



**HAL**  
open science

# **Deus miraculose nobis tradiderit imperium Romanum: Conquering, Inventing, and Negotiating Kingship in the Latin Empire of Constantinople (circa 1200–1230)**

Simon Hasdenteufel

## ► To cite this version:

Simon Hasdenteufel. Deus miraculose nobis tradiderit imperium Romanum: Conquering, Inventing, and Negotiating Kingship in the Latin Empire of Constantinople (circa 1200–1230). Sven Jaros; Eric Böhme; Marie Ulrike Jaros; Stefan Magnussen; Wolfgang Huschner. Changes of Monarchical Rule in the Late Middle Ages / Monarchische Herrschaftswchsel des Spätmittelalters, De Gruyter, pp.303-324, 2024, Europa im Mittelalter, 9783111218083. <10.1515/9783111218083-015>. <hal-05219919v1>

**HAL Id: hal-05219919**

**<https://hal.science/hal-05219919v1>**

Submitted on 23 Aug 2025 (v1), last revised 12 Mar 2026 (v2)

HAL is a multi-disciplinary open access archive for the deposit and dissemination of scientific research documents, whether they are published or not. The documents may come from teaching and research institutions in France or abroad, or from public or private research centers.

L'archive ouverte pluridisciplinaire HAL, est destinée au dépôt et à la diffusion de documents scientifiques de niveau recherche, publiés ou non, émanant des établissements d'enseignement et de recherche français ou étrangers, des laboratoires publics ou privés.



Distributed under a Creative Commons CC0 1.0 - Universal - International License

Simon Hasdenteufel

# ***Deus miraculose nobis tradiderit imperium Romanum: Conquering, Inventing, and Negotiating Kingship in the Latin Empire of Constantinople (circa 1200–1230)***

**Abstract:** After the capture of Constantinople by the armies of the Fourth Crusade in 1204, the conquerors elected a new emperor to rule them. This paper aims at studying the relationships between this emperor and various collective institutions such as assemblies, parliaments and councils, which were frequently organised by the Latins in order to take decisions. I argue that political practice in the new Latin Empire of Constantinople was built on the fundamental principle of sharing power between the emperor and these collective institutions. A close reading of Geoffroy of Villehardouin's chronicle from a lexicographical point of view will show that this negotiation system was by no means a sign of political weakness on the part of Latin lords but a standard way of doing politics. Furthermore, by analysing the Latin Empire's constitutional treatises, we will see that this political concept of sharing power kept vivid a sense of public authority besides the traditional feudal paradigm built on private links. Actually, the emperor and the collective institutions were part of an imperial structure, and this *imperium* bound its subjects to public obedience. Lastly, this paper will focus on various strategies employed by the Latin Emperor in order to overtake the collective institutions and establish his own autocratic authority. This mix of public and private obedience created complex political configurations and structured aristocratic relationships in the Latin Empire.

The year 1204 witnessed major monarchical changes and overwhelming political crises in Byzantium. It culminated with the conquest of Constantinople on 12<sup>th</sup> April 1204 by the armies of the Fourth Crusade.<sup>1</sup> This was followed by the election and coronation of a new emperor from among the leaders of the expedition, namely Baldwin, count of Flanders and Hainaut. As Emperor Baldwin I, he succeeded the traditional *basileis* of the Byzantine Empire on the throne of Constantinople.

This momentous political shift in the history of the medieval Mediterranean has raised among scholars many discussions on these new monarchs often labelled by his-

---

<sup>1</sup> For a chronological account, see *Queller/Madden*, Fourth Crusade (1997), 186–203; *Saint-Guillain*, À propos de l'élection impériale (2010), 717–720. Among the rich bibliography on the Fourth Crusade's consequences, see *Angold*, Fall of Constantinople (2013), 11–30; *Madden*, (Ed.), Fourth Crusade (2008); *Laiou* (Ed.), *Urbs capta* (2005).

toriography as “Latin Emperors” although this expression does not appear in the sources where they are usually described according to the current Byzantine title *Imperator Romanorum*, or more simply presented as Emperors of Constantinople. These Latin Emperors ruled in Constantinople until 1261 when the “Queen of the Cities” was retaken by Michael VIII Palaiologos from the Byzantine imperial dynasty which had evaded to Nicaea. In the following decades, the Latin Empire’s imperial dignity would be passed on between the Western monarchs who claimed some kind of filiation with the former Latin Emperors of Constantinople.<sup>2</sup>

The quotation in this paper’s title pertains to the first years of the Latin Empire and is drawn from a letter written in September 1206 by Latin Emperor Henry of Flanders, Baldwin I’s brother and successor, to their bastard brother Godfrey, provost of Saint-Amé in Douai, France.<sup>3</sup> This document represents one of the rare texts known to us emanating directly from a Latin Emperor, and it holds paradoxical considerations on the first years of the Latin Empire’s existence.<sup>4</sup> On the one hand, Henry, who had participated in the crusade and who had just been elected emperor in August 1206, praises recent events as a miracle favouring the crusaders against the Greeks and bringing glory to the Flanders’ dynasty in Europe.<sup>5</sup> Similar to the conquest of Jerusalem during the First Crusade, the capture of Constantinople is part of a divine and providential history reflecting God’s will.<sup>6</sup> On the other hand, Henry describes various difficulties experienced by the conquerors and new settlers in Byzantium, mainly the assaults of King Kalojan of Bulgaria against the empire and the subsequent Latin defeat at Adrianopolis in April 1205, where Baldwin I was captured and later died in captivity in unknown circumstances.<sup>7</sup> Thus, beyond the irenic picture, this letter reveals an empire under construction which is already facing many political challenges.

Historiography has often focused on these difficulties so that various scholars have been used to describe and analyse the Latin Empire as the shadow of an empire which was too weak to exist as a real state in the Mediterranean geopolitical system, especially since its existence was relatively brief (less than 60 years between 1204 and

---

<sup>2</sup> For a critical reassessment of the Byzantine reconquest of Constantinople as narrated by the Greek sources, see *Kinloch*, *Byzantine Historiography* (2018). For the post-1261 use of the imperial title by western monarchs, see *Burkhardt*, *Intoxication* (2017), 297.

<sup>3</sup> *Urkunden*. Ed. *Thomas/Tafel*, vol. 2, 37–42; *Van Tricht*, *Latin Renovatio* (2011), 75.

<sup>4</sup> *Hendrickx*, *Régestes des empereurs latins* (1988), 7–222.

<sup>5</sup> On crusading as a source of prestige, see *Naus*, *Constructing Kingship* (2016), 33 f.

<sup>6</sup> See also the previous letters of Baldwin I to Pope Innocent III and to all Christians in the West after his coronation as emperor on 16 May 1204, in *Oorkonden*. Ed. *Prevenier*, vol. 2, 564–604. For an English translation, see *Contemporary Sources*. Ed. *Andrea*, 98–112. On the role of miracles in crusade narratives, see *Spacey*, *Writing of Crusade Narrative* (2020).

<sup>7</sup> *Madgearu*, *Asanids* (2017), 138–156; *Wolff*, *Second Bulgarian Empire* (1976), 167–203.

1261).<sup>8</sup> In addition, the Latin Emperors have sometimes been considered not skilled or clever enough to stand their ground and to confront the neighbouring states, while the barons in Constantinople were seen as harmful characters, threatening the longevity and security of the empire.<sup>9</sup> Lastly, some byzantinists have tended to see the Latin Empire as a mere parenthesis in the history of Byzantium, leaving aside the elements of continuity under the Latin Emperors and the extent of Latin influence on Byzantine politics and culture after 1261.<sup>10</sup>

However, these pessimistic analyses have been challenged more recently by Filip Van Tricht's research which, on the basis of a wide variety of sources, has convincingly shown that the Latin Emperors were not as weak as previously thought. In addition, according to Filip Van Tricht, the Latin Emperors had a thorough understanding of Byzantine ideology which they made use of in order to rule and to play a part in eastern Mediterranean diplomacy. Thus, they effectively became the successors of the Byzantine emperors considering themselves as true representatives of the everlasting Eastern Empire – in a word, the new *basileis* of Constantinople.<sup>11</sup> As attractive and solid as this theory may be, Filip Van Tricht's arguments are still intensely debated, especially as sources emanating directly from the Latin Emperor's entourage remain desperately scarce, leaving this issue open to new interpretations.<sup>12</sup>

Since the present volume aims to reassess the possible roles and the agency of medieval monarchs within changes of rulership with a focus on processes of negotiation, it offers an opportunity to further challenge overly negative views concerning the Latin Empire. The aim of this article is not to deny the concrete difficulties of this political entity, but to study more precisely the complex political configurations and the collective dynamics in the context of changing monarchical rule. Thus, we should not consider the Latin Empire according to our contemporary perceptions influenced by ideology of the modern state, but rather as a field of political experimentations.

---

8 Interestingly, the Carolingian Empire, which existed not much longer than the Latin Empire, enjoys a far better reputation in both medieval and modern historiography. See *Gabriele*, *Empire of Memory* (2011).

9 *Sampsonis*, *Empire latin* (2019), 253–274; *Burkhardt*, *Mediterranes Kaisertum* (2014), 66–87, 241–369; *Hendrickx*, *Contrat féodal* (2000), 239 f.; *Hendrickx*, *Diplomatie* (1974), 105–107; *Hendrickx*, *Pouvoir impérial* (1974), 117; *Lock*, *Latin Emperors* (1994), 298, 301–304; *Wolff*, *Latin Empire* (1976), 199–201, 211–233; *Longnon*, *Empire latin* (1949), 167–169, 178, 186.

10 This may be the case for the ritual of anointment, for example. See *Dagron*, *Empereur et prêtre* (1995), 282–284.

11 *Van Tricht*, *Horoscope of Emperor Baldwin II* (2018); *Van Tricht*, *Claiming the Basileia* (2017), 248–287; *id.*, *Robert of Courtenay* (2013), 996–1034; *id.*, *Latin Renovatio* (2011). Before Filip Van Tricht's studies, David Jacoby had already shown from an economical perspective that, even after 1204, Constantinople's mediterranean trade kept flourishing dynamically thanks to its merchant elites: *Jacoby*, *Economy of Latin Constantinople* (2005), 195–214.

12 *Angold*, *Rev. of: Van Tricht, Latin Renovatio* (2013); *Angold*, *Rev. of: Van Tricht, Horoscope of Emperor Baldwin II* (2019).

From 1204 onward, the Latin conquerors set up a new organisation on a scale that had not been seen since the creation of the ‘Crusader States’ in Syria and Palestine in the wake of the First Crusade. Firstly, they distributed powers, shared lands between themselves and established the frame of their political relationships through various “constitutional treatises” we are about to examine: namely the Pact of March 1204, the *Partitio Romaniae* and the Pact of October 1205 which are well-known documents analysed by historiography. Secondly, they elected a new emperor and created councils of representatives or judges in order to rule jointly with the new sovereign. Furthermore, the average length of an imperial reign in the Latin Empire was shorter than in other medieval kingdoms or empires (Fig. 1).<sup>13</sup> Due to the distance to Europe, to diplomatic obligations and to military pressure, it was difficult for the Latin emperors to stay on the Constantinopolitan throne for long compared to other monarchs.<sup>14</sup> Thus, deliberative parliaments, elections, and regencies were frequent political processes in the empire where rules of succession were opened to debates and the emperors frequently absent.<sup>15</sup> These collectively organised processes shaped the framework of monarchical power we are trying to define and analyse throughout this volume. On the following pages, I argue that these collective processes and institutions, involving various members of the aristocratic group and structuring their ratio of power, played a central role

---

**13** However, the average duration of Byzantine reigns as they appear on the figure must be qualified. Indeed, except for the 12<sup>th</sup> century Comnenian dynasty, the author notes that Byzantine reigns of Byzantine emperors were quite short and precarious. Between 963 and 1204, of 22 adult emperors in Byzantium, “twelve were murdered, blinded or consigned to a monastery after reigns none of which exceeded ten years”. See *Whittow, Staying on the top* (2017), 808–810.

**14** After Henry of Flanders’ death in 1216, his brother-in-law and successor Peter of Courtenay had to come to Constantinople from his lordship in the Kingdom of France. Yet, he was captured in 1217 by Theodor Komnenus Doukas of Epirus, while passing by Durazzo during his journey to his new empire. Then, his son and heir to the throne Robert of Courtenay arrived in the imperial capital only around spring 1221. Because of the empire’s difficult situation, he left Constantinople at an unknown date, probably at the beginning of the year 1227, in order to gain help in the West. He died on his way back, in Achaia, in November 1227. Afterwards, the former king of Jerusalem John of Brienne became the new emperor of Constantinople, but one had to await autumn 1231 for his arrival. When he passed away in 1237, his successor Baldwin II, who was Peter and Yolande of Courtenay’s youngest son, was sojourning in France in order to obtain reinforcements for the Latin Empire. He came back in Constantinople around spring 1240 but made another journey to the West in 1244–1247/8. See *Osswald, Trois notes* (2021), 137–140; *Van Tricht, Horoscope of Emperor Baldwin II* (2018), 63; *id.*, *Robert of Courtenay* (2013), 1023 f., 1027 f.; *Perry, John of Brienne* (2013), 162; *Chrissis, Frankish Greece* (2012), 120–126, 155–159; *Jo Gilles, Nova Francia* (2010), 90–103.

**15** Among the Latin Emperors mentioned in the previous note, Peter and Robert of Courtenay as well as John of Brienne were elected by Constantinopolitan barons. Even if heredity and primogeniture remained guiding principles for electing the emperor, imperial dignity was opened to outsiders. Thus, choosing a successor could raise debates among the barons. For example, John was by no means related to the imperial family and tried to remove Baldwin II from the throne. See *Van Tricht, Horoscope of Emperor Baldwin II* (2018), 60; *id.*, *Robert of Courtenay* (2013), 1021 f.

in the Latin Empire, not as a reflection of political weakness, but rather as an indicator of the ways politics were done in the Latin eastern Mediterranean.

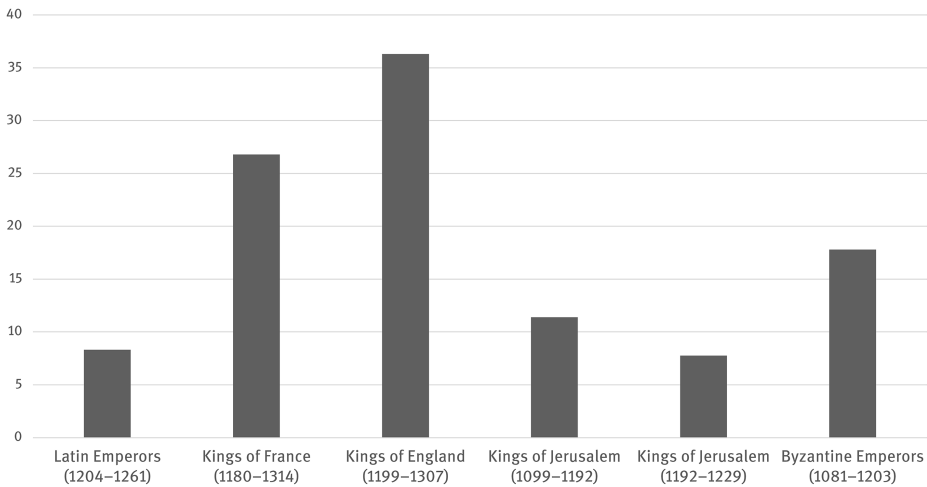


Fig. 1: Average Reign of Rulers in the Latin Empire of Constantinople.

## Deliberations as the main political Practice throughout the Crusade and the Conquest of Byzantium

The course of the crusade and the subsequent conquest of Constantinople involved frequent collective deliberations and discussions between the Latins, which contributed to the sharing of power in the new Latin Empire. Geoffroy of Villehardouin's chronicle – one of our main sources for the events around 1204 – offers a detailed and vivid view of the political debates among the crusaders, especially since the author was one of the most important barons participating in the crusade.<sup>16</sup> He repeatedly describes Latin knights having discussions about the progress of the expedition and the ways of settlement in conquered Byzantium. For example, in 1203 the leading barons of the crusade *parleroient ensamble* about Emperor Alexius IV's proposal to stay one more year in Constantinople until he could pay his debt to the crusaders for having helped him to get back his throne.<sup>17</sup> The discussion was all the stormier that

<sup>16</sup> For the reliability of Villehardouin's testimony on political affairs, see *Noble*, *Stratégie militaire* (2000), 119–136; *Noble*, Villehardouin (1999), 202–211; *Faral*, Geoffroy de Villehardouin (1936), 530–582.

<sup>17</sup> Villehardouin, *Conquête*. Ed. *Dufournet*, § 196–199, 140–142.





**Tab. 1:** Occurrences of the most employed terms in the word cloud (with English translation).

Term in Modern French	Term in English	Occurrences
<i>Gens</i>	People	334
<i>Empereur</i>	Emperor	310
<i>Terre*</i>	Land*	254
<i>Ost</i>	Host	240
<i>Comte*</i>	Count*	160
<i>Constantinople</i>	Constantinople	159
<i>Nous</i>	Us	153
<i>Jour*</i>	Day*	135
<i>Cité</i>	City	117
<i>Barons</i>	Barons	116
<i>Grec*</i>	Greek*	115
<i>Chevalier*</i>	Knight*	113
<i>Ville</i>	Town	113
<i>Baudouin</i>	Baldwin	113
<i>Conseil*</i>	Council*	110
<i>Marquis</i>	Marquis	109
<i>Henri</i>	Henry	105
<i>Dieu</i>	God	96
<i>Homme*</i>	Man*	94
<i>Frère*</i>	Brother*	91
<i>Saint*</i>	Saint*	83
<i>Doge</i>	Doge	79
<i>Andrinople</i>	Adrianopolis	75
<i>Seigneur*</i>	Lord*	71
<i>Part</i>	Part	71
<i>Venise</i>	Venice	70
<i>Geoffroy</i>	Geoffroy	68

\*= Included both singular and plural uses.

military affairs concerning the course of the crusade, the capture of Constantinople, and the settlement in Byzantium. They also deal with political issues, for example the sharing of lands after the conquest, the imperial election, or the feudal conflicts between Emperor Baldwin I and Marquis Boniface of Montferrat, the former leader of the crusade.<sup>25</sup> On top of that, Villehardouin asserts that his testimony about the events of the Fourth Crusade is all the more authentic since he had personally attended all the councils, as though this would be a decisive criterion of veracity. Basically, the author seems to consider these gatherings as central institutions of the expedition.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>25</sup> Villehardouin, *Conquête*. Ed. *Dufournet*, § 234, 162; § 256, 174; § 257 f., 176; § 260, 178; § 265, 180; § 283, 190–192; § 285, 193; § 294 f., 196–198; § 298 f., 100. See also Clari, *Conquête*. Ed. *Dufournet*, § 68, 150–152; § 93–95, 184–188; § 98–100, 190–194; § 104 f., 198–200; § 107, 202.

<sup>26</sup> Villehardouin, *Conquête*. Ed. *Dufournet*, § 120, 98.

Villehardouin also highlights the crusaders' tendency to speak a lot, his narrative frequently using turns of phrase such as *assez y ot paroles et avant et ariere*, or more broadly repeating the word *paroles*.<sup>27</sup> It thus casts light on the fact that having verbal arguments was part of political decision making. Above all, among the occurrences of deliberations, one can often find the expression *prist conseil* (singular) or *prirent conseil* (plural) which refers to rulers consulting other barons in order to make decisions. The Latin Emperors, themselves coming from the aristocracy, were accustomed to have arguments with other barons, and this may have remained a fundamental political practice for them also as rulers. In Villehardouin's chronicle, there are six occurrences for Emperor Baldwin I consulting his men, and as much as 17 for Baldwin's successor, the regent and emperor-to-be Henry of Flanders.<sup>28</sup> The latter, who had to protect Thrace in the west against Kalojan and the Marmara shores in the east against Theodor Laskaris, always *prist conseil* (took advice) from his barons when making a military decision at the head of the imperial army.<sup>29</sup> Sometimes the council's participants are namely cited. For example, Geoffroy of Villehardouin states that on 31rd March 1207, Henry decided together with Cono of Béthune, Geoffroy of Villehardouin and Milo le Bréban to save the Latin garrison of Kibotos on the Marmara shore attacked by Theodor Laskaris.<sup>30</sup> Thus, governing and defending the Latin Empire required the rulers to consult the main barons frequently. This attitude is also echoed in the chronicle of George Akropolites, who maintained that Latins generally tended to speak more openly to their rulers than the Greeks did.<sup>31</sup> That is especially interesting since Akropolites himself was a Greek citizen of Constantinople who had grown up under Latin rule before emigrating to Nicaea. The fact that he included his observations on these differing political attitudes into his chronicle indicates that they must have been of special interest to him.

Lastly, Villehardouin mentions 14 *parlements* organised by the Latins during the crusade and conquest periods until 1207. These procedures have already been studied by Benjamin Hendrickx for 13<sup>th</sup> century Latin Romania.<sup>32</sup> Hendrickx has shown that these *parlements* were held frequently in order to discuss thorny issues, involving not only the emperor and his barons, but sometimes also lesser knights, members of the clergy and the bourgeoisie. Such extended assemblies could make decisions concerning general military or political interest and even religious matters. Normally, they

27 See for example Villehardouin, *Conquête*. Ed. *Dufournet*, § 40–42, 58–60; § 147, 112–114; § 234, 162; § 239 f., 164; § 256, 174; § 265, 180; § 272, 184; § 294 f., 196–198; § 423, 270; § 429, 272.

28 Marquis Boniface of Montferrat even had a council of his own with Jacques of Avesnes, Guillaume of Champlitte, and Othon of La Roche. See Villehardouin, *Conquête*. Ed. *Dufournet*, § 284 f., 192.

29 See for example Villehardouin, *Conquête*. Ed. *Dufournet*, § 402, p. 256; § 423, p. 270; § 426, p. 272; § 428, p. 272; § 429, p. 272; § 435, p. 276; § 441, p. 280; §453, p. 286; § 466, p. 294; § 468, p. 296; §470, p. 296; § 477, p. 300; § 481, p. 302; § 488, p. 306.

30 Villehardouin, *Conquête*. Ed. *Dufournet*, § 466, p. 294.

31 Georgii Acropolitae Opera. Ed. *Heisenberg*, § 50, 99. For an English translation, see *History*. Ed. *Macrides*, 262. See also *Longnon*, *Empire latin* (1949), 143.

32 *Hendrickx*, *Parlements* (2012), 211–228.

were held in churches or abbeys, underlining the fact that all political practices stood firmly under the influence of the church and were inextricably bound up with a Christian perspective: deciding always implied God's will.<sup>33</sup> Moreover, Benjamin Hendrickx' article rightly indicates that medieval chronicles do not use the word *parlements* systematically in order to refer to this kind of procedure. For example, the assembly of March 1204 which established basic rules for sharing spoils of war, electing the emperor, and distributing lands was not called a *parlement* by Villehardouin, yet definitely can be considered as such.<sup>34</sup> However, even if Hendrickx is correct when saying that *parlements* cannot be considered as institutions with a regulated status, his perception that *parlements* reflected the emperor's weakness or a situation of crisis remains arguable in the light of the examples presented above.<sup>35</sup> Indeed, it appears that parliaments are simply a current political practice for Latin Emperors. Baldwin and Henry frequently hold parliaments prior to making decision. For them it was a regular political process. It is all the truer that more generally rulers both in Byzantium and in the Latin West had to consider (or at least appear to consider) the interests of the aristocracy and other parts of society in order to remain legitimate and recognised as protectors of the *utilitas communis*.<sup>36</sup>

## Imperial Authority and collective Institutions

Indeed, one must note that, according to the "constitutional treatises" of 1204/05, the Latin Emperors could only rule in coordination with the collective institutions. These documents originally created a kind of balance in the new Latin Empire between the *basileus* and his Latin barons, in accordance with the political order in the West (or in Latin East) where the monarchs couldn't act as autocrats or tyrants but had to share power.<sup>37</sup>

The procedure for the election of the first Latin Emperor is presented in the Pact of March 1204, concluded by the crusaders shortly before the capture of Constantino-

33 Villehardouin, *Conquête*. Ed. *Dufournet*, § 43 f., 60–62 (in the church Saint Marie of Soissons); § 129–131, 104 (in the abbey Saint Stephen on the Bosphorus); § 239 f., 164 (in a non-identified church); § 260, 178 (in a chapel in a Constantinopolitan palace held by the Venetian doge).

34 Villehardouin, *Conquête*. Ed. *Dufournet*, § 234, 162.

35 *Hendrickx*, *Parlements* (2012), 226.

36 *Kaldellis*, *Byzantine Republic* (2015), 32 f.; *Kyritses*, *Imperial Council* (2013), 57–70; *Sassier*, *Bien commun* (2010), 245–258. On ideal rulers and the exigences of humility, see *Weiler*, *Rex Renitens* (2000), 1–42. Serving one's subjects and working for their salvation as main duties of rulers appear also in a letter of Innocent III to clerics residing at Constantinople. See *Patrologiae Cursus Completus*. Ed. *Migne*, vol. 215, 514; English translation in *Contemporary Sources*. Ed. *Andrea*, 134.

37 These aspects have been well studied for Latin East by *Besson*, *Pratiques du pouvoir* (2017), 332 f. Yet, as shown by *Filip Van Tricht*, Latin Emperors quickly managed to overcome the "constitutional treatises": *Van Tricht*, *Latin Renovatio* (2011), 215–219.

ple. Six men chosen by the Venetians from among their people, with six other men designated by the “pilgrims” (i. e. the rest of the crusaders) from among their ranks were to elect the emperor to come who is presented as: *personam (...) quam credent [viz. the electors] melius scire tenere, et melius posse tenere, et melius scire ordinare terram et Imperium ad honorem Dei et sancta Romane Ecclesie et Imperii*.<sup>38</sup> However, there are no indications proving clearly that this electoral council remained active after Baldwin I’s election and coronation. In the Pact of March, it is also stipulated that another council of at least 24 *homines* or *partitores* should distribute fiefs and honours (*feuda et honorificentia*) to all *homines* and assign them the *servitia* they owed to the *Imperatori et Imperio*.<sup>39</sup> Among the members of this council, one half was to be elected by the Venetians and the other half by the pilgrims, in other words the representatives of the crusade acting as some kind of collective institution. Thus, according to the Pact of March, fiefs and services were not to be given by the emperor to his men, but by mediation of a collective authority emanating from the crusaders in the service of the new empire. In this sharing process, the Latin Emperor would hold one quarter of the empire, while the remaining three quarters were to be divided equally between the Venetians and the “pilgrims”, each side obtaining one quarter and a half or three eighths. The way this distribution was put into practice is known to us through another obscure document, often labelled as the *Partitio Romaniae* and being basically a list of toponyms.<sup>40</sup>

In view of this fragmentation of the Byzantine Empire in the wake of the Latin reorganisation, Benjamin Hendrickx and Filip Van Tricht speak of a “feudalization” of Byzantium, using the traditional framework of analysis conveyed by Frédéric-Louis

---

38 Urkunden. Ed. *Thomas/Tafel*, vol. 1, 444–449 (Venetian version); 449–452 (version of the pilgrims). Besides the information contained in the Pact of March, Baldwin’s election is well-documented in contemporary sources. See Villehardouin, *Conquête*. Ed. *Dufournet*, § 256–258, 174–180; Clari, *Conquête*. Ed. *Dufournet*, § 93 f., 184–186; *Gunther de Paris*, *Historia*. Ed. Riant, 58 f.; *Devastatio Constantinopolitana*. Ed. *Andrea*, 137; *Chronica Albrici Monachi Trium Fontium*. Ed. *Scheffer-Boichorst*, 884; *Choniates, Historia*. Ed. *Van Dieten*, 596 f.; for an English translation see, *Choniates, City of Byzantium*. Ed. *Mangoulias*, 327 f. See also Baldwin’s letter to the pope and the West: *Patrologiae Cursus Completus*. Ed. *Migne*, vol. 215, 447–454; *Oorkonden*. Ed. *Prevenier*, vol. 2, 577–604.

39 Urkunden. Ed. *Thomas/Tafel*, vol. 1, 447 f. (Venetian version), 451 version of the pilgrims). The word *partitores* is not used in the pact of March 1204 but in the pact of October 1205 (see *ibid.*, 571) studied below.

40 According to this document, the emperor, the Venetians, and the pilgrims each were to receive lands and revenues falling into two categories: firstly, territories in nearby Thrace which could be immediately conquered, secondly, territories in the rest of the Byzantine Empire. As this document has no official formatting, it is considered a draft established from the Byzantine fiscal registers of September 1203, shortly before the Latin conquest. However, dating the *Partitio* remains difficult: Benjamin Hendrickx argued for October 1204 while Filip Van Tricht more prudently conjectured that the drawing up of the document might be placed in the period May–September 1204. See *Partitio*. Ed. *Carile*, 217–222; *Hendrickx, Main Problems* (1974), 795; *Oikonomidès, Décomposition* (1992), 4–11; *Van Tricht, Latin Renovatio* (2011), 47–51.

Ganshof's famous book *Qu'est-ce que la féodalité?* Yet, they observe that some elements of the Pact of March do not match the feudal system as it is traditionally perceived for societies in the Latin west.<sup>41</sup> It seems indeed that the bond between the Latin Emperor and the *homines* in the Pact of March had not established a feudal and personal bond, but rather a bond of political obedience to the ruler and the empire.<sup>42</sup> Before delineating the distribution of fiefs and services, the Pact of March featured three oaths (*iuramentum*) to be taken by the Venetians and the pilgrims: firstly, the promise to assist the emperor another year in defending the empire; secondly, an oath to the emperor for those ready to stay in the empire; lastly, the promise to ensure that the repartition of fiefs and the general agreements would be respected by everyone. Thus, there are two oaths defining the empire as an institution to be protected but only one relating directly to the emperor. Moreover, the *iuramentum* to him is not necessarily of feudal nature as a personal bond, but merely a commitment to imperial authority. Benjamin Hendrickx supposes that the oath to the emperor *secundum bonam et rationabilem consuetudinem* as recorded in the Pact of March is a reference to feudal law in Latin Europe.<sup>43</sup> Yet, one wonders whether it does not rather evoke the imperial structure perceived by the Latin as ensuring *utilitas communis* and common good for all the empire's subjects. Indeed, such political ideas had become more frequent in the end of the 12<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>44</sup> Of course, the crusaders brought some feudal components to the Byzantine and imperial frame, yet they still maintained the idea of obedience to the empire and its ruler as public institutions serving common good, thanks to *bonam et rationabilem consuetudinem*. In some subsequent documents, one can find references to the "customs of the empire", for example around 1229, when Jean of Brienne was about to be crowned emperor and swore to maintain and defend *jura imperii et honores et approbatas consuetudines imperii*.<sup>45</sup> In this case, the future ruler is presented not only as a feudal lord existing through pri-

41 Ganshof, *Féodalité* (2015); Van Tricht, *Latin Renovatio* (2011), 44 (noting the absence of *homagium* to the emperor), 57 (speaking about a "drastic feudalization" in Byzantium after 1204); Hendrickx, *Contrat féodal* (2000), 221–243.

42 Paradoxically, Benjamin Hendrickx holds the same findings concerning obedience to the *imperium* but nevertheless tries to fit the political organisation of the Latin Empire into a strict "Ganshofian" interpretative framework. He even goes as far as to search an "essence véritable de la féodalité occidentale" within the imperial institutions. See Hendrickx, *Contrat féodal* (2000), 225 f., 237. See also Carile, *Signoria rurale* (1980), 669, 676 f. who speaks of the remaining "alta sovranità dell'imperatore", and of mixed "diritti patrimoniali e diritti pubblici" within the new empire. Lastly, for criticism on the feudal paradigm, see Reynolds, *Fiefs* (1994); *ead.*, *Fiefs* (2011), 15–26; Magnou-Nortier, *Féodalité* (1996), 253–358. The feudal controversy is generally ignored in Modern historiography on the Latin Empire, feudality being accepted as the main paradigm for socio-political analyses.

43 Hendrickx, *Contrat féodal* (2000), 225; Hendrickx, *Pouvoir impérial* (1974), 106.

44 Sassier, *Bien commun* (2010/2), 249.

45 Jacoby, *Féodalité* (1971), 59 f.; Urkunden. Ed. Thomas/Tafel, vol. 2, 269. The earliest occurrence of the expression "customs of the empire" dates back to c. 1217 and is related to a proper feudal affair involving the Dalle Carceri family: *ibid.* vol. 3, 131.

vate bonds in a strictly feudal system as defined by Ganshof, but holds a kind of public office. More widely, we can note that throughout the Latin Empire's history, almost every emperor had to swear (*iurare*) to preserve the original repartitions, thus evoking a direct reference to the constitutional treatises, which evidently kept their legal strength.<sup>46</sup>

The fact that imperial power ran in relation with collective institutions beyond a mere feudal paradigm is also noticeable in the second constitutional treaty, concluded between the regent Henry of Flanders and the Venetian podesta Marino Zeno and often called the Pact of October 1205. It was drawn up after Baldwin I was captured at the battle of Adrianopolis but before Henry succeeded him as emperor, and it confirmed not only the pact of March 1204 but added new stipulations as well. This treaty established new collective institutions which were to take part in political affairs. It first referred to a *consilium* consisting of both the Venetian Podesta with his councillors and Frankish aristocrats.<sup>47</sup> Its role was primarily to summon *omnes milites Imperii* who were obliged to follow the emperor on military expeditions. Furthermore, this council had the authority to extend the duration of the service owed to the emperor in the case of enemy attacks on the Latin Empire.<sup>48</sup> Military matters and defense of the empire were thus the main purposes of this council. In addition, the Pact of October stated that, if the conventions were not observed by *milites* or by the emperor himself, then none of them would have the right to render justice personally by some kind of spoliation, as a feudal lord would to reassert his authority, but they both had to leave the case to a group of *iudicibus (...) tam per Francigenas, quam per Venetos erunt constituti*.<sup>49</sup> In addition, if the Latin Emperor were to act against justice, then he would have to beg forgiveness on the order of the mixed council and in presence of the judges. Here again, the Latin Emperor appears as by no means omnipotent, and political issues are partially taken in charge by a collective institution emanating from the Latin reorganisation of the Byzantine Empire.

Lastly, one can wonder whether the *milites* mentioned by the clause about dispensing justice really were the Latin Emperor's vassals as Filip Van Tricht presents it. Indeed, neither the word *vassalus*, nor the term *homines* or other words denoting

---

46 Hendrickx, *Pouvoir impérial* (1974), 108 f. However, Filip Van Tricht has convincingly shown that Baldwin II did not swear this oath, probably in an attempt to push forward his personal and autocratic power. Furthermore, it seems to me that Benjamin Hendrickx is mistaken when he asserts that all the Latin Emperors had to swear the oath *before* being coronated. A more careful reading of the sources might show that this took place after the coronation, at least in the case of the emperors Peter and Robert of Courtenay. See *Van Tricht, Horoscope of Emperor Baldwin II* (2018), 46 f.

47 On the Venetian councillors see *Jacoby, Venetian Government* (2006), 30–32; *Wolff, A New Document* (1976), 570 f.

48 According to Filip Van Tricht, this council may be the same as the one in charge of the distribution of lands. See *Urkunden*. Ed. *Thomas/Tafel*, vol. 1, 572; *Van Tricht, Latin Renovatio* (2011), 54 f.

49 *Urkunden*. Ed. *Thomas/Tafel*, vol. 1, 573.

some kind of personal dependence are used.<sup>50</sup> Being the Emperor's vassal is not the case for all the knights within the empire, but the clause may have rather concerned specifically those who had received land grants from him in the imperial quarter, the part given to the emperor according to the *Partitio Romaniae*.<sup>51</sup> Outside this domain, the emperor does not seem to have been allowed to distribute lands at his will.<sup>52</sup> Thus, the *milites* in the Pact of October must not necessarily have been his personal vassals. Anyway, they owed him *iuramentum* due to their obedience to imperial authority and laws, as had been stipulated in the Pact of March. These observations match with recent research in the wake of Susan Reynold's main analysis indicating that feudal system in the West was more complex than previously assumed.<sup>53</sup> Indeed, the emperor in Latin Romania was not the master of fiefs, nor a mere feudal lord, but rather a monarch bound by collective institutions. Thus, the complexity of the political configurations in Latin Romania seems to have exceeded the "classic structures" of feudal systems.

## A Multiplicity of Bonds: the Latin Empire's political Structure

Certainly, the Latin emperors perceived constitutional treatises and collective institutions not as unbearable limits to their power but rather as a standard feature of doing

---

50 As far as I have read the surviving sources regarding our context, the first occurrence of the word "vassal" appears in a copy of the 1210 Pact of Ravennika included in a letter by Pope Honorius III from 1219. See Bullarium. Ed. *Duba/Schabel*, 255–264.

51 The imperial quarter was a kind of royal domain belonging directly to the emperor. We find the word "domain" in a document written in March 1205 at the Palace of Blachernae on the orders of Baldwin I. Through this document, the emperor gave the Knights Hospitaller of Jerusalem one quarter of the *ducatus Neocastri qui noster dominicus est et proprius* which was indeed part of the imperial quarter according to the *Partitio Romaniae*. The term *dominicus* is clearly defined by Niermeyer's dictionary as a property held like an allod. This runs contrary to Hendrickx' assertion that the Latin Emperors could not hold personal properties and allods. See Oorkonden. Ed. *Prevenier*, vol. 2, 624; *Partitio*. Ed. *Carile*, 218; *Hendrickx*, *Contrat féodal* (2000), 226; *dominicus* in *Niermeyer / Van de Kieft*, *Lexicon Minus* (accessed: 19.06.2022). See also *Van Tricht*, *Latin Renovatio* (2011), 108 f.

52 That was the case when, according to Robert of Clari, Baldwin I told Boniface of Montferrat that he could not give him the territory of Thessaloniki because he had no right to it. Guillaume Saint-Guillain has convincingly shown that, when narrating this, Robert of Clari was actually not aware of a special agreement previously made by the main barons which approved Thessaloniki being given to Boniface. Yet, even if Robert ignored this, it does not nullify the fact that he is correct in regard to the Pact of March saying that the emperor didn't had power to give lands which did not belong to his own domain. Clari, *Conquête*. Ed. *Dufournet*, § 99, 192–194; *Madden*, *Fractured foundation* (2008), 46 f.; *Saint-Guillain*, *À propos de l'élection impériale* (2010), 732–734.

53 *Magnou-Nortier*, *Féodalité* (1996), 257, 274

politics. Yet, this did not prevent them from trying to impose and increase their authority to their subjects and even to act as autocratic rulers. They even tried to reinforce their influence relying on the private bonds they had with various political players. That was the case when Baldwin distributed lands that were not included in the *Partitio* to some of his men, such as the Duchy of Philippopolis, which in September 1204 was given to Renier of Trith, one of Baldwin's vassals from the County of Flanders.<sup>54</sup> This allowed Baldwin to extend his domination beyond the imperial quarter in territories whose owners should be faithful to him.

Similarly, it is possible to observe situations where imperial obedience seems to have been closely connected with feudal bonds. In February 1205, Baldwin issued five documents in which he presented himself both as *fidelissimus in Christo imperator* and *Flandrie et Hainoie comes*, because the situation made it necessary to refer to these two political identities and thus to two kinds of obedience owed to him.<sup>55</sup> In these charters, it is recorded that Robert of Eperlecques, one of Baldwin's men from the County of Flanders, wanted to return to Flanders whereas Baldwin commanded him to stay *ad servicium nostrum* in the Latin Empire, thus applying one of the clauses featured in the Pact of March.<sup>56</sup> Consequently, Robert requested to sell (*vendere*) the land in Flanders, Baldwin had given him, next to Courtrai, before leaving for the crusade.<sup>57</sup> One can imagine that it was too complicated for Robert to manage his affairs both in Constantinople and in Flanders, so that he preferred to sell his land there to a Flemish cleric named Walter who was also Baldwin's man. Robert's relinquishment was made in the presence of Baldwin, as the count of Flanders was the landlord. Then, the latter gave this very land to Walter as a *feodum ligium* with a *ligium homagium*, certainly the way Robert had previously held it from Baldwin. On the one hand, Robert obeyed Emperor Baldwin as stipulated in the Pact of March by making *servicium* for at least one year. On the other hand, Robert remained Count Baldwin's vassal and in addition he might have hoped to be acknowledged as one of his closest men, as it is clearly stated in one of Baldwin's charters concerning this affair: (speaking of Robert) *suam nobiscum perpetuam statueret mansionem*.<sup>58</sup> Thus, the ability to play

---

54 Count Louis of Blois, Étienne of Perche, and Thierry of Loos also received duchies in fief from Baldwin in autumn 1204. Yet, they were not his vassals in the Latin West, so that they may have entered into a personal bond with him some time after his election as emperor. See *Van Tricht*, *Latin Renovatio* (2011), 159 f., 268; *Hasdenteufel*, *Empereur au-delà du fleuve* (2021), 164 f.

55 Oorkonden. Ed. *Prevenier*, vol. 2, 612–623. On Latin Emperor's titles, see *Van Tricht*, *Latin Renovatio* (2011), 62–82.

56 More precisely, the *iuramentum* of staying in the empire at least for one year. On Robert of Eperlecques, see *Longnon*, *Compagnons* (1978), 190.

57 Oorkonden. Ed. *Prevenier*, vol. 2, 618.

58 Oorkonden. Ed. *Prevenier*, vol. 2, 618.

with imperial and feudal bonds appears to have been a very important political tool for both the emperor and his men.<sup>59</sup>

For the Latin Emperor, creating a personal bond also represented a way to reinforce his political influence and thus his authority. A famous case in this point concerns Marquis Boniface of Montferrat, the leader of the Fourth Crusade and loser of the imperial election, who had become Baldwin I's man for the territories of Thessaloniki.<sup>60</sup> In 1207, Baldwin's successor Henry of Flanders took care of renewing this feudal bond, but Boniface's death during a battle against the Bulgars in the same year cancelled the emperor's special link with Thessaloniki.<sup>61</sup> As Boniface's son Demetrios was still under age to rule, the regency was run by his mother Margaret-Mary and by Oberto of Biandrate.<sup>62</sup> Yet, according to the imperial chronicler Henry of Valenciennes, Oberto and various other north-Italian barons sought to escape from the oath of fidelity to Emperor Henry in order to be more independent from the empire.<sup>63</sup> Moreover, they were planning to invite in Thessaloniki Boniface's Italian son William of Montferrat.<sup>64</sup> The latter was 30 and could become a new monarch for the Italian barons in place of Demetrios who would likely be under Henry of Flanders' influence. In front of such opposition against imperial power, Henry decided to head towards Thessaloniki in December 1208. He planned to spend the winter there, in order to receive *homage et feuté* from the Lombards, that is to say the north-Italian barons.<sup>65</sup> Allying with Margaret-Mary of Hungary, Henry managed to gradually subdue through negotiations and military conquest the barons of Thessaloniki, making some of them his personal vassals.<sup>66</sup> Above all, the Latin Emperor succeeded in personally crowning Demetrios, as king of Thessaloniki on 6 January 1209.<sup>67</sup> By doing so, Henry granted greater scope to his imperial power, placing this new kingdom under his personal

---

<sup>59</sup> This idea has also been brought forward by Benjamin Hendrickx in his analysis of Jacques of Avesnes' multiple bonds of dependence: twofold with Baldwin I, Emperor and Count of Flanders and Hainaut, and additionally with Boniface of Montferrat from whom Jacques held rights and lands in Negropont. See *Hendrickx*, *Main Problems* (1974), 793.

<sup>60</sup> Villehardouin, *Conquête*. Ed. *Dufournet*, § 256–258, 174–176; § 264 f., 180. Among the vast bibliography on this episode see *Hasdenteufel*, Άγιος βασιλεύς (2022); *Maestri* (Ed.), *Bonifacio* (2009); *Hendrickx*, *Frontières* (2009–2010), 57–69; *Hendrickx*, *Boniface* (2001), 71–76; *Ferjančić*, *Počeci Solunske* (1964), 101–116.

<sup>61</sup> Villehardouin, *Conquête*. Ed. *Dufournet*, § 496, 310; § 499, 312.

<sup>62</sup> *Malamut*, Marguerite-Marie (2018), 213–229; *Haberstumpf*, *Dinastie europeee* (1993), 164–174.

<sup>63</sup> Valenciennes, *Histoire*. Ed. *Longnon*, § 560–562, 55–57.

<sup>64</sup> Valenciennes, *Histoire*. Ed. *Longnon*, § 598, 75.

<sup>65</sup> Valenciennes, *Histoire*. Ed. *Longnon*, § 560, 55.

<sup>66</sup> This might be the case for Amédée Pofey, the brothers Albertino and Rolandino of Canossa, Ravano dalle Carceri, and Berthold of Katzenelnbogen. See Valenciennes, *Histoire*. Ed. *Longnon*, § 669, 109; § 678 f., 113 f.; *Prinzing*, *Brief Kaiser Heinrichs* (1973), 414, 417.

<sup>67</sup> Valenciennes, *Histoire*. Ed. *Longnon*, § 605, 79.

control.<sup>68</sup> Furthermore, Henry commanded the defence of this borderland region against the Bulgarian assaults. Thus, in a letter of 13 January 1213 written in Asia Minor, the Latin Emperor wrote that he had previously ordered *nostris baronibus regni Thessalonice*, namely Berthold of Katzenelnbogen and Henry's brother Eustache, to protect this region, which on this occasion is presented as *marchiam*, i. e. a kind of frontier region under the control of the *basileus*.<sup>69</sup> Thus, creating new feudal bonds was the main issue of Henry's campaign against Thessaloniki. For him it was a major political tool in order to reassess his imperial domination beyond his own domain around Constantinople. On the contrary, for the north-Italian barons, refusing as long as possible the feudal submission to the emperor was the best way to keep some political independence.

The emergence of the so-called Latin Emperors on the throne of Constantinople after the Fourth Crusade had resulted from a military conquest where collective deliberations had been frequently employed as a political tool, mainly by the aristocratic groups leading the crusade. Discussing or exchanging *palabres* appears as an important political practice of Western chivalry, especially if we refer to Dominique Barthélemy's research.<sup>70</sup> This way of doing politics was expressed through collective institutions such as parliaments, treatises, or elections. These institutions would deserve more detailed studies especially regarding the process of electing rulers in the Latin Empire. Indeed, from Baldwin I in 1204 to John of Brienne in 1229, every Latin Emperor was designated as leader by a college of Constantinopolitan barons. Belonging to the imperial family was not the only criterion for making an emperor in Constantinople. It had to match with the barons' deliberations and decisions about who would rule the empire. As formulated by Corinne Péneau there were a combination between an elective principle and a hereditary principle in the making of a ruler.<sup>71</sup> This complementarity – or ambivalence – between the elective and the hereditary or dynastic approaches was not specific to the Latin Empire but can also be observed in other monarchical successions.<sup>72</sup> Even the empire's bailiff could be elected by a college of barons: this was the case for example in 1206 for Henry of Flanders and in 1219 for Conon of Béthune, when there was no emperor on the throne of Constantinople.<sup>73</sup>

<sup>68</sup> Though Demetrios and Margaret are often considered as powerless, a more detailed study of their government might nuance this traditional picture. See Bullarium. Ed. *Duba/Schabel*, 17–28.

<sup>69</sup> *Prinzing*, Brief Kaiser Heinrichs (1973), 417. For the dating of this letter, see *Van Tricht*, Politique étrangère (2001), 227.

<sup>70</sup> *Barthélemy*, Nouvelle histoire (2012), 24.

<sup>71</sup> *Péneau*, Élections et pouvoirs (2008), 18.

<sup>72</sup> *Théry*, Moyen Âge (2001), 667 f.; *Besson*, Pratiques du pouvoir (2017), 768–773. Concerning Byzantium, it has been argued that, compared with Western kingdoms its system of monarchical succession cannot be defined as hereditary. See *Whittow*, Staying on the top (2017), 818.

<sup>73</sup> Villehardouin, Conquête. Ed. *Dufournet*, § 385 f., 246; Chronique d'Ernoul. Ed. *Mas Latrie*, 389 f.; Urkunden. Ed. *Thomas/Tafel*, vol. 2, 219.

Whether it be imperial elections or land distributions with the *Partitio Romaniae*, each of these collective processes contributed to a political game in which the emperor and his barons shared power and at the same time competed for it. As we have seen in the introduction, these subtle political processes were traditionally described as internal disorders responsible for the weakness and the fall of the empire. Yet, I have tried to show that sharing and competing for power was rather the normal way of doing politics in the Latin Empire. Power was not an attribution monopolized by the Latin Emperor, but rather a political resource which was always contested between the monarch and the barons.<sup>74</sup>

This game was structured by feudal bonds without leaving aside a sense of public authority. Indeed, obedience was owed to the emperor not only as a feudal lord, but also as an imperial sovereign. Moreover, the emperor himself had to act in conformity with the imperial order as defined by the first treatises of 1204/1205. Thus, the Latin Emperors had to combine feudal and imperial mechanisms in order to build their authority. Yet, for scholars studying 13<sup>th</sup> century Latin Romania, the relations between the emperors and their barons remain all the more difficult to understand that the few surviving sources merely allows us to scratch at the surface of the plethora of political processes which shaped the Latin Empire's political evolution.

## Bibliography

### Published Primary Sources

- Devastatio Constantinopolitana*. Ed. Andrea, in: id. (Ed.), *Devastatio Constantinopolitana*, (1993), 131–138.
- Partitio Terrarum Imperii Romanie*. Ed. Carile, in: *Studi Veneziani* 7 (1965), 125–306.
- Bullarium Hellenicum*. Pope Honorius III's Letters to Frankish Greece and Constantinople (1216–1227). Ed. William O. Dube / Christopher D. Schabel. (Mediterranean Nexus 1100–1700. Conflicts, Influence and Inspiration in the Mediterranean Area 3) Turnhout 2015.
- Chronica Albrici Monachi Trium Fontium*. Ed. Paul Scheffer-Boichorst. (Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Scriptores 23) Hannover 1874.
- Chronique d'Ernoul et de Bernard le Trésorier*. Ed. Louis de Mas Latrie. Paris 1871.
- Contemporary Sources for the Fourth Crusade*. Ed. Alfred J. Andrea. (The Medieval Mediterranean: Peoples, Economies and Cultures, 400–1453 29) Leiden / Boston / Köln 2000.
- De oorkonden der graven van Vlaanderen (1191 aanvang 1206)*. Ed. Walter Prevenier, 3 vols. (Recueil des actes des princes belges 5, 1–3) Bruxelles 1964–1971.
- Geoffroy de Villehardouin, La Conquête de Constantinople*. Ed. Jean Dufournet. Paris 2004.
- Geoffroy de Villehardouin, La Conquête de Constantinople*. Ed. Edmond Faral. 2 vols. (Classiques de l'Histoire de France au Moyen Âge 18–19) Paris 1961.

---

<sup>74</sup> In his thesis on the nobility in Latin East, Florian Besson has argued that, when analysing political processes, it is more relevant to ask how power works and how it is exercised, rather than trying to know who held it: *Besson, Pratiques du pouvoir* (2017), 27.

- George Akropolites. *The History*. Ed. *Ruth Macrides*. Oxford 2007.
- Georgii Acropolitae Opera. Ed. *Augustus Heisenberg*, 2 vols. (Bibliotheca Scriptorum Graecorum et Romanorum Teubneriana) Stuttgart 1978.
- Gunther de Pairis, *Historia Constantinopolitana*. Ed. *Paul Riant*. Genève 1875.
- Henri de Valenciennes, *Histoire de l'Empereur Henri de Constantinople*. Ed. *Jean Longnon*. (Documents relatifs à l'histoire des croisades 2) Paris 1948.
- Nicetas Choniates, *O City of Byzantium*. Ed. *Harry J. Mangoulias*. Detroit 1984.
- Nicétas Choniates, *Historia*. Ed. *Iohannes Aloysius van Dieten*. Berlin / New York 1975.
- Patrologiae Cursus Completus*, vol. 215. Ed. *Jacques-Paul Migne*. Paris 1891.
- Der Brief Kaiser Heinrichs von Konstantinopel vom 13. Januar 1212. Überlieferungsgeschichte, Neuedition und Kommentar. Ed. *Günter Prinzing*, in: *Byzantion* 43 (1973), 395–431.
- Robert de Clari, *La Conquête de Constantinople*. Ed. *Jean Dufournet*. (Champion Classiques 14) Paris 2004.
- Urkunden zur älteren Handels- und Staatsgeschichte der Republik Venedig mit besonderer Beziehung auf Byzanz und die Levante. Ed. *Georg M. Thomas / Gottlieb L. F. Tafel*, 3 vols. (Fontes rerum austriacarum. Oesterreichische Geschichts-Quellen 2. Diplomata et acta 12–14) Wien 1856–1857.

## Secondary Sources

- Alfred John Andrea*, *The Devastatio Constantinopolitana, A Special Perspective on the Fourth Crusade: An Analysis, New Edition, and Translation*, in: *Historical Reflections* 19, 1 (1993), 109–149.
- Michael Angold*, *Turning Points in History: The Fall of Constantinople*, in: *Byzantinoslavica* 71 (2013), 11–30.
- Michael Angold*, Rev. of: *Van Tricht*, *Horoscope of Emperor Baldwin II* (2018), in: *The Medieval Review* 2019, online: <https://scholarworks.iu.edu/journals/index.php/tmr/article/view/28009/33194> (accessed: 19.06.2022).
- Michael Angold*, Rev. of: *Filip Van Tricht*, *The Latin Renovatio* (2011), in: *Speculum* 80 (2013), 865–867.
- Dominique Barthélemy*, *Nouvelle histoire des Capétiens: 987–1214*. Paris 2012.
- Florian Besson*, *Les barons de la chrétienté orientale. Pratiques du pouvoir et cultures politiques en Orient latin (1097–1229)*. Phil. Diss. Université Paris-Sorbonne Décembre 2017.
- Florian Besson*, *Nuages de mots, courbes d'histoire, cartes interactives: une réflexion sur de nouveaux outils*, in: *Centre de Recherche Français à Jérusalem* (publ. 2016), online: <https://crfj.hypotheses.org/370> (accessed: 19.06.2022).
- Stefan Burkhardt*, *Intoxication with Virtuality: French Princes and Aegean Titles*, in: *Christian Scholl / Torben R. Gebhardt / Jan Clauß* (Eds.), *Transcultural Approaches to the Concept of Imperial Rule in the Middle Ages*. Frankfurt (Main) 2017, 295–319.
- Stefan Burkhardt*, *Mediterranes Kaisertum und Imperiale Ordnungen. Das Lateinische Kaiserreich von Konstantinopel*. (EMA 25) Berlin 2014.
- Antonio Carile*, *Signoria rurale e feudalesimo nell'Impero Latino di Costantinopoli (1204–1261)*, in: *Structures féodales et féodalisme dans l'Occident méditerranéen (x<sup>e</sup>–xiii<sup>e</sup> siècles). Bilan et perspectives de recherches*. (Collection de l'École Française de Rome 44) Rome 1980, 667–678.
- Nikolaos G. Chrissis*, *Crusading in Frankish Greece: A Study of Byzantine-Western Relations and Attitudes, 1204–1282* (*Medieval Church Studies* 22), Turnhout 2012.
- Gilbert Dagron*, *Empereur et prêtre. Étude sur le "césaropapisme" byzantin*. Paris 1995.
- Dictionnaire du Moyen Français (1330–1500)*, online: <http://www.atilf.fr/dmf/definition/conseil> (accessed: 21.08.2021).
- Edmond Faral*, *Geoffroy de Villehardouin. La question de sa sincérité*, in: *Revue historique* 177, 3 (1936), 530–582.

- Božidar Ferjančić*, Počeci Solunske kraljevine (1204–1209) [Kingdom of Thessaloniki's early years], in: Zbornik Radova Vizantološkog Instituta 8, 2 (1964), 101–116.
- Matthew Gabriele*, *An Empire of Memory. The Legend of Charlemagne, the Franks and Jerusalem before the First Crusade*. Oxford 2011.
- François Louis Ganshof*, *Qu'est-ce que la féodalité?* Paris<sup>5</sup> 2015.
- Frédéric Godefroy*, *Dictionnaire de l'ancienne langue française et de tous ses dialectes du IX<sup>e</sup> au XV<sup>e</sup> siècle*, 10 vols. Paris 1881–1902, online: <http://micmap.org/dicfro/previous/dictionnaire-godefroy> (accessed: 19.06.2022).
- Walter Haberstumpf*, *Dinastie europea nel Mediterraneo orientale*. Torino 1995.
- Simon Hasdenteufel*, Άγιος βασιλεύς μάργιο: les multiples visage de Boniface de Montferrat pendant la fondation de l'Empire latin de Constantinople (1204–1207), in: *Archivio Storico Italiano* 637, 2 (2022), 437–476.
- Simon Hasdenteufel*, L'empereur au-delà du fleuve. La construction d'un territoire politique dans l'Empire latin de Constantinople (1204–1213), in: *Frontières spatiales, frontières sociales au Moyen Âge*. Actes du LI<sup>e</sup> congrès de la SHMESP. (Histoire ancienne et médiévale 177) Paris 2021, 159–175.
- Benjamin Hendrickx*, Les 'parlements' dans l'Empire latin de Constantinople, le Royaume des Montferrat à Thessalonique et la Principauté d'Achaïe, in: *Byzantiaka* 30, 3 (2012), 211–228.
- Benjamin Hendrickx*, Le problème des frontières du Royaume latin des Montferrat à Thessalonique: réalité et légalité, in: *Byzantinos Domos* 17–18 (2009–2010), 57–69.
- Benjamin Hendrickx*, Boniface de Montferrat et Manuel Angelos, empereur 'manqué' de Byzance (1204), in: *Byzantinos Domos* 12 (2001), 71–76.
- Benjamin Hendrickx*, Le contrat féodal et le fief dans l'Empire latin de Constantinople, in: *Byzantiaka* 20 (2000), 221–243.
- Benjamin Hendrickx*, Régestes des empereurs latins de Constantinople (1204–1261/1272), in: *Byzantina* 14 (1988), 7–222.
- Benjamin Hendrickx*, Les institutions de l'Empire latin de Constantinople: la diplomatie, in: *Acta classica* 17 (1974), 105–119.
- Benjamin Hendrickx*, Les Institutions de l'Empire latin de Constantinople (1204–1261): le pouvoir impérial, in: *Byzantina* 6 (1974), 85–154.
- Benjamin Hendrickx*, The Main Problems of the History of the Latin Empire of Constantinople (1204–1261), in: *Revue belge de philologie et d'histoire* 52 (1974), 787–799.
- David Jacoby*, The Venetian Government and Administration in Latin Constantinople, 1204–1261: a State within a State, in: *Gherardo Ortalli / Giorgio Ravegnani / Peter Schreiner (Eds.), Quarta Crociata. Venezia – Bisanzio – Impero Latino. Venezia 2006*, 19–80.
- David Jacoby*, The Economy of Latin Constantinople, 1204–1261, in: *Angeliki Laiou (Ed.), Urbs capta: the Fourth Crusade and its Consequences. (Réalités byzantines 10) Paris 2005*, 195–214.
- David Jacoby*, *La féodalité en Grèce médiévale. Les Assises de Roumanie, sources, application et diffusion*. Paris 1971.
- Erica Jo Gilles*, "Nova Francia"? Kinship and Identity among the Frankish Aristocracy in Conquered Byzantium, 1204–1282. Thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. Princeton University June 2010.
- Anthony Kaldellis*, *The Byzantine Republic: People and Power in New Rome*. London 2015.
- Matthew Kinloch*, *Rethinking Thirteenth-Century Byzantine Historiography. A Postmodern, Narrativist, and Narratological Approach*. Thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. Oxford University January 2018.
- Demetrios Kyritses*, The Imperial Council and the Tradition of Consultative Decision-Making in Byzantium (Eleventh to Fourteenth Centuries), in: *Dimiter Angelov / Michael Saxby (Eds.), Power and Subversion in Byzantium. (Society for the Promotion of Byzantine Studies Publications 17) Farnham 2013*, 57–70.

- Angeliki Laiou* (Ed.), *Urbs capta: the Fourth Crusade and its Consequences*. (Réalités byzantines 10) Paris 2005.
- Peter Lock*, The Latin Emperors as heirs to Byzantium, in: Paul Magdalino (Ed.), *New Constantines. The Rhythm of Imperial Renewal in Byzantium, 4<sup>th</sup>–13<sup>th</sup> Centuries*. (Society for the promotion of Byzantine studies 2) Aldershot 1994, 295–304.
- Jean Longnon*, *Les Compagnons de Villehardouin*. Genève 1978.
- Jean Longnon*, *L'Empire latin de Constantinople et la principauté de Morée*. Paris 1949.
- Thomas F. Madden*, The Latin Empire of Constantinople's fractured foundation: the rift between Boniface of Montferrat and Baldwin of Flanders, in: id. (Ed.), *The Fourth Crusade: Event, Aftermath and Perceptions*. (Crusades, Subsidia 2) Aldershot / Burlington 2008, 45–52.
- Alexandru Madgearu*, *The Asanids. The Political and Military History of the Second Bulgarian Empire (1185–1280)*. Leiden 2017.
- Roberto Maestri* (Ed.), *Bonifacio Marchese di Monferrato, Re di Tessalonica*. Genova 2009.
- Élisabeth Magnou-Nortier*, La féodalité en crise. Propos sur '*Fiefs and Vassals*' de Susan Reynolds, in: *Revue historique* 296, 2 (1996), 253–358.
- Élisabeth Malamut*, Marguerite-Marie de Hongrie, impératrice byzantine et reine latine de Salonique (1185–1223), in: *Byzantinoslavica* 76 (2018), 213–229.
- James L. Naus*, *Constructing Kingship. The Capetian monarchs of France and the Early Crusades*. Manchester 2016.
- Jan Frederik Niermeyer* / *Co van de Kieft*, *Mediae Latinitatis Lexicon Minus Online*, online: <https://dictionar ies-brillonline-com.janus.bis-sorbonne.fr/search#dictionary=niermeyer&id=NI-05875> (accessed: 23.08.2021).
- Peter Noble*, Stratégie militaire dans la quatrième croisade. Les points de vue de Villehardouin, de Robert de Clari et de Nicétas Choniâtès, in: *Memini. Travaux et documents* 4 (2000), 119–136.
- Peter Noble*, Villehardouin, Robert de Clari and Henri de Valenciennes: their different approaches to the Fourth Crusade, in: Erik Kooper (Ed.), *The Medieval Chronicle*, vol. 1. Rodopi 1999, 202–211.
- Nicolas Oikonomidès*, La décomposition de l'empire byzantin à la veille de 1204 et les origines de l'empire de Nicée: à propos de la *Partitio Romaniae*, in: id. (Ed.), *Byzantium from the Ninth Century to the Fourth Crusade*. Hampshire / Brookfield 1992, 3–28.
- Corinne Péneau*, Élections et pouvoirs politiques. Une introduction, in: ead. (Ed.), *Élections et pouvoirs politiques du VII<sup>e</sup> au XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle*. Pompignac 2008, 13–40.
- Guy Perry*, *John of Brienne. King of Jerusalem, Emperor of Constantinople, c. 1175–1237*. Cambridge 2013.
- Brendan Osswald*, Trois notes sur l'histoire de Durazzo (Durrës) au XIII<sup>e</sup> siècle, in: *Mélanges de l'École française de Rome – Moyen Âge*, 133, 1 (2021), 131–168.
- Donald E. Queller* / *Thomas F. Madden*, *The Fourth Crusade. The Conquest of Constantinople*. Philadelphia 2<sup>nd</sup> 1997.
- Susan Reynolds*, Fiefs and Vassals after Twelve Years, in: Sverre Bagge / Michael H. Gelting / Thomas Lindkvist (Eds.), *Feudalism. New Landscapes of Debate*. (The Medieval Countryside 5) Turnhout 2011, 15–26.
- Susan Reynolds*, *Fiefs and Vassals. The Medieval Evidence Reinterpreted*. Oxford / New York 1994.
- Guillaume Saint-Guillain*, Comment les Vénitiens n'ont pas acquis la Crète. Note à propos de l'élection impériale de 1204 et du partage projeté de l'empire byzantin, in: *Mélanges Cécile Morrisson*. (Travaux et mémoires 16) Paris 2010, 713–758.
- Florence Sampsonis*, L'Empire latin de Constantinople (1204–1261), l'ombre d'un Empire, in: Sylvain Gouguenheim (Ed.), *Les Empires médiévaux*. Paris 2019, 253–274.
- Yves Sassié*, Bien commun et *utilitas communis* au XI<sup>e</sup> siècle, un nouvel essor?, in: *Revue Française d'Histoire des Idées politiques*, 32, 2 (2010), 245–258.
- Beth C. Spacey*, *The Miraculous and the Writing of Crusade Narrative*. Woodbridge 2020.

- Julien Théry*, Moyen Âge, in: Pascal Perrineau / Dominique Reynié (Eds.), *Dictionnaire du vote*. Paris 2001, 667–678.
- Filip Van Tricht*, *The Horoscope of Emperor Baldwin II. Political and Sociocultural Dynamics in Latin-Byzantine Constantinople*. Leiden / Boston 2018.
- Filip Van Tricht*, Claiming the *Basileia ton Rhomaion*, in: *The Medieval History Journal* 20 (2017), 248–287.
- Filip Van Tricht*, Robert of Courtenay (1221–1227): An Idiot on the Throne of Constantinople? in: *Speculum* 88 (2013), 996–1034.
- Filip Van Tricht*, *The Latin Renovatio of Byzantium. The Empire of Constantinople (1204–1228)*. Leiden / Boston 2011.
- Filip Van Tricht*, La politique étrangère de l’empire de Constantinople, de 1210 à 1216. Sa position en Méditerranée orientale: problèmes de chronologie et d’interprétation, in: *Le Moyen Âge* 107, 2 (2001), 219–238.
- Björn Weiler*, The *Rex Renitens* and the Medieval Ideal of Kingship, ca. 900–ca. 1250, in: *Viator* 31 (2000), 1–42.
- Mark Whittow*, Staying on the top in Byzantium, 963–1210, in: Béatrice Caseau / Vivien Prigent / Alessio Socracasa (Eds.), *Mélanges Jean-Claude Cheynet*. (Travaux et mémoires 21.1) Paris, 2017, 807–830.
- Robert Lee Wolff*, The “Second Bulgarian Empire”. Its Origin and History to 1204, in: id. (Ed.), *Studies in the Latin Empire of Constantinople*. (Variorum Reprints 55) London 1976, 167–203.
- Robert Lee Wolff*, The Latin Empire of Constantinople, in: id. (Ed.), *Studies in the Latin Empire of Constantinople*. (Variorum Reprints 55) London 1976, 187–223.
- Robert Lee Wolff*, A New Document from the Period of the Latin Empire of Constantinople: The Oath of the Venetian Podestà, in: id. (Ed.), *Studies in the Latin Empire of Constantinople*. (Variorum Reprints 55) London 1976, 539–573.