



## Summary :

The battle of Mantzikert took place on the 26<sup>th</sup> of August 1071 and was the most decisive encounter of the clash between Byzantium and the Seljuks. The defeat of the Byzantines meant the crush of Byzantine army and the captivity of the emperor Romanos IV Diogenes, whereas in the long run it caused a range of economic and political problems in the Byzantine provinces of Asia Minor.

## Date

26 August 1071

## Geographical Location

Mantzikert, Armenia, modern eastern Turkey

## 1. General framework

During the second half of the 11<sup>th</sup> century the [defense of the frontier regions](#) on the eastern border of the Byzantine Empire had already begun to collapse. The reasons that led to this unfavorable evolution was the indifference of the central authority for the fate of the eastern provinces and the continuous uprisings inside the empire that weakened even more the already decaying administrative and defense system of Byzantium. The internal tensions were caused by unsatisfied members of the [military aristocracy](#), which were trying to react against their neglect from the [civil nobility of the capital](#).

The unfavorable situation inside the Empire was aggravated by great catastrophes caused by the Seljuks on the eastern frontier. In an amazingly short period of time, this new enemy swept away the Arabic dominion in Persia, conquering even the city of Baghdad, capital of the [caliph](#). In this way the [Seljuks](#) essentially undertook the political and military leadership of the Muslim world.<sup>1</sup> Straight after that, they began [assaults against the eastern provinces of Byzantium](#) and soon, even though the empire managed (although under many hardships) to maintain the integrity of its borders, it became apparent that the problems had already corrupted the whole state machine. This weakness was the result of the misadministration during the last decades and it appeared to be irreversible. Thus, through repeated attacks the Seljuks destroyed Iberia, plundered the regions of Mesopotamia, of [Chaldia](#), of [Melitene](#), of Koloneia, of Vaspurakan and of [Armeniakon](#). In 1064, Ani of [Armenia](#) was definitely seized, a fact that shocked the inhabitants of the Empire.<sup>2</sup>

After the fall of Ani, the Byzantine dominion on the eastern borders became even more unsafe. At about 1067 the Seljuks succeeded in penetrating westerly, sacking the large city of [Cappadocia](#), and [Caesarea](#). This new blow was a result of the failure of [Melitene's](#) garrison to confront the raiders that had crossed the river Euphrates. The Byzantine government was not able to foresee such a large hostile expansion.

This was the situation of the state on May 1067, when emperor [Constantine X Doukas](#) died after an illness that lasted for months, leaving the control of the empire to the [augusta](#) Eudokia Makrembolitissa and her three under age children.

The fall of Caesarea was a warning of how easily the Seljuks could penetrate in the regions of the borders and pillage the territories of eastern [Asia Minor](#), as the [defense system](#), which had been planned earlier to confront the [Arab invaders](#), proved to be insufficient. It was not strange, thus, that it was a general demand a military man to be put in charge of the empire. The choice was in the hands of the empresses Eudokia, on which her dying husband had entrusted the regency in the name of their young children. The augusta soon yielded to those demands that wanted the imperial office to be associated with the name of a man capable to restore the military fate of the state.<sup>3</sup>

## 2. Romanos IV Diogenes and the campaigns against the Seljuks



The choice of the empresses was [katepano Romanos Diogenes](#), which had a relatively outstanding military carrier in the Balkans and was the son of the Cappadocian [general Constantine Diogenes](#), distinguished during the reigns of Basil II (976-1025) and Constantine X (1025-1028). Romanos married Eudokia, he was crowned emperor in January 1068 and soon after he found himself occupied with the overturning of his forbearers' policy.

The new emperor tried to restore the situation in Asia Minor by the sword, but soon he realized that to achieve this goal, he had to reestablish the army and to put the state machine under a situation of a military readiness, an attempt, nevertheless, that was difficult to be accomplished, because of the reactions of the members of the [Doukas dynasty](#) and of [Michael Psellos](#), of which the plots were undermining Romanos IV's efforts.<sup>4</sup> Diogenes committed a major mistake · he kept in his court Michael Psellos, the [caesar John Doukas](#) and their followers, which were opposed to his policy, whether secretly or in an open way, causing the emperor's efforts not to produce what was expected from them.

Realizing that the existing Byzantine armies were not able to take the initiative against the Seljuks, as they were mainly composed of a small number of foreign mercenaries, Romanos hoped to gather new forces with the reorganization of the army of the [themes \(themata\)](#), which had been disorganized during the previous twenty years. But the sight he faced during the preparation for the campaign of 1068 was disheartening. The mobilized soldiers were purely armed, undisciplined and untrained, unable to undertake a serious effort for the recovery of the empire's eastern borders.<sup>5</sup> In addition, the Byzantine army did not have the required mobility to confront the flexible Seljuks, whereas the emperor, although with military experience, nevertheless he did not have the necessary staff knowledge for the conception of the right plan and the organization of wide-scale operations in impassable territories.

Nevertheless, Romanos did not appear to be frightened. In March 1068, a few months after his enthronement, he started the operations against the Seljuks. The first campaign had the aim to drive away the invaders from the central Asia Minor, whereas on October the emperor moved towards Syria, where he liberated Hierapolis. From there Romanos penetrated in [Cilicia](#) and in Cappadocia, and returned to Constantinople on January 1069. The Seljuks seized the opportunity of the Byzantine army's gathering in Syria, to raid until the region of [Amorion](#), which they pillaged. The spring of 1069 the Byzantine army carried out a new campaign, which was delayed due to an insurrection of Frankish mercenaries. Romanos Diogenes proceeded to clean-up-operations around the cities of Keltzene, Koloneia (modern Şebin Karahisar, Turkey), [Sebasteia](#), [Tyana](#) as far as Cilicia. As a base for its attacks the Byzantine army used Caesarea in Cappadocia. The most far-reaching plan of the emperor was to reoccupy Chliat (modern Ahlat, Turkey), a city with strategic importance, north of the lake Van.<sup>6</sup> During the time the emperor was in northeastern Asia Minor, the Seljuks destroyed [Ikonion](#). For one more time the Byzantine armies were not able to accomplish a sweeping victory against the Seljuks or to prevent the tribesmen from penetrating to the rear.

Tired and psychologically succumbed from the continuous and inefficient struggle against the Seljuks, Romanos decided not to undertake a campaign in 1070 under his leadership, but to entrust the defense of Asia Minor to Manuel Komnenos, a nephew of the former emperor [Isaac I Komnenos](#). Manuel, although very young, proved to be a capable general. He reorganized his army, restored the discipline and accomplished heavy blows upon the enemy.<sup>7</sup> Nevertheless, the success and his popularity made the emperor worry about him. He commanded his general to split the armies and to send back the largest part of it in Ierapolis, which was once more in danger.<sup>8</sup> This act proved to be a great strategical mistake, because, whereas a part of the army marched towards Ierapolis, Manuel with the rest of the army tried to withhold the Seljuks near Sebastea, but he was defeated and he was captured alive. This defeat had as a consequence to encourage the Seljuks to raid until [Chonai](#), even to sack the famous [church of Archangel Michael](#).

These facts forced Romanos to decide for a new campaign against the Seljuks the following year. He was to lead the operations himself, and the goal was again the reoccupation of the city of Chliat, which was situated on the main routes of invasion passing through Armenia. The cause was the capture of the Byzantine fortress at Mantzikert (modern Malazgirt, Turkey) by the Seljuks at the end of 1070. The councilors of Romanos supported that if Chliat and the surrounding fortress (that of Mantzikert included) were reoccupied and garrisons were installed as soon as possible, the raids of the Seljuks in Asia Minor would be annihilated before even started.

### 3. The battle of Mantzikert



### 3.1. Preparations

At the end of winter-beginnings of spring 1071, the Byzantine army of the West and other unites of mercenaries were gathered in Constantinople to get ferried across Asia Minor, so as to be united with the Byzantine forces stationed there, in order to participate in the planned military operation of the emperor against the Seljuks. It is hard to calculate the size of the expeditionary corps, but it is certain that the largest part was composed by Byzantine armies, although there were numerous unites manned with foreign mercenaries or allies: [Pechenegs](#), [Cumans](#), Uzes, Franks, [Varangians](#) and [Armenians](#).<sup>9</sup> Simultaneously, Byzantine ambassadors were sent to the Seljuk sultan Alp Arslan, who by that time was besieging the city of [Edessa](#) in Mesopotamia, aiming to ask for the renewal of an old agreement with the Seljuks in relation to the restriction of the raids in the Byzantine territory of Asia Minor.

Inevitable is the question why Romanos was in such a rush to conduct the campaign, to lead himself the most numerous expeditionary corps the Byzantines had summoned up for the last years, when the Seljuks were already beyond the borders of the Empire and contended themselves with surprise raids and plunder. The most plausible answer is that the emperor was hoping that an eventual military success would have had a favorable impact in the consolidation of his own personal power.<sup>10</sup> We should not forget that Romanos had been chosen for the throne in order to accomplish the mission of confronting the attacks and, thus, his promises for a military solution were running the danger to be proved false. The opposition party against him, rallied around John Doukas, had begun to gain ground and if the emperor wanted to retain his power, he needed desperately a clear military victory.<sup>11</sup>

Thus, on 13 March 1071 (Sunday of Orthodoxy) Romanos departed from Constantinople, directed towards the Armenian provinces of the Empire. Although better prepared than the previous ones, this campaign gave the impression from the beginning that it had not started with the best omens.<sup>12</sup> The emperor adopted once more the strategy that he had enforced in 1069, aiming to secure the control of Mantzikert near lake Van. The imperial forces were marching through [Bithynia](#) and [Phrygia](#), crossed the river Ali and camped in the location Cryapege (Cold Spring) in Cappadocia, where Romanos suppressed a rebellion of his German mercenaries. Thereafter, he marched towards Sebastea. In contrast to the year 1069, this time he did not plan to approach the Armenian provinces from the side of Melitene, but from [Theodosiupolis](#) (modern Erzurum), as this route was shorter and provided more supplies for a numerous army.

### 3.3. The clash and the defeat

Romanos reached Theodosiupolis on July 1071 and proceeded to renew his army's supplies. Ignoring the approaching of Alp Arslan (the sultan had abandoned the siege of Aleppo and the planned campaign against the Fāṭimids of Egypt and he advanced, though with few forces, to the north) the emperor committed the fault to break his forces, by sending some of his unites against Chliat, with [magistros](#) Joseph in charge, a member of the family of [Tarchaneiotēs](#), as well as the Frank mercenary [Roussel](#) or Ursel de Bailleul,<sup>13</sup> whereas himself with the rest of his army marched to the fall of Mantzikert, the real object of this campaign. Afterwards, the main body of the army camped on the plain outside the fortress. At that time, the emperor was informed that the army of the Seljuks was approaching and he notified right away Joseph Tarchaneiotēs and Roussel to hasten to return to the imperial camp. Nevertheless, Tarchaneiotēs, upon hearing of the arrival of the sultan in the field and being a supporter of the party of Doukas, he disobeyed the imperial order and withdraw his forces in the imperial territories through Mesopotamia.<sup>14</sup>

As August was approaching to his end, the situation of the Byzantine camp was getting worst, because of the attacks of the irregular Seljuk horsemen. In his effort to confront them, Nikephoros Basilakes, one of the most important commanders of Romanos, was ambushed near the camp and was captured alive, whereas his men were decimated. In addition, the sultan wanted to negotiate the signing of a peace treaty, but the Byzantine emperor rejected his proposals. Romanos was afraid that Alp Arslan probably wanted to delay until the arrival of reinforcements, whereas the danger that the mercenary armies of the Byzantines (especially the Uzes) would desert to the Seljuks because the former ones were of the same race with the last ones, was increasing. Thus, the collision between the two armies, after the failure of the diplomatic efforts, was inevitable.

The initiative of the attack took the Byzantine leader. On August the 26<sup>th</sup>, 1071<sup>15</sup> the Byzantines were arrayed for battle: in the front



line the emperor himself governed the center, Alyates (probably the strategos of [Cappadocia](#)) the right wing and Nikephoros Bryennios, in charge of the western armies, the left wing, whereas the second, reserve line was governed by [Andronikos Doukas](#), the eldest son of Caesar John Doukas, whom Romanos took with him essentially as a hostage. The Byzantine army advanced carefully and in battle array, whereas the Seljuks were retreating, refusing to fight. But, during the afternoon and as the Byzantine army was about to gain this victory, Romanos, wisely thinking, he judged as purposeful to discharge his armies and to take care of their safe return to the fortified camp. Obviously he did not want to pass the night out of the fortress, where the Byzantine army would have been left vulnerable to the mercy of the hostile archers.

But the tactic of retreat is a hard maneuvering, even under the most favorable circumstances, and Romanos' men were mainly inexperienced. As they were retreating, they had to bear the hostile arrows, without being able to react. In addition, among the lines of the army a rumor was spread that the emperor had been defeated. The rumor became a certainty when the distant parts of the array, ignoring the order for withdrawal, saw the imperial flag turning back. Most of them believed the intentional rumor by Andronikos Doukas that this was an irregular retreat, especially when they saw him leading the reserve line away from the battlefield.

Alp Arslan took advantage without any delay of the panic that prevailed, as well as of the retreat of the second line, which under normal conditions could have restrained his circular movements. Immediately the sultan threw his forces against the right wing of the Byzantines and he repelled it, whereas the effort of the left wing to haste for help was futile. The result was that the Seljuks surrounded the center of the Byzantine array and crushed it. Romanos fought bravely, even when he was on foot and wounded on his arm, until the enemy captured him alive late in the evening.<sup>16</sup>

#### 4. Estimates and results

The defeat in Mantzikert and the capture of Romanos IV were the result of the lack of experience, of military discipline and abilities, of good information, of coordination between the different military commanders. Only because of the above-mentioned military inefficiency, the treachery of Andronikos Doukas could have had the specific effect.<sup>17</sup>

The battle of Mantzikert was not a military disaster at the end, as the contemporaneous Byzantine historians presented it. Certainly it was a military defeat of the imperial army, and most of all for the capture of the emperor himself, but not for the total catastrophe. The balance of powers in the East was not radically transformed and the civil struggle that followed the release of Romanos Diogenes (beginnings of September 1071) caused much more damage in the area of Asia Minor than the defeat at Mantzikert itself. Furthermore, after this defeat the Byzantine army did not seem to suffer substantial loses, as its commanders managed to escape with the main body of the expeditionary corps.

What was more important was the meaning of the battle of Mantzikert in the political realm: on the one hand it inaugurated a decade of civil war in the empire, on the other hand the treaty that Diogenes and the sultan Alp Arslan agreed in common, left almost the whole of Asia Minor intact. An explicit mention was made for the maintaining of the existing territorial status quo, for the free communication between the two states and for the abstaining of the Seljuks from the pillaging of Byzantine territories. In addition, it was made provision for the exchange of prisoners of war, and finally the contracting of intermarriage between the children of the two leaders. Thus, the Byzantines lost few or no territories.

On the other side, equally important was the defeat of Mantzikert in the economic level, because the campaign itself was expensive enough, and the ransom fallen to the hands of the enemy, when they sacked the camp of Romanos, was exceptionally rich. Furthermore, the financial hardship that appeared during the reign of Michael VII Doukas (1071-1078) was a consequence of the unfavorable outcome of the battle as well. Finally, we must take into consideration the psychological factor of the defeat, as for the first time the Byzantine emperor was captured alive by the enemy.<sup>18</sup>

Nevertheless, beside all theses above-mentioned consequences of the defeat at Mantzikert, a satisfactory explanation cannot be given for the amazingly swift conquest of Anatolia (eastern Asia Minor) by the Seljuks. Possibly they profited from the political weaknesses that this particular defeat brought about, in relation to the fact that the attention of the Byzantines had been already turned towards the



West, where a new and dangerous enemy, the Normans, made their menacing appearance.<sup>19</sup>

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5. Angold, M., *Η βυζαντινή αυτοκρατορία από το 1025 έως το 1204. Μια πολιτική ιστορία* (Athens 1997), p. 85. Cf. Bekker, I. (ed.), *Michaelis Attaliothae Historia* (Bonn 1853), p. 103.
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9. Cheynet, J.-C., "Mantzikert: Un désastre militaire?", *Byzantion* 50 (1980), pp. 416, 418, 423-424.
10. Χριστοφιλοπούλου, Α., *Βυζαντινή Ιστορία 2.2* (Thessaloniki<sup>2</sup> 1997), pp. 242-243.
11. Angold, M., *Η βυζαντινή αυτοκρατορία από το 1025 έως το 1204. Μια πολιτική ιστορία* (Athens 1997), p. 87.
12. Among the bad omens recorded by the historians of that era was the denial of empress Eudokia to accompany Romanos until the shores of Asia Minor, as was the habit whenever an emperor started a campaign to the East. See Bekker, I. (ed.), *Michaelis Attaliothae Historia (CSHB, Bonn 1853)*, p. 143.
13. Bekker, I. (ed.), *Michaelis Attaliothae Historia (CSHB, Bonn 1853)*, p. 147; *Scylitzes Continuatus*, Τσολάκης, Ε. (ed.), *Η Συνέχεια της Χρονογραφίας του Ιωάννου Σκυλίτζη (Ioannes Scylitzes Continuatus)* (Ίδρυμα Μελετών Χερσονήσου του Αίμου 105, Thessaloniki 1968), p. 144.
14. Gautier, P. (ed.), *Nicéphore Bryennios, Histoire* (Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae 9, Bruxelles 1975), p. 114.
15. Older scholars used to consider August 19th as the date of the battle.
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Η «Ιστορία» του Aristakes Lastivertc'i

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## Glossary :

**augusta**

A formal title bestowed by an emperor on his wife, the empress, frequently after the birth of a son and heir. Rarely and extraordinary the title was bestowed on distinguished personages who belong to the emperor's family.

**caesar**

In the Roman Empire the title of Caesar was given to the Emperor. From the reign of Diocletian (284-305) on this title was conferred on the young co-emperor. This was also the highest title on the hierarchy of the Byzantine court. In the 8th c. the title of Caesar was usually given to the successor of the throne. In the late 11th c. this office was downgraded and from the 14th c. on it was mainly conferred on foreign princes.

**caliph**

The supreme religious and political authority of Muslims, considered successor of Muhammad (Arabic: khalifa = deputy). He was the head of the Caliphate, the religious state of the Arabs.

**katepano**

(from "epano", "above") Governor of a katepania. Title that from the end of the 10th century characterized the commanders of large provinces as Italy or Mesopotamia and from the 11th century, it was used also in the regions of Bulgaria, Antioch etc.

**magistros**

Higher office that Philotheos in his Kletorologion places above the anthypatos. This title lost its importance from the 10th century and gradually disappeared - most probably in the middle of the 12th century.

**strategos ("general")**

During the Roman period his duties were mainly political. Office of the Byzantine state's provincial administration. At first the title was given to the military and political administrator of the themes, namely of the big geographic and administrative unities of the Byzantine empire. Gradually the title lost its power and, already in the 11th century, strategoi were turned to simple commanders of military units, responsible for the defence of a region.

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## Quotations

Ioannes Scylitzes Continuatus describes the first phase of the campaign in 1071:

Κατάλογον δὲ τῶν στρατιωτῶν ποιησάμενος, ἄρτι τοῦ ἔαρος ὑπανοίγοντος διαπεραιωθεὶς εἰς τὰ τῶν Ἡρώων παλάτια κατάγεται καὶ περὶ αὐτὴν τὴν ἡμέραν τῆς Ὀρθοδοξίας, τῆς πρὸ αὐτῆς ἡμέρας τὴν ἐτησίαν ῥόγαν τῷ τε στρατῷ καὶ τῇ συγκλήτῳ διανεμιάμενος, οὐ διὰ χρυσοῦ πᾶσαν, ἀλλὰ τὸ ἐνδέον σηρικῶς ὑφάσμασιν ἀναπληρωσάμενος. Διαπεραιουμένου δ' αὐτοῦ περισσότερὰ τὶς οὐ πᾶν λευκὴ, πρὸς τὸ μέλαν δὲ τὸ πλεῖστον αὐτῆς ὑποφαίνουσα, ποθὲν ἵπταμένη τὴν φέρουσαν τὸν βασιλέα τριῆρη περιεπέτετο, ἕως εἰς αὐτὸν ἐκείνον καθεσθεῖσα χερσὶ ταῖς αὐτοῦ προσερχύη. Κακείνος ταύτην τῆ βασιλίδι ἀνέπεμψεν ἐν τοῖς ἀνακτόροις παρὰ τὸ εἰωθὸς ἀπομεινάση διὰ τινὰς θρύψεις γυναικείας καὶ ἀκκισμούς. Ἔδοξεν οὖν ἡ περισσότερὰ σύμβολον οὐ χρηστῆς ἀποβάσεως αὐτῷ τε τῷ λαβόντι καὶ πρὸς ἦν ἔσταλτο. Ἄλλ' ἐκείνη περιπετῶς σχοῦσα τῆς θρύψεως, μεταμεληθεῖσα πρὸς τὸν βασιλέα ἀφίκετο τὸν συντακτῆριον ἀποδώσουσα καὶ αὐτὸν ἐπὶ τὴν ἐκστρατείαν προπέμψουσα. Ἐκείθεν οὖν ἀπάρας ὁ βασιλεὺς οὐκ ἐν Νεακώμῃ οὐδὲ ἐν ὑπατίοις χωρίοις τισὶ <ἢ> βασιλικῶς προσωρμίσατο, ἀλλ' ἐν Ἐλενοπόλει, ἦν οἱ ἐγχώριοι ἀγροικικώτερον κικλήσκουσιν Ἐλεινόπολιν, ὃ καὶ αὐτὸ οἰωνὸς οὐ χρηστὸς ἔδοξε. Συνέβη δὲ καὶ τι ἕτερον· τὸ γὰρ συνέχον τὴν βασιλικὴν σκηνὴν μέγιστον ξύλον κατεαγὲν πεσεῖν αὐτὴν αἰφνιδῶν παρεσκευάσεν. Ὅμως δ' οὖν οὐδὲ πρὸς ἐν τούτων ἢ τῶν ἀνθρώπων ἀβελτηρία καὶ οἷον εἰπεῖν καχεξία καὶ τὸ ἐν τῇ δοκούσῃ πίστει ἄπιστον καὶ ἀσύμβλητον διαβλέψαι ἠθέλησε, τοῦ χρεῶν ἐμποδίζοντος πανταχοῦ καὶ μὴδ' αὐτῷ παρεχομένου συναίσθησιν πρὸς ὃν ἀποσκήπτειν ἔμελλον. Προΐει τοίνυν ὁ



βασιλεὺς καὶ τῆς ἐφῶς προσωτέρω προήρχετο, ἕως τῆ τῶν Ἀνατολικῶν ἐπαρχία προσέβαλε φειδωλία παρὰ τὸ εἰκὸς πρὸς πάντας συνεχόμενος. Συνεῖς δέ, ὡς ἔοικε, τὸ συνεχὲς τῶν προγεγονότων σημείων εἰς αὐτὸν ἀποσκήψον, οὐκ ἔν σκηνῇ οὐδ' ἐν πεδίοις, ἀλλ' ἐν γηλόφοις καὶ δωματίοις τὴν κατασκήνωσιν ἐποιήσατο. Ἐνθα δὴ τι καὶ συνέβη οὐκ ἔλαττον εἰς κακοδαιμονίαν οἰώνισμα. Πῦρ γάρ ποθεν ἐνεχθὲν τοὺς δόμους, ἐν οἷς ὁ βασιλεὺς ἐσκήνωτο, κατενεμήσατο, οἷς καὶ συγκατεκαύθησαν ἵπποι τε καὶ ἐφεστρίδες βασιλικαὶ καὶ χαλινὰ τῶν ἄλλων πολὺ διαφέροντα καὶ τοῦ πυρὸς δι' ὀλίγου γεγόνασι παρανάλωμα. Οἱ δὲ ἵπποι ἡμίφλεκτοι καθορώμενοι τῷ στρατοπέδῳ ἔλεεινὸν διεφαίνοντο θέαμα.

Scylitzes *Continuatus*, Τσολάκης, Ε. (ed.), *Η Συνέχεια της Χρονογραφίας του Ιωάννου Σκυλίτζη (Ioannes Scylitzes Continuatus)* (Ιδρυμα Μελετών Χερσονήσου του Αίμου 105, Thessaloniki 1968), pp. 142.3-143.8.

The Byzantine historian Michael Attaleiates describes the rebellion of the German mercenaries of Romanos IV in Cappadocia:

ὁ δὲ βασιλεὺς διαπεραιωθεὶς τὸν Σαγγάρην ποταμὸν διὰ τῆς τοῦ Ζόμπου καλουμένης γεφύρας, ἤρξατο τὰς ὑπολειπομένας συναθροίζειν δυνάμεις· ἦσαν γὰρ οἱ τῆς στρατιάς διεσκεδασμένοι κατὰ λόφους καὶ σήραγγας καὶ κρησφύγετά τινα καὶ ἄντρα διὰ τὴν προοδηλωμένην τῶν βαρβάρων ἐπίτασιν. καταλέξας δ' οὖν ὅσους αὐτῷ βουλομένῳ ἐνῆν, πλείστους δ' ἀποπεμφάμενος, τῆς εἰς τὰ πρόσω πορείας εὐθυμότερον εἶχετο, διαφόρως ἀποξενῶν ἑαυτὸν τοῦ στρατοῦ εἰς τὰς οἰκείας ἐπαύλεις καὶ κτημάτων ἐπιδείξεις οἰκείων καὶ πολυτελεστέρων οἰκοδομῶν διατάξεις. διαπεραιωθέντος οὖν τοῦ στρατοῦ τὸν Ἄλυν λεγόμενον ποταμὸν αὐτὸς οὐ συνδιεπραιώθη τηνικαῦτα αὐτῷ, ἀλλ' εἰς νεοπαγὲς φρούριον, ἐκ προστάξεως αὐτοῦ συνοικοδομηθέν, ἐπιμείνας ἐκεῖθιν τινὰς ἡμέρας διέτριψεν. εἶτα διαπεραιωθεὶς καὶ αὐτός, κὰν τῆ τοῦ Χαρσιανοῦ ἐπαρχία, τὴν διαίρεσιν ἐκ τοῦ στρατοῦ εἰς κτήσεις οἰκείας συνδιεγράψατο· καὶ τὸ ἀπ' ἐκείνου ἀδιαίρετος ἦν, τῇ Καισαρέων μὴ προσμίξας τὸ σύνολον, ἕως εἰς τὴν λεγομένην Κρύαν πηγὴν ἐνηλύισατο. ἐστὶ γὰρ ὁ τόπος οὐδενὸς τῶν χρηστῶν τὸ παράπαν ἀπολειπόμενος, τὸ τε [τὸ] ὕδωρ διείδες ἄμα καὶ πότιμον καὶ ψυχρότατον, δένδρα τε συνηρηφῆ μετὰ δαψιλοῦς τῆς πόης ἐκτρέφον καὶ ξυλίσασθαι εὐπορος, παντοίοις τε ῥόδοις κατάκομος καὶ κρινωνιαῖς, λόφοις τε ἠρέμα πρὸς ἑαυτοὺς ἀνάγουσιν εὐθετος, καὶ οἶον εἰπεῖν ἀστυκώμη καὶ ἀγρόπολις διὰ τῆς συμμιγῶς ποριμότητος γνωριζόμενος. ἐκεῖσε δ' ὁ βασιλεὺς ἡμέρας τινὰς στρατοπεδευσάμενος, ὡς εἶδε τὴν χώραν ἀφειδῶς κατακειρομένην ἐκ τῶν στρατιωτῶν καὶ μᾶλλον ἐκ τοῦ μισθοφορικοῦ καὶ ἀλλογενοῦς, καὶ ἅπαν λήιον ἐξώρως ἀποτεμνόμενον καὶ τοῖς βοσκήμασι λαφυραγωγούμενον, δηχθεὶς τὴν ψυχὴν ἀπνηέστερον προσηνέχθη τισὶ τῶν Νεμίτζων λεγομένων, οὓς ὁ παλαιὸς λόγος Σαυρομάτας καὶ αὐτοὺς ἐγίνωσκεν. ἀλλ' οἴγε θράσει καὶ θυμῷ ζέοντες καὶ ἀπονοία βαρβαρική πρὸς ἐκδίκησιν τῶν ἰδίων ἰταμῶς διανέστησαν, καὶ τῶν ἵππων περὶ τὴν τῶν ἀρίστων ἐπιβάντες ὥραν τῆς τοῦ βασιλέως σκηνῆς καὶ αὐτοῦ βασιλέως κατεξαναστήναι συνέθεντο. γνωσθείσης δὲ τῆς αὐτῶν ἐπιθέσεως βοῆ τῆ περὶ τὸ στρατόπεδον γέγονε, καὶ ταχὺ διαβοηθέντος τοῦ πράγματος συνέστη μὲν ὁ βασιλεὺς καὶ διητηρεπίσθη τὰ πρὸς τὸν πόλεμον, ἐπιβὰς δὲ τοῦ ἵππου καὶ τὴν στρατιάν ὡς εἰς μάχην συναρμολογῶν κατέπληξε τοὺς ἰδιοξένους, εἰς τὸ πεδίον εὐσυντάκτως γενόμενος· καὶ ὑποσπόνδους αὐτοὺς ποιησάμενος, τὴν ἐσχάτην τούτοις χώραν ἐκ τῆς σωματοφυλακίας καὶ τῆς πρῶν ἐγγύτητος ἀπενείματο, ἐν τούτῳ καὶ μόνῳ τὸ πρόστιμον αὐτοῖς τοῦ τοιοῦτου ἐγκλήματος ἐγκατεθέμενος.

Bekker, I. (ed.), *Michaelis Attaliothae Historia* (CSHB, Bonn 1853), pp. 145.19-147.15.

The Byzantine historian Nikephoros Bryennios refers to deferent opinions, expressed during the war council in front of the emperor:

Γενόμενος δὲ περὶ τὴν Καππαδοκῶν, τοὺς ἀρίστους ἄμα τῶν στρατηγῶν ἐπ' ἐκκλησίαν ἐκάλει καὶ βουλήν περὶ τοῦ πολέμου προϋτίθει, πυνθανόμενος εἰ χρητὴν Περσίδος ἐλαύνειν κἀκεῖσε τοῖς Τούρκοις συμπλέκεσθαι ἢ μένοντα ἐπὶ τῆς ἰδίας τὴν ἐκείνων ἔλευσιν ἀναμένειν· ἠγγέλλετο γὰρ ἤδη καὶ ὁ σουλτάνος ἐξελεθῆναι τῆς Περσίδος καὶ σχολῇ καὶ βάδην κατὰ Ῥωμαίων χωρεῖν. Τοῖς μὲν οὖν ἐδόκει, ὅσοι θρασύτερόν πως διέκειντο καὶ κολακικώτερον, μὴ μένειν, ἀλλ' ἀπιέναι καὶ συμπλέκεσθαι τῷ σουλτάνῳ εἰσιόντι ἐν Βατάνοις τῆς Μηδίας. Τῷ μαγίστρῳ δὲ Ἰωσήφ τῷ Ταρχανειώτῃ κατάρχοντι τότε ταγμάτων πολλῶν καὶ τῷ δουκὶ πάσης δύσεως Νικηφόρῳ τῷ Βρυεννίῳ παντάπασιν ἐδόκει τὰ τοιαῦτα βουλευόμενα σφάλλεσθαι καὶ ἐξελιπάρουν τὸν βασιλέα, εἰ οἶόν τε εἶη, προσμένειν καὶ τοὺς πολεμίους ἔλκειν πρὸς ἑαυτὸν τὰς πέριξ πόλεις κατοχυρώσαντα καὶ τὰς πεδιάδας ἐμπρήσαντα, ὥστε σπανίζειν τοῖς πολεμίοις τὰ ἐπιτήδεια· εἰ δὲ μὴ τοῦτο, κὰν γοῦν καταλαβεῖν τὴν Θεοδοσίου πόλιν κἀκεῖσε στρατοπεδεύσαντα προσμένειν τοὺς πολεμίους, ὥστ' ἀπορία τῶν ἀναγκαίων τὸν σουλτάνον ἀναγκασθῆναι τοῖς Ῥωμαίοις συμπλέκεσθαι ἐνθα Ῥωμαίους ξυμβαλεῖν πρὸς πόλεμον συμφέρον ἐστίν. Ἀλλ' ἐδόκουν παρὰ κωφῷ ἄδειν καὶ τὰ τῶν κολάκων ἐνίκα καὶ δέον ἀνδράσι τὴν οἰκείαν ἀρετὴν παραστήσασιν ὑπακούειν, ὁ δὲ τοῖς κόλαξι μᾶλλον προσεῖχεν ἢ τοῖς ὀρθῶς συμβουλευούσιν, ἐπηρμένος τοῖς προλαβοῦσι τροπαίοις καὶ μέγα ἐπὶ τούτοις φρονῶν, καὶ γὰρ τὸ τε Μέμπετ φρούριον εἶλε καὶ Τούρκων ἀποσπάσι προνομευόντων ἐντυχῶν ἐτρέψατό τε τούτους καὶ πολλοὺς μὲν ἀνείλεν, οὐκ ὀλίγους δὲ καὶ ἐζώργησε. Τούτοις



οὐν ἐπαιρόμενος καὶ θαρρήσας πέρα τοῦ δέοντος ἄτε καὶ πλείονα τῶν προτέρων ἐπαγόμενος ἑξυμμαχίαν καὶ δύναμιν, ἄρας σὺν παντὶ τῷ στρατεύματι τὴν εὐθὺ Περσίδος ἤλαυνε καὶ πρὸς τοὺς ἐναντίους ἐχώρει.

Gautier, P. (ed.), *Nicéphore Bryennios, Histoire* (Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae 9, Bruxelles 1975), pp. 105.22-107.21.

The effort of Ioannes Scylitzes Continuatus to justify the strategy of Romanos Diogenes:

Ἐκεῖθεν χωρεῖ εἰς Σεβάστειαν τὴν Ἰβηρίαν καταλαβεῖν ἐπιειγόμενος, ὅτε καὶ τῶν σὺν τῷ κουροπαλάτῃ Μανουήλ τῷ Κομνηνῷ πεσόντων θεατῆς τῶν πτωμάτων ἐγένετο. Κάκειθεν σχολῆ καὶ βάδην ἰὼν καταλαμβάνει τὴν Θεοδοσιούπολιν, πρώην μὲν ἀμεληθεῖσαν, ἐξ ὅτου δὲ ἐπολιορκήθη τὸ Ἄρτζε ἀνοικοδομηθεῖσαν καὶ κατοχυρωθεῖσαν. Ἐντεῦθεν διμήνου τροφὴν ἐκάστω φέρειν ἐπικηρυκευσάμενος, ὡς δι' ἀοικήτου καὶ ἠρημωμένης χώρας βαδίζειν μέλλουσι, πάντων δὲ τὸ προσταχθὲν ποιησαμένων τὸ μισθοφορικὸν τῶν Οὐζῶν καὶ τοὺς Φράγκους σὺν Ἰρουσελίῳ, ἀνδρὶ γενναίῳ καὶ πολεμικῷ, διαφήσι κατὰ τοῦ Χλίου εἰς προνομήν. Τοῦτο δὲ καὶ πρότερον ἐποίησατο. Ἐκεῖνος δὲ κατόπιν ἐλαύνων εἰς τὸ Μαντζικίερτ παρεγένετο, πόλιν ῥωμαϊκὴν μὲν, χειρωθεῖσαν δὲ πρὸ τοῦ τῷ σουλτάνῳ καὶ Τούρκους ἐγκαθημένους ἔχουσαν. Καταφρονήσας δὲ τούτων ὡς ὀλιγοστών, ἕτεραν μοῖραν οὐκ ἐλαχίστην ἀποτεμόμενος τοῦ στρατοῦ Ἰωσήφ μαγίστρω τῷ Τραχανειώτῃ παραδίδωσι, προσεπιδοῦς καὶ στίφος πεζῶν οὐκ εὐκαταφρόνητον, μᾶλλον δὲ τῶν ἵπποτῶν τὸ ἔκκριτόν τε καὶ μαχιμώτατον κὰν τοῖς πολέμοις προκινδυνεύον ἀεὶ καὶ προμαχόμενον. Ἄρας δὲ ὁ Τραχανειώτης ἄπεισιν εἰς τὸ Χλίον βοηθήσων τοῖς Οὐζοῖς καὶ τοῖς Φράγκοις καὶ παντὶ τῷ μισθοφορικῷ· ἠκηκόει γὰρ ὁ βασιλεὺς πλῆθος μυριάνδρον κατ' αὐτῶν φέρεσθαι. Διεῖλε γὰρ ὁ βασιλεὺς τὸν στρατὸν ἐλπίζων αὐτὸς ταχὺ τὸ Μαντζικίερτ παραστήσασθαι – ὃ δὴ καὶ γέγονε – καὶ ἐπιδημήσαι τοῖς ἐν τῷ Χλίῳ· εἰ δὲ τις ἀνάγκη κατεπεῖξει, ταχέως αὐτοὺς προσκαλέσασθαι, πλησίον ἐσκηνωμένων τῶν στρατευμάτων· ἦκουε γὰρ τὸν σουλτάνον ἐπείγεσθαι κατ' αὐτοῦ. Καί γε ἦν οὐκ ἄλογος ἡ διαίρεσις τῶν στρατευμάτων καὶ λογισμῶν οὐκ ἀπο στρατηγικωτάτων, εἰ μὴ πεπρωμένη· μᾶλλον δὲ θεῖος χόλος ἢ λόγος ἡμῖν ἀπορητότερος τὴν ἐκβασιν εἰς τὸναντίον περιέτρεψε καὶ πρὸς τῷ τέλει τοῦ ἔργου καὶ τῇ αὐθιμερινῇ τῶν στρατευμάτων ἐνώσει καὶ τὸν σουλτάνον ἀκηρυκτῶς τοῖς Τούρκοις ἐπέστησε καὶ τὰ δοκηθέντα τελεσθῆναι διακεκώλυκε.

Scylitzes Continuatus, Τσολάκης, Ε. (ed.), *Η Συνέχεια της Χρονογραφίας του Ιωάννου Σκυλιτζη (Ioannes Scylitzes Continuatus)* (Ίδρυμα Μελετών Χερσονήσου του Αίμου 105, Thessaloniki 1968), pp. 144.6-145.7.

Siege and fall of Mantzikert:

Παραβαλὼν δ' ὁ βασιλεὺς εἰς τὸ Μαντζικίερτ τὴν μὲν παρεμβολὴν μετὰ τῆς ὅλης παρασκευῆς ἀγχοῦ ποῦ θεῖναι καὶ χάρακα θεῖναι κατὰ τὸ εἰθισμένον παρεκελεύσατο, αὐτὸς δὲ τὸ ἔκκριτον ἀναλαβὼν τοῦ στρατοῦ περιήλθε τὸ ἄστυ, κατασκοπῶν ὅπη περ εὐχερὲς τὰς προσβολὰς κατὰ τοῦ τειχοῦ ποιήσασθαι καὶ τὰς ἐλεπόλεις προσαγαγεῖν. εἶχε γὰρ ταύτας ἐκ παρασκευῆς ξύλοις παντοίοις καὶ μεγίστοις κατωργανωμένας, καὶ φερομένας δι' ἀμαξῶν τῶν χιλίων μὴ ἀποδουσῶν. ἤλαυνε δὲ καὶ τῶν ἄλλων βοσκημάτων εἰς δαπάνην τοῦ στρατοῦ μυριομέτρους ἀγέλας. τῶν δὲ πολεμίων ἐνδον ἀλαλαζόντων τὸ ἐνυάλιον καὶ τὰ ξίφη παραγυμνοῦντων καὶ ὅπλοις ἐκηβόλοις χρωμένων, μετὰ τῆς ἀσπίδος ὁ βασιλεὺς περιπεύσας τὸ τεῖχος ἐπανήλθεν εἰς τὴν παρεμβολήν. οἱ δὲ πεζοὶ τῶν Ἀρμενίων προσβαλόντες τῷ ἐκτὸς τῆς ἀκροπόλεως τείχει, καὶ πολλὰς προσβολὰς ποιησάμενοι, αὐτοβοεῖ αἰροῦσιν αὐτό, τοῦ ἡλίου πρὸς δυσμὰς ἀποτρέχοντος. ἠσθέντος δὲ τοῦ βασιλέως τῷ γεγονότι, κατέλαβον ἀπὸ τῶν ἐναντίων καὶ πρέσβεις, συμπαθείας τυχεῖν ἐξαιτούμενοι καὶ τῶν ἰδίων πραγμάτων συγχώρησιν, καὶ τοιαύταις ὁμολογίαις παραδοῦναι τὴν πόλιν τῷ βασιλεῖ. συνθέμενος δὲ πρὸς τοῦτο, καὶ τοὺς πρέσβεις δώροις τιμήσας, ἀπέστειλε τὸν παραληψόμενον αὐτίκα τὸ κάστρον. οἱ δ' ἐνδον φρουρὰν ἐν τοιοῦτῳ καιρῷ εἰσδέξασθαι μὴ καταδεξάμενοι, ἵνα μὴ κακὸν τι διὰ τῆς νυκτὸς τοῖς ἐναντίοις ἐπιτεχθῆ, ἔδοξαν ἠλογηκέναι καὶ καταψεύσασθαι τῶν σπονδῶν. διὰ τοῦτο καὶ ταχὺ σαλπίσας ὁ βασιλεὺς τὸ πολεμικόν, ἐξήλθε πανστρατιᾷ τῆς παρεμβολῆς, καὶ τοῖς τείχεσι προσεπέλασε. καταπλαγέντες δὲ οἱ Τούρκοι καὶ πρὸς ἀπολογία τραπεζόμενοι, καὶ πλείονα πίστιν τῆς ἑαυτῶν ἀπολυτρώσεως αἰτησάμενοι καὶ λαβόντες, ἐξίασι μὲν ἐκ τῆς πόλεως μετὰ τῆς οἰκειᾶς ἀποσκευῆς, καὶ τῷ βασιλεῖ γονυκλινοῦσιν, οὐ κεναῖς δὲ χερσὶν ἀλλὰ πάντες ξιφῆρεις, καὶ τῷ βασιλεῖ γυμνῶ πανοπλίαις οἱ πλείονες προσεγγίζοντες.

Bekker, I. (ed.), *Michaelis Attaliothae Historia* (CSHB, Bonn 1853), pp. 151.8-152.17.

Nikephoros Bryennios describes the defeat and the capture of Nikephoros Vasilakis a little before the battle:

Γενομένῳ δὲ τούτῳ περὶ τὸ Μαντζικίερτον ὁ Βασιλάκιος ὑπηγίαζε, στρατὸν ἐπαγόμενος οὐκ ὀλίγον ἐκ Συρίας καὶ Ἀρμενίας, ὃς ῥωμαλέος μὲν ὦν καὶ τὴν χεῖρα γενναῖος, θρασὺς δὲ ἄλλως καὶ δυσκάθεκτος ταῖς ὁρμαῖς καὶ τὸν βασιλέα κολακεύειν



βουλόμενος οὐδὲν ὑγιὲς ἐρωτώμενος ἀπεφθέγγετο. Τοῦ γὰρ βεστάρχου Λέοντος τοῦ Διαβατηνοῦ γράμματα τῷ βασιλεῖ πεπομφότος, ὡς ὁ σουλτάνος, φησί, τὴν ἐκστρατείαν πυθόμενος καὶ δείσας τὴν δύναμιν, τὴν Περσίδα καταλιπὼν ἄπεισι φεύγων εἰς Βαβυλῶνα, τούτοις ὁ βασιλεὺς τοῖς λόγοις ἀναπεισθεῖς, διχῆ τὸ στράτευμα διελὼν τὴν μὲν τῶν δυνάμεων αὐτόθι κατεῖχε, τὴν δὲ πρὸς τὸ Χλέατ ἐξαποστέλλει, στρατηγὸν ἐπιστήσας αὐτοῖς τὸν μάγιστρον Ἰωσήφ τὸν Ταρχανειώτην, ἄνδρα δεινὸν μὲν στρατιωτικοῖς βουλευμάσι τε καὶ στρατηγήμασιν, ἀπρόθυμον δὲ τότε παντάπασιν ὄντα, καὶ τῷ βασιλεῖ παραινοῦντα εἰσὼ τὰς δυνάμεις ἀπάσας κατέχειν καὶ μὴ μερίζειν τὸ στράτευμα, ἀγχοῦ τῶν ἐναντίων στρατοπεδεύοντων· ὅς, ὡς ταῦτα λέγων οὐκ ἔπειθε, τὰς δυνάμεις ἀναλαβὼν πρὸς τὸ Χλέατ ἠπειγέτο· πόλις δὲ τὸ Χλέατ ὑπὸ τοὺς Τούρκους τελοῦσα καὶ φρουρὰν ἔχον ἀποχρῶσαν ἔνδοθεν Τούρκων. Ἄλλ' οὐπω τρίτης διεληούσης ἡμέρας τοῖς ἐπὶ χόρτου συλλογὴν ἐξιούσιν ἐπιτίθενται Τούρκοι καὶ τινας μὲν ἀναιροῦσιν, ἐνίους δὲ καὶ ζωοροῦσι. Τοῦ ξυμβάντος γοῦν ἀπαγγελέντος τῷ βασιλεῖ, εὐθύς ὁ Βασιλάκης μετεκέκλητο καὶ περὶ τῶν Τούρκων ἐπολυπραγμονεῖτο, τίνες τε εἶεν οἱ τὰς ἐπιθέσεις ποιοῦμενοι καὶ ὅθεν γῆς ἦκοντες. Ὁ δὲ τῆ συνήθει θρασύτητι καὶ πάλιν χρῆσάμενος τοὺς ἐκ τοῦ Χλέατ ἦκειν ἐφ' ἀρπαγῆ διενίστατο. Ἐλαθεν οὖν οὕτω τὸν βασιλέα ἢ τοῦ σουλτάνου ἔφοδος οὐ μακρὰν τοῦ στρατοπέδου ὄντος καὶ τὰ τοῦ πολέμου εὐ διατιθεμένου. Βουλόμενος γὰρ τὸν βασιλέα ὑπαγαγεῖν εἰς τὰ ἔμπροσθεν καὶ ἐντὸς ἀρκύων ποιήσασθαι, προδρόμους ἐξέπεμπεν, οἱ προέτρεχόν τε τοῖς ἵπποις περὶ τὸν τῶν Ῥωμαίων χάρακα καὶ αὐθις ἀνθυπενόστουν ὥσπερ δρασμὸν ποιοῦμενοι καὶ τοῦτο πολλάκις ποιοῦντες ἐνίους τῶν στρατηγῶν συνηρπάκασιν, ὧν ὁ πρῶτος ὁ Βασιλάκης ἦν. Σπεύδων γὰρ οὗτος τὸν βασιλέα πληροφορῆσαι ὡς οὐκ ἐκ τοῦ Περσικοῦ στρατεύματος εἶεν οἱ τὰς ἐκδρομάς ποιοῦμενοι, ἀλλ' ἐκ τῶν ἐνοικούντων τῷ Χλέατ, ἦτι συγχωρηθῆναι οἱ τοῦ χάρακος ἐξελεῖν καὶ τὸν ἀκινάκην σπασάμενος καὶ μυωπίσας τὸν ἵππον ἀσυντάκτως ἐχώρει κατὰ τῶν πολεμίων καὶ οἱ περὶ αὐτὸν εἶποντο οὐ κατὰ τάξιν, ἀλλ' ὥσπερ ἔτυχεν ἕκαστος. Ἀμέλει καὶ τὴν ἄτακτον τούτων φορὰν οἱ πολέμιοι θεασάμενοι προσεποιήσαντο φεύγειν· ἐπεὶ δὲ πόρρω τοῦ χάρακος εἶδον αὐτοὺς ἐξελάσαντας, τοὺς χαλινούς ὑποστρέψαντες καὶ διεσκεδασμένοι αὐτοῖς προσβαλόντες νικῶσιν αὐτοὺς κατὰ κράτος καὶ πίπτουσι μὲν πολλοὶ τῶν στρατιωτῶν, ὡς μικροῦ δεινὸν μὴδ' ἄγγελον, ὃ δὴ λέγεται, διασωθῆναι τῆς συμφορᾶς, ἕάλω δὲ καὶ ὁ Βασιλάκης.

Gautier, P. (ed.), *Nicéphore Bryennios, Histoire* (Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae 9, Bruxelles 1975), pp. 107.22-111.17.

Nikephoros Bryennios describes the array of the Byzantine army before the battle:

Ὡς δὲ βουλή προετέθη ἢ πολεμῆν ἢ εἰσὼ τὰς δυνάμεις κατέχειν, τοῖς μὲν ἐδόκει συνετῶς ἄγαν εἰσὼ μένειν τοῦ χάρακος καὶ τὰς δυνάμεις ἐκ τοῦ Χλέατ μεταπέμπεσθαι, τοῖς δὲ κόλαξι τάναντία. Εἰ μὲν καὶ οὕτω φρονοῦσιν, οὐκ ἔχω λέγειν· τέως δ' ἔδοξε καὶ αὐθις ἐνίκα τὰ χερεῖονα. Ἐξάγειν οὖν τὰς δυνάμεις ἐγένετο. Οἱ δὲ γε Τούρκοι κραταιότεροι αὐθις καὶ μετὰ πλείονος ἐπήρχοντο τῆς χειρός· καὶ δὴ προσβάλλουσι ταύταις καὶ μάχης συστάσης πίπτουσι μὲν τῶν Τούρκων συχνοί, πίπτουσι δὲ καὶ τῶν Ῥωμαίων πλείστοι· ἐτρώθη δὲ καὶ αὐτὸς ὁ Βρυέννιος πολλαχοῦ τοῦ σώματος, ἀλλὰ δεινὸς ὧν περὶ τὰ στρατηγικὰ τὸ πλείστον τῆς φάλαγγος ἀσινὲς διεσώσατο. Ὅρων δ' ἐπιόντας τοὺς Τούρκους ὁ βασιλεὺς ἐξῆγε καὶ αὐτὸς τὰς δυνάμεις ὡς ἐπὶ πόλεμον καὶ παρετάττετο πρὸ τοῦ χάρακος· ἠγείτο δὲ τοῦ μὲν δεξιῦ κέρατος ὁ Ἀλυάττης, ἀνὴρ Καππαδόκης καὶ συνήθης τῷ βασιλεῖ, τοῦ δ' εὐωνύμου αὐτὸς ὁ Βρυέννιος, τὸ δὲ μέσον τῆς φάλαγγος εἶχεν ὁ βασιλεὺς· οὐραγεῖν δὲ ἐτέτακτο ὁ τοῦ καίσαρος υἱὸς ὁ πρόεδρος Ἀνδρόνικος, τὰς τε τῶν ἐταίρων τάξεις ἔχων καὶ τὰς τῶν ἀρχόντων, ἀνὴρ καὶ γένους λαμπροῦ καὶ πᾶσι κομῶν τοῖς καλοῖς· φρονήσει γὰρ τῶν ἡλικίων ἀπάντων ὑπέρτερος καὶ ἀνδρικότατος εἶπερ τις ἄλλος καὶ ταῖς στρατηγικαῖς ἐντραφεῖς μελέταις, οὐ πάνυ δὲ φιλιῶς ἔχων πρὸς βασιλέα.

Gautier, P. (ed.), *Nicéphore Bryennios, Histoire* (Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae 9, Bruxelles 1975), pp. 113.21-115.14.

Description of the battle and the crush of the Byzantines according to the historical work of Michael Attaleiates:

καὶ οἱ μὲν Τούρκοι κατὰ σφᾶς αὐτοὺς τὰ τῆς εἰρήνης ἐπραγματεύοντο, ὁ δὲ βασιλεὺς σαλπίσας τὸ ἐνυάλιον τὸν μόθον παραλόγως ἐκράτησε. καταλαβούσα δ' ἡ φήμη τοὺς ἐναντίους ἐξέπληξε. τέως δ' οὖν καθοπλισάμενοι καὶ αὐτοὶ τὸ μὲν ἄχρηστον πλῆθος εἰς τούπισω προήλαυον, αὐτοὶ δὲ κατόπιν φαντασίαν ἐδίδουν πολεμικῆς ἀντιπαρατάξεως. τὸ δὲ πλείστον φυγῆς τῆς κατεῖχεν αὐτοὺς, συντεταγμένας ἰδόντας τὰς τῶν Ῥωμαίων φάλαγγας ἐν τάξει καὶ κόσμῳ καὶ πολεμικῷ παραστήματι. καὶ οἱ μὲν προήεσαν εἰς τούπισω, ὁ δὲ βασιλεὺς κατόπιν αὐτῶν πανστρατιᾶ ἐπεδίωκεν, ἕως ἄρα δέιλη ὄψια κατέλαβεν. ἐπεὶ δ' ὁ βασιλεὺς τοὺς ἀντιτεταγμένους καὶ ἀντιπολεμοῦντας οὐκ εἶχε, τὴν δὲ παρεμβολὴν ἐψιλωμένην στρατιωτῶν καὶ πεζοφυλάκων ἐγίνωσκε, διὰ τὸ μὴδ' εὐπορεῖν ἰκανοῦ πλῆθους ὥστε καὶ παρατάξεις ἐνταῦθα καταλιπεῖν, ἤδη προεξαντληθέντων τῶν πλείστων, ὡς προδιείληπται, ἔγνω μὴ πλείον ἐπιτεῖναι τὴν δίωξιν, ἵνα μὴ λόχον πεπονηκότες οἱ Τούρκοι ἀφυλάκτω ταύτη ἐπίθωνται, καὶ ἅμα διασκοπῶν ὡς εἰ πλείον ἐκμακρυνθεῖη, καταλήψεται τούτον ἐν τῇ ἐπανόδῳ ἢ νύξ, καὶ τηνικαῦτα οἱ Τούρκοι παλίντροπον θήσουσι τὴν φυγὴν, ἐκηβόλοι τυγχάνοντες, διὰ ταῦτα καὶ τὴν βασιλικὴν σημαίαν ἐπιστρέψας νόστου



ἐπιμνησθῆναι διήγγελλεν. οἱ δὲ πόρρω τὰς φάλαγγας ἔχοντες στρατιῶται, τὴν ἐπιστροφὴν τῆς βασιλικῆς σημαίας ἰδόντες, ᾤθησαν ἡττῆ τὸν βασιλέα περιπεσεῖν. ὡς δ' οἱ πολλοὶ πληροφοροῦσιν, ὅτι τῶν ἐφεδρευόντων αὐτῶ τισ, ἑξάδελφος ὢν τῶ τοῦ βασιλέως προγονῶ Μιχαήλ, προβεβουλευμένην ἔχων τὴν κατὰ τούτου ἐπιβουλὴν, αὐτὸς τὸν τοιοῦτον λόγον τοῖς στρατιώταις διέσπειρε, καὶ ταχὺ τοὺς οἰκείους ἀναλαβὼν (ἐμπεπίστευτο γὰρ παρὰ τῆς τοῦ βασιλέως καλοκαγαθίας οὐ μικρὸν τι μέρος λαοῦ) φυγὰς εἰς τὴν παρεμβολὴν ἐπανέδραμε. μιμησάμενοι δὲ τοῦτον οἱ πλησιέστεροι λόχοι εἰς καθ' ἓνα τὴν φυγὴν ἀμαχητὶ διεδέξαντο, κάκείνους ἕτεροι. καὶ οὕτως ὁ βασιλεὺς ἰδὼν τὸ παράλογον τῆς ἐξαγωνίου φυγῆς, ἔστη μετὰ τῶν περὶ αὐτόν, τὴν τῶν οἰκείων φυγὴν, ὡς ἔθος, ἀνακαλούμενος. ἦν δὲ ὁ ἐπακούων οὐδεὶς. τῶν δ' ἐναντίων οἱ ἐπὶ λόφῶν ἰστάμενοι, τὸ τῶν Ῥωμαίων ἰδόντες ἐξαίφνης ἀτύχημα, τῶ σουλτάνῳ καταγγέλλουσι τὸ γενόμενον, καὶ τὴν ἐπιστροφὴν αὐτῶ κατεπείγουσιν. εὐθὺς οὖν ἐπανελθόντος αὐτοῦ μάχη τις ἀθρόον τῶ βασιλεῖ προσήγγνυται· καὶ κελεύσας τοὺς ἀμφ' αὐτόν μὴ ἐνδοῦναι μηδὲ μαλακὸν τι παθεῖν, ἡμύνατο μὲν ἐρρωμένως μέχρι πολλοῦ. ἐν δὲ τῶ μέσῳ τῆς τῶν ἄλλων φυγῆς περιαντλησάσης ἔξω τὸν χάρακα, συμμιγῆς τις ἦν ἐκ πάντων βοῆ καὶ ἀτακτος δρόμος καὶ λόγος οὐδεὶς ἀπηγγέλλετο καίριος, τῶν μὲν λεγόντων ἰσχυρῶς ἀντιπαρατάξασθαι τὸν βασιλέα μετὰ τῶν ὑπολελειμμένων αὐτῶ καὶ τοὺς βαρβάρους τρέψασθαι, τῶν δὲ σφαγῆν ἢ ἄλωσιν καταγγελλόντων αὐτοῦ, καὶ ἄλλων ἄλλα συνειρόντων καὶ παλίντροπον ἑκατέρου μέρους τὴν νίκην καταλεγόντων, ἕως ἤρξαντο καὶ τῶν σὺν αὐτῶ Καππαδοκῶν πολλοὶ κατὰ μοῖρας τινὰς ἐκείσε ἀποφοιτᾶν. εἰ δέ τι καὶ αὐτὸς τοῖς φεύγουσιν ἀντίξους γεγονῶς πολλοὺς ἡμυνάμην, τὴν ἀνάκλησιν ἐπιτρέπων τῆς ἡττῆς, ἕτεροι λεγέτωσαν. τὸ δὲ μετὰ τοῦτο καὶ τῶν βασιλικῶν ἵππων πολλοὶ μετὰ τῶν ἵππων ἐπαναστρέφοντες μὴ ἰδεῖν τὸν βασιλέα, τί γέγονεν, ἐρωτῶμενοι ἀπεκρίναντο. καὶ ἦν σεισμὸς οἴος καὶ ὄδυρμος καὶ πόνος καὶ φόβος ἀκίχητος, καὶ ἡ κόνις αἰθέριος, καὶ τέλος οἱ Τοῦρκοι πανταχόθεν ἡμῖν περιρρέοντες. ὅθεν καὶ ὡς εἶχεν ἕκαστος ὀρηκῆς ἢ σπουδῆς ἢ ἰσχύος, φυγῆ τὴν ἑαυτοῦ σωτηρίαν ἐπίστευσεν. οἱ δ' ἐναντίοι κατόπιν διώκοντες οὐς μὲν ἀνείλον οὐς δὲ ζωγρία εἶλον, ἑτέρους δὲ συνεπάτου. καὶ ἦν τὸ πρᾶγμα λίαν ἐπώδυνον καὶ πάντα θρηνον ὑπερβάλλον καὶ κοπετόν. τί γὰρ ἐλεεινότερον τοῦ στρατοπέδου ἅπαν βασιλικὸν φυγῆ καὶ ἡττῆ παρὰ βαρβάρων ἀπανθρώπων καὶ ἀποτόμων ἐλαύνεσθαι, καὶ τὸν βασιλέα βαρβαρικοῖς ὄπλοις ἀβοήθητον περιεστοιχίσθαι, καὶ τὰς βασιλείους σκηνὰς καὶ τὰς ἡγεμονικὰς ἅμα καὶ στρατιωτικὰς ὑπὸ τοιοῦτων ἀνδρῶν κυριεῦσθαι, καὶ ἅπαν ἀνάστατον τὸ Ῥωμαϊκὸν καθορᾶσθαι, καὶ βασιλείαν ἐν ἀκαρεῖ κατανοεῖν συμπεσοῦσαν.

Bekker, I. (ed.), *Michaelis Attaliothae Historia* (Bonn 1853), pp. 160.16-163.15.

Nikephoros Bryennios provides a deferent narration of the Byzantines' defeat:

Οἱ δὲ Τοῦρκοι τὸν βασιλέα βλέποντες παρατάττοντα τὸν στρατόν, οὐ κατὰ φάλαγγας οὐδὲ κατὰ λόχους –οὐδὲ γὰρ ἐβούλοντο Ῥωμαίους εἰς χεῖρας ἔλθειν– ἠσύχασαν· ἀλλ' ὁ μὲν σουλτάνος πόρρω που ἰστάμενος τὰ πρὸς πόλεμον διετάττετο, ἀνδρὶ δὲ τινὶ ἐκτομίᾳ τὰ μέγιστα παρ' αὐτῶ δυναμένῳ, Ταράγγης τούτῳ τὸ ὄνομα, τὰς πλείστας δυνάμεις παραδοῦς κύριον τοῦ πολέμου τοῦτον ἀπέδειξεν. Ὁ δὲ εἰς πολλὰ μέρη τὸ στράτευμα διελὼν προλοχισμούς τε ἐποίει καὶ ἐνέδρας συνίστα καὶ περιμένα τὰς τάξεις Ῥωμαίων ἐπέταττε καὶ τοῖς τοξεύμασι χρῆσθαι πάντοθεν. Οἱ δὲ Ῥωμαῖοι, τῶν ἵππων αὐτῶν βαλλομένων, ἠναγκάζοντο ἔπεσθαι καὶ διὰ εἶποντο, φεύγειν δοκούντων ἐκείνων· εἰς δὲ τοὺς λόχους καὶ τὰς ἐνέδρας περιπίπτοντες μεγάλως ἐβλάπτοντο. Τοῦ βασιλέως δὲ τὸν ὑπὲρ τῶν ὄλων βουλομένου κίνδυνον ἀναδέξασθαι, βάδην ἐπομένου καὶ προσδοκῶντος φάλαγγα Τοῦρκων εὐρεῖν καὶ αὐτῆ συρραγῆναι καὶ οὕτω κριθῆναι τὰ τοῦ πολέμου, οἱ Τοῦρκοι πανταχόθεν διεσκεδάννυντο· ὑποστρέψαντες δὲ μετὰ ῥύμης σφοδρᾶς καὶ κραυγῆς ἐπελθόντες Ῥωμαίους τρέπουσι τὸ δεξιὸν κέρα. Εὐθὺς δ' ἀνεχώρουν καὶ οἱ περὶ τὴν οὐραγίαν καὶ τὸν βασιλέα οἱ Τοῦρκοι κυκλώσαντες ἔβαλλον πάντοθεν. Ὁρμησαντος δὲ τοῦ εὐωνύμου κέρατος ἐπαρήγειν οἱ Τοῦρκοι ἐκώλυον· κατὰ νώτου γὰρ οὗτοι γενόμενοι καὶ τοῦτο κυκλώσαντες φυγεῖν κατηνάγκασαν. Ὁ δὲ βασιλεὺς παντάπασιν ἔρημος ἀπολειφθεὶς βοηθείας τὸ ξίφος ἐγύμνωσεν ἐπὶ τοὺς ἐχθρούς καὶ πολλοὺς μὲν ἀνείλε, τοὺς δὲ καὶ φυγεῖν κατηνάγκασε· κυκλωθεὶς δ' ὑπὸ τῶν πολεμίων τοῦ πλήθους τὴν χεῖρα τιτρώσκειται καὶ γνωσθεὶς ὑπ' αὐτῶν ὅστις ἐστὶ κύκλῳ περιστοιχίζεται πάντοθεν, καὶ τοξεύεται μὲν ὁ ἵππος αὐτοῦ καὶ ὀλισθήσας πίπτει, συγκαταβάλλει δὲ καὶ τὸν ἐπιβάτην, καὶ τοῦτον τὸν τρόπον δορυάλωτος ὁ βασιλεὺς Ῥωμαίων γίνεται καὶ πρὸς τὸν σουλτάνον ἀποκομίζεται δέσμιος, οὐκ οἶδ' οἴσισι λόγοις τοῦτο τῆς θείας προνοίας οικονομησάσης. Ἐάλω δὲ καὶ λοιπὸν μοῖρα τῶν ἀρχόντων οὐκ ὀλίγη· τῶν δὲ λοιπῶν οἱ μὲν μαχαίρας ἔργον γεγόνασιν, οἱ δὲ διεσώθησαν· ἐάλω δὲ καὶ τὸ τε στρατοπέδον ἅπαν καὶ ἡ σκηνὴ ἢ βασιλείος καὶ τὰ χρήματα καὶ τῶν βασιλικῶν παρασήμων τὰ κάλλιστα, ἐν οἷς καὶ ὁ πολυθρόνῳ μάργαρος ἦν, ὃν Ὀρφανὸν κατωνόμαζον. Οἱ δ' ἐκ τῆς μάχης διασωθέντες ἄλλος ἄλλαχού διεσπάρησαν, τὴν ἰδίαν ἕκαστος καταλαβεῖν σπεύδοντες.

Gautier, P. (ed.), *Nicéphore Bryennios, Histoire* (Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae 9, Bruxelles 1975), pp. 115.15-119.6.

Ioannes Scylitzes Continuatus describes the capture of Romanos Diogenes:



Τὸν δὲ βασιλέα περιστοιχίσαντες οἱ πολέμιοι οὐκ εὐχείρωτον ἔσχον εὐθύς, ἀλλ' ἄτε στρατιωτικῶν καὶ πολεμικῶν εἰδήμων καὶ κινδύνοις προσομιλήσας πολλοῖς καρτερῶς ἡμύνατο, καὶ πολλοὺς ἀνελὼν τέλος ἐπλήγη φασγάνῳ τὴν χεῖρα, τοῦ τε ἵππου κατακοντισθέντος ἐκ ποδὸς ἰστάμενος διεμάχετο. Καμῶν δ' ὅμως πρὸς ἐσπέραν ἀλώσιμος –φεῦ τοῦ πάθους– καὶ αἰχμάλωτος ὁ περιώνυμος βασιλεὺς Ῥωμαίων γίνεται. Καὶ τῇ μὲν νυκτὶ ἐκείνῃ ἐπ' ἴσης τοῖς πολλοῖς ἐπὶ γῆς ἀτίμως καὶ περιωδύνως κατέδαρθε, μυρίοις περικλυζόμενος λυπηρῶν κύμασι. Τῇ δ' ἐπαύριον ἀγγελθείσης τῷ σουλτάνῳ καὶ τῆς τοῦ βασιλέως ἀλώσεως χαρὰ τις ἀπληστος καὶ ἀπιστία κατέσχευεν αὐτὸν οἰόμενον <ὡς ἀληθῶς μέγα τι καὶ ὑπερμέγεθες εἶναι>, ὥσπερ καὶ ἦν, μετὰ νίκην τοσοῦτου καὶ τηλικούτου στρατοῦ καὶ αὐτὸν τὸν βασιλέα ἀλώσιμον λαβεῖν καὶ ὑποχείριον. Ἀνθρωπίνως δὲ ὅμως τὸ γεγονός λογισάμενος καὶ τὴν νίκην μετριοφρόνως ἐνεγκών καὶ τὸ γεγονός εὐτύχημα συστολήν μᾶλλον καὶ ψυχῆς ἀγαθῆς ἔνδειξιν καὶ τρόπων καλοκαγαθίας μεστῶν θέμενος, Θεῶ τὸ πᾶν ἀνετίθει, ὡς μείζον ἢ κατὰ τὴν ἑαυτοῦ ἰσχὴν ἀποτελέσας τρόπαιον. Διὰ τοῦτο καὶ προσαχθέντος τῷ σουλτάνῳ Ἀξάν τοῦ βασιλέως Ῥωμαίων ἐν εὐτελεῖ καὶ στρατιωτικῇ ἀμπεχόνῃ διαπορῶν ἦν καὶ περὶ τούτου μαρτυρίαν ζητῶν. Ὡς δ' ἐπληροφορήθη παρὰ τῶν πρέσβων καὶ τοῦ Βασιλακίου, πεσόντος μὲν πρὸ τῶν ποδῶν αὐτοῦ, οἰκτρὸν δέ τι καὶ γοερὸν ἀνοιμώξαντος, εὐθύς ὥσπερ ἐμμανῆς ἀνέθορε τοῦ θρόνου καὶ ἔστη ὀρθός. Τεθέντα τοῦν ὅμως πρὸ τῶν ποδῶν αὐτοῦ, πατήσας, ὥσπερ ἔθος, καὶ ἀναστήσας καὶ περιπτυσσάμενος «μὴ δέδιθι» ἔφη «ὦ βασιλεῦ, ἀλλ' εὐελπὶς ἔσο πρὸ πάντων, ὡς οὐδενὶ προσομιλήσεις κινδύνῳ σωματικῷ, τιμηθῆσθαι δ' ἀξίως τῆς τοῦ κράτους ὑπεροχῆς. Ἄφρων γὰρ ἐμοὶ λογίζεται ἐκεῖνος, ὁ μὴ τὰς ἀπροόπτους τύχας ἐξ ἀντεπιφορᾶς λογιζόμενός τε καὶ εὐλαβούμενος». Ἐπιτάξας οὖν αὐτῷ σκιρῆσαι ἀποταχθῆναι καὶ θεραπείαν ἀρμόζουσαν, σύνδειπνον αὐτὸν τηλικαῦτα καὶ ὁμοδαίτον ἀπειργάσατο, μὴ παρὰ μέρος καθίσας, ἀλλὰ σύνθρονον ἐν εὐθύτητι τῆς ἐκκρίτου τάξεως καὶ ὁμόδοξον κατὰ τὴν τιμὴν ποιησάμενος. Δις τῆς ἡμέρας συνεχόμενος αὐτῷ καὶ συλλαλῶν καὶ παρακλησέσιν ἀνακτώμενος, μέχρις ἡμερῶν ὀκτῶ τῶν ὁμοίων ἐκοινώνει αὐτῷ λόγων τε καὶ ἄλων μηδ' ἄχρι καὶ βραχυτάτου λόγου πρὸς τοῦτον πεπαρωνηκῶς, περὶ τινῶν δὲ δοκούντων σφαλμάτων ἐν τῇ ἐλάσει τῆς στρατιᾶς ὑπομνήσας.

*Scylitzes Continuatus*, Τσολάκης, Ε. (ed.), *Η Συνέχεια της Χρονογραφίας του Ιωάννου Σκυλίτζη (Ioannes Scylitzes Continuatus)* (Ίδρυμα Μελετών Χερσονήσου του Αίμου 105, Thessaloniki 1968), pp. 150.6-151.13.

## Chronological Table

January 1068: Enthroning of Romanos IV Diogenes

March 1068 – January 1069: First campaign of Romanos Diogenes in Anatolia

Spring-summer 1069: Second campaign of the emperor against the Seljuks

End of 1070: The Seljuks capture Mantzikert

13 March 1071: Commencement of the third campaign of Romanos IV against the sultan Alp Arslan

July 1071: The Byzantine army reaches Theodosiupolis. Romanos sends a large part of his army against Chliat

Beginnings of August 1071: Fall of Mantzikert by the Byzantines. Alp Arslan reaches the region. Defeat of a part of the Byzantine army under Nikephoros Vasilakis

26 August 1071: Battle of Mantzikert. Defeat of the Byzantine army and capture of emperor Romanos Diogenes

Beginnings of September 1071: Release of Romanos Diogenes