leaders sought his life because they suspected that the emperor had convinced Kerbogha to attack. He fled, and Bohemond used this as an excuse to keep the city, persuading the other leaders to agree to give it to whoever was able to take it. Anna says Bohemond did this because he was “unwilling to hand over Antioch to Tatikios...and covet[ed] the city for himself.”<sup>132</sup> Anna is also not the most trusted source, since she depicts Bohemond as desiring to take Antioch from the beginning of the campaign, which we have already concluded was not the case. Her account is also incorrect, since Kerbogha was not yet on his way when Tatikios left.<sup>133</sup> What is also important to consider is that Bohemond had little motivation to produce this lie. If Bohemond did this only to increase his individual claims to Antioch, was it worth the risk of losing a key strategist and a small but valuable group of men? The siege was precariously teetering on the brink of failure due to starvation and desertion, and even though Kerbogha would not arrive for three more months, it is possible that the crusaders expected that more Turkish relief forces would come, just as Duqaq and Ridwan had. The crusaders needed all the troops they could get to survive. In addition, Tatikios would have been a good ally to promote Bohemond’s appointment to the city. If he had still hoped to receive an assignment to Antioch during this time, as this thesis maintains, then keeping Tatikios around would have been advantageous for his claims to the city. Furthermore, by risking the removal of the Greek contingent, he would also be jeopardizing the steady supply of goods from the Byzantine merchants and ports. The needs of the crusaders at this time makes it difficult to accept that Bohemond would have taken this risk.

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<sup>132</sup> Anna Comnena, *The Alexiad*, Book 11.4, 343.

<sup>133</sup> Pryor and Jeffreys, “Bohemond, Alexios, and Byzantium’s Euphrates Frontier,” 74.

Regardless of whether or not Bohemond was involved in Tatikios' departure, the combination of ways in which the Byzantines failed to reinforce the siege was likely interpreted by him as a betrayal of the oath made with Alexios. The crusaders had faithfully returned Nicaea to Alexios, and at Tatikios' direction they also took towns such as Plastencia and left them in the hands of westerners who were in the service of Alexios.<sup>134</sup> To Bohemond, the crusaders had kept their end of the oath, yet no major Greek force helped the crusaders in their desperation at Antioch, which perhaps to him meant that the Franks were not required to honour their agreement anymore.

Bohemond's other defense for retaining Antioch was his ability to ensure the support of the other lords. Bohemond took advantage of the crusaders' precarious position at Antioch to convince them to promise the city to him, and he did so in a rather cunning way. After making the deal with Firuz, he proposed the idea to the crusader lords about promising the city to whoever captured it. The *Gesta* has him saying, "Let one of us set himself above the others, on condition that if he can capture the city or engineer its downfall by any means, by himself or by others, we will all agree to give it to him."<sup>135</sup> However, he likely did not tell the other leaders about his deal with Firuz, holding it as an 'ace in his sleeve' in order to receive the promise of the city.<sup>136</sup> The *Gesta* claims that the other leaders rejected his proposal initially, either opting for all the leaders to hold it together or honour the oath to Alexios. When the reports came of the massive Turkish army under Kerbogha, the *Gesta* indicates that the council decided, "If Bohemond can take this city, either by himself or by others, we will thereafter give it to him

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<sup>134</sup> Frankopan, *The First Crusade*, 149.

<sup>135</sup> *Gesta Francorum*, Book 8.20, 44.

<sup>136</sup> Murray, "The enemy within," 42; Anna insists that he kept this agreement a secret to trick the other leaders. Anna Comnena, *The Alexiad*, Book 11.4, 342-343; Yewdale, *Bohemond I*, 65.

gladly, on condition that if the emperor comes to our aid ... we will return the city to him.”<sup>137</sup>

The author is very likely embellishing the wording to stress the idea that the other lords promised the city to him. Yet the cunning that the *Gesta* displays is very typical of Bohemond, much like his father. Extorting promises like this from the other leaders would be a strategic way to ensure control of the city.

Raymond d’Aguilers asserts a similar story, but he places it well before. He indicates that Bohemond threatened to leave the campaign in December 1097 when they were still suffering from severe famine. Since Bohemond played a large role in providing for the crusader armies, his departure would surely doom the campaign.<sup>138</sup> Raymond d’Aguilers may have had the timeline confused and put this story earlier, but it is possible that Bohemond played this strategy because morale was low and he knew that he was needed for the campaign to survive.<sup>139</sup> In any case, all the sources attest that after hearing of Kerbogha’s approach, the leaders relented and promised Bohemond the city.<sup>140</sup> He had secured the city so long as Alexios did not arrive with aid. Again, it should be stressed that this does not necessarily prove that Bohemond did this to gain control of the city himself. It could be that he initially did this so that Alexios would appoint him and not Count Raymond or any other lord as governor of Antioch.

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<sup>137</sup> *Gesta Francorum*, Book 8.20, 45; See also Peter Tudebode, *Historia de Hierosolymitano Itinere*, Book 6, 61-62; Other Latin sources agree that Bohemond was promised Antioch by the other leaders, but they do not include the requirement of no Byzantine aid. Ralph records Bohemond’s speech to the leaders: “Let us propose some prize for bravery...that this city fall as a prize to one, if it is by his ability that the city [falls to] us.” He claims the entire council was in favour and did not include a condition. Ralph of Caen, “The Gesta Tancredi,” Chapter 64, 89-90; Albert indicates that Bohemond took aside Godfrey, Robert of Flanders, and Raymond, and told them about Firuz and their plan. He requested that they give him the city after it was conquered, to which they readily agreed. Albert of Aachen, *Historia Ierosolimitana*, Book 4.16, 273.

<sup>138</sup> Raymond writes that Bohemond secured the promise of all the lords except for Count Raymond that Antioch would be given to Bohemond if it was captured. Raymond reveals, “All the princes with the exception of the Count [of Toulouse] offered Antioch to Bohemond.” Raymond d’Aguilers, *Historia Francorum*, Chapter 4, 37.

<sup>139</sup> France, “The Departure of Tatikios,” 143.

<sup>140</sup> Guibert of Nogent, *The Deeds of God Through the Franks*, Book 5, 90-91; Robert the Monk, “Historia Iherosolimitana,” Book 5.11, 144; Baldric of Bourgueil, *History of the Jerusalemites*, Book 2.19, 93-96.

It is not certain why all the leaders were willing to allow Bohemond to take control of the city, as they would do a few months later when they gave their individual holdings in Antioch to him. It is clear why they did so before Kerbogha arrived – they needed to quickly gain entry into the city and could not afford Bohemond to leave. Once Kerbogha was defeated, however, this no longer compelled them to heed Bohemond’s request. John France notes that they may have agreed to this because of the apparent promise that Alexios had made to Bohemond about ceding him land around Antioch. Perhaps they saw this as Bohemond claiming this promise, especially after Alexios never came even after the city was taken. After all, sources indicate that the crusaders – including Bohemond – sent Hugh of Vermandois and Baldwin of Hainaut to Alexios right after the city was taken, requesting him to receive the city. The Franks did not depart for Jerusalem until November 1, giving him plenty of time to arrive.<sup>141</sup> It is possible that the Latin sources fabricated this story to make it seem like Alexios was too preoccupied to make Antioch a priority, but this seems unlikely. Regardless of whether this happened, Alexios would have eventually heard about the Frank’s victory, so it is surprising that he did not immediately go to Antioch to claim the city. The crusader lords would have eventually recognized Alexios’ absence, and instead of delaying at Antioch even longer, they would have realized it would be in their best interest to appease Bohemond and continue to Jerusalem.

Even though Bohemond had laid claim to Antioch and most of the leaders seemingly went along with it, Count Raymond of Toulouse, who had control of strategic areas of the city, resisted. As was mentioned at the beginning of the chapter, the count was Bohemond’s main

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<sup>141</sup> *Gesta Francorum*, Book 10.30, 72; Albert of Aachen, Book 5.3, 341; Fulcher of Chartres, Book 23.8, 81; William of Tyre, *A History of Deeds Done Beyond the Sea*, Book 7.1, 298; John France, “The fall of Antioch during the First Crusade,” in *Dei gesta per Francos: Etudes sur les croisades dédiées à Jean Richard / Crusade Studies in Honour of Jean Richard*, ed. Michel Balard, Benjamin Z. Kedar and Jonathan Riley-Smith (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2001), 14.

rival to the city, and there is enough evidence to suggest that he also made an alliance with Alexios to ensure the return of Antioch. The best way that Count Raymond could ensure its return to the Byzantines was through his own dominance of the area. Bohemond, along with Tancred, may have held onto Cilicia and the citadel, but the count controlled strategic areas of the city and quickly expanded to areas outside of Antioch. Therefore, Count Raymond set himself up in a powerful position to acquire Antioch or prove a challenge to Bohemond obtaining it.

Areas in Antioch that Count Raymond controlled included the fortress of La Mahomerie which controlled the bridge across the Orontes. He also held the Bridge Gate and its towers, as well as the palace of Yaghi Siyan.<sup>142</sup> Count Raymond also gained control of strategic areas surrounding Antioch. Both during and after the siege, Count Raymond ventured into the region known as Jabal as-Summaq, one of the main southern approaches to the city, and took Tell-Mannas, Kafartab, Albara, and Ma'arrat-an-Nu'man.<sup>143</sup> This established a large powerbase that challenged Bohemond's position. He even appointed his own bishop, Peter of Narbonne, at Albara to administer the area after he left, a move which was accepted by the Greek patriarch John the Oxite.<sup>144</sup> This appointment could suggest that Raymond intended to control the area. Perhaps he had a similar mindset as Bohemond. If he kept another lord from claiming Antioch and controlled strategic areas around it, then maybe Alexios would grant him possession of the city.

Raymond was following the same strategy as Bohemond and realized how essential it was to control the areas around Antioch and therefore likely held on to these areas in an effort to

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<sup>142</sup> Asbridge, "The Principality of Antioch and the Jabal as-Summaq," 144; Peter Tudebode, *Historia de Hierosolymitano Itinere*, Book 9, 102; Albert of Aachen, *Historia Ierosolimitana*, Book 5.2, 341.

<sup>143</sup> Asbridge, "The Principality of Antioch and the Jabal as-Summaq," 142.

<sup>144</sup> Hill, *Count Raymond IV*, 102.

destabilize Bohemond's position in Antioch and perhaps give himself an opportunity to govern it on Alexios' behalf.<sup>145</sup> In turn, Bohemond also appears to have tried to discourage Raymond from attempting this. Bohemond helped him take over Ma'arrat, but this was likely so that he could claim control of the city too.<sup>146</sup> Frankopan suggests that Bohemond raced to the city first to prevent him from taking it, but when the city finally fell, he occupied parts of the city and refused to hand them over to Raymond in order to gain leverage in Antioch.<sup>147</sup> Asbridge notes that he took just enough of the city to keep Raymond from exercising complete control.<sup>148</sup>

The leaders met on November 5, 1098, in an attempt to mediate between Raymond and Bohemond in the Basilica of St. Peter in Antioch, the very same church that the lance was discovered in.<sup>149</sup> During this meeting, Count Raymond told the leaders that he had given the oath to restore the city to Alexios, and he reminded Bohemond that he took this oath on his advice.<sup>150</sup> He claimed that the emperor did not break the oath and that Bohemond was using the situation to try and take the city behind his back. He even suggested that Bohemond agree to defer the question of succession until after they had taken Jerusalem, provided that the Norman go with them.<sup>151</sup>

Had Raymond maintained his authority in this region, it would have been difficult for Bohemond to establish the principality. Asbridge indicates that Raymond was not able to do this

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<sup>145</sup> Asbridge, "The Principality of Antioch and the Jabal as-Summaq," 143.

<sup>146</sup> Raymond d'Aguilers notes that Bohemond acquired several towers, leading to "hard feelings" between the two armies. Raymond d'Aguilers, *Historia Francorum*, Book 10, 79; *Gesta Francorum*, Book 10.30-33, 73-80; Peter Tudebode, *Historia de Hierosolymitano Itinere*, Book 9, 92-94, 98-102.

<sup>147</sup> Frankopan, *The First Crusade*, 171.

<sup>148</sup> Asbridge, "The Principality of Antioch and the Jabal as-Summaq," 149.

<sup>149</sup> Hill, *Raymond IV*, 102.

<sup>150</sup> Guibert of Nogent, *The Deeds of God Through the Franks*, Book 6, 114-115; Count Raymond rebutted, according to Ralph, "The defense of the city is mine, as is the citadel on the mountain, the royal palace and the forum. The bridge and the gates open to me. [For] the lance is mine." Ralph of Caen, "The Gesta Tancredi," Chapter 103, 121.

<sup>151</sup> *Gesta Francorum*, Book 10.31, 75-76; Raymond d'Aguilers, *Historia Francorum*, Book 10, 74-75.

because he was pressured to continue to Jerusalem since the disagreements were delaying the expedition. After attempting a council to employ the other princes to his army, his own followers, anxious to continue to Jerusalem, pulled down the walls of Ma'arrat in early January 1099, depriving him of a power base.<sup>152</sup> In turn, his men were driven out from the Bridge Gate, the palace, and La Mahomerie shortly after he left for Ma'arrat, securing the city for Bohemond.<sup>153</sup> At the pressure to continue on to Jerusalem, Raymond left his remaining holdings in the Jabal as-Summaq and led the armies south. The power vacuum he left was filled by Bohemond, and men he left in charge, specifically Peter of Narbonne, likely allied with Antioch.<sup>154</sup> With Raymond no longer a major threat, Bohemond held complete control of his new city.

This, then, brings to a close Bohemond's journey to Antioch. His 'victory' over Count Raymond, his main rival to Antioch, was the culmination of his goal to establish his own territory, one in which he could further expand from and feed his ambitions. He fought for decades attempting to enfranchise himself, failing to do so in the Balkans and in Italy. His success, however temporary, at Antioch was no doubt a great relief to him. His struggle for power was not over, as he would fight against the Byzantines until his death. Yet he established his principality which would last for several generations.

As has been seen, Bohemond's rejection of a Byzantine title did not immediately turn him to plotting against the empire for control of Antioch. He certainly had a unique relationship

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<sup>152</sup> Riley-Smith, *The First Crusade*, 89.

<sup>153</sup> Raymond d'Aguiler, "Historia Francorum," Book 13, 105; Some sources instead describe that after seeing that the argument delayed the campaign to Jerusalem, the count relented, saying to the leaders, "I agree to the decision of my peers, the princes now present...[for] I unwillingly promised [Antioch] to the prince of Constantinople." Guibert of Nogent, *The Deeds of God Through the Franks*, Book 6, 115.

<sup>154</sup> Asbridge, "The Principality of Antioch and the Jabal as-Summaq," 150; Peter of Narbonne had fallen out with Count Raymond after the siege of Jerusalem by surrendering his tower to Duke Godfrey, leaving Asbridge to assume that Peter allied with Antioch. Raymond d'Aguilers, *Historia Francorum*, Book 15, 130.

with the Byzantines, but at no point during the First Crusade does it conclusively show that he always intended to acquire Antioch independently of them. His role in organizing Byzantine supply and his work in establishing himself as a primary leader of the expedition indicate that he rather hoped to receive command of a city in service to the Byzantines. His increased reputation would also serve as a fallback in case he could not receive the city, allowing him the strength and support of the other lords to take control of the city independently if needed. It was only when the opportunity clearly presented itself to Bohemond that he realized he could take the city independently. I suggest that this realization would have happened over time, and Bohemond would only have acted upon it once his leadership and tactical brilliance ensured him the loyalty and approval of most of the other lords to control the city.

## Conclusion

Bohemond established a Principality that lasted for more than a century and a half, spanning seven generations. During its existence, it endured Turkish aggression and Byzantine reconquest. Bohemond may have only enjoyed eleven years in his new principality, most of which were not even spent in the city, but his actions established a Latin power base in the Levant that even outlasted Jerusalem, surviving until near the end of the Crusader States when it was taken by Baibars in 1268.<sup>1</sup>

Bohemond's long journey east encompassed many difficulties, full of interpersonal challenges and foreign policies which forced him to balance political loyalty and independent ambition. As we have seen, this struggle began in southern Italy. Set to inherit the dukedom from his father and control the vast Norman territory, his prospect was stripped down to a small estate in Apulia which he had to fight to attain. Failing to acquire new opportunity in the Balkans with his father and struggling with his half-brother and uncle for what remained of his former inheritance, he abandoned his Norman holdings and ventured instead to the east where opportunity thrived. By understanding how his family relationships and insatiable ambition all played important roles in causing Bohemond to move from his estate in Apulia to the impressive principality in Antioch, this thesis has helped fill in gaps in existing scholarship.

In tracking Bohemond's relationships further, we have also challenged the common idea that Bohemond only reluctantly served Alexios and the Byzantine Empire. Bohemond was an opportunistic knight who was not too proud to put himself under the authority of another man in the hopes of raising his own position and prestige. He had committed to the authority of Guiscard and Roger Borsa and kept that loyalty, although loosely, so long as he was adequately

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<sup>1</sup> Asbridge, *The Creation of the Principality of Antioch*, 216.

rewarded. He understood the benefits of Byzantine service, likely knowing how well Norman mercenaries did in their employ, and evidence exists that he actively searched for these awards by vying for a military title and an opportunity to receive an estate or land grant. Indeed, he received much wealth and promising prospects under Alexios.

Latin and Greek relations during the First Crusade often get painted in a negative light, and even though they clearly deteriorated in the end, this hindsight has influenced inaccurate accounts that cloud the reality of what their relations may have been at the outset of the First Crusade. In reality, these two entities appear to have worked closely since the Byzantines needed Latin support in the struggle against the Seljuk Turks, and the crusaders knew that Byzantine support was essential for its success. Despite Bohemond's earlier conflict against Alexios in the 1080s, he was exactly the kind of military leader Alexios needed to secure the eastern borders, and Bohemond knew that loyalty to Alexios would put him in the best position to receive an eastern estate. This thesis has argued that it is plausible to suggest the relationship between Bohemond and Alexios was not as diametrically opposed as sources and certain scholars have made them out to be, and that there were potentially positive relations between them. In fact, it could be suggested that, had the emperor been more involved in the expedition after Nicaea, or had he even come to receive Antioch from Bohemond after the siege, there is enough evidence to support the idea that Bohemond would have willingly governed Antioch on his behalf, using this position to expand further into Anatolia and the Levant. Only once it was clear to Bohemond that he would not receive the kind of support and benefit that the Byzantines could have offered, was he confident in having a better opportunity to govern on his own.

This examination is by no means conclusive, and there are unknown variables that make Bohemond's intentions in his relationship with Alexios impossible to know for certain. There is

admittedly speculation to this conclusion, but one that deserves adequate analysis. The scholarship may be right to assume that Bohemond was happy to rescind his loyalty to Alexios once the opportunity came to do so, but it is not responsible to assume that this was his end goal from the start or an opportunity that he had always been seeking. Bohemond would eventually decide to abandon his loyalty once the siege at Antioch began to succeed, but it is pure speculation to assume that he had planned to betray his Byzantine oath before scaling the walls of Antioch, let alone when he was still at Constantinople. Byzantine employment even at Antioch could have given Bohemond a lot more opportunity, and one could even criticize him for not following through on his promise. His principality would likely have fared better and expanded quicker had he established himself as a vassal of the Byzantines. This, of course, goes into the dangerous territory of alternate history, but is important to consider in order to realize that Byzantine loyalty even once Antioch was in his control was not outside the realm of possibilities.

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