

The Mongol Impact on the Political History of the Byzantine Empire

N. Abdimomynov, K. Zhumagulov, Ye. Saurykov

For citation: Abdimomynov N., Zhumagulov K., Saurykov Ye. The Mongol Impact on the Political History of the Byzantine Empire. *Vestnik of Saint Petersburg University. History*, 2024, vol. 69, issue 3, pp. 685–708. <https://doi.org/10.21638/spbu02.2024.309>

This paper examines the significant role of the Mongols in the political history of the Byzantine Empire during the reign of Michael VIII (1261–1282). Specifically, it focuses on the impact of Mongol uluses — the Īlkhānid state and the Golden Horde — on the foreign policy of the Byzantine Empire at that time. As the Īlkhānid state consolidated its political influence in Asia Minor and the Golden Horde established political dominance in the Balkans, Byzantium strategically adjusted its foreign policy to engage with these emerging Mongol uluses by recognizing their crucial role in regional affairs. Michael VIII, who reconquered Constantinople from the Latin Empire in 1261, aimed to restore the former power of the Empire. Therefore, he actively cultivated political and marital alliances with both rival Mongol uluses, leveraging their influence to strengthen Byzantium's position in Anatolia and the Balkans. The authors argue that the Mongol-Byzantium alliances were mutually beneficial, enhancing the Byzantine Empire's geopolitical standing. The alliance with the Īlkhānid state provided security to the eastern fronts of the Empire, while the political alliance with the Golden Horde bolstered the political initiatives of the Byzantine Empire in the Balkans from the 1260s to the 1280s. Moreover, the involvement of the Īlkhānid state and the Golden Horde in the foreign affairs of Byzantium made the Mongol factor a global phenomenon. It strengthened the intricate political and economic links connecting the Mongol world, Byzantium, and Mamluk Egypt.

Keywords: the Mongols, Nicaean Empire, Byzantium, the Golden Horde, the Īlkhānid state; Mamluk Egypt, Michael VIII Palaiologos.

Nurtas T. Abdimomynov — PhD (History), Professor, Al-Farabi Kazakh National University, 71, pr. Al-Farabi, Almaty, 050040, Kazakhstan; <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5395-8701>, nurtas.amirbay@gmail.com

Нуртас Талгатжанович Абдимомынов — канд. ист. наук, проф., Казахский национальный университет им. аль-Фараби, Казахстан, 050040, Алматы, пр. аль-Фараби, 71; <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5395-8701>, nurtas.amirbay@gmail.com

Kalkaman T. Zhumagulov — Dr. Sci. (History), Professor, Al-Farabi Kazakh National University, 71, pr. Al-Farabi, Almaty, 050040, Kazakhstan; <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9072-6344>, kalkaman.zhumagulov@kaznu.kz

Калкман Турсунович Жумагулов — д-р ист. наук, проф., Казахский национальный университет им. аль-Фараби, Казахстан, 050040, Алматы, пр. аль-Фараби, 71; <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9072-6344>, kalkaman.zhumagulov@kaznu.kz

Yerbolat B. Saurykov — Dr. Sci. (Philology), Professor, International Taraz Innovative Institute named after Sh. Murtaza, 69B, ul. Zheltoksan, Taraz, 080000, Kazakhstan; <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5763-0703>, e_saurykov@mail.ru

Ерболат Байузакович Саурыков — д-р филол. наук, проф., Международный Таразский инновационный институт им. Ш. Муртазы, Казахстан, 080000, Тараз, ул. Желтоксан, 69Б; <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5763-0703>, e_saurykov@mail.ru

© St. Petersburg State University, 2024

Для цитирования: *Abdimomynov N., Zhumagulov K., Saurykov Ye.* The Mongol Impact on the Political History of the Byzantine Empire // Вестник Санкт-Петербургского университета. История. 2024. Т. 69. Вып. 3. С. 685–708. <https://doi.org/10.21638/spbu02.2024.309>

В статье рассматривается роль монголов в политической истории Византийской империи в период правления Михаила VIII Палеолога (1261–1282 гг.). Особое внимание уделено анализу политического влияния монгольских улусов — государства Хулагуидов (Ильханидов) и Золотой Орды — на внешнюю политику Византийской империи в этот период. После того как государство Хулагуидов укрепило свое влияние в Малой Азии, Золотая Орда установила политическое господство на Балканах. Византийская империя стратегически корректировала свою внешнюю политику, признавая важную геополитическую роль монгольских улусов в поддержании интересов империи в региональной политике. Михаил VIII, отвоевавший Константинополь у Латинской империи в 1261 г., стремился восстановить былое могущество Византийской империи. Он активно поддерживал политические и брачные союзы с обоими соперничающими монгольскими улусами, используя их влияние для укрепления позиций Византийской империи в Анатолии и на Балканах. В результате Михаил VIII заключил политический и брачный союз с государством Ильханидов и в то же время Византийская империя присоединилась к альянсу Джучидов-Мамлюков в начале 1260-х гг. Оказавшиеся взаимовыгодными монголо-византийские союзы укрепляли геополитические позиции Византийской империи. Политический и брачный союз с государством Хулагуидов обеспечивал безопасность восточных границ Византийской империи, а политический союз с Золотой Ордой способствовал продвижению политических инициатив империи на Балканах в период с 1260-х по 1280-е гг. Кроме того, участие государства Хулагуидов и Золотой Орды во внешних делах Византийской империи сделало монгольский фактор глобальным явлением, укрепив сложные политические и экономические связи между монгольским миром, Византийской империей и мамлюкским Египтом.

Ключевые слова: монголы, Никейская империя, Византия, Золотая Орда, Государство Ильханидов, Мамлюкский Египет, Михаил VIII Палеолог.

Introduction

It is often argued that in the political history of Byzantium, the reign of Michael VIII Palaiologos (1261–1282) was marked by the close contacts of the Empire with the Mongol uluses — the Īlkhānid state and the Golden Horde. However, 13th-century Byzantine and Eastern authors or Mongolian chroniclers devoted little attention to the Mongol-Byzantium relations¹. “The Secret History of the Mongols”, or Rashid al-Din’s writings on the Mongols, or other Eastern historical sources, made only a few references to Mongol-Byzantium relations². Although Byzantine writers were at the center of these events and acted as authoritative observers of the Empire’s historical events and political situations, they also largely avoided discussing the Mongol-Byzantium relations in depth. There are only

¹ *Lippard B. G.* The Mongols and Byzantium 1243–1341: PhD thesis. [S.l.], 1984. P.I–X; *Giebfried J.* The Mongol invasions and the Aegean world (1241–61) // *Mediterranean Historical Review*. 2013. Vol. 28, no. 2. P. 129.

² *Lippard B. G.* The Mongols and Byzantium 1243–1341. P.I–X.

two Byzantine sources regarding Byzantine-Mongol relations in 1261–1281: “Relations Historiques” by George Pachymeres (Greek: Γεώργιος Παχυμέρης) and “Historia Byzantina” by Nikephoros Gregoras (Greek: Νικηφόρος Γρηγοράς). Pachymeres described the historical period between 1254 and 1308, during the reign of Michael VIII and Andronikos II Palaiologos. However, his accounts included only details of the marriage alliances of Michael VIII with the rulers of the Īlkhānid state — Hülagü and his son Abaqa, as well as with Noghai, the de facto co-ruler of the Golden Horde. He also documented Michael VIII’s contacts with Sultan Baybars, the ruler of Egypt, and some aspects of Mongol-Byzantium relations³. Despite its brevity, his account is considered one of the most reliable sources about Mongol-Byzantium contacts. Gregoras Nicephorus lived after Pachymeres, but he continued his work and wrote several books that covered the period 1204–1318⁴. However, he repeated Pachymeres’s information in a considerably shortened form⁵. When describing Palaeologus’s reign, he referred to the Mongols as the Scythians, a common name given to the largest population inhabiting the northern regions⁶. During the Mamluk period, Egyptian-Arabic authors also provided information on some aspects of Mongol-Byzantium relations. However, Mamluk authors frequently presented data in a general manner, sometimes accompanied by chronological inaccuracies. Moreover, most of the Mamluk authors praised the policies of the Mamluk Sultan and khans of the Golden Horde due to Egypt’s friendly relations with the Golden Horde, while simultaneously maintaining a hostile position toward the Īlkhānid state.

Although 13th-century references to Mongol-Byzantium relations are incidental, many modern scholars have increasingly recognized the role of Mongols in Byzantium’s political history during the reign of Michael VIII. Peter Jackson states that after the reconquest of Constantinople in 1261 by Michael VIII, the Byzantine Empire now “lay with the penumbra of Mongol overlordship”. As a result, the new emperor established friendly relations with both Mongol uluses — the Īlkhānid state and the Golden Horde⁷. According to Lippard, the relationships of Mongols with Byzantium, with few exceptions, remained distinct during the reign of Michael VIII. He claims that both Mongol powers “effectively kept out the dreaded Angevin conspiracy” against the Byzantine Empire⁸. In his article, Giebfried argues that the Mongol invasions in the Aegean world during 1241–1261 were the critical turning point in the struggle for hegemony in the region, which allowed the Empire of Nicaea, one of the Byzantine rump states, to expand its power⁹. Korebeinikov states that after the Mongol influence increased in the Anatolian region, the new emperor of the Nicaean Empire, Michael VIII, “turned Byzantine policy in the East sharply towards amicable relations with the Īlkhānid state”. He also states that Byzantium was “a safe haven” during the Mongol conquests of the 1240–1250s. The armies of the Golden Horde and the Īlkhānid state ravaged and subdued the Balkans (Bulgaria) and Asia Minor, re-

³ *Georges Pachymérés. Relations Historiques I. Livres I–III / ed. and transl. by A. Failler and V. Laurent. Paris, 1984. P. 186–189, 234–235, 242–243, 300–313.*

⁴ *Gregoras Nicephorus. Historia Byzantina: in 3 vols. Vol. I / ed. by B. Immanuel. Cambridge, 2012. P. 1–279.*

⁵ *Korobeinikov D. Byzantium and the Turks in the Thirteenth Century. Oxford, 2014. P. 19.*

⁶ *Uspenskii F. I. Byzantine Historians on Mongols and Egyptian Mamluks // Vizantiiskii Vremennik. 1926. Issue 24. P. 10.*

⁷ *Jackson P. The Mongols and the West. Harlow, 2005. P. 171.*

⁸ *Lippard B. G. The Mongols and Byzantium 1243–1341. P. 234.*

⁹ *Giebfried J. The Mongol invasions and the Aegean world (1241–61). P. 130.*

spectively, but these Mongol powers never joined in attacking Constantinople¹⁰. Favereau claims that those “formerly dismissed as “predatory nomads” initiated economic activities and intensified processes of connectedness on a hemispheric level”¹¹. She also states that Mongols established permanent trade and economic relations with Byzantium, and the Byzantine Empire regularly communicated with the Īlkhānid state and the Golden Horde on exchange rules and regional policy issues¹². Alexander Nikolov also highlights the significant role played by the western Mongol uluses of the Ilkhanids state and the Golden Horde in the political history of Byzantium¹³. In his article “Byzantium between the Golden Horde and the Ilkhanids (1261–1337),” he examines the complex geopolitical situation involving the Byzantine Empire, the Golden Horde, and the Ilkhanids from 1261 to 1337. However, Nikolov’s research on Mongol-Byzantium relations covers a broader time frame — from the early 13th century to the early 15th century. Although Nikolov only dedicates few pages to the Mongol-Byzantium relations during the reign of Michael VIII Palaeologus, he draws some critical conclusions. In contrast, our article attempts to provide more detailed insights into the period between 1261 and 1282, considering that Michael VIII had more contacts with the Mongols than any other Byzantine emperor. Other scholars also recognized the role of Mongols in Byzantine political history¹⁴. Despite the fact that researchers have briefly explored Mongol-Byzantium relations, there remains a notable gap in contemporary scholarship regarding the impact of the Mongols on Byzantium’s political history from the 1260s to the 1280s.

Moreover, notwithstanding some consensus among historians about the Mongol-Byzantium relations in 1261–1282, there is still a need to reconsider them. Furthermore, the historical reconstruction of this period raises many questions concerning Mongol-Byzantium political relations. It is unclear what level of communication they had, why Michael VIII was allied with both hostile Mongol powers, and what benefits and interests they sought from their relationships. Therefore, the study aims to provide an overview of the Mongol-Byzantium contacts during this period and answer some of these questions. Specifically, we aim to investigate the Byzantium-Mongol relations during the reign of Michael VIII Palaeologus and to analyze the Mongols’ impact on the Byzantine Empire’s political history, using primary and secondary sources. Based on the analysis of the critical moments of the political ties with Īlkhānid state and the Golden Horde, the study reveals how they were instrumental in shaping the foreign policy of the Byzantine Empire from 1261 to 1282 and how crucial the Mongol-Byzantium relations were for all parties. We have clarified the motivations and interests of the members of their alliances. Michael VIII, who sought to restore the former power of the Empire, built political alliances and forged friendly relations with two hostile Mongol powers. This helped him strengthen

¹⁰ *Korobeinikov D.* Byzantium and the Turks in the Thirteenth Century. P. 294.

¹¹ *Favereau M.* The Mongol peace and global medieval Eurasia // *Comparativ*. 2018. Vol. 28, no. 4. P. 49.

¹² *Favereau M.* The Horde: How the Mongols Changed the World. Cambridge, 2021. P. 6, 152–153.

¹³ *Nikolov A.* Byzantium and the Mongol world: contacts and interaction (from Batu to Tamerlane) // *The Routledge Handbook of the Mongols and Central-Eastern Europe, Political, Economic, and Cultural Relations*. London; New York, 2021. P. 191.

¹⁴ *Uspenskii F. I.* Byzantine Historians on Mongols and Egyptian Mamluks. P. 1–16; *Vernadsky G. V.* Zolotaia Orda, Egipet i Vizantiia v tsarstvovanii Mikhaila Paleologa // *Seminarium Kondakovianum*. 1924. Vol. 1. P. 73–84; *Morgan D. O.* The Mongols and the Eastern Mediterranean // *Mediterranean Historical Review*. 1989. Vol. 4, issue 1. P. 198–211; *Sinor D.* The Mongols in the West // *Journal of Asian History*. 1999. Vol. 33, issue 1. P. 1–44.

Byzantium's influence in Anatolia and support political initiatives in the Balkan region. Berke, the khan of the Golden Horde, initiated the war against Īlkhānids, declaring that the Hülegü had taken advantage of the dissolution of the Empire to claim the territory of modern-day Azerbaijan illegally¹⁵. This war lasted from the formation of the Īlkhānid state to its collapse and had an impact on the political affairs of the Jochids, who allied with Mamluk Egypt. Diplomatic exchanges between Sarai and Cairo took place regularly through the territory of the Byzantine Empire, which caused Michael VIII to join the Qipchāq-Mamluk alliance. Nevertheless, the Īlkhānid state and the Golden Horde also gained tremendous benefits from the relationships with the Byzantine Empire, making the Mongol factor a global phenomenon. The political alliance of the Īlkhānids state with Michael VIII strengthened its influence in the political and economic life of Asia Minor. According to George Lane, the reign of Hülegü and his son Abaqa marked the political stability and general prosperity of the Īlkhānid state as it benefitted from “the opening of the borders and access to the markets in the East”¹⁶. The Golden Horde's alliance with the Byzantine Empire allowed control of trade and economic activities over the Black Sea region. The Byzantium also allowed free movement of travelers, envoys, and merchants between the Dashti-Qipchāq and Egypt through the Hellespont and Bosphorus strait by solidifying Qipchāq-Mamluk links.

The Byzantine Empire, one of the most influential states in the eastern Mediterranean region for many centuries, since the beginning of the 13th century had experienced one of the most challenging periods in its history. The conquest of Constantinople by the crusaders of the Fourth Crusade in 1204 led to the fragmentation of the Byzantine Empire into competing Greek and Latin realms. After seizing Byzantine territories, the leaders of crusaders established the Latin Empire of Constantinople. Meanwhile, the Byzantine aristocracy also formed three rump states in the remaining territories of the Empire, centered in Nicaea, Trebizond, and Epirus. The political landscape shifted significantly only with the arrival of the Mongols in Asia Minor in the 1240s. Particularly, the Mongol invasion and conquest of Anatolia in 1241–1243 was a critical turning point in Byzantium's history. According to Giebfried, the Empire of Nicaea, one of the most viable Byzantine rump states, took political advantage of the early Mongol invasions, which weakened the Latin Empire and Seljuk Sultanate, the main rivals of the Nicaean Empire¹⁷. He claims that the Mongol invasions and conquests in Anatolia in 1241–1243 enabled Nicaea to rapidly expand its political power and economic influence “at the expense of rivals devastated by the Mongols”¹⁸. However, Bruce Lippard disagrees with this idea. He points out that the invasions and conquests of Mongols disrupted the coexistence and treaty between the Seljuks and Nicaea. Before the Mongol conquests, Seljuk sultans had provided the equilibrium characterized by economic, political, and social prosperity for thirty years¹⁹. We argue that Mongol conquests of Western Asia led by Hülegü in 1256–1259 and the foundation of the Īlkhānid state in 1258 were critical factors that allowed the Empire of Nicaea to expand its power and to reconquer Constantinople in 1261. Therefore, in 1257, Nicaean Emperor Theodore II Laskaris signed a peace treaty with Hülegü by using all skills of Byzantine tac-

¹⁵ *Hautala R.* The Jochid Ulus // *The Mongol World*. London, 2022. P. 247.

¹⁶ *Lane G.* The Ilkhanate // *Ibid.* P. 284.

¹⁷ *Giebfried J.* The Mongol invasions and the Aegean world (1241–61). P. 129–130.

¹⁸ *Ibid.* P. 129.

¹⁹ *Lippard B. G.* The Mongols and Byzantium 1243–1341. P. 233.

tics²⁰ in order to eliminate the Mongol threat to the Empire²¹ and to concentrate its forces in European lands of Byzantium. As a result of this and other factors, the Nicaean Empire was able to reconquer Constantinople and to restore Byzantine power during the reign of Michael VIII Palaiologos, who successfully defeated the Latin army in 1261. However, Michael VIII faced more complex geopolitical situations after his victory than his predecessors. The Mongol powers — the Īlkhānid state and the Golden Horde, had already increased influence in Eastern Europe and the Middle East. As we have mentioned earlier, before the establishment of the Īlkhānid state by Hülegü, the Anatolian region had been under the influence of Mongols for 16 years. After Sultan Ghiyath al-Din suffered a decisive defeat at Köse Dagh in 1243, Sivas, Kayseri, Konya, and Ankara were seized by Mongols, and the Sultanate of Rum became a vassal state²². According to Rubruck, Trebizond also turned into a subject territory of the Mongol Empire²³. However, after the campaign of Hülegü in Western Asia in 1256–1259, the vast territories of the Near East and eastern parts of Asia Minor were added to Hülegü's realm. As a result, the Īlkhānid state became the most influential Mongol power in this region. The proximity of the Nicaean Empire and the Īlkhānid state considerably influenced relations between the two. Michael VIII understood the role of the Mongols in Asia Minor and sought to use them more effectively in his foreign policy. He relied on Hülegü's power and influence over Anatolia²⁴. Hülegü had already strengthened his influence in Asia Minor at the beginning of the 1260s. However, his policy focused on maintaining the balance of power in Asia Minor with Byzantium due to the complex political situation in the Middle East at the end of the 1250s²⁵. In 1260, Michael VIII signed a peace treaty with Hülegü to protect his Anatolian provinces and to focus on the European front. Lippard states that both rulers wanted to protect their interests in Anatolia “without committing forces”. Hülegü was still engaged in the war against the Mamluks in Syria, and Michael VIII was eager to reconquer Constantinople²⁶.

Moreover, the Byzantine Empire was also involved in relations with the Golden Horde due to a new geopolitical situation in the Balkan region. After the European campaign of the Mongols (1237–1242), the Golden Horde emerged as one of the strongest Eurasian land powers whose policy influenced many states, including the Byzantine Empire. As Pow claims, the Golden Horde played a significant role in the Balkans until the 1300s. The Jochids, starting from Batu Khan, acted as “regional potentates” rather than loyal subjects of the Mongol Empire²⁷. From the reign of Batu Khan, the Golden Horde carried out its de facto independent policy (until 1269, although it was nominally a part of the Mongol Empire). The southern direction of the Golden Horde's foreign policy concerning Asia Minor was established during the reign of Batu Khan. The Russian researcher Bartold states that Batu Khan, who became the most powerful leader of the Mongol Empire after the European campaign (1236–1241), pursued a non-aggressive and restrained policy of expanding the territory of the Golden Horde and did not initiate new military campaigns for the

²⁰ *Andreyeva M. A.* Priem tatarskikh poslov pri nikeiskom dvore // Sbornik statei, posviashchennyi pamiati N. P. Kondakova. Prague, 1926. P. 192–200.

²¹ *Korobeinikov D.* Byzantium and the Turks in the Thirteenth Century. P. 198.

²² *Manz B. F.* The Mongol Conquest of Iran // *The Mongol World*. P. 203.

²³ *May T.* The Mongol conquest of the Near East // *Ibid.* P. 229.

²⁴ *Lippard B. G.* The Mongols and Byzantium 1243–1341. P. 204.

²⁵ *Ibid.* P. 199.

²⁶ *Ibid.* P. 233.

²⁷ *Pow S.* The Mongol Invasions of Europe // *The Mongol World*. P. 191.

last 13 years of his life²⁸. However, based on Armenian sources, Korobeinikov claims that Mongol commander Baiju attacked Erzurum by order of Batu Khan in 1242²⁹ to bring the Seljuk Sultanate into submission. Nevertheless, Batu Khan played a major role in Asia Minor in the 1240s and 1250s³⁰. After the death of Batu Khan, when Berke Khan came to power in the Golden Horde in 1256, this direction became one of the focal point of their foreign policy³¹. According to Sinor, Berke's main preoccupation lay with the south: the Īlkhānid state, Mamluk Egypt, and, to some degree, the Byzantine Empire³². Berke Khan agreed with Mamluk Egypt and the Byzantine Empire in 1262–1264³³. Moreover, as Favereau argues, the Golden Horde also gained political and economic benefits from its relationships with the Byzantine Empire. A political alliance with Michael VIII strengthened the Horde's control over the Black Sea region and allowed its envoys and traders to pass through the Bosphorus and Dardanelles. Furthermore, political alliance with Baybars gave the Golden Horde access to the Nile River and the Red Sea, which allowed Genoese, Venetian, Greek, Pisan, Egyptian, or Armenian sea traders and coastal powers to become political and commercial partners for the Golden Horde³⁴.

Byzantium, Mamluk Egypt, the Īlkhānid state, and the Golden Horde in the 1260s

In the 1250s, the Mongols extended their influence to the Near East, Eastern Europe, and Asia Minor, presenting a more complicated geopolitical situation for the new Emperor Michael VIII than it was during his predecessors (see Figure). As Michael VIII wanted to restore the Empire's former power, he was primarily concerned with the Mongol invasion led by Hülegü in the East and the political influence of the Golden Horde in the Balkan region. However, the real threats came from the European front after 1261—the possibility of another Latin attack. Therefore, he realized the need to establish a new foreign policy regarding the Mongols since the Byzantine Empire was not able to fight against them. Michael VIII sought to use these challenges to his advantage by employing skilled diplomacy. Charles of Anjou (1266–1285), who, on February 26, 1266, defeated Manfred of Hohenstaufen (1251–1266) and became King of Naples and Sicily. In 1265–1282, Charles aimed to restore the Latin Empire. His purpose in creating anti-Byzantine alliances severely threatened the existence of Byzantium³⁵. For this reason, Michael VIII sought to find as many allies as possible to protect the Empire and to strengthen his power

²⁸ *Bartold V. Batyi // Bartold V. Raboty po istorii i filologii tiurkskikh i mongol'skikh narodov. Sochineniia: in 9 vols. Vol. V. Moscow, 1968. P. 496–500.*

²⁹ *Kirakos G. Istoria Armenii / transl. by L. A. Khanlarian. Moscow, 1976. P. 278.*

³⁰ *Korobeinikov D. Byzantium and the Turks in the Thirteenth Century. P. 177.*

³¹ *Abdimomynov N. Altyn Ordanyň syrtyky sayasatynyn negizgi bagyrtary: PhD thesis (History). Almaty, 2011. P. 6.*

³² *Sinor D. The Mongols in the West. P. 27.*

³³ *Favereau M. The Golden Horde and the Mamluks: The Birth of a Diplomatic Set-Up (660-5/1261-7) // Mamluk Cairo, a Crossroads for Embassies. Leiden, 2019. P. 316.*

³⁴ *Favereau M. The Horde: How the Mongols Changed the World. P. 187.*

³⁵ *Nicol D.M. The last centuries of Byzantium, 1261–1453. Cambridge, 1993. P. 48–71; Runciman S. The Sicilian Vespers: A History of the Mediterranean World in the Later Thirteenth Century. Cambridge, 2000. P. 68–70, 194–200.*



The Byzantine Empire in 1265. The Historical Atlas, 1911. W. R. Shepherd.

Source: Mapping Globalization. Available at: <https://commons.princeton.edu/mg/the-byzantine-empire-in-1265/> (accessed: 10.09.2023)

in this way³⁶. As a result, the Byzantine emperor created political and marriage alliances and friendly relationships with both Mongol uluses — the İlkhānid state and the Golden Horde. According to Lippard, Michael VIII focused on two principal tasks in his foreign policy: defending Constantinople from another Latin attack and protecting Byzantine possessions in Anatolia³⁷. Since Michael VIII understood that the Mongol factor played an essential role in Asia Minor, he adopted a new policy for Byzantine-Mongol relations. He understood that the Empire could survive only through the help of the generous use of Byzantine diplomacy, political alliances, or marriage alliances with foreign countries, including the Mongol uluses³⁸. Pachymeres reports that the Byzantines effectively thwarted the Mongol threat through diplomatic skills and strategic alliances, not with military strength. The emperor employed friendly gestures, such as forging marriage ties and presenting valuable gifts³⁹.

³⁶ Bryer A. The fate of George Komnenos, ruler of Trebizond (1266–1280) // *Byzantinische Zeitschrift*. 1973. Vol. 66, no. 2. P. 342–343.

³⁷ Lippard B. G. The Mongols and Byzantium 1243–1341. P. 201–212.

³⁸ Abdimomyonov N. Altyn Ordanyň syrtyky sayasatynyň negizgi bagytyary. P. 147–155.

³⁹ *Uspenskii F. I.* Byzantine Historians on Mongols and Egyptian Mamluks. P. 3.

The Mongol campaign in the Middle East in 1256–1260, led by Hülegü, had brought about significant changes in international relations. In 1258, Hülegü took Baghdad and soon afterwards established the Īlkhānid state⁴⁰. The Mongols also captured northern Mesopotamia and Syria. As a result, the Īlkhānid state became one of the strongest powers in the Near East. Therefore, the new Emperor of the Nicaean Empire, Michael VIII, first created a treaty with the newly established Īlkhānid state in 1260⁴¹. Both states tried to restore the balance of power in Anatolia at that time and needed to sign a treaty. According to Lippard, after Michael VIII restored Byzantine power in Constantinople, he also sought a political alliance and friendly relations with the Īlkhānid state in order to avoid a potential Mongol invasion. Therefore, the political alliance between Michael VIII and Hülegü was imperative⁴². Michael VIII wanted to protect the status quo and possessions of the Byzantine Empire in Anatolia. Therefore, in 1265, Hülegü's son Abaqa married Maria Diplobatatzina, the illegitimate daughter of Michael VIII, shortly after Hülegü's death⁴³. As a result, a new policy was established, making Byzantium and the Īlkhānid state influential regional powers in Asia Minor. According to Korobeinikov, Maria and Abaqa's marriage marked a milestone in Byzantine Eastern politics. Maria was an influential and respected wife until the death of her husband in 1282⁴⁴. This fact demonstrates the genuinely friendly relations between the two states. In addition, the alliance with the Īlkhānid state produced quick results. Hülegü preferred the Orthodox Church in Antioch and forced Latin princes to install Orthodox patriarch Euthymius. Furthermore, in 1261, Hülegü's troops pacified the Turkmen tribes on the Byzantine frontiers⁴⁵.

At the same time, Michael VIII intended to establish a friendly relationship and an alliance with Mamluk Egypt, the enemy of the Īlkhānid state. For this reason, in 1261–1262 AD / 660 AH, Michael VIII sent his envoys to Sultan Baybars⁴⁶, who immediately accepted Michael VIII's proposal since a political alliance with the Byzantine Empire would facilitate diplomatic relations and contacts with Berke Khan, the ruler of the Golden Horde. During that time, Baybars desired an agreement with Berke Khan, an enemy of the Īlkhānid state, that would outflank Baybars-Hülegü's hostility. In 660 AH / 1261–1262 AD, Baybars sent a letter to Berke Khan calling on him to create an alliance and to start a holy war against the infidel Īlkhānids⁴⁷. It was necessary to maintain diplomatic relations between these two states to strengthen their military-political bonds against the Īlkhānid state. According to Pachymeres, after Sultan Baybars came to power in Egypt, he intended to establish relationships with the Golden Horde because he was of Qipchāq origin. For this purpose, he needed close ties with the emperor of Byzantium and the sea route connecting the two states⁴⁸. According to the treaty between Byzantium and Egypt, Michael VIII ensured the free passage of envoys of the Mamluk Sultanate and the Golden Horde through the Hellespont (Dardanelle) and Bosphorus strait under the control of the

⁴⁰ Lane G. The Ilkhanate // The Mongol World. P. 283.

⁴¹ Lippard B. G. The Mongols and Byzantium 1243–1341. P. 196.

⁴² Idid.

⁴³ Georges Pachymérés. Relations Historiques I. P. 234–235.

⁴⁴ Korobeinikov D. Byzantium and the Turks in the Thirteenth Century. P. 209.

⁴⁵ Lippard B. G. The Mongols and Byzantium 1243–1341. P. 197

⁴⁶ Amitai R. Mongols and Mamluks: The Mamluk-Īlkhānid War, 1260–1281. Cambridge, 1995. P. 91.

⁴⁷ Tiesenhausen V. G. Sbornik materialov, otnosiashchikhsia k istorii Zolotoi Ordy: in 2 vols. Vol. 1. St. Petersburg, 1884. P. 55.

⁴⁸ Uspenskii F. I. Byzantine Historians on Mongols and Egyptian Mamluks. P. 1.

Byzantine Empire. Michael VIII probably aimed to establish as many allies as possible in order to protect the eastern borders of the Empire and to strengthen his power in Anatolia. Moreover, the Mamluk Egypt accepted his offer since the most crucial commercial sea route from the Black Sea to Egypt passed through the territory under the control of the Byzantine Empire. Establishing a free passage of goods and mainly enslaved people was critical, as was replenishing the Mamluk troops in Egypt. According to Pachymeres and Gregoras, the Byzantines knew that the Qipchāq slave trade route went through the Hellespont (Dardanelle) and Bosphorus strait under the control of the Byzantine Empire, to Egypt to sustain the Mamluk military power⁴⁹. Pachymeres points out that the Egyptians had previously highly valued the Scythian tribe (Qipchāqs), buying enslaved people from these places and primarily recruiting an army. He says that when the Scythian (Qipchāq) became the head of the supreme power, the Scythian tribe in particular began to be valued in Egypt as the basis of the military force as the Scythian captives could not be delivered there by any other way except for the Strait. This was possible only with the consent of the Emperor of Byzantium. Therefore, embassies were sent to him with a request that the ships from Egypt pass without delay to Euxinus Pontus, having bought Scythian youths at a high price. There was often a transfer of embassies: from Egypt with an expression of courtesies, from the Golden Horde with an agreement to open a free sea passage for ships⁵⁰. However, a political alliance between the Golden Horde and Mamluk Egypt was also the best way to keep the Īlkhānid state at bay in foreign policy⁵¹.

In 1262, a full-scale war broke out between the two Mongol uluses — the Īlkhānid state and the Golden Horde due to inter-dynastic strife and territorial disputes that emerged during the Mongol campaign in the Middle East from 1256–1260⁵². In the context of this war, Sultan Baybars, as well as Michael VIII, were responsible for creating the north and south axis: the Golden Horde, Byzantium, and Egypt, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, — the Īlkhānid state, Byzantium, and probably Western Europe, which existed during and after the reign of Michael VIII⁵³. The situation was volatile. Therefore, Michael VIII allowed free passage of envoys from the Mamluk Sultanate and the Golden Horde because he didn't want to quarrel with both hostile Mongol uluses. Based on the information from Byzantine and Arab sources, American researcher Lippard counted fifteen Byzantine embassies to the Mamluks from 1285 to 1327 to promote the Cairo, Sarai, and Constantinople axis⁵⁴. David Morgan highlights that the critical link between

⁴⁹ *Uspenskii F. I.* Byzantine Historians on Mongols and Egyptian Mamluks. P. 1–6; *Vernadsky G. V.* Zolotaia Orda, Egipet i Vizantiia v tsarstvovanii Mikhaila Paleologa. P. 75–77; *Jackson P.* The Mongols and the West: 1221–1410. London, 2018. P. 7; *Korobeinikov D.* Byzantium and the Turks in the Thirteenth Century. P. 214.

⁵⁰ *Uspenskii F. I.* Byzantine Historians on Mongols and Egyptian Mamluks. P. 2; *Vernadsky G. V.* Zolotaia Orda, Egipet i Vizantiia v tsarstvovanii Mikhaila Paleologa. P. 75–77.

⁵¹ *Sinor D.* The Mongols in the West. P. 27.

⁵² *Baybars al-Mansūri al-Dawādār.* Zubdat al-fikra fi ta'rikh al-Hijra // History of the early Mamluk Period / ed. by D. S. Richards. Beirut, 1998. P. 82; *Tiesenhausen V. G.* Sbornik materialov, otnosiashchikhsia k istorii Zolotoi Ordy. Vol. 1. P. 99–123, 126–127; *Kirakos G.* Istoria Armenii. P. 236–237; *Zakirov S.* Diplomaticheskie otnosheniia Zolotoi Ordy s Egiptom (XIII–XIV). Moscow, 1966. P. 14–16, 39–52; *Amitai R.* Mongols and Mamluks. P. 78–80; *Allsen T.* The rise of the Mongolian Empire and Mongolian rule in North China // The Cambridge History of China. 1994. Vol. 6. P. 412–413; *Korobeinikov D.* Byzantium and the Turks in the Thirteenth Century. P. 199.

⁵³ *Korobeinikov D.* Byzantium and the Turks in the Thirteenth Century. P. 213.

⁵⁴ *Lippard B. G.* The Mongols and Byzantium 1243–1341. P. 144.

the Golden Horde and Mamluk Egypt was Constantinople after Michael Palaiologos restored the Byzantine Empire. The researcher implies that Michael VIII skillfully served as a middleman by maintaining friendly relationships with the Īlkhānid state and the Golden Horde-Mamluk axis⁵⁵. Moreover, the alliance of the Byzantine Empire with the Īlkhānid state, as well as with Mamluk Egypt and the Golden Horde, was crucial to surviving on both fronts. Michael VIII sought to avoid any conflicts with both powerful Mongol rulers, Berke and Hülegü. While he feared a possible Mongol invasion in Anatolia by the Īlkhānid state, he also anticipated threats of the Golden Horde's invasion in the Balkan provinces of the Byzantine Empire, which was evident in 1264–1265. Therefore, Michael VIII's political relations with both Mongol uluses were imperative. The geographic location of the Byzantine Empire played an essential role in its political and economic ties with the Golden Horde. Additionally, Michael VIII needed close relations with the Golden Horde because Byzantium relied on the Jochids' support to protect its interests in the Balkan region. As such, in 1270, Michael VIII formed a marriage alliance with Noghai, the de facto co-ruler of the Golden Horde, to ensure the security of the Empire's Balkan possessions⁵⁶. By doing so, Michael was able to balance the Īlkhānid state's political ties with the Latins and to prevent any anti-Byzantine collision. Michael's alliance with Mongol uluses, the Īlkhānid state, and the Golden Horde also prevented a Mongol invasion.

According to the Arab writers, the Egyptian embassies to Berke or vice versa traveled via Constantinople⁵⁷. The land route between the Mamluk Sultanate and the Golden Horde through the Īlkhānid's domain was unsafe. However, the sea route connecting the two countries could go only through the Hellespont (Dardanelles) and Bosphorus Strait. Due to the fact that both Straits were under the control of the Byzantine emperor, the Mamluk sultan needed to reach a special agreement with Michael VIII. Therefore, the sultan sent envoys once a year to ensure the free movement of embassies, travelers, and merchants between the Dashti-Qipchāq and Egypt through the Hellespont and Bosphorus Strait. Thus, even though Michael VIII established friendly relations and marriage alliance with the Īlkhānid state, he created conditions for the free passage of ships of the Mamluk Sultanate and the Golden Horde, both enemies of Īlkhānids. It might seem that the foreign policy of Michael VIII was hopeless. However, the analysis of the situation of the Byzantine Empire at the time reveals that it was the most effective and beneficial political step. Byzantium writer Pachymeres blamed the emperor's policy for the agreement with Sultan Baybars and permission of the passage of envoys and travelers between the Golden Horde and the Mamluk Sultanate. He said that the emperor thought it benefited the Empire but did not bring any favors. He mentioned that such a policy would be understandable in a peaceful time; otherwise, it was a severe threat. He argued that it strengthened the Mamluk Sultanate, which was hostile to Christendom. The constant flow of captured and bought young enslaved people from the north for the military forces of the Mamluks increased, as did their courage to attack neighboring peoples and cause damage to Christians. That period, the Western peoples (Italians—the authors) ruled the coastal lands adjacent to Syria and Phoenicia, even dominated Antioch, and, thanks to their power, sought to liberate Palestine, which was the land of life and suffering of the Savior, the Holy Land. During this

⁵⁵ Morgan D. O. *The Mongols and the Eastern Mediterranean*. P. 110.

⁵⁶ Georges Pachymérés. *Relations Historiques* I. P. 242–243; *Uspenskii F. I. Byzantine Historians on Mongols and Egyptian Mamluks*. P. 3.

⁵⁷ Tiesenhausen V. G. *Sbornik materialov, otnosiashchikhsia k istorii Zolotoi Ordy*. Vol. 1. P. 56–57.

period, the Egyptians strengthened at the expense of Scythian (Qipchâq — the authors) troops, pushing Christians out of the big cities and turning this country into a desert region. In the end, Pachymeres said that “the Sultan of Egypt rationally used their stupidity, illogical calculation, unfounded plans, and greed in his struggle with Christians”⁵⁸.

According to Denis Sinor, Constantinople was indispensable for traders and envoys traveling between Egypt and the Golden Horde because of its strategic location. The Golden Horde and Egypt shared a common interest in foreign policy and trade. Egypt relied heavily on the Golden Horde to import enslaved people, which was crucial for the Mamluks’ military power and profitable from the Horde’s perspective⁵⁹. Byzantine historian Gregoras Nicephorus explained that the Sultan of Egypt and Arabia approached Emperor Michael VIII then. The essence of this contact was to agree, to be friendly with the Greeks, and to allow the passage of Egyptian merchants through the Straits (Dardanelles and Bosphorus) once a year for trading. Since this seemed insignificant initially, the emperor easily acceded to it. Over time, when the true meaning of this agreement became clear, it became difficult to forbid the passage of envoys and merchants since the agreement could not be broken. Once or twice a year, the ships came to the European Scythian, collecting volunteer refugees living in Azov and the Don region; enslaved people bought from rich people, and children bought from their parents. As a result, these ships returned to Egyptian Babylon (Cairo) and Alexandria, delivering Scythian military forces to the Egyptians. After all, the Egyptians were incapable of military service, being extremely cowardly and devoid of willpower; therefore, they were forced to rely on foreigners and mercenaries for military service. However, soon after that, the size of the army assembled by the Egyptian Arabs was so great that it became a dangerous enemy to the peoples of the West and the East. They occupied Africa and all territories of Libya to the Pillars of Hercules, then Phoenicia and Syria, and the entire coastal country to Cilicia, destroying the former population there. The same happened with others, especially the Galatians and Celts (French and Italian Crusaders), who arrived from the West and had long owned the best places and cities⁶⁰.

In the 1260s, the commercial activities of the Eastern Mediterranean intensified. However, restoring the Empire did not undermine the economic dominance of the Italian trade republics in the recovered territories. Michael VIII gave more privileges to Genoese merchants, creating conditions for the latter to prevail over their rival country — the Venetians, who benefited more during the Latin Empire⁶¹. Moreover, from the 1260s, the Golden Horde’s policy regarding the Mediterranean had been affected economically. The final defeat of the Crusaders in the Middle East and wars between the Īlkhānid state and the Mamluk Egypt in the 1250s weakened the southern route of the transcontinental Silk Road⁶². Moreover, the northern route of the Silk Road, across the Golden Horde, began to revive because of the Pax Mongolica in the Eurasian steppe and Jochid’s favorable politics regarding trade. In fact, since the 1250s, the Golden Horde had become a powerful state that controlled the transcontinental trade route from China to the ports of the

⁵⁸ *Uspenskii F.I.* Byzantine Historians on Mongols and Egyptian Mamluks. P. 3.

⁵⁹ *Sinor D.* The Mongols in the West. P. 27.

⁶⁰ *Uspenskii F.I.* Byzantine Historians on Mongols and Egyptian Mamluks. P. 5–6.

⁶¹ *Necipoglu N.* Byzantium between the Ottomans and the Latins: Politics and Society in the Late Empire. Cambridge, 2009. P. 23.

⁶² *Abdimomyrov N.* Altyn Ordanyň syrtyky sayasatynyň negizgi bagyttary. P. 91–100.

Northern Black Sea⁶³. Thus, the involvement of the Golden Horde and Byzantium in the commerce in the Black Sea increased. The trade between Western and Eastern countries flourished because of *Pax Mongolica*, which benefited the Mongols, the Golden Horde, and Byzantium. American historian Lippard argues that the weak position of Byzantium (because of Bulgarian expansion to the south of the Balkans and the loss of its Anatolian provinces) increased its dependence on the regional and transcontinental commodities obtained from markets under Mongol control⁶⁴. However, moving the imperial capital back to Constantinople from Nicaea allowed Michael VIII to control the sea trade and communication in the territory of the Byzantine Empire. The political and commercial changes in the Bosphorus made it possible for the envoys of the Golden Horde and Mamluk Sultanate to pass through⁶⁵.

In sum, at the beginning of the 1260s, the Byzantine Empire formed a mutually beneficial alliance with the Īlkhānid state, which enabled to focus on imminent threats from Europe while maintaining stability in the Anatolian region. The agreement between Michael VIII and Sultan Baybars served as a counterbalance to Latin aggression. However, Baybars's political and diplomatic relations with the Golden Horde and Byzantium's policy regarding south-eastern European countries brought the Golden Horde into Byzantine foreign policy. Michael VIII needed to establish friendly relations with the Golden Horde because the empire relied on the Jochids' support to protect its interests in the Balkan region. As a result, at the beginning of the 1260s, the north and south axes emerged in the region: on the one hand, the Golden Horde, Byzantium, and Mamluk Egypt; on the other hand, the Īlkhānid state, Byzantium, and possibly Western Europe⁶⁶. However, it should be noted that the political alliance between Īlkhānid and the Western world against Mamluks failed to become operative. Both sides, the Īlkhānids and the Franks, intended to create an alliance and joined forces against the Mamluks. Pope Urban IV (1261–1264) pursued this intention. The dialogue between Christian West and Abaqa was continued by Pope Clement IV (1265–1268). Political and diplomatic contacts were frequent and aimed to establish coordination between the Eastern and Western joint forces against the Mamluk threat. However, various factors prevented the alliance between the Īlkhānid and the West.

The conflicts between the Byzantine Empire and the Golden Horde in the 1260s

According to mutual agreements between Byzantium, Mamluk Egypt, and the Golden Horde, Michael VIII permitted the passage of the envoys of Mamluk Sultan Baybars and Berke Khan through the Bosphorus and Dardanelles. However, the hostile Īlkhānid state disapproved of this situation and sent warnings against the Mamluk and Qipchāq envoys passing the Byzantine territory⁶⁷. Having no desire to invade Byzantium, the Īlkhānid state used psychological warfare; the Abaqa resorted to rumors to create terror in the Byzantine Empire. However, the emperor took the warning seriously. In the summer

⁶³ Zhumagulov K. T., Abdimomynov N. T. Altyn Ordanyň sauda katynastarynyň negizgi bagyttary (XIII–XIV g. basy) // Vestnik of KazNU. Seriya istoricheskaya. 2018. Vol. 90, no. 3. P. 86.

⁶⁴ Lippard B. G. The Mongols and Byzantium 1243–1341. P. I–X.

⁶⁵ Vernadsky G. V. Zolotaia Orda, Egipet i Vizantiia v tsarstvovanii Mikhaila Paleologa. P. 73–84.

⁶⁶ Lippard B. G. The Mongols and Byzantium 1243–1341. P. 199–212.

⁶⁷ Ibid. P. 199.

of 1263, Michael VIII broke the treaty with the Qipchāq-Mamluk alliance and detained Izz al-Dīn, the Mamluk envoys with tons of gifts sent by Sultan Baybars I, and envoys of Berke Khan, who returned from Egypt on July 27, 1263 (17 Ramadan 661 Hijri)⁶⁸. Michael also wrote Baybars about reneging on their agreement and warning him⁶⁹. Favereau claims that the Byzantine emperor was fearful of Hülegü's influence because the Īlkhānid state was a Mongol force "to be reckoned with on the Byzantines' doorstep". Michael had two options: "Would he maintain his promises to the Horde, or would he break his promises to them to avoid antagonizing Hülegü?" Michael VIII chose the latter⁷⁰. This event led to an escalation of tensions between the Golden Horde and Byzantium. Berke Khan sent troops against the Byzantine army led by Noghai. Moreover, on June 27 — July 26, 1264 (Ramadan 662 Hijri), Sultan Baybars was informed about the capture of the embassy by the Byzantine emperor. According to Arab writer Ibn Abd al-Zahir, the sultan immediately invited the Patriarch and Bishop; he showed them a letter of agreement signed by the Byzantine emperor with Mamluk Egypt to ask for their opinion on this behavior of the emperor. They said that the emperor should be expelled from the church for violating the agreement by this act⁷¹. The Sultan Baybars received their opinions in written form and sent this message to the emperor with a letter "expressing his anger" about this case. In addition, the sultan also sent a special note to the Berke Khan regarding this situation⁷². However, Ibn 'Abd al-Zāhir left no further information about this incident. Moreover, there are some contradictions in the Arab sources about this incident.

Another Arab writer, Mufaddal Ibn Abī-l-Fadā'il, provided additional information about this incident. He explained that when the envoys of Egypt and the Golden Horde arrived at Michael VIII's palace, the envoys from the Īlkhānid state also visited the emperor's palace simultaneously. These encounters prompted Michael VIII to justify his actions to the Mamluk Sultan. He explained that, in the presence of the Īlkhānid envoys, he could not permit the passage of the ambassadors of Baybars and Berke. He feared that Hülegü would invade their territories because the Byzantine Empire's territory directly bordered Īlkhānid. However, Berke Khan was informed about this incident and sent the army of the Golden Horde under the command of Noghai to besiege Constantinople⁷³.

According to Arab writer Mufaddal Ibn Abī-l-Fadā'il, when the troops of the Golden Horde under the command of Noghai approached Constantinople, the emperor left the city. He also sent the Egyptian envoy Faris ad-Din Akush al-Masudi, who was in captivity in Constantinople, as a peacemaker to resolve issues with the commander of the Golden Horde army. At the request of Michail VIII Palaiologos, he said that the envoys voluntarily stayed in Constantinople. However, after the commander of the Golden Horde army demanded that his statement be confirmed in written form, the Egyptian envoy fulfilled the requirement of the commander Noghai. The Byzantine emperor reminded Noghai of his friendship with the Mamluk Sultan⁷⁴. Moreover, the Byzantine emperor confirmed that he "will include 300 satin robes among the annual tributes that he will give him (Berke)

⁶⁸ Vernadsky G. V. Zolotoia Orda, Egipet i Vizantia v tsarstvovanii Mikhaila Paleologa. P. 73–84, 169; Tiesenhausen V. G. Sbornik materialov, otnosiashchikhsia k istorii Zolotoi Ordy. Vol. 1. P. 359.

⁶⁹ Lippard B. G. The Mongols and Byzantium 1243–1341. P. 199.

⁷⁰ Favereau M. The Horde: How the Mongols Changed the World. P. 154.

⁷¹ Tiesenhausen V. G. Sbornik materialov, otnosiashchikhsia k istorii Zolotoi Ordy. Vol. 1. P. 62.

⁷² Ibid. P. 62–64.

⁷³ Ibid. P. 190–191.

⁷⁴ Ibid. P. 190.

so that he (Berke) will be an ally and not attack his land”⁷⁵. Afterwards, the Golden Horde army retreated, and the envoys of Mamluk Egypt and the Golden Horde were immediately released. Without any other incidents, envoys of the Mamluk Sultanate and the Golden Horde reached Crimea and arrived at the headquarters of Berke who settled in the Lower Volga region. Faris al-Din Akush al-Masudi tried to justify his long delay by referring to captivity in Byzantium. However, Berke showed his written statement about a voluntary presence in Constantinople given to Noghai. Berke was furious about this situation. He was angry at the envoy’s disrespect for the diplomatic mission entrusted to him and at his hypocrisy. However, due to the diplomats’ right to inviolability and friendly relations with Sultan Baybars, the Khan of the Golden Horde left him at the discretion of the sultan without subjecting himself to punishment. The sultan punished Faris al-Din Akush al-Masudi for treason after his arrival in Egypt in March 1267. His property and 40,000 dinars of goods were confiscated, and he was imprisoned⁷⁶. Proving the disloyalty of the foreign diplomat, Faris al-Din Akush al-Masudi, might pose a significant challenge. However, commander Noghai received his written response about this incident and took proactive measures to address delicate interstate matters without consequences⁷⁷.

According to Egyptian-Arab authors, Constantinople survived the invasion of the Golden Horde army thanks to the peacekeeping activities of Faris al-Din Akush al-Masudi, who at the request of Michael VIII Palaiologos managed to convince the head of the Golden Horde army that there was an agreement between Byzantium, Mamluk Egypt, and the Golden Horde. Thus, Berke Khan demonstrated his power to the Byzantine emperor and explained that actions against the Golden Horde’s interests would not end well. The latest situation demonstrated the importance of the political relations of Byzantium with the İlhānīd and the Golden Horde. The Byzantine emperor agreed to pay tribute for a peaceful existence. It was clear that under the circumstances, the emperor could implement either a peaceful policy or neutrality⁷⁸. According to Yegorov, this event is one of the episodes of the long struggle between the İlhānīd state and the Golden Horde, once again confirming the systemic policy of Constantinople directed against the alliance between the Mamluk Sultanate and the Golden Horde⁷⁹. Several medieval Arab writers provide information about the military campaigns of the Golden Horde against Constantinople, which can be found in the works of an-Nuweiri, Ibn Khaldun, al-Maqrizi, and al-Aini. All the authors described this campaign in the same manner but indicated the name of the Golden Horde ruler as Möngke-Temür, not Berke Khan⁸⁰.

According to Al-Nuwayrī, Ibn Khaldūn, Al-Maqrīzī, and Al-’Aynī, the Khan of the Golden Horde — Möngke-Temür — sent his army against Constantinople “because of dissatisfaction” with the actions of the Byzantine emperor. The representative of the Mamluk Sultan embassy, Faris ad-Din Akush Al-Masudi, approached the commander of the Golden Horde (Noghai — authors) and assured him that there was an agreement between the Golden Horde, Egypt, and Byzantium. The army of Möngke-Temür plundered the surroundings of Constantinople and took Seljuk Sultan of Rūm ‘Izz al-Dīn Kaykāwus II

⁷⁵ Ibid. P. 191.

⁷⁶ Ibid. P. 191–192.

⁷⁷ *Abdimotynov N.* Altyn Ordanyň syrtyky sayasatynyn negizgi bagyttary. P. 150.

⁷⁸ Ibid. P. 150–151.

⁷⁹ *Egorov V.* Istoricheskaja geografiia Zolotoi Ordy v XIII–XIV v. Moscow, 1985. P. 194.

⁸⁰ *Abdimotynov N.* Altyn Ordanyň syrtyky sayasatynyn negizgi bagyttary. P. 152–153.

with them. When he returned to Egypt, Egyptian envoy Faris ad-Din Akush Al-Masudi was severely punished by Sultan Baybars for abuse of authority⁸¹. It is not difficult to identify that the description of this information is similar to the description of the campaign of Berke Khan's army against Byzantium in 1265, recorded in the writings of Baybars al-Manşūrī al-Dawādār, Şāfi, Mufaddal Ibn Abi-l-Fadā'il, and Ibn Kasir⁸². The facts and the names of the actors of the event coincided. In this and the previous description, the names of Faris ad-Din Akush Al-Masudi and Sultan 'Izz al-Dīn Kaykāwus II were repeated twice; as the authors state, he was arrested twice, which was impossible. Therefore, according to the information, these descriptions of these campaigns are the same, only dated incorrectly.

The analysis of the Arabic sources reveals the following. In the works of Al-Nuwayrī, Ibn Khaldūn, Al-Maqrīzī, and Al-'Aynī, the campaign against Constantinople dates back to the reign of Mōngke-Temūr. In the parts devoted to the reign of Berke, there is no information about the campaign of the Golden Horde army against the Byzantine Empire. In contrast, in the works of Baybars al-Manşūrī al-Dawādār, Şāfi, Mufaddal Ibn Abi-l-Fadā'il, and Ibn Kasir, the campaign took place during the reign of Berke. In the section devoted to the period of the reign of Mōngke-Temūr, there is no information about the campaign to Constantinople. Only the work of Al-'Aynī mentions both campaigns — those of Berke and Mōngke-Temūr. However, it should be noted that Al-'Aynī wrote his work at the beginning of the 15th century, 150 years after the siege of Constantinople by the troops of the Golden Horde. He used the works of his predecessors. He might have taken the information about the campaign in 1265 from one author and about the campaign in 1269–1272 from another. The most detailed information about the campaign of Berke's army against the Byzantine Empire is given in the work of Al-Mufaddal, in which the main description of this campaign is logically constructed and coincides with previous and subsequent events. Al-Nuwayrī, Al-Maqrīzī, and Ibn Khaldūn, mention only Mōngke-Temūr's "dissatisfaction" with the Byzantine emperor's action. The reason for this "discontent" and what happened afterwards remains unclear. Therefore, the campaign against Constantinople was not organized during the reign of Mōngke-Temūr. It took place in 1265 by the order of Berke Khan, which is confirmed by other facts. The primary reason is that at the time of Mōngke-Temūr, relations between the Golden Horde and Byzantium were neither peaceful nor hostile. Moreover, in the works of Al-Nuwayrī, Ibn Khaldūn, Al-Maqrīzī, and Al-'Aynī, the date of this event is inaccurate, so the reference to the campaign of Mōngke-Temūr to Byzantium should be regarded as erroneous.

Moreover, in 1265, during the reign of Berke Khan, the troops of the Golden Horde led by his commander Noghai with the Bulgarian King Constantine I, invaded Byzantium. Michael VIII barely escaped the attack. The emperor survived only by arriving at the capital on the way back not by land but by sea (there was a Horde-Bulgarian ambush). Noghai's campaign also aimed to liberate the former Seljuk Sultan 'Izz al-Dīn Kaykāwus II from Byzantine captivity. After the overthrow by his brother Rukn ad-Din Kilich-Arslan, the former Seljuk Sultan came to Michael VIII with a request for asylum. However, the emperor was afraid of the outcomes of his action and locked the sultan in prison. The emperor held the former Seljuk Sultan hostage in Constantinople. The situation was tense

⁸¹ Tiesenhausen V.G. Sbornik materialov, odnosiaschikhsia k istorii Zolotoi Ordy. Vol. 1. P. 153–154, 380, 434, 511–512.

⁸² Idid. P. 103, 126, 191, 272–277.

but Hülegü seemed pleased with this situation, as ‘Izz al-Dīn Kaykāwus II was no longer sultan. Moreover, in 1261, after the reconquest of Constantinople, Michael Palaiologos maintained close contacts with the Mamluk sultanate; the envoys of Egypt and the Golden Horde traveled through the Byzantine capital because they had no other way⁸³. In other words, Michael VIII also cherished the hope of restoring ‘Izz al-Dīn Kaykāwus II’s reign. It is known that the Byzantine embassy arrived in Egypt with the envoys of Berke and ‘Izz al-Dīn Kaykāwus II shortly before July 7, 1263, on the eve of a new round of negotiations with Hülegü about a marriage alliance. According to Pachemeres, “the emperor did everything possible to conquer [garrisons] of Persian (Seljuk) fortresses, hoping to use [them] as a buffer zone if they (the Mongols) attack [on us]”⁸⁴. Berke was concerned with the fate of the former Seljuk Sultan as he desired the return of ‘Izz al-Dīn Kaykāwus II to the throne of Seljuk Sultanate of Rūm and restoration of the political influence of the Golden Horde on the Seljuk Sultanate, as it was during Batu Khan. As a result of the campaign, the former Seljuk sultan was freed from captivity. ‘Izz al-Dīn Kaykāwus II left the fortress of Ainos and arrived in Solkhat in the autumn of 1265 or in the winter of 1264⁸⁵. Berke granted him an appanage in Crimea until he received the throne and gave his daughter Urbai-khatun as a bride⁸⁶. This incident posed a significant threat to the position of Byzantium⁸⁷. Moreover, Noghai invaded the territory of Byzantium not only to release ‘Izz al-Dīn Kaykāwus II but also to bring the lands of the Danube to the Dniester under strict control of the Golden Horde. This campaign brought the Golden Horde’s territory closer to the territory of Byzantium, setting the stage for Noghai’s significant role in the foreign policy of the Byzantine Empire.

The foreign policy of the Byzantine Empire in 1266–1282

During Mengü-Temür’s reign, twenty years of peaceful relations were initiated between the Golden Horde and the Īlkhānid state⁸⁸. Once Abaqa and Mengü-Temür restored friendly relationships, Michael VIII was able to use Abaqa’s support to prevent Charles I Anjou’s plans for the reconquest of Constantinople. In the mid-1260s, Michael VIII and Abaqa started coordinating their diplomatic intentions regarding Western countries. In 1268, Abaqa wrote a letter to Pope Clement IV, in which he suggested that the Latin army join forces with the Īlkhānid state and Michael VIII⁸⁹. The following year, they sent a joint diplomatic mission of Īlkhānid state and Byzantine envoys. The mission met with James I of Aragon, who wrote that Michael and Abaqa had offered to help and support them if they landed near Alanya or Anatolia⁹⁰. In 1274, the envoys of the Īlkhānids and Byzan-

⁸³ Morgan D. O. *The Mongols and the Eastern Mediterranean*. P. 204.

⁸⁴ Georges Pachymérés. *Relations Historiques* I. P. 186–187.

⁸⁵ Tiesenhausen V. G. *Sbornik materialov, otnosiashchikhsia k istorii Zolotoi Ordy*. Vol. 1. P. 52–54, 178–180, 189–192; Georges Pachymérés. *Relations Historiques* I. P. 300–313.

⁸⁶ Pochekaev R. Yu. *Tsari ordynskie. Biografii khanov i pravitelei Zolotoi Ordy*. St. Petersburg, 2010. P. 30.

⁸⁷ Korobeinikov D. *Byzantium and the Turks in the Thirteenth Century*. P. 206.

⁸⁸ *Abdimotynov N. Altyn Ordanyň syrtyky sayasatynyn negizgi bagyttary*. P. 112.

⁸⁹ Pashuto V. T., Shtal’ I. V. *Nekotorye dannye ob istochnikakh po istorii mongol’skoi politiki papstva. Poslanie khana Abaki pape, Klimentu IV // Voprosy sotsial’no-ekonomicheskoi istorii i istochnikov povedeniia perioda feodalizma v Rossii*. Moscow, 1961. P. 212.

⁹⁰ Lippard B. G. *The Mongols and Byzantium 1243–1341*. P. 200.

tines were sent to the Council of Lyon⁹¹. In 1276, a Byzantine envoy George Metachites visited Pope Gregory X in Lausanne. Metochities offered a land crusade across the Balkans through Anatolia and Jerusalem, after which crusaders would be able to rest in the territory of Īlkhānid state, where they could stage attacks on Syria and Palestine. Metochities managed to persuade Pope Gregory X, but the Pope could not initiate the proposed Crusade⁹². The Byzantine emperor sought to defuse Charles I Anjou's Western support through these missions. Lippard states that Michael VIII wanted to recapture the territory lost to the Seljuks in the 11th–12th centuries⁹³. Abaqa, nonetheless, attempted to implement the main aspirations of the Īlkhānid state concerning their Western policies by using Latin powers to drive the forces of the Mamluk Sultanate from Syria and Palestine. Charles I of Anjou, who established one of the most powerful Mediterranean kingdoms, was devoted to the reconquest of Constantinople. In 1269, he allied with Stephen Uroš I of Serbia, Bela IV of Hungary, and Constantine Tikh of Bulgaria. In other words, the anti-Byzantine coalition began to take shape, with Serbia and Bulgaria joining⁹⁴. However, his attempt to draw Abaqa to call the Īlkhānid state into the alliance failed⁹⁵. According to Brier, in the 1270s, Michael VIII could create marriage alliances with the Īlkhānid state, the Western Georgian kingdom, and, from time to time, with the Papacy against Charles of Anjou and his allies⁹⁶. However, due to internal and external factors, Charles's plan to reconquest Constantinople fell through. Notably, the Latin fleet was destroyed by a storm in Sicily on November 22, 1270⁹⁷. Moreover, the main antagonist of Michael VIII in the Mediterranean region, Michael II Angelus, the Despot of Epirus, died in 1271. The territory he owned was divided between his two sons. The eldest son, Nicephorus, received Epirus, and the second son, Sebastokrator John, took Thessaly. Michael VIII attempted to keep them out of the Angevin camp and to avoid contact with Charles I of Anjou. He intended to establish bonds with the kingdom of Epirus through marriage alliances. One of Michael VIII's nieces married Nicephorus, while the daughter of Sebastokrator John wedded Andronicus Tarchaneiotēs, a nephew of Michael VIII. However, Andronicus did not meet Michael's expectations. Andronicus, who was dissatisfied with his position in the Imperial hierarchy, later devised a plan against the Empire with his father-in-law, Sebastokrator John I Ducas, the despot of Thessaly. They instigated Noghai, the de facto co-ruler of the Golden Horde, to invade Thrace⁹⁸.

In the 1270s, the growing Angevin political influence in the Balkan region, Tarchaneiotēs' revolt, and the Mongol raid of the Golden Horde in the Byzantine Thracian territory seriously threatened the position of the Byzantine Empire. Therefore, Michael VIII began a political course through marriage diplomacy and political alliances to maintain the Byzantine's position in the region. Michael VIII initiated negotiations with the Bul-

⁹¹ Boyle J. A. *Dynastic and Political History of the Il-khans // The Cambridge History of Iran*. 1968. Vol. 5. P. 124.

⁹² Lippard B. G. *The Mongols and Byzantium 1243–1341*. P. 200.

⁹³ *Ibid.* P. 201.

⁹⁴ Madgearu A. *The Asanids: The Political and Military History of the Second Bulgarian Empire (1185–1280)*. Leiden; Boston, 2017. P. 256.

⁹⁵ Geanakoplos D. *Emperor Michael Palaeologus and the West*. Cambridge, 1959. P. 124.

⁹⁶ Bryer A. *The fate of George Komnenos, ruler of Trebizond (1266–1280)*. P. 342–343; Korobeinikov D. *Byzantium and the Turks in the Thirteenth Century*. P. 209.

⁹⁷ Lippard B. G. *The Mongols and Byzantium 1243–1341*. P. 259.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.* P. 202–203; Geanakoplos D. *Emperor Michael Palaeologus and the West*. P. 231.

garian tsar Constantine Tich. In 1271, Michael VIII arranged a marriage between his niece, Mary Palaeologina, with the Bulgarian Tsar Constantine Tikh. As a dowry for his niece, Michael promised to return two vital Black Sea ports — Anchialus and Messambria, which were captured by his troops in 1262. However, Michael did not keep his word, and the Bulgarian tsar captured not only Mesembria and Anchialus but also Sozopol, Agathopolis, and several small Byzantine towns⁹⁹. However, Michael VIII succeeded in countering the Bulgarian offensive by forming a political alliance with Noghai. Before this, he sent gifts to Noghai: foods, aromatic wines, gold and silver drinking cups, expensive clothes, and garments. Moreover, Noghai was married to another illegitimate daughter of the Emperor, Euphrosyne¹⁰⁰. As a result, Noghai agreed to form an alliance with Michael and crossed the Danube to punish Constantine Tich¹⁰¹. Diverted by the Mongol raids and attacks, Constantine Tich deviated from his southern front, and Byzantium restored the lost towns. Pachymeres gives no exact date of Noghai's marriage to Euphrosyne. However, Lippard claims that it must have occurred shortly after the end of the Byzantine-Bulgarian War (1272)¹⁰². Noghai's marriage to the emperor's daughter and the receipt of his valuable gifts indicate that he had a huge political influence on the policy of Byzantium in the 1270s. The marriage alliance with Noghai provided relative protection for the Balkan possessions of the empire¹⁰³. Alexandru Madgearu claims that the Byzantine Empire allied with Noghai to fight against Bulgaria. Therefore, it allowed Nogai to establish a permanent position on the banks of the Danube. He states that from 1273 to 1285, Noghai minted coins in his name in Isaccea, featuring images of tamghas (Mongol emblems), crosses, and two-headed eagles. The combination of these symbols has led historians to believe that the hinter land of Isaccea was a shared territory between the Byzantine Empire and the Golden Horde after 1273¹⁰⁴.

In the following years, internal factors led to the weakening of Constantine Tich's authority. Bulgarian boyars openly opposed the power of Constantine, which had already been undermined by the Mongol raids to the south of the Danube. In addition, the country was debilitated by a popular uprising in 1277. The rebel's leader, Ivajlo, replaced Constantin, who was killed in battle. In 1279, the Byzantine and Mongol troops overthrew Ivajlo, and Michael's protégé, John III Asen, then ascended the throne. Ivajlo's forces later defeated the Byzantine army, causing John III Asen to flee to Constantinople. However, in 1280, the Bulgarian boyars chose George Terter tsar. Ivajlo sought refuge with Noghai's horde, while Michael sent Asen to Noghai for support to claim the Bulgarian throne. Initially unsure whom to support in this political struggle, Noghai ultimately ordered the death of Ivaylo¹⁰⁵.

During the last seven years of the reign of Michael VIII, the political and diplomatic relations of Byzantium with Mamluk Egypt and the Golden Horde were harmonious. All three countries regularly exchanged diplomatic embassies. In 1281, the emperor and Sultan Qalāwūn agreed on a new treaty that clearly defined the Byzantine-Mamluk mem-

⁹⁹ *Georges Pachymérés*. *Relations Historiques* I. P.242–243; *Nikolov A.* *Byzantium and the Mongol world*. P.203.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁰¹ *Lippard B. G.* *The Mongols and Byzantium 1243–1341*. P.204.

¹⁰² *Ibid.* P.209–210.

¹⁰³ *Georges Pachymérés*. *Relations Historiques* I. P.242–243.

¹⁰⁴ *Madgearu A.* *The Asanids*. P.260.

¹⁰⁵ *Lippard B. G.* *The Mongols and Byzantium 1243–1341*. P.204–205.

orandum as only one aspect of a greater alliance, the third party of which was the Qipchāq Khanate. The Byzantine-Mamluk Treaty of 1281 concerned the free passage of envoys and merchants through the Straits under the control of Byzantium; the conditions of enslaved Christians in Mamluk Egypt; and the Christian pirates' raids on Mamluk Egyptian ships in the Mediterranean and Aegean Seas. However, the primary concern, especially of Qalāwūn, was diplomatic and trade passage rights. He explicitly stated that the Golden Horde was the sole destination for Mamluk Egyptian diplomats and traders¹⁰⁶. Moreover, the eight paragraphs of the treaty were regarded as possible joint actions by Byzantium and Egypt against Charles I of Anjou, their common enemy¹⁰⁷. Under George Terter, the Bulgarian army wanted to join the Angevin power along with Serbia and Epirus. Charles I of Anjou, who was preparing his forces against the Byzantine Empire, took special precautions to ensure that the emperor would not get support from "the very mighty Tatars"¹⁰⁸. The careful preparations delayed the invasion. In the end, time ran out when an anti-French riot broke out in Palermo on March 30, 1282. For the last time, Charles abandoned the plan to reconquer Constantinople to suppress the civil war in his own kingdom¹⁰⁹. However, Charles's political allies in the Balkan region did not give up the fight against the Byzantine Empire. John the Bastard, the Despot of Thessaly, invaded the territory of the Byzantine Empire in November 1282. Michael called on Noghai for assistance and then led his army to the village of Pakhiomos in Thrace. Noghai immediately sent 4,000 warriors to help, and Michael VIII received and tested them shortly before his death on December 11, 1282¹¹⁰.

When Michael VIII died, 4,000 soldiers of the Golden Horde in Pakhomy mourned the emperor's death as much as the Byzantines. The Mongols' presence and reaction to Michael's death disturbed Michael's son and successor, Andronikos II (1282–1328). The new emperor feared that the troops of the Golden Horde might rebel in the Byzantine garrison and capture him¹¹¹. His fears were quite justified: first, the warriors of the Golden Horde demonstrated loyalty to Michael VIII, not to Andronikos II; secondly, he thought that the Mongols came to the assistance of Michael solely for the opportunity to plunder Thessaly; finally, he was convinced that the Mongol troops would not return to Dasht-i Qibchaq without military trophies. Therefore, he postponed the fulfillment of his father's plan. Instead, he decided to use the Mongol troops against an ally of Thessalia — the Serbian king Stefan Uroš II Milytin (1282–1321), who was captured in the autumn of 1282. The Mongol troops of 4,000 were sent to Serbia under Grand Constable Michael's command. At the beginning of 1283, the Tatars, reinforced with the Byzantine border units, quickly devastated the enemy territories and, without encountering any resistance, penetrated further into the north. However, the Serbs organized a defense on the banks of the Dream River. Part of the Mongol forces suffered a crushing defeat when trying to force

¹⁰⁶ *Canard M.* Le traité de 1281 entre Michel Paléologue et le sultan Qalā'un // *Byzantion*. 1935. Vol. 10. P. 669–680.

¹⁰⁷ *Canard M.* Un traité entre Byzance et l'Égypte au XIIIe siècle et les relations diplomatiques de Michel VIII Paléologue avec les sultans mamlüks Baibars et Qalā'un // *Byzance et les musulmans du Proche-Orient*. London, 1973. P. 198–203.

¹⁰⁸ *Lippard B. G.* The Mongols and Byzantium 1243–1341. P. 201–205.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.* P. 205.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.* P. 205–206.

¹¹¹ *Uzelac A.* Zolotaia Orda i Balkany (XIII–XIV veka) // *Zolotaia Orda v mirovoi istroii*. Kazan, 2016. P. 390–391.

a river that had overflowed due to the spring floods. Their commander, who was part of the Serbian Easterners under the name “Chernoglav” (which probably was nothing else than a Slavic translation of the Turkic name “Karabash”), was captured and beheaded¹¹². Nevertheless, the new emperor, Andronicus II, could not form a new alliance or friendly relations with Michael’s long-standing friend, Noghai¹¹³.

Although the Byzantine Empire kept diplomatic and friendly relationships with Mongols after Michael VIII’s death, his successors could not gain benefits from these relationships as Michael did. Moreover, at the end of the 13th century, socio-economic problems exacerbated the situation, and the central government of the Byzantine Empire could not gain national support. Moreover, the policy of the Byzantine Empire in south-eastern Europe also weakened. After Nogai’s death, the control of Mongols concerning Byzantium and Bulgaria returned to the central power of the Golden Horde. However, Bulgaria and Byzantium had a peripheral status for the Golden Horde and were separated from the central power of the Golden Horde; therefore, they suffered less from Mongol interference.

Conclusion

If we analyze historical sources, the development of Mongol-Byzantium relations was caused by the geopolitical situation at that time. In the 1260s, the Mongol control over Asia Minor intensified after the establishment of the Īlkhānid state, prompting Michael VIII to shift Byzantine policy to the East, towards the Īlkhānid state, to conclude an agreement with Hülegü. Additionally, the Byzantine Empire’s geographic location in the context of Balkan provinces affected economic and political relations with the Golden Horde. At the beginning of the 1260s, the disputes between the Īlkhānid state and the Golden Horde escalated into a full-blown war, which Sultan Baybars quickly exploited by forming an alliance with the Golden Horde against the Īlkhānid state. Michael VIII’s initial contact with Hülegü occurred in 1260 and continued in 1261 when Hülegü pacified the rebellious Turcomans of the western uj (a Seljuq militarized border unit)¹¹⁴. The political union between the two states was completely formed when Michael VIII’s illegitimate daughter Maria Diplobatzina became the wife of Hülegü’s son Abaqa (reign 1265–1282) after Hulagu died in 1265. Most historians believe that Maria became a significant pro-Byzantine factor at the Īlkhānid court, and Maria and Abaqa’s marriage marked a milestone in Byzantine Eastern politics¹¹⁵. Moreover, Bruce Lippard argues that the political alliance between Byzantium and the Īlkhānid state was not only mutually beneficial but also instrumental in maintaining peace in Anatolia. This alliance pacified the Turcomans and allowed both rulers to divert their attention to more crucial external politics. For Michael VIII, it was expected aggression of the Latins trying to retake Constantinople, while the Ilkhanids were engaged in a struggle with the Mamluk Egypt for dominance in the Near East, as well as facing deteriorating relations with the Golden Horde to their northern borders¹¹⁶.

¹¹² *Uzelac A.* Serbskie pis'mennye istochniki o tatarakh i Zolotoi Orde (pervaia polovina XIV v.) // *Zoltoordynskoe obozrenie*. 2014. No. 1. P.102–103; *Vásáry I.* Cumans and Tatars: Oriental Military in the Pre-Ottoman Balkans, 1185–1365. Cambridge, 2005. P. 102.

¹¹³ *Lippard B. G.* The Mongols and Byzantium 1243–1341. P. 208–210.

¹¹⁴ *Nikolov A.* Byzantium and the Mongol world. P. 202.

¹¹⁵ *Idid.* P. 202; *Korobeinikov D.* Byzantium and the Turks in the Thirteenth Century. P. 209.

¹¹⁶ *Lippard B. G.* The Mongols and Byzantium 1243–1341. P. 196–98.

Michael VIII also sought to maintain relatively good relations with the Golden Horde and Mamluk Egypt. The Sultan of Egypt also made an agreement with the emperor of Byzantine as this political alliance would facilitate diplomatic relations and contacts with Berke Khan, the ruler of the Golden Horde. The emperor joined the Mamluk-Golden Horde alliance despite having an agreement with the Īlkhānid state, the main enemy of both Egypt and the Qipchāqs. While the alliance with the Īlkhānid state ensured and protected the Eastern fronts, the alliance with the Golden Horde assisted with the political initiatives of the Byzantine Empire in Southeast Europe. Moreover, the Byzantine Empire faced a significant threat from Angevin's influence on the Balkans. In response, strategic alliances were formed with the "mighty Tartars" to strengthen its defenses against formidable opponents. During Berke Khan's reign, the relationship between Byzantium and the Golden Horde was relatively tense due to the incident with Mamluk and the Golden Horde envoys in Constantinople. However, Michael VIII was able to avoid war with the Golden Horde, mainly through diplomatic ways. The situation improved only after Berke's death in 1266, when the new khan of the Golden Horde, Möngke-Temür (reigned 1266–1280), sought to establish good relations with Abaq Khan. According to Alexander Nikolov, this gave Michael VIII more opportunities to develop his own strategy with Mamluk Egypt as a participant in the anti-Latin actions. The Egyptians were the main anti-crusading force that put pressure on the remnants of the Latin East, thereby preventing serious attempts by the West to attack Byzantium. Constantinople continued to provide to Egypt — the Golden Horde contacts through its territories, but in a more advantageous situation, a period when relative peace and stability reigned between the two hostile Mongolian uluses¹¹⁷. However, in 1272, a new Tatar raid from the Golden Horde (Nogai) occurred on the Byzantine Thracian territories. Noghai, the ruler of the western territories of the Golden Horde, sought to expand his influence south of the Danube. It was perhaps provoked by Andronicus Tarchaneiotes, who was dissatisfied with his position in the imperial hierarchy. Andronicus, with his father-in-law — John the Bastard, the despot of Thessaly, devised a plan against the Byzantine Empire and persuaded Noghai to invade Thrace. However, Michael VIII was able to respond to the threat from the Golden Horde and the Bulgarian offensive by allying with Noghai¹¹⁸. Through strategic alliances with the Mongols and the effective use of diplomatic instruments, Michael VIII was able to avoid large-scale wars on the southeastern European borders of the Empire. His conspiracy with the Aragonese in Sicily, supporting the famous Sicilian Vespers in 1282, and his thwarting of the Angevins' plans for intervention in the Balkans, as noted by Nikolov, were significant moves that shaped the region's power dynamics¹¹⁹.

After the reign of Michael VIII, the Byzantine Empire maintained political and diplomatic ties with the Mongols until the 1340s. The last Byzantine-Mongol marriage alliance ended with the deaths of Andronicus III and Özbek Khan in 1341¹²⁰. However, his successors were unable to benefit from these political connections. Therefore, some researchers claim that Byzantium became a second-ranking state at the end of the 13th century¹²¹. The policy of the Byzantine Empire in Southeastern Europe also waned. After the death

¹¹⁷ Nikolov A. Byzantium and the Mongol world. P. 202.

¹¹⁸ Georges Pachymérés. Relations Historiques I. P. 242–243.

¹¹⁹ Nikolov A. Byzantium and the Mongol world. P. 202.

¹²⁰ Lippard B. G. The Mongols and Byzantium 1243–1341. P. 234–235.

¹²¹ Korobeinikov D. Byzantium and the Turks in the Thirteenth Century. P. 1.

of Nogai, Bulgaria, which gained considerable independence, began to pursue a policy against Byzantium¹²². Moreover, by the end of the 13th century, the Empire's socio-economic problems became more complex, and the central government struggled to gain national support. Furthermore, various economic and political factors further isolated the Byzantine Empire from the region. Therefore, at the beginning of the 14th century, the empire lost its ability to conduct international politics with its ally countries. The ties of Byzantium with Mamluk Egypt and Mongols ended at the beginning of the 1340s.

References

- Abdimomynov N. T. *Altyn Ordanyn syrtyky sayasatynyn negizgi bagyttary*. PhD thesis. Almaty, al-Farabi atyn. Qazaq Ulttiq universiteti Press, 2011, 207 p. (In Kazakh)
- Allsen T. The rise of the Mongolian Empire and Mongolian rule in north China. *The Cambridge History of China*, 1994, vol. 6, pp. 321–413.
- Amitai R. *Mongols and Mamluks: The Mamluk-İlkhanid War, 1260–1281*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1995, 292 p.
- Andreyeva M. A. Priyem tatarskikh poslov pri nikeiskom dvore. *Sbornik statei, posviashchennyi pamiati N. P. Kondakova*. Prague, 1926, p. 187–200. (In Russian)
- Bartold V. Batyi. *Raboty po istorii i filologii tyurkskikh i mongol'skikh narodov*, vol. V. Moscow, Nauka Publ., 1968, pp. 496–501. (In Russian)
- Boyle J. A. Dynastic and Political History of the Il-khans. *The Cambridge History of Iran*, 1968, vol. 5, pp. 303–421.
- Bryer A. The fate of George Komnenos, ruler of Trebizond (1266–1280). *Byzantinische Zeitschrift*, 1973, vol. 66, issue 2, pp. 332–350.
- Canard M. Le traité de 1281 entre Michel Paléologue et le sultan Qalā'un. *Byzantion*, 1935, vol. 10, pp. 669–680.
- Canard M. Un traité entre Byzance et l'Égypte au XIII^e siècle et les relations diplomatiques de Michel VIII Paléologue avec les sultans mamluks Baibars et Qalā'un. *Byzance et les musulmans du Proche-Orient*. London, Variorum Reprints, 1973, pp. 197–224.
- Egorov V. *Istoricheskaya geografiya Zolotoi Ordy v XIII–XIV v.* Moscow, Nauka Publ., 1985, 245 p. (In Russian)
- Favereau M. The Golden Horde and the Mamluks. *Mamluk Cairo, a Crossroads for Embassies*. Leiden, Brill, 2019, pp. 302–326.
- Favereau M. *The Horde: How the Mongols Changed the World*. Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 2021, 348 p.
- Favereau M. The Mongol Peace and Global Medieval Eurasia. *Comparativ*, 2018, vol. 28, no. 4, pp. 49–70.
- Geanakoplos D. *Emperor Michael Palaeologus and the West*. Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1959, 434 p.
- Georges Pachymérès. *Relations historiques I–II. Livres I–III and Livres IV–VI*, eds and transl. A. Failler and V. Laurent. Paris, Les Belles Lettres, 1984, 703 p.
- Giebfried J. The Mongol invasions and the Aegean world (1241–61). *Mediterranean Historical Review*, 2013, vol. 28, no. 2, pp. 129–139.
- Gregoras Nicephorus. *Historia Byzantina*, vol. 1, ed. by B. Immanuel. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2012, 674 p.
- Hautala R. The Jochid Ulus. *The Mongol World*. London, Routledge, 2022, pp. 245–262.
- Jackson P. *The Mongols and the West*. Harlow, Longman, 2005, 414 p.
- Jackson P. *The Mongols and the West: 1221–1410*. London, Routledge, 2018, 452 p.
- Kirakos G. *Istoria Armenii*. Moscow, Nauka Publ., 1976, 359 p. (In Russian)
- Korobeinikov D. *Byzantium and the Turks in the Thirteenth Century*. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2014, 396 p.

¹²² Lippard B. G. The Mongols and Byzantium 1243–1341. P. 234–235.

- Lane G. The Ilkhanate. *The Mongol World*. London, Routledge, 2022, pp. 279–297.
- Lippard B. G. *The Mongols and Byzantium, 1243–1341*. PhD thesis. [S.l.], Indiana University, 1984, 253 p.
- Madgearu A. *The Asanids: The Political and Military History of the Second Bulgarian Empire (1185–1280)*. Leiden; Boston, Brill, 2017, 359 p.
- Manz B. F. The Mongol Conquest of Iran. *The Mongol World*. London, Routledge, 2022, pp. 196–212.
- May T. The Mongol conquest of the Near East. *The Mongol World*. London, Routledge, 2022, pp. 227–241.
- Morgan D. O. The Mongols and the Eastern Mediterranean. *Mediterranean Historical Review*, 1989, vol. 4, issue 1, pp. 198–211.
- Necipoglu N. *Byzantium between the Ottomans and the Latins: Politics and Society in the Late Empire*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2009, 374 p.
- Nicol D. M. *The last centuries of Byzantium, 1261–1453*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1993, 496 p.
- Nikolov A. Byzantium and the Mongol world: contacts and interaction (from Batu to Tamerlane). *The Routledge Handbook of the Mongols and Central-Eastern Europe, Political, Economic, and Cultural Relations*. London; New York, Routledge, 2021, pp. 191–211.
- Pashuto V. T., Shtal' I. V. Nekotorye dannye ob istochnikakh po istorii mongol'skoi politiki papstva. Poslanie khana Abaki pape, Klimentu IV. *Voprosy sotsial'no-ekonomicheskoi istorii i istochnikov povedeniia peri-oda feodalizma v Rossii*. Moscow, Academy of Sciences Press, 1961, pp. 209–213. (In Russian)
- Pochekaev R. Yu. *Tsari ordynskie. Biografii khanov i pravitelei Zolotoi Ordyy*. St. Petersburg, Evrasia Publ., 2010, 408 p. (In Russian)
- Pow S. The Mongol Invasions of Europe. *The Mongol World*. London, Routledge, 2022, pp. 183–195.
- Runciman S. *The Sicilian Vespers: A History of the Mediterranean World in the Later Thirteenth Century*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2000, 368 p.
- Sinor D. The Mongols in the West. *Journal of Asian History*, 1999, vol. 33, issue 1, pp. 1–44.
- Tiesenhausen V. G. *Sbornik materialov, otnosyashchikhsya k istorii Zolotoy Ordyy*. Vol. 1. St. Petersburg, Imperial Academy of Sciences Press, 1884, 564 p. (In Arabic and Russian)
- Uspenskii F. I. Vizantiiskie istoriki o mongolakh i egipetskiikh mamliukakh. *Vizantiiskii Vremennik*, 1926, issue 24, pp. 1–16. (In Russian)
- Uzelac A. Serbskie pis'mennye istochniki o tatarakh i Zolotoi Orde (pervaia polovina XIV v.). *Zolotoordynskoe obozrenie*, 2014, no. 1, pp. 101–118. (In Russian)
- Uzelac A. Zolotaia Orda i Balkany (XIII–XIV veka). *Zolotaia Orda v mirovoi istorii: kollektivnaia monografiia*. Kazan, Sh. Marjani Institute of History of the Tatarstan Academy of Sciences Press, 2016, pp. 376–394. (In Russian)
- Vásáry I. *Cumans and Tatars: Oriental Military in the Pre-Ottoman Balkans, 1185–1365*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2005, 230 p.
- Vernadsky G. V. Zolotaia Orda, Egipet i Vizantiia v tsarstvovanii Mikhaila Paleologa. *Seminarium Kondakovianum*, 1924, issue 1, pp. 73–84. (In Russian)
- Zakirov S. *Diplomaticheskie otnosheniia Zolotoi Ordyy s Egiptom (XIII–XIV)*. Moscow, Nauka Publ., 1966, 160 p. (In Russian)
- Zhumagulov K. T., Abdimomynov N. T. Altyn Ordanyň sauda katynastarynyň negizgi bagyttary (XIII–XIV g. basy). *Vestnik of KazNU. Seriya istoricheskaya*, 2018, vol. 90, no. 3, pp. 85–93. (In Kazakh)

Статья поступила в редакцию 13 ноября 2023 г.

Рекомендована к печати 10 апреля 2024 г.

Received: November 13, 2023

Accepted: April 10, 2024