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THE FAILURE OF THE GERMAN - BYZANTINE ALLIANCE ON THE EVE OF THE FIRST CRUSADE*

After the defeat of Mantzikert and the final loss of Southern Italy in 1071, a semi-official apologist of the byzantine court, Michael Attaleiates, expressed himself on these terms : «... agony of death has been extended upon us since the Gothic and the most execrable nations have conquered the East and the West, while we surrendered to naivety and carelessness and, what is more true, to folly and fury. Because, raging against ourselves and fighting without mercy and scorning death, we appeared to the foreign nations as cowards and without virility, preferring to flee at war...»¹.

This tremendous conquest of East and West by the most execrable nations, about which Attaleiates speaks, was the most serious blow to the integrity of the Byzantine territory. Scholars used to say² that these military defeats in the East and the West opened a new period of Byzantine history, characterized by the continuous endeavour of the emperors of the house of Comneni to rescue the Balkan Peninsula and Western Asia Minor. But all this was the result—we dare say—the crystallisation of new situations that arose as consequences of these de-

* Communication for the XVth International Congress of Byzantine Studies, Athens September 1976.

1. Attaleiates, p. 198 CSHB : ... περίεσχον γὰρ ἡμᾶς ὄδινες θανάτου κατὰ πᾶσαν ἐφῶν καὶ τὴν ἐσπέραν τῶν Γοθικῶν καὶ μισρωπῶτων ἐπικρατησάντων ἔθνῶν, καὶ κατατροφησάντων τῆς ἡμῶν εὐθελείας ἢ ἀμελείας, ἢ τὸ γε ἀληθέστερον εἰπεῖν, θεοβλαβείας καὶ μανίας, ὅτι κατ' ἀλλήλων λυττῶντες καὶ ἀκρατῶς τοῖς ὁμοφύλοις μαχόμενοι καὶ θανάτου καταφρονεῦντες, ἐν τοῖς ἀλλοφύλοις πολέμοις δειλοὶ καὶ ἀνάγκιδες καὶ πρὸ πολέμου τὰ νῶτα διδόντες φαινόμεθα... Cf. also Bryennius III, 3, p. 213 ed. GHAUTIER CFHB... ἐπεὶ δὲ Χωροβάτοι καὶ Διοκλεῖς τὴν Ἰλλυρίδα κακῶς διετίθουν, καὶ τὸ Φράγγων ἔθνος κατακυριεῦσαν τῆς Ἰταλίας καὶ Σικελίας δεινὰ κατὰ Ῥωμαίων ἐμελέτων... The byzantine authors design the Normans by the term Φράγγοι, while Germans are mentioned as Ἀλαμανοί.

2. J. GAY, *L' Italie méridionale et l' empire byzantin, de l' avènement de Basile Ier jusqu' à la prise de Bari par les Normands (867-1071)*, Paris 1904. F. CHALANDON, *Essai sur le règne d' Alexis Ier Comnène (1081-1118)*, Paris 1900. IDEM, *Histoire de la domination normande en Italie et en Sicile*. Paris 1907. G. OSTROGORSKY : *Geschichte des byzantinischen Staates*², Munich 1963, pp. 290-295. ERA L. VRANOUSI, Alexios I Komnenos, article in the «Biographisches Lexicon zur Geschichte Süd-Osteuropas», vol. I (1974), pp. 48-49.

feats. When these disasters occurred, Byzantium offered to the civilized world of the eleventh century a tremendous and magnificent appearance, in spite of various minor misfortunes that might have occurred locally at the eastern boundaries. A most powerful element that contributed to the political *prestige* of the Byzantine Empire was the old alliance with the German Empire, confirmed by imperial marriages and weddings and aiming to avenge the danger of the Moslems of Europe³. But, in the third quarter of the eleventh century, the point of union and common interest of the German-Byzantine alliance, Southern Italy, obeyed another master: the Normans of Robert Guiscard were deepening the breach between Christians smashing Byzantine power in Italy, while fighting against Saracen infidels⁴. Since Robert Guiscard became the Pope's sword, events grew worse for Byzantium that had broken its relations with the Papacy after the Schism of the year 1054. The task of fighting the Saracens of Sicily was trusted to the Normans and the German - Byzantine alliance had no more reasons to be.

So, the emperor Michael VII Doucas (1071 - 1078) followed a conciliatory policy against the Papacy and the Normans and recognized by implication Robert Guiscard's conquest of Southern Italy⁵. The great Pope Gregory VII Hildebrand (1073 - 1085) had every reason to be satisfied; by these means, all misunderstandings between the Churches of Rome and Constantinople since 1054 would disappear⁶. As it is

3. Cf. P. CHARANIS, «Byzantium, the West and the Origin of the First Crusade», *Byzantion* 19 (1949), pp. 17-36. W. OHNSORGE, «Das Kaiserbündnis von 842-844 gegen die Sarazenen», in «Abendland und Byzanz» Darmstadt 1963, pp. 131-183. IDEM, «Die Entwicklung der Kaiseridee im 9. Jahrhundert und Süditalien», *ibidem*, pp. 184-226. IDEM, «Die Byzanzreise des Erzbischofs Gebhard von Salzburg und das päpstliche Schisma im Jahre 1062», *ibidem*, pp. 342-363. ΚΩΝΣΤΑΝΤΙΝΑΣ ΦΙΛΟΠΟΥΛΟΥ, «Αἱ δυτικαὶ πηγαὶ διὰ τὴν ἐναντι τῶν Νορμανδῶν πολιτικὴν τοῦ Κωνσταντίνου Γ' Δούκα», *Μνήμων* 3 (1973), 1-14.

4. W. HOLTZMANN, *Papsttum, Normannen und griechische Kirche* (Miscellanea Bibliothecae Hertzianae) Munich 1961. B. LEIB, *Rome, Kiev et Byzance au XIe siècle*, Paris, 1924, p. 202 sqq. 290.

5. P. CHARANIS, *op. cit.*, p. 19 and 21. It is to be noted that papal activity after the quarrel with Henry IV aimed to the diplomatic isolation of the German king. Cf. JAFFE 5.201 (15/3/1081)... Henricum, hominem Christianae legis contemptorem, ecclesiarum videlicet et imperii destructorem atque hereticorum auctorem et consentaneum... (letter to Hermann, bishop of Metz).

6. ST. RUNCIMAN, *A history of the Crusades*, vol. I, Cambridge 1953, pp. 98-101. Cf. also W. NORDEN, *Papsttum und Byzanz*, Berlin 1903, p. 44. F. DÖLGER, *Rom in der Gedankenwelt der Byzantiner*, in «Byzanz und die europäische Staatenwelt» Darmstadt 1964, pp. 70-95.

often stated ⁷, in the spring of 1074, the Pope decided to send an army of western knights to help the Byzantines to recover Asia Minor from the Seljukids. This time, the loss of the western Byzantine provinces would be counterbalanced by the total recovery of the eastern provinces with the help of the western enemies of the empire. And the Pope would then hold a council at Constantinople, where the Christians of the East would resolve their quarrels and acknowledge the supremacy of Rome ⁸.

But the emperor Michael VII Doukas, head of this conciliatory and moderate policy was deposed in 1078. On hearing the news, Pope Gregory VII excommunicated the usurper Nicephorus III Botaneiates (1078 - 1081) ⁹. At the same time, the violent clash between Papacy and the German king Henry IV (1056 - 1106) was reaching its apex; Gregory was for the moment victorious at Canossa (1077) and could concentrate his attention on the eastern affairs: so, the Normans under Robert Guiscard were encouraged to invade Byzantine territory ¹⁰. When the emperor Botaneiates in his turn was replaced by Alexius Comnenus, the excommunication was extended at once to the new emperor. It was the first that Western Europe attacked so openly the Byzantine Empire, aiming at its total destruction and using christian armies to that end.

It was obvious that the moderate policy initiated by Michael VII

7. Cf. W. OHNSORGE, *Byzanzreise*, pp. 345, 357, 361. F. KEMPF, *Die Kirche im Zeitalter der gregorianischen Reform*. 44 Kapitel: Die Reformpolitik in den einzelnen Ländern, in: *Handbuch der Kirchengeschichte*, herausgegeben von H. JEDIN, Band III: Die Mittelalterliche Kirche. Erster Halbband: Vom kirchlichen Frühmittelalter zur gregorianischen Reform. Freiburg-Basel-Vienna 1973, p. 432.

8. JAFFE, *Bibliotheca rerum germanicarum*, vol. II: *Monumenta Gregoriana*, Berlin, 1865. Reg. Greg. VII, 1, 46, 49. II, 3, 137. P. RIANT, *Inventaire des lettres historiques des Croisades*, in, *Archives de l' Orient Latin I* (1881), p. 57, 59 sqq. C. ERDMANN-N. FICKERMANN, *Briefsammlungen der Zeit Heinrichs IV. n. 23*, p. 218, (MGH, *Briefe der deutschen Kaiserzeit vol. V*, Weimar 1950).

9. MANSI XX, 508. Cf. also ST. RUNCIMAN, *ibidem*, p. 99.

10. Cf. CHALANDON, *Domination*, p. 260-261. G. KOLIAS, «*Η έξωτερική πολιτική Ἀλεξίου Α' Κομνηνοῦ (1081-1118)*», *Ἀθηνᾶ* 59 (1955), 241-288, IDEM: «*Le motif et les raisons de l' invasion de Robert Guiscard en territoire byzantin*», in *Byzantion* 36, (1966), pp. 424-430. Cf. also A. MAYER-PFANNHOLZ, «*Heinrich IV und Gregor VII im Lichte der Geistesgeschichte*», pp. 27-50 and A. BRACKMANN «*Heinrich IV als Politiker beim Ausbruch des Investiturstreites*», pp. 61-88, of the volume «*Canossa als Wende*» (*Wege der Forschung XII*), Darmstadt 1969.

could no longer last. The very existence of the Empire was at stake. Alexius I Comnenus had to react to avoid total disaster. An alliance with Henry IV was confirmed¹¹ and twice (autumn of 1082 and beginning of 1083) the German king appeared before the walls of Rome¹². An anti-Pope, the bishop Guibert of Ravenna was proclaimed, while Guiscard left the Balkans and hurried to Italy to rescue Gregory VII, his protector. So, the Norman campaign in the Balkan Peninsula met with disaster and this was the first immediate result of the German-Byzantine alliance.

In spite of various embassies exchanged between the two emperors and large sums of money (144.000 pieces of gold and promise for another 216.000 pieces) paid by the Byzantines for the recruitment of mighty armies in Germany throughout the years 1083 and 1084, Henry IV achieved nothing serious against the Normans in Italy¹³. On the autumn of 1084, Robert Guiscard was free again to invade the Balkans threatening the Byzantine Empire with destruction. A pontifical chronicler, Bernold, attributes the failure of Henry IV to the following reasons: «...his temporibus rex Constantinopolitanus maximam pecuniam Heinrico quondam regi transmisit, ut Robertum Wiscardum, ducem Calabriae et Apuliae et iuratum militem domni papae ut ultionem eiusdem regis, bello appeteret. Nam Robertus iam dudum fines Constantinopolitanorum invasit, iterumque illuc expeditionem moveri disposuit. Sed Heinricus acceptam pecuniam non in procinctum supra Roubertum, quod iuramento promisit, set ad conciliandum sibi vulgus Romanum expendit, cuius adiutorio Lateranense palatium feria quinta ante palmas cum suo Ravennato Guiberto intravit...»¹⁴.

What followed is very uncertain. Anna Comnena no longer makes mention of Henry IV or of the German alliance after the year 1084. But, when Pope Gregory VII died in 1085, the Byzantines welcomed the news

11. Anna Comnena III, 10, 3-10, ed. LEIB I, 133-136. Cf. also Benzo, bishop of Alba VI, 4=MGH, SSRG, XI, 664. Vita Heinrici IV imperatoris, MGH, SSRG, XII, 271. Also CHALANDON, Domination I, 267. Alexis, p. 68. DÖLGER, Regesten 1077.

12. CHALANDON, Domination I, 272-274.

13. CHALANDON, Domination I, 275-277. Cf. also G. MEYER von KNONAU, Jahrbücher des Deutschen Reiches unter Heinrich IV und Heinrich V, v. III, 441 sqq.

14. Bernoldus in 1084=MGH, SSRG, V, 440. The whole story in details is reported also by CHALANDON, Domination I, 276-278.

from the West as a judgement from on high¹⁵. No doubt at all that Anna Comnena was well aware of the danger that constituted the Normans of Southern Italy at the disposal of Papacy. However, during the years 1084-1089, new enemies were threatening the Byzantine Empire, this time from the North: the Petchenegs, crossing the Danube rushed on the town of Dristra and defeated there an imperial army in 1087. With the invaders was the former king of Hungary, Salomon, now deposed from his throne and the declared enemy of Henry IV of Germany...¹⁶.

It is well known that two years later, at the Council of Melfi (September 1089), Pope Urban II (1088-1099) lifted the ban of excommunication against Alexius I. The Byzantine emperor, once again giving proofs of his goodwill towards the Western Church, held that same month a Synod at Constantinople, where it was found that the Pope's name had been omitted from the diptychs «not by any canonical decision but, as it were, from carelessness»¹⁷. From the year 1089 on, the Byzantine

15. Gaufredus Malaterra: *Historia Sicula*, in MIGNE PL 149, 1192. Cf. OHNSORGE, *Byzanzreise*, p. 361 claiming that: ... «die Verhandlungen sind nach 1084 nicht fortgesetzt worden»... Generally, Anna Comnena does not recognize pontifical authority over the West. Cf. her statement that: ... και ταῦτα πρώτου ἀρχιερέως και ταῦτα προκαθημένου τῆς οἰκουμένης ἀπάσης γενομένου, ὥσπερ οὖν και οἱ Λατῖνοι λέγουσι τε και οἴονται· ἔστι γάρ και τοῦτο τῆς ἀλαζονείας αὐτῶν... I, 13,4: LEIB I, 48. That is why, throughout her work, she tends to justify the alliance between the german and the byzantine empires. Any way, she mentions Henry IV, only as... ρήξ Ἀλαμανίας Ἐνέριχος I, 13, 1: LEIB I, 47.

16. The chronology of the wars against the Petchenegs, in CHALANDON, *Domination I*, 105-107. Cf. the mention given by Bernoldus in 1087=MGH, SSRG, V, 446: ...Salomon quondam rex Ungarorum scilicet a Latislao iam dudum regno privatus et in exilium expulsus, dum quiddam fortiter contra regem Grecorum molitur, post incredibilem hostium stragem et ipse viriliter occubuit... Cf. also Anna Comnena VII, I, I: LEIB II, 87, mentioning Salomon as... δημαγωγός... DÖLGER, *Regesten 1144*. Also G. MORAVCSIK, *Byzantium and the Magyars*, Amsterdam, 1970, p. 65. The years of Victor III (1086-1088) seem to have been quiet and without major events in the series of roman-byzantine relations...

17. ...Οὐδὲ γὰρ ἀπὸ κρίσεως συνοδικῆς και διαγνωσεως τὴν ἐκκλησίαν τῆς Ῥώμης ἀπορραγῆναι τῆς πρὸς ἡμᾶς κοινωνίας, ἀλλ' ἀσυντηρήτως, ὡς ξοικεν, τὸ τοῦ πάπα μὴ φέρεσθαι ὄνομα... Document no 2, p. 60 in W. HOLTZMANN, «Die Unionsverhandlungen zwischen Kaiser Alexios I. und Papst Urban II. im Jahre 1089», BZ 28 (1928), pp. 38-67. Cf. also Bernoldus in 1089, *ibidem*, p. 450: ... Domnus papa Constantinopolitanum imperatorem ab excommunicatione per legatos suos absolvit, item literas Philippi, regis Francorum debitam ei subictionem promittentis suscepit... The mention *imperator Constantinopolitanus* is somewhat like an improvement of the mention *rex Grecorum*, used by Bernoldus for the year 1087. Cf. previous note 16.

policy abandoned the German alliance and aimed to find a new orientation in the well-known pontifical plans of a Crusade in the East¹⁸.

In close connection with all these facts stand the four very important documents which have been published by Walther Holtzmann in 1928¹⁹. All of them were written in 1089, the year of the byzantine-papal *rapprochement* and present the Byzantines as being divided in their opinions. A former ambassador to the papal court and native of Italy, the Greek metropolitan of Reggio Calabria Basil who is in very good terms with the anti-Pope Clement III (Guibert of Ravenna), defended the German alliance and complained that his colleagues, the Metropolitan of Santa Severina and the Archbishop of Rossano Romanus had submitted themselves to Urban II, thus retaining their sees²⁰, although the treaties concluded between Alexius I and Henry IV were still in force²¹. The editor of the documents pointed out that Basil's point of view was somewhat obsolete in 1089 (it could have been true for the years 1083-1084, when the Norman danger was still threatening the integrity of the byzantine empire)²², since no source mentions the existence of any treaty with Germany for the years 1084-1089²³. So, concludes W. Holtzmann, in the year 1089, the Byzantines were already in their way to show their will to be in good relations with Pope Urban

18. Cf. Bernoldus in 1091, *ibidem*, p. 450 : ... Domnus papa eo tempore in partibus Campaniae morabatur, et ab omnibus catholicis debita reverentia colebatur, videlicet a Constantinopolitano imperatore et a Philippo Francorum rege, aliisque diversorum regnorum principibus tam aecclesiasticis quam secularibus excepto in Teutonico regno, ubi ex catholicis in partem excommunicatorum avaricia decepti sponte sua se transtulerunt... As we see, Byzantium has definitely abandoned the german alliance and Alexius I is mentioned as *imperator Constantinopolitanus* constantly.

19. Documents edited in the pages 59-67 of W. HOLTZMANN, «Unionsverhandlungen...» ; cf. note 17.

20. Document no 4, p. 67 : ... ὁ δὲ μητροπολίτης Σευηρίνης καὶ ὁ ἀρχιεπίσκοπος Ρουσιάνου τῷ Οὐρβανῷ ὑπετάγησαν καὶ διὰ τοῦτο καὶ ἐν τοῖς αὐτῶν κατελείφθησαν θρόνοις...

21. Document no 4, p. 66 : ...ὁ δὲ τοιοῦτος ρῆξ Ἀλαμανίας συνθήκας ἔχων μετὰ τοῦ βασιλέως ἡμῶν τοῦ ἀγίου, [ἀς] καὶ ἡ γραφὴ τοῦ πάπα Ῥώμης Κλήμεντος περιέχει, ἥτις, πρὸς τὴν ἀγιωσύνην σου ἀπεστάλη, κατὰ τὸν καιρὸν τοῦ ἤρος, εἴπερ θεοῦ βούλησις ἐστίν, εἰς ἀναίρεσιν τῶν ἀθέων Φράγγων μέλλει ἐν Ἰταλίᾳ γενέσθαι ὡς παρὰ πάντων ἀκούομεν καὶ αὐτὸς ὁ Κλήμης μετ' αὐτοῦ, ὅς καὶ διὰ γραφῆς αὐτοῦ ἐδήλωσέ μοι πρὸς αὐτὸν ἀφικέσθαι, μὴ δυνθέντος ἐμοῦ τοῦτο ποιῆσαι...

22. Cf. HOLTZMANN, *ibidem*, p. 57.

23. HOLTZMANN, *ibidem*, p. 57, n. 5, p. 51.

(documents nos 2 and 3), and Basil of Reggio knows it very well, when he asks the Patriarch of Constantinople Nicolas III Grammaticos (1084-1111) to hand him the bishopric of Leucas in the Ionian Sea as a restitution for the lost see of Reggio Calabria²⁴.

While documents no 2 (i. e. the decision of the Synod at Constantinople that the Pope's name must be mentioned again in the diptychs) and no 3 (i.e. the invitation of the Patriarch to the Pope to send a confession of faith) show obvious Byzantine tendency to reestablish cordial relations with the Papacy, documents 1 and 4 stand in obvious contradiction with this official point of view. Document no 1 is an answer of the anti-Pope Clement III to Basil of Reggio and explains that there is a schism among the Church, fomented by some bishops who were heretic and proclaimed a new Pope. And further: «... we cannot order, nor even write to the duke of Apulia, writes Clement III, nor to anyone of the Franks of Italy on the subject of your see; we know very well that they are our enemies... So, be patient for a while and, when a general restitution takes place, then you will be delivered your see...»²⁵.

According to Clement III, this much desired restitution will occur when, «... soon, our Son the king of Germany will come to us and, then, he will restore everything, as well as your affairs...»²⁶. There can be hardly any doubt that Clement expected a German campaign in Italy in the summer of 1089 and hoped that this victorious campaign would restore the Byzantine sees of Southern Italy to their former masters, because the new order established by Urban II, the heresiarch had to be smashed.

The metropolitan see of Reggio Calabria was granted by Urban II to Rangerius of Marmoutiers²⁷, who, in his attempt to take possession of his see and getting money from everywhere, was finally captured

24. HOLTZMANN, *ibidem*, p. 57/8.

25. Document no 1, p. 59-60: ... τὸν δὲ δοῦκαν ἢ ἕτερόν τινα τῶν Φράγγων τῶν ἐν τῇ Ἰταλίᾳ περὶ τῆς ἐκκλησίας, ἧς ἔγραψας, οὔτε ἀξιοῦμεν οὔτε γράφομεν, ἐχθρωδῶς εἰδότες εἰς ἡμᾶς τούτους διακειμένους. ἀλλ' ὑπόμεινον μικρὸν ἀδικηθεῖς, ὡς καὶ ἡμεῖς ὑπομένομεν, καὶ ὅταν γένηται τῶν πραγμάτων ἀποκατάστασις, ἀπολάβῃς καὶ σὺ τὸν ἴδιον θρόνον...

26. Document no 1, p. 60: ... τάχιον γὰρ τὸ ἡμέτερον τέκνον ὁ βασιλεὺς τῆς Ἀλαμανίας καταλαμβάνει πρὸς ἡμᾶς καὶ οἰκονομηθήσονται πάντα καλῶς, ὁμοίως δὲ καὶ τὰ παρὰ σοῦ...

27. MANSI XX, 725 (Concilium Melfitanum 1089, c. I, c. 8). Cf. HOLTZMANN, p. 54.

and killed by the prince of Capua Jordan, who is cited as *ἄνθρωπος τοῦ ῥηγῶς Ἀλαμανίας* in document no 4. This must have happened in the summer of 1089, prior to the redaction of letter n° 4 and after the promise of Clement III to Basil of Reggio that «everything will be restored». What is interesting here is not that Henry IV of Germany did not undertake any campaign to Italy in the summer of 1089, but that Clement III tried to convince Basil that the German king still believed in the validity of the treaty concluded between the Byzantine emperor and himself. So, Holtzmann's point of view, that the German alliance was not profitable to Byzantium in 1089²⁸, is not convincing; the German-Byzantine treaty, as it might have been understood by its Byzantine partisans, was profitable to the empire for its western interests. That means that Henry IV, because of his quarrel with the Papacy pointed out by Anna Comnena, would restore to the Byzantine Empire Southern Italy and destroy the Norman power at the Pope's orders. In the Balkans, Byzantium would manage the situation somehow, as it was to be proved afterwards.

As it has been already said, in 1087, the Petchenegs and the former king of Hungary Salomon assailed the empire and took Dristra. The fact that with them was a declared enemy of Henry IV, tends to demonstrate that Byzantium and Germany still had common enemies in 1087. If we assume that the treaties were still in force in the spring of 1089, it might be easily deduced that they never lost their significance since 1082, when they had been concluded. That is why the anti-Pope Clement III insisted on the German intervention in Italy that it would be profitable to Byzantium and there would be general restitution of all misfortunes and misdoings until then.

But, to my knowledge, the German campaign in Italy expected by Clement III and Metropolitan Basil of Reggio never took place. Pope Urban II seemed to be immovable and strong enough to gather warriors²⁹. So, Alexius I Comnenus, in the autumn of 1089, was compelled to change his western policy recognizing, as Emperor Michael VII Doukas had done before him, the loss of Southern Italy and to concentrate all his endeavours to the recovery of Asia Minor, with the help of those people

28. Cf. notes 22-24.

29. Anna Comnena, writing after these events, attributes to the Pope of Rome the most extraordinary powers and possibilities, I, 13, 1: LEIB I, 47: ... ὁ γὰρ τοῦ πάπας τῆς Ῥώμης (γενναία δὲ αὐτῆ ἀρχὴ καὶ στρατεύμασι παντοδαποῖς περιφραττομένη)...

who had previously destroyed Byzantine power in the West. Naturally, this new orientation of the imperial policy affected too much the Metropolitan of Southern Italy, who did not care about the recovery of Asia Minor, and Basil's objections are merely proofs of the existence of another policy prevailing until the year 1089: the German-Byzantine alliance, aiming to the recovery of Southern Italy.

After the loss of Asia Minor and Southern Italy, the confusion and lack of resolution during the reign of Nicephorus III Botaneiates was merely due to the priority that had to be given to the endeavours for recovery. Faced with the Pope's denial about the legitimacy of his reign, Nicephorus III was not in a position to follow Michael's plans for the recovery of Asia Minor with Western aid. So, he his successor, Alexius I, were naturally driven towards the German alliance. This alliance had as its goal the destruction of Papal military power; when the latter would be accomplished, Germany would rule over central Italy and Byzantium would rule over Southern Italy. Such was the custom at the beginning of the eleventh century and the content of all German-Byzantine understanding. This priority of «western recovery» was imposed to both allies, as long as the Papacy was in a position to threaten both empires, and it lasted till 1089. The failure of the German-Byzantine alliance was apparently due to the Byzantine hope that after the delinquency of Henry IV in 1089, the next target was the recovery of Asia Minor from the Seljukids. The emperor Alexius knew very well that a German aid for the reconquest of Asia Minor was out of the question. Three German campaigns in Italy between 1082 and 1085 were far from being decisive, although Italy was among the most prominent interests of a German emperor or king. After the long-expected campaign of the summer of 1089 which finally did not occur, Alexius turned finally his attention to the new Pope Urban II, abandoning in a sease his former plans for the recovery of Southern Italy and, consequently, the German alliance. That meant a return to the policy followed by Michael VII Doukas during his reign. Basil of Reggio did not understand at once or did not want to believe that all previous plans were losing now their importance. He still believed in the possibility of recovery of the ecclesiastical sees of Southern Italy with German aid, and complained that various greek bishops acknowledged the new reality in Italy submitting themselves to Urban II.

This sudden readjustment of Byzantine policy towards the Pope occurs only in 1089, although previous treaties with Henry IV of Germany were still in force. In succeeding years Byzantium would aban-

