



Summary :

Aristocratic family from Asia Minor that appeared in the 9th century. The most distinguished members of the family held key military positions in the 11th century, while the most famous member of the family was Emperor Nikephoros III Botaneiates (1078-1081). The family managed to maintain a high position in the Byzantine society in the 12th century by establishing matrimonial alliances with the Doukas and the Komnenos families.

Date and Place of Birth

first mentioned: 9th century

Main Role

military officials

1. General

The Botaneiates was a Byzantine [aristocratic lineage](#) from [Asia Minor](#). They probably came from the village of Botane and were named after it. Several generations of the family were associated with the region of [Phrygia](#), particularly with the theme of [Anatolikon](#). The earliest evidence on the family go back to the 9th century. Their ascent began in the years of [Basil II](#) (976-1025), when certain members of the family are reported among the [strategoi](#) in the wars against the [Bulgarians](#). The Botaneiates family reached their heyday during the reign of [Nikephoros III](#). In the 12th century, in the years of the [Komnenian dynasty](#), the Botaneiates family managed to maintain their high positions thanks to the affinal relations they established with the Komnenos and [Doukas](#) families. The social position of the family began to deteriorate towards the late 12th century.

2. Descent and origins of the Botaneiates lineage

The Botaneiates family probably was from the village of Botane, near [Synada](#) (modern Şuhut), Phrygia,¹ and was named after their birthplace. The available information concerning the members of the family indicates that the Botaneiates maintained their bonds with that region for many generations. According to the sources, Emperor Nikephoros III Botaneiates, the most distinguished member of the family, came from the area of Lambe, Phrygia, in the theme of Anatolikon.²

The first reliable reference to the family dates to the 9th century.³ However, the subsequent evidence about the members of the family dates to the early 11th century. The fact that for a whole century the Botaneiates family were not mentioned in the sources proves that the family's ascent actually began during the reign of Basil II. Therefore, we should count the Botaneiates family among those families that grasped the opportunity to ascend the social ladder and got to be ranked among the military aristocracy, an opportunity offered by the new military and expansionist policy that the empire followed in the second half of the 10th century.⁴

3. The Botaneiates family under Basil II

As mentioned above, after a silent 10th century, the 11th-c. sources once again begin to provide information about the members of the Botaneiates family. Two of its members, the grandfather and the father of the subsequent Emperor Nikephoros III, are known to have lived in the years of Basil II, both holding the office of *strategos*.

The first of them, named Theophylaktos according to the historian John Skylitzes and Nikephoros according to Michael Attaleiates,⁵ participated in the war against the Bulgarians of Samuel as *doukas* of Thessalonike. He was killed in the summer of 1014 during the operations that followed the battle of Kleidi.⁶

His son Michael Botaneiates participated along with his father in the operations against the Bulgarians in the area of Thessalonike, and



probably played an important role in the defence of the city, although his rank remains unknown. After his father died, Michael participated in the campaigns of Emperor Basil II against the Abasgoi (1021-1022).

Such evidence indicates that in the early 11th century the Botaneiates family held an eminent position among the Byzantine aristocracy. Their rise must have started in the years of Basil II, when the political circumstances offered the competent *strategoi* the opportunity for rapid ascent. It should be stressed that Michael Attaleiates, who wrote the encomium of Emperor Nikephoros III, does not refer to the recent past of the Botaneiates family, given that the above two *strategoi* of Basil II were the only ancestors of the emperor he knew. However, because he tried to find ways to highlight the prestige of the family his favourite emperor belonged to, he associated the Botaneiates lineage with the [Phokas family](#), who claimed to have been descendants of the Roman family of the Fabii.⁷

4. The Botaneiates lineage at the peak of their power: the reign of Nikephoros III

The most distinguished member of the family was Emperor Nikephoros III. Before he ascended the throne, Nikephoros had followed a long and successful career in the army. He became a military officer during the reign of Constantine IX Monomachos (1042–1055). Although there are no details about his early career, he must have been particularly successful in his military activities, as indicated by the fact that during the [rebellion](#) of [Isaac Komnenos](#) (1057), whom he supported, Nikephoros Botaneiates was already a [magistros](#) and one of the most important members of military aristocracy.⁸

The ascension of Isaac I Komnenos to the throne opened Nikephoros the way to high military offices. In the 1060s he excelled as commander in the Balkans, while he was later awarded the title of *doukas* of [Antioch](#). At the same time, he consolidated his political position, seeing as he was one of the pretenders for the throne in 1067-1068, while he was the third revolter after 1057 that assumed the throne (after Isaac I Komnenos and [Constantine X Doukas](#)). In October 1077, Nikephoros Botaneiates started his struggle for the throne from his birthplace, the theme of Anatolikon, where he was serving as *strategos*, with the high-ranking dignity of [kouropalates](#). Nikephoros was crowned emperor in 1078 and his reign was the greatest achievement of the Botaneiates family. However, in 1081 Alexios Komnenos (1081-1118) overthrew the old emperor and confined him to a monastery, where he died a few months later.

5. The Botaneiates family in the years of the Komnenian dynasty

The Botaneiates family managed to maintain its eminent position in the Byzantine society after Nikephoros III was overthrown, thanks to the affinal relations with the Komnenian dynasty and the [Synadenos family](#).⁹ The Botaneiates and the Komnenos families first tried to come closer before 1081, when a grandson of Nikephoros III was engaged to the daughter of Manuel Komnenos, the brother of the subsequent Emperor Alexios. The wedding took place a few years later, circa 1085.¹⁰ In addition, around 1110-1112, Alexios I gave Eudokia, the daughter of his brother, the [sebastokrator](#) Isaac, in marriage to Nikephoros Botaneiates, who, thanks to this alliance, was awarded the title of [sebastos](#).¹¹ The same title was also awarded to other members of the family, known already from the first half of the 12th century: Manuel (married to Eirene Synadene)¹² and George (husband of Zoe Doukaina).¹³ There is no evidence about the careers of these two 12th-c. members, but they probably were eminent figures of the imperial court, as their title indicates.

Towards the late 12th century, the Botaneiates family permanently lost its social status.¹⁴ The members of the family appearing in the subsequent period, in the 13th and 14th c., never held any important office.¹⁵

1. Αμαντος, Κ., "Οι Βοτανιάται", *Ελληνικά* 8 (1935), p. 48; Belke, K. – Mersich, N., *Phrygien und Pisidien* (TIB 7, Wien 1990), p. 209.

2. Thurn, I. (ed.), *Ioannis Scylitzae Synopsis Historiarum* (Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae 5, Berlin – New York 1973), p. 488, and Bekker, I. (ed.), *Michaelis Attaliotae Historia* (Bonn 1853), pp. 185, 213.



3. Schlumberger, G., *Sigillographie de l' Empire byzantin* (Paris 1884), 438, no. 2; Buckler, G., "A Sixth Century Botaneiates", *Byzantion* 6 (1931), pp. 405-410. It is believed that this surname was evidenced long ago, even from the 6th century. However, it is an ethnic rather than a family name; see Kazhdan, A., "Botaneiates", *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium* 1 (New York – Oxford 1991), p. 314.
4. Nikephoros II Phokas (963-969), John I Tzimiskes (969-976) and particularly Basil II (976-1025) pursued an expanded military policy. In that period, the war needs called for the participation of young people (of various ethnicities) in the Byzantine army, who were rewarded for their service with important titles, senior offices and money. As a result, competent officers became the founders of subsequently glorious families, such as the Komnenos and the Bourtzes lineages. On the other hand, the war gave the opportunity for rapid ascent to families that had not held any key position in the Byzantine aristocracy until then, as it happened with the Botaneiates family. See Krsmanović, B., *Uspon vojnog plemstva u Vizantiji XI veka* (Beograd 2001), pp. 3, 5, 11-13.
5. Thurn, I. (ed.), *Ioannis Scylitzae Synopsis Historiarum* (Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae 5, Berlin – New York 1973), pp. 350, 352; Bekker, I. (ed.), *Michaelis Attaliothae Historia* (Bonn 1853), p. 230. Kazhdan A. "Botaneiates", *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium* 1 (New York – Oxford 1991), p. 314, wrongly believes that Skylitzes' Theophylaktos and Attaleiates' Nikephoros were two different people whose sons were called Michael.
6. Bekker, I. (ed.), *Michaelis Attaliothae Historia* (Bonn 1853), p. 230.
7. Because the historian Michael Attaleiates admired the emperor, he presents him in his work as a descendant of Nikephoros II Phokas, implying that in the second half of the 10th century the Botaneiates Family became relatives with the Phokas Family. See Μιχαήλ Ατταλειάτης, *Ιστορία*, Bekker, I. (ed.), *Michaelis Attaliothae Historia* (Bonn 1853), pp. 217, 228, 229. According to Djurić, I., "Porodica Foka", *Zbornik Radova Vizantinoslog Instituta* 1 (1976), p. 219 and fn. 11, it was an indirect affinity. See also Cheynet, J.-C., *Pouvoir et contestations à Byzance 963-1210* (Paris 1990), p. 217, fn. 70, p. 68, fn. 49.
8. Thurn, I. (ed.), *Ioannis Scylitzae Synopsis Historiarum* (Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae 5, Berlin – New York 1973), p. 495.
9. According to Skylitzes Continuatus, *Chronographia*, Τσολάκης, Ε. (ed.), *Η Συνέχεια της Χρονογραφίας του Ιωάννου Σκυλίτζη (Ioannes Skylitzes Continuatus)* (Institute for Balkan Studies 105, Thessaloniki 1968), p. 185, n. 23-26, the daughter of Theodoulos Synadenos was the niece of Nikephoros III, while Anna Komnene [Reinsch, D.R. – Kambylis, A. (ed.), *Annae Comnenae Alexias* (Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae 40, Berlin – New York 2001), pp. 57, 75-82], reports that Nikephoros Botaneiates intended to bequeath the throne to a member of the Synadenos family.
10. Βαρζός, Κ., *Η γενεαλογία των Κομνηνών 1* (Thessaloniki 1984), p. 123.
11. Βαρζός, Κ., *Η γενεαλογία των Κομνηνών 1* (Thessaloniki 1984), pp. 172-173. See also Kazhdan, A., "Some Notes on the Byzantine Prosopography of the Ninth through the Twelfth Centuries", *Byzantinische Forschungen* 12 (1987), pp. 67-68.
12. Βαρζός, Κ., *Η γενεαλογία των Κομνηνών 1* (Thessaloniki 1984), pp. 274-275. This Manuel owned land in the region of Berroia. See Gautier, P., "Le typikon du Christ Sauveur Pantocrator", *Revue des Études Byzantines* 32 (1974), p. 123; Cheynet, J.-C., *Pouvoir et contestations à Byzance 963-1210* (Paris 1990), p. 239, n. 273.
13. Polemis, D., *The Doukai. A Contribution to Byzantine Prosopography* (London 1968), p. 79, no. 33; Βαρζός, Κ., *Η γενεαλογία των Κομνηνών 1* (Thessaloniki 1984), pp. 280-281.
14. See Miklosich, F. – Müller, J., *Acta et diplomata graeca medii aevi* 6 (Wien 1890), p. 136, including a reference to John Botaneiates, who held the title of *taboullarios* in Crete.
15. *Prosopographisches Lexikon der Palaiologenzeit* 2 (Wien 1977), no. 3001-3003.

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	Συνεχιστής Ιωάννου Σκυλίτζη , <i>Χρονογραφία</i> , Τσολάκης, Ε. (επιμ.), <i>Η Συνέχεια της Χρονογραφίας του Ιωάννου Σκυλίτζη</i> , Ίδρυμα Μελετών Χερσονήσου του Αίμου 105, Θεσσαλονίκη 1968
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	Buckler G. , "A Sixth Century Botaniates", <i>Byzantion</i> , 6, 405-410
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Palace of Botaneiates
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Νομίσματα Νικηφόρου Γ΄ Βοτανειάτου

http://www.wildwinds.com/coins/byz/nicephorus_III/i.html

Glossary :

doukas (lat. dux)

Antiquity: Roman military commander who, in some provinces, combined military and civil functions.

Buzantium: a higher military officer. From the second half of the 10th c. the title indicates the military commander of a larger district. After the 12th c., doukes were called the governors of small themes.

kouropalates

A high-ranking dignity, which from Justinian I was conferred on members of the imperial family and on foreign princes. During the 11th c. it was conferred on several generals, not belonging to the imperial family.

magistros

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

sebastokrator

Honorary title of the Byzantine court. The office was established in 1081 by Alexios I Komnenos for his elder brother Isaac, equivalent to the one of regent

sebastos

("venerable") Title of honour created by Constantine IX the Monomachos in the middle of the 11th century. Originated from the translation of the imperial adjective augustus. This title was given successively to the two mistresses of the emperor.

strategos ("general")

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

Sources

Thurn, I. (ed.), *Ioannis Scylitzae Synopsis Historiarum* (Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae 5, Berlin – New York 1973), pp. 350, 59-351, 81, 488, 63-489, 78, 495, 59-496, 69.

Bekker, I. (ed.), *Michaelis Attaliothae Historia* (Bonn 1853), pp. 216, 20-217, 14, 229, 16-235, 12.

Ioannes Skylitzes Continuatus, *Chronographia*, Τσολάκης, E. (ed.), *Η Συνέχεια της Χρονογραφίας του Ιωάννου Σκυλίτζη (Ioannes Skylitzes Continuatus)* (Ίδρυμα Μελετών Χερσονήσου του Αίμου 105, Θεσσαλονίκη 1968), pp. 120, 17-121, 13, 171, 26-172, 6, 172, 10-14, 181, 22-182, 7, 185, 23-26.

Gautier, P. (ed.), *Nicéphore Bryennios, Histoire* (Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae 9, Bruxelles 1975), pp. 55, 1-14, 301, 1-24.

Reinsch, D.R. – Kambylis, A. (επιμ.), *Annae Comnenae Alexias* (Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae 40, Berlin – New York 2001), pp. 57, 75-82, 65, 13-17, 87, 2-19.

Quotations

The Byzantine historian Michael Attaleiates refers to the descent of the Botaneiates lineage:

Ἀλλ' ὁ μὲν περὶ τοῦ κράτους αὐτοῦ λόγος ἀναμεινάτω μικρόν· ἐπεὶ δὲ περὶ τῆς τοῦ γένους αὐτοῦ μεγαλειότητος ἐπεμνήσθημεν, βραχὺ τι περὶ τούτου διαλεξώμεθα, ἵνα γινῶσι πάντες οἷων αὐτῶ τῶν προγόνων ὄντων εἰς περιφάνειαν ἀνδραγαθίας καὶ δόξης ὅσον οὗτος ὑπερηκόντισε, ὡς μήτε τοῦτον ἄξιον εἶναι προγόνους ἑτέρους ἔχειν ἢ ἐκείνους μόνους, μήτ' ἐκείνους ἀπόγονον ἕτερον ἢ τὸν νῦν εὐφημούμενον. ὅπερ δὴ καλῶς ποιοῦν καὶ συνέδραμεν. Ἡ μὲν οὖν τοῦ γένους αὐτοῦ ἀνωτάτω καὶ πρώτη σειρὰ ἐκ τῶν Φωκάδων ἐκείνων ὠρμηται, Φωκάδων ὧν κλέος εὐρὸν κατὰ πᾶσαν γῆν τε καὶ θάλασσαν. οὗτοι γὰρ ὑπερφῶς τῶν ἄλλων τὸ κράτος ἐν βασιλείαις ἐκέκτηντο, στρατηγίαις τε καὶ δημαγωγίαις καὶ ἀνδρείῳ βραχίονι καὶ γένους ἐπισημότητι πάντας



ἐπιεικῶς ὑπεραίροντες· ἐνενήκοντα γὰρ καὶ δύο γενεὰς εὐημεροῦντες κατὰ τὸ συνεχές κατὰ πάντων εἶχον τὰ νικητήρια, μηδενὸς ἀνθαμιλληθῆναι δυναμένου καὶ συγκριθῆναι τῷ γένει τῶν Φωκάδων ὑπὲρ ἀνδρίας ἢ ἀνδραγαθίας τινὸς ἢ ὑπατείας μεγίστης καὶ στρατηγίας ἐπιφανοῦς.

Bekker, I. (ed.), *Michaelis Attaliothae Historia* (Bonn 1853), pp. 216.20 - 217.14.

The alleged descent of the Botaneiates lineage from a Roman family, according to a chronicle:

Ἦν δὲ ὁ Βοτανειάτης τῶν εὐπατριδῶν, ἐκ τοῦ Φωκᾶ τὸ γένος πολυπλόκως μὲν ἀλλ' ὅμως κατάγων καὶ τῶν περιωνύμων Φλαβίων, οἱ τὸ γένος ἀπὸ τῆς περιδόξου καὶ πρεσβυτέρας Ῥώμης κατήγον, καθὼς ἢ ἀνέκαθεν παράδοσις κρατεῖ περὶ αὐτοῦ.

Ioannes Skylitzes Continuatus, *Chronography*, Τσολάκης, Ε. (επιμ.), *Η Συνέχεια της Χρονογραφίας του Ιωάννου Σκυλίτζη (Ioannes Skylitzes Continuatus)* (Ίδρυμα Μελετῶν Χερσονήσου τοῦ Αἵμου 105, Θεσσαλονίκη 1968), p. 172.10-14.

The Byzantine historian John Skylitzes's account of theophylaktos Botaneiates's death (1014):

Πρὸ τοῦ δὲ ταῦτα γενέσθαι, Θεοφυλάκτου τοῦ Βοτανειάτου ἄρχειν Θεσσαλονίκης μετὰ τὸν Ἀρειανίτην πεμφθέντος Δαβίδ ὁ Νεοτορίτζης, εἰς τῶν παρὰ Βουλγάρους μέγα δυναμένων ὑπάρχων, μετὰ δυνάμεως ἀδράς κατὰ Θεσσαλονίκης ἐκπέμπεται παρὰ τοῦ Σαμουήλ. οἷς συναντήσας ὁ Θεοφύλακτος σὺν τῷ υἱῷ Μιχαῖλ καὶ συμπλακεῖς τρέπει τε κατὰ κράτος, καὶ λείαν πολλήν καὶ αἰχμαλώτους συχνούς προσλαβόμενος διακομίζει τῷ βασιλεῖ πολιορκοῦντι τὸ ἐν τῇ κλεισοῦρα τοῦ Κλειδίου δέμα. τὸ δέμα δέ, ὡς εἴρηται, διαβάς ὁ βασιλεὺς κατὰ Στρούμβιτζαν γίνεται. καὶ παρεστήσατο μὲν φρούριον τὸ καλούμενον Ματζούκιν, τῇ Στρομβιτζῇ δὲ προσεγγίζον, μετὰ δυνάμεως δ' ἐκπέμπει τὸν Βοτανειάτην Θεοφύλακτον τὸν δούκα Θεσσαλονίκης, ὑπερβῆναι κελεύσας τοὺς ἐν Στρομβιτζῇ βουνούς, καὶ τὰ ἐν ταῖς κατ' αὐτοὺς ὁδοῖς πυρπολησάμενα δέματα, καὶ εὐπόρευτον αὐτῷ θείναι τὴν πρὸς Θεσσαλονικὴν ἄγουσαν ὁδόν. ὁ δὲ ἀπελθὼν συνεχωρήθη μὲν ἐν τῷ εἰσεῖναι παρὰ τῶν τοποφυλακούντων Βουλγάρων ἀνεμποδίστως διελθεῖν, μέλλων δὲ πρὸς τὸν βασιλέα πάλιν ὑποστρέφειν μετὰ τὰ προστεταγμένα πληρῶσαι περιπίπτει λόχοις ἐπ' αὐτῷ τούτῳ προσκαθημένοις καὶ ἐνεδρεύουσιν ἐν τινὶ ἐπιμήκει στενοχωρία. ἐν ἣ εἰσελθὼν καὶ πάντοθεν περιστοιχισθεὶς καὶ ἄνωθεν ὑπὸ λίθων καὶ τόξων βαλλόμενος, μηδενὸς ἀμύνασθαι δυναμένου διὰ τὴν πύκνωσιν καὶ τὸ τῆς στενοχωρίας ἀδιεξόδευτον, αὐτὸς τε πίπτει, μηδὲ ταῖς οἰκειαῖς χερσὶ δυνηθεὶς χρήσασθαι, τοῦ Ῥαδομηροῦ τῇ λόγῃ, ἣν ἐπέφερετο, τὰ τούτου ἐκχέαντος ἔγκατα, καὶ πολὺ μέρος σὺν αὐτῷ ἀπώλετο τοῦ στρατοῦ.

Thurn, I. (ed.), *Ioannis Scylitzae Synopsis Historiarum* (Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae 5, Berlin – New York 1973), pp. 350.59 - 351.81.

The death of Nikephoros Botaneiates's grandfather (1014), according to Attaleiates:

οἱ δὲ τοῦ γένους αὐτοῦ ἐδιώχθησαν μὲν ὑπὸ τῶν μετέπειτα βασιλέων διὰ τὸ βάρος τῆς τύχης καὶ τὸ τῆς ἀνδρίας ἀξίωμα περιώνυμον, ἔμεινε δὲ τῇ μετέπειτα γενεᾷ ὥσπερ τις σπινθήρ ὑπαυγάζων τὸ γένος τῶν Βοτανειάτων, ἐν τῷ στρατῷ διαλάμπων τοῦ κυρίου Βασιλείου τοῦ πορφυρογεννήτου, ὃς τεσσαρακοστὸν ἔτος τοῖς Βουλγάρους ἀντιτασσόμενος, καὶ μυρίοις πόνοις καὶ ὅπλοις ἀντιπαραταττόμενος, ἕνα μόνον εἶχε βοηθὸν καὶ συλλήπτορα, βουληφόρον ἅμα καὶ στρατηγὸν καὶ ἰππότην καὶ δεξιὸν ἀρχιστράτηγον, τὸν Βοτανειάτην Νικηφόρον, ὃς πάππος ἦν τῷ προελεγμένῳ βασιλεῖ. τέλος δὲ τοῦ πολέμου, μετὰ τὸ καταπολεμηθῆναι καὶ ἡττηθῆναι τὸ τῶν Βουλγάρων ἔθνος ὑπὸ τῆς αὐτοῦ δεξιάς (ἦν γὰρ τῆνικαῦτα τῷ περιβλέπτῳ τῶν βεστών ἀξιώματι τετιμημένος, ἐλαμπρύνετο δὲ καὶ τῇ τοῦ δουκὸς περιφανεστάτῃ ἀρχῇ), τὸν εὐγενῆ καὶ ἀληθέσι στρατιώταις ἐράσιμον θνήσκει μαχόμενος θάνατον. τρεψάμενος γὰρ τοὺς Βουλγάρους, καὶ διώκων ἐν τῇ κλεισοῦρα τῇ λεγομένῃ τοῦ Κλειδίου, οὐκ ἀνίει σφάττων καὶ κατατιτρώσκων αὐτοῦς, ἕως εἰς ἀκρωρείας ἀνελθὼν, ἐνθα καὶ ἑτέρους ἑώρα Βουλγάρους καταφυγόντας, ἐσφάλη τῆς ἰππασίας, τοῦ ἵππου κατολισθήσαντος ἐν πλαξὶ λιθίναις καὶ σὺν αὐτῷ κατακρημνισθέντος, ὥστε καταπλαγέντας τοὺς ἐναντίους τὴν ἀνυπέρβλητον ὄρμην τοῦ ἀνδρὸς μηκέτι τοῖς Ῥωμαίοις τολμησάμενοι εἰς χείρας ἔλθειν, ἀλλὰ τὸν μὲν ἄρχοντα τούτων, Σαμουήλ κατονομαζόμενον, σύντρομον φυγεῖν καὶ ἀποθανεῖν ἐν τῷ λιμνία νήσῳ τῆς Πρέσπας, τοὺς δὲ λοιποὺς ἅπαντας ὑποσπόνδους ἑαυτοῦς ἐγχειρίσαι τῷ βασιλεῖ καὶ γενέσθαι δούλους δι' ἄρετην ἐνὸς ἀνδρὸς καὶ γενναιότητος μέγεθος.

Bekker, I. (επιμ.), *Michaelis Attaliothae Historia* (Bonn 1853), pp. 229.16 - 230.21.

Attaleiates commends Michael Botaneiates, the father of Emperor Nikephoros III:



Ἐπει καὶ ὁ τούτου υἱὸς Μιχαὴλ, πατὴρ τοῦ βασιλέως, μέγα τι καὶ ὑπεράνθρωπον ἐνεδείξατο καρτερίας καὶ ἀνδραγαθίας κατὰ τῶν ἀντιπάλων προτέρημα. πλῆθους γὰρ ἀμυθήτου Βουλγάρων ἐπιστρατεύσαντος τῆ Θεσσαλονικέων μητροπόλει, οὐ κατεπλάγη πρὸς τὰς τοσαύτας δυνάμεις αὐτῶν, καὶ τῶν τειχῶν ἐντὸς ἑαυτὸν περιέσειλεν, ἀλλ' οἷά φασιν εἶπεῖν αὐτὸν τὸν Ἀλέξανδρον, ὡς εἰς μάγειρος πολλῶν προβάτων ἀγέλας οὐ δέδουκε, ταῦτα διανοησάμενος καὶ εἰπὼν ἐξήλθε μετ' ὀλίγων τῶν παρατυχόντων αὐτῷ συστρατεύεσθαι. ἔχων γὰρ τὴν τοιαύτην ἡγεμονίαν πατρῶαν, καὶ τῷ ζήλῳ μονονουχὶ ἐκπυρακτωθεὶς, καὶ ἅμα μένους καὶ φρονήματος εὐγενεοῦς ἀκαταμαχήτου πνέων, καὶ τοσοῦτον νικῶν τῷ τῆς ἰσχύος διάγραμματι ὅσον οἱ ἀντικείμενοι τῷ πληθίει καὶ ταῖς πανοπλίαις ἐδόκουν ἀβρύνεσθαι, πρὸς μάχην ἐκ τοῦ εὐθέως αὐτοῖς ἀντιπαρετάξατο, καὶ μετὰ πολλῆς τῆς ῥύμης καὶ τοῦ ἀκρατοῦς ῥυτῆρος εἰς μέσους τοὺς πολεμίους γενόμενος ἅπαν τὸ πεδῖον ἐκεῖνο σωμάτων νεκρῶν κατεσφαγαμένων ἐπλήρωσε, μηδενὸς δυνηθέντος ἀθάνατον πληγὴν ἐκ τῆς τούτου χειρὸς ἀπενέγκασθαι. ἐπήρχοντο μὲν γὰρ αὐτῷ κατὰ φάλαγγας οἱ πολέμιοι πανταχόθεν, τῷ σώματι τούτου τὰς ἀκμὰς τῶν ξιφῶν ἐπερείδοντες, οὐδαμῶς δὲ τῆς ἵππικῆς ἔδρας αὐτὸν ἀποκρούσασθαι ἰσχυόν· ἀλλὰ φασι γὰρ τὰ δόρατα τούτων ἀποτέμνων καὶ τὰς σαρίσσας, οὕτω τοὺς πολεμήτορας ὑπὸ γῆν κατηκόντιζεν, οὐ μὲν κεφαλὴν ἐν μιᾷ πληγῇ σὺν τῇ χειρὶ διατέμνων, ἄλλον δὲ δεικνύων ἡμίτομον, τὸν δὲ καὶ καρπομῶν, καὶ μυριοῖς εἶδεισι πληγῶν καταστρέφων καὶ καταπλήττων αὐτούς. οἱ δὲ Βούλγαροι, πλῆθος ὄντες ἀνεξερεύνητον καὶ ἀριθμῷ καθυποβληθῆναι μὴδ' ὄλως δυνάμενον, περισχόντες αὐτὸν εἰς μέσον ὥσπερ ὑδάτων πολλῶν ἀχανὲς πέλαγος, οὕτως αὐτὸν ἀποπνίξαι καὶ εἰς ἀδιεξόδευτον βυθὸν καταποντίσαι διηγωνίζοντο, οἷα πέτρ τισὶ κύμασι τοῖς τύμμασι τῶν δοράτων καὶ τῶν ἄλλων πολεμικῶν ὀργάνων συνεχῶς αὐτὸν ἐπιπλήττοντες. ἀλλ' ἐκεῖνος βρυγμῷ λέοντος κατ' αὐτῶν ἐξορμῶν, καὶ τοὺς ἐπεισεσόντας ἐξαισιόεις ἀναχαιτίζων πληγαῖς, ὁδὸν ἑαυτῷ ἐποίει καὶ πρόσβασιν ἐκατέρωθεν. καὶ μετὰ τὸ γνῶναι πάντας τὸ τούτου ἀκρατὲς καὶ πρὸς τὰς ἀνδραγαθίας εὐσταθὲς καὶ ἀνίκητον, οὐκέτι πρὸς ἀντικαταστάσεις ἀγχεμάχων ἀπὸ χειρῶν εἰς χεῖρας πρὸς μάχην αὐτῷ συνίσταντο, ἀλλὰ χορείαν μονονουχὶ συστησάμενοι σὺν θαύματι μεγάλῳ δι' ἐκίμβλων ὀργάνων τὸν πόλεμον συνερρήγνουν, ἕως αὐτὸς τοῖς ὑποχωροῦσιν ἐπιφερόμενος ἦταν αὐτῶν μεγίστην καὶ τροπὴν ἀπειργάσατο· καὶ τοσοῦτον ὅτι μετὰ τὴν νίκην ἀπιδῶν πρὸς τὸ πλῆθος τῶν πεσόντων καὶ τῶν φευγόντων, καὶ οἷον αὐτῷ ἔργον ὑπὲρ ἀνθρωπίνην ἰσχυὴν ἐξεύργαστο, σκοτοδινίας πλησθεὶς καὶ φύσεως ρευστῆς εἶναι, τοῖς ἀνθρωπίνους δεινοῖς καὶ πάθεσι κατακλινομένης, ὑποδεικνύς, αὐτομάτως ἐκ τοῦ ἵππου πρὸς γῆν καταρρεύσας συννέενυκε, διάβροχος μὲν καὶ λελουμένος ὢν τῷ τῶν πολεμίων ἀπλέτῳ καὶ ποταμῷ αἵματι, οὐχ ἦττον δὲ καὶ τῷ οἰκείῳ καὶ μαρτυρικῷ περιορεόμενος λύθρῳ. ἐθαύμασαν αὐτὸν ὑπερφύως καὶ ὑπερηγάσθησαν τὸ τε πολέμιον καὶ πᾶν τὸ Ῥωμαϊκόν, καὶ δῆμοι πάντες ἀνθρώπων πρὸς τοῦτο ἐξεθαμβήθησαν. τὸ δὲ γένος τῶν Θετταλῶν ἐώρτασε μὲν ὑπὲρ ἅπαντος τὴν τῆς πόλεως λύτρωσιν, ἔθυσσε δὲ θεῶ καὶ τῷ μεγαλομάρτυρι Δημητρίῳ τὰ σώστρα, ἔθυσσε δὲ καὶ αὐτῷ τῷ τούτου θεράποντι Μιχαὴλ τῷ Βοτανειάτῃ τὴν ἐξ ἰσοθέων ἀγῶνων ἐπινίκιον εὐφημίαν καὶ εὐκλειαν. ἐζήτηε δὲ τὸν ἀθλητὴν ἢ σωθεῖσα πόλις δι' αὐτοῦ, καὶ διὰ σπουδῆς ἐποιεῖτο τὴν τούτου εὐρεσιν. καὶ ζητοῦσα σὺν ἐπιμελείᾳ καὶ διαδρομῷ πολλῶν εὗρεν αὐτὸν κείμενον ἐν ὀπλισμένῳ καὶ ἀνδρείῳ φρονήματι, καὶ τὸ ξίφος τοῖς δακτύλοις περιεχόμενον καὶ μηδαμῶς ἀφιέμενον, ἕως μετὰ πολλῆς θεραπείας καὶ τεχνικῆς ἐπιστήμης ἀφήκε μὲν τὸ ξίφος ἢ χεῖρ, τῶν ὀνύχων τῆ παλάμη προσηλωθέντων αὐτοῦ τῷ ἔμμανεϊ τῆς κατὰ τῶν πολεμίων ἐπέξεως, αὐτὸς δὲ δορυφορούμενος, καὶ μεγίσταις εὐφημίαις καὶ κρότοις καὶ δορυφόρων ἀλαλαγμοῖς καὶ ἐγκωμίων πλοκαῖς καταστεφόμενος ὡς ἀριστεὺς ἀπαράμιλλος, εἰς τὴν πόλιν ἐθριάμβευσε, τοῦ κάρου ἤδη ἀνενεγκῶν, καὶ πᾶσαν τὴν Ῥωμαίων χαρὰς καὶ θυμηδίας πεπλήρωκεν. ὁ δὲ τὰ σκῆπτρα τῆς ἀρχῆς ἐγκεχειρισμένος κύριος Βασίλειος, ἀναφέρων μὲν καὶ πρὸς τὸ τοῦ γένους αὐτοῦ ἐπίσημον καὶ περιδοξόν, ἀναφέρων δὲ καὶ πρὸς τὰς πατρῶας ἀνδραγαθίας, καὶ τὴν τοῦ παρόντος κατορθώματος ἐκπληττόμενος ἀσύγκριτον ἔπαρσιν, υἱὸν αὐτὸν ἀπεκάλει καὶ μέλος ἴδιον, καὶ τὸ ὄνομα τούτου διὰ γλώττης εἶχε. καὶ ὄρων ἐπὸ θει τοῦτον, καὶ ποθῶν ἐτίμα, καὶ πιστότατον ἅμα καὶ οἰκειότατον καὶ στρατιώτην ἀκαταγώνιστον εἶχε καὶ ἐλογίζετο, καὶ διαλλακτικῶς τῶν μεγίστων καμάτων καὶ πολέμων ἐτίθετο ἀσφαλῆ, ὡς τῆ παρουσίᾳ τούτου φευγόντων τῶν ἐναντιῶν καὶ νῶτα διδόντων εὐθύς. ὅθεν καὶ σὺν αὐτῷ μὲν καὶ τῷ πατρὶ τὴν κατὰ τῶν Βουλγάρων ἦρατο νίκην, καὶ τῆς Βουλγαρίας δυσκαταμαχήτου καὶ πολλῆς καὶ δυσάλωτου γινωσκομένης παντάπασι, καὶ μηδενὶ τῶν βασιλέων ὑποταγείσης ἐπὶ πολὺ, καὶ παρὰ τοῦτο μὴ ἀνείσης τῆ Βύζαντος τὸ ἀνέσιμον καὶ τὴν χορηγίαν τῶν ἀναγκαίων, λαμπρῶς καὶ σὺν πολλῇ τῇ ἀκμαιότητι ἐκυρίευσεν· καὶ κατέστη τῆ Ῥωμαίων βασιλείᾳ πρὸς ἐσπέραν ἐν εὐπραγίᾳ καὶ γαλήνῃ τὰ πράγματα, καὶ ἀντὶ τῆς πρὶν ἐνδείας δαψιλῆ τὴν ἀφθονίαν καὶ τὴν εὐκληρίαν εὐθύμως ἀπέλιπεν.

Bekker, I. (ed.), *Michaelis Attaliothae Historia* (Bonn 1853), pp. 230.22 - 234.16.

Michael Botaneiates participates to the campaigns of Basil II against the Abasgoi:

Ἐπὶ δὲ τῆς ἐώας διακυκλωμένων τῶν Ἀβασγῶν καὶ ἀντιδοξούντων τῷ βασιλεῖ καὶ προφανῶς ἀνταιρόντων (ἐθάρρουν γὰρ οὐ τῷ πληθίει μόνον, ἀλλὰ καὶ τοῖς τῶν ὄπλων ἰσχυροτάτοις προβλήμασιν, ὡς μὴ ἑαυτοὺς μόνον ἀλλὰ καὶ τοὺς ἵππους τεθωρακισμένους καὶ ἀτρώτους πανταχόθεν περικαλύπτοντες), πάλιν αὐτὸς ὁ Βοτανειάτης πρωταγωνιστῆς καὶ πρόμαχος ἐγνωρίζετο καὶ τοῦ κρατοῦντος ὑπέρμαχος· τοῦ γὰρ βασιλέως κατ' ἐκεῖνο τὰς Ῥωμαϊκὰς δυνάμεις ἐλάσαντος, καταπληκτικῶς μὲν ἀγῶνες καὶ μάχαι περιφανεῖς καὶ πανημέριοι συνερράγησαν, οὐδεμιᾶς δὲ τούτων ὁ Βοτανειάτης ἐναπολέλειπτο, ἀλλ'



ήγωνίζετο μὲν ὥσπερ τις ἑκατοντάχειρ καὶ δεύτερος Ἡρακλῆς ἢ ὑπὲρ τὸν Ἡρακλέα ἐκεῖνον τοῖς ἄθλοις ἐπιγαννύμενον (οὐ γὰρ τρισκαίδέκατον ἀθλον ἀλλ' ἑκατονταπλάσιον ἦνυσεν), ἔνθα δὲ ἀνεκτᾶτο τὸ ἀνιώμενον, καὶ θάρσους πληρῶν εὐτολμότερον ἐποίει καὶ νικᾶν παρεσκεύαζε. ταῦτα οὐκ ἐπὶ μιᾶς ἐκστρατείας τῆς κατὰ τῶν Ἀβασγῶν αὐτῷ διεγώνιστο, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἐπὶ δευτέρας.

Bekker, I. (ed.), *Michaelis Attaliothae Historia* (Bonn 1853), pp. 234.17 - 235.12.

Skylitzes mentions Nikephoros Botaneiates part in the rebellion of Isaac Komnenos (1057):

οἱ δὲ κατὰ τὸ θέμα τῶν Ἀνατολικῶν τὰς οἰκίσεις ἔχοντες ἄρχοντες, ὁ πρόεδρος Ῥωμανὸς ὁ Σκληρός (ἦν γὰρ οὐδ' αὐτὸς ἔξω τῶν ὁμοιοσμένων), ὁ Βούρτζης, ὁ Βοτανειάτης, οἱ Βασιλείου τοῦ Ἀργυροῦ παῖδες καὶ ὁ λοιπὸς ὄμιλος, τέως μὲν ἦσαν ἡρεμοῦντες καὶ ἀρχὴν ἀποστασίας ἀλλαχόθεν προσμένοντες, ἐπεὶ δὲ ἐπύθοντο τὰ κατὰ τὸν Βρυέννιον, καὶ οἷαις ἑαυτὸν οὗτος φρενοβλαβῶς καθυπέβαλε τύχαις, ἐντρεχῶς λογισάμενοι, ὡς ἐταζόμενος οὗτος ἀποφῆναι τὴν συνωμοσίαν καὶ οὐκ εἰς καλὸν τοῖς συνωμοταῖς τὸ τέλος ἐπενεχθήσεται, ἄραντες ἅπαντες ἀπέρχονται ἐν Παφλαγονίᾳ κατὰ τὴν Καστάμωνα· οἶκος δὲ ἡ Καστάμων τοῦ μαγίστρου Ἰσαακίου τοῦ Κομνηνοῦ. καταλαβόντες δὲ καὶ αὐτὸν ἡρεμοῦντα ἔτι ἀνιστῶσι καὶ ἄκοντα, καὶ ἔρχονται μετ' αὐτοῦ κατὰ τινα τόπον ὁμαλὸν καὶ πλάτος ἰκανὸν ἔχοντα· Γουνάρια ὁ τόπος κατονομάζεται. κάκεισε τοὺς πλησιοχώρους ἀθροίσαντες στρατιώτας καὶ τοὺς ὅσοι πυθόμενοι τὴν κίνησιν ἐθελονταὶ παρεγένοντο, μετὰ πάντων αὐτῶν ἀναγορεύουσι τοῦτον αὐτοκράτορα βασιλέα Ῥωμαίων, ὀγδόην ἄγοντος τότε τοῦ Ἰουνίου μηνός, τῆς δεκάτης ἰνδικτιῶνος.

Thurn, I. (ed.), *Ioannis Scylitzae Synopsis Historiarum* (Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae 5, Berlin – New York 1973), pp. 488.63 - 489.78.

The valour of Nikephoros Botaneiates in a battle against the imperial army, according to Skylitzes:

Ἐν ταύτῃ τῇ μάχῃ φασίν, ὅτι τῶν περὶ τὸν βασιλέα τραπέντων Ῥανδούλφος ὁ Φράγγος ἐς μέσους περιπλανώμενος τοὺς τε φεύγοντας καὶ τοὺς διώκοντας ἐζήτηε συμπλακῆναι τινι τῶν ὀνομαστών, ἐπεὶ δὲ μάθοι, ὡς Νικηφόρος δίεισιν ὁ Βοτανειάτης, τοὺς ἄλλους καταλιπὼν ἀπήει πρὸς ἐκεῖνον, πόρρωθεν κρᾶζων καὶ μένειν παρεγγυόμενος, δηλῶν καὶ τοῦνομα, ὅστις εἶη καὶ ἐφ' ᾧ προσκαλεῖται ὅπερ γνοὺς ὁ Βοτανειάτης ἴστηρι τὸν δρόμον, καὶ ἐγγίσαντι τῷ Ῥανδούλφῳ προσμίγνυται, καὶ παίζει μὲν ἐκεῖνος τῷ Ξίφει τὴν ἀσπίδα τοῦ Ῥανδούλφου καὶ τέμνει δίχα, παίζει δ' ὁ Φράγγος αὐτὸν κατὰ τῆς κόρυθος, διολισθησάν δὲ τὸ Ξίφος οὐκ ἔβλαψε. διὸ καὶ συνδραμόντες πρὸς τὸν Βοτανειάτην ἕτεροι χειροῦνται ζωγρίαν τὸν ἄνδρα καὶ ἐς τὸν Κομνηνὸν ἀπάγουσιν.

Thurn, I. (ed.), *Ioannis Scylitzae Synopsis Historiarum* (Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae 5, Berlin – New York 1973), pp. 495.59 - 496.69.

An account of Nikephoros Botaneiates's action as *doux* of Antioch according to a contemporary chronicle:

Γενόμενοι γοῦν ἐν οἷ τε Τοῦρκοι καὶ οἱ Χαλεπίται, καὶ ὁμολογίαν δόντες ἀλλήλοις, τὴν ἐν Συρίᾳ Ἀντιόχειαν καὶ τὰ περὶ αὐτὴν κακῶς διετίθεσαν σφάττοντες, πυρπολοῦντες, ἀνδραποδίζοντες, λεηλατοῦντες, αἰχμαλωτίζοντες καὶ πάν, εἴ τι χεῖριστον, διαπραττόμενοι. Συνηθροίσθη μὲν γὰρ στράτευμα ἐπ' αὐτοὺς ἀξιώλογον, Νικηφόρου ὄντος τοῦ Βοτανειάτου ἐν ταύτῃ δουκός, ἡ δὲ φειδωλία καὶ ἡ γλισχροτής ἄπρακτα πάλιν τὰ πάντα ἀπέδειξεν. Οὐ γὰρ ὀλόκληρον τὸ ὀψώνιον, ἀλλὰ μερικὸν αὐτοῖς καὶ μέτριον δοθὲν ναρκῆσαι τοὺς στρατιώτας ἐποίησε· λαβόντες γὰρ τὸ δοθὲν εἰς τὰ οἰκεία διεσκεδάσθησαν, καὶ πάλιν ἦσαν οἱ βάρβαροι τὴν χώραν δηρούμενοι καὶ ἀδεῶς κατατρέχοντες. Νεολαίαν δὲ τινα βραχείαν, ἄρτι τῶν οἰκημάτων οἷς ἐνετρέφοντο ἐκπεπηδηκυῖαν, μικροῖς καὶ ἐλαχίστοις ἀθροίσαντες ἀναλώμασι τῷ τῆς Ἀντιοχείας ἡγεμόνι ἐνεχείρισαν. Οἱ δρᾶσαι μὲν τι προεθυμοῦντο ἀπονοία νεωτερικῆς θρασύτητος στρατηγούμενοι, ἀπειροπόλεμοι δὲ ὄντες καὶ ἀφιπποὶ καὶ σχεδὸν ἄοπλοι καὶ γυμνοὶ καὶ μηδὲ τὸν ἡμερήσιον ἄρτον ἔχοντες, πολλὰ παθόντες ἀνήκεστα εἰς τὴν σφῶν δυσκλεῶς ἐπανεστρέψαν γῆν, τοῦ δουκὸς Βοτανειάτου μετὰ τῶν οἰκείων ὑπασπιστῶν καὶ τιῶν ξενικῶν δυνάμεων μετρίως αὐτοὺς ἀποσοβῆσαι ἰσχύσαντος. Παρᾶλυθέντος δὲ τῆς ἀρχῆς ἐκεῖνου τὰ τῶν βαρβάρων ἐπὶ πλέον ἐθρασύνθη, σιτοδείας πιεζούσης τὰς πόλεις καὶ τῶν ἄλλων ἐπιτηδείων ἐνδείας.

Ioannes Skylitzes Continuatus, *Chronographia*, Τσολάκης, Ε. (ed.), *Η Συνέχεια της Χρονογραφίας του Ιωάννου Σκυλίτζη (Ioannes Skylitzes Continuatus)* (Ίδρυμα Μελετών Χερσονήσου του Αίμου 105, Θεσσαλονίκη 1968), pp. 120.17 - 121.8.

Nikephoros Botaneiates as aspiring emperor (1067-1068):



Αλλ' ἐπειδήπερ ἐξ ἀνάγκης βασιλέως ἐδεήθη τὰ πράγματα δυναμένου αὐτὰ ποσῶς καταστήσαι τε καὶ ὁμαλίσαι ἐν οὕτως ἐναντίοις καιροῖς, ἐψηφίζετο μὲν ἀξιολογώτατος ὁ Βοτανειάτης καὶ ἄλλοι πολλοί, νικᾷ δὲ ὁμως ἡ θεία βουλή. διὸ καὶ ἀνάγεται ἐπὶ ταύτην ὁ βεστάρχης Ῥωμανὸς ὁ Κωνσταντίνου τοῦ Διογένου υἱός.

Ioannes Skylitzes Continuatus, *Chronographia*, Τσολάκης, Ε. (ed.), *Η Συνέχεια της Χρονογραφίας του Ιωάννου Σκυλίτζη (Ioannes Skylitzes Continuatus)* (Ίδρυμα Μελετών Χερσονήσου του Αίμου 105, Θεσσαλονίκη 1968), p. 121.9-13.

The rebellion of Nikephoros Botaneiates according to a contemporary chronicle (1077):

Οὕτω δὲ τῶν πραγμάτων διοικουμένων καὶ οὕτω τῶν τε ἐκτὸς καὶ τῶν ἐντὸς λεηλατουμένων καὶ κεραίζομένων δυσβουλία καὶ κακότητι τῶν κρατούντων, οἱ ἐν τῇ ἀνατολῇ προέχοντες, Ἀλέξανδρός τε ὁ Καβάσιλας, ὁ Στραβορωμανός, οἱ Συναδηνοί, ὁ Γουδέλιος καὶ ἡ λοιπὴ τῶν συγκλητικῶν λογάς, ἦν ἐκ πολλοῦ ἀποστασίαν ὠδίνησαν εἰς ἔργον ἐξάγουσι νῦν καὶ τὸν κουροπαλάτην Νικηφόρον τὸν Βοτανειάτην συνελθόντες βασιλεῖα ἀναγορεύουσιν, Οκτωβρίου μηνὸς ἵσταμένου τῆς πρώτης ἐπιμεμήσεως.

Ioannes Skylitzes Continuatus, *Chronographia*, Τσολάκης, Ε. (ed.), *Η Συνέχεια της Χρονογραφίας του Ιωάννου Σκυλίτζη (Ioannes Skylitzes Continuatus)* (Ίδρυμα Μελετών Χερσονήσου του Αίμου 105, Θεσσαλονίκη 1968), pp. 171.26 - 172.6.

Critical remarks of Nikephoros Bryennios on Nikephoros Botaneiates:

Ἐκ τῆς ἐφ᾽ αὐτῷ ἀποστατεῖ κατ' αὐτοῦ καὶ ὑπερισχύσας τῆς βασιλείας ἐπιλαμβάνεται, τῆς ἐγκεχειρισμένης αὐτῷ, καθὼς εἴρηται, στρατηγίας τῶν Ἀνατολικῶν ἀμοιβῆν πονηρὰν τῷ ἐγχειρίσαντι ἀντιδούς, κιβδηλῶν τινῶν ἀνδρῶν καὶ τὴν τοῦ καλοῦ φύσιν ἀγνοησάντων παντάπασι καὶ μηδὲ πίστιν ὀρθὴν συντηρεῖν μαθόντων, οἷς ταύτην ἐπῶφειλον, εἰς ταῦτο συνελθόντων γνώμης καὶ συμπνευσάντων καὶ τοῦ δήμου παντὸς ἀλογίστως οὕτω τῷ ἐκείνων θελήματι παρακολουθήσαντος. Αἰεὶ γὰρ ἐν ἀνθρώποις ἡ κακία μᾶλλον ἢ τὸ ἀγαθὸν πλεονεκτεῖν εἴωθε· φιλεῖ δὲ καὶ ἄλλως τὸ πλῆθος τοῖς τοιαύταις χαίρειν μεταβολαῖς. Οὕτω τοίνυν ὁ Βοτανειάτης εἰς τὸ τῆς βασιλείας ὕψος ἀνάγεται, ἀνὴρ συνετὸς μὲν τὰ πρῶτα καὶ ἰκανώτατος τῇ χειρὶ, γήρα δὲ ἄλλως καὶ χρόνῳ κατειργασμένος καὶ τὸ περὶ τὴν δεξιότητα πάλαι καταλύσας φιλότιμον καὶ μικροῦ <δεῖν> πᾶσαν τὴν ἑαυτοῦ ἀφηρημένος ἐνέργειαν καὶ πρὸς τὸ τῆς βασιλείας ὕψος μὴ ἐπαρκῶν.

Gautier, P. (ed.), *Nicéphore Bryennios, Histoire* (Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae 9, Bruxelles 1975), p. 55.1-14.

Nikephoros Botaneiates's marriage to Maria of Alania:

Ὁ δὲ βασιλεὺς τῆς γυναικὸς αὐτοῦ τελευτησάσης τῆς Βεβδηνῆς, ἅμα τῇ ἀναρρήσει ἀναγορευθείσης καὶ αὐτῆς, ἐτέραν ἠγάγετο. Πολλοὶ μὲν γὰρ αὐτῷ ἐμνηστεύοντο, Ζωὴ τε γὰρ ἡ τοῦ βασιλέως τοῦ Δούκα θυγάτηρ, παρθένος οὖσα καὶ τῷ εἶδει εὐπρεπῆς, ἀλλὰ καὶ τῶν συγκλητικῶν θυγατέρες πολλοὶ ὥραν ἔχουσαι γάμου. Ὁ δὲ μίαν ἠρέετο τῶν δύο, ἡ τὴν τοῦ Δούκα σύζυγον καὶ αὐτῆς τοῦ Διογένου Εὐδοκίαν ἢ τὴν τοῦ ἑναγχοῦ βασιλεύσαντος Μιχαὴλ Μαριάν τὴν ἐξ Ἀλανῶν. Στέλλει γοῦν τὴν Εὐδοκίαν ληψόμενος, ἡ δὲ ἠκολούθει περιχαρῶς. Ὅπερ γνοὺς ὁ τηρικαυτὰ ἐπ' ἀρετῇ διαβόητος μοναχός, ὃν δὴ καὶ Πανάρετον ἀντ' ἄλλου παντὸς ἐκάλουν ὀνόματος, παντὶ τρόπῳ διακωλύσαι ἐσπούδασε τὸ ἀτόπημα, πολλῶν ὑπομνήσας αὐτὴν τῶν δυναμένων παραλῦσαι τῆς προθυμίας. Ἄγεται τοίνυν τὴν Μαριάν ἀπηρυθριασμένως ὁ βασιλεὺς καὶ ἱερολογεῖται αὐτῇ, καὶ παραυτίκα καθαιρεῖται ὁ ἱερεὺς ὡς προφανῶς μοιχείας τετελεσμένης.

Ioannes Skylitzes Continuatus, *Chronographia*, Τσολάκης, Ε. (ed.), *Η Συνέχεια της Χρονογραφίας του Ιωάννου Σκυλίτζη (Ioannes Skylitzes Continuatus)* (Ίδρυμα Μελετών Χερσονήσου του Αίμου 105, Θεσσαλονίκη 1968), pp. 181.22 - 182.7.

Nikephoros Bryennios describes the reaction of Nikephoros Botaneiates to the rebellion of Nikephoros Melissenos (1080):

Ἐν ὅσῳ δὲ ταῦτα ἐπράττετο, ὁ Μελισσηνὸς Νικηφόρος, ἀνὴρ εὐγενής, ὡς ὁ λόγος ἐγνώρισεν ἄνωθεν, ἐκ κήδους ὧν ὠκειωμένος τοῖς Κομνηνοῖς, καὶ γὰρ ἐφθῆ συναφθῆναι τὴν τούτων ἀδελφὴν Εὐδοκίαν, περὶ τὴν Κῶ διατρίβων, τὰς Τούρκων δυνάμεις καὶ τοὺς Τούρκων ἄρχοντας ἐλύσας πρὸς ἑαυτόν, περιεῖη τὰς τῆς Ἀσίας πόλεις, τὰ κοκκοβαφῆ ὑποδησάμενος πέδιλα. Οἱ γοῦν πολῖται ὡς βασιλεῖ Ῥωμαίων σφᾶς τε αὐτοὺς καὶ τὰς πόλεις αὐτῷ παρεδίδουν. Ὁ δὲ καὶ ἄκων τοῖς Τούρκοις ἐνεχείριζεν, ὡς συμβῆναι διὰ βραχέος καιροῦ κακ' αὐτοῦ τοῦ τρόπου πασῶν τῶν περὶ τὴν Ἀσίαν τε καὶ Φρυγίαν καὶ τὴν Γαλατίαν πόλεων



κατακυριεύσαι τούς Τούρκους· Ξὺν στρατεύματι γούν πλείστῳ τὴν ἐν Βιθυνίᾳ Νίκαιαν καταλαμβάνει κάκειθεν τῆς βασιλείας ἀνετεποιεῖτο Ῥωμαίων. Ὁ Βοτανειάτης δὲ ταῦτα πυθόμενος τὸν Κομνηνὸν μετεκαλεῖτο Ἀλέξιον καὶ ἐκέλευε τοῦτον σὺν ταῖς δυνάμεσι τὸν πορθμὸν διαπεραιωθέντα τὸν Χαλκηδόνιον κατ' ἐκείνου στρατεύειν. Ὁ δ' ἀπελέγετο τὴν κατ' ἐκείνου στρατείαν συνετῶς ἄγαν· ἐδεδίδει γὰρ τὴν βασιλέως κουφότητα καὶ τὴν τῶν περὶ αὐτὸν πονηρίαν ὁμοῦ καὶ τὸν φθόνον, μὴ ποτε τοῦτον προσπταῖσαι ξυμβαίη κατὰ πολὺ τῆς τῶν Τούρκων δυνάμεως ἐλαττούμενον καὶ οἱ πονηροὶ λαβὴν εὐρόντες διαβάλωσι τοῦτον πρὸς βασιλέα ὡς διὰ τὸ κῆδος προδιδόντα τὴν μάχην. Ὁ βασιλεὺς τοίνυν, ἐπεὶ πολλὰ παρακαλέσας τοῦτον οὐκ ἔπειθεν, ἀγασθεὶς τὸ τοῦτου στεργὸν τοῦ φρονήματος τὰς δυνάμεις παραδιδόναι τῷ πρωτοβεστιαρίῳ ἐκέλευεν· ἦν δ' οὗτος ὁ ἐκτομίας Ἰωάννης, πάλαι τούτῳ πρὸ τῆς βασιλείας ὑπηρετῶν· φιλόδοξος δὲ ἦν, εἴπερ τις ἄλλος, καὶ τὸ ἦθος φέρων οὐ στάσιμον.

Gautier, P. (ed.), *Nicéphore Bryennios, Histoire* (Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae 9, Bruxelles 1975), p. 301.1-24.

A relative of the Botaneiates mentioned in the history of Anna Comnene:

ἐπεὶ γὰρ ὁ βασιλεὺς τεκνογονεῖν διὰ τὸ γῆρας οὐκ ἐπεφύκει, δεδιὼς δὲ καὶ τὸ ἄφυκτον τῆς τοῦ θανάτου τομῆς, περὶ τοῦ διαδεξομένου διεσκοπεῖτο. ἦν δὲ τῆνικαῦτα Συναδηνὸς τίς ἐξ ἀνατολῶν ὁρμώμενος, ἐκ γένους λαμποῦ, τὸ εἶδος ὡραῖος, τὴν φρένα βαθύς, ῥωμαλέος τὴν χεῖρα, τὴν ἡλικίαν ἐς μειράκιον παραγγέλλων καὶ ἄλλως δὲ προσήκων αὐτῷ κατὰ γένος· τῶν ἄλλων μᾶλλον ἐσκέπτετο διάδοχον αὐτὸν τῆς βασιλείας καταλιπεῖν, καθάπερ τινα πάτριον κλῆρον τὸ κράτος αὐτῷ διδούς, κακῶς βουλευόμενος.

Reinsch, D.R. – Kambylis, A. (ed.), *Annae Comnenae Alexias* (Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae 40, Berlin – New York 2001), p. 57.75-82.

The affinity of the Botaneiates with the Synadenoι:

Δέδωκε δὲ καὶ τὴν ἀνεψιᾶν αὐτοῦ ὁ βασιλεὺς τὴν Συναδηνήν, θυγατέρα οὖσαν Θεοδούλου τοῦ Συναδηνοῦ, τῷ κρᾶλι Οὐγγρίας εἰς γυναῖκα, οὗ καὶ τελευτήσαντος αὐθις εἰς τὸ Βυζάντιον ὑπέστρεψε.

Ioannes Skylitzes Continuatus, *Chronographia*, Τσολάκης, E. (ed.), *Η Συνέχεια της Χρονογραφίας του Ιωάννου Σκυλίτζη (Ioannes Skylitzes Continuatus)* (Ἰδρυμα Μελετῶν Χερσονήσου του Αἴμου 105, Θεσσαλονίκη 1968), p. 185.23-26.

Anna Comnene mentions the grandson of E. Nikephoros Botaneiates:

ἐπεὶ δὲ ἡ μήτηρ τῶν Κομνηνῶν, ἡ Δαλασσηνὴ Ἄννα, γαμβρὸν ἔφθασεν εἰσποιεῖσθαι ἐπὶ τῇ θυγατρὶ Μανουῆλ τοῦ πρωτοτόκου τῶν υἱῶν αὐτῆς τὸν τοῦ Βοτανειάτου ἔγγονον, πτοηθεῖσα μὴ ὁ παιδαγωγὸς αὐτοῦ γνοὺς τὴν ἐπιβουλήν προσαγγεῖλη τῷ βασιλεῖ, βουλήν ἀρίστην βουλεύεται.

Reinsch, D.R. – Kambylis, A. (επιμ.), *Annae Comnenae Alexias* (Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae 40, Berlin – New York 2001), p. 65.13-17.

Anna Comnene refers to the fall of Nikephoros Botaneiates and his being tonsured a monk (1081):

Οἱ δὲ Κομνηνοὶ τὰ βασιλεία καταλαβόντες παραχορῆμα τὸν ἐπ' ἀνεψιᾶ γαμβρὸν αὐτῶν Μιχαῆλ, ὃς ἐν ὑστέροις καιροῖς λογοθέτης τῶν σεκρέτων ἐχορημάτισε, πέμπουσι πρὸς αὐτόν. ὁ δὲ ἀπελθὼν μετὰ τοῦ τῆνικαῦτα ἐπάρχου (ὁ Ῥαδηνὸς δὲ οὗτος ἦν) εἰσαγαγὼν τὸν βασιλέα εἰς ἀκάτιον τι μικρὸν ἀπέρχεται μετ' αὐτοῦ εἰς τὴν τῆς Περιβλέπτου περιώνυμον μονήν· εἶτα τὸ μοναδικὸν αὐτῷ ἄμφω προτρέπονται ἀμφιάσασθαι σχῆμα. τοῦ δὲ ἐς νέωτα τοῦτο ὑπεριθεμένου οὗτοι δεδιότες ἐτι ἐν συγχύσει καὶ ἀταξίᾳ τῶν πραγμάτων ὄντων, μὴ τι ἀπὸ τοῦ μέρους τῶν δούλων ἐκείνων καὶ τῶν ἐκ τοῦ Χώματος αὐθις νεωτερισθῆ, κατηπειγμένως τὴν τῶν τριχῶν ἀποκοπὴν αὐτῷ συμβούλευον· καὶ πείθεται τούτοις καὶ τοῦ ἀγγελικοῦ τῆνικαῦτα ἀξιοῦται σχήματος. οἷα τὰ τῆς τύχης· ὑψοῦ μὲν αἶρει τὸν ἀνθρώπινον βίον, ὅτε ἐπιμειδιᾶν αὐτῷ θελήσει, καὶ διάδημα βασιλικὸν αὐτῷ περιτίθησι καὶ περιπορφύρει τὰ πέδιλα, ἐπὰν δὲ τὰς ὀφρῦς τούτοις ἐπισυνάξῃ, ἀντὶ τῆς πορφυρίδος καὶ τῶν στεμμάτων τὰ μέλανα ῥάκη καταμφιέννουσι. ὅπερ δὴ καὶ τῷ βασιλεῖ Βοτανειάτῃ ξυμβέβηκεν. ἐρωτηθεὶς δὲ παρὰ τοῦ τῶν συνήθων, εἰ εὐφόρως τὴν μεταβολὴν φέρει, φησὶν· “ἡ τοῦ κρέως με μόνον ἀποχὴ ἀνιᾶ, τῶν δ' ἄλλων ὀλίγη μοι ἡ φροντίς”.

Reinsch, D.R. – Kambylis, A. (ed.), *Annae Comnenae Alexias* (Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae 40, Berlin – New York 2001), p. 87.2-



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Chronological Table

9th c.: First mention of the Botaneiates family in the sources

summer of 1014: The doukas of Thessalonike Theophylaktos Botaneiates dies at the battle of Kleidi against the Bulgarians. His son Michael distinguishes himself in the same operations

1021-1022: Michael Botaneiates takes part in the campaigns of Basil II against the Abasgoi

1057: Nikephoros Botaneiates participates in the rebellion of Isaac Komnenos

1060's: Nikephoros Botaneiates distinguishes himself as military commander on the european front and in Antioch

October 1077: Nikephoros Botaneiates rebels against Michael VII Doukas

1078-1081: reign of Nikephoros III Botaneiates

1081: Rebellion of Alexios Komnenos, resulting in the overthrow of Nikephoros III, who is tonsured a monk

around 1085: A grandson of Nikephoros III marries the daughter of Manuel Komnenos, deceased brother of Alexios I.

around 1110-1112: Eudokia, the daughter of the *sebastokrator* Isaac (brother of Emperor Alexios I), marries Nikephoros Botaneiates, who on this occasion receives the title of *sebastos*

1st half of the 12th century: Two members of the Botaneiates family, Manuel (married to Eirene Synadene) and George (husband of Zoe Doukaina), receive the title of *sebastos*

late 12th century: The Botaneiates family loses its high social status

Auxiliary Catalogs

List of notable members of the family:

Theophylaktos (Nikephoros) Botaneiates: *Doukas* of Thessalonike in the early 11th century, under Basil II (976-1025). He took part in the battles against the Bulgarians of Samuel in the summer of 1014.

Michael Botaneiates: Son of the above Theophylaktos. In 1014, he distinguished himself in the battles against the Bulgarians in the area of Thessalonike. In 1021-1022, he participated in the campaigns of Basil II against the Abkhazians.

Nikephoros Botaneiates: Son of the above. He launched a military career in the years of Constantine IX Monomachus (1042-1055) and participated in the rebellion of Isaac Komnenos in 1057, when he was a *magistros*. After 1057, he held top military posts. In the 1060s he was a distinguished military commander in the Balkans and Antioch. As the *strategos* of the theme of Anatolikon and *kouropalates* he revolted in 1077 in order to occupy the throne. He ascended the throne in 1078; in 1081 he was dethroned by Alexios Komnenos in 1081 and became a monk.

Botaneiates: Grandson of Nikephoros III Botaneiates, who married the daughter of Manuel Komnenos, the brother of Alexios I, ca. 1085.

Nikephoros Botaneiates: Ca. 1110-1112 he married Eudokia, the daughter of the *sebastokrator* Isaac Komnenos, the brother of Alexios I. He received the high title of *sebastos*.



Manuel Botaneiates: Known in the first half of the 12th century, he married Eirene Synadene. He was honoured with the title of *sebastos*.

George Botaneiates: Known in the first half of the 12th century, he married Zoe Doukaina. He was honoured with the title of *sebastos*.