

A Provincial Aristocratic *Oikos* in Eleventh-Century Byzantium

Koichi Inoue

RECENT BYZANTINE STUDIES have taken an increasing interest in family and household. The primary aim of this article is to examine the *oikos* of provincial aristocrats in the eleventh century, as described in Part Three of the *Strategikon* of Kekaumenos (ca 1070); these *oikoi*, I shall argue, provided the foundation of their owners' power and self-confidence during the military rebellions typical of this period.¹ To illustrate this situation, and to provide some background for our subsequent discussion, we begin with a glance at the revolt of Isaak Komnenos.²

I

In June 1057 a group of military aristocrats in Asia Minor, dissatisfied with the anti-military policy of Michael VI (1056–1057), proclaimed Isaak as emperor, advanced towards Constantinople, and defeated the imperial army near Nicomedeia. Sending delegates to the rebel camp, Michael VI offered Isaak the rank of *Caesar* and adoption as an heir to the throne. Isaak finally consented to put an end to the revolt, but many of his fellow rebels opposed this agreement, arguing that Isaak had already been invested with imperial power.³ Katakalon

¹ On the Byzantine *oikos* see P. Magdalino, "The Byzantine Aristocratic Oikos," in M. Angold, ed., *The Byzantine Aristocracy, IX to XIII Centuries* (Oxford 1984) 92–111; cf. the symposium on "The Byzantine Family and Household" at Dumbarton Oaks, 5–7 May 1989.

² See S. A. Kamer, *Emperors and Aristocrats in Byzantium 976–1081* (diss. Harvard 1983) 310–33; M. Angold, *The Byzantine Empire, 1025–1204* (London 1984) 48–52.

³ Psellos, one of the delegates, tells Isaak: "Honor your father [Michael VI] in his old age, and you will inherit the throne by legal means" (Michael Psellos, *Chronographie*, ed. E. Renauld [Paris 1926–28] II 101; on the opposition see II 99).

Kekaumenos, for example, a celebrated general and one of the most prominent participants in the revolt, offered strong objections on the grounds that the rebels had already proclaimed Michael's abdication.⁴ It is clear that many participants in the rebellion assumed the right to depose an undesirable emperor and to raise a new one.

Such confidence depended upon independent military power. After his accession as emperor, Isaak I Komnenos (1057–1059) minted a new coin type portraying himself holding a sword. A chronicler expresses embarrassment: "Soon after the accession he had himself depicted with a drawn sword on golden coins. He did not think that he owed everything to God, but to his own power and military experience."⁵

In accounting for the military power of these aristocrats, we find that most of them—commanders or ex-commanders of the imperial troops stationed in the provinces—also had private armies: Katakalon Kekaumenos joined Isaak's rebellion with "his own [army]" as well as two Roman *tagmata* (Skylitzes 491). The frequent references to the private soldiers of the military aristocrats in the descriptions of provincial uprisings during this period indicate that they could now afford to maintain their own military retinues.⁶ They did this, first of all, by taking advantage of their command of imperial provincial troops—a post not only providing substantial income, but also affording the opportunity to convert some forces under their command into a personal retinue.⁷ This does not, however, fully explain the situation, for aristocrats did not acquire private armies large enough to affect the imperial throne until the eleventh century, or the latter half of the tenth at the earliest. A further explanation may be found in the social and economic power of these aristocrats in provincial society.

It is well known that in the mediæval West, aristocrats had

⁴ John Skylitzes, *Synopsis Historiarum*, ed. J. Thurn (Berlin 1973) 497.

⁵ John Skylitzes *Continuatus*, 'Η συνεχεία τῆς Χρονογραφίας, ed. E. Tsolakis (Thessaloniki 1968) 103; on the coin see P. Grierson, *Byzantine Coins* (London 1982) no. 919. Rebels proclaimed Leon Tornikios emperor in 1047 by raising him on a shield—the first use of this method since 602: Psellos II 18.

⁶ Cf. G. G. Litavrin, "Byl li Kekavmen, avtor 'Strategikona', feodalom?" *Vizantijskie Očerki* (Moscow 1962) 236ff; G. Ostrogorsky, "Observations on the Aristocracy in Byzantium," *DOP* 25 (1971) 12–15.

⁷ Constantine VII (913–959) had already prohibited *strategoï* from using soldiers for private ends: I. and P. Zepos, *Ius Graeco-Romanum* (Athens 1931) I 205f; cf. H. G. Ahrweiler, "Recherches sur l'administration de l'empire byzantin aux IX^e–XI^e siècles," *BCH* 84 (1960) 44f.

their own *domus*, an independent microcosm exempted from any intervention, even that of the king. Hence the Western feudal relationship between lord and vassal was a kind of bilateral contract. Both lords and vassals were masters of their respective households, standing in this regard on the same footing, although differing in size. In mediaeval Japan, usually said to have developed a feudalism similar to that of the West, military aristocrats also had their own household, a mansion and country estate controlling many servants and dependent peasants.⁸ Contemporary sources refer to their *ihe* ('house'), their mansion, estate, family, and followers. Most Japanese military aristocrats, like their Western counterparts, drew their family name from the place of their estate, thus indicating the importance of their 'house'. These 'houses' provided Japanese military aristocrats of the twelfth century with a basis for challenging the authority of the ancient centralized state and forming their own military government.

In eleventh-century Byzantium we find the development of a similar aristocratic *oikos*, from which aristocrats could revolt against the imperial government. Family names, drawn from toponyms (as in contemporary Western Europe and Japan) and common from the tenth century, indicate the emergence of hereditary nobles and their households.⁹ As a tenth-century commentary on the *Basilika* attests, "One's house (*oikos*) is his own castle"¹⁰—a parallel to the Western mediaeval legal proverb *domus sua pro munitione habetur*.

Several references to aristocratic households occur in eleventh-century chronicles. Constantine Dalassenos, one of the most prominent aristocrats of the age, was living "in his *oikos* in the theme of the Armeniakon as a private man" (Skylitzes 373). In 1034 he was summoned to the capital by the new emperor Michael IV (1034–1041), whose accession he had openly opposed. The emperor gave him the title *anthypatos* and demanded his residence in the capital. While under virtual detention there, the emperor arrested his relatives and friends

⁸ On the household of Japanese military aristocrats see S. Ishii, *Chusei Bushidan [Warrior Groups in Mediæval Japan]* (Toyko 1974).

⁹ A. P. Kazhdan, "Ob aristokratizácii vizantijskogo obščestva VIII–XII vv.," *Zbornik radova Vizantološkog instituta* 11 (1968) 47–53; E. Patlagean, "Les débuts d'une aristocratie byzantine et le témoignage de l'historiographie: système des noms et liens de parenté aux IX^e–X^e siècles," in *Angold (supra n.1)* 23–42.

¹⁰ Zepos (*supra n.7*) V 323; cf. Magdalino (*supra n.1*) 92.

and confiscated their properties.¹¹ This episode reveals that the *oikos* was the basis of the aristocrat's opposition and that the emperor, regarding him as *capax imperii*, tried to destroy his *oikos*. Further, participants in the rebellion of Isaak Komnenos are said to have gathered at his *oikos* in Kastamon (Skylitzes 489).

Unfortunately no information survives about the households of Dalassenos or of Isaak Komnenos. According to Zonaras (III 766 Büttner-Wobst), Alexios I Komnenos (1081–1118) regarded the Empire as his own *oikos*. Zonaras' usage may be metaphorical, but at the same time we may suppose that the management of aristocratic households was evolving into something like a state administration, for Zonaras subsequently says that some imperial families were surrounded by servants appropriate for an emperor.¹² It is likely that Alexios Komnenos, a leading military aristocrat, applied the method of managing his household to state administration despite the scanty evidence about his household.

Yet even such fragmentary details allow us to surmise that the *oikos* must have played a distinct rôle in the political and economic life in eleventh-century Byzantium. A. Kazhdan argues that the microstructures of Byzantine society (family, lineage, village community, guild, monastery, and town community)¹³ were—with the exception of the narrow circle of the nuclear family—loose and weak, providing fertile soil for the growth of the imperial autocracy. But as we have indicated, the Byzantines had, at least in the eleventh century, another small social grouping or unit, which was not a nuclear family but an extended or fictitious family, including slaves, servants, and other dependents. It remains to indicate how this *oikos* served as a driving force behind aristocratic resistance to the imperial autocracy.

¹¹ Skylitzes 393f, 404; cf. Michael Attaleiates, *Historia*, ed I. Bekker (Bonn 1853) 11. On the Dalassenos family cf. N. Adontz, *Études arméno-byzantines* (Lisbon 1965) 163–67; A. P. Kazhdan, *Armjane v sostave gospodstvujuscego klassa Vizantijskoj imperii v XI–XII vv.* (Erevan 1975) 92–97; J.-C. Cheynet and J.-C. Vannier, *Études prosopographiques* (Paris 1986) 75–122.

¹² Zonaras, III 767 B-W. Cf. *Actes de Lavra*, edd. P. Lemerle, A. Guillou, and N. Svoronos (Paris 1970) I no.46.49: *ton anthropon* of Adrian Komnenos; F. Dölger, *Aus dem Schatzkammer des heiligen Berges* (Munich 1948) no. 14 line 14: *hoi pronoetai* of Isaak Komnenos.

¹³ A. Kazhdan, "Small Social Groupings (Microstructures) in Byzantine Society," *XVI. Internationaler Byzantinistenkongress, Akten* II.2 (=JÖBG 32.2 [1982]) 3–11.

II

The best-known *oikos* is probably that of Mangana, originally a private *oikos* converted into an imperial financial department in the age of Basil I (867–886).¹⁴ The term *oikos* (rather than *sekretion*) for this financial department reflects its private origin. In the eleventh century the *oikos* of Mangana increased its estates and developed into a large complex including a palace, monastery, church, and law school. Besides the enlargement of Mangana, the period saw the foundation of new imperial *oikoi*, mostly *euageis oikoi* (sacred houses), *i.e.* monastic and philanthropic foundations.¹⁵ Zonaras' note on Alexios I and the frequent granting of imperial *oikoi* to private persons imply that private or aristocratic *oikoi*, similar to the imperial ones, also developed in the eleventh century. In 1077 Michael Attaleiates, a judge and historian, contributed a large part of his household to establish a monastery with a poorhouse, thereby intending to make his household permanent. His *typikon* (or foundation document), though tinged with religious color, offers a glimpse of his *oikos* and is therefore valuable evidence.¹⁶

Even more significant testimony for private and secular households in this period may be found in the *Strategikon*, written in the 1070's by a certain Kekaumenos, a retired military commander.¹⁷ My examination will focus on two issues: the specific features of Kekaumenos' *oikos*, especially its economic and military aspects; and the relations between the *oikos* and its external environment, *i.e.*, the local community and the State. Some preliminaries regarding the *Strategikon* and its author will be useful.

¹⁴ P. Lemerle, *Cinq études sur le XI^e siècle byzantin* (Paris 1977) 273–83; N. Oikonomides, "St. George of Mangana, Maria Skleraina and the 'Malyj' of Novgorod," *DOP* 34–35 (1980–81) 239–46; W. Treadgold, "The Bulgars' Treaty with the Byzantines in 816," *RivBizSlav* 4 (1986) 216 (inaccessible to me), *cf.* his *The Byzantine Revival 780–842* (Stanford 1988) 199f, 342; E. Malamut, "Nouvelle hypothèse sur l'origine de la maison impériale des Manganes," in B. Kremnydas *et al.*, edd., *Αφιέρωμα στον Νίκο Σβορώνο* (Athens 1986) I 127–34.

¹⁵ N. Oikonomides, "L'évolution de l'organisation administrative de l'Empire byzantin au XI^e siècle (1025–1118)," *TravMém* 6 (1976) 138–41.

¹⁶ P. Gautier, "La diataxis de Michel Attaliat," *REByz* 39 (1983) 5–143; Lemerle (*supra* n.14) 65–112.

¹⁷ I shall quote the text from the edition of G. G. Litavrin, *Sovety i rasskazy Kekavmena* (Moscow 1972), superseding that of B. G. Wassiliewsky and V. Jernstedt, *Cecaumeni Strategicon et incerti scriptoris De officiis regii libellus* (St Petersburg 1896); *cf.* F. Tinnefeld's review in *Byzantina* 6 (1974) 438–51. See also K. Inoue, "The Strategikon of Kekaumenos I," *Jinbunkenkyu* (Osaka City University) 38.13 (1986) 34–46 (in Japanese).

Of the several Kekaumenoi in eleventh-century chronicles and seals, the celebrated military commander Katakalon Kekau-
 menos is sometimes regarded as the author of the *Strategikon*.¹⁸ Our knowledge of the author derives exclusively from his work, and his relation to other Kekaumenoi (including Katakalon) cannot be ascertained. Inconsistencies in his writings create further uncertainties. Five of the six known relatives of the author, whose official posts are definite or probable, held military commands and perhaps two had civil posts. Twenty-one of the author's twenty-six anecdotes treat military affairs, and he gives few accounts of Constantinople.¹⁹ Hence the inference, confirmed by the manuscript tradition,²⁰ that the author's family belonged to the provincial military aristocracy and that the *Strategikon* reflects its mentality.²¹ Although only one manuscript of the work survives (*Mosquensis Synodalis* gr. 436), circulation of the *Strategikon* among the military nobility appears probable from several transcriptions of the work by those interested in military affairs.

The *Strategikon* is usually divided into six parts: (1) advice to civil bureaucrats, (2) advice to military commanders, (3) advice to those in private life, (4) advice in case of insurgency, (5) advice to emperors, and (6) advice to *toparchai*. Since the narrative (except for Part Five, sometimes mistaken for an independent work) takes the form of a father's advice to his sons, it is better to think of the work as a 'A Guidebook for Aristocrats' rather than as a 'Strategikon'.²²

¹⁸ G. Buckler, "Authorship of the *Strategikon* of Cecaumenus," *BZ* 36 (1936) 7–26, and "Can Cecaumenus Be the Author of the *Strategikon*?" *Byzantion* 13 (1938) 139ff, insists that the author is Katakalon. On the Kekaumenos family see Kazhdan (*supra* n.11) 28–33; A. G. C. Savvides, "The Byzantine Family of Kekaumenos (Cecaumenus): Late 10th–Early 12th Century," *Diptycha* 4 (1986/7) 12–27.

¹⁹ John Maios, a cousin of the author and once a *strategos*, later became a tax collector: Kekaumenos 196.1–9. On the twenty-six anecdotes see P. Lemerle, *Prolégomènes à une édition critique et commentée des 'Conseils et Récits' de Kékauménos* (Brussels 1960) 56–77.

²⁰ B. L. Fonkič, "O rukopisi 'Strategikona' Kekavmena," *VizVrem* 31 (1971) 108–20; Kekaumenos 11–32. In my view (*supra* n.17: 27–33) the *Strategikon* was transcribed more often than Russian scholars suppose.

²¹ Kekaumenos 57–61. Kazhdan, however, regards the Kekaumenoi as a family transformed from the military to the civil aristocracy: *Sočial'nyj sostav gospodstvujuščego klasse v Vizantii XI–XII vv.* (Moscow 1974) 160, 179, and *VizVrem* 36 (1974) 154–67, esp. 163 (a critical note on Litavrin's edition).

²² See H.-G. Beck, *Vademecum des byzantinischen Aristokraten*² (Graz 1964); Lemerle (*supra* n.19).

My chief concern is Part Three, which opens as follows (188.20–25):

If you are living a private life in your *oikos* and do not hold any official posts, devote yourself to household work, by which your *oikos* may be maintained well. Never neglect the household work, for you have no sources of income better than the cultivation of land. Provide sources of income for yourself from water-mills, workshops, orchards, and all the things that bring annual income by rent or products.

In Kekaumenos' opinion a man's private life should rest upon his *oikos*, and by managing the household properly he can maintain a pleasant life even without holding an official post. As Part Three relates Kekaumenos' advice on private life, it belongs to the genre of *oikonomika*, a type of didactic literature on managing one's household that flourished from ancient Greece to the early modern age. Kekaumenos often quotes the apocryphal Book of Sirach, another example of a father's advice to his son. Part Three of the *Strategikon* also includes useful information on the provincial aristocratic *oikos* of the eleventh century.

The house in which Kekaumenos and his family lived constitutes the primary element of the *oikos*.²³ No detailed information about his house survives, except that it shared with other aristocratic mansions the practice of providing special rooms for women and guests.²⁴ Apparently his house did not match in size and luxury that of Andronikos Doukas,²⁵ a cousin of the emperor Michael VII Doukas (1071–1078), for he calls it simply an *oikia* without implying a larger construction. In contrast, he employs *oikesis* and *palation* for aristocratic mansions in Constantinople (204.9, 20). Hence the impression that the author belonged to the lesser nobility.

Another core element of Kekaumenos' *oikos* is the nuclear family. He takes it as a matter of course that grown-up sons build their own houses and become independent of their

²³ On Byzantine houses see G. L. de Beylié, *L'habitation byzantine* (Grenoble 1902) 53–98; Magdalino (*supra* n.1) 95f.

²⁴ Kekaumenos 202.17; for the *gynaikeion* (women's room) in the imperial palace cf. S. Runciman, "Women in Byzantine Aristocratic Society," in Angold (*supra* n.1) 13, 15.

²⁵ On Andronikos' mansion see M. Nystazopoulou-Pelekidou, ed., Βυζαντινὰ ἔγγραφα τῆς μονῆς Πάτμου (Athens 1980) II 9 (=P. Miklosich and M. Müller, edd., *Acta et Diplomata Graeca Medii Aevi* [Vienna 1860–90] VI 6); cf. G. Rouillard, *La vie rurale dans l'Empire byzantin* (Paris 1953) 130.

parents.²⁶ Kekaumenos' slight interest in genealogy does not go beyond his grandfathers, although he displays some degree of family consciousness in using ancestral documents and writing the *Strategikon* as a kind of family history.²⁷ When speaking of his family's reputation, he places greater emphasis on parents than upon the honor of distant ancestors (226.24f): "Try to glorify your parents with your virtuous deeds." Neighbors praising the Kekaumenoi also refer to his father (198.25f): "Your father was a man of justice." But Kekaumenos does not share the mentality of contemporary and later Byzantine aristocrats who take great pride in their noble birth and lineage.²⁸ He advises his sons not to forget relatives (208.22f, 222.32), but distant connections are not mentioned. His consciousness of his family is restricted both vertically and horizontally and therefore indicates a parvenu family whose *oikos* was still in a formative stage.

But the *oikos* extended beyond house and family (220.13–21):

First you have to take care of things indispensable to your *oikos*, and then things not so necessary.... Do not start building your house while you are poor [that is, stay in your parent's house].... You should rather plant vines and cultivate land, which will bring you a good harvest and allow you to lead an easy life. When you have enough surplus, begin to build [a house].

Since he regards cultivation of land as the most important part of household management, he recommends keeping an eye on farmland, orchards, water-mills, and workshops, and on breeding cattle, pigs, sheep, and other animals, to provide grain, wine, and meat. An *oikos* should be self-sufficient; like other household economists, Kekaumenos takes a negative attitude towards trade.²⁹

²⁶ Kekaumenos 220.17–21; a tenth-century fiscal treatise also tells us that sons built their own houses: F. Dölger, *Beiträge zur Geschichte der byzantinischen Finanzverwaltung* (Leipzig 1927) 115.28–33. On Kekaumenos' nuclear family see A. P. Kazhdan and A. Epstein, *Change in Byzantine Culture in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries* (Berkeley 1985) 99.

²⁷ On Kekaumenos' sources see G. Buckler, "Writings Familiar to Cecaumenus," *Byzantion* 15 (1940/1) 133–43; M. Gyóni, "L'œuvre de Kékauménos source de l'histoire roumaine," *Revue d'histoire comparée* N.S. 3 (1945) 152–67; Litavrin (*supra* n.17) 39–49.

²⁸ Kazhdan (*Sočial'nyj*, *supra* n.21) 53f; according to Attaleiates (218) Nikephoros Botaneiates had a genealogical table (probably counterfeit) of his family.

²⁹ Cf. Lemerle (*supra* n.19) 93; M. Hendy, *Studies in the Byzantine Monetary Economy c. 300–1450* (Cambridge 1985) 565ff.

Who cultivated the land? Although Kekaumenos (238.10f) tells the private person to cultivate land “by the sweat of your brow,” the *Strategikon* (unlike the ancient Greek *oikonomika*) says little about the practical side of agriculture. The biblical “by the sweat of your brow” is not reflected in Kekaumenos’ *oikos*, which includes besides his family many servants, designated δοῦλοι, οἰκέται, ὑπηρέται, οἱ ὑπηρετοῦνταί σου, οἱ ἄνθρωποί σου, ὁ λαός σου, and divided into free and slaves.³⁰ As Kekaumenos says, “Someone who loses expensive pearls or valuable sparkling jewels can find fine-looking ones and buy them. But one who loses his servants, servile and free, or reliable and respectable friends cannot find substitutes for them.”³¹

Kekaumenos maintained at least part of the slaves in his household. “If you are careless, then your servants will devour your crops and take your income for themselves. In a bad year, when the land begets no crops, you will become aware that you have neither grain nor other foods to nourish your servants” (190.5–9). These domestic slaves cultivated part of Kekaumenos’ land. The most important duty of the master of the house³² was to nourish and supervise them, and Kekaumenos repeatedly insists on the need for oversight.

Tenants, whom Kekaumenos calls “free servants,” farmed the rest of the land. They formed part of the household without being fully incorporated within it. If family and house represent the core of the *oikos*, free servants are its periphery. Unlike the domestic servants, they lead a relatively independent life with greater autonomy in managing their holdings. “You have to treat your free servants as courteously as you can. If those whom you endowed generously want to leave your household,

³⁰ Nikephoros Bryennios uses *oikos* no more than once; his phrase “all the *oikos*” includes the household servants (*Histoire*, ed. P. Gautier [Brussels 1975] 221.20).

³¹ 242.6–9. Kazhdan (*supra* n.26: 208) remarks on this passage that Kekaumenos’ φίλος designates a vassal, but I prefer the general meaning ‘friend’, as Kekaumenos’ vassals are a matter of dispute.

³² Kekaumenos does not use this phrase. The closest approximation may be οἰκοδεσπότης, found in contemporary documents, where it is applied to powerful farmers within a village (Arekleon and Paschalis: Lemerle *et al.* [*supra* n.12] I no.14.1) and once to a provincial administrator (Andreas Papadopoulos: no. 20.79, 82). In legal documents οἰκοδεσπότης is the Greek translation of *paterfamilias*, although Byzantine law did not recognize this concept. Therefore I shall use “master of the house” in the broader sense of those who manage their households through servants and tenants. Cf. Angold, “Archon and Dynastes: Local Aristocracies and the Cities of the Later Byzantine Empire,” in Angold, ed. (*supra* n.1), 239.

you must not detain them. It is unjust to do so" (216.29–218.2). Of these free peasants—apparently entitled to dissolve their land tenure contract at will—some were originally domestic slaves. And documents of this period, such as the will of Eustathios Boilas, mention the manumission of slaves.³³

Many free servants (probably independent 'state farmers' originally) nevertheless depended upon Kekaumenos, as the local *dynastes* (magnate), for protection against the calamities of civil wars, foreign invasions, and especially the heavy state taxes.³⁴ The master of the house, through his military and economic power, could exert influence on the local society, participated in the allotment of state taxes, and delivered judgment on some criminals. The desire of many state farmers to live under a local aristocrat's protection and in the security of his household shows that the *oikos* was a substantial social unit.

At the beginning of Part Three the phrase "all the things that bring you annual income by rent or products" means, therefore, agricultural income from the tenants' rent and the direct management of land cultivated by domestic servants. The master of the house directed and supervised agricultural work. Some passages reveal the patriarch's jurisdiction to punish servants of the *oikos*. Kekaumenos insists that the master of the house make everyone (*pantas en aute* [= *oikia*]) stand in awe of him.³⁵ Furthermore, as master of the house and a landlord, Kekaumenos could punish some criminals of the community

The *Strategikon* does not mention the size of the household, but Kekaumenos' omission of special agricultural overseers would indicate something smaller than a Western mediæval manor. Kekaumenos' master of the house personally supervises the agricultural work. Some larger estates, however, did have agricultural overseers, such as the household managers (*protokourator* and *kourator*) on Andronikos Doukas' domain

³³ Lemerle (*supra* n.14) 26.192–27.238; 28.248–53. Cf. the *praktikon* of Andronikos Doukas: "There are no slaves, for all of them have died": Nystazopoulou-Pelekidou (*supra* n.25) II 10.122f (=Miklosich/Müller VI 6.22f).

³⁴ H. Ahrweiler, "Recherches sur la société byzantine au XI^e siècle: nouvelles hiérarchies et nouvelles solidarités," *TravMém* 6 (1976) 117. Imperial charters granting tax exemptions to monasteries ordered the deportation of state farmers settled there to their former residences: *c.f.* Miklosich/Müller (*supra* n.25) V 8.18–21. These state farmers sought the protection and the tax exemption of the monasteries.

³⁵ Kekaumenos 240.15f; Litavrin (*supra* n.6) calls Kekaumenos a "feudal landlord."

granted by the emperor Michael VII.³⁶ Even an approximate number of free servants is difficult to conjecture, and it may have varied from time to time.

Kekaumenos was obsessed by fear of the outside world, with its social pressures, political forces, and natural dangers;³⁷ but he was concerned, above all, with instability in his household. A fear of failure in household management and of disruption of the family emerges between the lines, although Kekaumenos may exaggerate the dangers of life (as in a father's advice to his children). Svoronos has already shown that in eleventh-century Byzantium large estates tended to disintegrate into small peasant holdings,³⁸ while small peasant holdings (as in Kekaumenos' case) were relatively independent of the landlord's household.

The will of Eustathios Boilas (1059) provides some insight into the causes of this instability of the household. Eustathios, probably involved in the conspiracy of Romanos Boilas,³⁹ was forced *ca* 1051 to move into the border region around Edessa. There he acquired eleven parcels of land (*choria* and *proasteia*) and improved them "with ax and fire." Soon, however, he had to dispose of these properties one after another, and only four remained to will to his family. Some scholars attribute Eustathios' lost of property to the Apokapes family's abuse of their government posts—a good illustration of the liabilities of imperial honorary ranks and official posts: the Boilas family could not hold its properties after losing imperial favor.⁴⁰ Thus the intervention of political factors rendered household management unstable. In extreme cases the emperor confiscated private properties.

This picture can be supplemented by another aspect of the problem, the difficulty of employing domestic servants and slaves. According to his will Boilas several times emancipated

³⁶ Nystazopoulou-Pelekidou (*supra* n.25) II 14.210 (=Miklosich/Müller VI 10.27) *protokourator*; 20.317 (15.16) *kourator*. Cf. Rouillard (*supra* n.25) 131. Eustathios Boilas does not, however, mention agricultural overseers.

³⁷ A. Kazhdan (with G. Constable), *People and Power in Byzantium: An Introduction to Modern Byzantine Studies* (Washington, D.C., 1982) 26.

³⁸ N. Svoronos, "Remarques sur les structures économiques de l'empire byzantin au XI^e siècle," *TravMém* 6 (1976) 51–63, and "Sur quelques formes de la vie rurale à Byzance: petite et grande exploitation," *AnnEconSocCiv* 11 (1956) 325–35.

³⁹ Skylitzes 473f; Psellos, *Chron.* II 38–45; Zonaras III 644ff.

⁴⁰ S. Vryonis, Jr, "The Will of a Provincial Magnate, Eustathios Boilas (1059)," *DOP* 11 (1957) 276. Lemerle (*supra* n.14: 55f) insists that Boilas was subordinate to Apokapes.

certain of his fifty slaves, granting them land and money, with the right to marry and become "Roman citizens."⁴¹ He reports that he was influenced by such personal tragedies as the death of his son. But the chief reason for the emancipation was probably the difficulty of supporting and supervising so many slaves. He faced the same problem of direct management that troubled Kekaumenos.

Several factors contributed to these difficulties, not least the structure of the Byzantine *oikos*. Unlike manors of the mediaeval West and Japan, Kekaumenos' farmland, even that managed directly, lay far from his urban residence at Larissa (implied by the words "the town where you live" (202.12f). This separation of the estates from the house impeded both access to the fields and control of the slaves and dependent peasants working the estates. Indeed, the Bulgar king Samuel is said to have prevented the citizens of Larissa from going outside the city walls to harvest their fields for some three years (250.30–252.16). Kekaumenos stressed oversight of servants (192.20ff): "You must not say 'I am confident in my servants. I do not suspect them', for they are faithful as far as you watch them; otherwise, they will all look after their own interests." But it seems clear that Byzantine landlords of this period could not exert a strong seignorial power over their dependent peasants.

Mediaeval Western and Japanese aristocratic households frequently had the character of military installations, as in the castle at the center of a Western domain or the earthworks and trenches often surrounding a Japanese mansion. Kekaumenos gives few hints of the military aspects of his *oikos* in Part Three and hardly mentions the *oikos* in Part Two (on military affairs). In general, however, the Byzantine aristocratic *oikos* was far less heavily armed than its contemporary Western European or Japanese equivalent. When Isaak Komnenos began his revolt, he first sent his wife and treasures to a fortress near the mouth of the Halys River (Skylitzes 492), an act implying that this powerful aristocrat's *oikos* was not strongly fortified. The separation of the urban house from the rural estates, typical in the Byzantine Empire, produced a defensive emphasis on a city's walls and its acropolis. Because the aristocratic *oikos* lacked fortifications, it could not serve as an independent mili-

⁴¹ The total of the emancipated slaves amounted to *ca* 50: Lemerle (*supra* n. 14) 61.

tary unit.⁴² Kekaumenos advises that in emergencies one should take shelter in a fort (248.17f). This military vulnerability of the *oikos* weakened the masters of the house politically and restricted their independence. Kekaumenos adds (248.21) that “If you cannot occupy a fort, cast off everything and fly to the emperor.”

The military weakness of the *oikos* is also apparent in Kekaumenos’ remarks on children’s education. He recommends reading books, but military training is omitted (212.9, 240.8). In contrast, military training in the *oikos* formed an important part of the education of Isaak Komnenos and his brother John (Bryennios 75). Attitudes to military education apparently differed among great military aristocrats and the lesser nobility. The latter, not fully specialized in military affairs, were primarily agricultural administrators.

But a provincial aristocratic *oikos* did not lack military capability altogether. In Part Three (198.19–200.17), Kekaumenos tells how the inhabitants of a region appealed to a local magnate, living privately in his house, to lead a revolt against a merciless provincial governor (ὑπερέχουσα κεφαλὴ εἰς τὸν τόπον), who fled at their approach.⁴³ Kekaumenos says that the master of the house commanded the *laos* (198.32, 200.3f), but the word here can only mean ‘people’, not ‘soldiers’ as in Part Two. The incident (on this evidence) illustrates the potential of a master of the house for military leadership in the local community, but it offers no proof of military retainers in the *oikos*.⁴⁴

⁴² To my knowledge no clear examples of fortified houses in this period survive. Neither Michael Attaleiates’ houses in Constantinople and Rhaidestos nor Andronikos Doukas’ mansion in western Asia Minor seem to have had military facilities, as Attaleiates’ *typikon* and Doukas’ *praktikon* do not mention towers, trenches, or walls. Even the house of Eustathios Boilas, located in the countryside of the border region of Edessa, was not fortified.

⁴³ Lemerle (*supra* n.19: 21, 79) interprets the phrase as referring to a local magnate without an official post, and Kekaumenos’ grandfather, Demetrios Polemarchios, was a *hyperechousa kephale* of this type (174.20ff). I prefer, however, to see a provincial governor here, since he resides in a palace (*praitorion*), sends a message to the emperor, and punishes the rebels. Kekaumenos’ phrase “my former [officials]” (200.11: τοὺς πρόην) confirms this interpretation.

⁴⁴ Litavrin, on the basis of Kekaumenos’ reference (218.28) to the importance of having many servants (*hypereton*), believes some of them had military functions. Certainly imperial vassals could be called *hyperetes* (e.g. Lemerle *et al.* [*supra* n.12] I no. 44.3), but the evidence is too inconclusive to assert that Kekaumenos had military vassals in his *oikos*. See Litavrin (*supra*

Nevertheless, at the beginning of Part Four (*Advice in case of insurgency*, a sequel to Part Three⁴⁵) Kekaumenos indicates that the master of the house and his servants could be armed: "the slaves and free men who are bound to go on horseback and form a line with you" (250.6ff)—hence an argument that the magnate did have armed support against the provincial governor. This view can be supported by another example. In 1077 Michael Attaleiates, at news of the insurrection at Rhaidestos, gathered his servants and proceeded to the town gate in an effort to avoid participation in the revolt. When the rebel gatekeepers refused him passage, Attaleiates informed Vatazena, a leader of the insurgents, that he would attack unless the gate were opened.⁴⁶

Thus even the *oikos* of lower aristocrats had some military potential, although servants usually engaged in domestic and agrarian chores were not highly trained fighters, and neither Kekaumenos nor Attaleiates use terms indicating military vassals in his *oikos*.

To compensate for their military weakness, *oikoi* could, without submission to the emperor, be allied with a powerful military aristocrat. Such links figure in provincial rebellions of this period,⁴⁷ and leading military aristocrats could increase their power by organizing provincial *oikoi*. Some in the later eleventh century succeeded, without imperial permission, in controlling fortresses (*kastra*), which a decree of Michael VII Doukas conceded them the right to possess for life.⁴⁸

To summarize the characteristics of Kekaumenos' *oikos*, it appears immature in comparison with contemporary Western

n.6) 233; *contra*, G. Ostrogorsky, *Pour l'histoire de la féodalité byzantine* (Brussels 1954) 24f, for the absence of 'feudal' armies in the *Strategikon*.

⁴⁵ Part Four is unique in lacking introductory phrases to the addressees (e.g. "If you are a general and in charge of a troop," etc.) and perhaps should not be regarded as a separate part.

⁴⁶ Attaleiates 245. According to Skylitzes (481), the *proedros* Theodosios, to protest the accession of Michael VI, marched from his house in Constantinople to the Great Palace at the head of "his family, slaves, and those who served him in other ways." In this case his neighbors and intimates followed him; cf. Magdalino (*supra* n.1) 96f.

⁴⁷ Skylitzes (439, 441) says that Leon Tornikios organized a rebel army in Adrianople through his relatives. A network of family ties also supported the revolt of Nicephoros Bryennios (1077/8): cf. Angold (*supra* n.32) 243.

⁴⁸ F. Dölger, *Regesten der Kaiserurkunden des oströmischen Reiches* (Munich 1924–60) II no. 1012; N. Oikonomides, "The Donations of Castles in the Last Quarter of the 11th Century (Dölger, *Regesten* n.1012)," in P. Wirth, ed., *Polychronion* (Heidelberg 1966) 413–17.

or Japanese aristocratic households: not of long standing, with relatively unstable agricultural management and limited military power. Although the weakness or instability of the *oikos* probably affected its relations with the outside world (see below), Kekaumenos nevertheless felt at peace in his household. There is in the *Strategikon* a frequent association of *oikos* and *anapauomai* ('refresh', 'take rest'):⁴⁹ "Even if you hold an official post, take care of your house and brighten it up. When you resign the office, your house will receive you and you will feel easy there" (210.25ff). To this extent at least the Byzantine aristocracy found in the household a basis for its power and self-awareness.⁵⁰

III

What relations did Kekaumenos' *oikos* have with the outside world: with other households, the local community, and the state? In Part Three *philos* often occurs as an antonym for 'slave' or 'those who are serving you'. 'Friends', therefore, are outsiders to the *oikos*, including masters of other households.⁵¹ Examination of Kekaumenos' view of *philos* will indicate his general attitude towards the world outside his *oikos*.

Despite some advice to his sons on the importance of friendship, Kekaumenos also cautiously warns of its dangers: "If your friend, living in another place, comes to the town in which you live, you should not lodge him in your house" (202.12f); "Do not stand surety for anyone whoever he may be. Many people were ruined by giving surety. Do not stand surety for anyone, even if he is one of your most intimate friends" (218.17ff). In proportion to his deep concern for the *oikos*, his precautions

⁴⁹ 188.27 (τούτων=household properties), 266.18f (οἶκῳ), 294.26 (οἰκίαις).

⁵⁰ Kazhdan maintains that the *Strategikon* is characterised by "individualism without freedom": a mentality deprived of any substantial social links, consciously kept within the narrow circle of a nuclear family and prostrating itself before heavenly and earthly authority. Although Kekaumenos' *oikos* was unstable, it represents in my view a new form of 'social unit' and accordingly permitted a certain independence from the emperors (see below). On "individualism without freedom" see Kazhdan (*supra* n.13) 9, (*supra* n.37) 34; cf. Angold (*supra* n.2) 74f.

⁵¹ According to Kazhdan, Kekaumenos uses *philos* in three senses besides "friend": for vassals, subordinates, and allies (Kazhdan and Epstein [*supra* n.26] 208), but in Part II it is generally an antonym of *echthros* ("enemy") and in Part III an antonym of *doulos* ("slave").

against outsiders are correspondingly strict.⁵² This, together with his objection to trade makes it clear that he wanted his *oikos* to be exclusive and self-sufficient, economically as well as socially.

Kekaumenos' *oikos* nevertheless had many external relations with local society. In the *Strategikon*, *koinon*—as a synonym of *polis* and the antithesis of *chora*—appears as a town community where masters of the house resided.⁵³ In the revolt against a provincial governor (*supra* 557), some residents betrayed the master of the house leading the protest by informing against him. Some of these informers, called “those who stand out” (200, 15), were probably masters of the house and received as a reward the governor's invitation to dinner. Kekaumenos scarcely mentions relations between masters of the house, although he carefully avoided disputes with them. Other contemporary sources allude to their horizontal grouping⁵⁴—a topic that cannot be examined here.

In contrast, Kekaumenos recounts in some detail relations of the *oikos* with other urban dwellers and the provincial governor. As a leader of the community in cases of governmental misrule, the master of the house was called *authentēs* (‘lord’: 198.20), but his local political rôle went further. The local governor, for example, could have the master of the house allot extraordinary taxes on the town among the inhabitants (200.27ff). Here, too, he functioned as their ‘lord’. A master's judicial authority also extended beyond his *oikos* to the community:

I will tell you this, too. If you live a private life in your house, people of the district will be obedient to you.... Punish some criminals by yourself. As for others, however, you should bring them to the popular assembly and inform the gathering of their wrongdoings, and say: “You judge these men!”⁵⁵

⁵² Kazhdan and Epstein (*supra* n.26) 208. On Kekaumenos' view of ‘friends’ see M. E. Mullett, “Byzantium: a Friendly Society?” *Past and Present* 118 (1988) 3–24.

⁵³ Kekaumenos 128.25; 198.20; 200.10, 18; 202.3, 8; Ahrweiler (*supra* n.34: 117) interprets the *koinon* as a “conseil” formed by local nobles.

⁵⁴ E.g. the *ekklesia* (assembly) of Amaseia: Bryennios 189; Anna Comnena, *Alexiade*, ed. B. Leib (Paris 1937) I 13.

⁵⁵ 232.9–21. Cf. G. G. Litavrin, *Vizantijskoe obščestvo i gosudarstvo v X–XI vv.* (Moscow 1977) 193.

This indicates that the master of the house stood as an intermediary between the provincial governor and the local community. His power and influence in local society did not depend upon an official post but upon the economic and military power of his *oikos*. A son succeeding to his father's *oikos* also inherited his position in the community.⁵⁶

Kekaumenos warns his sons against protests and the flattering address of 'lord': to protest against a provincial governor was dangerous, and the allotment of state taxes could incur local displeasure. Yet, as he notes, local inhabitants expected the master of the house to have an interest in those problems and to meet their expectations. Kekaumenos admitted (200.17–20) that the master of the house, as a representative of the community's interests, could not avoid relations with local society.

Because of their great influence on local society, masters of the house were also heeded by provincial governors. Despite occasional hostilities, their relations became increasingly close and intimate, and included dinner invitations to the masters of the house in an effort to win their support. On the other hand, the masters provided the governor and his servants with food as private gifts in hope of procuring a provincial post (198.17ff). "Do not procure an official post through bribes," warns Kekaumenos (236.24–238.5); "Some people give money or gifts to a local *archon* in order to obtain an official post." Thus masters of the house often became subordinate to a provincial governor or acquired imperial offices and dignities through his mediation.

A master of the house should not, however, become involved in a governor's affairs: "If there is a local governor in your land, visit him, not often but occasionally. Carefully speak to him about what you have to speak. Do not speak if you are not asked" (198.15ff). In advising his sons to have as few connections as possible with a governor, Kekaumenos implies that relations between provincial governors and masters of the house were growing closer—a process in which local offices would have played a rôle.

A passage from the beginning of Part Four (248.13–23) also reveals personal ties between masters and governors:

⁵⁶ When the local inhabitants urged the master of the house to protest to the provincial governor, they referred to his father: "Your father was a man of justice" (Kekaumenos 198.25f).

If anyone plots a revolt and proclaims himself emperor, you should not take part in his plot but keep away from him. If you are able to fight against him and make him captive, fight for the sake of the emperor and everyone's peace. If you cannot ..., take shelter in a fort with your servants, write a letter to the emperor and fulfill your duty to him.... If you do not have enough servants to occupy a fort, cast off everything and fly to the emperor. If, however, you cannot run away because of your family (διὰ τὴν φαιμίλιαν σου), stay at the side of the rebel, but be faithful to the emperor in your mind.

Here Kekaumenos insists on loyalty to the emperor; but there is also an implication of a close relationship between the provincial governor and the master of the house, given that most of the provincial revolts in this period were led by military commanders within the local government. The phrase "because of your family"⁵⁷ would likewise indicate personal ties, although it is unclear whether reference is to marriage bonds or relatives of the master held in the palace of the governor.

While provincial governors wanted close connections for reasons of administrative and military action, masters of the house courted governors through local offices and family ties for support of their unstable households and to extend their influence outside the *oikos*. A hidden purpose thus lies behind Kekaumenos' advice to avoid close association with provincial governors: the development of intimate links among the local upper class.⁵⁸ This, in my view, is an important stage of the consolidation within the Byzantine aristocracy. Subsequently, in the age of Alexios I Komnenos, these links extended throughout the Empire as many aristocratic families were joined by ties of marriage, providing the basis for the emergence of Byzantine aristocracy as a social grouping.⁵⁹

⁵⁷ Kazhdan translates "because of your household": Kazhdan and Epstein (*supra* n.26) 254.

⁵⁸ On marriage ties among families of the military aristocracy see Kazhdan (*Social'nyj*, *supra* n.21) 258f. A novel of Leo VI (886–912) prohibited *strategoi* from creating family ties in their provinces. Basil II (976–1025) succeeded in undermining the power of the family network of the Cappadocian *strategoi* Phocas and Maleinos, but after his death provincial military aristocrats gradually resumed more extensive family networks. On Leo's novel see P. Noailles and A. Dain, *Les nouvelles de Léon VI le Sage* (Paris 1944) 90–93; on Basil II's stand against the aristocracy see Kamer (*supra* n.2) 146–53.

⁵⁹ On the Komnenian family network see A. Hohlweg, *Beiträge zur Verwaltungsgeschichte des oströmischen Reiches unter den Komnenen* (Munich 1965) 15–28.

But how did Kekaumenos view relations between the *oikos* and imperial offices and dignities? His ideal *oikos*, “the perfect house,”⁶⁰ was an autonomous, self-sufficient economic unit under a patriarch’s administration. Kekaumenos followed the tradition of *oikonomia* that household members should be engaged in agriculture and avoid as much as possible the money economy of trade and usury. An exception to this view forms his lengthy remarks on imperial offices and dignities, which like trade and moneylending were non-agricultural sources of income. This deviation from the principles of *oikonomia* reflects a special characteristic of the Byzantine world.

Governmental posts were not only an indication of the holder’s political function and social status, but also provided him with a quick means of accumulating income. During the Empire’s financial difficulties of the eleventh century, imperial offices and ranks were largely for sale.⁶¹ The rich invested in offices, especially the potentially lucrative post of tax collector. Besides honorary titles, court dignities amounted to a kind of ‘national bond’.⁶² For a fixed sum paid to the imperial treasury, one received a court title and its annual pension: the cost of the dignity corresponded to the principal, the annual pension to the interest. Thus the government became a huge mechanism for redistribution of wealth and a source of profit for its members. Besides offering other advantages, imperial offices and dignities were economically attractive to masters of the house.

John Maios, a relative of Kekaumenos, tried to obtain a provincial tax collector’s post, claiming that “All these houses were built by means of financial posts” (196.6f). Likewise a master of the house is urged by his wife and friends to “gain the position of an acting [fiscal] dignitary [ἐκπροσωπικήν],⁶³ archonship, or some other imperial governmental post, so that you, your *oikos*, and your servants will prosper” (196.19–22).

⁶⁰ O. Brunner, “Das ‘ganze Haus’ und die alteuropäische ‘Oikonomik,’” in *Neue Wege der Verfassungs- und Sozialgeschichte* (Göttingen 1968) 103–27.

⁶¹ Eleventh-century chronicles contain numerous references to the extensive sale of imperial offices: e.g. Attaleiates 200f; Zonaras III 676.

⁶² P. Lemerle, “‘Roga’ et rente d’état aux X^e–XI^e siècles,” *REByz* 25 (1967) 77–100. A marriage contract of this period mentions an imperial court title among the donations: see C. N. Sathas, *Mesaionike bibliothekē* (Venice 1872–94) V 205.15–21; cf. R. Guiland, “Une compte-rendu de procès par Psellos,” *Byzantinoslavica* 20 (1959) 205–30.

⁶³ I follow the commonly accepted interpretation: Beck (*supra* n.22) 77 with n.64; Lemerle (*supra* n.19) 92f; Litavrin (*supra* n.17) 464.

Kekaumenos did not, however, approve of acquiring imperial offices and dignities to increase one's wealth; he advises his sons not to purchase governmental posts or court titles, especially those involving tax collection. John Maios failed as a tax collector and suffered imprisonment because he was unable to pay the stipulated sum to the state treasury.⁶⁴ From John's disgrace Kekaumenos concludes that management of the household, *i.e.*, cultivating the land, is the best way of life.

On the other hand, Kekaumenos does not reject all government service: Parts One and Two give advice to civil servants and military commanders respectively. Comments in Part Three concur: "If you hold a governmental post, make much of it. It will dignify you" (200.25f); "Do not avoid the civil and military offices of the provinces; you must know that governmental posts and court and titles are a blessing of God" (210.23f).

How should Kekaumenos' seemingly contradictory attitude be interpreted? Does he distinguish good from bad official posts? To be sure he warns against fiscal services in particular,⁶⁵ but his main objection is to acquiring imperial office by purchase. On the other hand, Kekaumenos approves of offices given by God, *i.e.*, by the emperor: "You should ask God for an official post" (238.8f).

Kekaumenos' attitude appears to reflect the ambivalent character—the autonomy and instability—of the *oikos* itself. Each master of the house vacillated between confidence in autonomous household economy and anxiety about its instability, between living as an independent landlord and becoming an imperial servant. With some hesitation Kekaumenos ultimately advises his sons to follow the first course: an official salary or annual pension will compensate for unstable household management; you must have great concern for these, but your *oikos* supports your life, and official posts should not be sought at the cost of your household; money for household management should not be spent on court titles, nor should you dispose of your land for imperial offices and dignities. For Kekaumenos the *oikos* was most important, and an imperial post only a supplement for livelihood.

⁶⁴ Litavrin (*supra* n.17) 197 with nn.580, 582; *contra*, Lemerle (*supra* n.19: 91), asserting that John Maios escaped imprisonment but willingly asked St Paul of Orphanotropheion for protection against the prosecution of fiscal officials.

⁶⁵ Lemerle (*supra* n.19) 93.

Once again, Kekaumenos' ideal differs from contemporary reality. Some masters of the house eagerly sought imperial court titles, asking the local governor for mediation, paying a sum of money into the imperial treasury, or even resorting to rebellion. Michael VI's refusal to grant such higher dignities to military aristocrats caused the revolt of Isaak Komnenos.⁶⁶

Kekaumenos' view of the emperor also merits note.⁶⁷ Though a provincial, he was aware of the imperial ideology advocated by court rhetoricians and jurists: the emperor is an image of God and not restricted by law. "I advise you, my dear children whom God gave to me, to take sides with the emperor and to serve him. The emperor who resides in Constantinople must always prevail" (268.10–13). But the *Kaiseridee* did not greatly impress Kekaumenos:⁶⁸ he was aware of the realities of imperial life, for he witnessed the abdication of Michael V during a stay in the capital (288.27–290.1). Kekaumenos surely stood in awe of the emperor and feared the charge of disloyalty. But while he advises scrupulousness in serving the emperor he rejects the view of an all-powerful emperor as an image of God. Some criticism of the traditional Byzantine *Kaiseridee* emerges among the few remarks on the emperor in Part Three, concerning among other things an emperor's vain temptation of a subject's wife (204.13–17). The beginning of Part Five ("Advice to Emperors," 274.1–7) is worth citing:

Some declare that the emperor is not subject to the law but is law itself; I also say the same. Whatever he may act and legislate, if it is in justice, we obey him. If, however, he says "Drink poison," you cannot do so. Or, if he says "Go to the sea and cross it swimming," you cannot do it, either. From this, you have to know that the emperor as well, being a man, is subject to the divine law.

Likewise in his "Advice to *toparchai*" (Part Six: 298.18–21) Ke-

⁶⁶ Kameron (*supra* n.2) 310–13; Angold (*supra* n.2) 48f.

⁶⁷ Opinions differ on this point: awe and obedience (e.g. Lemerle [*supra* n.19] 100; Kazhdan [*supra* n.13] 8ff, [*supra* n.26] 112, [*supra* n.37] 26) vs relative independence or even a democratic attitude (e.g. V. Valdenberg, "Nikoulitza et les historiens byzantins contemporains," *Byzantion* 3 [1926] 95–121; Beck [*supra* n.22] 10; Litavrin [*supra* n.17] 62–70).

⁶⁸ H.-G. Beck, *Das byzantinische Jahrtausend* (Munich 1978) 85.

kaumenos reveals his idea of the relationship between private ownership of land and imperial authority.⁶⁹

Whatever great wealth or high court title the emperor promises you, do not deliver your land to him in exchange for money or goods.... Keep the land tightly in your hand, however small and insignificant it may be. For it is better for you to be an autonomous and independent friend of the emperor than to be his slave or servant.

Those who mortgage their *oikos* to purchase a court title, however exalted, become no more than the "emperor's slave." Although in traditional Byzantine ideology the phrase designated a privileged status,⁷⁰ Kekaumenos opposed—or was at least indifferent to—this ideology. He advises his sons against seeking high rank, preferring to be an "emperor's friend," not his "slave."⁷¹

The status of "emperor's friend" necessitated retention of the *oikos*. Despite the instability of the household economy, the *oikos* permitted a master of the house to remain, in a sense, on equal terms with the emperor. As Kekaumenos was aware, an emperor suppressed defiant aristocrats by confiscating their estates.⁷² Thus he exhorted his sons to keep landed properties tightly in hand and never voluntarily deliver them to the emperor.

Kekaumenos probably also objected to the excessive intervention of emperors in a private *oikos*. In Part Five ("Advice to emperors") he lists the four traditional imperial virtues: fortitude (*andreia* [*psychike*]), justice (*dikaiosyne*), temperance (*sophrosyne*), and wisdom (*phronesis*), of which he emphasizes

⁶⁹ On *toparches* (a local independent ruler) see J.-C. Cheynet, "Toparque et topotèrètès à la fin du 11^e siècle," *REByz* 42 (1984) 215–24.

⁷⁰ Cf. Kazhdan (*supra* n.37) 35.

⁷¹ 124.8. Kazhdan (*VizVrem*, *supra* n.20: 156) insists that ὅπερ ἀπεύχομαι ("which I do not wish") refers not to "to get high ranks" but to κατὰ συγχώρησιν Θεοῦ, which he interprets as "by God's dispensation," and that accordingly Kekaumenos did not reject the high ranks but a way to attain them. Nevertheless *hoper apeuchomai* occurs after *phthanes* ("be elevated to"), and the relative pronoun is not feminine but neuter. Cf. E. Barker, *Social and Political Thought in Byzantium* (Oxford 1957) 122.

⁷² E.g. 300.22–302.13: Michael IV confiscated the land of Dobronas, a *toparches* of Dalmatia.

temperance and justice as inapplicable to wrongdoing.⁷³ For Kekaumenos 'temperance' means that the emperor should not interfere in a private *oikos* or, more specifically, impose either heavy taxes or economic regulations to the household's detriment, and certainly not confiscate landed properties.⁷⁴

Thus Kekaumenos respected and obeyed the emperors so long as they did not trespass upon his *oikos*. The 'respectful distance' of this view can be attributed in part to Kekaumenos' residence in a province.⁷⁵ Yet his attitude of aloofness to the emperor also derives from his concept of the household economy. A well-known passage of Symeon the 'New Theologian' provides an apt contrast to Kekaumenos and the provincial aristocratic point of view: "Who do we say are those who truly serve the earthly emperor? Those who live in their own *oikos*, or those who follow him everywhere?... Is it not obvious that it is the latter rather than the former who serve the earthly emperor?"⁷⁶

In sum, Kekaumenos advises his sons that the *oikos*, as an independent and self-sufficient 'social unit', should have few connections with the outside world. In this closed microcosm Kekaumenos feels at ease, and from this vantage he can admire at a distant the emperor in Constantinople. But external relations were unavoidable: both the provincial governor and the local inhabitants expected the master of the house to be a leader, and many—willingly or unwillingly—met this expectation. Similarly, Kekaumenos could not be indifferent to imperial official and dignities, although he regarded them as a mere supplementary support for the *oikos*. Kekaumenos also re-

⁷³ 288.12–17; on the traditional imperial virtues, A. Kazhdan, "The Social View of Michael Attaleiates," in A. Kazhdan and S. Franklin, *Studies on Byzantine Literature of the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries* (Cambridge 1984) 25; Kazhdan and Epstein (*supra* n.26) 110–16.

⁷⁴ Attaleiates rarely uses *sophrosyne*, but his idea of imperial justice (*dikaio-syne*) approximates Kekaumenos' 'temperance': see Kazhdan (*supra* n.73) 41. In his *typikon* (1077) Attaleiates rejected the emperor's trespass on his monastery, which he said was to be inherited only by his direct descendants: Gautier (*supra* n.16) 31.232, 33.269, 51.562, 75–77.973f. Gregory Pakourianos' *typikon* (1083) also emphasized the inviolability of private property: P. Gautier, "Le *typikon* du sébaste Grégoire Pakourianos," *REByz* 42 (1984) 45.432–47.

⁷⁵ I. Ševčenko, "Constantinople Viewed from the Eastern Provinces in the Middle Byzantine Period," *Harvard Ukrainian Studies* 3/4 (1979/80) 712–47.

⁷⁶ J. Darrouzès, ed., *Syméon le nouveau théologien: Traités théologiques et éthiques* II (Paris 1967) 166.133–47.

hearses imperial ideology and advocates loyalty to the emperor. In fact he hopes to be granted court titles. But on the whole, Part Three of the *Strategikon* indicates that a connection with the emperor is not crucial to the private *oikos*, and in Kekaumenos' opinion the emperor should not intrude on it. His ambivalent attitude towards the emperor thus reflects the ambivalent character of his *oikos*; but more significant is Kekaumenos' expectation that one can live a pleasant life without the emperor through proper management of the *oikos*.

IV

In the eleventh century local aristocrats created their own microcosm at some distance from the emperor. Some provincial governors, successful not only at consolidating and developing their own *oikoi* but also in organizing those of their provinces, emerged with strong military capabilities and challenged the authority of the central government. The strength and tenacity of provincial rebellions in this period can be attributed, in my view, to the support of many masters of the house, possessing the economic and military power of an *oikos* and exerting some influence on their local communities.

In the rebellions of this period we can distinguish two impulses: the demands for generosity (*euergesia*) and for temperance (*sophrosyne*). The former is related to the desire for higher posts and titles from the emperor, *i.e.*, becoming a favored beneficiary of the imperial organs of the redistribution of wealth; the latter refers to opposition to the government's intrusive and suppressive policies, such as heavy taxation and economic regulation. From the standpoint of the *oikos*, the demand for imperial generosity reveals an expectation that government revenues should support household economies and compensate for unstable incomes. 'Temperance', including the protection of private property from imperial depredation, indicates on the other hand the masters' preference for autonomous administration of the *oikos*.

This new demand for autonomous household management, added to the old desire for imperial favor, is a reflection of the development of the provincial *oikos* and is a characteristic of eleventh-century rebellions.⁷⁷ In meeting the demands of these

⁷⁷ *E.g.* the following policies of *logothetes* Nikephorizes provoked revolt of Nestor, a *catepano* of Dristra: withdrawal of the annual donations to the towns on the Danube, the state monopoly of the wheat trade, and the

rebels, the new emperor Alexios I Komnenos brings to an end an age of despotism and absolute dependence upon the emperor.⁷⁸

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confiscation of Nestor's house and properties. Nestor, after plundering the towns near Constantinople, demanded the dismissal of Nikephoritzes from Michael VII: Attaleiates 204–09.

⁷⁸ Alexios I Komnenos bestowed new court titles on the military aristocrats (Anna Komnena, I 113ff Leib; cf. Hohlweg [*supra* n.59] 34–40; Oikonomidès [*supra* n.15] 127f), and his chrysobull to the Venetians (May 1082) permitted local Byzantine aristocrats to sell their agricultural products without customs duties or regulations. Their household management must have been considerably improved. On the chrysobull see G. L. F. Tafel and G. M. Thomas, *Urkunden zur älteren Handels- und Staatsgeschichte der Republik Venedig* (Vienna 1856–57) I 51–54; cf. E. Francès, “Alexis Comnène et les privilèges octroyés à Venise,” *Byzantinoslavica* 29 (1968) 17–23; for exports to Italy see R.-J. Lilie, *Handel und Politik zwischen dem byzantinischen Reich und den italienischen Kommunen Venedig, Pisa und Genua in der Epoche der Komnenen und der Angeloi (1081–1204)* (Amsterdam 1984) 272–78.