



Summary :

In 872 (or, according to other scholars, in 878) the forces of Chrysocheir, leader of the Paulicians, clashed with the Byzantines during a battle given at Vathys Ryax, northern Cappadocia, and fled in disorder. The Byzantines chased them to the northeast as far as a hill called Konstantinou Bounos near Sebasteia, and they killed Chrysocheir along with lots of his soldiers.

Date

872 or 878

Geographical Location

Vathys Ryax (modern Kalınırmak pass), northern Cappadocia

1. Historical Framework

From the mid-9th century onwards the Arab-Byzantine conflicts in Asia Minor were for the first time connected with the firm religious policy of the Byzantine Empire against heresies. More specifically, as part of the strictly Orthodox policy adopted after the final restoration of icons in March 843, the [persecutions](#) against the [Paulicians](#) became more systematic and the latter had to move to the east of the Arab-Byzantine border, in the region of the Upper Euphrates, where they sought shelter in Arab lands. The Arab [emir of Melitene](#), Amr al-Aqta' , finally ceded them the region to the north of [Melitene](#), where they settled as an [autonomous political and religious community](#) protected by the Arabs; in return, they offered the Arabs military service. Thus, the Paulicians participated in the Arab raids against the Byzantine Empire, which gradually strengthened the military, economic and political power of their state and made it an important enemy of Byzantium.

The particularly intense military activity of the Paulicians led by [Chrysocheir](#) (863-872 or 878)¹ made Emperor [Basil I](#) turn his whole attention to the eastern border and lead a campaign against the Paulician capital, Tephrike, during which he narrowly escaped being captured (spring 871). Encouraged by this failure of the Byzantine emperor, Chrysocheir campaigned against the Byzantine lands in Asia Minor the following years, reaching as far as [Ankyra](#)² and the region of Kommata, between Ankyra and Lake Tatta (modern Tuz Golu) in southern [Galatia](#), which he plundered. After taking rich spoils, the Paulicians took their way back, following the route which led from Ankyra to [Sebasteia](#) via [Tabia](#).³ Basil I had been informed of the raids and ordered his brother-in-law and [domestikos ton scholon](#), Christopher,⁴ to pursue Chrysocheir on his way back to the Paulician capital, Tephrike.⁵ Chrysocheir's forces had already camped at Agranai (near modern Muşalem Kale) when the Byzantines reached Siboron (modern Karamadara), to the west of Agranai. Christopher split his forces and ordered the [stratego](#)i of the themes of [Armeniakon](#) and Charsianon to follow the Paulicians as far as Vathys Ryax (modern Kalınırmak pass) in northern [Cappadocia](#), to the west of Sebasteia, and to inform him whether Chrysocheir was sending forces against the two themes.

2. The Battle

Chrysocheir had already camped at Vathys Ryax when the two *stratego*i arrived at night with their force at the wood that covered the hill of Zogoloenos, above the Paulician camp. Taking advantage of their men's enthusiasm (the soldiers of the two themes conflicted bitterly over the title of the bravest corps in battle), they attacked before dawn, although they had been ordered to return without fighting. According to the plan of the two *stratego*i, the two of them along with a special corps of 600 men would attack the Paulician camp, while the rest of the soldiers had been ordered to remain in their place and keep shouting all through the battle so that the enemies would think that the main part of the Byzantine army was moving to reinforce the attacking forces. The plan worked out perfectly. The Paulicians were taken aback by the unexpected Byzantine attack and fled in disorder. The Byzantines chased them for around 50 km to the northeast as far as the hill of Konstantinou Bounos (probably identified with modern Yildiz Dagi), near Sebasteia. Many Paulicians were killed during the pursuit. Chrysocheir tried to escape but was caught up at Konstantinou Bounos by Poullades, a Byzantine soldier who had lived in Tephrike as a captive of Chrysocheir and now sought revenge. Chrysocheir was fatally wounded by Poullades while trying to cross a ditch and, despite the pleads of his loyal servant, Diakonitzis, the overhauling



Byzantines beheaded him. His head was sent to Emperor Basil I in Constantinople.

3. Consequences

The defeat of the Paulicians at Vathys Ryax in 872 or, according to others, in 878,⁶ not only prevented them from realising the target of their campaign – to strengthen their presence in Asia Minor –, but also had a catastrophic effect, as their military forces suffered serious damage and their leader was fatally wounded. The death of Chrysocheir disorganised the Paulician state and weakened it extremely rapidly, which gave Basil I the opportunity to immediately follow a vigorous offensive policy on the eastern border of the Byzantine Empire. He undertook and led himself a series of successful campaigns against both the Paulicians and their Arab allies.⁷ The apex of his military venture was the capture and sack of the Paulician capital a few years later, in the spring-summer of 878⁸ or in the summer of 879.⁹ After the Byzantines had occupied Tephrike, the Paulician state actually collapsed and the military threat against the Byzantine Empire disappeared. However, the religious community of the Paulicians was not utterly eliminated, as there is evidence that it survived until the 10th and 11th century.

1. Before 869 Chrysocheir had raided Asia Minor, as far as Nicomedia, Nicaea and Ephesus. When Basil I sent a delegation to Tephrike in 869, aiming at a peace treaty, Chrysocheir claimed the entire Asia Minor to be subjected to him.
2. C. Foss, "Late Antique and Byzantine Ankara", *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 31 (1977), p. 80, reports that the Paulicians captured Ankyra. However, this is not confirmed by any source.
3. Hild, F. – Restle, M., *Kappadokien (Kappadokia, Charsianon, Sebasteia und Lykandos)* (Tabula Imperii Byzantini 2, Wien 1981), p. 81.
4. According to Treadgold, W.T., *A History of the Byzantine State and Society* (Stanford 1997), p. 457, the emperor sent Christopher to confront the Paulicians because he did not want to run the risk of a second unsuccessful campaign against them.
5. From this point on, the account of the events by the Byzantine sources is full of contradictions; here we are following the reconstruction proposed by Lemerle, P., "L'histoire des Pauliciens d'Asie Mineure d'après les sources grecques", *Travaux et Mémoires* 5 (1973), p.103. F. Hild and M. Restle, *Kappadokien (Kappadokia, Charsianon, Sebasteia und Lykandos)* (Tabula Imperii Byzantini 2, Wien 1981), p. 81, K. Belke, and M. Restle, *Galatien und Lykaonien* (Tabula Imperii Byzantini 4, Wien 1984), p. 68, and W.T. Treadgold, *A History of the Byzantine State and Society* (Stanford 1997), p. 457, agree with the above reconstruction. On the other hand, A.A. Vasiliev, *Byzance et les Arabes, 2: La dynastie macédonienne (867-959)* (Corpus Bruxellense Historiae Byzantinae 2/2, Bruxelles 1962), p. 34-35, reports that the *domestikos ton scholon* Christopher, after winning an important victory against the Paulicians, captured and destroyed their capital, Tephrike. The leader of the Paulicians, Chrysocheir, managed to escape, while Christopher continued to pursue him until they clashed at Vathys Ryax. This version seems to be adopted by G. Ostrogorsky, *Ιστορία του βυζαντινού κράτους* 2 (transl. in greek, Athens 1989), p. 113.
6. N.G. Garsoian, *The Paulician Heresy. A Study in the Origin and Development of Paulicianism in Armenia and the Eastern Provinces of the Byzantine Empire* (The Hague-Paris 1969), p. 39, 128, dates the fall of Tephrike and the death of Chrysocheir at Vathys Ryax to 878/9. See J. F. Haldon, *The Byzantine Wars* (Stroud 2001), p. 85, where he too dates the campaign of Chrysocheir and his defeat at Vathys Ryax to 878.
7. Already in 873 Basil I had campaigned to the east and captured Sozopetra (Zapetra) and Samosata (Arsamosata), without managing to capture Melitene, though, which was the prime target of his campaign. At the same time he successfully attacked several Paulician strongholds.
8. This chronology was proposed by Lemerle, P., "L'histoire des Pauliciens d'Asie Mineure d'après les sources grecques", *Travaux et Mémoires* 5 (1973), p. 108, and was followed by lots of contemporary scholars, such as F. Hild and H. Hellenkemper, *Kilikien und Isaurien* (Tabula Imperii Byzantini 5, Wien 1990), p. 51. K. Belke and M. Restle, *Galatien und Lykaonien* (Tabula Imperii Byzantini 4, Wien 1984), p. 68, also believe that Tephrike must have fallen to the Byzantines in 878. Earlier scholars, such as A.A. Vasiliev, *Byzance et les Arabes, 2: La dynastie macédonienne (867-959)* (Corpus Bruxellense Historiae Byzantinae 2/2, Bruxelles 1962), pp. 32-42, date the event to 872.
9. Treadgold, W. T., *A History of the Byzantine State and Society* (Stanford 1997), p. 458.



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Glossary :

	domestikos ton scholon
Commander of the regiment of <i>scholae</i> . The first officer with this title appears in 767/8. In the 10th C the <i>domestikos</i> became very powerful among the army of the <i>themata</i> ; in mid-10th C the office was divided in two, <i>domestikoi ton scholon</i> of the East and those of the West, commanders in chief of the eastern and the western provinces' army respectively.	
	emir
(from Arabic <i>amir</i>) Emir meaning "commander" or "general", later also "prince". Also a high title of nobility or office in some Turkic historical states.	
	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, <i>stratego</i> i were turned to simple commanders of military units, responsible for the defence of a region.	

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Quotations

The 872 campaign, according to accounts of that period:

«Δυσὶ δὲ χρόνοις παρελκυσθεῖσιν ὁ Χρυσόχειρ ἐξήλθεν σὺν τοῖς ἰδίῳι στρατεύμασι μέχρις Ἀγκύρας τῆς πόλεως καὶ αὐτῶν τῶν Κομμάτων, λαφυραγωγίαν ἑαυτῷ πολλὴν προσηκάμενος, καὶ ἐπάνεισιν. ὁ δὲ καθηγεμῶν τῶν σχολῶν διασηματίζων μίλιον ἐν τὴν παραδρομὴν ἐσκευάζετο· ἐδεδοίκε γὰρ πλησιοφανῆ τὴν παραδρομὴν παραδείκνυσθαι. ὁ δὲ Χρυσόχειρ κατηντηκῶς τῷ τοῦ Χαρσιανοῦ θέματι εἰς Ἀγρᾶνας ἐσκήνωται, εἰς τὸ Σίβορον δὲ ὁ δομέστικος· καὶ τοῖς στρατηγέταις τῶν τε Ἀρμενιακῶν καὶ τοῦ Χαρσιανοῦ προστέταχε διειπῶν· «ἄρατε τοὺς ὑπὸ χεῖρα τελοῦντας ὑμῶν ἄρχοντας καὶ καλλίπους τινὰς καὶ δαπάνας ὡς ἡμερῶν ἱβ', καὶ παρατρέχετε τὸν Χρυσόχειρα μέχρι τοῦ Βαθυρούακος· καὶ εἰ μὲν διαιρήσας λαὸν εὐπληκτον παραπέμψοι τῷ τῶν Ἀρμενιακῶν ἢ τῷ τοῦ Χαρσιανοῦ θέματι, κατάδηλον ἡμῖν τοῦτο ποιήσατε· ὅτε δὲ ἀποκινήσοι τοῦ Βαθυρούακος, ὑποστραφέντες ἦκετε πρὸς ἡμᾶς.» ἀπελθὼν τοῖνυν ἐσπέρας ὁ Χρυσόχειρ ἐσκήνωσεν κάτω, οἱ δὲ στρατηλάται εἰς τὸν ζυγὸν προσανέβησαν καὶ ἠλόισθησαν εἰς τινα τόπον κατονομαζόμενον Ζωγολόηον· οὗτος γάρ ἐστιν ἐκ πετρώδους συμπήξεως δυσανάβατος, ἐν ᾧ ὕλη πολὺ δένδρος πέφυκεν. τῶν οὖν εἰρημένων στρατηλατῶν ἐκέῖσε διαναπαυσαμένων φιλονεικία τις ἀνέκυψεν ἀνδρική τῶν ἀρχόντων ἀλλήλοις ἀντεριζόντων, τίνες ἂν εἴεν κρείττους, πότερον οἱ ἀπὸ τοῦ τῶν Ἀρμενιακῶν θέματος ἢ τοῦ Χαρσιανοῦ ὠρμημένοι. τῶν οὖν Χαρσιανιτῶν φιλονεικούντων τὰ πρεσβεία ἑαυτοῖς τῆς ἀνδρείας ἐπιδοῦναι ἢ τοῖς ἐτέροις, οἱ Ἀρμενιακοὶ εἶπον πρὸς αὐτούς· «τί φιλονεικεῖν ἔτι περὶ ἀνδρείας ἐκ λόγων βουλόμεθα; πρακτικῶς τοῖς πολεμίοις παρεμβάλωμεν ἄμφω· καὶ τότε φανερωθεῖ ἕκαστος ἡμῶν, ὁποῖος ἐτέρου καθέστηκεν ἀνδρειότερος.» οἱ δὲ στρατηγέταις διακηκότες περὶ τῆς ἀμίλλης αὐτῶν, δι' αὐτῶν δὲ καὶ τῆς τοῦ λαοῦ προθυμίας συνενδοκοῦσης αὐτοῖς, ἤγαγον καὶ εἰρήκεσαν· «προθυμεῖσθε, ὦ ἄνδρες ἀνθάμιλλοι, ἵνα τοῖς πολεμίοις, θεοῦ συνεργούντος, προσβάλωμεν;» πρὸς οὓς γενναιοφρόνως ἐξεῖπον· «ναί. καὶ διὰ τοῦτο ὄρκω μεγίστῳ τῆς βασιλικῆς κεφαλῆς περιδεσμοῦμεν ὑμᾶς, ὅπως συμπλακῶμεν αὐτοῖς. ὁ γὰρ τόπος ἐν ᾧ ἐρηρῆσμεθα, τῶν ἐχυρωτάτων· ἐξ οὗ εἶπερ τι κατ' αὐτῶν γενναῖον καταπραξαίμεθα, τοῦτο ἡμῖν ἐστὶν εἰς τρόπαιον· εἰ δὲ μή, κατ' οὐδὲν παρ' αὐτῶν πημανθείμεν.» τότε δὴ, τότε οἱ δύο στρατηγέταις διεῖλον ἄνδρας μέχρι ἑκτῆς ἑκατοντάδος, τοὺς δὲ λοιποὺς παρήκαν ἐν ταῖς σκηναῖς τῶν ἀρχηγῶν αὐτῶν σὺν φλαμμούλοις, καὶ τούτοις διησφαλίσαντο ἐπειπόντες· «ἡμεῖς μὲν τῷ φοσσάτῳ παρεμπελάσομεν ἐπιτρέχοντες, καὶ ὅταν τὴν ἀφίξιν πρὸς ἡμᾶς ἀπευθύνωσι, παρεμβалоῦμεν αὐτοῖς· καὶ εἰ μὲν ὀρμήσουσι κατέναντι ἡμῶν, ἐξέλθετε ἀντικρυς καὶ μεγάλως κεκράξατε, πλείστου λαοῦ βοὴν ἐνημαίνοντες, ὅπως ἐκ ταύτης εἰκάσειαν τὸν τῶν σχολῶν ἐξηγούμενον μετὰ τῶν θεμάτων ἐφειστηκέναι.» τῇ οὖν ὑφηγησεί ταύτῃ κεκνηκότων τῶν στρατηγῶν καὶ παρεμπεπωκότων ἐκ τοῦ σύνεγγυς τοῖς ἐχθροῖς πρὸ τοῦ τὴν ἡμέραν τρανῶς ἐπιλάμψαι τοῖς τῶν τυμπάνων κρούμασιν ἐπέκίνησαν· ἀλλ' οἱ μὲν αὐτῶν μετὰ τοῦ Χρυσόχειρος, οἱ δὲ τὰ φορτία τοῖς ὑποζυγίοις ἐκούφιζον. τούτων οὕτως μεριζομένων οἱ



στρατηγείται σὺν τοῖς ὑπ' αὐτοὺς ἄρχουσιν ἐπέθεντο κατ' αὐτῶν, καὶ φωνῆ βριαρᾶ· «σταυρὸς νενίκηκεν» οἷον πολεμικῶς ἐτυμπάνισαν. οὗτοι δὲ τῆ ἀθρόα προσβολῇ καταπτήξαντες ἀμεταστρεπτὶ τῆς φυγῆς εἶχοντο, μὴδὲ ὄραν καὶ πολυπραγμανεῖν ἀνεχόμενοι, τίνες διώκται τούτων ὑπάρχουσιν, ἀπὸ τοῦ Βαθυρῦακος διωκόμενοι ἐπὶ μιλίοις λ' ἕως τοῦ κατωνομασμένου Κωνσταντίνου βουνοῦ, χαλεπῶς συγκοπτόμενοι. Καὶ ὁ Χρυσόχειρ ὀλίγους τινὰς μεθ' ἑαυτοῦ προσλαβόμενος φυγαδεῖαν ἠσπάσατο. ἐπιφθάνει τοίνυν αὐτὸν ὁ Πουλλάδης, ᾧ τοῦτο παρῆν ὄνομα περιβόητον, πῖλον ἐνδεδυμένος· προεκεκράτητο δὲ κατὰ Τεφρικὴν καὶ κατὰ χαριεντισμὸν τῷ Χρυσόχειρι προσφικεῖτο. ὡς οὖν ἐωράκει τοῦτον, ἐπέγνων καὶ ἐκεκράγει διαπρυσίως· «ᾧδε οἱ στρατηγείται, ᾧδε ὁ τῶν σχολῶν ἐξηγούμενος ἴτω.» ἄπεισιν ὁ Χρυσόχειρ, καὶ πρὸς τὸν Πουλλάδην ἐφώνησεν· «ἄθλιε ᾧ Πουλλάδη, τί σοι φαῦλον ἐνεδειξάμην; μᾶλλον μέντοι γε πλείστα σοι χρηστὰ εἰργασάμην. ἀπελθε, καὶ μὴ μοι πρόσκομμα εἶης.» ὁ δὲ ἀντέφη αὐτῷ· «ἐγὼ γινώσκω, Χρυσόχειρ, ὅτι πλείστα καλὰ μοι πεποίηκας, καὶ ευελπιστῶ τῷ σωτηρί μου θεῷ κατ' αὐτὴν γε τὴν ἡμέραν ἀποδοῦναί σοι τὰ χαριστήρια.» ἰπτάζων δὲ ὁ Χρυσόχειρ εὐρίσκει τάφρον πρὸς τοῖς ἐνωπίοις αὐτοῦ, ἦν ὁ ἵππος αὐτοῦ ὑπερπηδᾶν <ἀπεδειλία καὶ ἐκ> τούτου διώκλαζεν. ὅθεν ὁ μὲν Χρυσόχειρ τοῦ λοιποῦ ὄραν τὸν Πουλλάδην οὐδ' ὄλους ἐφρόντιζεν, ἕωρα δὲ μᾶλλον κατέναντι αὐτοῦ, ἵνα μὴ τῷ τῆς τάφρου περιπέσειεν πτώματι· καὶ λαθραῖως αὐτὸν ὁ Πουλλάδης κατὰ τὴν μασχάλην τιτρώσκει κοντῷ· οὐ τῆ πληγῇ ταραχθέντος ὁ ἵππος παρέσφηλέν τε καὶ αὐτὸν ἀπεκρήμνισεν. καταβάς οὖν ὁ τῶν πρὸς θεραπείαν αὐτοῦ οικειότατος, ᾧ Διακονίτζης τὸ φημιζόμενον (ὃν Λέων ὁ ἀοιδίμος βασιλεὺς ἀλλοιωθέντα τὴν πρὸς τὸ κρεῖττον ἀλλοίωσιν ἐκ τῆς μυσαρᾶς θρησκείας τῶν Παυλιανιστῶν, προεχειρίσατο μηνσουράτωρα, ὅπερ φωνῆ Ῥωμαίων οὕτω προσαγορεύεται) καὶ τούτου τὴν κεφαλὴν βαστάξας ἠξίωσε κομιδῆς ταύτην ἐνθεῖς τοῖς αὐτοῦ γόνασιν· ὃν εὐρηκότες οἱ στρατηλάται κατέσχον καὶ διατεμόντες αὐτὴν σπουδαίως τῷ θεοστέπτῳ ἄνακτι Βασιλείῳ ὡς δῶρον ἀνέπεμψαν."

Joseph Genesius, ed. Lesmüller-Werner, A. – Thurn, I., *Josephi Genesisii Regum Libri Quattuor* (CFHB 14, Berlin 1978), p. 86.85 - 88.65.

Skylitzes recounts the 872 Paulician campaign:

"Τῷ δ' ἐπιόντι χρόνῳ τοῦ τῶν Μανιχαίων ἐξηγουμένου Χρυσόχειρος εἰς τὴν τῶν Ῥωμαίων ἐμβαλόντος βαρεῖ στρατῷ καὶ ταύτην ληϊζομένου ἀποστέλλει κατ' αὐτοῦ συνήθως ὁ βασιλεὺς τὸν τῶν σχολῶν ἐξηγούμενον. οὗτος δὲ πάντα τὸν Ῥωμαϊκὸν στρατὸν συμπαρειληφώς, ἐπειδὴ σταδαῖα μάχη κρίναι τὸ πᾶν ἐδειλία, παρείπετο τέως αὐτῷ ἀπὸ τίνος διαστήματος καὶ τὰς μερικὰς ἀνεῖργε καταδρομὰς καὶ οὐ συνεχῶρει κατὰ τῆς χώρας ἀδεῶς διασκιδνασθαι. ὡς οὖν τὰ μὲν δρών, τὰ δὲ ἀπρακτῶν ὁ βάρβαρος ἦδη καὶ τῆς πρὸς τὰ οἴκοι ἐπανόδου ἐμέμνητο, καὶ μετὰ λείας συχνῆς ὑπέστρεψεν, ὁ δομέστικος τῶν σχολῶν δύο τῶν στρατηγῶν ἀφώρισε, τὸν τε τοῦ Χαρσιανοῦ καὶ τῶν Ἀρμενικῶν, μετὰ τῆς περὶ αὐτὸν δυνάμεως ἕκαστον συμπαρομαρτεῖν τῷ Χρυσόχειρι ἄχρι τοῦ λεγομένου Βαθυρῦακος, κάκειθεν εἰ μὲν ἐπαφήσει, φησί, κατὰ τῶν Ῥωμαϊκῶν ὁρίων στρατὸν, δηλα θέσθαι αὐτῷ τὰ περὶ τούτου, εἰ δ' οἴκαδε ἀμεταστρεπτὶ βαδίσειεν, ἐάσαντας τοῦτον αὐθις ἐπανελθεῖν πρὸς αὐτόν. ἐσπέρας οὖν καταλαβούσης, καὶ τοῦ βαρβαρικοῦ στρατεύματος γεγονότος κατὰ τὸν Βαθυρῦακα αὐλισαμένου τε κατὰ τὴν τοῦ ὄρους ὑπώρειαν, τῶν δὲ εἰρημένων στρατηγῶν κατασχόντων τὰ τούτου μετεωρότερα καὶ τὸ μέλλον ἀποσκοπούντων, ἐμπίπτει τις ἕξις περὶ πρωτείων καὶ ἄμλλα τοῖς τῶν δύο θεμάτων στρατιώταις. οἱ μὲν γὰρ τοῦ Χαρσιανοῦ ἑαυτοῖς τὰ τῆς ἀνδρείας ἐνίσταντο ἀρμόζειν πρωτεία, ἐμπαλιν δὲ ἑαυτοῖς οἱ Ἀρμενικοὶ. ὡς οὖν ἐπὶ πλείστον ἐχώρει τὰ τῆς φιλονεικίας καὶ πρὸς τὸ μέγαλαυχον ἐκάτερον ἐρρεπε τῶν ταγμάτων, ἐνταῦθα δὴ λέγεται παρὰ τινος λεχθῆναι τοῦ τῶν Ἀρμενικῶν συστήματος, ὡς «ἵνα τί μάτην, ᾧ συστρατιώται, ἀπρεπῶς θρασυνομέθα, ἐξὸν τοῖς ἔργοις ἀναμφισβήτητον ἀρετὴν ἐπιδείξασθαι· οἱ πολέμοι γὰρ οὐ μακράν, καὶ ἔξοστιν ἐπὶ τῶν ἔργων φανῆναι τοὺς ἀριστεῖς.» τοὺς τοιοῦτους τοίνυν λόγους διενωτισθέντες οἱ στρατηγοὶ καὶ τὴν πρὸς ἀνδρείαν ὁρμὴν κατανοήσαντες τοῦ λαοῦ, καταμαθόντες δὲ καὶ τὴν ἀπὸ τοῦ τόπου βοήθειαν, ὅτι ἐξ ὑπερδεξίων μέλλουσιν ἐπιτίθεσθαι τοῖς πολεμίοις ἐν κοίλῳ κειμένοις τόπῳ, διχῆ διαιροῦσι τὴν δύναμιν. καὶ τὸ μὲν ἕκκριτον ταύτης ἄχρις ἔξακοσίων μετ' αὐτῶν γε τῶν στρατηγῶν προσβαλεῖν ἐκρίθη τῷ τῶν βαρβάρων στρατῷ. τὸ δὲ λοιπὸν καὶ εὐαρίθμητον τῆς Ῥωμαϊκῆς στρατιᾶς εἰς δόκησιν πλήθους αὐτοῦ που συσκευάσαντες πρὸς τὰ μετέωρα καὶ σύνθημα δόντες, ἴν' ὅταν οὗτοι προσβάλωσι τοῖς ἐχθροῖς, κάκειον σὺν ἀλαλαγμῷ μεγίστῳ καὶ σάλπιγγιν ἐκπληκτικὴν βοὴν ἀναρρήξωσι, συνεπηχούντων καὶ τῶν ὀρέων, καὶ οὕτως ἀφανῶς διὰ τῆς νυκτὸς τῆ στρατοπεδεία τῶν ἐχθρῶν πλησιάζωσι. καὶ τοιοῦτου δοθέντος συνθήματος, οὕτω τοῦ ἡλίου τὰς ἀκρωρείας αὐγάζοντος, βοὴ στιβαρᾶ παιανίσαντες καὶ τὸ «σταυρὸς νενίκηκε» συμβοήσαντες ἐπιτίθενται τοῖς ἐχθροῖς, συνεπαλαλαξάντων ἀπὸ τοῦ ὄρους καὶ τῶν λοιπῶν. εὐθύς οὖν οἱ βάρβαροι τῷ ἀνελπίστῳ καταπλαγέντες καὶ μήτε συστήναι, μήτε τὸ ἐπιὸν πλῆθος, ὅσον ἐστὶ, λαβόντες καιρὸν κατιδεῖν, μήτ' ἄλλο τι σωτήριον ἑαυτοῖς ἐκ τοῦ παραρηγῆμα βουλευσασθαι, ὠρμησαν πρὸς φυγὴν. τῶν οὖν διωκόντων Ῥωμαίων καὶ τοὺς μὴ συνόντας ἐπιβωμένων στρατηγούς καὶ τὰ τάγματα καὶ τὸν τῶν σχολῶν ἀφηγούμενον, καθάπερ αὐτοῖς συνετέτακτο, καὶ τῶν φευγόντων εἰς πλείονα συνελαυνομένων φόβον καὶ ταραχὴν, συνέβη μέχρι μιλίων τριακόνα γενέσθαι τὴν δίωξιν καὶ τὸν μεταξὺ χρόνον ἀπείροις καταστρωθῆναι νεκροῖς. τότε δὴ καὶ ὁ ἀναιδῆς Χρυσόχειρ σὺν ὀλίγοις φεύγων τῶν μετ' αὐτοῦ, ἐπεὶ καταδιώκειν ἔγνω Ῥωμαίων τινα Πουλλάδην τὴν προσηγορίαν, ὃν αἰχμάλωτον ἔλαβέ ποτε κατὰ τὴν Τεφρικὴν καὶ διὰ ἀστεῖσμὸν καὶ χάριτα καὶ συνήθη εἶχε καὶ γνώριμον, θεασάμενος αὐτὸν καὶ γνωρίσας, ἐπιστραφεῖς· «τί σοι», φησίν, «ᾧ ἄθλιε, διεπραξάμην, Πουλλάδη, κακόν, ὅτι με οὕτω καταδιώκεις μανιωδῶς ἐπιθυμῶν ἀνελεῖν;» ὁ δὲ συντόμως



ύπολαβόν· «τῶν εὐεργεσιῶν σου, πάτρων, τὴν ἀμοιβήν», ἔφη, «ἀποδοῦναί σοι κατὰ τὴν παροῦσαν ἡμέραν πεποιθώς εἰμι ἐν θεῶ·» ὁ μὲν οὖν προΐει οἷά τις ἐμβρόντητος καὶ βεβλαμένος τὰς φρένας, ὁ δὲ ἐφείπετο μετ' εὐτολμίας νεανικῆς. τάφρω δὲ βαθείᾳ ὁ διωκόμενος ἐντυχῶν καὶ ὑπερρηδῆσαι ταύτην τὸν ἵππον μὴ συγχωρῶν βάλλεται κατόπιν παρὰ τοῦ Πουλάδῃ φθάσαντος κοντῶ κατὰ τῆς πλευρᾶς. καὶ ὁ μὲν εὐθέως περιδινθεὶς τῶ ἀλγήματι κατερρῦη τοῦ ἵππου, τῶν δὲ σὺν αὐτῶ τις (Διακονίτζης τούτῳ ἦν τὸ ἐπώνυμον) τοῦ ἵππου ῥίψας ἑαυτὸν ἐπιμελείας ἡξίου τὸν πεσόντα, τοῖς τε οἰκείοις γόνασι τὴν ἐκείνου κεφαλὴν ἐπιθεὶς καὶ τὸ συμβὰν ὀδυρόμενος. ἐν τοσοῦτῳ δὲ προσγίνονται τῶ Πουλάδῃ καὶ ἕτεροι, καὶ καταλλόμενοι τῶν ἵππων τὴν τοῦ Χρυσόχειρος ἀποτέμνουσι κεφαλὴν ἤδη θανατῶντος καὶ ἐκλιμπάνοντος. δεσμοῦσι δὲ καὶ τὸν Διακονίτζην καὶ τοῖς ἄλλοις αἰχμαλώτοις συγκαταλέγουσιν. εὐθύς οὖν εὐαγγέλια πρὸς τὸν βασιλέα ἐκπέμπονται, μεθ' ὧν ἦν καὶ ἡ τοῦ Χρυσόχειρος κεφαλὴ. πεσόντος οὖν τοῦ Χρυσόχειρος συναπεμαράνθη πᾶσα ἡ ἀνθοῦσα τῆς Τεφρικῆς εὐανδρία. καὶ τὰ μὲν κατὰ τὴν Τεφρικὴν τοιοῦτον ἔσχε τὸ τέλος, καὶ ἐν ᾧρα μιᾷ ἢ ἐπὶ μεῖζον δόξης ἀρθεῖσα ὕψος τῶν Μανιχαίων πληθὺς ὥσει καπνὸς διελύθη."

John Skylitzes, ed. Thurn, I., *Ioannis Scylitzae Synopsis Historiarum* (CFHB 5, Berlin-New York 1973), p. 138.65 - 140.40.