Proceedings
of the Plenary Sessions

edited by Emiliano Fiori and Michele Trizio

Plenary Sessions

The 24th International Congress of Byzantine Studies
Venice and Padua, 22-27 August 2022
Proceedings

Series edited by
Antonio Rigo

1 | 1

The 24th International Congress of Byzantine Studies
Venice and Padua, 22-27 August 2022
Proceedings

Editors-in-Chief

Antonio Rigo (Università Ca' Foscari Venezia)
Alessandra Bucossi (Università Ca' Foscari Venezia)
Valentina Cantone (Università degli Studi di Padova)
Niccolò Zorzi (Università degli Studi di Padova)

Proceedings
of the Plenary Sessions
The 24th International
Congress of Byzantine Studies

Venice and Padua, 22-27 August 2022

edited by
Emiliano Fiori and Michele Trizio

Abstract

The present volume collects most of the contributions to the plenary sessions held at the *24th International Congress of Byzantine Studies*, and incisively reflects the ever increasing broadening of the very concept of 'Byzantine Studies'. Indeed, a particularly salient characteristic of the papers presented here is their strong focus on interdisciplinarity and their breadth of scope, both in terms of methodology and content. The cross-pollination between different fields of Byzantine Studies is also a major point of the volume. Archaeology and art history have pride of place; it is especially in archaeological papers that one can grasp the vital importance of the interaction with the so-called hard sciences and with new technologies for contemporary research. This relevance of science and technology for archaeology, however, also applies to, and have significant repercussions in, historical studies, where – for example – the study of climate change or the application of specific software to network studies are producing a major renewal of knowledge. In more traditional subject fields, like literary, political, and intellectual history, the contributions to the present volume offer some important reflections on the connection between Byzantium and other cultures and peoples through the intermediary of texts, stories, diplomacy, trade, and war.

Proceedings of the Plenary Sessions
The 24th International Congress of Byzantine Studies
edited by Emiliano Fiori and Michele Trizio

Table of Contents

SECTION 2
LINKING FIELDS, APPROACHES, AND METHODS

Foreword

Antonio Rigo
Ca' Foscari University of Venice

The 'motto' *Byzantium – Bridge Between Worlds* evokes first and foremost the spatial, physical centrality of the *Reich der neuen Mitte* and hence its function of connecting – and mediating between – not only East and West, but also the world of the North and that of the Mediterranean and Africa. This is expressed concretely, yet also symbolically, by the imperial capital itself, which soon became a model to be imitated, reproduced and multiplied.

The connections and relations between different worlds is also reproduced, at another level, in actual studies devoted to Byzantium. Thus the present volume collects most of the contributions to the plenary sessions held at the *24th International Congress of Byzantine Studies*, and reflects the progressive broadening of the very concept of 'Byzantine Studies'. Indeed, a particularly salient characteristic of the papers presented here is their strong focus on interdisciplinarity and their broad scope, in terms of both methodology and content. The cross-pollination between different fields of Byzantine Studies is also a major point illustrated by the volume. Archaeology and art history are given pride of place, and it is perhaps especially in the archaeological papers that one can grasp the vital importance of interaction with the so-called hard sciences and with new technologies for contemporary research. This relevance of science and technology for archaeology also applies to – and has significant repercussions in – the field of historical studies, where the study of climate change, for example, and the application of specific software to network studies are producing a major renewal of knowledge. In more traditional disciplines, such as literary, political, and intellectual history, the contributions to the present volume offer some important

reflections on the connection between Byzantium and other cultures and peoples by focusing on texts, stories, diplomacy, trade, and war.

This volume is, in a sense, the first part of a diptych: it is complemented by a second volume containing the *Abstract of the Free Communications, Thematic Sessions, Round Tables and Posters*, which perhaps illustrates even better the current situation in Byzantine Studies, the broadening of its perspective and, at the same time, the ever-changing borders of this concept and definition.

Proceedings of the Plenary Sessions

Section 1
Patrimoines

Introduction

Jannic Durand
Conservateur général du Patrimoine ; Directeur du département des Objets d'art
du musée du Louvre

Catherine Jolivet-Lévy
Directrice d'études émérite à l'École pratique des hautes études (Ve Section)

L'introduction, au Congrès des études byzantines, d'une séance plé-nière consacrée aux « Patrimoines », nouvelle dans son principe, re-pose sur un constat : les problématiques tournant autour du patri-moine matériel et de l'histoire de l'art byzantins n'ont pas eu dans les congrès récents l'importance qu'elles méritent.

Cette séance a pour objectif de dresser un bilan ponctuel au cœur de l'actualité de la recherche et des avancées des dernières années et de dégager des perspectives. Elle tient aussi compte de l'urgence actuelle à attirer l'attention, dans certains domaines, sur un patri-moine parfois hélas menacé dans son existence même.

Sous le titre « Patrimoines » sont ainsi regroupés trois domaines d'études complémentaires jusqu'à présent dispersés et qui trouvent une prolongation naturelle dans plusieurs tables rondes.

Ce sont d'abord les champs traditionnels de l'archéologie et de l'histoire de l'art et de leur historiographie : architecture et décor monumental, mosaïques, peintures murales, sculpture, icônes et ma-nuscrits, arts appliqués, orfèvrerie, ivoires, textiles, verrerie... Ce sont aussi les champs de la conservation, de la restauration et de la valorisation de ce patrimoine : restaurations et dérestaurations, ana-lyses en laboratoire, sites et musées, expositions, catalogues de col-lections, projets de corpus. Enfin, ce sont également les champs des nouvelles technologies patrimoniales : numérisation des manuscrits

et traitement des archives photographiques, catalogues en ligne, par exemple.

Les quatre intervenants ont donc été invités à développer librement leur rapport à l'intérieur de chacun des axes définis ou transversalement, en tenant compte des problématiques et des méthodologies les plus récentes ou des découvertes les plus importantes.

Les champs de l'archéologie et de l'histoire de l'art, de la restauration et de la valorisation seront d'abord envisagés à travers un bilan des recherches archéologiques à Istanbul, où devait initialement se tenir le Congrès. La présentation des récents travaux menés dans la basilique Saint-Marc permettra d'évoquer plus précisément le thème de la restauration monumentale, tout en rendant hommage à la translation du Congrès à Venise. Le bilan des recherches sur les textiles et broderies, un domaine en plein renouvellement, mettant en exergue les perspectives ouvertes par l'approche de la matérialité des œuvres, s'inscrit aussi au cœur de ces problématiques. Enfin, l'appropriation des nouvelles technologies numériques par les institutions muséales et patrimoniales sera également évoquée, qui a révolutionné la gestion, la visibilité et la diffusion des collections, tout en éclairant l'historiographie de la discipline. La piste, encore méconnue, des musées universitaires jette un pont entre historiographie et perspectives patrimoniales, invitant à penser l'art byzantin dans son sens le plus large entre le terrain, l'enseignement, la culture et l'imaginaire.

Discovering and Preserving Byzantine Constantinople: Archaeology and Heritage Policies in Istanbul

Barış Altan
Brandenburg University of Technology Cottbus-Senftenberg

Ayşe Ercan
Columbia University, New York

Abstract   This paper presents an overview of the archaeology and heritage policies in Istanbul focusing on the physical remains of Byzantine Constantinople. The first part discusses the archaeological excavations conducted in Istanbul over the past century, during which the Byzantine archaeology of Istanbul began to be institutionalised as a scientific field and excavations were systematically recorded. A particular focus is given to the recent and lesser-known excavation projects. In the second part of the paper, the local authorities' approaches towards architectural heritage and conservation practices of the Byzantine monuments and architectural remains in Istanbul are analysed in order to scrutinise the contextualisation of this urban architectural heritage and elucidate how they were viewed in the past century by the various politically diverse Turkish governments.

Keywords   Byzantine archaeology. Urban rescue excavations. Architectural heritage. Conservation policies. Byzantine Constantinople.

Summary   1 Introduction. – 2 Byzantine Archaeology in Istanbul Over the Past Century. – 3 Approaching Byzantine Heritage of Istanbul Through Restoration Practices.

Edizioni
Ca'Foscari

1 Introduction

Archaeology has played a critical role in materialising Byzantine Constantinople as a physical place, rather than a historical construct. Starting from the late nineteenth-century, there were large-scale projects, such as the fieldworks at the Hippodrome, the Great Palace, the Mangana, Küçükçekmece, Forum of Theodosius, the Churches of St. Polyeuktos, Myrelaion and Kalenderhane that greatly contributed to our understanding of the city's architectural heritage. Nevertheless, Byzantine archaeology in the proper sense of the term – pertaining to a scientific field that adopts a holistic research agenda exploring the past human life and urban history in Istanbul – is nearly non-existent in the city today. Rescue excavations that took over systematic archaeological fieldwork that aims to explore and document sites in a holistic manner rarely lead to large-scale excavations such as the one at Yenikapı (the former Theodosian harbour). As a consequence, physical evidence on Byzantine Constantinople is largely fragmented, and similarly underrepresented.

With respect to the preservation of surviving Byzantine monuments in Istanbul and the Byzantine-period material evidence that archaeology brought to light, the Turkish government has taken varying approaches over the past century. The governmental efforts to promote Byzantine architectural heritage started with Hagia Sophia during the first decades that followed the foundation of the Turkish Republic in 1923. Fethiye Mosque (Pammakaristos Church, Fethiye Museum) and Kariye Mosque (Chora Church, previously Chora Museum) were subsequently chosen for restoration projects. Similarly, the 1950s, a period characterised by the transition from the one party regime to the multiparty system, marked a significant period for Istanbul's Byzantine heritage. First of all, a new institution for the management of cultural heritage was established, triggering further developments in the field of Byzantine studies. In the year 1955, Turkey housed its first international Byzantine studies conference in Istanbul, the first academic event of its kind. As a preparation for this event, a number of restoration campaigns were initiated, standing as another key moment for the restoration of the Byzantine built heritage. In the following decades, to this day, the approach towards the Byzantine heritage differed based on changing political circumstances.

This paper presents an overview of the archaeology and heritage policies in Istanbul focusing on the physical remains of Byzantine Constantinople. The first part discusses, in retrospect, the archaeological evidence from Istanbul, which came to light over the past century when archaeology began to be institutionalised and excavations systematically recorded. Due to the vast amount of evidence, particularly on churches and cisterns, it prioritises to provide a full understanding of the nature of the material evidence that archaeolo-

gy yielded in the last years in the shape of major urban elements. By focusing on the most recent archaeological discoveries that remained restricted to a small community of scholars for various reasons, the paper aims to inform a larger audience concerning the new archaeological discoveries in Istanbul. In the second part of the paper, an analysis of the heritage and conservation approaches is presented in order to scrutinise the contextualisation of Byzantine period remains and elucidate how they were approached and viewed by the state. In doing so, this paper seeks to trigger further scholarly debates on the Byzantine heritage of Istanbul, and how this fundamental architectural heritage of the city should be approached in the future.

2 Byzantine Archaeology in Istanbul Over the Past Century

2.1 Civic Architecture

Rescue excavations conducted in Istanbul so far shed light only to a general understanding of the street network of Byzantine Constantinople. The Mese (Divanyolu Caddesi) has been already known to the scholarly community, serving as the major artery of both the Byzantine and Ottoman capitals.[1] A more specific evidence on the street architecture in Constantinople came to light from the recent fieldwork conducted in the former harbour district in today's Sirkeci, where a well-preserved Late Antique street system was revealed together with its pavement, central drainage system and surrounding blocks of buildings, possibly used as aristocratic residences.[2]

Additional, yet scanty evidence of portico stylobates came from the east of the Istanbul Archaeological Museum (hereafter IAM), the courtyard of St. Sophia, the Great Palace excavations at Sultanahmet, the east of the Hippodrome's sphendone, Vezneciler (metro excavation) and Beyazıt.[3] Yet none of these presents sufficient evidence to firmly construct the street network of Constantinople.

Of the monumental public squares that the street network connected to, archaeology presents evidence only on the Constantine and Theodosian Fora.[4] The archaeological excavations of the Theodo-

---

1 On the general street layout, see Mango 1985, 27; Berger 2000; Mundell Mango 2001. In 1967, the Milion's remains were found near the Ottoman water siphon at Sultanahmet. For the report, see Fıratlı, Ergil 1969.

2 For the architectural remains found in the 'east shaft' at Sirkeci, see Kızıltan 2015. For the ceramic evidence, see Waksman et al. 2009.

3 The fieldwork in Vezneciler was conducted on the junction of Büyük Reşit Paşa and Vidinli Tevfik Paşa Avenues, see Altuğ 2013, 40.

4 For a complete consideration of these squares, see Müller-Wiener 1977; Bauer 1996.

sian Forum was conducted in a larger scale, and yielded a more comprehensive understanding of the architecture of this public square concerning its monumental tripartite arch that defined its eastern end and entrance[5] and a sigma-shaped structure interpreted as a nymphaeum once located in the current plot of Istanbul University's Central Library, as well as the ecclesiastical topography of its surrounding regions (Fıratlı 1951, 163-78; Naumann 1976, 117-41).[6]

The Hippodrome that has served as a major public monument also in the Ottoman period, was the first Byzantine monument to have been explored in Istanbul. In two major campaigns conducted by Charles Newton in 1855 and by the British Academy represented by Stanley Casson in 1927, the bases of the Masonry Obelisk, the Serpent Column and the Egyptian Obelisk, were revealed along with their secondary function as public fountains (Newton 1865, 27; Bardill 2010). Two further fieldworks undertaken by Theodor Wiegand and Ernest Mamboury in 1932, and later by Rüstem Duyuran and Aziz Ogan in 1950, greatly contributed to the understanding of the Hippodrome's architecture, particularly its perimeters, alignment, and overall design (Mamboury, Wiegand 1934, 39-54; Duyuran 1952; 1953).

Baths have played a key role in civic life both in Byzantine and Ottoman Constantinople. Two of the imperial baths (*thermae*) are known through archaeological work, notably the Baths of Zeukippos (Casson, Rice 1929)[7] and the one found during the construction of an eastern annex to the IAM (tentatively identified as the Baths of Alexander (Fıratlı 1978; Altuğ 2017, 164-5). Additional evidence on a number of *loutra* and *balnea* has been also revealed in the last decades, such as the one adjacent to the Kalenderhane (Striker, Kuban 1971), Anemas (Dark, Özgümüş 2013, 76-7), Gülhane,[8] and recently in Eyüp by the IAM, being only some of the baths explored over the last decades. The latter – that has remained unpublished – constitutes one of the most interesting examples for a small-scale local neighbourhood bath, designed as a circular hall furnished with a hypocaust system.

---

[5] During the same fieldwork, several other miscellaneous walls were found; many of these were later wiped out for the construction project. Mamboury 1936, 236-40; Casson, Talbot Rice 1929; Duyuran 1958, 71-3.

[6] Some of the monumental architectural sculptures yielded by the excavations are on display on one side of the avenue, other pieces were gathered at the museum organised at Beyazıt Hamam, and others are in the gardens of the University. About the latter, see https://dergipark.org.tr/tr/download/article-file/410002.

[7] For further details, see also: Mamboury 1951; Berger 1982, 109. For further discussion on the Zeuxippus, see Guilland 1966; Berger 1982, 144-59.

[8] This structure was initially identified as the *hagiasma* or the baptistery of the Hodegon monastery, see Demangel, Mamboury 1939, 81-111. More recently, see Ousterhout 2015.
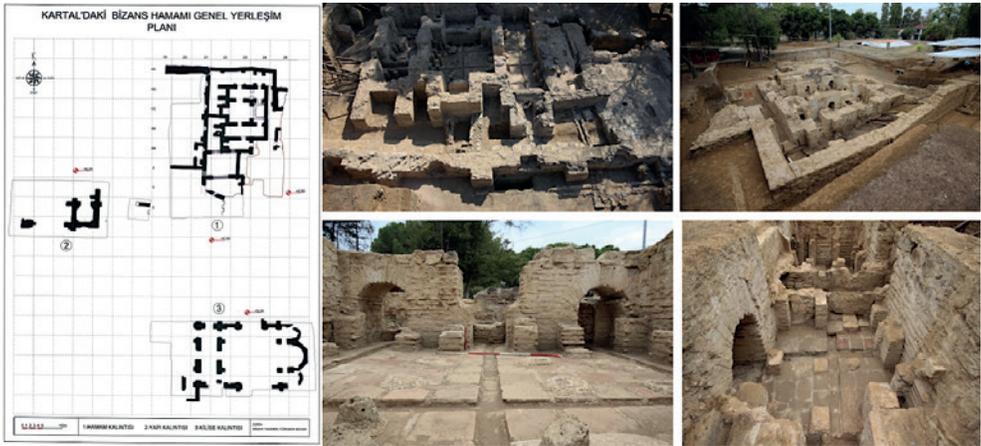
In Kartal, recent fieldwork conducted in Dragos revealed a massive late antique bath complex **[fig. 1]** expanding to an area of 588 m^2 with its wonderfully-preserved apodyterium, frigidarium, tepidarium, caldarium, and sudatorium, expanding our knowledge on the Byzantine-period baths.[9]

The urban features that we only recently have gained insights on are the harbours and anchorage facilities of Byzantine Constantinople. Nearly nothing was known about them as physical spaces prior to the subway constructions. The Theodosian harbour remains one of the most important archaeological projects in Istanbul's history. After a decade of intensive fieldwork in Yenikapı, the excavations yielded evidence on the architecture of this Byzantine harbour, such as fortifications, quaylines and piers in addition to the largest collection of Medieval shipwrecks[10] ever found in the Mediterranean (Gökçay 2010; Kızıltan 2015).[11] Of these, the Yenikapı pier **[fig. 2]**, dated to the late eighth century and wonderfully preserved with its timber formwork, presents unique evidence for the field of harbour archaeology, manifesting the continuation of the Roman underwater construction techniques into the Byzantine periods.[12]

---

[9] For a detailed analysis along with visuals, see Sevinç 2014. For the previous fieldwork, see Pasinli, Soyhan 1975; 1978; Sevgili 2010.

[10] 37 in number, the Yenikapı shipwrecks reshaped the understanding of medieval shipbuilding technology. For further discussion, see Kocabaş 2013.

[11] A general overview of the Yenikapı excavations can be found: Asal, Kızıltan 2014.

[12] For the dendrochronological dating, see Kuniholm et al. 2015. For a recent analysis of the pier, see Ginalis, Ercan Kydonakis 2022.

Similar harbour structures were also revealed in Sirkeci and Üsküdar, shedding light to the location of the suburban harbour installations (Karagöz 2014; Atik 2007, 58). Various other ports are also being documented in the hinterlands of Constantinople, through a number of survey projects that will hopefully contribute to a bigger picture concerning the maritime network between Constantinople and its hinterlands (Aydıngün et al. 2014; Öniz, Kaya, Aydingün 2014).

Structures related to the city's water supply such as cisterns and aqueducts remain the best-understood monuments of Byzantine Constantinople, thanks to the systematic documentation works conducted from the nineteenth century onwards both in Constantinople and its hinterland (Forchheimer, Strzygowski 1893; Crow, Bardill, Bayliss 2008; Altuğ 2017).

On the other hand, archaeological work on the Byzantine-period fortifications both in Constantinople and in its hinterland including Galata[13] remain quite insufficient. The Golden Gate fieldwork conducted in 1927 by Macridy and Casson (1931) is still one of the most detailed and systematic excavation projects with respect to the defence system of Constantinople, in addition to the fieldwork conducted in the 1990s by Ahunbay and Ahunbay (2000).

Despite the amount of physical evidence on the funerary practices that is being collected from all around Istanbul and its suburbs,

---

13 On Galata, see Sağlam 2018, 7-171.

there is no single scholarly work that deals with the interpretation of the archaeology of the dead and burial typology.

One of the aspects of urban life in Byzantine Constantinople that we have limited information about is the houses. Archaeological evidence on houses are largely restricted to aristocratic residences of the Late Antique period. As excavations elucidated, a majority of these concentrates in the area west of the Hippodrome, such as Sirkeci, the Palace of Antiochos[14] and the one adjacent to the Binbirdirek.[15] The fieldwork in the Myrelaion complex (Naumann 1966) has also offered evidence on the presence of a monumental *rotonda* lavishly decorated by *opus sectile* pavement and marble reliefs, used as an aristocratic house under the Theodosian dynasty.[16]

Concerning the Middle and Late Byzantine period residences, the physical evidence is scarce apart from the tower residences such as the so-called Tower of Isaac II and Mermerkule.[17] One architectural complex that was explored in 1924 during a construction project on Cemal Nadir Street in Sirkeci, was tentatively identified with the Palace of Botaniates (Schreiner 2013). The massive building complex expands on terraces and consists of several interconnected chambers and a bathing facility.[18]

The Great Palace as a physical space has come to be known through a series of archaeological projects implemented in the twentieth century. Theodor Wiegand, then a German army officer in Istanbul, launched the first architectural survey in 1918, after the 1912 conflagration that devastated the timber houses in the quarters of Cankurtaran and Ishakpaşa, exposing various Byzantine remains. Paul Lemerle from the French School of Athens conducted the first archaeological excavations in 1936-37 that exposed the remains of a fourth-century colossal wall that he identified with the eastern limit of the Augusteion. These pioneering studies were followed by the archaeological project performed in 1935-38 by Russell and Baxter, and in 1953-54 by Talbot Rice with the support of the Walker Trust, St. Andrews University, in the area between Arasta and the Sultan Ahmed Mosque. These fieldworks explored at a great length the fifth-

---

14   Schneider 1943; Duyuran 1952; 1953; Dolunay, Nauman 1964, 19-22. Despite its initial identification as the Palace of Lausus, Bardill (1997, 87-9) demonstrated that the edifice's earlier phase could have been originally part of the Palace of Antiochus.

15   The exact location is the junction of Peykhane and Klodfarer Streets (Altuğ 2017, 53-4).

16   Concerning the identification of the domus, see Berger 1997; Striker 1981, 13-16. For a later interpretation of its dating, see Niewöhner 2010, 411-59. On the mosaics dated to the fifth century, see Dalgıç 2008, 148-52.

17   For an example of Late Byzantine tower residence, see Peschlow 1995.

18   The IAM archaeologists recently claimed to find further remains of this residential complex: see Baran Çelik, Önder 2022.

century peristyle court, remodelled in the sixth century as an apsed hall with a mosaic floor.

Further clues on the architecture of the Great Palace were revealed during the IAM excavations conducted between 1997 and 2008 on the north of the Old Sultanahmet Prison. On the eastern end of the excavation site, where Mamboury and Wiegand previously located the Magnaura, the fieldwork yielded evidence on the complex's extensive use from the sixth to the twelfth centuries. On the former site of the Old Courthouse, an entrance unit, identified with the Chalke Gate, was also recently uncovered during the IAM excavations (Girgin 2008; Denker 2009).

It is also important to note that the Boukoleon Palace,[19] is currently being excavated by the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality after decades of abandonment following the brief fieldwork by Mesguich (Mesguich 1914) and the documentation campaign by Wiegand and Mamboury (Mamboury, Wiegand 1934, 1-20). This fieldwork has so far shed light to the architectural design and chronology of the monument, which will hopefully be shared with a larger audience in the following years upon the completion of the archaeological excavation.

2.2 Ecclesiastical Architecture

Over the last decades, additional evidence has been added to the city's ecclesiastical topography through accidental discoveries made in the course of rescue excavations. For instance, during the construction of an overpass at Saraçhane, one of the most unique monuments of Late Antique Constantinople came to light. Between 1964 and 1969, a splendidly-decorated three-aisled church that was constructed in a massive scale attached to a baptistery/martyrion, identified as the church of St. Polyeuktos commissioned by Anicia Juliana were exposed (Harrison 1989; Mango, Ševčenko 1961; Bardill 2011).

The restoration projects conducted at Sts. Sergius and Bacchus, the Pantokrator, the Pammakaristos, and Vefa Kilise Camii, have similarly provided new findings on these monuments. At Sts. Sergius and Bacchus, the church's crypt built in a cruciform shape with a depth of 1.7 metres was exposed, in addition to its original pavement.[20] At the Pantokrator, a 'small chapel' attached to the south church was recorded, along with miscellaneous architectural remains revealed to the north of the katholikon (Özgümüş et al. 2017). At Vefa Kilise

---

19 For the Boukoleon's topography, see Mango 1997. For its harbour, see Heher 2016. A brief 'cleaning' work was conducted by Feridun Özgümüş: see Özgümüş 2012.

20 For further details, see http://mmetingokcay.blogspot.com and http://www.envanter.gov.tr.

Camii, the temenos wall was restored, and excavations revealed two side chapels flanking the katholikon, pointing at a five-aisled floor plan (Mango 1993). Parallel restoration work was carried out at the Pammakaristos, where burial chambers beneath the north aisle were uncovered, in addition to a cistern and the architectural remains of the twelfth-century monastic complex both on the eastern side (Belting, Mango, Mouriki 1978; Çurku, Ülger 2021).

In addition to these key monuments, new discoveries from archaeological excavations and surveys conducted in Istanbul greatly contributed to our knowledge of the ecclesiastical topography of Constantinople. For instance, new architectural units within the previously-documented building complexes were discovered in the recent decades. A complex adjacent to Hagia Eirene, argued to be the Sampson hospital, exposed along the south side of the church constitutes an intriguing find that needs further exploration in this area (Dirimtekin 1962).

As for the hinterlands of Istanbul, archaeological fieldwork is abundant particularly in Rhegion, Damatris, Dragos, Küçükyalı and Aydos. The ongoing excavations near ancient Chalcedon, today's Haydarpaşa have revealed the physical remains of a maritime neighbourhood expanding to the entire area behind the nineteenth century train station. A three-nave building and a rotonda where the church of St. Bassa was previously located by Janin, can be listed among the most significant architectural findings on this neighbourhood.[21]

As this brief overview demonstrates, taking into account the current state of archaeological data collection, Istanbul is above all in dire need of a renewed vision and policy for Byzantine archaeology with established principles concerning recording, preserving and processing data to make the city's urban heritage more visible and accessible to everyone.

Unfortunately, the selective protection of Istanbul's cultural heritage, championing one culture over another, endangers the long-term protection of material heritage, limiting its visibility. Furthermore, careless restoration works offered to construction companies devoid of competent academic supervision, gigantic construction and infrastructure projects, culminate in the overall manipulation of the archaeological and architectural heritage of Istanbul, if not their erasure in perpetuity.

---

21 Archaeologists recorded a deposit layer dated to the period between the 4th and 7th centuries, with occasional finds from the Middle Byzantine period such as workshops and burials found within a chapel (Asal et al. 2022).

3 Approaching Byzantine Heritage of Istanbul Through Restoration Practices

The level of improvement of Byzantine studies in Turkey is recurrently a subject of discussion in both national and international scholarly circles. This discussion is legitimate to a certain extent, as the interest of the Western travellers and explorers towards the Byzantine heritage of Anatolia goes back to the mid-nineteenth century. The activities of foreign scholars with expertise in Byzantine art, architecture, or history date to the 1930s and 1940s (Kılıç Yıldız 2011, 67). Considering all these scholarly and practical knowledge accumulations, the discussions concentrating upon the level of improvement of Byzantine studies in Turkey sound reasonable.

Despite the emerging status of the scholarly Byzantine studies in Turkey, the attempts to protect, conserve and repair as well as excavate especially the Byzantine heritage of Istanbul, were much more advanced. The first repair at Hagia Sophia after the foundation of the Turkish Republic dates to 1926, while it still was functioning as a mosque. This repair involved changing the lead covers of the domes and the gypsum window frames. The next and more comprehensive repair was undertaken by Thomas Whittemore in 1931 under the auspices of the Byzantine Institute when Whittemore uncovered the mosaics plastered during the Ottoman period. Another repair campaign took place in 1939, which was after the conversion of the monument into a museum in 1934 (Diker 2016, 145-9).

Kariye Mosque (Chora Church) also went under repair in 1945 prior to its conversion to a museum. The works also continued in 1946 and the monument was also added to the work plan with other major Byzantine monuments in Istanbul for the congress mentioned below (Tamer 2003, 121). Another major monument of Istanbul's Byzantine heritage, Fethiye Camii (today's Fethiye Museum, original name Pammakaristos Church) was repaired by the Directorate of Pious Foundations from 1936 to 1938 (Esmer, Ahunbay 2013, 46).

Adding up a pivotal academic event to the arguments of these discussions, the 10th International Congress of Byzantine Studies which took place in Istanbul on 15-21 September 1955, one would expect a more institutionalised, productive, and enhanced environment of Byzantine studies in Turkey during the beginning of the 1950s **[fig. 3]**. The congress was organised in an academic context where Byzantine studies had been institutionalised only in 1950 at Istanbul University by Philip Schweinfurth, a specialist in Byzantine art (Akyürek 2018, 53). Semavi Eyice, known as the first Turkish Byzantinist, was another important figure in this context. After his high school graduation, he went to Berlin to study Byzantine art. Because of the severe conditions of the Second World War, he decided to return to Istanbul and graduated from Istanbul University Department of Fine Arts in 1948

with a thesis on the minarets of Istanbul (Atasoy Yavuzoğlu 2019, 135). Eyice received his PhD from Istanbul University in 1952 with a dissertation titled *Byzantine Monuments in Side*.

After the selection of Istanbul as the venue for the 10th Congress, both the administrative and the financial issues of the event started to be discussed at the Grand National Assembly of Turkey. On 30 November 1954, the government proposed the budget for the 1955 fiscal year and allocated 100.000 Turkish Liras for the administrative and publishing costs of the congress. Apart from this amount, 325.000 Turkish Liras were allocated for the repair of the major Byzantine monuments in Istanbul; 200.000 Turkish Liras for Hagia Sophia, 60.000 Turkish Liras for Hagia Irene, 25.000 Turkish Liras for Yedikule Fortress and the Golden Gate, and 40.000 Turkish Liras for Chora Museum, Fethiye Mosque, Fenari İsa Mosque, Bodrum Mosque, and Tekfur Palace. The amounts allocated for the Byzantine monuments were a part of a total budget of 2.500.000 Turkish Liras for both the Ottoman and the Byzantine monuments scattered all around Turkey.[22]

---

22 https://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d10/c005/tbmm10005042.pdf.

Both from the minutes of the sessions of the Assembly and from other sources, we learn that a committee was established to review the monuments which were included in the repair programme initiated for the congress. This committee was composed of the General Director of the Museum and Antiquities, archaeology professors, directors of the museums in Istanbul (the museums are not specified), a director from the Ministry of Public Works, and Burhanettin Onat.[23]

Architect Cahide Tamer (1915-2005), who was working at the Istanbul Surveying Office and at the Permanent Committee of Old Monuments during that period, was also a member of the committee mentioned above. As a member, she was commissioned to prepare the budget estimates and later on became the main figure executing this repair campaign. In one of her interviews, she describes the planned work on the Byzantine monuments as "basic repair", "protective measures towards the environmental effects" and "not comprehensive restorations" (Başarır 1995, 94-8).

In a short period, Tamer completed the planned repair works and made these monuments 'ready' for the congress. She continued to carry out repair or restoration works on some of these monuments during the following years (Tamer 2003, 121). This campaign, initiated by the government and executed by Cahide Tamer contributed to the survival of most of the major Byzantine monuments in Istanbul. As we can trace from Cahide Tamer's personal archive, some of the monuments she worked on were severely damaged and were left abandoned for long periods. The basic protective measures were followed by comprehensive restoration projects during the following decades by the successors of Tamer and these efforts in total helped these structures to reach to the present day.

One of the long-term projects Tamer has executed occurred at the Land Walls, Yedikule Fortress, and the Golden Gate. Her work at Yedikule Fortress and the Golden Gate started in 1958 and continued until 1970 (Tamer, Kumbaracılar 1996, 49). After the Land Walls were registered as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1985, the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality opened a tender in 1986 to document and conserve some parts of the Land Walls. Between 1988 and 1990, conservation activities continued at the northern parts of the monument. One of the extensive and scientifically accurate restoration projects was conducted by a team from Istanbul Technical University from 1991 to 1994.[24]

After the local elections in March 1994, the current president of the Turkish Republic, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, was elected as the may-

---

23 https://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d10/c005/tbmm10005052.pdf.

24 https://istanbulsurlari.ku.edu.tr/en.
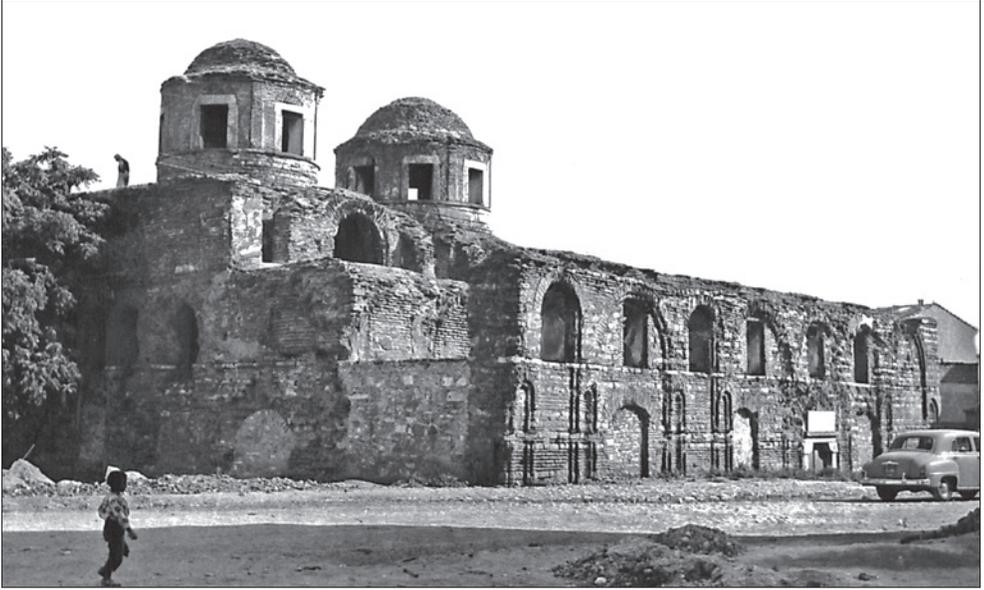
Figure 4   Cahide Tamer, photo of the Church of Monastery of Lips (present-day Fenari İsa Mosque). 1959.
© Cahide Tamer Historic Buildings Restoration Projects Collection,
Suna Kıraç Libray, Koç University, Istanbul, Turkey

or of Istanbul and continued to serve as the mayor until December 1997. According to the Municipalities Law dated 14 June 1930, the municipalities were authorised as the legal entities holding the ownership of their city walls (Madran 1996, 66). From 1994 until 2019, when a social democrat party's candidate was chosen as the new mayor of Istanbul, almost no preventive measures or restorations to consolidate the city walls occurred. Within this 25-year period, some parts of the walls collapsed.

One of the major interventions during this period took place at the Palace of Porphyrogenetos (present-day Tekfur Palace). The intervention involved extensive reconstruction, and the monument lost most of its original architectural features. Currently, the monument functions as a museum focusing on its Ottoman period and the ceramic production of that period.[25]

In February 2021 the new administration of Istanbul introduced a restoration campaign under the supervision of a scientific board, fo-

---

[25]   https://www.tekfursarayi.istanbul/en.

cusing on the parts bearing a high risk of collapse at the land walls.[26] A restoration project started in June 2021 at the Boukoleon Palace, one of the major surviving parts of Constantinople's Great Palace.

Another important part of the Byzantine built heritage of Istanbul, basically, the churches converted into mosques, is administered by the Directorate of the Pious Foundations. After the repairs conducted by Architect Cahide Tamer mentioned earlier, most of these monuments were either left in that state of preservation or witnessed poor interventions. After Istanbul was declared as the European Capital of Culture in 2010, the restorations of the Byzantine monuments in Istanbul gained momentum. This initiative resembles the one taken for the 10th International Congress of Byzantine Studies in 1955.

Apart from Hagia Sophia, which is constantly under restoration or repair, other Byzantine monuments, especially the mid-Byzantine churches such as the Church of Pammakaristos Monastery (present-day Fethiye Mosque), the Church of Monastery of Lips (present-day Fenari İsa Mosque) [fig. 4], the Church of Pantepoptes (present-day Eski İmaret Mosque), the church of Hagios Theodoros (present-day Molla Gürani Mosque) and the Masjid of Şeyh Süleyman are the ones that were restored between 2010 and 2021. As in the example of the Masjid of Şeyh Süleyman, the Directorate collaborated with an Italian team of experts within the framework of Med-Art Project. Apart from positive and successful restorations of the Byzantine monuments of Istanbul, unfortunate cases also occurred. Tekfur Palace went under a destructive restoration in 2015.

There is a settled discourse in the restoration and preservation circles of Turkey, advocating the idea that the Byzantine heritage has been neglected for decades. For certain monuments, such as the city walls of Istanbul, this discourse seems valid. But if we investigate the political approaches, realised restoration projects, and the budgets allocated to this field, we can argue that some aspects are missing in this discussion. It is difficult to assert that the Byzantine heritage is deliberately neglected or badly restored. Because the relatively low scientific quality of the restoration projects in Turkey applies to all monuments, no matter what era they belong to. This degree of quality is closely linked with the legal framework, qualified manpower, social and economic priorities. This paper tries to give a broad overview of the restoration projects of the Byzantine heritage of Istanbul, starting from the early years of the foundation of the Turkish Republic, with a special focus on the latest projects.

---

26 https://www.ibb.istanbul/arsiv/37655/imamoglu-yedikule-surlari-onunde-konustu-25-y.

Bibliography

Ahunbay, M.; Ahunbay, Z. (2000). "Recent Work on the Land Walls of Istanbul. Tower 2 and Tower 5". *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, 54, 227-39.

Akyürek, E. (2018). "Byzantine Art History in Turkey from the 1950s to the Present". Bevilacqua, L.; Gasbarri, G. (eds), *Picturing a Lost Empire. An Italian Lens on Byzantine Art in Anatolia, 1960-2000*. Istanbul: ANAMED, 49-65.

Altuğ, K. (2013). *İstanbul'da Bizans Dönemi Sarnıçlarının Mimari Özellikleri ve Kentin Tarihsel Topografyasındaki Dağılımı* (Architectural Features of Byzantine Period Cisterns in Istanbul and Their Distribution in the Historical Topography of the City) [PhD dissertation]. Istanbul: Istanbul Technical University.

Asal, R.; Kızıltan, Z. (2014). "MÖ.7-MS.12. Yüzyıllar Theodosius Limanı'nın 1900 Yılı" (1900 Years of the Theodosian Harbor, 7th Century BCE- 12th Century CE). Ladstätter, Pirson, Schmidts 2014, 377-97.

Asal, R. et al. (2022). "Haydarpaşa Gar Sahası Kazıları" (Haydarpasa Train Station Excavations). Baran Çelik, Önder 2022, 20-30.

Atasoy Yavuzoğlu, N. (2019). "Ülkemizin İlk Bizantolog'u Prof. Dr. Semavi Eyice (1923-2018)" (The First Byzantinist of Our Country Prof. Dr. Semavi Eyice). *Sanat Tarihi Yıllığı*, 28, 131-48.

Atik, Ş. (2007). "Marmaray İstasyon Projesi Kapsamında Üsküdar Meydan Kazısı" (Uskudar Square Excavations of Marmaray Station Project). Pekin, A.K. (ed.), *Gün Işığında İstanbul'un 8000 yılı. Marmaray, Metro, Sultanahmet Kazıları* (Istanbul: 8000 Years Brought to Daylight, Marmaray, Metro, Sultanahmet Excavations). Istanbul: Vehbi Koç Vakfı, 54-64.

Aydıngün, Ş. et al. (2014). "Küçükçekmece Lake's Basin Antique Harbours". Ladstätter, Pirson, Schmidts 2014, 437-44.

Baran Çelik, G.; Önder, D. (eds) (2022). *İstanbul Arkeoloji Müzeleri Yıllığı* (Annals of Istanbul Archaeological Museums). Istanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası Yayınları.

Bardill, J. (1997). "The Palace of Lausus and Nearby Monuments in Constantinople. A Topographical Study". *American Journal for Archaeology*, 101(1), 67-95. https://doi.org/10.2307/506250.

Bardill, J. (2010). "Excavations and Archaeologists at the Hippodrome". Pitarakis B.; Işın, E. (eds), *Hippodrome. A Stage for Istanbul's History*. Istanbul: Pera Müzesi, 83-90.

Bardill, J. (2011). "Eglise Saint-Polyeucte à Constantinople. Nouvelle solution pour l'énigme de sa reconstitution". Spieser, J.-M. (éd.), *Architecture paléochrétienne. Collection Grèce, Rome, Byzance*. Gollion: Infolio, 77-103.

Başarır, B. (1995). "30 Yıl Restorasyon. Cahide Tamer" (30 Years of Restoration. Cahide Tamer). *İstanbul*, 13, 94-8.

Bauer, F.A. (1996). *Stadt, Platz und Denkmal in der Spätantike*. Mainz: P. von Zabern.

Belting, H.; Mango, C.; Mouriki, D. (eds) (1978). *The Mosaics and Frescoes of St. Mary Pammakaristos (Fethiye Camii) at Istanbul*. Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Center for Byzantine Studies.

Berger, A. (1982). *Das Bad in der byzantinischen Zeit*. München: Institut für Byzantinistik und Neugriechische Philologie der Universität.

Berger, A. (1997). "Regionen und Straßen im frühen Konstantinopel". *Istanbuler Mitteilungen*, 47, 349-414.

Berger, A. (2000). "Streets and Public Spaces in Constantinople". *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, 54, 161-72.

Casson, S.; Talbot Rice, D. (1929). *Second Report upon the Excavations Carried out in and near the Hippodrome of Constantinople in 1928*. London: Oxford University Press.

Crow, J.; Bardill, J.; Bayliss, R. (2008). *The Water Supply of Byzantine Constantinople*. London: Society for the Promotion of Roman Studies.

Çurku, Y.; Cengiz, Ü. (2021). "Fethiye Camii/Pammakaristos Manastır Kilisesi Arkeolojik Kazıları" (The Archaeological Excavations at Fethiye Mosque/Pammakaristos Katholikon). *İstanbul Arkeoloji Müzeleri Yıllığı*, 19, 455-67.

Dalgıç, Ö. (2008). *Late Antique Floor Mosaics of Constantinople prior to the Great Palace* [PhD dissertation]. New York: New York University.

Dark, K.; Özgümüş, F. (2013). *Constantinople. Archaeology of a Byzantine Megapolis*. Oxford; Oakville (CT): Oxbow.

Demangel, R.; Mamboury, E. (1939). *Le quartier des Manganes et la première région de Constantinople*. Paris: de Boccard.

Denker, A. (2009). "Eski Sultanahmet Cezaevi Bahçesi'ndeki (Büyük Saray Bölgesi) Kazı Çalışmaları" (The Excavations Conducted in the Garden of the Old Sultanahmet Prison [Great Palace]). *Mimarist*, 31, 91-8.

Diker, H.F. (2016). *Ayasofya ve Onarımları* (Hagia Sophia and Its Repairs). Istanbul: Fatih Sultan Mehmet Vakıf Üniversitesi.

Dirimtekin, F. (1962). "Les fouilles faites en 1946-47 et en 1958-60 entre Sainte-Sophie et Sainte-Irène à Istanbul". *Cahiers archéologiques*, 13, 161-85.

Dolunay, N.; Nauman, R. (1964). "Divanyolu ve Adalet Sarayı Arasındaki Araştırmalar 1964" (Researches Between Divanyolu and Justice Palace 1964). *İstanbul Arkeoloji Müzeleri Yıllığı*, 11, 19-22, 136-40.

Duyuran, R. (1952). "İstanbul Adalet Sarayı İnşaat Yerinde Yapılan Kazılar Hakkında İlk Rapor" (The First Report on the Excavations Conducted prior to the Construction of Istanbul Justice Palace). *İstanbul Arkeoloji Müzeleri Yıllığı*, 5, 23-32.

Duyuran, R. (1953). "İkinci Rapor" (Second Report). *İstanbul Arkeoloji Müzeleri Yıllığı*, 6, 21-7.

Duyuran, R. (1958). "The Remains of the Arch of Triumph". *İstanbul Arkeoloji Müzeleri Yıllığı*, 8, 71-3.

Esmer, M.; Ahunbay, Z. (2013). "İstanbul'da Orta Bizans Dönemi'ne Ait Üç Anıt ile Çevrelerinin Bütünleşik Olarak Korunması İçin Öneriler" (Three Byzantine Period Monuments in Istanbul and a Proposal for Their Integral Protection with Respect to Their Environmen). *Tasarım Kuram*, 15, 35-55.

Fıratlı, N. (1951). "Découverte de trois églises byzantines à Istanbul". *Cahiers archéologiques*, 5, 163-78.

Fıratlı, N. (1978). "New Discoveries Concerning the First Settlement of Ancient Istanbul-Byzantion". Akurgal, E., *The Proceedings of the Tenth Congress of Classical Archaeology* (Ankara-İzmir, 23-30 September 1973). Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 556-78.

Fıratlı, N.; Ergil, T. (1969). "The Milion Sounding". *İstanbul Arkeoloji Müzeleri Yıllığı*, 15-16, 208-12.

Forchheimer, P.; Strzygowski, J. (1893). *Die Byzantinischen Wasserbehalter von Konstantinopel*. Wien: Verlag der Mechitharisten-Congregation.

Ginalis, A.; Ercan Kydonakis, A. (2022). "Some Reflections on the Archaeology of the Late Antique and Byzantine Harbours of Constantinople". Daim, F.; Kislinger, E. (eds), *The Byzantine Harbours of Constantinople*. Heidelberg: Propylaeum, 33-75. Byzanz zwischen Orient und Okzident 24.

Girgin, Ç. (2008). "La porte monumentale trouvée dans les fouilles près de l'ancienne prison de Sultanahmet". *Anatolia Antiqua*, 16(1), 259-90. `https://doi.org/10.3406/anata.2008.1262`.

Gökçay, M. (2010). "Yenikapı Liman Kazıları" (Yenikapi Harbor Excavations). Ödekan, A. et al. (eds), *1. Uluslararası Sevgi Gönül Bizans Araştırmaları Sempozyumu* (International Sevgi Gonul Symposium of Byzantine Studies). Istanbul: Koç Üniversitesi Yayınları, 264-73.

Guilland, R. (1966). "Les thermes de Zeuxippe". *Jahrbuch der Österreichisches Byzantinistik*, 15, 261-71.

Harrison, R.M. (1989). *A Temple for Byzantium. The Discovery and Excavation of Anicia Juliana's Palace-Church in Istanbul*. Austin (TX): University of Texas.

Heher, D. (2016). "Der Palasthafen des Bukoleon". Daim, F. (Hrsg.), *Die Byzantinische Häfen Konstantinopels*. Mainz: Verl. d. Römisch-Germanischen Zentralmuseums, 67-89.

Karagöz, Ş. (2014). "Marmaray Kazıları ve Antik Liman. Khrysopolis Liman" (Marmara Excavations and Antique Harbor. Chrysopolis Harbor). Ladstätter, Pirson, Schmidts 2014, 399-415.

Kılıç Yıldız, Ş. (2011). "A Review of Byzantine Studies and Architectural Historiography in Turkey Today". *Middle East Technical University (METU) Journal of the Faculty of Architecture*, 28, 63-80. `https://doi.org/10.4305/metu.jfa.2011.2.3`.

Kızıltan, Z. (2015). "İstanbul Kazıları Marmaray-Metro Projeleri ve Arkeolojik Kurtarma Kazılarının Şehir Tarihine Katkıları" (Istanbul Excavations Marmaray-Metro Projects and the Contribution of the Archaeological Rescue Excavations in the city's History). Yılmaz, C. (ed.), *Büyük İstanbul Tarihi* (Great Istanbul History), vol. 1. Istanbul: İSAM, 363-4.

Kocabaş, U. (2013). "A New Milestone in Ship Archaeology. The Yenikapı Shipwrecks Project". Kızıltan, Z. (ed.), *Stories from the Hidden Harbor Shipwrecks of Yenikapı*. Istanbul: Istanbul Arkeoloji Müzesi, 35-46.

Kuniholm, P.I. et al. (2015). "Of Harbors and Trees. The Marmaray Contribution to a 2367-Year Oak-Tree-Ring Chronology from 97 Sites for the Aegean, East Mediterranean, and Black Seas". Magdalino, P.; Ergin, N. (eds), *Istanbul and Water*. Leuven: Peeters, 47-91.

Ladstätter, S.; Pirson, F.; Schmidts, T. (Hrsgg) (2014). *Häfen und Hafenstädte im östlichen Mittelmeerraum von der Antike bis in byzantinische Zeit. Neue Entdeckungen und aktuelle Forschungsansätze*. Istanbul: Ege Yayınları. *BYZAS* 19. Österreichisches Archäologisches Institut Sonderschriften 52.

Macridy-Bey, T.; Casson, S. (1931). "Excavations at the Golden Gate, Constantinople". *Archaeologia*, 81, 63-84.

Madran, E. (1996). "Cumhuriyet'in İlk Otuz Yılında (1920-1950) Koruma Alanının Örgütlenmesi-I" (The Organization of the Field of Restoration During the First 30 Years of the Republic-I). *Ortadoğu Teknik Üniversitesi Mimarlık Fakültesi Dergisi*, 16(1-2), 59-97.

Mamboury, E. (1936). "Les fouilles byzantines à Istanbul et dans sa banlieue immédiate aux XIXᵉ et XXᵉ siècles". *Byzantion*, 11, 229-83.

Mamboury, E. (1951). "Les fouilles Byzantines à Istanbul et ses environs et les trouvailles archéologiques faites au cours de constructions ou de travaux officiels et privés depuis 1936". *Byzantion*, 21, 425-59.

Mamboury, E.; Wiegand, T. (1934). *Die Kaiserpaläste von Konstantinopel zwischen Hippodrom und Marmara-Meer*. Berlin; Leipzig: De Gruyter.

Mango, C. (1985). *Le développement urbain de Constantinople (IVᵉ-VIIᵉ siècles)*. Paris : de Boccard.

Mango, C. (1993). "The Work of M.I. Nomidis in the Vefa Kilise Camii, Istanbul (1937-38)". *Studies on Constantinople*. Aldershot: Variorum, essay XII.

Mango, C. (1997). "The Palace of the Boukoleon". *Cahiers archéologiques*, 45, 41-50.

Mango, C.; Ševčenko, I. (1961). "Remains of the Church of St. Polyeuktos at Constantinople". *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, 15, 243-7.

Mesguich, R. (1914). "Un palais de Byzance. «La Maison de Justinien». Premiers travaux (Octobre-Décembre 1913)". *Comptes rendus des séances de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres*, 58(4), 444-51.

Müller-Wiener, W. (1977). *Bildlexikon zur Topographie Istanbuls, Byzantion– Konstantinupolis– Istanbul bis zum Beginn d. 17. Jhs.* Tübingen: Wasmuth.

Mundell Mango, M. (2001). "The Porticoed Streets at Constantinople". Necipoğlu, N. (ed.), *Byzantine Constantinople. Monuments, Topography and Everyday Life*. Leiden; Boston; Köln: Brill, 29-51.

Naumann, R. (1966). "Der antike Rundbau beim Myrelaion und der Palast Romanos I. Lekapenos". *Istanbuler Mitteilungen*, 16, 199-216.

Naumann, R. (1976). "Neue Beochachtungen am Theodosiosbogen und Forum Tauri in Istanbul". *Istanbuler Mitteilungen*, 26, 117-41.

Newton, C.T. (1865). *Travels and Discoveries in the Levant*. 2 vols. London: Day & Son.

Niewöhner, Ph. (2010). "Der frühbyzantinische Rundbau beim Myrelaion in Konstantinopel. Kapitelle, Mosaiken und Ziegelstempel". *Istanbuler Mitteilungen*, 60, 411-59.

Ousterhout, R. (2015). "Water and Healing in Constantinople. Reading the Architectural Remains". Pitarakis, B. (ed.), *Life Is Short, Art Long. The Art of Healing in Byzantium*. Istanbul: Pera Müzesi Yayınları, 64-77.

Öniz, H.; Kaya, H.; Aydingün, S. (2014). "A Harbour Structure at Beylikdüzü, Istanbul". *International Journal of Nautical Archaeology*, 43(1), 179-84. https://doi.org/10.1111/1095-9270.12048.

Özgümüş, F. (2012). "Bukoleon Sarayı 2009 yılı Temizlik Çalışmaları/Cleaning Works of Bukoleon Palace During 2009 Season". *Vakıf Restorasyon Yıllığı*, 4, 64-79.

Özgümüş, F. et. al. (2017). "Report of the New Findings from Byzantine Istanbul". *Istanbuler Mitteilungen*, 67, 330-7.

Pasinli, A.; Soyhan, C. (1975). "Dragos'taki Hamam Kazısı" (A Bath Excavation in Dragos). *İTÜ Bülteni*, 1(2), 2-3.

Pasinli, A.; Soyhan, C. (1978). "Cevizli (Dragos) Kazısı" (Cevizli [Dragos] Excavation). *Turing Belleteni*, 62(341), 30-3.

Peschlow, U. (1995). "Mermerkule. Ein spätbyzantinischer Palast in Konstantinopel". Borkopp, B.; Steppan, B. (Hrsgg), *Studien zur byzantinischen Kunstgeschichte. Festschrift für Marcell Restle*. Amsterdam: Hakkert, 93-7.

Sağlam, S.H. (2018). *Urban Palimpsest at Galata and an Architectural Inventory Study for the Genoese Colonial Territories in Asia Minor* [PhD dissertation]. Milano: Politecnico di Milano.

Schneider, A. (1943). "Grabung im Bereich des Euphemia-Martyrions zu Konstantinopel". *Archaeologischer Anzeiger*, 58, 255-89.

Schreiner, P. (2013). "The Architecture of Aristocratic Palaces in Constantinople in Written Sources". Ödekan, A. et al. (eds), *The Byzantine Court Source of Power and Culture = Papers from the Second International Sevgi Gönül*

Byzantine Studies Symposium (Istanbul, 21-3 June 2010). Istanbul: Koç University Press, 37-9.

Sevgili, S. et al. (2010). *Dragos Kazısı*, *Tekel Arazisinde Bir Bizans Hamamı* (Dragos Excavation, a Byzantine Bath in the Tekel Factory). Istanbul: Chiviyazıları Yayınevi.

Sevinç, F. (2014). *İstanbul, Kartal'da Bizans Dönemi Hamamı Yapısı* (A Byzantine period Bath Complex in Kartal, Istanbul) [MA thesis]. Ankara: Hacettepe Üniversitesi.

Striker, C.L.; Kuban, D. (1971). "Work at Kalenderhane Camii in Istanbul. Third and Fourth Preliminary Reports". *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, 25, 254-5.

Striker, C.L. (1981). *The Myrelaion (Bodrum Camii) in Istanbul*. Princeton (NJ): Princeton University Press.

Tamer, C. (2003). *İstanbul Bizans Anıtları ve Onarımları* (The Byzantine Monuments of Istanbul and Their Repairs). Istanbul: Turing.

Tamer, C.; Kumbaracılar, İ. (1996). *İstanbul Surları ve Yedikule* (City Walls of Istanbul and Yedikule). Istanbul: Turing.

Waksman Y. et al. (2009). "Les ateliers de céramiques de Sirkeci (Istanbul). Résultats de la campagne 2008". *Anatolia Antiqua*, 17(1), 457-67. `https://www.tbmm.gov.tr/tutanaklar/TUTANAK/TBMM/d10/c005/tbmm10005052.pdf`.

La matérialité des collections byzantines. Le cas des textiles

Marielle Martiniani-Reber
Conservatrice en chef honoraire, Musée d'art et d'histoire, Genève

Abstract   Taking up the main arguments of John Beckwith's presentation, "Byzantine tissues", delivered at the *XIV International Congress of Byzantine Studies*, we propose a state of the question of the study of Byzantine textiles. Some of the problems cited in his article remain recurrent, but refined technical analyses, as well as examinations of iconography and style, have advanced the possibilities of dating the silks that have come down to us and of locating their origin. This evolution is important since most Byzantine fabrics were discovered in Western reliquaries where they served as relic envelopes, and are devoid of any historical information.

Keywords   Textiles. Silks. Embroidery. Studies. Analysis. Progress.

Summary   1 Introduction. – 2 Les instruments du tissage. – 3 Les armures de tissage et les analyses textiles. – 4 La typologie des décors textiles. –5 Différence de qualité des textiles. – 6 Production latine en Grèce et à Chypre. – 7 Les soieries des derniers siècles de Byzance. – 8 Conclusion.

1 Introduction

Au cœur de cette séance plénière consacrée au Patrimoine, la matérialité des œuvres et objets byzantins nous a semblé l'occasion de revisiter la présentation de John Beckwith[1] lors du XIVe Congrès international des études byzantines tenu à Bucarest en septembre 1971, dont le texte fut ensuite publié sous le titre « Byzantine Tissues » (Beckwith 1974). Dans cet article, l'auteur considérait que ce champ d'étude est peut-être le plus complexe de l'histoire de l'art, et évoquait les qualités qui lui semblaient nécessaires, notamment la connaissance des différents procédés de tissage, à laquelle s'ajoute bien évidemment celle du contexte historique, aussi bien de Byzance que des régions limitrophes puisque les textiles sont liés aussi bien aux échanges diplomatiques qu'au culte des reliques.

Actuellement, les étoffes qui nous sont parvenues sont largement dispersées dans le monde occidental, dans les musées, dans les trésors des églises, sans oublier les bibliothèques patrimoniales où des reliures de manuscrits peuvent receler des soies byzantines (voir Muthesius 1978), car, en dehors des étoffes mises au jour en Égypte, celles qui nous sont parvenues, et donc que nous connaissons le mieux, sont les soieries façonnées enveloppant les reliques. Au regard de ces collections, bien que les exemples découverts dans les fouilles archéologiques d'Égypte soient nombreux, ils témoignent avant tout de la production locale, principalement des vêtements, des pièces d'ameublement ou de fragments de vêtements, évocateurs de la vie quotidienne, réutilisés dans un contexte funéraire. Parmi ces pièces, on trouve aussi des éléments de qualité exceptionnelle.[2] Malheureusement, la grande majorité de ces tissus a été découverte lors de fouilles menées de façon expéditive, sans méthode scientifique, à la fin du XIXe siècle, nous privant ainsi de précieuses données chronologiques.[3] Toutefois, ce manque commence à être pallié par des analyses au C14, de moins en moins destructives et de plus en plus abordables du point de vue financier, qui permettent peu à peu de fixer une chronologie.

---

1 John Gordon Beckwith (1918-91) historien de l'art britannique qui fut d'abord assistant conservateur au département des textiles au Victoria and Albert Museum, puis y fut promu le conservateur en chef en 1958. La même année il organisa les deux grandes expositions d'art byzantin à Londres et à Édimbourg. En 1974, il devient conservateur du département d'architecture et sculpture jusqu'en 1979. Il enseigna également à l'Université d'Oxford.

2 Plusieurs tentures à images mythologiques sont conservées à la Fondation Abegg en Suisse ; l'une, montrant la Vierge entre les archanges et autres saints, est présentée au Musée d'art et d'histoire de Genève, pour ne citer qu'un seul exemple, voir Martiniani-Reber 1991, 36.

3 Les observations d'Albert Gayet (1856-1918) lors des fouilles d'Antinoë ont été publiées de manière succincte dans les *Annales du Musée Guimet*, voir Dawson 1951, 61-2 et Martiniani-Reber et al. 1997, 34.

Les principes requis de ce domaine d'étude ayant été énoncés par John Beckwith, il y a quelque cinquante ans, il est tentant, lors de cette partie de la séance plénière, de mesurer les progrès qui ont été faits dans ce laps de temps, mais aussi les points pour lesquels nos connaissances ont stagné.

2 Les instruments du tissage

Dès le début de son article, John Beckwith souligne la totale méconnaissance du métier à tisser utilisé pour la fabrication des tissus façonnés, le métier dit à la tire. L'existence de ce métier n'a pu être établie qu'à partir de l'observation des techniques employées. Cette constatation est malheureusement toujours d'actualité, aucune illustration ni trace archéologique ne nous étant parvenue (Wu 2021). L'usage du métier à la tire qui nécessitait l'action conjointe de deux ouvriers, le tisserand et le tireur de lacs, perdura jusqu'à la création du métier Jacquard dans les premières années du XIXe siècle.

À côté de ce métier complexe, existait un métier beaucoup plus simple, sorte de cadre qui devait convenir au tissage des tapisseries dites coptes, technique employée pour la réalisation des tuniques, tentures et autres textiles de lin et laine. Les peintures murales de l'Antiquité tardive, comme celles du tombeau de Silistra en Bulgarie ou encore les mosaïques de Piazza Armerina en Sicile, montrent que les vêtements de tapisserie étaient répandus dans tout l'empire dès la fin de l'Antiquité (Atanasov 2009 ; Rinaldi 1964-65).

Il en est quasiment de même pour l'arrivée du rouet sous nos latitudes, bien que l'on en possède une belle illustration arabe qui permet d'envisager une étape proche-orientale et sans doute byzantine avant que cet important instrument textile parvienne depuis la Chine ou l'Inde, lieux d'origine possibles, jusqu'en Occident.[4] Le rouet a permis de notables progrès dans la fabrication des fils qui avant lui étaient filés au fuseau,[5] ce qui prenait beaucoup plus de temps (pour les fils, voir Popović 2007).

---

[4] Dans le manuscrit des *Maqamāt* de Hariri, *Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France* MS ar. 5847, fol. 13v, une femme accroupie file à l'aide d'un rouet (voir Lombard 1978, 226-7).

[5] On a retrouvé quantité de fusaïoles d'époque médiévale dans les fouilles d'Égypte. Le Musée d'art et d'histoire de Genève en possède un petit ensemble, voir Martiniani-Reber 1991, 110-11.

3 Les armures de tissage et les analyses textiles

En revanche, les analyses techniques se sont affinées et ont permis de progresser dans l'étude des procédés de fabrication. La création du Centre international d'étude des tissus anciens (CIETA) en 1954, donc deux décennies avant l'article de John Beckwith qui avait bien pu mesurer l'intérêt de ses recherches, a permis cet essor par la rédaction des dossiers de recensement. Ceux-ci sont principalement constitués d'analyses techniques, parfois complétées de mises en carte destinées à la reproduction de ces œuvres anciennes dans une démarche d'archéologie expérimentale.[6] Le CIETA a aussi créé un document essentiel pour l'analyse technique textile : un *Vocabulaire* publié en de nombreuses langues. La version initiale, en français, reprend la terminologie en usage dans l'industrie textile lyonnaise, que les traducteurs adaptent dans les différentes langues étrangères. Ce travail n'a ainsi pu être réalisé qu'avec la collaboration des industriels locaux du textile.

Le caractère international de ce centre a permis de faire connaître quantité de textiles trouvés dans des fouilles archéologiques de divers pays, qui furent étudiés, présentés et publiés par les membres correspondants.

Le rôle de la Fondation Abegg, créée en 1967 près de Berne, commençait à développer son activité dans le domaine de la restauration et de l'étude des textiles à l'époque de la rédaction de l'article de John Beckwith. Tout d'abord destinée à mettre en valeur la collection réunie par Werner et Margaret Abegg, elle a à la fois établi des principes de restaurations fondés sur la réversibilité selon le mode scandinave. L'institution joua très vite un rôle essentiel dans l'étude des tissus anciens ; elle conserve un très bel ensemble de soieries byzantines.

On sait que la grande majorité des textiles byzantins conservée en Occident se compose de damas, de samits ou de taquetés façonnés pour les exemplaires les plus anciens, et de samits façonnés, ainsi que des lampas plus tardifs, car réalisés à partir de la période macédonienne.

4 La typologie des décors textiles

Le système décoratif des soieries byzantines évolue au fil des siècles ; les exemples paléochrétiens offrent deux types de motifs, soit des

---

6 Des copies à l'identique furent exécutées dans les écoles de tissage de Lyon ou de Krefeld. Leurs fils de chaîne étaient en coton, de façon à les distinguer des pièces originales, dont la chaîne était en soie. Cependant quelques-unes entrèrent dans certaines collections muséales.

scènes complexes, voire des cycles, soit des éléments floraux ou géo-métriques. Aux périodes suivantes, à partir de l'époque iconoclaste, les cycles disparaissent au profit d'images-signes, selon l'expression d'André Grabar. Des scènes concises se répètent à l'intérieur de compartiments le plus souvent circulaires ou plus rarement sont disposées en registres horizontaux. Ces organisations relèvent de l'influence sassanide. On n'a pas d'indication précise sur l'impact que pouvait avoir le travail des soyeux iraniens sur les Byzantins, mais il ne faut pas oublier que la route dite de la soie passait par la Perse et que la sériciculture y fut connue sinon antérieurement, mais au moins en même temps qu'à Byzance,[7] les Sassanides entretenant de bonnes relations avec la Chine. Avant la conquête arabe, la Perse rivalisait avec Byzance dans la production des textiles de luxe, et ce phénomène se poursuivit après l'arrivée de l'Islam. D'ailleurs, il est probable que non seulement Byzance connaissait bien les tissus sassanides et post-sassanides mais qu'elle jouait un rôle dans leur commercialisation en Occident. Il faut avouer que l'on ne connaît guère les voies de diffusion des soieries proche-orientales. D'après les sources comme le *Liber Pontificalis*, inventaire papal des églises de Rome, la ville pouvait s'approvisionner en étoffes byzantines, arabes et espagnoles. D'autre part, quantité de fragments contenus dans les reliquaires d'Occident sont certainement arrivés avec les reliques diffusées par la cité papale.[8] Venise recevait également ces précieux tissus que les marchands exportaient plus à l'ouest.[9]

Les regroupements qui ont été proposés par divers chercheurs concernent surtout les régions extérieures à l'Empire byzantin où il est quasiment impossible de déterminer l'origine de ses productions ; ainsi un ensemble cohérent de soieries façonnées au décor influencé par l'art sassanide a été autrefois attribué à la Sogdiane sur la base d'une inscription. Actuellement on préfère situer les ateliers de production dans une aire géographique plus étendue, mais toujours dans le monde islamique et les dates proposées restent toujours fondées (Shepherd, Henning 1957 ; Shepherd 1981 ; Sims-Williams, Khan 2008) ; d'autres textiles, également à décor sassanide, marqués par des fils de chaînes de soie rouge, ont sans doute été fabriqués par des ateliers iraniens au début du VIIe siècle.[10] Plus près

---

7 Pour la mise en place de la sériciculture à l'époque de Justinien, voir Procope, *Histoire des Goths*, 4.17 (ed. Auberger, Roques 2015).

8 Malheureusement les sources écrites ne mentionnent pas ces linceuls de reliques.

9 Le commerce à partir de Rome est attesté par la provenance des reliques qui vraisemblablement parvenaient en Occident enveloppées de tissus précieux en signe de vénération. Voir aussi Guillou 1979. On a aussi un témoignage sur les marchands vénitiens dans la *Vie de saint Géraud* (voir Ganshof 1933).

10 Par exemple au Musée des tissus de Lyon, Martiniani-Reber 1986, 45-6 nos. 10-11, et au Musée du Louvre, Martiniani-Reber 1997, 53 no. 6.

de Byzance, on peut citer la production d'Achmim, dont les soieries bicolores sont caractérisées par des bordures à ornements foliés en forme de chandeliers à cinq branches.[11]

À Byzance même, on a pu attribuer avec certitude un groupe de soieries, à fond rouge, offrant souvent un décor enfermé dans des compartiments circulaires, usant de couleurs ocre, blanche ou verte. La production de ces tissus avait auparavant été située à Alexandrie par Otto von Falke (King 1966). Un rapprochement stylistique peut être fait avec des peintures murales du IXe siècle (Martiniani-Reber 2014).

La question de la transmission des décors n'a été abordée que récemment. Elle est cependant d'importance en raison d'un bon nombre de soieries à décor similaires : parmi elles, on peut citer celles qui représentent le combat d'un lutteur avec un lion qui doit être Samson. Nous avons également conservé plusieurs variantes d'une chasse de Bahram Gour, dans laquelle un cavalier archer abat d'une même flèche un fauve attaquant un onagre.[12] Nous possédons aussi diverses versions d'une image de chasse analogue, mais simplifiée par une réduction des détails, soit polychromes, soit bicolores. L'une d'elles porte même des caractères coufiques archaïques, attestant que ces modèles pouvaient franchir les frontières. Comment les soyeux transmettaient-ils leurs modèles ? Ceux-ci circulaient-ils dans différents centres de production ? Toutes ces questions demeurent sans réponse, bien que des dessins colorés trouvés dans les fouilles d'Égypte font bien penser à des préparations au tissage (Stauffer 2008). Toutefois, ces schémas sont assez sommaires, malgré leur caractère esthétique, et ne sauraient être assimilés à des mises en carte qui mettent en place le tissage d'une unité de décor (on dit le rapport), en organisant chaque fil de chaîne et chaque trame.[13] Les dessins conservés attestent plutôt la volonté de porter des motifs à la connaissance d'autres ateliers ou d'autres artisans qui pouvaient les modifier quelque peu, mais les variantes des soieries que nous avons évoquées montrent que l'utilisation des couleurs est quasiment identique lorsque nous avons affaire à des exemples polychromes. L'étude des variantes d'un même motif liées aux dessins conservés permet de supposer que ces modèles circulaient pour être interprétés librement dans les ateliers qui les recevaient et qui réalisaient alors les

---

11   Ce type de soieries est très bien représenté dans différents musées, voir par exemple Desrosiers et al. 2004, 197-200 ; Martiniani-Reber 1986, 93-5.

12   Pour la série des soieries de Bahram Gour, voir Durand 1992, 195 no. 130.

13   La mise en carte moderne est une figuration des effets de dessin d'un tissu façonné sur un papier quadrillé. Dans le quadrillage chaque interligne vertical représente une découpure chaîne (unité minimale du motif) et un interligne horizontal représente une découpure trame (en général d'une passée dans les tissus à plusieurs trames de couleurs différentes) : description adaptée du *Vocabulaire technique du Centre international des tissus anciens.*

Figure 1 Annonciation, samit de soie. Photographie et copyright Musées du Vatican Musées du Vatican

Figure 2 Annonciation, samit de soie, abbaye Saint-Pierre, Baume-les-Messieurs, Jura. Photographie et copyright K. Otavsky

mises en carte. Ceux-ci pouvaient réduire le nombre de couleurs ou simplifier le dessin selon la clientèle ou le niveau de compétence. En règle générale, on peut estimer que les soyeux byzantins utilisaient des relevés précis, ancêtres des mises en carte, à la différence de ceux de la Perse post-sassanide dont la production révèle souvent des différences importantes d'un motif à l'autre dans un même tissu. Dans les faits, on suppose avec vraisemblance qu'à Byzance les décors se transmettaient d'abord par des modèles adaptables, mais qu'ensuite les artisans dessinaient des sortes de mises en carte afin de réaliser ces décors d'une manière optimale.

Un bon exemple nous est fourni par les deux versions de l'Annonciation qui nous sont parvenues. La première, conservée au Musée du Vatican, d'une très belle facture, possède des parties en pourpre, tandis que la seconde, retrouvée au début du XXe siècle dans un reliquaire de l'abbaye de Baume-les-Messieurs, dans le Jura français, est beaucoup plus usée et lacunaire. Elle est une sorte de simplification de celle du Vatican, présentant un nombre réduit de couleurs et elle est dépourvue de pourpre (Martiniani-Reber 2018) **[figs 1-2]**.

5 Différence de qualité des textiles

Les analyses techniques, qui établissent l'identité du tissu, permettent d'affirmer ou d'infirmer sa qualité. La doublure de reliure d'un manuscrit de la Bibliothèque de Trente, réalisée en un samit façonné de bel aspect du point de vue de ses coloris, et notamment du

rouge, comporte une telle quantité d'erreurs de tissage que son motif présente des déformations extrêmes [fig. 3]. Celles-ci sont d'autant plus flagrantes que nous connaissons plusieurs variantes de son décor, un lutteur au lion qui est sans doute Samson (pour les différentes versions de Samson, voir Martiniani-Reber 2004 ; Desrosiers et al. 2004, 208-10). Un autre exemple, une soierie incisée sans doute postérieure d'un siècle environ, conservée dans le trésor de l'église de l'abbaye de Baume-les-Messieurs, présente quantité d'erreurs de tissage au point que son décor en devient illisible (Martiniani-Reber 2018).

En revanche, le tissu du Musée byzantin de Thessalonique et celui du monastère du Grand-Météore, bien qu'exécuté pour le premier, dans une technique plus simple que le samit façonné, tous deux relèvent d'une belle facture.[14]

On peut ainsi supposer avec vraisemblance que les matières de luxe prévalaient sur la qualité du tissage (Martiniani-Reber 2021b).

La valeur que l'on accordait aux textiles, et notamment aux soieries, a provoqué une rivalité entre ateliers byzantins et sassanides, puis islamiques, ce qui explique la reprise de motifs analogues dans le décor de leurs textiles, sans que l'on puisse connaître leur origine exacte. Cependant, si les médaillons sont habités de divers animaux,

[14]   Un article par Androudis, Martiniani-Reber et Vryzidis examinant ces deux tissus byzantins trouvés en Grèce est prévu dans le prochain numéro du *Journal of Late Antique, Islamic and Byzantine Studies*.

bouquetins, coqs, éléphants, lions, de créatures fantastiques ou encore de scènes de chasse, l'organisation décorative des soieries anciennes varie entre mondes byzantin et persan où, dans ce dernier, sont privilégiées les rangées horizontales. Les médaillons des soies persanes ne prennent vraiment d'importance que durant la période post-sassanide, peut-être sous l'influence byzantine.

6   Production latine en Grèce et à Chypre

Assez récemment, on a pu isoler un petit ensemble de broderies latines pour en situer la réalisation dans le Duché d'Athènes et à Chypre. Michele Bacci a magistralement retracé l'histoire de l'antependium de Giovanni Conti, conservé à Pise et brodé à Chypre (Bacci 2000). On a pu mettre en regard l'antependium d'Othon de Granson, également d'origine chypriote, mais modifié par l'ajout de deux panneaux anglais (*opus anglicanum*) brodés d'un motif floral (Martiniani-Reber 2007 ; Durand, Martiniani-Reber 2010). Le panneau central présente la Vierge entourée des deux archanges Gabriel et Michel, avec un petit chevalier latin agenouillé au pied de Marie. Les armoiries disposées au bas du panneau permettent de l'identifier comme Othon de Grandson. Othon séjourna à Chypre quelques années après la chute de Saint-Jean d'Acre en 1291 et en profita sûrement pour commander ce panneau. Ensuite, il partit en Angleterre pour se mettre au service d'Édouard Ier. Lorsque qu'il fut attribué à la cathédrale de Lausanne, on y ajouta les deux panneaux latéraux anglais afin de le mettre aux mesures du maître-autel en marbre noir de Saint-Tryphon qui subsiste encore de nos jours à la collégiale de Berne. La représentation de la Vierge au centre est byzantine de même que les deux archanges. Seul le petit personnage s'apparente à un chevalier occidental. L'inscription qui accompagne l'image est trilingue, abréviation grecque pour le Christ, abréviation française pour les archanges et enfin latine pour Mater Domini **[fig. 4]**.

Un parement d'autel a pu être réexaminé et attribué avec beaucoup de vraisemblance au duché d'Athènes, dont la capitale était Thèbes (Martiniani-Reber 2021a) **[fig. 5]**. Conservé au trésor de la cathédrale de Sens, et simplement désigné sous l'appellation de parement de la comtesse d'Étampes, l'objet n'a pas été examiné jusqu'ici en regard de son histoire (Santangelo 1959, 16). Jeanne d'Eu, comtesse d'Étampes en raison de sa première union, était aussi l'héritière des ducs d'Athènes par son premier mariage. Or le parement porte les armoiries de ses beaux-parents, celles des familles Brienne et Châtillon, attestant ainsi l'identité des commanditaires Gautier V et son épouse Jeanne de Châtillon. Les diverses scènes du parement sont inscrites dans des compartiments surmontés d'un arc trilobé à la manière des œuvres gothiques. Le choix iconographique apparaît

Figure 4 Antependium de Granson, détail de la partie centrale, broderie sur taffetas de soie aux filés métalliques argent doré et soie. Photographie et copyright Musée historique de Berne

Figure 5 Parement d'Etampes, broderie sur samit uni en soie aux fils de soie et filés métalliques, trésor de la cathédrale Saint-Etienne de Sens. Photographie Lydwine Saulnier-Pernuit, copyright DRAC Bourgogne

inhabituel même si le parement a malheureusement été amputé sur sa partie gauche qui fut sans doute autrefois ornée de l'Annonciation et peut-être de la Visitation. Dans un cycle consacré à Marie se trouve étrangement placée la représentation du Baptême du Christ. La technique de broderie, comme celle des visages, et certains détails tel le vêtement de Marie sont purement byzantins, tandis que les compartiments trilobés, le voile blanc de Marie dans l'Adoration des mages sont occidentaux.[15] L'hypothèse la plus probable est celle d'une réalisation dans le Duché d'Athènes, durant le gouvernement de Gautier V entre 1308 et 1311, date de la mort de Brienne sur le champ de bataille de Halmyros, durant la guerre menée contre les Catalans [fig. 5]. Ce parement pourrait bien être un *unicum*, seul survivant d'une production thébaine qui jouissait pourtant dès le XIIe siècle d'une si grande renommée que Roger II de Sicile n'hésita pas à enlever les soyeux de cette ville pour s'en approprier le savoir (Jacoby 2000 ; Dunn 2015 ; Edbury, Kalopissi-Verti 2007).

À ce petit ensemble, on peut ajouter un centre de corporal (?) conservé au trésor de la cathédrale Saint-Jean de Lyon (Durand, Giovannoni 2010, 120 no. 128), un samit uni de soie rouge, présentant une Vierge à l'Enfant couronnée, entre deux saints, ainsi qu'une broderie constituée de fils métalliques dorés sur un samit de soie jaune, conservée au trésor de la basilique Saint-François à Assise. Dans le

15   Parmi les caractéristiques de la broderie byzantine, on peut citer les visages dont le volume est traité en hachures et non en spirale comme dans les broderies occidentales pour créer le modélé des visages. Les hachures s'apparentent au procédé en usage dans la peinture byzantine, notamment sur les icônes.

premier cas, c'est l'iconographie chrétienne mêlant éléments occiden-
taux et orientaux qui nous conduit à cette hypothèse, tandis que, pour
le second cas, au décor purement ornemental d'oiseaux contournés
d'inspiration byzantine dans des médaillons lobés de type gothique,
nous possédons des indications historiques. En effet, un inventaire
de 1338 la cite comme un don de l'empereur des Grecs qui pourrait
être Baudoin II (1228-61) (Woodfin 2021, 57).

Une autre découverte importante a été la remise en question de
l'hypothèse selon laquelle le point couché rentré retiré ait été uni-
quement utilisé en Occident et le point couché non rentré à Byzance.
Aussi bien Odile Brel Bordaz pour la broderie médiévale occidentale
que Warren Woodfin ont mis à mal ces affirmations même si dans la
majorité des cas cette distinction peut être observée (Brel Bordaz
1983, 39 ; Woodfin 2021).

7 Les soieries des derniers siècles de Byzance

La question des tissus des derniers siècles de Byzance reste mal ré-
solue même si les arts figurés nous éclairent quelque peu. Cepen-
dant, la découverte d'une reliure dans un monastère des Météores ap-
porte quelques informations. La doublure d'une soie rouge et jaune,
déjà évoquée plus haut, ornée de petits rinceaux présente de fortes
analogies avec des décors paléologues, notamment avec l'orfèvrerie
(Androudis, Martiniani-Reber, Vryzidis à paraître). Le manuscrit est
également d'époque paléologue.

Enfin, à l'époque des Paléologue, la broderie connaît un essor
sans précédent dans toute l'orthodoxie qui se déclinera durablement
dans les arts textiles post-byzantins et dont l'étude connaît depuis
quelques années un véritable renouveau.[16]

8 Conclusion

L'étude des textiles historiques constitue une discipline vouée à se dé-
velopper ; des nouvelles régions portent à notre connaissance des arte-
facts trouvés lors de fouilles archéologiques effectuées sur la route de
la soie ou dans les temples d'Extrême-Orient (Francfort 2006 ; Gaspa-
rini 2016). Ces exemples attestent la force de l'influence byzantino-sas-
sanide dans le système décoratif textile. On retrouve des telles soie-
ries jusque dans le trésor du temple Sho-shoin à Nara (Japon). Il reste
d'ailleurs à souhaiter que le catalogue raisonné de l'intégralité de cet

---

16 Notamment : Schilb 2009 ; Woodfin 2012 ; Barkov 2013 ; Kachanova 2013 ; Betan-
court 2015 ; Cernea, Damian 2019.

ensemble soit réalisé en raison de son importance et aussi des informations historiques que l'on pourrait y puiser (Hayashi 1975).

À cela on doit ajouter l'ouverture de reliquaires jusque-là inaccessibles ou la mise en valeur par des publications de tissus méconnus.[17] Ainsi, la quasi-totalité des tissus trouvés dans les trésors d'églises et de monastères de Suisse a été publiée (Schmedding 1978). Il en est de même pour le trésor de Maastricht (Stauffer 1991). Des publications de trésors français comme celui de la cathédrale de Sens, pour lequel on ne dispose guère que de travaux anciens (Chartraire 1897 et 1911 sont les premières publications d'envergure de ce trésor textile), sont prévues dans un proche délai. Des collections muséales ont été également l'objet de catalogues raisonnés comme celles du Musée des tissus de Lyon, du Musée du Moyen Âge et des thermes de Cluny, du Kremlin de Moscou (Barkov 2013 ; Kachanova 2013) et d'autres, tandis que d'autres ouvrages ont présenté des ensembles textiles conservés dans des trésors d'églises et des musées (Martiniani-Reber 1986 ; Desrosiers et al. 2004 ; Muthesius 1997), sans compter la multiplication et l'apport bien connu des expositions depuis cinquante ans.

D'autres publications sont amenées à susciter un plus grand intérêt pour les textiles anciens. On peut citer la prochaine parution d'un ouvrage consacré aux tissus byzantins, coptes, latins d'Orient et post-byzantins, en grec, qui constitue une première dans cette langue (Androudis, Vryzidis, Martiniani-Reber à paraître). L'accent sera porté sur les textiles conservés en Grèce et aussi sur la technique. Nous espérons vivement que ce livre encouragera les études dans le domaine textile en Grèce où, jusqu'à une époque récente, les recherches se sont surtout concentrées dans le domaine de la broderie.

D'autres informations capitales sont apportées par différents textes pour la dénomination des textiles ou objets textiles : la terminologie de la base *Typica* offre un grand intérêt principalement pour l'étude des tissus d'usage quotidien.[18] On y constate la valeur accordée aux textiles d'ameublement et aux vêtements qui font partie des biens mentionnés dans les testaments, ainsi que les variantes des appellations. Grâce à cette base de données qui repère les appellations ou les sommaires descriptions, nous sommes peut-être à même d'appréhender des textiles dont l'usage important ne nous était guère connu jusque-là comme ceux doublés de fourrure (voir Martiniani-Reber 2015).

---

[17]   On peut citer les tissus contenus dans les reliquaires du trésor de la cathédrale de Sens qui seront présentés dans une prochaine publication, et l'article de Maximilien Durand sur le reliquaire de Sainte Hélène au trésor de la cathédrale de Troyes ou encore les tissus de Jouarre ou de Chelles (voir Laporte 1988).

[18]   Créée à l'Université de Fribourg en Suisse et maintenant hébergée par le Comité français des études byzantines, la base de données rassemble différentes mentions d'objets contenus dans des textes d'archives byzantins. Aux termes grecs sont proposées des traductions française et anglaise.

Les analyses des images offrent parfois des informations essentielles ; en effet, les enluminures des manuscrits byzantins nous donnent une idée de produits textiles qui, sans elles, nous seraient à jamais inconnus. Elles montrent des tentes, des drapeaux ou des fanons, des tapis ou des couvertures (Tsamakda 2002). et sans doute l'analyse systématique de ces représentations pourrait nous apporter des informations utiles même si l'on a souvent affaire à des reprises de modèles anciens qui deviennent des stéréotypes.

La traduction anglaise du *Livre des dons et des raretés* (ed. Hijjawi Qaddumi 1996) a particulièrement mis en lumière les relations de Byzance avec le monde arabe aux époques macédonienne et fatimide. Le texte arabe illustre parfaitement la rivalité des deux empires et la valeur qui était accordée aux produits byzantins, notamment aux soieries. On a pu mettre en regard les descriptions de cet ouvrage avec les miniatures du manuscrit impérial du Ménologe de Basile II, dont la qualité et la précision des peintures permettent les rapprochements avec des tissus existants. Il a été possible de montrer que si des costumes correspondaient bien aux stéréotypes byzantins, d'autres étaient parfaitement contemporains de l'illustration du livre. Certaines miniatures attestent même la connaissance que les peintres avaient des tissus islamiques (Cornu, Martiniani-Reber 1997). Elles montrent aussi que Byzantins et Arabes, puisque les bourreaux des martyrs sont généralement représentés comme ces derniers, appréciaient les mêmes étoffes, notamment les soieries monochromes dites incisées (Schorta 2001). Nous possédons un grand nombre de ces soies dans les trésors de nos églises occidentales, chasubles et autres ornements liturgiques. La grande majorité est ornée de motifs géométriques ou floraux. On en connaît d'époque paléochrétienne, réalisées en damas ou en taqueté, avant de se développer en armure samit, puis lampas. L'armure du lampas a d'ailleurs sans doute été créée afin de donner plus de lisibilité aux motifs des soies monochromes qui à Byzance étaient fort en vogue à la période macédonienne. En arabe, elles pourraient avoir été désignées par l'appellation « soie borgne » *al-harīr al-madfūn* ou encore *kimhā* (en grec καμοχάς) ou encore par le terme *būqalamūn* dérivé du grec ὑποκάλαμον (Lombard 1978, 242). Toutefois, l'interprétation de ces termes reste hypothétique.

Le *Livre des dons et des raretés* qui énumère les cadeaux diplomatiques offerts aux souverains fatimides, révèle, au-delà l'attrait qu'exerçaient les tissus byzantins auprès du monde arabe, le manque de compréhension dans la lecture des décors. Les portraits des empereurs byzantins à cheval luttant contre des fauves sont perçus par le rédacteur arabe comme de simples chasses (Hijjawi Qaddumi 1996, 99-100, § 73). Cependant, cette omission pourrait être voulue, masquant le fait de ne pas vouloir reconnaître le symbole du souverain byzantin.

Après la parution de l'article de Beckwith, un type de textiles a pu être défini, le byssus, parfois confondu, y compris par les Anciens, avec du lin très fin. Or, il s'agit d'une fibre très rare, produite par une grosse moule possédant de longs filaments mordorés qui lui permettent de s'accrocher aux rochers. Nous n'en possédons que peu d'exemples dont un bonnet médiéval occidental trouvé à Saint-Denis (Wyss 2001). On en produisit en Italie au cours du XIXe siècle et actuellement la production perdure en Sardaigne où la fibre est utilisée pour fabriquer des fils de broderie. L'existence du byssus à Byzance est bien attestée par Procope qui nous décrit assez précisément sa présence dans des vêtements d'apparat offerts par Justinien aux princes d'Arménie.[19] On a aussi pu dégager quelques traits de la production textile arménienne, fort réputée, notamment dans le monde arabe. Toutefois, il reste sans doute beaucoup de découvertes à faire dans ce domaine, particulièrement dans les bibliothèques, ou encore dans le matériel archéologique excavé à Ani.

Cet exposé, qui a rapidement retracé une brève histoire des recherches textiles depuis l'article de John Beckwith, atteste leur développement et propose quelques pistes possibles de leur avenir. Nous avons émis le souhait d'une multiplication des analyses C14, des analyses techniques visant à déterminer précisément les armures des tissages, ainsi que celles des teintures, de même qu'un accroissement des publications et des expositions offrant de nouvelles trouvailles à la portée du plus grand nombre.

---

[19] Pour le byssus, voir Maeder, Hänggi, Wunderlin 2004. Le byssus était aussi fort prisé chez les Arabes.

Bibliographie

Androudis, P.; Martiniani-Reber, M.; Vryzidis, N. (à paraître). *Ο διάκοσμος των μεταξωτών στην περίοδο της Εικονομαχίας.*

Atanasov, G. (2009). « Late Antique Tomb in Durostorum-Silistra and Its Master ». *Revista Pontica*, 40, 447-68.

Auberger, J. ; Roques, D. (éds) (2015). *Procope : Histoire des Goths*. 2 vols. Paris : Les Belles Lettres.

Bacci, M. (2000). « Tra Pisa e Cipro, la committenza artistica di Giovanni Conti (+1332) ». *Annali della Scuola normale superiore di Pisa*, 5(2), 343-86.

Barkov, A. (2013). « Byzantine Liturgical Vestments in the Collection of the Moscow Kremlin Museums ». *Byzantine Antiquities. Works of Art from the Fourth to Fifteenth Centuries in the Collection of the Moscow Kremlin Museums*. Moscow : Moscow Kremlin Museums, 452-7.

Beckwith, J. (1974). « Byzantine Tissues ». Berza, M. ; Stănescu, E. (éds), *Actes du XIVe congrès international des études byzantines*. Bucharest : Editura Academiei Republicii Socialiste România, 343-53.

Betancourt, R. (2015). « The Thessaloniki Epitaphios. Notes on Use and Context ». *Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies*, 55, 489-535.

Brel-Bordaz, O. (1983). *Broderies d'ornements liturgiques, XIIIe-XIVe siècles. "Opus anglicanum"*. Paris : Nouvelles Éditions Latines.

Cernea, E. ; Damian, I. (2019). « La broderie de tradition byzantine en Roumanie (XIVe-XVIIe siècle) ». Durand, J. (éd.), *Broderie de tradition byzantine en Roumanie du XVe au XVIIe siècle. Autour de l'Étendard d'Étienne le Grand*. Paris : Musée du Louvre.

Chartraire, E. (1897). *Inventaire du Trésor de l'église primordiale et métropolitaine de Sens*. Sens ; Paris : P. Duchemin ; A. Picard & Fils.

Chartraire, E. (1911). *Les tissus anciens du trésor de la cathédrale de Sens*. Paris : H. Champion.

Cornu, G. ; Martiniani-Reber, M. (1997). « Étoffes et vêtements dans le Ménologe de Basile II. Reflets des courants d'échanges entre Byzance et le monde islamique ». *Quaderni di Studi arabi*, 15, 1997, 45-64.

Dawson, W. (1951). *Who Was Who in Egyptology*. London : Egypt Exploration Society.

Desrosiers, S. et al. (éds) (2004). *Soieries et autres textiles de l'Antiquité au XVIe siècle. Catalogue du Musée national du Moyen Âge et des thermes de Cluny*. Paris : Réunion des Musées Nationaux.

Dunn, A. (2015). « The Rise and Fall of Towns, Ports and in Western Beotia. The Problem of Thisvi-Kastorion ». Tsougarakis, N. ; Lock, P. (eds), *A Companion to Latin Greece*. Leiden : Brill, 38-71.

Durand, J. (éd.) (1992). *Byzance, l'art byzantin dans les collections publiques françaises*. Paris : Musée du Louvre.

Durand, J. ; Giovannoni, D. (éds) (2010). *Chypre entre Byzance et l'Occident IVe-XVIe siècle = Catalogue de l'exposition* (Paris, 28 octobre 2012-28 janvier 2013). Paris : Musée du Louvre.

Durand, M. (1998). « Les fragments des reliques byzantines de sainte Hélène d'Athyra retrouvés au trésor de la cathédrale de Troyes ». *Cahiers archéologiques*, 46, 1998, 169-82.

Durand, J. ; Martiniani-Reber, M. (2010). « Opus Ciprense. Oiselets, or de Chypre et broderies ». Durand, Giovannoni 2010, 266-71.

Edbury, P. ; Kalopissi-Verti, S. (2007). « Relations between East and West in the Lordship of Athens and Thebes after 1204. Archaelogical and Artistic Evidence ». Edbury, P. ; Kalopissi-Verti, S. (eds), *Archaeology and the Cru-sades = Proceedings of the Roundtable* (Nicosia, 1 February 2005). Athens : Pierides Foundation, 1-33.

Francfort, H.-P. (2006). « Découvertes et route de la soie ». Sabouret, J.-F. (ed.), *The Asian Side of the World*. Paris : Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique Éditions, 399-403.

Ganshof, F. (1933). « Notes sur un passage de la vie de saint Géraud d'Auril-lac ». Ancel, J. et al. (éds), *Mélanges offerts à Nicolas Iorga*. Paris : J. Gamber, 295-308.

Gasparini, M. (2016). « Sino-Iranian Textile Patterns in Trans-Himalayan Area ». *The Silk Road*, 14, 84-96.

Guillou, A. (1979). « Rome, centre de transit des produits de luxe d'Orient au haut Moyen Âge ». *Zograf*, 10, 17-21.

Hayashi, R. (1975). *The Silk Road and the Shoso-in*. New York ; Tokyo : Weath-erhill.

Hijjawi Qaddumi, G. (ed.) (1996). *Book of Gifts and Rarities, Kitab, al-Hadaya wa al-Tuhaf. Selections Compiled in the Fifteenth Century from an Eleventh-Century Manuscript on Gifts and Treasures*. Cambridge (MA): Harvard University Press.

Jacoby, D. (2000). « The Production of Silk Textiles in Latin Greece ». *Τεχνογνωσία στη Λατινοκρατούμενη Ελλάδα*. Athens : Etva Politistiko Tekhnoloyiko Idri-ma, 22-35.

Kachanova, I. (2013). « Reconstructing the Original Appearance of Two Byz-antine Sakkoses ». *Byzantine Antiquities. Works of Art from the Fourth to Fif-teenth Centuries in the Collection of the Moscow Kremlin Museums*. Moscow : Moscow Kremlin Museums, 458-65.

King, D. (1966). « Les soies façonnées de l'empire carolingien ». *Bulletin de liai-son du Centre international d'étude des tissus anciens*, 23, 49-52.

Laporte, J.-P. (1988). *Le trésor des saints de Chelles*. Chelles : Société archéo-logique et historique de Chelles Société archéologique et historique de Chelles.

Lombard, M. (1978). *Les textiles dans le monde musulman du VIIe au XIIe siècle*. Paris ; La Haye : Mouton.

Maeder, F. ; Hänggi, A. ; Wunderlin, D. (éds) (2004). *Bisso marino, fili d'oro dal fondo del mare, Muschelseide, Goldene Fäden vom Meeresgrund*. Bâle ; Mi-lan : Cinq Continents Éditions.

Martiniani-Reber, M. (1986). *Soieries sassanides, coptes et byzantines, V^e-XIe siècles, Lyon, musée historique des tissus de Lyon*. Paris : Ministère de la culture et de la communication ; Éditions de la réunion des musées na-tionaux.

Martiniani-Reber, M. (1991). *Tissus coptes, collection du Musée d'art et d'histoire, Genève*, vol. 1. Genève : Musée d'art et d'histoire de Genève.

Martiniani-Reber, M. (2004). « L'image du lutteur au lion sur les soieries byzan-tines ». *Bulletin du Centre international d'étude des tissus anciens*, 81, 21-32.

Martiniani-Reber, M. (2007). « Une broderie exceptionnelle conservée en Suisse. L'antependium de Grandson ». Campagnolo, M. ; Martiniani-Reber, M. (éds), *Chypre d'Aphrodite à Mélusine. Éclairages archéologiques et histo-riques*. Genève : La pomme d'or, 85-9.

Martiniani-Reber, M. (2014). « Textiles et décors peints aniconiques ». Campagnolo, M. et al. (éds), *L'aniconisme dans l'art religieux byzantin = Actes du colloque* (Genève, 1-3 octobre 2009). Genève : La pomme d'or, 75-84.

Martiniani-Reber, M. (2015). « La fourrure dans l'Empire byzantin ». Véron-Denise, D. (éd.), *Pelage et plumage. Quand l'animal prend de l'étoffe*. Saint-Maur-des-Fossés : Sepia, 99-108.

Martiniani-Reber, M. (2018). « Les tissus médiévaux de l'abbaye de Baume-les-Messieurs ». *Autour des reliques de saint Césaire d'Arles = Actes du colloque* (Arles, 11-13 octobre 2013). Arles : Amis de saint Trophime, 121-8.

Martiniani-Reber, M. (2021a). « Le parement d'autel de la Comtesse d'Étampes. Une broderie réalisée dans le duché d'Athènes ? », in « L'évolution de la broderie de tradition byzantine en Méditerranée orientale et dans le monde slave (1200-1800) », monogr. no, *Cahiers balkaniques*, 48, 11-43. `https://doi.org/10.4000/ceb.18275`.

Martiniani-Reber, M. (2021b). « Soie et pourpre, note sur les caractéristiques des étoffes façonnées de la période mésobyzantine ». Martiniani-Reber, M. ; Rey, A.-L. ; Lini, G. (éds), *Autour des métiers du luxe = Actes du colloque international organisé dans le cadre de l'exposition "Byzance en Suisse"* (Genève, 26-7 février 2016). Genève : Musée d'art et d'histoire de Genève. `https://bit.ly/3zeoE7P`.

Martiniani-Reber, M. et al. (éds) (1997). *Textiles et mode sassanides, les tissus orientaux conservés au département des Antiquités égyptiennes, Musée du Louvre*. Paris : Musée du Louvre.

Muthesius, A. (1978). « The Silk over the Spine of the Mondsee Gospel Lectionary ». *Journal of the Walters Art Gallery*, 26, 50-73.

Muthesius, A. (1997). *Byzantine Silk Weaving, AD 400 to AD 1200*. Vienna : Fassbaender.

Popović, B. (2007). « The Most Precious Thread in Byzantine and Medieval Serbia ». Grünhart, M. et al. (eds), *Material Culture and Well-Being in Byzantium (400-1453)*. Vienna : Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 193-8.

Rinaldi, M.L. (1964-65). « Il costume romano e i mosaici di Piazza Armerina ». *Rivista dell'Istituto nazionale d'Archeologia e Storia dell'Arte*, n.s. 13-14, 200-68.

Santangelo, A. (1959). *Tessuti d'arte*. Milano : Banca Nazionale del Lavoro.

Schilb, H. (2009). *Byzantine Identity and Its Patron. Embroidered Aëres and Epitaphioi of the Paleologan and Byzantine Periods* [PhD dissertation]. Bloomington : Indiana University.

Schmedding, B. (1978). *Mittelalterliche Textilien in Kirchen und Klöstern der Schweiz*. Bern : Stämpfli.

Schorta, R. (2001). *Monochrome Seidengewebe des hohen Mittelalters*. Berlin : Deutscher Verlag für Kunstwissenschaft.

Shepherd, D. ; Henning, W.B. (1957). « Zandaniji Identified ». Ettinghausen, R. (Hrsg.), *Aus der Welt der islamischen Kunst. Festschrift für Ernst Kühnel*. Berlin : Gebr. Mann, 15-40.

Shepherd, D. (1981). « Zandaniji Revisited ». Flury-Lemberg, M. ; Stolleis, K. (Hrsgg), *Documenta Textilia. Festschrift für Sigrid Mueller-Christensen*. München : Deutscher Kunstverlag, 105-22.

Sims-Williams, N. ; Khan, G. (2008). « Zandaniji Misidentified ». *Bulletin of the Asian Institute*, 22, 207-13.

Stauffer, A. (1991). *Die mittelalterlichen Textilien von St. Servatius in Maastricht*. Bern : Abegg-Stiftung.

Stauffer, A. (2008). *Antike Musterblätter. Wirkkartons aus dem spätantike und frühbyzantinischen Ägypten*. Wiesbaden : Harrassowitz.

Tsamakda, V. (2002). *The Illustrated Chronicles of Ioannes Skylitzes in Madrid*. Leiden : Brill.

Woodfin, W. (2012). *The Embodied Icon. Liturgical Vestments and Sacramental Power in Byzantium*. Oxford : Oxford University Press.

Woodfin, W. (2021). « Underside Couching in the Byzantine World », in « L'évolution de la broderie de tradition byzantine en Méditerranée orientale et dans le monde slave (1200-1800) », monogr. no, *Cahiers balkaniques*, 48, 47-63. https://doi.org/10.4000/ceb.18337.

Wu, G. (2021). « How Did Byzantines Weave ? A Synthesis of Textual, Pictorial, Ethnographical, and Archaeological Evidence ». *Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies*, 61, 368-95.

Wyss, M. (2001). « Bonnet en byssus du XIVe siècle ». *L'archéologue*, 54, 41.

Atypical Patrimony.
Collecting Byzantine Art
in American University Museums

Robert Nelson
Yale University, New Haven

Abstract   American university museums became important institutions for the study and popularisation of Byzantine art in the United States during the first half of the twentieth century. Largely confined to major East Coast universities, university museums, led by Harvard's Dumbarton Oaks, acquired significant amount of Byzantine art between the two World Wars and sponsored excavations. For the most part this interest was motivated not from personal connections with Greek culture or the lands of the Byzantine Empire, but because of the aesthetic significance and scholarly interest of this art. The French and English Mandates in Syria and Palestine aided these acquisitions, a colonial heritage of Byzantine studies that has remained little studied.

Keywords   Byzantine art. American University Museums. Robert and Mildred Bliss. Royall Tyler. French mandate. English mandate.

Summary   1 Introduction. – 2 Patrimoines Atypiques. – 3 State of American Collections. – 4 Royall Tyler, Venice and Byzantine Art. – 5 The Bliss Collection and Harvard University. – 6 Collections of Ivy League Universities. – 7 Colonialism.

1   Introduction

On 23 May 1931, Royall Tyler (1884-1953) wrote Mildred Bliss (1879-1969) about the first international exhibition of Byzantine art that was about to open in Paris. Tyler, one of the organisers of the show, was a self-taught student of Byzantine art, as well as an international banker and later an official of the League of Nations (Nelson 2010, 27). Mildred and her husband Robert founded the Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection of Harvard University. In 1940, they donated their collection, library, and house to Harvard University and thereby created the most important university museum of Byzantine art in America (details of the donation are in Carder 2010a, 13-17). The Paris exhibition was the first time that their objects were shown to the larger public. Among Tyler's problems with the show was the material being sent from America, as he writes:

> I'm sorry to say that the U.S. loan is, apart from your magnificent things, wretched. Mr. Morgan's things were refused at the last minute, and the stuff the American Ctee. headed by Prof. Urge T. Morey, selected, is such rubbish that we are hesitating about exposing it, which makes one feel rather sick considering the huge sums for which the muck is insured.[1]

For my contribution to our session, I want to examine American collections of Byzantine art up to about 1950 with special attention to university museums.[2] The focus throughout will be on the types of objects deemed suitable for a fine art museum, thus excluding coins and archaeological material, as well as illuminated manuscripts, which are normally housed in the rare book rooms of university libraries. Venice, the site of our congress, plays an important role in the history of American university museums, as I will explain. But not all is in agreement in my paper, because the American experience fits poorly into a discussion of *patrimoines byzantins*. It is indeed *atypique*.

---

[1]   Carder, Nelson 2008, an online resource at Dumbarton Oaks: `https://www.doaks.org/resources/bliss-tyler-correspondence`. All references to the Bliss-Tyler letters refer to texts on this site. On the Exposition Internationale d'Art Byzantin, see Lovino 2020 and Labrusse 2018, with photographs of the exhibition.

[2]   Unfortunately, I have not been able to use the Census of Objects of Early Christian and Byzantine Art in North American Collections, which the Blisses started at Dumbarton Oaks in 1938 and occasionally updated thereafter: *Bliss-Tyler Correspondence*, letter of 4 September 1937.

2   Patrimoines Atypiques

The forefathers and foremothers of most Americans were not Byzantines by any stretch of the imagination. I remind you that Constantinople fell in 1453 or 39 years before Columbus reached the outer edges of the American continents. By one accounting, the colonisation of what is the United States of America began in 1607 when the English established Jamestown in Virginia, although the Spanish had come earlier to Florida, but their hold there was tenuous. Early American settlers regarded their cultural ancestry to be English, French, Spanish, or Dutch, all Atlantic states far from the Eastern Mediterranean. Greek immigration to the United States was minimal until 1890, and then increased dramatically up to World War I. However, Greek-Americans have had minimal impact on the collecting of Byzantine art until recently, when the Jaharis family has funded galleries at the Metropolitan Museum in New York and the Art Institute of Chicago, as well as the Jaharis Center at Hellenic College Holy Cross near Boston.

Initially, Byzantine art came to the US through the efforts of New England Protestants, who appreciated it, because it was foreign and different and not part of their heritage, their patrimony. Royall Tyler and Mildred Bliss fit the profile perfectly. Tyler's father belonged to a distinguished New England family, whose ancestors included prominent jurists and playwrights, and of course they were Protestant. His mother's family was different. The daughter of a Slovak physician, she nonetheless became a fervent Christian Scientist, an American denomination that relies on prayer, not modern medicine to heal illness. Her son, in turn, rebelled against his venerable American heritage that his mother carefully had cultivated, as his mother had gone against hers. Royall was largely educated in England, Spain, and Germany and had a strong admiration of Catholicism, although he apparently never converted (Tyler unpublished; on Tyler and the Blisses see Nelson 2010). He spent his life in Europe, and in his youth, his aversion to returning to America dissuaded Mildred from continuing their courtship. She instead married Robert Bliss, but Tyler and his wife Elisina became fast friends with Mildred and Robert for the remainder of their lives (cf. Nelson 2005).

Mildred was from a wealthy family, and her inheritance supported the Bliss's art collecting and the eventual endowment of Dumbarton Oaks (for their biographies, see Carder 2010a). Both Mildred and Robert developed a deep love of Byzantine art, but before examining the origins of their interests, I want to look more closely at Tyler's assessment of American collections of Byzantine art in 1931. In brief, Tyler was right. The American committee, headed by Charles R. Morey, a long-time professor at Princeton University, was sending second-rate objects to the Paris exhibition and insuring them for inflated

amounts. Tyler suspected that collusion was involved, but the limited experience of American agents with assessing Byzantine objects may also have been a factor. Tyler had a poor opinion of Morey, whose theories about the development of late antique art would be decisively rejected by Ernst Kitzinger in his contribution to the Munich Congress of Byzantine Studies (Kitzinger 1958).[3] Tyler referred to Morey as Prof. Urge T. Morey, some kind of American slang of the period that I do not understand, but the reference was not complimentary.[4]

3　State of American Collections

A review of American holdings of Byzantine art before 1950 confirms Tyler's judgment and the importance of his two exceptions, the collections the Blisses and J. Pierpont Morgan, the renown American financier and one of the wealthiest men in the world. He bought on a grand scale and donated over 7,000 works of art to the Metropolitan Museum in New York, including such Byzantine masterpieces as the David Plates and several major tenth-century ivories, as well as the twelfth-century Djumati enamels (cf. Gennari-Santori 2010, 81, 84-5; Metropolitan Museum of Art 1914, 7-8, 11-12, 14-20).[5] Among US collections, only the Cleveland Museum of Art, one of America's "new, cash-rich museums", had an equivalent to Morgan's ivories in its tenth-century Virgin and child, obtained from the Stroganoff collection in 1925 (Rowlands 2020, 537; 2021, 93-5; Moretti 2010; Kalpakcian 2012).[6] When the Metropolitan Museum's Board of Directors decided not to loan the Morgan objects, Tyler was left with very little from America with the exception of the Bliss holdings that Tyler had helped to acquire. These included a large Hestia tapestry that French curators praised[7] and the sixth-century Riha Paten, which went well with Tyler's chalice of the same date. The two were already thought

---

3　The entire article can be read as a refutation of what had become the "Morey School".

4　Tyler uses a similar expression about the Persian scholar Arthur Upham Pope in a letter to Mildred of 17 March 1931. There he refers to two categories, the Urges and the Elmers, neither are positive. On this day, Morey is an Elmer, because he thinks the Andrews Diptych in the Victoria and Albert Museum is a fake.

5　Morgan's Byzantine holdings deserve a separate study.

6　The Blisses would surely have bought the ivory, if Tyler had written them about it, but he did not then have good contacts in Rome. Later there were excited exchanges about a silver dish from the Stroganoff collection, which it turned out to be a fake. That correspondence begins in a letter from Tyler to Mildred Bliss, 8 January 1928, and continues in letters of 31 January, 1 February (1, 2), 17 February, 29 April, 10 May of the same year.

7　Royall Tyler to Mildred Barnes Bliss, 30 April 1931.

to have been found together.[8] We now know that they came from the same Syrian horde, the Kaper Koraon Treasure (Mango 1986, nos. 30, 35). Tyler accurately, if bluntly, summarised the situation in a letter to Mrs. Bliss of 21 June 1934, written after seeing various collections in the States (Carder, Nelson 2008).

4 Royall Tyler, Venice and Byzantine Art

A collector of Byzantine art himself, Royall Tyler initially inspired the Blisses to acquire Byzantine art and then supported their plans to establish a research institute and museum. Since the Dumbarton collection constitutes the finest university museum of Byzantine art in the US, it is essential to ask how and why Tyler became interested in this art. Initially, he favoured the art of medieval Spain, for it resonated with his Catholic sensibilities, and he wrote a well-regarded book about Spain and its art, published in 1909 (Tyler 1909). In the first decade of the twentieth century, he came to love Byzantine art, beginning with a visit to Venice as a sixteen-year-old schoolboy in 1900. As he recounts in his *Autobiography*:

> in San Marco, at Venice, my eyes were opened to color by the earlier mosaics and the enamels of the Pala d'Oro and the Treasure: a revelation comparable with that I had experienced on encountering the liturgy. Domes, pendentives, marble wainscoting, porphyry columns, carved capitals, mosaic pavements and the light in which they bathed, suddenly made me feel that these things were for me. The days in Venice passed as in a dream. I learned that San Mark's sumptuous raiment was loot from Constantinople, and remembered my friend Coryatt's [sic] description of the porphyry Tetrarchs set in the outer wall of the Treasure-house.[9] My experience in Venice opened the door leading to Byzantine art. (Tyler unpublished)

Two years later, Tyler persuaded his mother to take him on a longer visit to Venice. There his earlier sentiments were confirmed:

> While classical art, western primitives and the Renaissance still eluded me, I turned eagerly to Byzantine color and form. (Tyler unpublished)

---

8 Royall Tyler to Mildred Barnes Bliss, 1 February 1924. The Blisses contributed fourteen objects to the exhibition: Musée des Arts Décoratifs 1931, nos. 90, 190*bis*, 273, 339, 347, 367, 369, 371-4, 410, 439, 562 (pp. 75, 92, 105, 116, 347, 123-4, 130, 135, 157).

9 The reference is to the account of the European journey of Coryat (1776).

The expression "color and form" belongs to the language of aesthetic formalism. While neither Tyler nor the Blisses corresponded in detail about recent art, both had a high regard for Matisse, and Tyler knew him personally. Moreover, Mildred Bliss was a trustee of the Museum of Modern Art in New York (cf. Carder 2010a; Nelson 2010). Byzantine art, Formalism, and Modern art were all mixed together in the first two decades of the twentieth century. Key figures were the well-known Roger Fry and the more obscure Matthew Prichard. Fry had written about Morgan's enamels as modern (cf. Fry 1912), and Prichard introduced Henri Matisse to Byzantine art, especially Byzantine coins (Bullen 1999; Nelson 2015, 24-7). Like Tyler, both had had transformative experiences seeing the mosaics and treasury of San Marco. Prichard helped Tyler decipher the inscription on his silver chalice, as he recounted in an ecstatic letter to Mildred Bliss of 11 March 1913:

> Prichard, the only man alive who really knows and feels Byzantine art, and I spent most of last night over the chalice. He says it is a crown of glory, the finest thing out of S. Mark's etc. and tears came to his eyes when the inscription burst upon him. (Carder, Nelson 2008)

In 1914, Prichard went to Germany for language study and was imprisoned there, because he was a citizen of Great Britain, which was then at war with Germany.[10] He never fully recovered from the experience.

5   The Bliss Collection and Harvard University

In contrast, the War brought the Tylers and Blisses closer together, since they all were then in Paris. During the 1920s, the Blisses began to acquire Byzantine objects, including the Riha paten in 1924, but their tastes also led them to other areas. However, by the 1930s and with their growing resolve to create a collection and library about Byzantine art, they focused on acquiring Byzantine objects. During that period, their correspondence with Tyler was full of details about the art market in Paris, the centre for the arts of many periods. With the aid of Wolfgang Fritz Volbach in Rome, Tyler had hopes of obtaining precious ivories from German public collections, because the Nazis considered the Byzantines to be non-Aryan and

---

10   Elisina Tyler to Mildred Bliss, 30 September 1914.

wanted Byzantine objects deaccessioned.[11] Tyler's negotiations largely failed, but the Blisses were able to purchase two sculptures from a villa in Berlin-Potsdam used by the Nazi high command: a figure of Mary turning and praying to the right and the famed relief of a Byzantine emperor that has long ruled over the Dumbarton Oaks collection (on this and the other German negotiations see Nelson 2010, 41-3). The most tantalising and mysterious objects mentioned in the correspondence are archaic Greek sculptures that were excavated on the island of Samos and then brought to a museum in Berlin. Curators had not exhibited the sculpture because of its illegal export from Greece. Selling this material to the Blisses would have solved the problem for them but only by passing it to the Blisses. Thankfully, they did not take the bait.[12] Whatever happened to the sculpture from Samos, if it ever existed, is not known.

6 Collections of Ivy League Universities

What the Blisses managed to acquire during the frenetic period leading up to World War II together with their treasures bought in the 1920s were conveyed to Harvard University in 1940. The result is the finest university museum of Byzantine art in America. No other university museum comes close to matching Dumbarton Oaks. Even though scores of American universities have established museums in recent decades, only a few possess Byzantine objects, mainly those of Ivy League universities, a term that once applied to their athletic conference and now refers to eight universities that are among the oldest in America. All are wealthy, some more than others. Howev-

---

11 Royall Tyler to Mildred Bliss, 4 September 1937: "Fritz [Volbach] is willing to sell Byz. things at present. In your place, I'd buy as many first rate Byz. things from him as I could, even paying big prices for them. We'll see what Fiedler says about the Dresden-Hannover diptych, the Cologne-Deutz lion shroud, etc. And, who knows – Limburg might be pried loose". The greatest of objects is, of course, the celebrated True Cross Reliquary at Limburg an der Lahn.

12 "In addition to the above, there is another matter of which our friend [Volbach] only spoke with bated breath and of which he asked me not to communicate with you unless I could be absolutely certain that the message would reach you without interception. There are in the vaults of the Museum in Berlin several archaic statues, according to our friend of the very finest style of the VI° century B.C. These statues were excavated in the island of Samos some time ago, without the knowledge of the Greek authorities, and discreetly smuggled out of Greek territory. The Germans have never dared to exhibit them, for fear of trouble with the Greek Government. Our friend believes that the State may be willing to sell these statues, no question being asked or information being given as to their provenance, in which case if the point were to be raised later, the State would be alone responsible". Royall Tyler to Robert Woods Bliss, 1 March 1937. The mystery of sculpture from Samos has just now been resolved by Puritani, Maischberger, Sporleder (2022).

er, mere wealth and longevity do not equal deep holdings of Byzantine art, as the Yale University Art Gallery demonstrates, for it has no examples of the type of Byzantine art that the Blisses collected. The University began acquiring art shortly after its founding in 1701 and established the Gallery in 1832, making it the oldest university museum in America (Matheson 2001, 3-21). In 1867, it acquired the Jarvis collection of 119 Italian paintings, including a number from the later thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. They remain one of the Gallery's highlights, but although several panels document the impact of Byzantine art in Italy, none are properly Byzantine (Matheson 2001, 44-53). The Gallery does have a good collection of Byzantine coins and seals, which common among Ivy League museums, but a survey of the coin collections of university museums would require another paper.

Yale, however, did sponsor excavations that yielded important material during the 1920s and 1930s, the time that the Blisses were collecting. Best know is its collaboration with the French Académie des Inscriptions des Belles-Lettres to excavate Dura Europos on the Euphrates River. When British troops discovered the site during World War I, the American archaeologist James Henry Breasted was dispatched to investigate. His brief preliminary report described the frescoes as precursors to Byzantine painting (Breasted 1924). Because of the war, no further study of the site was attempted. Afterwards, Dura became part of the French Mandate, which made possible the joint investigation between Yale and the French Academy. Their discovery of frescoes in a Christian chapel and a Jewish synagogue had important implications for the history of Byzantine art.[13] Today the Yale Gallery has thousands of objects found at Dura, as well as frescoes from the Christian chapel, although they are in a poor state of preservation.

During the interwar period, Yale also collaborated with the British School of Archaeology in Jerusalem and the American Schools of Oriental Research in the excavation of the ancient city of Gerasa (present day Jerash in Jordan). There they found material remains that are properly Byzantine, including a sixth-century floor mosaic with representations of the cities of Alexandria and Memphis. Presently installed on a Gallery wall, the mosaic was previously displayed at the Metropolitan Museum of Art (Brody 2012). As Carl Kraeling explains in his publication of the site, the work at Gerasa was made possible "above all" by the British Mandate in Palestine (Kraeling 1938, 3), the same political context that had enabled the excavation of Dura Europos during the French Mandate of Syria. In both cases, one

---

[13] Hopkins 1979 provides an overview of the excavation. More recently see Brody 2012 and Brody-Hoffman 2011.

goal was the acquisition of objects for the Yale University Gallery of Art (Matheson 2001, 111).

In addition to Dumbarton Oaks in Washington, Harvard University has other museums at its Cambridge campus. For the present purposes, the most relevant is the Fogg Museum, which contains fragments of Coptic textiles, coins, seals, and a few post-Byzantine icons, but none compete with the holdings of Dumbarton Oaks.[14] The Penn Museum at the University of Pennsylvania, another one of the Ivies, contains material from its many excavations as well as other objects donated to it. In terms of high art, the finest Byzantine piece in the museum is a large green jasper medallion (diameter 8 centimetre) with a bust of Christ in the pose of the Pantocrator of the Daphni dome (Popovich 1962). The medallion was donated to the Penn Museum in 1904, making it one of the earliest Byzantine objects of high quality acquired by an American museum.

The Department of Art and Archaeology of Princeton University has long had an interest in Byzantine art through the research and teaching of Howard Crosby Butler (d. 1922), Earl Baldwin Smith (d. 1956), Albert Mathias Friend, Jr. (d. 1956), and of course Tyler's nemesis, Charles Rufus Morey (d. 1955), but it was the coming of Kurt Weitzmann to Princeton and the Institute for Advanced Study in 1935 that made Princeton one of the premier American centres for the study of Byzantine art (Weitzmann 1986). No other American university has had such a sustained and distinguished history of teaching Byzantine art. As shown by the 1986 exhibition catalogue, *Byzantium at Princeton* (Ćurčić, St. Clair 1986), the Princeton Museum's Byzantine holdings are significant and further evidence of the university's commitment to the subject. Concerning objects acquired before 1950, this catalogue reports a tenth-century ivory plaque, illuminated leaves from a Psalter, a manuscript page with a portrait of Constantine, and a complete manuscript of the homilies of Gregory Nazianzenus; other important Byzantine illuminated manuscripts are found in Princeton libraries.

Like Yale, Princeton conducted excavations during the interwar period that produced material for its museum. The most relevant for the present discussion is the multi-year excavation of the Syrian city of Antioch that began in 1932. Morey assembled a consortium of American institutions to finance the work plus the Musées Nationaux de France, because Antioch was part of the French Mandate. The Committee for the Excavation of Antioch-on-the-Orontes consisted of Princeton, the Worcester Art Museum, and the Baltimore

---

14   The following information about the holdings of university museums is based upon searching collections under the word "Byzantine". For the Fogg Museum, see https://harvardartmuseums.org/collections?q=.

Museum of Art to which in 1936 was added the Fogg Museum in association with the Bliss collection at Dumbarton Oaks. As a result, the Fogg Museum and other Harvard buildings have Antioch mosaics, and visitors entering Dumbarton Oaks walk across a floor mosaic with the appropriate personification of Enjoyment (Ἀπόλαυσις) taken from an Antioch bath.[15] The Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton supported the research for the standard work on the mosaics by Doro Levi, so that it is appropriate that it has four on display today in its dining hall (Levi 1947; Coleman 2018). Antioch mosaics have been distributed to other American institutions as far away as Hawaii. Princeton University and its museum, of course, also benefited from the excavation. There mosaics decorate the walls of Firestone Library and the School of Architecture, and others doubtlessly will be reinstalled in the new Museum building that is under construction. Finally, the Louvre received particularly fine mosaics from the excavations, including the famous Phoenix floor that is on display.[16]

7 Colonialism

American Byzantinists owe a great debt to the Blisses for the art collection that they lovingly gathered with the aid of their friend Royall Tyler and for donating their art, library, house, and an endowment to Harvard University to create the finest university museum of Byzantine art in America. Credit should also be given to curators at Princeton and the University of Pennsylvania for the Byzantine objects that they assembled and to Yale and Princeton for the excavations that they sponsored. Yet beyond or below these developments lies another context that is seldom addressed in museum catalogues or art historical monographs but should be noted in a discussion of patrimony. In 1874, 1884 and 1906, the Ottoman Empire formulated increasingly more stringent laws against the removal of antiquities from its territories (Shaw 2003, 89-91, 110-12, 126-30). The dissolution of the Ottoman Empire after World War I and the imposition of European control of Syria and Palestine through the Mandate system made possible excavations in those areas and the removal of a portion of the discoveries to museums elsewhere. The interwar years also witnessed widespread, unsanctioned excavation that fed the art market in Paris, the principal centre for the trade of Byzantine objects and the source of much of the Bliss collection.

---

15 Dumbarton Oaks Museum BZ.1938.72: see `http://museum.doaks.org/objects-1/info/30420`. On the consortium that supported the excavations see Morey 1938. About the mosaics more recently see Kondoleon 2001.

16 `https://collections.louvre.fr/en/ark:/53355/cl010250190`.

Owning the past is seductive but impossible. Past objects are another matter. While the United States received no mandates in the Near East, Americans did finance the transferal of Byzantine art from there to the United States. Later laws about the exportation of objects from countries in the Near East reduced the art trade from the region but did not stop it, because institutions and collectors in Europe and America had acquired a taste for Byzantine objects to embellish their museums and homes. In the process, what once was deemed foreign became accepted into the artistic canon of Western Europe and America and therefore made suitable for the instruction of the publics of American university museums. Yet in the process, the originating countries lost part of their past. It was "sealed off in museums [...] officially isolated" for the benefit of North American and European nations (Azoulay 2019, 77). This is where university museums have the opportunity – a word in my title – to teach by breaking through their self-imposed barriers to the knowledge of the past. Through their labels and exhibitions, they can inform the public about the history of the formation and acquisition of their collections and can sponsor wider campus discussions. Byzantine art can thereby represent not only the Middle Ages but also the centuries from then to now for communities of the future that are sure to be yet more intertwined than today.

Bibliography

Azoulay, A.A. (2019). *Potential History. Unlearning Imperialism*. New York: Verso.

Breasted, J.H. (1924). *Oriental Forerunners of Byzantine Painting. First-Century Wall Paintings from the Fortress of Dura on the Middle Euphrates*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Brody, L.R. (2012). "Gerasa". Evans, H.C.; Ratliff, B. (eds), *Byzantium and Islam. Age of Transition 7th-9th Century*. New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 11-12.

Brody, L.R.; Hoffman, G.L. (eds) (2011). *Dura Europos. Crossroads of Antiquity*. Chestnut Hill (MA): McMullen Museum of Art.

Bullen, J.B. (1999). "Byzantinism and Modernism 1900-14". *Burlington Magazine*, 141, 663-75.

Carder, J.N. (2010a). "Mildred and Robert Woods Bliss. A Brief Biography". Carder 2010b, 1-26.

Carder, J.N. (ed.) (2010b). *A Home for the Humanities. The Collecting and Patronage of Mildred and Robert Woods Bliss*. Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection.

Carder, J.N.; Nelson, R.S. (2008). *Bliss-Tyler Correspondence*. Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection. `https://www.doaks.org/resources/bliss-tyler-correspondence`.

Coleman, K.M. (2018). "Late Roman Mosaics at the Institute for Advanced Study". *Institute for Advanced Studies*. `https://www.ias.edu/ideas/coleman-mosaics`.

Coryat, T. (1776). *Coryat's Crudities. Reprinted from the Edition of 1611*. London: W. Cater.

Ćurčić, S.; St. Clair, A. (eds) (1986). *Byzantium at Princeton. Byzantine Art and Archaeology at Princeton University = Exhibition Catalogue* (Firestone Library, Princeton University, 1 August-26 October 1986). Princeton (NJ): Department of Art and Archaeology.

Fry, R. (1912). "An Appreciation of the Svenigodoroskii Enamels". *Burlington Magazine*, 21, 290-4.

Gennari-Santori, F. (2010). "Medieval Art for America. The Arrival of the J. Pierpont Morgan Collection at the Metropolitan Museum of Art". *Journal of the History of Collections*, 22(1), 81-98. https://doi.org/10.1093/jhc/fhp025.

Hopkins, C. (1979). *The Discovery of Dura Europos*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Kitzinger, E. (1958). "Byzantine Art in the Period between Justinian and Iconoclasm". *Berichte zum XI Internationalen Byzantinisten-Kongress München 1958*, Bd. 4. München: C.H. Beck, 1-50.

Kalpakcian, V. (2012). "Il destino della collezione romana del conte Grigorij S. Stroganoff (1829-1910) dopo la scomparsa del collezionista". *Rivista d'arte*, 5(2), 447-72.

Kondoleon, C. (ed.) (2001). *Antioch. The Lost Ancient City*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Kraeling, C.H. (ed.) (1938). *Gerasa. City of the Decapolis. An Account Embodying the Record of a Joint Excavation Conducted by Yale University and the British School of Archaeology in Jerusalem (1928-1930) and Yale University and the American Schools of Oriental Research (1930-1931, 1933-1934)*. New Haven: American Schools of Oriental Research.

Labrusse, E. (2018). "Modernité byzantine. L'Exposition internationale d'art byzantin de 1931 à Paris". Arnoux-Famoux, L.; Kosmadaki, P. (éds), *Le Double Voyage. Paris-Athènes (1919-1939)*. Athènes: École Française d'Athènes, 221-42. https://books.openedition.org/efa/3838#bodyftn21.

Levi, D. (1947). *Antioch Mosaic Pavements*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Lovino, F. (2020). "Byzantium on Display. Scholars, Collectors and Dealers at the Exposition Internationale d'Art". *Journal of the History of Collections*, 32(3), 509-21. https://doi.org/10.1093/jhc/fhz044.

Mango, M.M. (1986). *Silver from Early Byzantium. The Kaper Koraon and Related Treasures*. Baltimore: Trustees of the Walter Art Gallery.

Matheson, S.B. (2001). *Art for Yale. A History of the Yale University Art Gallery*. New Haven: Yale University Art Gallery.

Metropolitan Museum of Art (1914). *Guide to the Loan Exhibition of the J. Pierpont Morgan Collection*. New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Moretti, S. (2010). "Sulle tracce delle opere d'arte bizantina e medievale della collezione di Grigorij Sergeevič Stroganoff". *La Russie et l'Occident. Relations intellectuelles et artistiques au temps des révolutions russes = Actes du colloque* (Université de Lausanne, 20-1 mars 2009). Roma: Viella, 97-121.

Morey, C.R (1938). *The Mosaics of Antioch*. New York: Longmans, Green & Co.

Musée des Arts Décoratifs (1931). *Exposition internationale d'art byzantin, 28 mai-9 juillet 1931*. Paris: Musée des Arts Décoratifs.

Nelson, R.S. (2005). "The Beginnings of the Bliss Collection". Kirin, A. (ed.), *Sacred Art, Secular Context. Objects of Art from the Byzantine Collection of*

Dumbarton Oaks, Washington DC, Athens. Athens (GA): Georgia Museum of Art, 39-42.

Nelson, R.S. (2010). "Royall Tyler and the Bliss Collection of Byzantine Art". Carder 2010b, 27-52.

Nelson, R.S. (2015). "Modernism's Byzantium Byzantium's Modernism". Betancourt, R.; Taroutina, M. (eds), *Byzantium/Modernism. The Byzantine as Method in Modernity*, Leiden; Boston: Brill, 15-36.

Popovich, L. (1962). "A Byzantine Cameo". *Expedition. The Magazine of the University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology. Philadelphia. The University Museum*, 4(3), 28-33.

Puritani, L.; Maischberger, M.; Sporleder, B. (eds) (2022). *Konstantinopel-Samos-Berlin: Verpfändung, Fundteilung und heimliche Ausfuhr von Antiken am Vorabend des Ersten Weltkrieges*. Heidelberg: Universitätsbibliothek Heidelberg.

Rowlands, E.W. (2020). "'An Indefatigable Intermediary'. Harold Woodbury Parsons (1882-1967) and the Formation of the European Collections at the Cleveland Museum of Art. Part 1". *Journal of the History of Collections*, 32(3), 537-58. https://doi.org/10.1093/jhc/fhz042.

Rowlands, E.W. (2021). "'An Indefatigable Intermediary'. Harold Woodbury Parsons (1882-1967) and the Formation of the European Collections at the Cleveland Museum of Art. Part 2". *Journal of the History of Collections*, 33(1), 93-109. https://doi-org.eres.qnl.qa/10.1093/jhc/fhz043.

Shaw, W.M.K. (2003). *Possessors and Possessed. Museums, Archaeology, and the Visualization of History in the Late Ottoman Empire*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Tyler, R. (unpublished). *Autobiography*. Private collection.

Tyler, R. (1909). *Spain. A Study of Her Life and Arts*. New York: M. Kennerley.

Underwood, P.A. (1966-75). *The Kariye Djami*. 4 vols. New York: Bollingen Foundation.

Weitzmann, K. (1986). "The Contribution of the Princeton University Department of Art and Archaeology to the Study of Byzantine Art". Ćurčić, St. Clair 1986, 11-30.

Verso un museo digitale dell'Italia bizantina
Un progetto per la conoscenza di un patrimonio artistico disseminato

Antonio Iacobini
Sapienza Università di Roma

Abstract   The number of Byzantine objects in Italian museums and churches is extremely relevant, yet this heritage is dispersed throughout the country, forming a submerged network that is barely visible. The goal of the project *Navigating Through Byzantine Italy* is to highlight this network by creating an online catalogue of the Byzantine objects publicly displayed or accessible in Italy. Combined with an international workshop and a volume – both included in the outcomes of the project – this catalogue will help to achieve a better understanding of crucial phenomena that characterised cultural interrelations in the medieval Mediterranean, such as patronage, diplomacy, trade, and collecting.

Keywords   Italy. Byzantine art. Mediterranean. Portable art. Catalogue. Italian museums and churches.

Edizioni
Ca'Foscari

Da Mosca a Venezia,
ricordando Lidia Perria

Bisanzio e l'Italia: dal punto di vista dell'arte il binomio copre una storia secolare, di cui sono protagonisti opere, artefici e committenti, che si muovono in un ampio scenario mediterraneo.

A questo contesto di rapporti fa riferimento il nuovo progetto che presento, *Navigare nell'Italia bizantina. Un catalogo online per la conoscenza e la valorizzazione di un patrimonio artistico sommerso.*[1] Per chiarezza, desidero precisare subito che nel titolo il verbo 'navigare' e l'aggettivo 'sommerso' non sono intesi in senso letterale, ma si riferiscono all'obiettivo principale della ricerca, che è di creare un database 'navigabile in rete' di opere bizantine conservate in Italia, la cui conoscenza (nonostante la qualità e la quantità) è nel suo insieme ancora limitata e rientra in una realtà per così dire 'sommersa'. Sempre per chiarezza desidero sottolineare che il progetto si occupa specificamente di opere mobili, non di testimonianze monumentali. Queste ultime, infatti, presenti sul territorio nelle loro diverse espressioni – che afferiscono all'architettura, alla pittura, al mosaico o alla scultura – sono già state il tema di studi generali e di corpora. Cito quattro 'classici' portati a compimento nella seconda metà del Novecento: l'*Architettura bizantina nell'Italia meridionale* di Arnaldo Venditti (1967), il *Corpus der Kapitelle der Kirche von San Marco zu Venedig* di Friedrich W. Deichmann (Deichmann, Cramer, Peschlow 1981), *The Mosaics of San Marco* di Otto Demus (1984) e *I mosaici del periodo normanno in Sicilia* di Ernst Kitzinger (1992-2000). Per quanto riguarda, invece, le opere mobili custodite in musei, raccolte ed edifici sacri d'Italia non disponiamo di strumenti simili, fatta eccezione per il volume collettivo *I Bizantini in Italia* (Cavallo et al. 1982) e per pochi cataloghi di mostre, quali *Venezia e Bisanzio* (Furlan et al. 1974), *Splendori di Bisanzio* (Morello 1990), *Torcello alle origini di Venezia* (Caputo, Gentili 2009). Di questo patrimonio ricchissimo, disseminato su tutto il territorio nazionale, di fatto si ha una scarsa percezione d'insieme: al punto che anche la sua consistenza numerica rappresenta un dato sfuggente. Eppure si tratta di un patrimonio di grande importanza storica, religiosa e artistica, che nella storiografia italiana è stato a lungo trascurato, vittima, in tempi non lontani, di un vero e proprio ostracismo, che ha avuto il suo apice nel Ventennio fascista, e che ha coinvolto non solo l'arte, ma l'intera civiltà bizantina (Bernabò 2003). Anche per questa ragione tali testimonianze meritano di essere finalmente studiate e valorizzate in un'ottica allargata, scevra da preconcetti.

---

[1] Il progetto ha ricevuto un finanziamento PRIN dal Ministero dell'Università nel 2020.

Molte regioni della penisola hanno fatto parte per secoli dell'Impero d'Oriente e i contatti delle città italiane con Bisanzio sono stati sempre molto stretti.[2] Perciò gli oggetti bizantini rappresentano spesso documenti fondamentali per ricostruire la realtà multiforme del nostro passato, ma, al tempo stesso, possono anche costituire nel presente uno strumento importante per la riappropriazione di identità culturali che in alcune zone del Paese sono ancora vive e attuali. Catalogando queste opere, documentandole fotograficamente e studiandone la vicenda individuale, vogliamo realizzare un corpus generale (sinora mancante) che permetta di ricostruire un fenomeno di lunga durata che inizia in età medievale e arriva sino all'età moderna, legandosi alle complesse dinamiche della storia politica e religiosa e dei *transfer* culturali e artistici.

Le finalità di una ricerca di questo tipo sono molteplici:

1. innanzitutto una finalità scientifica per l'avanzamento dello studio storico-artistico degli oggetti bizantini conservati in Italia;
2. una finalità didattica per la formazione universitaria, che favorisca lo sviluppo di seminari, tesi di laurea e ricerche dottorali su questi temi;
3. poi una utilizzabilità dei dati che verranno raccolti da un punto di vista turistico-culturale, mediante la consultazione del database online e la possibile costruzione di percorsi territoriali e tematici bizantini;
4. infine una ricaduta nell'ambito della conservazione e della tutela, mettendo a disposizione delle istituzioni uno strumento agile per una migliore conoscenza del patrimonio bizantino in Italia.

Queste, in estrema sintesi, le motivazioni che ci hanno spinto a elaborare il progetto *Navigare nell'Italia bizantina*, che ha ottenuto un finanziamento triennale assegnato a un gruppo di quattro Atenei: la Sapienza Università di Roma, l'Università Roma Tre, la IULM di Milano e l'Università del Salento.[3] Il primo anno è stato purtroppo sfortunato, perché la pandemia ha determinato un forte rallentamento nelle attività appena iniziate, anche se questo periodo è stato messo a frutto per l'impostazione metodologica della ricerca e per avviare i rapporti con le istituzioni. Nel 2021 è stata siglata una convenzione tra la Sapienza e la Direzione Generale Musei del Ministero della

---

2 Cosentino 2021; in particolare per i rapporti artistici tra XI e XIV secolo cf. Iacobini 2017.

3 Responsabili delle Unità di Ricerca: Antonio Iacobini (Sapienza Università di Roma), Maria Luigia Fobelli (Università Roma Tre); Simona Moretti (IULM, Milano); Manuela De Giorgi (Università del Salento). Coordinatore nazionale: Antonio Iacobini.

Cultura, che verte sulle tematiche comuni dello studio, della valorizzazione e dell'educazione al patrimonio culturale.[4]

Torniamo alla cornice storica del progetto. La presenza in Italia di opere mobili bizantine rimonta talora fino all'epoca tardoantica, quando cominciarono ad arrivare nella penisola i primi manufatti dall'Oriente mediterraneo. È questo il caso di Roma, con le prestigiose raccolte di reliquie e suppellettili sacre delle grandi basiliche, quali il Tesoro di San Pietro e il Tesoro del *Sancta Sanctorum*, che custodivano numerosi esemplari d'eccezione. Ricordo qui solamente la croce-reliquiario in argento dorato degli imperatori Giustino II e Sofia, della seconda metà del VI secolo (cf. Pace, Guido, Radiciotti 2009).

Il fenomeno copre senza interruzioni tutto il Medioevo, fino agli ultimi decenni di vita dell'Impero d'Oriente, quando una parte consistente di opere bizantine giunse in Europa al seguito dei viaggi ufficiali dei *basileis*, che venivano a cercare sostegno militare contro i Turchi. Proprio in un'occasione del genere (siamo nel marzo del 1400) Manuele II Paleologo offrì al duca di Milano, Gian Galeazzo Visconti, l'icona della Vergine «Η ΕΛΠΙΣ ΤωΝ ΑΠΕΛΠΙϹΜΕΝωΝ» (attualmente a Frisinga), che era partita per l'Italia, assieme all'imperatore, nell'inverno precedente (Kürzeder, Roll 2018, 114-21; Roll et al. 2019).

Ma il XV secolo è anche il periodo in cui si assiste alla formazione delle prime raccolte d'arte umanistiche e l'eredità bizantina si proietta, per così dire, nella modernità (Nelson 2013; Moretti, Sozzè, Teruzzi 2021). In queste raccolte – sebbene si tenda a dimenticarlo – non c'erano solo pezzi antichi, ma, accanto ad essi, avevano spesso un ruolo di primo piano anche le opere che allora venivano definite 'greche' o 'alla greca' e verso le quali si cominciava a sviluppare un apprezzamento nuovo, di tipo estetico (Menna 2015, 101). Esemplare in tal senso la collezione del cardinale Pietro Barbo, poi papa Paolo II, che era sistemata in Palazzo Venezia a Roma e la cui nascita coincide cronologicamente con la caduta di Costantinopoli e la diaspora di tante opere orientali sul mercato d'arte europeo. Questo precocissimo insieme (un vero e proprio caso di protocollezionismo bizantino) purtroppo non esiste più e nessuno dei pezzi che ne faceva parte è sicuramente identificabile (Duits 2011; Moretti 2014, 29-35; Menna 2015; Sozzè, in Moretti, Sozzè, Teruzzi 2021, 64-9). Tuttavia – co-

---

me si ricava dall'inventario quattrocentesco – la raccolta comprendeva numerose icone a mosaico e icone dipinte con cornici in smalto e argento sbalzato, rilievi in steatite, stoffe ricamate, cammei e intagli, che forse dovevano essere esposti in un *display* comune con le opere classiche.[5]

Dicevamo all'inizio che, rispetto ad altri paesi d'Europa – dove gli oggetti bizantini sono concentrati perlopiù in grandi musei – un aspetto unico del patrimonio italiano è la forte disseminazione sul territorio, in luoghi anche molto piccoli: che spesso, però, mantengono ancora un legame diretto con le circostanze storiche dell'arrivo delle opere.

È il caso del Museo Civico di Sassoferrato nelle Marche, che custodisce una splendida icona a micromosaico con San Demetrio, capolavoro dei primi anni del Trecento.[6] Essa giunse a Sassoferrato nel 1473, assieme a un gruppo di reliquiari donati alla chiesa di Santa Chiara dall'umanista Niccolò Perotti, segretario del cardinale Bessarione e nativo di questa cittadina. Come ha ipotizzato di recente Robert Nelson, oggi è possibile ricostruire una tappa della storia dell'opera finora sconosciuta. La cassetta di legno in cui era sistemata a quel tempo l'icona reca sul coperchio il tetragramma degli imperatori paleologi[7] e sul pannello del fondo un monogramma greco che si può sciogliere con il nome 'Paolo'.[8] In quest'ultimo è stato persuasivamente individuato un riferimento a Paolo II Barbo, nella cui raccolta romana, dunque, l'icona doveva trovarsi prima di essere trasferita nelle Marche. L'idea di Nelson è che, tra il 1464 e il 1465, il pontefice l'avesse ricevuta in dono da Tommaso Paleologo, ultimo rappresentante della dinastia bizantina residente a Roma, e che per l'occasione il despota avesse fatto eseguire sia la cassetta con il tetragramma del donatore e il monogramma del destinatario, sia la cornice argentea del mosaico con due tetragrammi e due aquile bicipiti, ulteriori richiami al rango di Tommaso. Egli tentava così di conquistarsi il sostegno del nuovo papa (che era un appassionato collezionista) per indurlo a resuscitare il progetto della crociata antiturca fallito con la

---

[5] Anche se non sappiamo esattamente come. Per ciò che riguarda la disposizione delle icone: Duits 2011; Moretti 2014, 29-35; Menna 2015. Ad alcune opere risulta che fossero state aggiunte le armi del cardinale, con un'esplicita intenzionalità di appropriazione dello splendore del passato bizantino (Cutler 1995, 254). Di recente è stata cautamente avanzata la proposta di riconoscere come possibili pezzi Barbo le icone a micromosaico con il *Pantokrator* a Chimay (Collégiale Saints Pierre et Paul), con San Nicola a Kiev (Museo d'Arte Occidentale e Orientale) e quelle con la Vergine *Eleousa* a Venezia (Santa Maria della Salute) e a New York (Metropolitan Museum of Art): Sozzè, in Moretti, Sozzè, Teruzzi 2021, 68-9.

[6] Sull'opera mi limito a rinviare all'articolo di Nelson 2021.

[7] Βασιλεὺς βασιλέων βασιλεύων βασιλεύουσι, «Re dei re che regna su coloro che regnano».

[8] ΠΑΥΛΟΣ, «Paolo» o meglio ΠΑΥΛΟΥ, «di Paolo»: cf. Nelson 2021, 75.

morte di Pio II (Nelson 2021, 81-3). Ma in che modo poi Niccolò Perotti sarebbe riuscito a entrare in possesso di un'opera tanto prestigiosa? L'intermediario fu probabilmente Bessarione, che nel 1471 venne incaricato di gestire la complicata eredità di Paolo II.[9]

Come abbiamo anticipato, i percorsi dell'affluenza delle opere bizantine in Italia sono i più vari, ma si possono ricondurre ad alcuni canali principali.

1   Innanzitutto la religiosità e il pellegrinaggio. È il caso, ad esempio, della cassettina-reliquiario palestinese del *Sancta Sanctorum* (Fricke 2014). Essa dovette entrare molto presto nella cappella papale del Laterano, dove era gelosamente custodita nell'armadio al di sotto dell'altare, fatto allestire da papa Leone III. Scoperta nel 1905, si è rivelata subito un oggetto straordinario, sia per il suo contenuto sia per la sua decorazione. All'interno sono riuniti – in un *puzzle* materico di gusto quasi contemporaneo (cf. Nagel 2010) – frammenti di pietre e di legni dei *loca sancta*, identificabili grazie alle iscrizioni. Sul coperchio esterno si sviluppa invece un microciclo pittorico che evoca visivamente i siti evangelici da cui provengono le reliquie stesse. Tra le cinque scene raffigurate, si distingue in particolare quella delle Pie donne al sepolcro, che contiene una delle più antiche immagini della Rotonda dell'*Anastasis* di Gerusalemme con l'edicola costantiniana sulla tomba di Cristo.

2   In secondo luogo il canale dell'evergetismo. Possiamo esemplificarlo con un'opera celeberrima, ma tuttora discussa: la cattedra eburnea di Massimiano, che reca sulla fronte della seduta il monogramma latino dell'arcivescovo di Ravenna.[10] Manufatto di origine costantinopolitana, essa giunse a Ravenna in età giustinianea: o come dono dell'imperatore al suo più fedele rappresentante nell'Italia riconquistata o meglio, forse, come commissione diretta dello stesso Massimiano ad artisti attivi nella capitale d'Oriente, dove egli aveva vissuto per diversi anni. La cattedra è un pezzo singolare per tanti motivi, ma anche perché conserva – sebbene nascosta – una traccia del metodo di lavoro della bottega che l'ha prodotta. Sul rovescio dei pannelli con le storie di Giuseppe, infatti, è leggibile una numerazione alfabetica greca che fu predisposta dagli intagliatori, a manifattura conclusa, per il montaggio delle parti (Gerola 1919-20).

---

9   Certo, nell'inventario Barbo il micromosaico con san Demetrio non è citato, ma forse tale assenza si potrebbe spiegare con il fatto che esso dovette entrare tardi nella raccolta, quando la compilazione del documento era stata già conclusa. Sulla cronologia dell'inventario e del suo aggiornamento, riferibili rispettivamente al 1457 e al 1460 cf. Moretti 2014, 29-31.

10   MAXIMIANI EPISCOPI. Cf. Rizzardi 2009; Iacobini 2019.

3   Terzo canale: la diplomazia. È questo il percorso, ampiamente documentato, che nel XIII secolo portò da Nicea a Genova il pallio con storie di San Lorenzo, destinato alla cattedrale della città ligure.[11] Il grande telo di seta ricamato era stato appositamente eseguito per suggellare il trattato di Ninfeo del 16 marzo 1261, stipulato tra Michele VIII Paleologo e la Repubblica di Genova per cooperare alla riconquista di Costantinopoli. Quest'opera unica è stata oggetto, tra il 2011 e il 2019, di un accurato restauro presso l'Opificio delle Pietre Dure di Firenze (Ciatti, Conti, Triolo 2020), ma non ha fatto ritorno nel Museo di Sant'Agostino, dove troverà (speriamo presto) una nuova sistemazione espositiva.

4   Ancora: le vie del commercio. A questo proposito, si potrebbe citare il caso ben documentato dell'Ospedale di Santa Maria della Scala a Siena, che, tramite il suo procuratore, nel 1359 acquistò a Venezia un lotto di reliquiari provenienti dal Palazzo di Costantinopoli (Bellosi 1996). La transazione è attestata da una pergamena, in cui la stipula – trattandosi di reliquie – risulta siglata sotto forma di donazione, per evitare di incorrere nell'accusa di simonia (Derenzini 1996, 70). Il Tesoro di Siena è senza dubbio di notevole interesse, ma preferisco richiamare l'attenzione su un esempio di tipo diverso: una scoperta di archeologia subacquea avvenuta nel 1960 in Sicilia. Mi riferisco al recupero di un imponente carico di marmi provenienti dall'isola di Proconneso, stivati in una nave bizantina che, a metà del VI secolo, naufragò nei pressi di Marzamemi, percorrendo una rotta che forse aveva come destinazione l'Africa del Nord (Kapitän 1980; Leidwanger, Greene, Donnelly 2021). Si tratta di un nucleo di materiali che nel suo insieme è senza confronto e che corrisponde all'arredo prefabbricato di un'intera basilica pronto ad essere montato *in situ*: colonne, capitelli, recinzione presbiteriale, ciborio d'altare, ambone ecc. È un esempio del patrimonio bizantino in Italia dai connotati assolutamente eccezionali, che purtroppo – a distanza di più di sessant'anni dal rinvenimento – non ha ancora trovato una sistemazione museale che ne racconti in modo efficace le vicende. Nel 2019 è stata lanciata la proposta di realizzare quest'obiettivo all'interno di una chiesa da poco restaurata a Marzamemi, in modo da far tornare nel luogo della scoperta gli importanti reperti, che attualmente la Soprintendenza archeologica custodisce nella Latomía del Paradiso di Siracusa.[12] Parlarne qui è un auspicio affinché possano trova-

---

11   Per una messa a punto critica sull'opera rinvio solo a Paribeni 2015 e Taddei 2020.

12   L'improvvisa scomparsa nel 2019 dell'attore principale di questa operazione, il soprintendente del Mare della Sicilia Sebastiano Tusa, ha rallentato, purtroppo, l'attuazione dell'idea. Occorre ricordare che, dal 2013, è stata avviata a Marzamemi anche una nuova campagna di indagini subacquee in collaborazione tra la Stanford University e la Soprintendenza del Mare della Sicilia.

re una sede espositiva adeguata e possano essere catalogati nel nostro database.

5 Non dobbiamo poi dimenticare un altro percorso molto frequentato: quello dei bottini e dei saccheggi perpetrati in tempo di guerra. Le opere giunte in Italia per questa via rientrano anch'esse nel progetto PRIN, ma (voglio sottolinearlo di nuovo) la scelta fatta è di occuparsi esclusivamente di pezzi mobili, esposti in raccolte museali e all'interno di edifici sacri. Dunque il catalogo non prenderà in considerazione le sculture e i marmi inseriti in contesti urbanistici e architettonici, come il colosso di Barletta o i capitelli e gli altri pezzi di reimpiego della basilica di San Marco a Venezia: gli *spolia*, infatti, rappresentano un fenomeno macroscopico a parte. Rientrano invece nella schedatura – sempre per rimanere a Venezia – gli oggetti bizantini del Tesoro di San Marco, approdati in laguna come bottino della Quarta Crociata (Hahnloser 1971; *Il Tesoro di San Marco* 1986).

6 Infine, il canale del collezionismo. Come premesso, il fenomeno ha inizio in Italia in età umanistica: abbiamo già ricordato a questo proposito la raccolta Barbo a Roma. All'epoca della formazione delle prime collezioni personali o familiari risale tuttavia anche un altro illustre nucleo di oggetti bizantini conservati a Firenze: quelli di proprietà dei Medici fin dal tempo di Cosimo il Vecchio, confluiti successivamente nel cosiddetto Tesoro di Lorenzo il Magnifico (Menna 1998; Teruzzi, in Moretti, Sozzè, Teruzzi 2021, 70-8). Stando agli inventari del 1456, 1465 e 1492, ne facevano parte icone a mosaico, icone dipinte e icone in steatite definite «alla grecha», nonché vasi di pietre dure, che – come nella raccolta Barbo – coesistevano con opere antiche (Menna 1998, 124).[13] Un «quadro di musaicho» sicuramente mediceo è il *Pantokrator* del Museo del Bargello, documentato nel 1492 nella sala grande della raccolta di Lorenzo (Menna 1998, 125, 154).[14]

Passo ora ad illustrare più in dettaglio l'impostazione del nostro progetto, per il quale abbiamo assunto come limiti cronologici convenzionali le date del Millennio bizantino, dalla fondazione alla caduta di Costantinopoli, dal 324 al 1453. In base a una ricognizione preliminare, le opere da catalogare ammontano a circa 1.500 e comprendono un'ampia varietà di generi artistici: pitture su tavola, micromosaici, affreschi staccati, mosaici parietali e pavimentali staccati,

---

13 L'inventario di Lorenzo indica che le tavole a mosaico erano custodite nello scrittoio, assieme a pezzi preziosi come gioielli e cammei.

14 Recentemente è stato suggerito che potrebbero avere una provenienza medicea anche l'icona dell'Annunciazione del *Victoria and Albert Museum* di Londra e il San Giovanni Battista dell'Ermitage di San Pietroburgo. Cf., rispettivamente, Duits 2013, 181; Teruzzi, in Moretti, Sozzè, Teruzzi 2021, 74.

sculture in marmo e in legno, intagli in avorio, in osso e in steatite, oreficerie, tessuti, ceramiche.

Come già indicato, gli oggetti mobili bizantini da includere nel database vengono selezionati in base al criterio primario del loro essere musealizzati, esposti e fruibili al pubblico all'interno di raccolte, collezioni, tesori ecclesiastici, lapidari, antiquari ecc. sia dell'Italia sia della Città del Vaticano.

In casi particolari, vengono catalogati anche:

a. i manoscritti miniati e le legature artistiche, quando essi siano visibili negli spazi di un museo o di una biblioteca. Faccio l'esempio del *Codex Purpureus Rossanensis* nel Museo Diocesano a Rossano (Sebastiani, Cavalieri 2019)[15] oppure del Lezionario dell'Ospedale di Santa Maria della Scala a Siena (Bellosi 1996, 80-103, nr. 1 [M. Bonfioli; R. Batignani]). Restano dunque esclusi tutti i codici miniati delle biblioteche.

Rientrano inoltre nel catalogo:

b. le iscrizioni greche di età medievale, soprattutto quando esse siano accompagnate da un apparato decorativo. Si vedano le epigrafi mediobizantine della chiesa di San Giovanni ad Assemini in Sardegna (Guillou 1996, 235-7, nrr. 215-16); o ancora

c. le icone e gli oggetti che sono inseriti nella sistemazione liturgica di un edificio sacro, come la tavola della Vergine *Hagiosoritissa* del duomo di Spoleto (Bonfioli 2002, 192-5) o la stauroteca in avorio della chiesa di San Francesco a Cortona (Leggio 2014). Anche se non sono propriamente musealizzati, essi vengono catalogati perché sono comunque oggetti mobili esposti al pubblico.

In generale, quanto alla selezione dei pezzi, abbiamo deciso di adottare un criterio largo e flessibile. Il catalogo comprenderà anche le opere che una tradizione storiografica risalente al XVI secolo (e che coincide con la nascita della Storia dell'arte) definisce «greche», «di maniera greca», «greche moderne» e, più tardi, «bizantineggianti», «italo-bizantine» o «di cultura artistica bizantina» ecc.: faccio l'esempio dei mosaici staccati dell'abside della basilica Ursiana di Ravenna (Morigi 2014). Infatti, riteniamo più fruttuoso – sia dal punto di vista critico che operativo – seguire un'ottica inclusiva ed estensiva, catalogando anche oggetti che siano stati classificati in passato con l'impiego di queste definizioni e che spesso sono discussi per il loro

---

15 Il *Codex Purpureus Rossanensis* nel 2015 è stato inserito nel *Memory of the World Register* dell'UNESCO, unico oggetto bizantino esposto in un museo italiano: https://webarchive.unesco.org/20220323041423. Gli fanno compagnia in questa lista altri due manoscritti bizantini: il *De materia medica* di Dioscoride della Österreichische Nationalbibliothek di Vienna (Med. Gr. 1) e il *Codex Purpureus Beratinus* degli Archivi Nazionali Albanesi di Tirana (Arkivat e Shtetit, Berat 1, 2).

inquadramento storico-artistico. In tal modo, il database potrà funzionare anche come un efficace strumento comparativo per effettuare riletture mirate di certi casi studio. Gli oggetti che in fase finale verranno esclusi dal corpus bizantino, ma che costituiscono un problema aperto, entreranno a far parte di una sezione separata, denominata «Opere discusse». Nonostante il dibattito in corso sul termine 'bizantino',[16] abbiamo ritenuto comunque possibile – anzi opportuno – continuare ad adottarlo, interpretandolo nel modo più pragmatico, senza rigidezze tassonomiche, pur consapevoli degli aspetti problematici impliciti in ogni categoria o definizione critica.

Non vengono invece catalogati:

a. gli oggetti d'arte noti solo da pubblicazioni a stampa, la cui sede di conservazione attuale non sia conosciuta o che rientrino in collezioni private non accessibili al pubblico;

b. i pezzi (soprattutto marmi) che facciano strutturalmente parte di un edificio. Come abbiamo già detto, infatti, la categoria degli *spolia* rappresenta un fenomeno a sé.

Non vengono catalogati neanche:

c. gli oggetti riferibili ad altre aree dell'Oriente cristiano (l'Egitto copto, la Siria, l'Armenia, la Georgia, la Bulgaria, la Serbia ecc.) e alla cosiddetta Arte Crociata. Tale esclusione è dovuta all'appartenenza di queste opere a identità geolinguistiche e culturali a sé stanti.

d. Restano escluse anche le opere in deposito museale. Esse non rientrano nel database in quanto non esposte, ma vengono inserite in una lista 'di servizio', in attesa di approfondimenti *a latere* da parte dei componenti delle Unità di Ricerca.[17]

I musei sono una realtà dinamica in costante trasformazione. Pertanto, il database è concepito come un sistema aperto, implementabile in futuro sulla base dei cambiamenti che potranno sopraggiungere nell'allestimento delle collezioni, sia con l'esposizione di pezzi precedentemente in deposito, sia con l'eventuale arrivo di nuove acquisizioni.

Ogni opera viene classificata con una scheda autonoma. Essa è stata pensata per un doppio livello di consultazione. Il primo livello contiene i dati identificativi, con tutte le informazioni essenziali, e ha una finalità didattico-divulgativa sia per il grande pubblico sia per gli studenti dei vari ordini di scuole; il testo è bilingue (in italia-

---

16   Su tale questione – che costituisce una costante della storiografia – si è riflettuto di recente anche in riferimento alle identità etniche delle società del Medioevo. Cf. Kaldellis 2019.

17   Un esempio è quello dei *polycandela* paleobizantini dei musei della Sicilia studiati da Arcidiacono (2021).

no e in inglese). Il secondo livello (in lingua italiana) contiene un'approfondita analisi scientifica dell'opera e la bibliografia estesa. Nella seconda parte della scheda, una sezione è riservata agli aspetti tecnici e conservativi. Quest'ultima potrà costituire anche un riferimento utile per eventuali interventi di manutenzione e restauro. La scheda è corredata infine da una documentazione fotografica completa del pezzo: un intero, un rovescio, uno spessore, eventuali dettagli. Queste immagini – quando eseguite *ex novo* – potranno andare a colmare le lacune esistenti negli archivi e tale attività favorirà la collaborazione tra università e musei.

Ciascuna delle quattro Unità di ricerca – Sapienza, Roma Tre, IULM, Salento – lavora su specifici settori territoriali, ma tutti i componenti operano in stretta collaborazione, mettendo a disposizione del gruppo le loro competenze disciplinari, che vanno dalla storia dell'arte e dall'archeologia bizantina alla storia, alla filologia e all'epigrafia bizantina, dalla storiografia artistica alla storia del restauro e delle tecniche, dalla storia del collezionismo alla comunicazione museale e all'informatica. I docenti universitari che hanno aderito sono in tutto venti e rientrano in otto diversi settori disciplinari. [18] Ad essi si affiancano ricercatori e assegnisti, le cui posizioni sono state attivate nelle varie sedi con il finanziamento ottenuto.[19]

Al termine della ricerca, il database online consentirà di navigare virtualmente all'interno di un ideale 'museo bizantino italiano', finora sconosciuto nella sua totalità.

Il catalogo delle opere costituisce la struttura portante, lo scheletro del progetto, ma nella fase più avanzata del lavoro è prevista anche la realizzazione di altri due prodotti scientifici.

Il primo sarà un Workshop, che avrà lo stesso titolo del progetto, *Navigare nell'Italia bizantina*, ma con un sottotitolo diverso, *Arte, musei, mostre, web*. Nel piano dell'evento sono state programmate sette sessioni:

1. Da Bisanzio all'Italia: la mobilità artistica lungo le rotte mediterranee;

---

[18] Unità di Ricerca della Sapienza Università di Roma: Antonio Iacobini (responsabile), Alessandra Guiglia, Anna Maria D'Achille, Andrea Luzzi, Andrea Paribeni (componente esterno, Università di Urbino «Carlo Bo»); Unità di Ricerca dell'Università Roma Tre: Maria Luigia Fobelli (responsabile), Silvia Ronchey, Mario Micheli, Giuliana Calcani, Maria Raffaella Menna (componente esterna, Università della Tuscia); Unità di Ricerca IULM, Milano: Simona Moretti (responsabile), Tommaso Casini, Annamaria Esposito, Angela Besana, Massimo Bernabò (componente esterno, Università di Pavia); Unità di Ricerca dell'Università del Salento: Manuela De Giorgi (responsabile), Marina Falla, Paolo Gull, Maria Teresa Giampaolo, Claudia Guastella (componente esterna, Università di Catania).

[19] Giovanni Gasbarri (Sapienza Università di Roma), Maria Caterina Ciclosi (Università Roma Tre), Livia Bevilacqua (IULM, Milano), Giulia Arcidiacono (Università del Salento).

2.   Le forme del collezionismo: dall'Umanesimo al Novecento;
3.   Bisanzio e l'Italia: un patrimonio artistico disseminato;
4.   Fortune e sfortune di Bisanzio nella storiografia;
5.   Una rete di musei: allestimenti, valorizzazione e restauro;
6.   Bisanzio esposta: le mostre del XX e XXI secolo;
7.   L'arte di Bisanzio e il web.

Il secondo prodotto sarà un volume a stampa che raccoglierà le relazioni presentate nel Workshop, a cui è prevista la partecipazione dei componenti del gruppo PRIN, dei conservatori dei musei coinvolti nel progetto, nonché di studiosi italiani e internazionali esperti di queste tematiche.

Una prima prova di questa collaborazione allargata è la sessione tematica dal titolo *Byzantine Objects in Italy. Dynamic Identities and Transforming Contexts*, che quattro nostri ricercatori hanno organizzato per il Congresso di Venezia assieme ad altri colleghi provenienti da quattro università europee.[20]

La conclusione della ricerca *Navigare nell'Italia bizantina* è prevista per l'inizio dell'anno 2024, quando contiamo di rendere consultabile il catalogo online e, contemporaneamente, di svolgere il Workshop. Ci auguriamo che questi due eventi, che ruotano entrambi intorno alle finalità di base del progetto – quella scientifica; quella formativa e quella della valorizzazione – possano essere anche il punto di partenza per avviare (insieme a scuole, università e istituzioni) una strategia efficace di turismo culturale sostenibile e di educazione al patrimonio. L'esigenza, ormai prioritaria, di un potenziamento della ricaduta ambientale e sociale anche delle scienze umanistiche trova infatti un presupposto favorevole proprio nella disseminazione territoriale delle opere bizantine conservate in Italia. Oltre che nelle città, esse si distribuiscono in centri urbani, monumenti e siti spesso minori e poco noti, che potrebbero ben rientrare in itinerari turistici e didattici 'alternativi', finalizzati – in una prospettiva olistica – alla conoscenza dell'arte, del paesaggio e dei beni immateriali: all'insegna di Bisanzio.

---

[20]   Partecipanti: Adrien Palladino, Deniz Sever Georgousakis, Livia Bevilacqua, Giulia Arcidiacono, Maria Caterina Ciclosi, Veronica Carla Abenza Soria, Philipp Niewöhner, Giovanni Gasbarri.

Bibliografia

Arcidiacono, G. (2021). «Polycandela bizantini in Sicilia e nel contesto mediterraneo. A proposito di alcuni esemplari inediti o poco noti». Coden, F. (a cura di), *L'arredo liturgico fra Oriente e Occidente (V-XV secolo). Frammenti, opere e contesti. Liturgical Furnishings between East and West (5th-15th Centuries). Fragments, Objects, and Contexts*. Cinisello Balsamo: Silvana Editoriale, 12-31.

Bellosi, L. (a cura di) (1996). *L'oro di Siena. Il Tesoro di Santa Maria della Scala = Catalogo della mostra* (Siena, dicembre 1996-febbraio 1997). Milano: Skira Editore.

Bernabò, M. (2003). *Ossessioni bizantine e cultura artistica in Italia. Tra D'Annunzio, fascismo e dopoguerra*. Napoli: Liguori Editore. Nuovo medioevo 65.

Bonfioli, M. (2002). «Esami tecnici e indagini storico-artistiche. Il caso di tre icone». Guiglia Guidobaldi, A.; Iacobini, A. (a cura di), *Bisanzio e l'Italia. Scritti di archeologia e storia dell'arte*. Roma: Campisano Editore, 191-206. Milion. Studi e ricerche d'arte bizantina 6.

Caputo, G.; Gentili, G. (a cura di) (2009). *Torcello alle origini di Venezia tra Occidente e Oriente = Catalogo della mostra* (Venezia, 29 agosto 2009-10 gennaio 2010). Venezia: Marsilio.

Cavallo, G. et al. (1982). *I bizantini in Italia*. Milano: Scheiwiller.

Ciatti, M.; Conti, S.; Triolo, L. (2020). «Il pallio di San Lorenzo tra storia e restauro». *Arte medievale*, 4a serie, 10, 237-46.

Cosentino, S. (ed.) (2021). *A Companion to Byzantine Italy*. Leiden; Boston: Brill. Brill's Companions to the Byzantine World 8.

Cutler, A. (1995). «From Loot to Scholarship. Changing Modes in the Italian Response to Byzantine Artifacts, ca. 1200-1750». *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, 49, 237-67.

Deichmann, F.W.; Cramer, J.; Peschlow, U. (Hrsgg) (1981). *Corpus der Kapitelle der Kirche von San Marco zu Venedig*. Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag. Forschungen zur Kunstgeschichte und christlichen Archäologie 12.

Demus, O. (1984). *The Mosaics of San Marco in Venice*. 2 vols. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Derenzini, G. (1996). «Le reliquie da Costantinopoli a Siena». Bellosi 1996, 67-78.

Duits, R. (2011). «Una icona pulcra. The Byzantine Icons of Cardinale Pietro Barbo». Jackson, P.; Rebecchini, G. (a cura di), *Mantova e il Rinascimento italiano. Studi in onore di David S. Chambers*. Mantova: Sometti, 127-41.

Duits, R. (2013). «Byzantine Icons in the Medici Collection». Lymberopoulou, A.; Duits, R. (eds), *Byzantine Art and Renaissance Europe*. Farnham: Ashgate, 157-88.

Fricke, B. (2014). «Tales from Stones, Travels through Time. Narrative and Vision in the Casket from the Vatican». *West 86th. A Journal of Decorative Arts, Design History, and Material Culture*, 21(2), 230-50. https://doi.org/10.1086/679984.

Furlan, I. et al. (a cura di) (1974). *Venezia e Bisanzio = Catalogo della mostra* (Venezia, 8 giugno-30 settembre 1974). Milano: Electa Editrice.

Gerola, G. (1919-20). «La ricomposizione della cattedra di Massimiano a Ravenna». *Archivio storico per la Sicilia orientale*, 16-17, 410-18.

Guillou, A. (1996). *Recueil des inscriptions grecques médiévales d'Italie*. Rome: Publications de l'École Française de Rome. Collection de l'École Française de Rome 222.

Hahnloser, H.R. (a cura di) (1971). *Il Tesoro di San Marco*. Vol. 2, *Il Tesoro e il Museo*. Firenze: Sansoni Editore.

Iacobini, A. (2017). «Bisanzio e le città italiane. Opere, artisti e committenti nello scenario mediterraneo (XI-XIV secolo)». *La crescita economica dell'Occidente medievale. Un tema storico non ancora esaurito = Atti del Venticinquesimo convegno internazionale di studi. Centro italiano di studi di storia e d'arte* (Pistoia, 14-17 maggio 2015). Roma: Viella, 325-62.

Iacobini, A. (2019). «Cattedra d'avorio del vescovo Massimiano». D'Onofrio, M. (a cura di), *Museo Nazionale. 150 opere della storia d'Italia*. Milano: Officina Libraria, 518-23.

Kaldellis, A. (2019). *Romanland. Ethnicity and Empire in Byzantium*. Cambridge (MA); London: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.

Kapitän, G. (1980). «Elementi architettonici per una basilica dal relitto navale del VI secolo di Marzamemi (Siracusa)». *Corsi di Cultura sull'Arte Ravennate e Bizantina*, 27, 71-136.

Kitzinger, E. (1992-2000). *I mosaici del periodo normanno in Sicilia*, 6 vols. Palermo: Accademia Nazionale di Scienze Lettere e Arti; Istituto Siciliano di Studi Bizantini e Neoellenici.

Kürzeder, C.; Roll, C. (Hrsgg) (2018). *Die letzten Tage von Byzanz. Das Freisinger Lukasbild in Venedig = Ausstellungskatalog* (Venedig, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, 25. November bis 5. März 2019). München: Sieveking Verlag.

Leggio, S. (2014). «La stauroteca eburnea della chiesa di S. Francesco a Cortona». *Arte medievale*, 4a serie, 4, 9-34

Leidwanger, J.; Greene, E.S.; Donnelly, A. (2021). «The Sixth-Century CE Shipwreck at Marzamemi». *American Journal of Archaeology*, 125(2), 283-317. https://doi.org/10.3764/aja.125.2.0283.

Menna, M.R. (1998). «Bisanzio e l'ambiente umanistico a Firenze». *Rivista dell'Istituto Nazionale d'Archeologia e Storia dell'Arte*, 3a serie, 21[2000], 111-58.

Menna, M.R. (2015). «Sulla disposizione delle icone bizantine nella collezione del cardinale Pietro Barbo». Parlato, E. (a cura di), *Curiosa itinera. Scritti per Daniela Gallavotti Cavallero*. Roma: GBE; Ginevra Bentivoglio Editoria, 101-11. Collana arti 31.

Morello, G. (a cura di) (1990). *Splendori di Bisanzio. Testimonianze e riflessi d'arte e cultura bizantina nelle chiese d'Italia = Catalogo della mostra* (Ravenna, 27 luglio-11 novembre 1990). Milano: Fabbri Editori.

Moretti, S. (2014). *Roma bizantina. Opere d'arte dall'Impero di Costantinopoli nelle collezioni romane*. Roma: Campisano Editore. Milion. Studi e ricerche d'arte bizantina 10.

Moretti, S.; Sozzè, L.; Teruzzi, M. (2021). «Collezionare Bisanzio in Italia nel XV secolo». Finocchi Ghersi, L. (a cura di), *Sulle vie del collezionismo. Saggi per la storia della critica d'arte*. Milano: Scalpendi Editore, 59-85.

Morigi, C. (2014). «La breve rinascita del mosaico a Ravenna nel XII secolo». Bordi, G. et al. (a cura di), *L'officina dello sguardo. Scritti in onore di Maria Andaloro*. Vol. 1, *I luoghi dell'arte*. Roma: Gangemi Editore, 483-6.

Nagel, A. (2010). «The Afterlife of the Reliquary». Bagnoli, M. et al. (eds), *Treasures of Heaven. Saints, Relics, and Devotion in Medieval Europe = Exhibition Catalogue* (Cleveland, The Cleveland Museum of Art, 17 October 2010-17 January 2011; Baltimore, The Walters Art Museum, 13 February-15 May 2011; London, The British Museum, 23 June-9 October 2011). New Haven: Yale University Press, 211-22.

Nelson, R.S. (2013). «Byzantine Art in the Italian Renaissance». Drandaki, A.; Papanikola-Bakirtzi, D.; Tourta, A. (eds), *Heaven and Earth. Art of Byzantium from Greek Collections = Exhibition Catalogue* (Washington DC, The National Gallery of Art, 6 October 2013-2 March 2014; Los Angeles, The J. Paul Getty Museum, 9 April-25 August 2014). Athens: The Hellenic Ministry of Culture and Sports and the Benaki Museum, 327-35.

Nelson, R.S. (2021). «A Miniature Mosaic Icon of St. Demetrios in Byzantium and the Renaissance». *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, 75, 41-84.

Pace, V.; Guido, S.; Radiciotti, P. (2009). *La Crux Vaticana o Croce di Giustino II. Museo Storico Artistico del Tesoro di San Pietro*. Città del Vaticano: Edizioni Capitolo Vaticano. Archivum Sancti Petri. Bollettino d'archivio 4-5.

Paribeni, A. (2015). «Focus sul pallio di San Lorenzo». Gianandrea, M.; Gangemi, F.; Costantini, C. (a cura di), *Il potere dell'arte nel Medioevo. Studi in onore di Mario D'Onofrio*. Roma: Campisano Editore, 299-311. Saggi di storia dell'arte 40.

Rizzardi, C. (2009). «Massimiano a Ravenna. La cattedra eburnea del Museo Arcivescovile alla luce di nuove ricerche». Farioli Campanati, R. et al. (a cura di), *Ideologia e cultura artistica tra Adriatico e Mediterraneo orientale (IV-X secolo). Il ruolo dell'autorità ecclesiastica alla luce di nuovi scavi e ricerche = Atti del convegno internazionale* (Bologna-Ravenna, 26-29 novembre 2007). Bologna: Ante Quem, 229-43.

Roll, C. et al. (Hrsgg) (2019). *Das Freisinger Lukasbild. Eine byzantinische Ikone und ihre Tausendjährige Geschichte*. Paderborn: Schöningh (Brill).

Sebastiani, M.L.; Cavalieri, P. (a cura di) (2019). *Codex Purpureus Rossanensis. Un codice e i suoi segreti*. Roma: Gangemi Editore.

Taddei, A. (2020). «Un dono imperiale da Nicea a Genova. Il pallio di San Lorenzo. Anno 1261». *Arte medievale*, 4a serie, 10, 219-36.

Il Tesoro di San Marco (1986) = *Catalogo della mostra* (Roma, 1986). Milano: Olivetti.

Venditti, A. (1967). *Architettura bizantina nell'Italia meridionale. Campania, Calabria, Lucania*. 2 voll. Napoli: Edizioni Scientifiche Italiane.

Section 2
Linking Fields, Approaches, and Methods

La sigillographie.
État des lieux, innovations,
apport à d'autres disciplines

Jean-Claude Cheynet
Université Paris-Sorbonne (Paris IV)

Abstract   The field of sigillography has grown rapidly in recent decades due to the abundance of new material available, including the online Dumbarton Oaks database of the 16,500 seals preserved by this institution. Publications have thus multiplied and have facilitated the use of seals by other researchers in almost all aspects of Byzantine history. Computer technology enables further progress. Used to enhance photographs, it allows seals in poor condition to be read. Database projects, which will have to be harmonised, have seen the light of day and, for some, the first achievements.

Keywords   Sigillography. Prosopography. Epigraphy. Iconography. Database.

Sommaire   1 Introduction. – 2 Bilan des publications récentes ou en cours. – 3 Des recherches à renforcer. – 4 Les évolutions techniques. – 5 L'apport de la sigillographie aux autres disciplines.

1   Introduction

Depuis le congrès de Belgrade, la sigillographie continue de se déve-
lopper comme en témoigne la rubrique consacrée à cette discipline
dans la *Byzantinische Zeitschrift*. Je voudrais dresser un bref bilan
en montrant combien l'apport des sceaux irrigue d'autres champs
de recherche.

La quantité de matériel à disposition des chercheurs continue
d'augmenter sans cesse. Les ventes aux enchères proposent aussi
beaucoup de bulles byzantines. En faisant un décompte assez rapide
et sans tenir compte de rares lots de plusieurs centaines de sceaux de
lecture difficile, je pense que sont apparus chaque mois en moyenne
une centaine de sceaux ces trois dernières années. Les chercheurs
turcs ont entrepris d'explorer systématiquement les réserves des très
nombreux musées du pays qui contiennent souvent des sceaux by-
zantins. Des musées ont fait des efforts considérables pour mettre à
disposition des chercheurs d'excellentes photographies. Je pense au
centre de Dumbarton Oaks qui a rendu disponible par internet non
seulement les photos des sceaux déjà publiés dans les sept premiers
volumes de la collection des *DOSeals*, mais l'ensemble des 16.600
sceaux des collections depuis octobre 2021. Il est toujours impos-
sible de connaître le nombre exact de sceaux dans les collections
publiques et privées, mais le nombre de 100.000 bulles sera atteint
si ce n'est déjà fait.

L'existence de ce matériel sigillographique et le développement
des travaux qui exploitent les publications de sceaux suscitent une
nouvelle génération de sigillographes qui depuis une décennie mul-
tiplient les publications de nouveau matériel, notamment en Turquie,
en Bulgarie ou en Russie pour ne citer que les principaux pays. Ils ont
profité des enseignements portant sur les sceaux à Dumbarton Oaks
(Summer Schools), à Cologne, à Thessalonique, à Paris.

2   Bilan des publications récentes ou en cours

Deux principaux corpus sont en cours de publication. Celui des bulles
métriques par Alexandra Wassiliou-Seibt est en voie d'achèvement
avec la parution d'un troisième volume. On ne peut que réitérer le
souhait que cet ouvrage soit mis sous forme de base de données sur
internet pour des mises à jour régulières tenant compte des nou-
velles éditions et des nouvelles ventes aux enchères, qui seraient
déjà utiles pour les deux premiers tomes parus. Rappelons que ces
deux volumes sont en libre accès sur le site de la Austrian Academy
of Sciences. Le corpus des sceaux bulgares (Jordanov 2009) est aus-
si régulièrement complété, car l'archéologie et les trouvailles for-
tuites continuent de fournir de nouvelles bulles. La majeure partie

des bulles reste concentrée entre 960 et 1.120, époque où les sceaux fournissent le plus d'éléments sur les sigillants (Jordanov 2009; 2011). Toute une série de chercheurs bulgares, Živko Aladžov, Nikolaj Kanev, Filip Petrunov, Todor Todorov, pour n'en citer que quelques-uns, éditent des sceaux trouvés dans les localités du pays, souvent dans la revue *Numizmatika, sfragistika i epigrafika*. Le reste des Balkans a fourni beaucoup moins de matériel, mais de précieux sceaux ont été mis au jour lors de fouilles et leur provenance est donc bien établie, en Serbie (Ivanišević, Krsmanović 2018), comme en Grèce.

Plusieurs collections ont été publiées ou sont sous presse. Une majorité fournit de précieux corpus régionaux. Les sceaux d'Afrique conservés en Tunisie ont servi de base à l'habilitation de Vivien Prigent et leur édition est assurée par lui-même, Cécile Morrisson et Hanène Ben Slimane Ben Abbès. Parmi les résultats, on note un emploi plus important qu'attendu des bulles à légende grecque dans une province latinophone. V. Prigent achève également le manuscrit d'un important ensemble de plusieurs centaines de sceaux siciliens, qui décrivent l'administration de l'île au moment où celle-ci pèse d'un poids particulièrement important dans l'économie et les ressources fiscales de l'Empire. Moi-même je publie en collaboration avec Adolfo Eidelstein un ensemble de près de 800 sceaux trouvés dans la région de Césarée de Palestine. Ces ensembles concernent des bulles très majoritairement datables de l'époque protobyzantine, voire romaine pour ceux de Césarée, ou du début du Moyen Âge.

Sans prendre la forme d'un corpus régional, beaucoup de sceaux découverts en Turquie, notamment dans sa partie orientale, ont été édités ces dernières années (à titre d'exemple, Cheynet, Erdoğan, Prigent 2020). J'ai personnellement publié une collection de plus de 400 sceaux appartenant à Yavuz Tatış (Cheynet 2019). Ce collectionneur a rassemblé des pièces d'une remarquable qualité d'ensemble. Il faut ajouter les articles d'Altinoluk (2021), Bulgurlu (2019), Demirer, Elam (2018), Elam (2018), Erdoğan (2018), Laflı (Laflı, Seibt, Çağlayan 2021),[1] Ünal (Seibt, Ünal à paraître). De même les bulles des régions situées au nord de la Mer Noire sont publiées en grand nombre. Le corpus des sceaux de Cherson a été publié dans une nouvelle version augmentée par Nikolaj Alekseyenko.[2] Depuis la publication de V. Chkhaidze concernant les sceaux de Taman (Chkhaidze 2015), quelques sceaux isolés ont été mentionnés.

Enfin, l'édition de tout ou partie des collections publiques ou privées progresse considérablement. Elena Stepanova va publier la première partie des sceaux comportant un toponyme provenant de la

---

[1] Les sceaux postérieurs seront publiés dans une seconde partie.

[2] N. Alekseyenko a publié une version augmentée de son ouvrage paru en 2012 : Alekseyenko 2017.

vaste collection de l'Hermitage (668 bulles)[3] et elle travaille sur le second volume consacré à l'Asie Mineure. Je rappelle que les travaux plus anciens de V. Šandrovskaja ont été rendus accessibles avec de meilleures illustrations dans un volume préparé par E. Stepanova réunissant ses articles les plus importants (Шандровская 2019). Vivien Prigent collabore avec Pagona Papadopoulou sur les sceaux du Penn Museum (University of Pennsylvania, plusieurs centaines de plombs) et avec Alessio Sopracasa ainsi que Martina Filosa sur ceux de la British Library (plusieurs centaines de plombs). Alexandra Wassiliou-Seibt publie la collection Boersema qui renferme plus d'une centaine de pièces. Moi-même, j'achève la rédaction du catalogue de la collection Savvas Kofopoulos (2 600 bulles). Ch. Stavrakos s'occupe de deux collections, celle de Zafeiris Syrras (1 300 sceaux) et de Konstantinos Kalantzis (291 sceaux) et il a rejoint l'équipe (W. Seibt et J. Nesbitt) chargée de la publication des sceaux avec un nom de famille de Dumbarton Oaks. Le premier volume (*DOSeals* 8), comprenant les familles dont le nom commence par un A, est sous presse.

3   Des recherches à renforcer

L'intérêt des sigillographes se porte particulièrement sur les bulles des provinces périphériques de l'Empire, comme Cherson, mais aussi sur toutes les bulles découvertes hors du territoire impérial avec ce qu'elles révèlent des relations entre l'Empire et le monde extérieur. La publication prochaine des sceaux byzantins de la collection Sheremetiev de Kiev par Werner Seibt et Oleksandr Alf'orov témoigne de l'intensité de l'influence byzantine dans l'organisation de la métropole de Russie et des relations suivies avec les princes russes (Seibt, Alf'orov à paraître). J'ai moi-même essayé d'analyser le rôle du *génikon* dans les négociations avec les étrangers (Cheynet à paraître). L'Italie constitue aussi une région qui a attiré l'attention lors du programme « l'héritage byzantin » conduit par l'Ecole française de Rome et par l'étude des sceaux vénitiens d'influence byzantine (Saint-Guillain, Prigent 2017). La recherche se poursuit avec les études de Guillaume Dorandeu sur les sceaux normands et les bulles de l'Italie du sud aux onzième et douzième siècles.

La datation précise des sceaux a toujours été un enjeu de premier ordre car il devient possible de mieux assurer la reconstitution des carrières de fonctionnaires connus principalement ou exclusivement par les sceaux. Werner Seibt a été un pionnier dans ce champ d'études en s'efforçant de serrer le plus possible la fourchette chrono-

---

[3] Le titre prévu est : *Corpus of Byzantine Seals with Geographical Names from the Hermitage Museum. Part I : Constantinople and Western Provinces, Themes, Cities.*

logique, souvent réduite au quart de siècle, ce qui est possible à partir de la seconde moitié du huitième siècle dans bon nombre de cas. En revanche, la datation des sceaux du sixième au huitième siècle est encore aléatoire sauf pour les bulles comportant une indiction et un portrait impérial. Il est important d'arriver à une plus grande précision, qui permettra de mieux utiliser les informations des sceaux pour comprendre la formation des thèmes et leur évolution administrative et peut-être de mieux connaître les officiers en charge de ces thèmes. Werner Seibt a offert des éléments de réflexion sur l'usage du monogramme très répandu durant ces siècles (Seibt 2016).

J'ai pu mesurer par moi-même combien la datation des bulles est difficile, surtout pour les siècles antérieurs au septième. Un article très séduisant de Goert Boersema, illustré par des bulles bien conservées, a proposé des datations pour des sceaux des quatrième et cinquième siècles, qui constituent une base pour continuer l'étude des bulles tardoantiques ou protobyzantines (Boersema 2019).

4   Les évolutions techniques

L'informatique est associée de longue date à la sigillographie et a été utilisée non seulement pour forger les premières bases de données, mais aussi pour aider les éditeurs de sceaux dans la lecture des monogrammes en proposant des solutions aux combinaisons de lettres. Cependant aujourd'hui aucun programme n'est disponible pour les chercheurs.

La lecture des sceaux mal conservés est un souhait de tous les sigillographes. Beaucoup de bulles ont été plus ou moins compressées et l'inscription est partiellement oblitérée. Il n'y a rien à faire lorsque l'inscription est hors du champ, mais dans beaucoup de cas, il reste sur le plomb des traces des lettres perdues sur la partie écrasée ou lorsque le sommet ou la base du plomb sont rognés. Il suffirait parfois de pouvoir lire une ou deux lettres supplémentaires pour que l'inscription puisse être plus complètement reconstituée. Nous savons tous que la photographie en lumière rasante met en valeur le moindre relief et offre une amélioration certaine. De nouvelles techniques se développent. A Cologne un nouvel équipement photographique utilisant la technique RTI[4] permet, par la multiplication des prises de vue sous différents angles et par la combinaison des photos avec l'assistance d'un programme informatique, de mieux restituer des lettres de la légende illisibles à l'œil nu. La démonstration a été faite sur un exemplaire très usé de la collection Feind du sceau

---

[4]   Reflectance Transformation Imaging. Voir : http://culturalheritageimaging.org/Technologies/RTI.

du moine Alexis, archevêque de Chypre et syncelle. Suffisamment de lettres ont été rendues lisibles pour déterminer qu'il existait un parallèle mieux conservé et, ensuite, il a été possible de corriger la lecture d'une troisième bulle conservée à Dumbarton Oaks (Catalano, Filosa, Sode 2021).

Les études sigillographiques souffrent de l'absence d'un corpus général qui faciliterait l'accès aux informations contenues sur ces près de 100 000 sceaux aux chercheurs peu familiers de cette discipline. Des bases de données partielles existent, les plus importantes à ma connaissance étant celle de Dumbarton Oaks, celle du *Taktikon* déjà signalée, qui sera bientôt disponible. Ces bases ne sont pas constituées de la même manière, ce qui ne permet pas de les agréger. Le problème est identique pour les épigraphistes et les numismates. Sous l'impulsion de Charlotte Rouéché, un programme, appelé *epidoc*, a été conçu pour rendre interopérables les bases de données développées indépendamment les unes des autres. Depuis les années 2000, l'épigraphie et la papyrologie ont adopté un standard commun pour la description et l'édition numérique des matériaux respectifs. Ce standard a été adapté aux besoins de la sigillographie.[5] La communauté des sigillographes est maintenant appelée à participer au développement ultérieur de cet instrument, dont la large utilisation permettra d'interroger simultanément tous les corpus sigillographiques publiés avec SigiDoc (Sopracasa, Filosa, Stoyanova 2020).

Le financement adéquat a été obtenu, et donc l'ancienne collection Zacos de la Bibliothèque nationale de France (6.500 sceaux) et la collection Feind (plus de 1.700 sceaux) seront publiées avec de nouvelles photographies utilisant l'appareillage mis au point à Cologne et employant Sigidoc.

Ce programme est renforcé par un autre programme DBIS – Digital Byzantine Studies qui vient d'obtenir un financement pour six ans (Volkswagen Foundation) qui a trois objectifs : une meilleure exploitation des informations offertes principalement par les sceaux (et élargie également à la numismatique, l'épigraphie et aux manuscrits), développer l'enseignement de la sigillographie et fournir des références pour les musées et les collectionneurs.

Un autre programme à base d'informatique est financé à Paris pour plusieurs années. Il entraîne des réseaux neuronaux en vue de la reconnaissance d'élément récurrents sur les sceaux (lettres, croix, images de la Vierge et des saints, etc). L'apport de l'intelligence artificielle peut être utile dans ce domaine. Si les résultats prometteurs se confirment, cette technique permettrait de fournir aux non-sigillographes une reconnaissance des motifs et des lettres et ultérieu-

---

[5] La démonstration de son fonctionnement est disponible aux adresses suivantes : http://sigidoc.huma-num.fr ; https://sigidoc.raketadesign.com/en.

rement l'ambition est d'avancer des propositions de lecture et de datation. Cela peut intéresser les archéologues pour une première évaluation, ainsi que les responsables de musées et même les chercheurs qui doivent se méfier des anciennes éditions comportant, en dépit de leur grand mérite, des erreurs notables.

Enfin signalons une étude sur les isotopes du plomb qui ne constitue qu'une étape préliminaire à une recherche qui demande à être effectuée sur un large matériel et dont les résultats ne sont pas assurés (Karagiorgou, Merkel, Wołoszyn 2021).

5   L'apport de la sigillographie aux autres disciplines[6]

Il n'est guère de domaines où la sigillographie ne joue aucun rôle, mais son apport est décisif dans plusieurs branches de notre discipline.

5.1   L'histoire sociale

La prosopographie a bénéficié de la publication constante de nouveaux sceaux qui ont permis la multiplication des monographies familiales depuis l'étude sur les Sklèroi de Werner Seibt en 1976 jusqu'aux contributions récentes de S. Nikolaros sur les Taronites (Nikolaros 2017), de N. Alekseyenko sur les Dermokaïtai (Alekseyenko 2019), de S. Antonov sur les Hagiozacharitai (Antonov 2020), d'A. Wassiliou-Seibt et Andreas Gkoutzioukostas sur les Kamytzai (Gkoutzioukostas, Wassiliou-Seibt 2019) et M. Campagnolo-Pothitou et P. Charalampakis sur les Radènoi (Campagnolo-Pothitou, Charalampakis 2019) en 2020... Plusieurs dizaines de familles ont bénéficié de recherches où les sceaux représentent souvent plus de la moitié des apports nouveaux. Les bulles permettent de reconstituer des carrières individuelles en rétablissant des étapes de celles-ci ignorées des sources narratives et documentaires. Ces travaux sont parfois rendus délicats par l'existence d'homonymes quasi-contemporains. Les bulles du temps des Comnènes décrivent souvent les liens de parenté ou de service du sigillant avec l'empereur du moment (Volkoff 2016). Aucun travail systématique n'a rassemblé la documentation disponible sur les Comnènes.

Ainsi, les sceaux forment la source la plus riche de l'ouvrage de Jonathan Shea sur le gouvernement de l'Empire et sur son personnel entre 966 et 1133, nourrissant les listes des fonctionnaires de l'administration centrale (Shea 2020). Moi-même, j'ai tiré parti de l'abondante documentation sigillographique du onzième siècle pour analyser les évolutions de la société et l'apport des étrangers dans le

---

[6] J'ai jadis esquissé plusieurs de ces apports : Cheynet 2008, 65-82.

renouvellement des élites (Cheynet 2020 ; Cheynet, Wassiliou-Seibt 2019). Une famille d'origine syriaque, qui a joué un rôle de premier plan dans les années 1060 a ainsi été ressuscitée par les sceaux (Cheynet 2019b).

5.2   Les institutions

Les sceaux sont souvent la source principale de connaissance des institutions civiles, militaires et ecclésiastiques, puisqu'ils étaient utilisés massivement pour authentifier les actes des fonctionnaires qui les géraient. Ils permettent aussi de les identifier, de situer leur rang social par leurs dignités, de déceler les traces de népotisme etc.

La justice byzantine a bénéficié grandement des informations offertes par les sceaux, qui ont été utilisées systématiquement par Andreas Gkoutzioukostas dans ses travaux sur les institutions judiciaires (Gkoutzioukostas 2011).

La géographie administrative est aussi une grande bénéficiaire des informations sigillographiques. L'étude des thèmes n'a jamais cessé, mais est relancée par un ouvrage appelé « Taktikon » par ses initiateurs O. Karagiorgou, Christos Malatras et Pantelis Charalampakis (2021). Par ce projet les auteurs se proposaient de rechercher systématiquement, y compris dans les ventes aux enchères, tous les sceaux connus portant le nom de l'un des trois thèmes anatoliens retenus, les Anatoliques, l'Opsikion et les Cibyrrhéotes et d'un thème occidental, l'Hellade, en y ajoutant toutes les mentions fournies par les autres sources. La démarche n'est pas nouvelle puisque bien des études de géographie historique ou d'administration ont été menées à bien selon les mêmes principes, mais le plus souvent sur une époque déterminée. Ce qui est nouveau, c'est le choix d'intégrer les bulles émises durant toute la durée du thème, en y incluant les bulles inédites des musées et des collections ainsi que celles proposées dans les nombreuses ventes aux enchères. Ainsi l'évolution des structures apparait plus précisément ainsi que la politique impériale de nomination des responsables administratifs de ces thèmes. Ol. Karagiorgou a tiré profit de son « Taktikon » pour conduire une réflexion plus générale sur la formation administrative des thèmes (Karagiorgou 2021). Cette étude traduit l'intérêt renouvelé de ce sujet qui a fait l'objet de travaux récents de John Haldon (2016), Constantin Zuckerman (2006) et V. Prigent (2021), travaux qui s'appuient sur la sigillographie.

Deux des collaborateurs du projet « Taktikon » poursuivent leur recherche sur d'autres thèmes, ceux des provinces pontiques par P. Charalampakis et ceux de l'espace égéen par Ch. Malatras. Un autre projet, indépendant du précédent et avec des objectifs un peu différents, mais comportant aussi une base de données, concerne la Thrace sous la direction de A. Gkoutzioukostas en collaboration avec

l'Académie de Vienne et l'Université de Shumen.[7] Les études ponctuelles sont très nombreuses tant pour les Balkans (Wassiliou-Seibt 2017) que pour l'Anatolie et ses frontières orientales, dévoilant l'histoire de certains thèmes, de forteresses peu connues etc. (à titre d'exemples, Seibt 2017 ; Seibt, Laflı 2020).

5.3 L'économie

Les institutions fiscales, dont les sceaux sont abondants, ont fait l'objet d'études assez nombreuses. L'apport le plus notable concerne les relations commerciales détaillées par les bulles des commerciaires dont l'intitulé a évolué au cours des siècles en rapport avec le changement de leurs missions. Le dernier travail systématique sur les bulles comportant une indiction a été rédigé par Federico Montinaro (2013), mais leur nombre continue d'augmenter. Les sceaux fournissent des énigmes, comme le mystérieux commerciaire du coton (Wassiliou-Seibt 2021). Les noms de métiers – certains fort rares – sont parfois mentionnés sur des sceaux dont la fonction n'est pas toujours explicite (Seibt 2019).

5.4 Les relations de Byzance et ses voisins

Les guerres avec les Petchénègues ont suscité une abondante correspondance au sein de l'armée, qui se reflète dans les trouvailles en Bulgarie au point qu'il est possible d'étudier le corps des officiers ayant lutté dans les Balkans sous Alexis Comnène. Cette analyse est entreprise par Zhenia Zhékova. Les bulles trouvées hors du territoire de l'Empire sont souvent des éléments indicatifs de sa politique extérieure et de son influence. Ainsi par exemple, un juge byzantin a été, semble-t-il, chargé d'un arbitrage entre princes russes (Seibt, Huletski, Tiguntsev 2018). Les sceaux dévoilent parfois les titulatures – et parfois l'existence – de princes clients de l'Empire, comme les exousiokratorés d'Alanie (Chkhaidze, Vinogradov 2019). W. Seibt a signalé une bulle en grec de l'émir Danishmend proposée dans une vente aux enchères. Celle d'un Gabras en arabe témoigne du passage d'aristocrates byzantins au service des Seldjoukides et de leurs ambitions (Heidemann, Sode 2018).

---

[7] Cf. le site qui donne plus d'informations : Lead Seals in Byzantine Thrace (https://www.oeaw.ac.at/byzanz/gesellschaft-und-landschaft/sigillographie/lead-seals-in-byzantine-thrace).

5.5 L'effet des évolutions de l'Église byzantine et ses doctrines

L'iconographie religieuse est extrêmement diversifiée sur les bulles même si la Vierge et une dizaine de saints occupe la grande majorité des droits des bulles comportant au moins une image. J. Cotsonis vient de nous fournir un bel instrument de travail à partir des collections de Dumbarton Oaks qui traite des sceaux iconographiques anonymes. Il reste à comprendre à qui ou à quelles institutions servaient de telles bulles. Au fur et à mesure que l'on accumule les données sur la provenance des sceaux, il devient possible de dessiner, avec la plus grande prudence, une préférence géographique pour certaines représentations iconographiques, enfin ces données permettent de mesurer le degré de popularité des saints. Nous disposons à nouveau d'un ensemble précieux d'études de J. Cotsonis, récemment regroupés dans deux volumes (Cotsonis 2020). Il est même parfois possible de déterminer un culte familial, comme celui de saint Georges chez les Monomaque. Les sceaux reflètent aussi les changements théologiques, ce qui se traduit, par exemple, dans les formulations des légendes (Glynias 2018) et notamment les invocations à Dieu et aux figures sacrées.[8]

Enfin, il faut évoquer l'utilité des sceaux pour l'usage du grec, aux côtés du latin et parfois d'autres langues comme l'arménien ou l'arabe (Cheynet 2015). Les légendes métriques, désormais mieux connues par le Corpus mentionné plus haut de A. Wassiliou-Seibt, reflètent l'évolution des goûts littéraire des byzantins et parfois la recherche de formules avec des jeux de mots, des manifestations de la piété des sigillants etc.

Cette description des recherches sigillographiques est nécessairement sommaire et incomplète, mais j'espère qu'elle a montré le dynamisme de cette branche des études byzantines. Il faut que les chercheurs en utilisent davantage les ressources grandissantes.

---

[8] La thèse de Christos Tsatoulis sur ce sujet (Οι επικλήσεις στο Θεοτόκο στις επιγραφές των βυζαντινών σφραγίδων) a été soutenue sous la direction de Ch. Stavrakos.

Bibliographie

Alekseyenko, N. (2017). *Византийский Херсон VI-XIII столетий в памятниках сфрагистики*. 1. *Чиновники Херсона VIII-XI вв* (Cherson byzantine [septième-treizième siècle] selon les sceaux. Vol. 1, Les fonctionnaires de Cherson [huitième-onzième siècle]). Sébastopol : OOO « Kolorit ».

Alekseyenko, N. (2019). « The Dermokaites Family in Byzantine History and Two New Seals Showing the Name of Michael Dermokaites ». *Chersonos Themata*. Vol. 2, *Worlds of Byzantium*. Simferopol, 307-30.

Altinoluk, Z. (2021). « Silifke Arkeoloji Müzesi'nden Bir Grup Bizans Kurşun Mühürü » (In groupe de sceaux de plomb du Musée archéologique de Silifke). *Çannakale Araştirmalari Türk Yilliği*, 30, 147-72.

Antonov, S. (2020). « Hagiozacharitai. A Little-known Byzantine Aristocratic Family from the 10th-11th c. ». Konev, N. ; Khrissimov, N. (éds), *Ruler, State and Church on the Balkans in the Middle Ages. In Honour of the 60th Anniversary of Prof. Plamen Pavlov*, vol. 1. Veliko Tarnovo : Faber, 762-74.

Boersema, G. (2019). « A Dutch Collection of Late Antique and Early Christian Lead Seals ». *Studies in Byzantine Sigillography*, 13, 3-32. `https://doi.org/10.1484/m.sbs-eb.5.117245`.

Bulgurlu, V. (2019). « The Byzantine Lead Seals in the Balıkesir Kuva-yi Milliye Museum Collection ». *Studies in Byzantine Sigillography*, 13, 33-46. `https://doi.org/10.1484/m.sbs-eb.5.117246`.

Campagnolo-Pothitou, M. ; Charalampakis, P. (2019). « The Radenos Family. A Prosopographic Study Through Literary and Sigillographic Evidence ». *Revue des études byzantines*, 77, 5-106. `https://doi.org/10.2143/REB.77.0.3287308`.

Catalano M.T. ; Filosa, M. ; Sode, C. (2021). « Byzantine Seals from the Collection Robert Feind in Cologne. Research and Publication in the Context of the Digital Humanities ». *Revue des études byzantines*, 79, 297-322. `https://doi.org/10.2143/REB.79.0.3289649`.

Cheynet, J.-Cl. (2008). *La société byzantine. L'apport des sceaux*. 2 vols. Paris : Association des amis du Centre de Recherche d'Histoire et Civilisation de Byzance. Bilans de recherche 3.

Cheynet, J.-Cl. (2015). « L'usage des langues à Byzance. Le témoignage des sceaux ». Ivakin, H. ; Khrapunov, N. ; Seibt, W. (eds), *Byzantine and Rus' Seals = Proceedings of the International Colloquium on Rus'-Byzantine Sigillography* (Kyiv, 13-16 September 2013). Kyiv : The Sheremetievs' Family Museum of Historical and Cultural Rarities ; The Ukrainian National Committee for Byzantine Studies, 107-24.

Cheynet, J.-Cl. (2019a). *Les sceaux byzantins de la collection Yavuz Tatış*. Izmir : Zero Books.

Cheynet, J.-Cl. (2019b). « Sauvés de l'oubli par leurs bulles. Les Marchapsaboi ». Todorov et al. 2019, 163-81.

Cheynet, J.-Cl. (2020). « Transformations in Byzantine Society in the Eleventh Century, particularly in Constantinople ». Howard-Johnston, J. (ed.), *Social Change in Town and Country in Eleventh-Century Byzantium*. Oxford : Oxford University Press, 16-43.

Cheynet, J.-Cl. (à paraître). « Les sceaux du bureau du *génikon* hors des frontières de l'Empire ». *Studies in Byzantine Sigillography*, 14.

Cheynet, J.-Cl. ; Erdoğan, E ; Prigent, V. (2020). « Les sceaux byzantins du musée de Gaziantep ». *Revue des études byzantines*, 78, 5-69.

Cheynet, J.-Cl. ; Wassiliou-Seibt, A. (2019). « Adelige aus dem »Westen« in Staatsapparat und Gesellschaft des byzantinischen Reiches. Das Vermächtnis der Siegel ». Daim, F. et al. (Hrsgg), *Menschen, Bilder, Sprache, Dinge. Wege der Kommunikation zwischen Byzanz und dem Westen*. Heidelberg : Propylaeum, 205-24. Byzanz zwischen Orient und Okzident 9.2.

Chkhaidze, V. (2015). *Византийские печати из Тамани* (Les sceaux byzantins de Taman). Москва : Ин-т археологии.

Chkhaidze, V. ; Vinogradov, A. (2019). « The Seal of Konstantinos, the Son of the *protoproedros* and *exousiokrator* of All Alania (about 1065-1075) ». Todorov et al. 2019, 182-93.

Cotsonis, J. (2020). *The Religious Figural Imagery of Byzantine Lead Seals*. Vol. 1, *Studies on Images of Christ, the Virgin and Narrative Scenes*. Vol. 2, *Studies on Images of the Saints and on Personal Piety*. London ; New York : Routledge.

Demirer, Ü. ; Elam, N. (2018). « Lead Seals of the Kibyra ». *ADALYA*, 21, 245-77.

Elam, N. (2018). « Kütahya Müzesindeki Bizans Kurşun Mühürleri (Byzantine Molybdobulla in Kütahya Museum) ». Ünan, S. (ed.), *2017 Yıllığı* (Kütahya Museum Yearbook 2017), vol. 5. Kütahya : Kütahya Museum, 495-515.

Erdoğan, E. (2018). « A Selection of Unpublished Lead Seals from the Gaziantep Archaeological Museum. Seals Issued by State Officials ». *Sanat Tarihi Yıllığı*, 27, 81-99.

Gkoutzioukostas, A. (2011). « Some Remarks on Mystographos and Mystolektes ». Stavrakos, Ch. ; Papadopoulou, B. (eds), *ΗΠΕΙΡΟΝΔΕ = Proceedings of the 10th International Symposium of Byzantine Sigillography* (Ioannina, 1-3 October 2009). Wiesbaden : Harrassowitz, 191-219.

Gkoutzioukostas, A. ; Wassiliou-Seibt, A. (2019). « The Origin and the Members of the Kamytzes Family. A Contribution to Byzantine Prosopography ». *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, 72, 169-79.

Glynias, J. (2018). « Prayerful Iconoclasts. Psalm Seals and Elite Formation in the First Iconoclast Era (726-750) ». *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, 71, 65-71.

Haldon, J. (2016). « A Context for Two 'Evil Deeds'. Nikephoros I and the Origins of the *themata* ». Delouis, O. ; Métivier, S. ; Pagès, P. (éds), *Le saint, le moine et le paysan. Mélanges d'histoire byzantine offerts à Michel Kaplan*. Paris : Éditions de la Sorbonne, 245-66. Byzantina Sorbonensia 29.

Heidemann, S. ; Sode, C. (2018). « Iḫtiyār ad-Dīn ibn Ġafras. Ein Rūmseldschukischer Usurpator aus byzantinischem Adel im Jahr 588/1192 ». *Der Islam*, 96, 450-78. https://doi.org/10.1515/islam−2018−0030.

Ivanišević, V. ; Krsmanović, B. (2018). « New Byzantine Seals from Morava (Margum) and Braničevo ». *Starinar*, 68, 111-24. https://doi.org/10.2298/sta1868111i.

Jordanov, I. (2009). *Corpus of Byzantine Seals from Bulgaria*, vol. 3. Sofia : National institute of Archeology with Museum Publisher.

Jordanov, I. (2011). « Corpus of Byzantine Seals from Bulgaria, vols. 1-3, Sofia 2002, 2006, 2009. Addenda et Corrigenda (1) ». *Numizmatika, Sfragistika i Epigrafika*, 7, 189-228.

Karagiorgou, O. (2021). « Yet Another TAKTIKON ». Karagiorgou, Charalampakis, Malatras 2021, 63-112.

Karagiorgou, O. ; Charalampakis, P. ; Malatras, Ch. (2021). *Studies on the Prosopography and Administration of the Byzantine Themata*. Athens : Research Centre for Byzantine and Post-Byzantine Art of Academy of Athens.

Karagiorgou, O. ; Merkel, St. ; Wołoszyn, M. (2021). « A Contribution to the Technology and Sources of Lead in Byzantium. Lead Isotope Analysis of Ten Byz-

antine Seals ». *Byzantinische Zeitschrift*, 114(3), 1161-203. `https://doi.org/10.1515/bz-2021-0058`.

Laflı, E. ; Seibt, W. ; Çağlayan, D. (2021). « Early Byzantine Sigillographic Evidence from Western Anatolia. Sixth- and Seventh Century Lead Seals from Bergama (Ancient Pergamon) ». *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies*, 45, 5-24. `https://doi.org/10.1017/byz.2020.27`.

Montinaro, F. (2013). « Les premiers commerciaires byzantins ». Zuckerman, C. (ed.), *Constructing the Seventh Century. Travaux et Mémoires*, 17, 351-538.

Nikolaros, S. (2017). « Die Taronitai. Eine prosopographisch-sigillographische Studie ». *Millennium*, 14, 227-91. `https://doi.org/10.1515/mill-2017-0007`.

Prigent, V. (2021). « Retour sur l'origine et la nature des thèmes byzantins ». *Travaux et Mémoires*, 24(2), 105-36.

Saint-Guillain, G. ; Prigent, V. (2017). « *Sigillographia Veneto-Byzantina*. Les Vénitiens et Byzance d'après le témoignage des sceaux », in Caseau, B. ; Prigent, V. ; Sopracasa, A. (éds), « Οὗ δῶρόν εἰμι τὰς γραφὰς βλέπων νόει ». Mélanges Jean-Claude Cheynet, *Travaux et Mémoires*, 21(2), 561-636.

Seibt, W. (2016). « The Use of Monograms on Byzantine Seals in the Early Middle-Ages (6th to 9th Centuries) ». *Parekbolai*, 6, 1-14. `https://doi.org/10.26262/par.v6i0.5082`.

Seibt, W. (2017). « The Enigma of Soteropolis ». *Revue des études byzantines*, 75, 101-7.

Seibt W. (2019). « Some Seals of Byzantine Professional Men ». Todorov et al. 2019, 431-41.

Seibt, W. (2021). « Bibliographische Notizen und Mitteilungen ». *Byzantinische Zeitschrift*, 114(2). `https://doi.org/10.1515/bz-2021-0041`.

Seibt, W. ; Alf'orov, O. (à paraître). *Byzantine Seals and Rus'ian Seals in the Byzantine Style found on the Territory of Ukraine (Collection of the Sheremetiev's Family Museum of Historical and Cultural Rarities*. Kiev : The Sheremetievs' Family Museum of Historical and Cultural Rarities.

Seibt, W. ; Huletski, D. ; Tiguntsev, Y. (2018). « Was Nikolaos Zounaras, the Thematic Judge of Thrake and Makedonia, Active in the Rus' after the Council of Liubech (1097)? ». *Byzantinoslavica*, 76, 274-9.

Seibt W. ; Laflı, E. (2020). « ΣΤΡΑΤΗΓΟΣ ΔΕΚΑΠΟΛΕΩΣ ». *Revue des études byzantines*, 78, 71-6.

Seibt, W. ; Ünal, C. (à paraître). « Byzantine Seals in the Tunay Demran Collection ». *Polish Archaeology in the Mediterranean*, 30.

Shea, J. (2020). *Politics and Government in Byzantium. The Rise and Fall of the Bureaucrats*. London : I.B. Tauris.

Sopracasa, A. ; Filosa, M. ; Stoyanova, S. (2020). « The Digital Enhancement of a Discipline. Byzantine Sigillography and Digital Humanities ». *magazén*, 1(1), 101-28. `http://doi.org/10.30687/mag//2020/01/006`.

Stavrakos, Ch. (2010). « Byzantine Lead Seals and Other Minor Objects from Mystras. New Historical Evidence for the Region of Byzantine Lakedaimon ». *Byzantinische Zeitschrift*, 103(1), 129-43. `https://doi.org/10.1515/byzs.2010.010`.

Stavrakos, Ch. (à paraître). « Byzantine Lead Seals from the Excavations at the New Acropolis Museum of Athens. New Evidence about Middle Byzantine Athens ».

Todorov, T. et al. (eds) (2019). *ΑΝΤΙΧΑΡΙΣΜΑΤΟΣ ΕΠΙΣΦΡΑΓΙΣΙΣ. A Tribute to Prof. Ivan Jordanov's 70th Anniversary*. Shumen (BG) : Konstantin Preslavsky University of Shumen.

Шандровская, В.С. (2019). *Византийская сфрагистика в трудах В.С. Шандровской, под ред. Степановой* (E. B) (La sigillographie byzantine dans l'œuvre de V.S. Šandrovskaja). Saint-Pétersbourg : Hermitage.

Volkoff, A. (2016). « Komnenian Double Surnames on Lead Seals. Problems of Methodology and Understanding ». *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, 69, 197-207.

Wassiliou-Seibt, A. (2017). « Das byzantinische Verteidigungssystem an der Balkangrenze (Ende 10.-Ende 11. Jh.). Neue Erkenntnisse aus der systematischen Nachlese der narrativen Quellen und dem Siegelbefund ». *Byzantinoslavica*, 55, 164-90.

Wassiliou-Seibt, A. (2021). « Κομμερκιάριος τοῦ βαμβακίου. Ein neuer Aspekt in der byzantinischen Finanz- und Verwaltungsgeschichte ». *Revue des études byzantines*, 79, 323-31.

Zuckerman, C. (2006). « Learning from the Enemy and More. Studies in 'Dark Centuries' Byzantium ». *Millennium*, 1, 79-135. `https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110182545.79`.

Creative Thinking and Interdisciplinary Approaches to Byzantine Artistic Production

Brigitte Pitarakis
CNRS, UMR 8167 "Orient et Méditerranée", Paris

Abstract   Metal objects represent a valuable means to explore the process of artistic production in Byzantium. From gold to bronze, they offer insight into the relationship between crafts and the multiple parameters governing social life. The network of relations involved in the production, use, and distribution of metal objects also places them at the centre of intra- and interdisciplinary exchange among Byzantinists. The literature devoted to them originates within the various subdisciplines constituting Byzantine studies, ranging from epigraphy and philology to dynastic history and art history to archaeology. Their link to numismatics further opens horizons in the study of the Byzantine economy. The scholarly standards instituted across academic fields through interdisciplinary contacts and the knowledge brought to light by such exchanges have the multiplying effect of developing new areas of study and refining the methodologies applied to the analysis of metal objects.

Keywords   Metalwork. Crafts. Inscriptions. Vocabulary. Epigrams.

Summary   1 Introduction. – 2 Epigraphy and the Byzantine Object. – 3 Converging Views on the Byzantine Object.Textual Evidence Recontextualised. – 4 Byzantine Economy, Wealth, and Artistic Production. Connected Methods and Approaches.

1   Introduction

Interdisciplinary contacts are fostered when scholars in different fields of study – but sharing similar methods, materials, techniques, and questionings – conduct research looking in the same direction. The merging of approaches, sources, and data from differing disciplines can help clarify obscure information, test theories, and disprove or confirm hunches, enhancing knowledge about a topic and helping resolve unanswered questions. Sometimes the process brings to light new questions.

Numismatics, sigillography, epigraphy, philology, and archaeology all use precise methods that contribute to factualising history by pinpointing political, societal, and cultural events and shifts. In close connection with art history, they form the scaffolding of Byzantine studies and what is known today about the Byzantines and the empire they created. The aim here is to explore the development and a few specific instances of interdisciplinary contacts in the study of Byzantine artistic production fabricated from precious and base metal. The objects discussed here are either religious objects used in church ritual or private devotional practices or functional objects from daily life, including some invested with aesthetic or sentimental value. The focus of attention is the context of production and use, but in some instances the process of exchange is also taken into account.

During the last two decades, research on the crafted artistic object has been enhanced through the publication of exhibition and museum catalogues, corpuses, archaeological excavations. An increased interest in urban growth and domestic structures in Byzantium produced new perspectives on the study of material culture in parallel with ongoing study of court culture. Online databases have also fostered greater access to published and unpublished objects and museum collections, stimulating scholarly interest in the milieus and situations that created them.

2   Epigraphy and the Byzantine Object

Monumental inscriptions are essential testimonies at the service of Byzantine scholarship, conveying literal and figurative messages from the surfaces of city walls, façades of civic and religious buildings, and painted church interiors. By their very nature, but also depending on their location and content, they have fostered interdisciplinary exchanges between epigraphists, historians, art historians.[1]

---

1   Jolivet-Lévy, Kiourtzian 2013; Métivier 2012; Jolivet-Lévy, Lemaigre Demesnil, Kiourztian 2017; Jolivet-Lévy 2019. See also Morrisson 1992.

Inscriptions on objects have traditionally been of interest not only for the literal message they convey, but also as clues for determining their date of production. For a 1986 interdisciplinary symposium at Dumbarton Oaks on the vast ensemble of church silver known as the Kumluca, or Sion, treasure, Ihor Ševčenko conducted a study of the inscriptions. His contribution highlighted that the use of letter forms for dating objects can sometime be elusive (Ševčenko 1992, 40). In the case of the Kumluca silver, all the pieces date to the sixth century, but two variants of the letter *alpha* – one with a broken horizontal bar and the other with a slanted bar – were attested. Ševčenko proffered that the differences in the appearance of the letters was not indicative of a different date or a chronological evolution as some might assume. The difference was, however, of value in terms of classification. In this instance, and potentially in others, epigraphic assessment of the arrangement of words on the vessels and the lettering helped in identifying different groups of serial production within the hoard.

Inscriptions are not isolated features. Complementary parameters forming a whole in the production of inscribed objects include the layout and arrangement of the inscriptions vis-à-vis the decorative composition, applied images and motifs, materials from which the object is made, and manufacturing techniques. The occasions on which inscribed objects were used, including those with pseudo-inscriptions, have shed light on the use of apotropaic messaging as well on the aesthetic features of their functionality (Rhoby 2017; Walker 2015).

Let us look, for instance, at a group of sixth-century copper alloy buckets that share a distinctive decorative inscription made in the same manner with circular punches along the mouth of the vessels. An epigraphic examination reveals a lyre-shaped *omega* created from two separate loops and a cross-like *chi* as distinctive features of the lettering. Most of the buckets are domestic vessels bearing wishes of good health. One, in the Istanbul Archaeological Museums, appears to have been created as a gift to a church (Pitarakis 2015a, 354-5, no. 112) **[fig. 1]**. The donor, a certain Antipatros, invokes the fulfilment of a vow he made as well as salvation for himself and his household. Such buckets were part of a set that included a water basin and an ewer. Σικλότρουλλον (probably from σιτλότρουλλον), a compound noun – in Latin, *situla* (bucket) plus *trulla* (basin) – is attested in *De Cerimoniis* (1.50.159 [eds and transl. Dagron, Flusin 2020]) and may reference a set that included a *situla*, and/or a water basin, and an ewer. A water basin and ewer set, used for a hand-washing ritual at banquets is called a *cherniboxestin* (Mundell Mango 1986, 106-7; ByzAD, "cherniboxeston").[2]

---

2 http://typika.cfeb.org/index/synthese/445.

Figure 1   Copper alloy bucket. Istanbul Archaeological Museums, inv 852 M.
© Istanbul Archaeological Museums (photograph by U. Ataç)

Letter forms and formulas tend to be closely linked to the material, shape, and function of an object. The dedicatory inscription of a sixth-century bronze polykandelon at the Louvre has a sequence of letters of varying sizes along with oversized vertical bars. The inscription reads "Κύριε μνήσθητὶ τοῦ δούλου σου Ἀβρααμίου υἱοῦ Κωνσταντοῦτος" (Lord remember your servant Abraamios son of Konstantous). This polykandelon in the Louvre is one of the earliest known Byzantine lighting devices to became the focus of attention of a scholarly publication (Schlumberger 1893; Pitarakis forthcoming). Intrigued by an unusual genitive form of Konstantous in the inscription, Gustave Schlumberger consulted Salomon Reinach, who informed him that names ending in -οῦς, with the genitive -οῦτος, are feminine and that many examples are to be found in Egyptian papyri. A recent study of lapidary inscriptions from Karpathos by George Kiourtzian (2021, 83-4, no. 12) provides new insight into the name Κωνσταντοῦς. Kiourtzian identifies it as a feminine hypocorism (diminutive form of a name) of Κωνσταντία or Κωνσταντίνα, the genitive form of which should be Κωνσταντοῦδος. A local pronunciation may have resulted in -δος being rendered as -τος.

Every Byzantine secular and religious ritual involved the use of dedicated objects and related inscriptions. At lavish banquets in the sixth century, members of the aristocracy made use of a distinctive type of spoon with an elongated handle, a pear-shaped bowl, and a

disk that served as a thumb rest for gripping the utensil at the juncture of the handle and the bowl. The discs often feature a monogram, while the bowl and the handle were used for conveying a rich repertory of texts, illustrating the transmission of literary culture (Fournet, Bénazeth 2020). Some of the inscriptions are amusing sayings, and other are quotes from classical authors. They also include best wishes and evocations of possible conversations related to the dinner, suggesting that sets were at least sometimes created for specific events.

The greater comparative value of silver compared to bronze does not necessarily imply that bronze workshops worked essentially for a more modest clientele. Bronze was also a prized metal. One interesting epigraphic testimony comes from the name Ardabourios in the dedicatory inscriptions of two different types of objects. One is a silver chalice at Dumbarton Oaks, the other a bronze suspension element for a lamp at the Benaki Museum. The similar lettering on these two objects led to the hypothesis both of them being attributed to the same person, who might be the homonymous consul (447; d. 471 in Constantinople) and eldest son of Aspar the Alan, an eastern Roman patrician of Alanic-Gothic descent and "master of soldiers" (Drandaki 2020, 227, no. 107).

The study of prosopographies is particularly relevant in fostering interdisciplinary contacts. For instance, the monograph on Byzantine silver stamps by the art historian Erica Cruikshank Dodd (1961) contains an excursus by the numismatist John P.C. Kent on the *comes sacrarum largitionum*, the highest-ranking financial official in the Byzantine administration. Work by Denis Feissel (1986) on control weights generated new consideration of the office of the prefect of Constantinople and the stamping of silver in the sixth and seventh centuries.

Numismatists, epigraphists, and sigillographers, who are closely involved with the field of metrology, have studied series of flat weights for balance scales. The inscriptions on control weights and the denominational marks on commercial weights reveal evolutions in the administrative and juridic systems that issued them, topics of interest to historians. At the same time, however, the weights also display a rich decorative repertory, such as imperial busts, enthroned emperors and co-emperors, Victories, angels, crosses (including some under arches or a pediment), vegetal and geometrical ornament, and protective formulas. All these elements, while purposeful in conveying information in and of themselves, also encourage an art historical perspective that can help in firming up dates and clarifying the messaging and cultural contexts of certain imagery (Pitarakis 2022). The prototypes for the inscriptions on weights are to be found primarily among coin iconography, but some stereotyped patterns of universal character, such as the cross under an arch or a pediment, have also been attested.

The invocation of God's grace and favour, a stereotyped formula found on late antique weights and weight boxes, is also widespread on wedding jewelry from the same period. In addition, puns and word-play on wedding-related jewelry also link the virtue of grace to the three Graces – Euphrosyne, Aglaia, and Thalia – and desired bridal attributes. The Museum of Fine Arts in Boston has a third-century gold ring bearing a wish of good luck. The octagonal band with flat sides lies at the heart of a fruitful interdisciplinary collaboration involving classics and epigraphy around the magic imbued in portable inscriptions (Van Den Hoek, Feissel, Herrmann 2015). The effort produced a catalogue of rings, breast pendants, bracelets, fibulas, gems, belt buckles, and dress and toilet accessories along with recorded formulas ranging from wishes of good luck and health to protective inscriptions to expressions of courtship and love. The epigraphic study of each of these pieces, ranging in date from the third to the seventh century, includes a transcription with restitutions of missing letters and words; when a word is obscure, misspelled, or in a reversed form, the correct version is proposed.

The syntax of the magical inscriptions found on amuletic jewelry has its own logic and balance. Most of the patterns of transmission derive from the corpus of magical papyri and the gems themselves. Another essential channel of transmission was iatromagic, a category of medical writing (Grimm-Stadelmann 2020). In magic, the literal meaning of an expression or a word was superseded by the belief in its immediate efficiency, which often depended upon the antiquity of the formula from which it is drawn. Quotes from classical epic poems, such as the *Iliad*, and from psalms are frequently encountered.

During the tenth and eleventh centuries, the standard votive formula found on late antique silver eucharistic vessels was in most known instances replaced by the invocation the priest recited during the service. In another shift, the establishment of private monastic foundations during the eleventh century favoured the manufacture of church vessels in copper alloy in conjunction to those in silver. In imitation of the thick letters used on enamels and repoussé silver, craftsmen introduced a well-defined epigraphic style commonly described as double-stroke lettering (Mundell Mango 1994). The script on the copper alloy vessels made extensive use of ligatures, and the letters feature triangular serifs. The vessels bearing double-stroke lettering are often coated with a layer of tinning. There is a consistent group of such vessels and crosses, the number of which coming to light in private collections continues to grow (Wamser, Zahlhaas 1998, 62, nos. 42-3). The copper liturgical vessels mentioned in monastic inventories from the twelfth century probably correspond to vessels of this type (Pitarakis 2009, 317).

Similar double-stroke lettering is also found around the neck of a consistent group of copper alloy jugs bearing a quote from Psalm

Figure 2
Copper alloy jug. Istanbul Archaeological Museums, inv. 6097 M.
© Istanbul Archaeological Museums (photograph by Dilara Şen Turan)

28 (29):2 recited by the priest during the Blessing of the Waters (Pitarakis 2018). The jugs, made of hammering sheets of metal, date to the eleventh century, but the tradition to which they belong is much older. A small production of jugs stands out among this group in the plain lettering of the psalm text and the casting technique used in their manufacture [fig. 2]. This technique, an *alpha* with a slanted bar, and an elegant vine scroll along the belly may suggest placing this particular group to Late Antiquity, although a date in the early ninth century may not be precluded. These inscribed jugs offer a valuable complement to the carved inscriptions of the same Psalm text on a consistent group of sixth-century marble basins from Constantinople (Feissel 2020, 99-101).

The issue of unmastered syntax and spelling – a common 'feature' of Byzantine bronze inscriptions – is also encountered on secular goldsmithing vessels found in Central Europe and the Balkans. The problem this raises involves the wording itself, which is sometimes difficult to decipher. One also finds antiquarian features, a particular onomastic pattern, and a style and technique quite different from Constantinopolitan works. These objects are often from treasures found in the late eighteenth to early twentieth century and whose date and geographical origins are still being debated.

One such find is the Vrap Treasure, also known as the Avar Treasure, discovered in Vrap, Albania, in the early twentieth century

Figure 3   Silver jug from Vrap treasure. Metropolitan Museum of Art, Accession no. 17.190.1704. Public Domain

Figure 4   Cruciform monograms on the bottom of the silver jug on fig. 3. Public Domain

(Bálint 2000; Garam 2000; Piguet-Panayotova 2002; Holcomb 2008). The Metropolitan Museum of Art houses the largest part of the treasure, which is thought to have been deposed in the eighth or perhaps the very early ninth century. The Walters Art Museum, Baltimore, has one drinking bowl from the find, and the Istanbul Archaeological Museums holds a chalice-shaped goblet. Along with a range of belt straps, drinking bowls, and chalices, the group at the Met includes a silver pitcher bearing a quote from Psalm 28 (29):2 around the mouth and five cruciform monograms engraved on the bottom of the vessel, simulating control stamps **[figs 3-4]**. Erika Cruikshank Dodd reads them as the name Zenobios, while more recently Werner Seibt has suggested the Avar name Τζονοβίου, Τζυβίνου, or Βουτζίνου and a date to the late seventh century (Seibt 2004; Garipzanov 2018, 221-2). From the perspective of the geographical location of Vrap – a region in the vicinity of Durrës, ancient Dyrrachion – and the distinctive character of the large majority of the goldsmithing artifacts in the treasure, it has also been suggested that they are interpreted as part of a provincial Byzantine border culture, still largely unknown, merging Avar elements with other local elements from the Balkans and Byzantine influence (Bálint 2000).

  The treasure found in 1799 near Nagyszentmiklós, once in Hungary and today Sânnicolau Mare in Romania, has also sparked debate

about its inscriptions, date, and geographical origin (Bálint 2010). Thorough study of the Greek inscriptions on two vessels from the hoard by Georges Kiourtzian led him to suggest dating these two pieces in the second half of the eighth or the first half of the ninth century. The inscriptions might have been engraved on the vessels in a cultural milieu at the periphery of the Byzantine Empire perhaps in the Danube region (Kiourztian 2016, 296-306, nos. 9-10).

The name and title of religious figures and stereotyped invocations, often in a cruciform layout, are among the most standard types of inscriptions attested on objects from the ninth to the eleventh century. Sigillography offers valuable comparisons for interpreting consistent series of inscriptions found on metal objects and hard stone jewelry. Identification of the issuer of an official seal and his or her status allows exploring preferences for Virgin types and epithets, saintly intercessors, and shrines in relation to his or her social status, gender, and age (Pitarakis 2015b, esp. 334-7; Cotsonis 2020). The epigram as a category of inscription on luxury objects developed in the tenth century and peaked during the fourteenth century (see Lauxtermann 2003, 149-96). Andreas Rhoby's systematic inquiry into various types of objects of private and public devotion led to recording the more than seven hundred epigrams preserved on them, opening new horizons on a variety of new approaches to these sometimes lengthy texts and interpretations of their message and purpose (Rhoby 2010, 2017).

One famous icon placed at the centre of scholarly debate by Rhoby's research features the Virgin and is identified as the Hope of the Desperate, now at the Diocesan Museum in Freising. Rhoby's study of the epigram challenged the traditional association of the donor, Manuel Dishypatos, with the metropolitan of Thessalonike who held the office from 1258 to 1261. The identification of another Manuel Dishypatos, a deacon and an official of the metropolis of Serres in 1365, as the possible donor prompted shifting the date of the enameled frame from the mid-thirteenth century to the late fourteenth (Rhoby 2019). The lettering of the epigram includes a *nu* with an inverted oblique bar, as if a mirror inscription, attested on lead seals from the late thirteenth to fourteenth century (Oikonomides 1986, 162) and on Palaiologan coins. The close links between the goldsmithing industry and the mint favours comparisons with monetary iconography. The alphabet of the epigram on the Freising icon also includes what appears to be the *beta* with square loops that, according to Philipp Grierson, are also attested on the Thessalonican coins of Anna of Savoy and on some related issues from the same mint (DOC 5.1, 97-8). The chronology suggested by a prosopographic study of the inscription and analysis of the letter forms is congruent with the information suggested by the enameling technique and colours used in the manufacture of the inscription (Bosselmann-Ruickbie 2021).

3 Converging Views on the Byzantine Object. Textual Evidence Recontextualised

The emergence of an image and its distribution on multiple supports is closely dependent upon the expectations of the commissioners, the faith of the beholders, their mentality and culture. All are conveyed by the requested texts. Jean-Michel Spieser's exploration of the iconography of Christ offers a valuable study case. Spieser notes that the chronological evolution of the iconographic types used to represent Christ has been approached through their distribution on privileged surfaces and materials ranging from sarcophagi, monumental art, and coins to crafted objects like precious reliquaries, crosses, and modest amulets. The roots of the images, however, are found in Christian literature, and in turn the comparison of texts and images reveals the anthropological transformation of Christianity during late antiquity (Spieser 2015). Growing interest in religious anthropology has opened new horizons on the study of the Byzantine object – viewed within the framework of human experience concerning sensoriality and materiality (Caseau Chevallier, Neri 2021; Peers 2021). Another approach, focusing on secular luxury objects from twelfth- and thirteenth-century Byzantium, explores cross-cultural interchange, which has the uncovered a blended visual and conceptual language between Byzantium, Islam, and the West (Pitarakis 2019; Walker 2012, 2020).

The study of artisanal objects offers insight into the lives of broader sections of Byzantine society than investigation of monumental art allows. The Byzantines, however, did not manifest an exacting textual tradition for describing their material world. Every object has a word or group of words to define it and to use in discussing it. However, technical terms often lack precision, thus creating problems of interpretation. Interest in the material world involving daily life is quite variable in the different types of Byzantine texts. A cross-reading of the specialised vocabulary from the perspectives of philology, art history, and archaeology reveals clues about the cultural context from which it emerged. Such a multi-focal perspective may also uncover elements that are not expressly mentioned in the text but are implied or suggested.

The tenth-century *De Cerimoniis* stands as the major source of information on material luxury at the Great Palace. When Jean Ebersolt published his pioneering *Les Arts Somptuaires de Byzance* (1923), many facets of the luxury crafts of Byzantium remained unknown. Many decades later, scholars took a more focused approach to *De Cerimoniis*, for instance, George Galavaris's work on crosses (Galavaris 1994) and Gilbert Dagron's study on thrones at the imperial palace (Dagron 2003a). Michael Featherstone's examination of chapter 15 of book 2 shed light on the luxury artifacts displayed at the Great Pal-

ace during the reception of foreign ambassadors and rulers. Among vessels, those of enamel and repoussé silver were the two major types displayed on these occasions. The vocabulary allows for identifying sets of platters (*minsouria*) and the shallow bowls (*skoutella*, or *plats creux* in French) of different sizes (*De Cerimoniis* 2.15.331-5 [Featherstone 2007, 95]). The word ἀνάγλυφον, generically translated as 'repoussé silver', may also equate to embossing by impression on a mold. The decorative repertory of these vessels is not described. One may assume, however, that it included the animals, fantastic creatures, hybrids, and mythological scenes that one commonly finds on contemporary ivory or bone caskets and was also transferred to the wide production of glazed ceramics from Constantinople. Appropriation of the decorative techniques used on glazed ceramics – impressed ware, sgraffito, champlevé – forms the crux of the close connections between potters, silversmiths, and a variety of other crafts. This relationship among artisans today creates connections among scholars specialising in various fields of material culture. Growing interest in the scholarly study of techniques and materials has also attracted the attention of philologists.

The commentary, index, and glossary for the latest edition of the *De Cerimoniis* (eds Dagron, Flusin 2020) offer a rich tool for new approaches to investigating material culture at the Great Palace. Besides the numerous chapters devoted to religious rituals, one also finds "Coronation and Nuptial Crowning of an *Augousta*" (*De Cerimoniis* 1.50), which offers glimpses into the equipping of elite households in late antiquity and Byzantium. We learn, for instance, that on the third day of the ceremonies surrounding the augusta's marriage, she is accompanied to the bath. The objects carried by her escort include linen towels (σάβανα), a perfume container (μυροθήκη), little boxes (σκρίνια), and a jug and basin (σικλότρουλλα) (*De Cerimoniis* 1.50.152-60, 175-7). The passage ends with a reference to three porphyry pomegranates set with precious stones (ῥοδιῶνες διάλιθοι πορφυροί), which were probably goldsmithing works set with rubies or other red stones. These luxury objects were likely intended for display and prestige, but the specificity of the chosen fruit and the context also conveys a message of fecundity.

The augusta's ritual bath described in the *De Cerimoniis* has ancient roots, and the text in this chapter appears to have preserved some archaisms and an old-fashioned style. To culturally contextualise it further, one may refer to the decoration of the fourth-century Projecta casket, now at the British Museum. Probably a wedding gift, the casket was part of a domestic silver treasure found in 1793 on the Esquiline Hill in Rome. The art historian and classicist Jaś Elsner studied the casket's iconographic programme with the purpose of illustrating the commissioner's place and role in fourth-century elite society in the Roman Empire (Elsner 2003). The aquatic

scenes surrounding the figure of Aphrodite on the lid are of a piece with the bath of the augusta involving various attendants who oversee the accoutrements of the toilette. The objects on the casket include candlesticks, caskets, an ewer, and a troulla as well as a bucket with an arch-shaped handle. In the visual discourse of the tenth-century, when the *De Cerimoniis* was compiled, an object with similar purpose to the Projecta casket would typically bear a metaphorical interpretation of the ritual. This could be achieved through the selection of extracts from mythological narratives for use in a contemporary decorative framework. The so-called Veroli casket at the Victoria and Albert Museum may be viewed as a relevant counterpart (Chatterjee 2013).

The wide array of documentary archives, among them monastic foundation charters (*typika*), wills, and dowries, contain abundant lists of objects and raw materials offering firsthand objective testimony on the crafted object in Byzantium. The structure of such lists – grouping objects by categories and recording information on the history of the object, the context of its use and the other objects with which it is grouped, price, manufacture, components, colour, and inscriptions – provides valuable data for the study of multiple aspects of Byzantine history. The *typika* as sources for approaching material culture first drew the attention of scholars interested in specific categories of objects like lighting devices, agricultural implements, and jewelry. In the 1990s, Nicolas Oikonomides became the first scholar to attempt a broader use of *typika* by mining them to restitute the contents of the Byzantine house (Oikonomides 1990).

Later, in the early 2000s, Jean-Michel Spieser, Maria Parani, Ludovic Bender, Aude Vuilloud, and I undertook a systematic collaborative study of Byzantine artifact terminology with the goal of providing a translation and commentary for each term recorded in published archival documents dating from the ninth to the fifteenth century. That effort resulted in the creation of the online electronic database Artefacts and Raw Materials in Byzantine Archival Documents / Objets et matériaux dans les documents d'archives byzantins (ByzAD)[3] (Parani, Pitarakis, Spieser 2019). The material researched include private documents and public acts (e.g. wills, court decisions), *typika*, and inventories of monastic property. The value of such archival documents is their immediate and objective witnesses to actual practices, including concrete descriptions of artifacts, free of artifice and rhetoric. Assembling all the available data so it can be put in perspective opens interesting avenues for interdisciplinary exchange.

In some instances, a word can gain clarity through comparison with the archaeological record, as occurred when the recurrent discovery

---

[3] http://typika.cfeb.org/index/.

of a distinctive type of bronze pin in conjunction with rings thought to belong to belt buckles (often found in funerary contexts) led to the identification of a binding mechanism – a clasp formed by a ring and a pin identified by the compound word κομποθήλικον or κομποθήκη in the archival documents (ByzAD, "biblion";[4] "kompothèlykon").[5] In another example of interdisciplinary research, Jean-Pierre Sodini compiled a comprehensive list of elements containing such clasps (i.e. other pins and rings) yielded by archaeological excavations and expanded his documentation through the inclusion of depictions of Christ Pantocrator holding a book equipped with such clasps in visual sources from the tenth and eleventh centuries (Sodini 2016). Since this publication, the archaeological discoveries of rings and pins forming binding mechanisms have increased (Demirel Gökalp 2021, 104-6; Pülz et al. 2020, 163-4, pl. 88, colour pl. 101). The extraordinary number and variety of copper alloy finds from the middle Byzantine monastic complex in Hattusa-Boğazköy allowed the graphic restitution of a book cover, including the *gammata* (*gamma*-shaped accessories) at the four corners, a medallion-shaped applique at the centre with a cross motif in relief, and the bookbinding mechanism made by rings and pins used to secure the cover with three straps (Böhlendorf-Arslan 2019, 100, fig. 71).

The vocabulary in *typika* also helped identify a complex device that appears to have been conceived in response to a liturgical need to illuminate the row of epistyle icons. The discovery of a bronze assemblage from a church during the construction of a water conduit in Western Thrace in the 1970s helped clarifying the function of the candle-holding device, today kept at the Archaeological Museum of Edirne (Pitarakis 2016). The components include horizontal bronze strips that were fixed on a marble epistyle using brackets. Each bracket takes the shape of an extended arm. A flat square holder with a pricket at its base inserts into the tightly clenched fists. Isolated or grouped components of such devices made their way from the archaeological record into museum collections during the past decade (Androudis, Motsianos 2019). According to the type and decoration of the strips and the square holders, these devices may be dated to the eleventh and twelfth centuries **[fig. 5]** or to the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. The composite words found in archival documents along with the actual objects bearing material representation of the words enrich layers of knowledge on the Byzantine templon.

Poetry is another branch of philology that has attracted interest as a source in the study of the luxury object. The above-mentioned corpus of *in situ* epigrams by Rhoby (Rhoby 2010) was followed by

Figure 5 Bronze hand from a lighting fixture attached to a templon. Istanbul Archaeological Museums, inv. 5870 M. © Istanbul Archaeological Museums (photograph by Dilara Şen Turan)

parallel art historical and philological approaches of investigation. Work by Ivan Drpić (Drpić 2013; 2014; 2016; 2018; 2020) on icon revetments and enkolpia and the comprehensive analysis of Foteini Spingou (2021) on the compilation of twelfth-century epigrams related to objects of art in the manuscript Graecus Z 524, at the Biblioteca Marciana in Venice, introduced new perspectives into the study of cultural history in Byzantium.

In concert with work by Stratis Papaioannou (2013) on Michael Psellos, Rhoby's epigrams also led to an innovative inquiry on subjectivity and self-representation in Byzantium (Rhoby 2016). The puns and wordplay of epigrams were intended to evoke magical powers, drawing the commissioner or recipient into the narrative represented on the object. The transferable power in the object allowed the commissioner or recipient to engage in the enhancive action of mentally assimilating as mythological heroes or religious figures. The use of the active voice in the epigram further involves assimilation by the maker of the object. Byzantine epigrams and inscriptions do not distinguish between "having something made" and "making something" (Lauxtermann 2003, 158-9). In short, the faith of the commissioner channels divine inspiration into the hands of the craftsman whose work then emerges as a reenacting of the Creation by God.

Representations of donors on goldsmithing artifacts are not frequently encountered. This may be due to donors typically expressing themselves through epigrams or in some instances being symbolically one with the imagery on the object or represented by it. The stereotyped format of the donor in *proskynesis*, at the feet of a saintly figure, is however attested. Such an example is found on a small eleventh-century bronze icon of St. Nicholas in Thessalonike that perhaps also served as a matrix (Kypraiou 1986, 89-90, no. 11). The incorporation of the donor in a composition serves to emphasise his or her wealth and the expense involved in the commission. A more lavish example is offered by the lid of the twelfth-century reliquary box at the Protaton, Mount Athos, showing the donor, a monk named Zosimas, at the foot of the Virgin in the Crucifixion scene (Pitarakis, Oikonomaki-Papadopoulou 2000, 49-53; Hostetler 2017, 172-89). The standing figures of Constantine Akropolites and his wife within the silver frame of the thirteenth-century icon of the Virgin and Child at the Tretiakov Gallery in Moscow attest to a version of this practice with precious revetments (Drpić 2016, 375).

4   Byzantine Economy, Wealth, and Artistic Production. Connected Methods and Approaches

One can observe in a succession of major publications the steps taken toward the growing integration of material culture research and study of the dynamics of Byzantine economy: *Studies in Byzantine Monetary Economy* by Michael Hendy (1985); the two-volume *Hommes et Richesses* directed by Jacques Lefort and Cécile Morrisson in collaboration with Vassiliki Kravari (Morrisson, Lefort 1989; Kravari, Lefort, Morrisson 1991); the three-volume *Economic History of Byzantium* compiled by Angeliki Laiou (2002); *The Byzantine Economy* by Laiou and Morrisson (2007); *Trade and Markets in Byzantium* by Morrisson (2012b) and *Trade in Byzantium* by Magdalino, Necipoğlu, and Jevtić (2016). Ceramics production represents a major area in this progression, with current research tending to highlight the links between ceramics finds, domestic structures, and coins. Studies devoted to long-distance trade in light of finds from shipwrecks and harbours brought attention to non-ceramic products (Mundell-Mango 2001). Steelyards are a recurrent find in late antique shipwrecks, typically in conjunction with copper kitchen vessels and table ware vessels. The excavations at the Theodosian Harbour of Yenikapı, in Istanbul, offer an extraordinary snapshot of the range of local production and imports that coexisted during a given period (Kızıltan 2007; Kızıltan, Baran Çelik 2013). Differentiating what was manufactured locally from what arrived via long-distance trade or other channels is not always obvious. Most of the exquisite

goldsmithing items found appear to be the work of Constantinopolitan workshops, while some ivory carvings from the sixth or seventh century may have come from Alexandria (Pitarakis 2021).

The close connection between numismatics and the study of luxury metal crafts is aptly exhibited in the sacks of coins depicted on ivory diptychs, the circus prizes on gold medals commemorating the consulship of emperors, and the wide range of coin jewelry and other categories of imperial largesse. The imperial mint and goldsmithing workshops at the palace worked in close collaboration, both falling under the authority of a single official, the *comes sacrarum largitionum* (Morrisson 2002; 2012a). The *comes* also oversaw the imperial textile workshops, which in the production of precious silks and dyes made wide use of gold thread. The insignia, silver plates, and medals that transmitted imperial ideology to all sectors of society were struck at palace workshops and served as prototypes for the urban workshops.

Numismatics and the study of goldsmithing share similar methods of recording and verification. Metrology – the study of all measurable features of an object, such as its dimensions, weight, and metallic composition – and examination of coin dies have long been standard procedures for numismatists, but the use of these practices has increasingly expanded. Today, for example, the precise measurement of objects' dimensions, along with the production of charts detailing metal composition obtained through scientific analysis, is among the methodologies developed and presented in a publication devoted to the production of late antique copper alloy vessels between the fourth and eighth centuries through examples in the Benaki Museum collection and related materials (Drandaki 2020). With regard to die studies, however, the possibility of identifying series of metal objects made from a single mold or die happens only infrequently. Overmoulding is also a common practice that one has to keep in mind when studying a bronze object. At the same time, the increasing number of objects of similar type produced from stone moulds and metal matrixes is helping re-create chains of production by given workshops. Provenance as an element of consideration in recording coins and metal objects allows the drafting of distribution maps and hypotheses about places of manufacture. The geographical distribution of mints and arms factories may help in pinpointing major metalworking centres.

Iconography is an essential intersection between art history, numismatics, and sigillography. For instance, the appearance of the image of the Virgin on Byzantine coins, an introduction attested in a rare issue of the *solidi* of Leo VI (r. 866-912) (Kalavrezou 2003, 128) and Michael Psellos's account of the miracle of the icon of the Virgin at the Blachernae, provoked an intense interdisciplinary debate about the author's description of the miracle and the actual iconographic type

it represented (Pentcheva 2006, 145-63; Fisher 2012). Another engaging debate on the prototypes of the iconographic types stemmed from the comparison of vast series of empress bust counterweights for the steelyards often yielded in seventh-century archaeological contexts with an inspiration from fourth-century coin types (Pitarakis 2012, 419-22). The popularity of pseudo-coins on precious jewelry of the sixth and seventh centuries offers an interesting social and artistic background for approaching this production (Pitarakis 2022).

The transmission of numismatic iconography to early Byzantine marriage rings bears testimony through the close connection between the imperial mint and the jewellers of the capital (Walker 2010). Their relationship might also have impacted the production of bronze workshops. The diversification of iconographic types on Palaiologan coinage – from the introduction of the Virgin surrounded by the city walls of Constantinople on the obverse of the gold hyperpyra of Michael VIII Palaiologos (r. 1261-1282) to that of the winged emperor on the Thessalonican coins of John Komnenos Doukas (1237-44) and the Palaiologan monogram – is a further rationale for interdisciplinary contacts between numismatics and art history (Cutler 1975, 54, 111-41; Pitarakis 2010b, 607-8; Morrisson, Papadopoulou 2013, 85-9).

On the reverse of Michael VIII's gold hyperpyron, the representation of the kneeling emperor with straight back before the seated Christ fostered interdisciplinary discussion because of its ideological and political implications, particularly of Western influence. This type also adds context to local Constantinopolitan artistic creation, such as the pose of the deferring Theodore Metochites in the well-known mosaic at the inner narthex of Chora. As with most other situations, the selection of an iconographic type fits within a broader cultural context. In the case of Metochites, his action is also contextualised by contemporary attitudes toward donation as evinced by *typika* (Ševčenko 2012, 198-201).

Innovation in coin iconography is often prompted by a major event that at the same time may serve as grounds for disseminating an ideological message. The introduction of the image of St. John the Baptist blessing the emperor on a gold issue of Alexander (r. 912-13), younger brother and co-emperor of Leo VI (r. 886-912), serves as a case in point. Cécile Morrisson and Pagona Papadopoulou (2013) observe that after Alexander's example, a saintly figure again appears on coins only in the eleventh century. While recognising that religious images on coins may convey multiple meanings, Papadopoulou and Morrisson suggest that the image of St. John might be a typological equivalent of the patriarch Nicholas Mystikos (901-07, 912-25), whom Leo VI had deposed during the crisis of the tetragamy.

Alongside this view, one could further suggest a generic reading for John's presence in light of the character of kingship and its rela-

tion to the church (Pitarakis 2020, 174). *De Cerimoniis* indicates that one major stop in the imperial procession in Hagia Sophia is at the chapel of the Holy Well, where behind curtains, the patriarch returns the crown to the emperor, who removes it upon entering the church (*De Cerimoniis* 1.1.275-80). In light of the emperor's ritual exit from the Great Church, John the Baptist on Alexander's coin may convey the baptismal connotation of the symbolic unction conferred on the *porphyrogennetoi* and the idea of a God-chosen emperor ruling over his chosen people (Dagron 2003b, 94-6, 102-3, 122, 273-4).

Metal objects have liquidity value in being convertible into money. The opposite, for instance, would be ivory, which although a precious material in medieval Byzantium, does not frequently appear among the artifacts listed in archival documents because it could not be converted into money (ByzAD, Artefact, ## 1176, 1353, 1786, 3003).[6] Amid monetary crisis, as in the late eleventh century, the reverse process of melting coins into silver plates is also documented (Morrisson, Papadopoulou 2019, 317). The liquidity value of metal is further evident in the theft of pieces of silver from icon revetments to be traded in exchange for food during the economic hardship of the fourteenth century (Oikonomides 1991, 38-9). The Byzantines accumulated silver objects for thesaurisation (storing money). The numerous coin hoards from the seventh century have often yielded silver plates as well as gold jewelry. In later contexts, as with the Palaiologan hoards from Belgratkapı, in Constantinople, some objects may have been of personal value, such as a silver enkolpion, a set of silver toilette items, a silver whistle, and a small bronze mortar (Pitarakis 2015a, 360-3, nos 116-19; Baker et al. 2017).

Metal objects, having a place among dowries due to possessing monetary value, were also bequeathed. In one case from Thessalonike, Maria Deblitzene, widow of Manuel, went to court to secure her right to her dowry and marital gifts from her late husband. A detailed inventory dated to 1384 offers valuable testimony for exploring the definition of the luxury object in Byzantium. The list of the household's precious belongings included a brooch and *kataseista*, probably pendant ornaments forming part of a headdress, valued at the impressive sum of 154 hyperpyra, while an ewer and a basin, probably of copper alloy, were together valued at 1 hyperpyron. There are also several rings identified as being made of *malagma*, a very pure gold which might connect with the fineness and the theoretical weight of the hyperpyron (Spieser 2021). The ownership of precious jewelry transmitted through inheritance is frequently illustrated in archival

---

6 http://typika.cfeb.org/index/artefact/1176; http://typika.cfeb.org/index/artefact/1353; http://typika.cfeb.org/index/artefact/1786; http://typika.cfeb.org/index/artefact/3003.

documents of the same period. In a will dated 1334 in the archives of the Prodromos monastery, in Serres, we learn that a ring, a silver bowl, and a gold jewelry clasp valued at 5 nomismata were selected for inheritance (ByzAD, Artefact, #3027).[7]

Comparisons of the price of metal objects with other categories are useful in assessing relative value in regard to household income. The study of prices opens a space ripe for interdisciplinary exchange (Morrisson, Cheynet 2002, 851-6, table 15). For goldsmithing artifacts, the monetary input of the artisan's skill with regard to the working of raw materials is difficult to evaluate. Sometimes in archival documents, instead of the price of a jewel, one finds a mention of its weight (Spieser 2021, 6). From the perspective of wages, it has been demonstrated that in the private sector, craftsmen were paid scarcely less than specialists such as doctors and appear to have enjoyed incomes fairly similar to those of professional soldiers (Morrisson, Cheynet 2002, 869). There are of course biases introduced by the disparity of available evidence given the long chronology of Byzantium.

The containers in which coin hoards were hidden are another element enhancing the relationship between numismatics and the study of metal artifacts. Pottery jugs as well as copper alloy jugs are attested as containers for coins. Two late sixth- and seventh-century hoards found, respectively, in Spetses and Samos, Greece, in the late 1970s and 1983, included distinctive types of copper jugs as containers the dating of which was thus strengthened (Morrisson et al. 2006, 278, 391). The eleventh-century hoard found in 1984 at Kocamustafapaşa, in Istanbul, allowed the identification of a rare, dated type of jug from the middle Byzantine period (Pitarakis 2010a).

Material culture intersects with the growing interest of archaeology in the study of urban development and spatial dynamics in relation to societal development (see Böhlendorf-Arslan, Ricci 2012). The evidence provided by the investigation of money supply and money circulation in the archaeological record finds a valuable complement in the quantification of ceramics, metal objects, glass, and other small finds. A cross-examination of such small finds may offer valuable clues on chronology as well as on the economic status of the recipients (Uytterhoeven 2021, 237-9; Papadopoulou 2015; Sanders 2018; 2020). A systematic classification of small finds with regard to their material and spatial distribution within each site or sector may provide interesting insight into social structures, production, and exchange. Such an inquiry could also broaden our knowledge about the equipping of well-off and middle-class households and technical issues on which the written sources are silent. Amorium excavations, in Phry-

---

7 http://typika.cfeb.org/index/artefact/3027.

gia, provide outstanding examples. In the Lower City Enclosure, for instance, there is an assemblage of objects from a destruction layer dated to the ninth century that includes a rich variety of objects and materials, including an open-shape copper basin, two pairs of iron folding legs for stools or tables, an iron stylus, a weight, two knives, a padlock, four gaming counters, an ivory or bone handle, and bone instruments that seem to have been used in weaving (Ivison 2012, 56-7; Yıldırım 2017, 85). Instruments like styli had multivalent functions. The discovery of several styli within the context of a church, for instance, led to the assumption that they might have served alternately for detailing painted wall decorations (Demirel Gökalp 2021, 107-8).

The categorising of information on the composition, types, and quantity of gold, silver, and copper alloys from archaeological contexts for comparison with objects maintained in museums and private collections is an approach not yet pursued on a large scale. As publication of metal finds grows, attempts to gather such statistics could contribute to more comprehensive evaluations of Byzantine production. The study of Late Antique and Byzantine small finds from archaeological excavations in Anatolia have been the focus of several recent master's and doctoral theses subsequently revised for publication. Among them, for instance, are those on the finds from Amorium (Yıldırım 2017), Kibyra (Demirer 2013; Kaya, Demirer 2020), Anaia/Kadıkalesi (Altun 2015), Divriği Fortress, in Sivas (Acar 2019), and Patara (Şahin 2018). One would suspect that among the luxury items from aristocratic households preserved in major museums and collections are objects that influenced more modest serial productions yielded by the archaeological record.

Ritualised life in the domestic realm (include the palace), the church, and the outdoors has produced particular sets of behaviours and practices requiring the use of specific categories of objects. In some cases, they are shared only by distinct social groups, but in others are found across all levels of society. Growing interest in the economic, social, and cultural aspects of objects points to the potential of a broad, enriching basis for interdisciplinary contacts in the study of Byzantine artistic production. Goldsmithing and the manufacture of copper alloys produced objects widely dispersed throughout society and involving all aspects of daily life, making them a particularly interesting subcategory relevant to such an approach.

Bibliography

Acar, D. (2019). *Divriği Kalesi Metal Buluntuları (2006-2018)* (Metal Finds at Divriği Castle [2006-2018]) [MA thesis]. Sivas: Sıvas Cumhuriyet Üniversitesi; Institute of Social Sciences; Department of Art History.

Altun, F.İ. (2015). *Kuşadası, Kadıkalesi/Anaia Kazısı 2001-2012 Sezonu Bizans Küçük Buluntuları* (Kuşadası, Kadıkalesi/Anaia Excavations, Season 2001-2012. Small Byzantine Finds) [PhD dissertation]. Izmir: Ege University; Institute of Social Sciences.

Androudis, P.; Motsianos, P. (2019). "Byzantine Metal Support Fittings for a Candlestick from the Monastery of Chilandar on Mount Athos". Motsianos, I.; Garnett, K.S. (eds), *Glass, Wax and Metal. Lighting Technologies in Late Antique, Byzantine and Medieval Times*. Oxford: Archaeopress, 153-8.

Baker, J. et al. (2017). "The Reformed Byzantine Silver Based Currencies (ca. 1372-1379) in the Light of the Hoards from the Belgrade Gate". *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, 71, 273-335.

Bálint, C. (2000). "Some Avar and Balkan Connections of the Vrap Treasure". Reynolds Brown, Kidd, Little, 2000, 180-7.

Bálint, C. (2010). *Der Schatz von Nagyszentmiklós. Archäologische Studien zur frühmittelalterlichen Metallgefäßkunst des Orients, Byzanz' und der Steppe*. Budapest: Balassi Kiadó. Varia Archaeologica Hungarica 16b.

Bosselmann-Ruickbie, A. (2021). "Palaeologan Luxury Art in a 'Period of Decline'. Byzantine Enamel of the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries and Its Potential for Innovation". Martiniani-Reber et al. 2021. `https://bit.ly/3OiXHnNh`.

Böhlendorf-Arslan, F. (2019). *Die Oberstadt von Ḫattuša. Die Mittelbyzantinische Siedlung in Boğazköy. Fallstudie zum Alltagsleben in einem anatolischen Dorf zwischen dem 10. Und 12. Jahrhundert*. Berlin: De Gruyter.

Böhlendorf-Arslan, F.; Ricci, A. (eds) (2012). *Byzantine Small Finds in Archaeological Contexts*, *Byzas 15*. Istanbul: Ege Yayınları.

ByzAD 2003- = Bender, L.; Parani, M.; Pitarakis, B.; Spieser, J.-M.; Vuilloud, A., *Artefacts and Raw Materials in Byzantine Archival Documents. Objets et matériaux dans les documents d'archives byzantins*. `http://typika.cfeb.org/index`.

Caseau Chevallier, B.; Neri, E. (éds) (2021). *Rituels religieux et sensorialité (Antiquité et Moyen Âge). Parcours de recherche*. Bologna; Milan: Silvana Editoriale. Biblioteca d'arte 71.

Chatterjee, P. (2013). "Vision, Transformation, and the Veroli Casket". *Oxford Art Journal*, 36(3), 325-44. `https://doi.org/10.1093/oxartj/kct029`.

Cotsonis, J.A. (2020). *The Religious Figural Imagery of Byzantine Lead Seals II. Studies on Images of the Saints and on Personal Piety*. Abingdon; Oxon; New York: Routledge; Taylor & Francis Group. Variorum Collected Studies.

Cruikshank Dodd, E. (1961). *Byzantine Silver Stamps. With an Excursus on the Comes Sacrarum Largitionum by J.P.C. Kent*. Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection; Trustees of Harvard University. Dumbarton Oaks Studies 7.

Cutler, A. (1975). *Transfigurations. Studies in the Dynamics of Byzantine Iconography*. University Park (PA); London: The Pennsylvania State University.

Dagron, G. (2003a). "Trônes pour un empereur". Avramea, A.; Laiou, A.; Chrysos, E. (eds), *Byzantium. State and Society. In Memory of Nikos Oikonomides*.

Athens: Institute for Byzantine Studies; The National Research Foundation, 179-203.

Dagron, G. (2003b). *Emperor and Priest: The Imperial Office in Byzantium*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Dagron, G.; Flusin, B. (éds et trad.) (2020). *Constantin Porphyrogénète. Le Livre des Cérémonies*. Avec la collaboration de M. Stavrou. 6 vols. Paris: Amis du Centre d'Histoire et Civilisation de Byzance. Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae 52.

Demirel Gökalp, Z. (2021). "Amorium Kazılarında Bulunan Styluslar" (Styluses Found in Amorium Excavations). *Türkiye Bilimler Akademisi Kültür Envanteri Dergisi*, 23, 99-117. https://doi.org/10.22520/tubaked.2021.23.005.

Demirer, Ü. (2013). *Kibyra Metal Buluntuları* (Metal Finds at Kibyra) [PhD dissertation]. Antalya: Akdeniz University; Institute of Social Sciences.

Drandaki, A. (2020). *Late Antique Metalware. The Production of Copper-Alloy Vessels between the 4th and 8th Centuries. The Benaki Museum Collection and Related Material*. Turnhout: Brepols. Bibliothèque de l'Antiquité Tardive 37.

Drpić, I. (2013). "Painter as Scribe. Artistic Identity and Arts of *Graphē* in Late Byzantium". *Word & Image. A Journal of Verbal. Visual Enquiry*, 29(3), 334-53. https://doi.org/10.1080/02666286.2013.771921.

Drpić, I. (2014). "The Patron's 'I'. Art, Selfhood, and the Later Byzantine Dedicatory Epigram". *Speculum*, 89(4), 895-935. https://doi.org/10.1017/s0038713414000785.

Drpić, I. (2016). *Epigrams, Art, and Devotion in Later Byzantium*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Drpić, I. (2018). "The Enkolpion. Object, Agency, Self". *Gesta*, 57(2), 197-224. https://doi.org/10.1086/698842.

Drpić, I. (2020). "Short Texts on Small Objects. The Poetics of the Byzantine *Enkolpion*". Lauxtermann, M.D.; Toth, I. (eds), *Inscribing Texts in Byzantium. Continuities and Transformations*. London: Routledge, 309-34.

Ebersolt, J. (1923). *Les arts somptuaires de Byzance. Étude sur l'art impérial de Constantinople*. Paris: Éditions Ernest Leroux.

Elsner, J. (2003). "Visualizing Women in Late Antique Rome. The Projecta Casket". Entwistle, C. (ed.), *Through a Glass Brightly. Studies in Byzantine and Medieval Art and Archaeology Presented to David Buckton*. Oxford: Oxbow Books, 22-36.

Featherstone, J.M. (2007). "Δι᾽ Ἔνδειξιν. Display in Court Ceremonial (*De Cerimoniis* II, 15)". Cutler, A; Papaconstantinou, A. (eds), *The Material and the Ideal. Essays in Medieval Art and Archaeology in Honour of Jean-Michel Spieser*. Leiden; Boston: Brill, 75-112.

Feissel, D. (1986). "Le préfet de Constantinople, les poids étalons et l'estampillage de l'argenterie au VIᵉ et au VIIᵉ siècle". *Revue numismatique*, 28, 119-42. https://doi.org/10.3406/numi.1986.1889.

Feissel, D. (2020). "Inscriptions grecques en Vénétie". Feissel, D. (ed.), *Études d'épigraphie et d'histoire des premiers siècles de Byzance*. Paris: Association des amis du Centre d'Histoire et Civilisation de Byzance. Bilans de Recherche 10.

Fisher, E.A. (2012). "Michael Psellos on the 'Usual' Miracle at Blachernai, the Law, and Neoplatonism". Sullivan, D.; Fisher, E.; Papaioannou, S. (eds), *Byzantine Religious Culture. Studies in Honor of Alice-Mary Talbot*. Leiden; Boston: Brill, 187-204.

Fournet, J.-L.; Bénazeth, D. (2020). "Quand les cuillers se mettent à parler". Boud'hors, A. et al. (éds), *Études coptes XVI. Dix-huitième journée d'études* (Bruxelles, 22-24 juin 2017). Paris: De Boccard, 129-59. Cahiers de la Bibliothèque Copte 23.

Galavaris, G. (1994). "The Cross in the Book of Ceremonies by Constantine Porphyrogenitus". *Θυμίαμα στη μνήμη της Λασκαρίνας Μπούρα*. 2 vols. Athens: Benaki Museum, 95-9.

Garam, É. (2000). "The Vrap Treasure". Reynolds Brown, Kidd, Little 2000, 170-9.

Garipzanov, I. (2018). *Graphic Signs of Authority in Late Antiquity and Early Middle Ages, 300-900*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Grierson, P. (2006). *Catalogue of the Byzantine Coins at the Dumbarton Oaks Collection and in the Whittemore Collection*. Vol. 5, *Michael VIII to Constantine XI, 1258-1453*. Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection.

Grimm-Stadelmann, I. (2020). *Untersuchungen zur Iatromagie in der Byzantinischen Zeit*. Berlin; Boston: De Gruyter.

Hendy, M. (1985). *Studies in Byzantine Monetary Economy, c. 300-1450*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Holcomb, M. (2008). "'Ugly but … Important'. The Albanian Hoard and the Making of the Archaeological Treasure in the Early Twentieth Century". *Early Medieval Europe*, 16(1), 3-22. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-0254.2008.00219.x.

Hostetler, B. (2017). "Image, Epigram, and Nature in Middle Byzantine Personal Devotion". Bartal, R.; Bodner, N.; Kühnel, B. (eds), *Natural Materials of the Holy Land and the Visual Translation of Place, 500-1500*. London; New York: Routledge; Taylor & Francis, 172-89.

Ivison, E. (2012). "Excavation at the Lower City Enclosure, 1996-2008". *Amorium Reports 3. The Lower City Enclosure Finds Reports and Technical Studies*. Istanbul: Ege Yayınları, 5-151.

Jolivet-Lévy, C. (1987). "L'image du pouvoir dans l'art byzantin sous la dynastie macédonienne (867-1056)". *Byzantion*, 57, 441-70.

Jolivet-Lévy, C. (2019). "Inscriptions et images dans les Églises byzantines de Cappadoce. Visibilité/lisibilité, interactions et fonctions". Brodbeck, S.; Poilpré, A.-O. (éds), *Visibilité et présence de l'image dans l'espace ecclésial. Byzance et Moyen Âge Occidental*. Paris: Éditions de la Sorbonne, 378-408. Byzantina Sorbonensia 30.

Jolivet-Lévy, C.; Kiourtzian, G. (2013). "Le site de Gorgoli et le martyrium de saint Kérykos en Cappadoce. Étude préliminaire". Blondeau, C. et al. (éds), *Ars auro gemmisque prior. Mélanges en hommage à Jean-Pierre Caillet*. Turnhout: Brepols, 463-78.

Jolivet-Lévy, C.; Lemaigre Demesnil, N.; Kiourtzian, G. (2017). "Bezirana kilisesi (Cappadoce). Un exceptionnel décor paléologue en terres de Rūm. Nouveau témoignage sur les relations entre Byzance et le sultanat". *Zograph*, 41, 107-42. https://doi.org/10.2298/zog1741107j.

Kalavrezou, I. (ed.) (2003). *Byzantine Women and Their World*. New Haven (CT); London: Yale University Press.

Kaya, M.C.; Demirer, Ü. (2020). "Kibyra'dan Instrumenta Domestica Metaller. Kuzey Yamaç 1 No'lu Mekan Buluntuları" (Instrumenta Domestica Metals from Cibyra: Finds of Building No. 1 at North Slope). *Phaselis*, 4, 113-43. https://doi.org/10.18367/pha.20008.

Kiourtzian, G. (2016). "Les inscriptions grecques de Nagyszentmiklós". Brod-
beck, S. et al. (éds), *Mélanges Catherine Jolivet-Lévy. Travaux et Mémoires*,
20(2), 291-306.

Kızıltan, Z. (ed.) (2007). *Gün Işığında. Istanbul'un 8000 Yılı. Marmaray, Metro,
Sultanahmet Kazıları* (In the Light of Day. 8000 Years of Istanbul. Marmaray,
Metro, and Sultanahmet Excavations). Istanbul: Vehbi Koç Vakfı.

Kızıltan, Z.; Baran Çelik, G. (eds) (2013). *Stories from the Hidden Harbor. Ship-
wrecks of Yenikapı*. Istanbul: Istanbul Archaeological Museums Press.

Kiourtzian, G. (2021). "Inscriptions chrétiennes de Karpathos". *Cahiers archéo-
logiques*, 58, 73-98.

Kravari, V.; Lefort, J.; Morrisson, C. (éds) (1991). *Hommes et richesses dans l'Em-
pire byzantin*. Tome II, *VIIIᵉ-XVᵉ siècle*. Paris: Editions P. Lethielleux. Réali-
tés byzantines 3.

Kypraiou, E. (1986). Θεσσαλονίκη. Ιστορία και Τέχνη. Έκθεση Λευκοὺ Πύργου.
Athens: Tamio Arkhaioloyikon Poron kai Apallotrioseon.

Laiou, A. (ed.) (2002). *The Economic History of Byzantium from the Seventh to
the Fifteenth Century*. 3 vols. Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Research
Library and Collection. Dumbarton Oaks Studies 39.

Laiou, A.E.; Morrisson, C. (2007). *The Byzantine Economy*. Cambridge: Cam-
bridge University Press. Cambridge Medieval Textbooks.

Lauxtermann, M.D. (2003). *Byzantine Poetry from Pisides to Geometres. Texts
and Comments*, vol. 1. Vienna: Austrian Academy of Science Press. Wiener
byzantinische Studien 24/1.

Magdalino, P.; Necipoğlu, N.; Jevtić, I. (eds) (2016). *Trade in Byzantium. Papers
from the Third International Sevgi Gönül Byzantine Studies Symposium* (Is-
tanbul, 24-27 June 2013). Istanbul: Koç University's Research Center for
Anatolian Civilizations (ANAMED).

Martiniani-Reber, M. et al. (éds) (2021). *Autour des métiers du luxe à Byzance*.
Musée d'Art et d'Histoire de Genève. `https://collections.geneve.
ch/mah/node/422714`.

Métivier, S. (2012). "Byzantium in Question in 13th-Century Seljuk Anatolia".
Saint-Guillain, G.; Stathakopoulos, D. (eds), *Liquid and Multiple. Individu-
als and Identities in the Thirteenth-Century Aegean*. Paris: Association des
amis du Centre d'Histoire et Civilisation de Byzance, 235-58. Collège de
France-CNRS; Centre de Recherche d'Histoire et Civilisation de Byzance,
Monographies 35.

Morrisson, C. (1992). "L'épigraphie des monnaies et des sceaux à l'époque
byzantine". Harlfinger, D. et al. (a cura di), *Paleografia e codicologia gre-
ca*. Alessandria: Edizioni dell'Orso, 252-74. Biblioteca di scrittura e civiltà 3.

Morrisson, C. (2002). "Byzantine Money. Its Production and Circulation". Laiou,
A. (ed.), *Economic History of Byzantium*, vol. 3. Washington, D.C.: Dumbar-
ton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 909-66.

Morrisson, C. (2012a). "Imperial Generosity and Its Monetary Expression. The
Rise and Decline of the 'Largesses'". Spieser, J.-M.; Yota, E. (éds), *Donation
et donateurs dans le monde byzantin*. Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 25-46. Ré-
alités byzantines 14.

Morrisson, C. (ed.) (2012b). *Trade and Markets in Byzantium*. Washington, D.C.:
Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection. Dumbarton Oaks Byz-
antine Symposia and Colloquia.

Morrisson, C.; Cheynet, J.-Cl. (2002). "Prices and Wages in the Byzantine World". Laiou, A. (ed.), *The Economic History of Byzantium*, vol. 2. Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 815-78.

Morrisson, C.; Lefort, J. (éds) (1989). *Hommes et richesses dans l'Empire byzantin*. Tome 1, *IVe-VIIe siècle*. Paris: Éditions P. Lethielleux. Réalités byzantines 1.

Morrisson, C.; Papadopoulou, P. (2013). "Symbols of Power, Symbols of Piety. Dynastic and Religious Iconography on Post-iconoclastic Byzantine Coinage". Grünbart, M.; Rickelt, L.; Vucetić, M. (Hrsgg), *Zwei Sonnen am Goldenen Horn? Kaiserliche und patriarchale Macht im byzantinischen Mittelalter. Akten der internationalen Tagung vom 3. bis 5. November 2010*. Teil 2. Münster: LIT Verlag, 75-98.

Morrisson, C.; Papadopoulou, P. (2019). "Monnaies réelles et monnaies de compte dans les documents athonites", in Delouis, O.; Smyrlis, K. (éds), "Lire les Archives de l'Athos", *Travaux et Mémoires*, 23(2), 299-339.

Morrisson, C. et al. (2006). *Les trésors monétaires byzantins des Balkans et d'Asie Mineure (491-713)*. Paris: Éditions P. Lethielleux. Réalités byzantines 13.

Mundell Mango, M. (1986). *Silver from Early Byzantium. The Kaper Koraon and Related Treasures*. Baltimore: The Walters Art Gallery.

Mundell Mango, M. (1994). "The Significance of Byzantine Tinned Objects". *Θυμίαμα στη μνήμη της Λασκαρίνας Μπούρα*. 2 vols. Athens: Benaki Museum, 221-7.

Mundell Mango, M. (2001). "Beyond the Amphora. Non-Ceramic Evidence from Late Antique Industry and Trade". Kingsley, S.A.; Decker, M.J. (eds), *Economy and Exchange in the East Mediterranean during Late Antiquity*. Oxford: Oxbow Books, 87-106.

Oikonomides, N. (1986). *A Collection of Dated Byzantine Lead Seals*. Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection.

Oikonomides, N. (1990). "The Contents of the Byzantine House from the Eleventh to the Fifteenth Century". *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, 44, 205-14.

Oikonomides, N. (1991). "The Holy Icon as an Asset". *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, 45, 35-44.

Papadopoulou, P. (2015). "Coins and Pots. Numismatic and Ceramic Evidence in the Economic History of the Middle Ages". Vroom, J. (ed.), *Medieval and Post-Medieval Ceramics in the Eastern Mediterranean. Fact and Fiction*. Turnhout: Brepols, 199-226.

Papaioannou, S. (2013). *Michael Psellos. Rhetoric and Authorship in Byzantium*. Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press.

Parani, M. (2010). "Byzantine Jewellery. The Evidence from Byzantine Legal Documents". Entwistle, C.; Adams, N. (eds), *Intelligible Beauty. Recent Research on Byzantine Jewellery*. London: British Museum, 186-92.

Parani, M.; Pitarakis, B.; Spieser, J.-M. (2019). "Artefacts and Raw Materials in Byzantine Archival Documents. A New Electronic Resource for the Study of Byzantine Material Culture", in Delouis, O.; Smyrlis, K. (éds), "Lire les Archives de l'Athos", *Travaux et Mémoires*, 23(2), 419-45.

Peers, G. (2021). *Animism, Materiality, and Museums. How Do Byzantine Things Feel?* Amsterdam: ARC Humanities Press; Amsterdam University Press.

Pentcheva, B. (2006). *Icons and Power. The Mother of God in Byzantium*. University Park (PA): The Pennsylvania State University Press.

Piguet-Panayotova, D. (2002). "The Gold and Silver Vessels from the Albanian Treasure in New Light". *Mitteilungen zur spätantiken Archäeologie und byzantinischen Kunstgeschichte*, 3, 37-74.

Pitarakis, B. (2009). "La vaisselle eucharistique dans les églises d'Orient". Bériou, N.; Caseau, B.; Rigaux, D. (éds), *Pratiques de l'eucharistie dans les Églises d'Orient et d'Occident (Antiquité et Moyen Âge)*. Paris: Institut d'Études Augustiniennes, 309-29.

Pitarakis, B. (2010a). "La cruche en cuivre du trésor de Kocamustafapaşa à Istanbul (XIᵉ siècle)", in "Mélanges Cécile Morrisson", *Travaux et Mémoires*, 16, 675-83.

Pitarakis, B. (2010b). "Wings of Salvation in Thirteenth-Century Art". Ödekan, A.; Akyürek, E.; Necipoğlu, N. (eds), *Change in the Byzantine World in the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries*. Istanbul: Koç University Press, 604-8.

Pitarakis, B. (2012). "Daily Life at the Marketplace in Late Antiquity and Byzantium". Morrisson, C. (ed.), *Trade and Markets in Byzantium*. Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 399-426. Dumbarton Oaks Byzantine Symposia and Colloquia.

Pitarakis, B. (ed.) (2015a). *Life Is Short, Art Long. The Art of Healing in Byzantium* = Exhibition catalogue (Pera Museum, 10 February-26 April 2015). Istanbul: Pera Museum.

Pitarakis, B. (2015b). "Piété privée et processus de production artistique à Byzance : à propos d'un enkolpion constantinopolitain (XIIIᵉ-XIVᵉ siècle)". *Deltion tes Christianikes Archaiologikes Hetaireias*, 36, 325-44.

Pitarakis, B. (2016). "Bras de lumière sur le templon médiéval (XIᵉ-XIIIᵉ siècle)". Brodbeck, S. et al. (éds), *Mélanges Catherine Jolivet-Lévy. Travaux et Mémoires*, 20(2), 435-52.

Pitarakis, B. (2018). "The Ritual of the Blessing of the Waters and Copper Alloy Vessels". *Annual of İstanbul Studies*, 7, 31-48.

Pitarakis, B. (2019). "Jewelers, Coppersmiths, and Clientele. Between Byzantium and the Arab World". Durak, K.; Jevtić, I. (eds), *Identity and The Other in Byzantium = Papers from the Fourth International Sevgi Gönül Byzantine Studies Symposium* (Istanbul, 23-5 June 2016). Istanbul: Koç University Press, 313-36.

Pitarakis, B. (2020). "Hagia Sophia, God's Chosen Ruler, and St. Nicholas. New Perspectives on the Macedonian Dynasty". *Yıllık. Annual of Istanbul Studies*, 2, 165-77. https://doi.org/10.53979/yillik.2020.13.

Pitarakis, B. (2021). "Health and Faith in Byzantine Anatolia". Akyürek, E.; Durak, K. (eds), *Anatolia in the Byzantine Period*. Istanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 242-53.

Pitarakis, B. (2022). "The Art of Weighing in Byzantium. Bizans'ta Ağırlık Ölçme Sanatı". *Ağırlık ve Ölçü Sanatı. The Art of Weights and Measures*. Istanbul: Pera Museum, 24-37.

Pitarakis, B. (forthcoming). "Objects of Desire. Collectors, Scholars, and Istanbul's Byzantine Art Market, 1850s-1950s". Delouis, O.; Pitarakis, B. (eds), *Discovering Byzantium in Istanbul. Scholars, Institutions, and Challenges, 1800-1955*. Istanbul: Istanbul Research Institute Publications. Istanbul Research Institute Publications 48, Symposium Series 3

Pitarakis, B.; Oikonomaki-Papadopoulou, Y. (2000). "Βυζαντινά Έργα". Papadopoulos, S. (ed.), *Κειμήλια Πρωτάτου*, vol. 1. Mount Athos: Iera Kinotis Ayiou Orous Atho, 45-58.

Pülz, A.M. et al. (2020). *Byzantinische Kleinfunde aus Ephesos*. Wien: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften. Forschungen in Ephesos 18/1.

Reynolds Brown, K.; Kidd, D.; Little, Ch.T. (eds) (2000). *From Attila to Charlemagne. Arts of the Early Medieval Period in the Metropolitan Museum of Art*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 180-7. The Metropolitan Museum of Art Symposia.

Rhoby, A. (2010). *Byzantinische Epigramme auf Ikonen und Objekte aus Kleinkunst*. Wien: Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften. Byzantinische Epigramme in inschriftlicher Überlieferung 2.

Rhoby, A. (2016). "Methods of Self-Representation in Byzantine Inscriptional Epigrams. Some Basic Thoughts". Santin, E.; Foschia, L. (éds), *L'épigramme dans tous ses états. Épigraphiques, littéraires, historiques*. Lyon: ENS Éditions, 2016. https://books.openedition.org/enseditions/5621.

Rhoby, A. (2017). "Text as Art? Byzantine Inscriptions and Their Display". Berti, I. et al. (eds), *Writing Matters. Presenting and Perceiving Monumental Inscriptions in Antiquity and the Middle Ages*. Berlin; Boston: De Gruyter, 265-83.

Rhoby, A. (2019). "Das Inschriftenprogramm auf dem Beschlag der Freisinger Lukasikone". Bosselmann-Ruickbie, A. et al. (Hrsgg), *Das Freisinger Lukasbild. Eine byzantinische Ikone und ihre tausendjährige Geschichte. Tagunsband zum Internationalen Symposium Freising 2016*. Paderborn: Schöningh, 87-98. Kataloge und Schriften (Diözesanuseum Freising) 67.

Şahin, F. (2018). *Patara V.2. Patara Metal Buluntuları* (Patara V.2. The Patara Metal Finds). Istanbul: Ege Yayınları.

Sanders, G. (2018). "Είχαν οι απλοί άνθρωποι κεραμικά; Είδη οικοσκευής των πλουσιότερων και των φτωχότερων βαθμίδων της κοινωνίας". Yangaki, A.G.; Panopoulou, A. (eds), *Το Βυζάντιο χώρις λάμψη. Τα ταπεινά αντικείμενα και η χρήση τους στον καθημερινό βίο των Βυζαντινών. Byzantium Without Glamour. The Humble Objects and Their Use in the Everyday Life of the Byzantines*. Athens: National Hellenic Research Foundation, 79-107.

Sanders, G.D.R. (2020). "Spring Forward Two Examples of How Shifting Chronologies Can Postpone The Dark Ages". *Herom. Journal on Hellenistic and Roman Material Culture*, 9, 353-79.

Schlumberger, G. (1893). "Un polycandilon byzantine". *Byzantinische Zeitschrift*, 2(3), 441-3.

Seibt, W. (2004). "Überlegungen zum Namensmonogramm auf dem byzantinischen Henkelkrug des Awarenschatzes von Vrap". Heftner, H.; Tomaschitz, K. (Hrsgg), *Ad Fontes! Festschrift für Gerhard Dobesch zum 65. Geburtstag*. Wien: Phoibos, 855-8.

Ševčenko, I. (1992). "The Sion Treasure. The Evidence of the Inscriptions". Boyd, S.A.; Mundell Mango, M. (eds), *Ecclesiastical Silver Plate in Sixth-Century Byzantium = Papers of the Symposium* (Walters Art Gallery, Baltimore; Dumbarton Oaks, 16-18 May 1986). Washington, D.C.: Trustees for Harvard University, 39-56.

Ševčenko, N. (2012). "The Portrait of Theodore Metochites at Chora". Spieser, J.-M.; Yota, E. (éds), *Donation et donateurs dans le monde byzantin*. Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 189-205. Réalités byzantines 14.

Sodini, J.-P. (2016). "Une boucle de fermoir dans une tombe de la cathédrale de Xanthos". Brodbeck, S. et al. (éds), *Mélanges Catherine Jolivet-Lévy. Travaux et Mémoires*, 20(2), 555-71.

Spieser, J.-M. (2015). *Images du Christ. Des catacombes aux lendemains de l'iconoclasme*. Genève: Droz. Titre courant 57.

Spieser, J.-M. (2021). "Les objets de luxe dans les documents d'archives byzantins. L'exemple d'un acte du tribunal ecclésiastique de Thessalonique de 1384". Martiniani-Reber, M. et al. 2021. `https://collections.geneve.ch/mah/publication/les-objets-de-luxe-dans-les-documents-darchives-byzantins`.

Spingou, F. (2021). *Words and Artworks in Byzantium. Twelfth-Century Poetry on Art from MS. Marcianus Gr. 524*. Tolworth: Grosvenor House.

Uytterhoeven, I. (2021). "Creating Private Space. Living Areas in the Late Antique Cities of Asia Minor". Kontogiannis, N.D.; Uyar, T.B. (eds), *Space and Communities in Byzantine Anatolia = Papers from the Fifth International Sevgi Gönül Byzantine Studies Symposium* (Istanbul, 24-26 June 2019). Istanbul: Koç University Press, 219-41.

Van den Hoek, A.; Feissel, D.; Herrmann, J.Jr. (2015). "More Lucky Wearers. The Magic of Portable Inscriptions". Boschung, D.; Bremmer, J.N. (eds), *The Materiality of Magic*. Paderborn: Wilhelm Fink, 309-56.

Walker, A. (2010). "The Question of the Crowned Bride", in "Mélanges Cécile Morrisson", *Travaux et Mémoires*, 16, 849-63.

Walker, A. (2012). *The Emperor and the World. Exotic Elements and the Imaging of Middle Byzantine Imperial Power*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Walker, A. (2015). "Pseudo-Arabic Inscriptions and the Pilgrim's Path at Hosios Loukas". Eastmond, A. (ed.), *Viewing Inscriptions in the Late Antique and Medieval World*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 99-123.

Walker, A. (2020). "Integrated yet Segregated. Eastern Islamic Art in Twelfth Century Byzantium". Schroeder, R.; Lam, A. (eds), *The Eloquence of Art. Essays in Honour of Henry Maguire*. London: Routledge, 387-406.

Wamser, L.; Zahlhaas, G. (Hrsgg) (1998). *Rom und Byzanz. Archäologische Kostbarkeiten aus Bayern*. München: Hirmer Verlag. Prähistorische Staatsammlung München.

Yıldırım, B. (2017). *Amorium Kazıları. Büyük Mekân Maden Buluntuları* (Amorium Excavations. Metal Finds from the Lower City Enclosure) [MA Thesis]. Eskişehir: Eskişehir Anadolu University; Institute of Social Sciences.

Interdisciplinarity in Byzantine Studies
A Sacred-Landscapes and Digital-Humanities Approach

Athanasios Vionis
Open University of Cyprus, Nicosia

Abstract   This contribution aims at investigating the application of theoretical and digital approaches to the 'sacred'. Apart from highlighting the potential of spatial analyses and other computational approaches in Byzantine Archaeology, this paper explores issues of reception and appropriation of the Byzantine past in our contemporary world through the employment of state-of-the-art digital tools, Neurosciences and the practice of Community Archaeology. The constructive application of digital technologies and the smart incorporation of archaeological and anthropological theory expands into innovative directions in the field of Byzantine Studies.

Keywords   Sacred landscapes. Sacred spaces. Digital humanities. Byzantine archaeology. Spatial analysis.

1 Introduction

Landscape studies have evolved into a significant branch of historical archaeological research in the last four decades, by placing emphasis on the ecological, economic, political and cultural values of premodern landscapes. Ever since spatial analysis entered the field of New Archaeology, archaeologists, historians, anthropologists, and geographers – working together – have been trying to explain, for example, how and why complex settlement systems developed in the landscape (Hodder, Orton 1976; Clarke 1977; Cavanagh et al. 2002; Bintliff, Howard, Snodgrass 2007). Even more interestingly, the study of 'sacred' landscapes and spaces has by now become another prominent field of landscape research, mainly in Northwest Europe and North America, by paying attention to the ideational dimensions of sacred mountains and hills, burial monuments and grave markers, sanctuaries, temples, and churches (Turner 2006; Bis-Worch, Theune 2017; Bielmann, Thomas 2018).

When it comes to the Christian era and the Byzantine landscapes of the Eastern Mediterranean, monumental/urban and humble/rural churches constitute one of the main elements through which one may explore sacred space, ritual practice and religious identities and/or affiliation (Vionis 2019; Vionis, Papantoniou 2019). A number of relatively recent publications have focussed on early Christian monumental basilica churches of the fifth and sixth centuries as powerful expressions of Christian ideology in the process of Christianising the Early Byzantine landscapes and townscapes of the Eastern Mediterranean (Caseau 2001; Sweetman 2010; Vionis 2017a; Vionis, Papantoniou 2017; Kyriakou 2019). For example, the prominent siting of Early Byzantine Christian basilicas, as well as Middle and Late Byzantine chapels and monasteries, was intended to dominate the religious skyline of cities, villages and their immediate countryside, in the same way that pagan sanctuaries on mountain tops and other prominent sites had done in the past (Caseau 2004; Vionis 2017a). On the other hand, there are diverse ways one can interpret the distribution of Byzantine churches, such as the spread of Christianity, pilgrimage, trade and network connections (Sweetman 2017; Vionis 2017a; Vionis, Papantoniou 2017; Kyriakou 2019; Keane 2021; Perdiki 2021).

Similarly, the field of Digital Humanities has grown into a discipline of its own, engaging, in most cases, into a productive dialogue between disciplines (cf. Papantoniou et al. 2019a). It evolved through several genealogies of approaches, previously known as 'humanities computing', 'humanist informatics' or 'digital resources in the humanities', providing a platform for the dialogue between the Humanities and computer applications (Nyhan, Terras, Vanhoutte 2013, 1-5; Neilson, Levenberg, Rheams 2018, 1-4). Living in a digital age, usually referred to as 'information era', within which the pres-

ervation of human values has become of utmost importance (Keen 2018), this fusion between social sciences and computational methods/mathematics was unavoidable (Le Deuff 2018). This process led to the convergence of new computational techniques and visualisation technologies in the Arts and Humanities, and to the development of fresh approaches to the study of new as well as traditional corpora (Berry 2012).

The employment of digital tools and approaches to sacred landscapes and ritual space has seen tremendous growth recently in both archaeological and historical research across periods and geographical regions (cf. Papantoniou et al. 2019a; Popović et al. 2019; Häussler, Chiai 2020). Geographic Information Systems (GIS), remote sensing (geophysical prospection, LiDAR) and 3D modelling have now become (almost) a standard tool for exploring sacred spaces and landscapes. The mapping of Cypro-Archaic and Cypro-Classical sanctuaries and the applicability of GIS approaches on sacred landscapes in Cyprus, for example, has revealed that extra-urban shrines created rings of sites demarcating the various ancient polities (Papantoniou, Kyriakou 2018). The investigation of princely sites, burial and ceremonial features in their landscape context around the Early Celtic hillfort of the Glauberg in Germany, with the aid of viewshed analysis and remote sensing, have revealed the multi-layered meaning of such landscapes, both as places of social meaning and as a transitional zone between the living and the dead (Posluschny, Beusing 2019). Another characteristic case from Early Medieval Bavaria has illustrated how the digitisation of churches combined with historical research can contribute to the reconstruction of diocesan borders and the 'topography of power' (Winckler 2019).

GIS and digital approaches to sacred space feature also in studies on Byzantine landscapes. Various spatial analyses, combined with historical and archaeological evidence, have shown that Early Byzantine basilicas functioned as a conceptual 'boundary' or 'territorial markers' between bishoprics/towns in central Greece, the Aegean islands and Cyprus, served as symbols of community ownership and comprised local 'central places' of production and economic activities within their respective micro-regions (Vionis 2017a; Vionis, Papantoniou 2017). Similar approaches employed to examine the distribution of religious structures on the islands of Naxos and Cyprus in the Middle-Late Byzantine era have produced important results regarding the role of rural churches as markers of settlement under divine protection, spaces to bury the dead and promote memory, and 'liminal' zones defining community or monastic properties (Vionis 2019).

Acknowledging that the interdisciplinary study of religious spaces and sacred topography transcends the boundaries of time and space, this contribution aims at investigating the application of theoretical and digital approaches to the 'sacred' through numerous published

case studies. Apart from highlighting the potential of spatial analyses and other computational approaches in Byzantine Archaeology, this contribution attempts, for the first time, to explore issues of reception and appropriation of the Byzantine past in our contemporary world through the employment of state-of-the-art digital tools, Neurosciences and the practice of Community Archaeology. The constructive application of digital technologies and the smart incorporation of archaeological and anthropological theory expands into innovative directions in the field of Byzantine Studies, delving into issues of 'who owns the Byzantine past' and 'how ethnic, cultural and religious identities clash or interact harmoniously'.

2 Understanding Byzantine Ritual and Sacred Space

The turnaround of politico-economic factors and the manifestation of the 'sacred' seem to have played a pivotal role in the expression of power and ideology, shaping settled and sacred landscapes accordingly, as well as determining settlement recovery and resettlement of abandoned or semi-abandoned microregions. The term 'sacred landscapes' has been chosen in acknowledgement of the inspiration provided by the published work of Susan Alcock (2001; Papantoniou, Vionis 2017). Alcock used this term in her examination of sacred landscapes in the Greco-Roman world, illustrating that the relationship between religion, politics, identity and memory was more intimate and more involved than had often been assumed (Papantoniou 2012, 77).

Material evidence allows us to identify sacred spaces in a given place and to reconstruct natural and cultural features endowed with religious meaning. In order to evaluate religion and forms of *interpretatio religiosa*, it is important to question where the 'secular' and the 'numinous' begin and end, whether the distinction is relevant, and that it may be impossible to isolate the numinous from its sociocultural norms as expressed in materialities (Papantoniou, Vionis 2020, 85-6). In Byzantine times, for example, a church was not simply a 'sacred space' or a symbolic expression of Christian piety. Depending on their contexts, churches functioned in a variety of ways: as monastic churches, episcopal and 'parish' churches, cemetery churches, private and burial chapels (Gerstel 1998, 93-6; Kalas 2009, 79; Vionis 2017a). Their architectural, decorative, archaeological and topographical parameters need to be taken into account in order to contextualise their meaning, ideational or other, and comprehend whether one can distinguish between 'sacred' and 'profane' or how 'profane' space was converted into a 'sacred' one in the landscape.

Additionally, senses such as the view of painted icons, the hearing of processional prayers, the movement of sound or the smell of

incense and other sensory experiences (e.g. the *proskynēsis*, i.e. kissing/venerating icons) cannot be ignored in a holistic approach to Byzantine sacred space (Lidov 2006, 32-3; Dale 2010, 406; Caseau 2013, 76; Antonopoulos et al. 2017, 322). In the domain of living religion especially, such as in Eastern Orthodox Christianity, the bodily senses play an essential role in understanding the nature of religious experience (Morgan 2010). For example, during the cult tradition of the *Epitaphios* on Good Friday since the thirteenth-fourteenth century, when the *Epitaphios* cloth started being used in the commemorative ritual procession (Ćurčić 1991, 252), sensory and experiential engagement includes the viewing of Christ's body, the *proskynēsis*, the touching of the *Epitaphios* (the portable domed bier representing the tomb), the hearing of processional prayers, the smell of incense and decorative garlands (Papantoniou, Vionis 2020, 90).

As noted above, churches functioned in a variety of ways; thus, one can explore their particular location and meaning in the landscape through various means. Sharon Gerstel has previously suggested that churches dedicated to Saints and the Virgin were constructed in towns and villages, functioned as 'parish' churches and were perceived as the spiritual, architectural and social centre of settlement communities (Gerstel 2005, 166). In a different topographical setting, Veronica Kalas (2009, 90) has seen outlying chapels in tenth-eleventh century Cappadocia as a protective sacred barrier between the outside and inside worlds of the inhabitants. Churches of the period of Latin domination in the thirteenth-fifteenth centuries, located in close proximity to arable fields belonging to small landowners, have also been seen as markers of important resources and property ownership or as entry points to geographical units, like the cases discussed by Lucia Nixon (2006, 23-6) in Crete, or Jim Crow and his collaborators (Crow, Turner, Vionis 2011, 130-2) in Naxos.

The sacred, however, does not simply take shape through the construction of churches as religious monuments. Movement and kinetic rituals (e.g. pilgrimage, religious processions) in the streets of a town, or in footpaths in the countryside, involve the engagement of the faithful with the magnetic power of a landscape or townscape (Eade 2020), charging it with sacred meaning and confirming the sacred dimension of a network of interlinked religious sites/monuments through time (Vionis 2022). By employing a spatiotemporal analysis of religious processions in Constantinople's streets, a fascinating study by Vicky Manolopoulou (2019) explores how the city's roads functioned as sites for ritual activity and how the faithful participated in the re-enactment and commemoration of saints by preserving social memory and shaping the relationship between people and sacred townscapes. In a similar manner, the example of the *Epitaphios* ritual procession noted above incorporates concepts of re-enactment, remembrance and commemoration (Papantoniou, Vionis

2020, 91). Although it is true that there is a long theological debate on the issue of 'mimesis', 'non-mimesis', 'enactment' and 'metamorphosis' (Krueger 2014, 7, 221; Walker White 2015, 5, 25), we cannot ignore that the re-enactment of Christ's passion and entombment in the procession of the *Epitaphios* on Good Friday stages a commemoration or creates the space for memory and sanctification. Constructed sacred landscapes, the sight of sacred relics, the hearing of liturgical prayers, movement within sacred spaces and participation in ritual processions and practices undoubtedly functioned also as agents of metaphorical healing. Recent developments and the expanding field of the science of neurotheology or spiritual neuroscience, suggest that the brain responds in specific ways to meditative and contemplative healing practices (Newberg 2010; 2014).

3 Digital Humanities and Spatial Approaches to Sacred Landscapes

By moving the emphasis from 'computing' to 'humanities', the creative possibilities of digital technologies can now be summoned to strengthen the capacity of studying, analysing, visualising and interpreting a range of cultural material and practices, through the making of virtual worlds, mapping and geospatial analysis, graphical and network analysis (Schreibman, Siemens, Unsworth 2016; Levenberg, Neilson, Rheams 2018; Flanders, Jannidis 2019). In this respect, one could argue that we are gradually moving towards a Digital Cultural Heritage era. This does not mean we can transform into purely 'digital scientists' solely by bringing cultural heritage experiences into the public domain, be that cultural atlases, museum collections and digital archives (Kenderine 2016, 22-4). Essentially, we remain what we are by discipline (even if this is also disputed today due to the interdisciplinary nature of most of our fields), by providing an 'alter-ego' in our research and by performing an interactive narrative and encompassing embodiment and digital analyses through cultural heritage visualisation.

3.1 The Spatiality of Sacred Places

Nowadays, various GIS analyses (e.g. viewshed, cost-surface and least cost path) comprise a useful means for exploring the spatiality of sacred and domestic sites (i.e. the hierarchical arrangement of sites) and their relation with topography and the environment, social and economic variables. Apart from the examples mentioned in the opening introduction of this contribution, we could also draw on the case study from the region of Tanagra in Boeotia (central Greece),

one of the first cases concerned with spatial/digital analyses and site choice in the Byzantine era, the distribution and the secular and sacred dimension of churches. GIS analyses, in combination with archaeological evidence for settlement activity in the area of Tanagra, have revealed the pattern of settlement hierarchy and how village-community 'territorial boundaries' were formed under the protection of the 'sacred' (Vionis 2017b, 166-8).

More specifically, intensive archaeological field survey in the region of Tanagra in 2000-05 by the *Leiden-Ljubljana Ancient Cities of Boeotia Project* in central Greece has revealed a network of rural settlement sites in the immediate territory of the ancient city-site of Tanagra. The network of Middle Byzantine settlements of the eleventh-twelfth centuries comprises two mega-villages, four hamlets and two farms. They are spaced at almost equal distances, with small churches (most of them of Byzantine date) dominating each site and marking past cultic and other human activities. Two of the largest settlements, Agios Dimitrios on the southern hills of Tanagra and Agios Thomas in the Asopos valley, must have functioned as the main villages of the region, with minor settlements scattered around. The results of GIS analyses applied in the case of the Middle Byzantine settlements in the region to identify settlement hierarchy, inter-site relationships, and village-community territorial boundaries are revealing. According to cost-surface analysis, the distance between neighbouring major and minor settlement is such that it would take between 5 and 15 minutes to go from one to the other. Notably, agricultural land around each settlement is sufficient to feed the population and provide a surplus for export. Furthermore, viewshed analysis confirmed that visibility from each main settlement (or mega-village), that is, Agios Thomas in the valley and Agios Dimitrios on the southern hills, is restricted to its respective territories and satellite settlements. This pattern, with churches marking the focus of each settlement and functioning as the cult-place for each community, illustrates not only site-hierarchy and the organisation of Byzantine space as pictured in the *Marciana Fiscal Treatise* (Ashburner 2015), but also points to the rural church as the focus of village/rural social and spiritual life (cf. Vionis 2020).

In another context, spatial analyses have revealed the multiple role of sacred monuments in the landscape. More than 50 churches, built or decorated with layers of fresco in the Middle and Late Byzantine/ Latin periods, are located in the inland valleys of Drymalia, Sangri and Potamia in Naxos, where GIS analyses visualise and provide further insights regarding their distribution and role (Vionis 2019, 76-9). Twenty-six of them are located at sites with evidence for settlement activity, 14 are associated with burial, as suggested by their fresco decoration and/or the existence of arcosol tombs, while the remaining very possibly functioned as 'liminal' or outlying chapels. The val-

leys of Drymalia and Sangri are particularly fertile and have always attracted settlement and intensive cultivation; olive trees now occupy a vast part of the area, while documentary records suggest this has been the case at least since the seventeenth century (Kasdagli 1999, 37-9; Crow, Turner, Vionis 2011, 125).

Archaeological evidence for settlement activity, deriving from extensive archaeological surface survey in the valleys of Drymalia and Sangri in Naxos, has revealed that some of the churches are associated with a settlement and/or a cemetery, while others with neither. One large settlement, associated with Panagia Protothrone at Chalki, is identified as the town of Middle Byzantine Naxos. The concentration of smaller rural settlements-sites in Drymalia, Sangri and Potamia, identified as hamlets, follow a pattern equivalent to that of church-concentrations in the three valleys under investigation. Cost-surface analysis further visualises the clustering of settlement sites in groups, as we saw in the case of Boeotia above. Thus, groups of minor settlements at small distances from each other seem to form a single village-community under the protection of holy powers, with churches in close proximity, signifying the sites' spiritual and social centre and providing sacred space for the communities' Sunday prayer, as well as burial. All village communities on the island saw the main and largest settlement at Chalki as their shared administrative and ecclesiastical centre and market town (Vionis 2019, 76).

What is most interesting in the case of Naxos is the specific topographic location of a number of churches, the function of which cannot be identified as parish or funerary (due to the lack of archaeological evidence for settlement activity and/or the lack of iconographic references to their funerary character). A number of these churches are located higher up, on hills surrounding the central valley of Drymalia to its north and east, forming a continuous line. Viewshed analysis shows that this network of sacred monuments overlooks the concentration of settlement sites, parish and funerary churches in the valley floor, forming a conceptual 'boundary' or zone around this community. Similar conclusions have been drawn in the case of the Late Byzantine Peloponnese, where Gerstel (2013, 337, 362-8) has identified, on the basis of painted inscriptions and other documentary evidence, that a large number of 'satellite' chapels and distinctive topographical features (ravines, consecrated caves, rivers and mountains) marked territorial borders that were simultaneously sacred, agricultural, fiscal and personal. Thus, it would seem logical to suggest that these humble isolated ecclesiastical monuments in inland Naxos can be identified as 'liminal' churches, honouring saints and the Virgin, sanctifying the landscapes in the periphery of each inhabited area, providing a landscape mark between settled or agrarian spaces and barren or pastoral grounds, as well as conceptually defining community space (Vionis 2019, 78).

In the context of 'centrality' and 'liminality' of sacred places and landscapes, another fascinating example is provided by Hamish Forbes (2007, 372) for the Methana peninsula in the Peloponnese, probably reflecting diachronic phenomena. There, extramural churches in faraway locations and on 'neutral' ground formed strategic meeting places for family and friends from different villages. The annual celebrations at those churches provided the means by which different communities have been able to express their pan-peninsular identity. In this landscape, therefore, it was not nucleated communities which have become 'central places'; rather, it was these isolated structures in the apparently 'empty' countryside.

3.2   Viewing, Hearing, Experiencing

Next to monumental ecclesiastical architecture and the significance of 'sanctifying' landscapes during the Byzantine period, visual imagery (e.g. the 'iconographic programme' and portraits of benefactors) intended not only to commemorate and praise patrons and/or the emperor, but also to communicate religious meanings to the viewers, setting the visual framework of the liturgical performance (Thomas 2018, 72). The links between architecture and liturgy, and the painted programme and liturgy, especially between the late seventh and twelfth centuries, when a new form of ecclesiastical architecture crystallised (i.e. the cross-in-square church-type with dome) and the iconographic programme illustrated the words of the liturgy, became particularly strong, creating a 'sacred space' for collective worship on special occasions (Yasin 2009, 15). Painted images and narrative scenes (e.g. wall frescoes and portable icons) act as mediators of the divine according to Aristotelian logic and Christian theology (Walker White 2015, 43; Gamberi 2017, 212-17) and provide lessons for the faithful who may view through Christ's and the martyrs' passion their own misfortunes and daily struggles (Gerstel 1999, 78).

Despite the fact that special features in Byzantine architecture remain recognisably 'global', as suggested by Robert Ousterhout (2010, 87), certain architectural details reflect the local or regional character of ecclesiastical monumental buildings and comprise examples of regional expression and local ritual practices. The church building itself, through its architectural arrangement in its various regional variations, became more than a shell for ritual, acquiring a specific 'function' in Byzantine and later Medieval society. The saintly and angelic figures depicted on its walls, on the other hand, became participants in ritual performances along with the congregants, alluding to liturgical aspects of the interior architectural space (Marinis 2014, 355-6; Antonopoulos et al. 2017, 334). It is fascinating that contemporary methods and digital tools provide the means through which we

can explore aspects of visibility, hearing and ritual movement within such sacred spaces.

Some relatively early attempts at exploring visibility and experiencing Byzantine sacred spaces were materialised through the application of 'space syntax' and 'visibility analysis' in Late Antique-Early Byzantine monuments, such as basilica churches in Jordan (Chatford Clark 2007) and San Vitale in Ravenna (Paliou, Knight 2013). Considering that sacred space comprised efficacious space, the articulation of religious buildings or building complexes was such as to protect the holiest of its corners from 'trespassing', visual or other 'pollution' by establishing certain symbolic or physical boundaries (cf. Eliade 1987). In the case of the Byzantine churches in Jordan, computational methods, such as space syntax, known as isovist and visibility graph analysis, were employed to examine spaciousness, openness, and complexity (from certain spots in the interior of the churches) for six building types. The aim was to identify the degree of visual integration and potential changes in the ritual, as well as the relationship between clergy and congregants (Chatford Clark 2007, 101-2). Aiming at the investigation of human sensory engagement with sacred spaces, the study of San Vitale, where isovist analysis was executed, comprises a case study with interesting observations, such as gender division within the building and men's privileged visual access to the performed ritual over women (Paliou, Knight 2013, 234-5), despite the limitations faced when dealing with two-storey buildings (Thomas 2018, 70-2). The visual and structural exploration of sacred buildings with the aid of computational methods, such as visibility and access analyses, and 3D reconstruction/modelling, especially in cases where the type of monuments explored do not survive intact (e.g. early Byzantine basilicas), provides a unique means of sensorial experience and perception of the sacred in the Byzantine past. Navigating our body and brain through a sensory experience in a real or virtual/reconstructed space, we may reach "a better understanding of the human experience of spirituality and religion" (Newberg 2014, 4).

Viewing the interior of sacred spaces seems not sufficient. The application of new information technologies, namely 3D auralisation and archaeoacoustics, to unlock the sound of religious buildings and appreciate or even live the experience of the Byzantine liturgy in a similar way the faithful experienced the Orthodox service in the Middle Ages, comprises a new and innovative field of research. The exploration of the acoustics in Byzantine/Medieval churches has revealed that "the overall conspicuous and sensorial impact of the interior communicates centrality and cohesion" (Tronchin, Knight 2016, 143) in the sixth-century octagonal basilica of San Vitale, and the ways that "the faithful could hear the angels depicted on the domes, fluttering and chanting above them" (Gerstel et al. 2021, 49) in Thessaloniki's Late Byzantine churches.

Combining textual references with monumental paintings, inscriptions and acoustical measurements, the *Soundscapes of Byzantium* multidisciplinary project has resulted in a number of publications concerned with the sound in Byzantine churches in modern Greece (Antonopoulos et al. 2017; Gerstel et al. 2018; 2021). Underlying the notable appearance of angels and other angelic figures taking a central position in the dome of churches dated to the last centuries of Byzantium, *Soundscapes of Byzantium* focuses on the confluence of acoustical parameters, architectural forms, visual imagery and live chant recordings in several churches of Thessaloniki.

The acoustics and aural experience in Orthodox churches of the Slavic speaking world is another rapidly growing area of research (Đorđević, Penezić, Dimitrijević 2017; Đorđević, Novković 2019). One of the most recent projects on the acoustics of Serbian Medieval monastic churches of the fourteenth century involves the measurement of impulse responses and the analysis of acoustic parameters, such as Reverberation Time, Early Decay Time, Speech Clarity and Speech Transmission Index (Đorđević, Novković 2019). The measurements showed how sound changes depending on the position of the congregant and the sound source, affecting both speech intelligibility (for preaching) and the experience of chanting.

4 Digital Tools, Community Archaeology and Reception of Byzantine Sacred Landscapes

A pilot study from Cyprus provides a paradigmatic and fascinating case in terms of heritage management, the reception of the Byzantine/Medieval sacred spaces and landscapes, and Community Archaeology. This pilot study draws from the *Unlocking the Sacred Landscapes of Cyprus* research project (UnSaLa-CY, EXCELLENCE/1216/0362), codirected by Athanasios Vionis and Giorgos Papantoniou on behalf of the University of Cyprus, in collaboration with the Cyprus Department of Antiquities, and funded by the European Regional Development Fund and the Republic of Cyprus through the Research and Innovation Foundation. The aim has been to examine how residents and visitors in the Xeros River valley (Larnaca District) make claims to, remember and experience religious and secular monuments of the Byzantine/Medieval past and their surrounding landscapes, while also investigating how claims are managed, negotiated and contested by local communities and the state.

The Xeros valley is located today at a major junction of the island's motorway, linking the capital Nicosia, with the towns of Larnaca, Limassol and Paphos. Although the Xeros valley never attracted the interest of Cypriots driving on the busy motorway, its location on the edge of different Iron Age city-kingdom territories, its immediate

proximity to the major infrastructure of the Roman road network, its choice as one of the most strategic localities of the Turkish Cypriots and the bloody bi-communal conflicts in the area in the 1960s, its habitation by Greek Cypriot refugees after 1974, and the establishment of the only governmental Reception Centre for Asylum Seekers in Cyprus at Kophinou (hosting refugees from neighbouring countries in war), confirm the centrality of this un-central rural landscape today (Papantoniou, Vionis 2017; Papantoniou, Morris, Vionis 2019a).

4.1 Digital Tools and the Exploration of Sacred Spaces and Landscapes

Competition, conflict and violence were at work in the Xeros valley, especially during Cyprus' recent past, having affected local communities living in the region nowadays by creating negative memories. In an attempt to answer the basic question of 'who owns the past', UnSaLa-CY proceeded with engaging with the local communities by bringing the results of the project and the region's natural and cultural landscapes closer to its present-day inhabitants through public talks and guided tours, in combination with the development of a mobile application providing an on-site tour to landscapes and monuments in the valley.

While new technologies for capturing the dynamics of cultural landscapes are constantly emerging and developing in the study of Mediterranean landscapes and spaces, the employment of experiential approaches when it comes to religious landscapes remain relatively underdeveloped. In order to remedy this, UnSaLa-CY developed an Augmented Reality (AR) mobile application to support the exploration of Byzantine/Medieval religious monuments and archaeological sites in the Xeros valley, serving as an on-site guided tour for visitors in the area. By employing image recognition and utilising a location-based practice, the application provides the users with an immersive and educational experience (cf. Ioannou et al. 2021).

Through the UnSaLa-CY application, visitors and current inhabitants of the Xeros valley have the opportunity to get in touch with the historical memory of the region and gain, in an indirect and novel way, an experiential contact with ten religious and secular Byzantine and post-Byzantine monuments and their surroundings, through explanatory texts in Greek, Turkish and English, images, 360° viewers and 3D virtual models and reconstructions. The operation of the application utilises target images placed at the ten Points of Interest (POI) along the cultural route. The application encourages visitors to visit those POIs and scan the target images using their smartphones. Once a target is recognised, the users are able to get historical information about the corresponding monument while in particular cases

(at the sites of the churches of Panagia Kophinou and Panagia Astathkiotissa) they can observe a recreation of part of the Byzantine/Medieval settlements through their smartphone's camera feed. A score is maintained while the user visits each monument; the objective is to motivate the users to complete the route by visiting all the monuments/landmarks and experiencing an enhanced AR exhibition while getting information about the historical and archaeological context of each site. Initial reactions by experts in landscape studies indicate the potential of the application in enabling the narration and visualisation of the historicity of the landscape and the fate of religious and other monuments of the past 1,500 years. The different monuments and sites in the area, Orthodox and Muslim, Byzantine and Ottoman, Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot, comprise landmarks of a collective memory in the landscapes of the Xeros valley today. At the same time, the presence and coexistence of these monuments in the area in the twenty-first century reflect timeless and current phenomena: prosperity and symbiosis, displacement, immigration and human suffering, creation of national and religious identities, destruction of sacred sites and abandonment (Papantoniou, Morris, Vionis 2019a, xv).

4.2 Community Archaeology and Cognitive Psychology

The Community-Archaeology venture by UnSaLa-CY, the first initiative in the domain of public archaeology in Cyprus to have been organised by a Cypriot institution, has clearer longer-term objectives related to public engagement and the employment of landscape archaeology in healing various forms of social traumas (Papantoniou 2021). The public engagement activities of the project, carried out in 2020 in the Xeros valley, consisted of the development of a cultural route to Byzantine/Medieval religious and secular monuments and sites offered through the aforementioned mobile phone application and the organisation of public outreach ventures that included a guided tour and an educational activity for children in the three main communities of the region. The latter formed a pilot exercise in engaging with the public and the local communities of the valley as a basis on which to build more informed activities in the field of public archaeology in the region. As such, the project sought this opportunity to get a better sense of the people participating in the events and how they experienced Byzantine/Medieval heritage sites in the region but also to enable local narratives and engage with oral histories.

Although the exploration of emotions in human experience is better suited for qualitative methods, UnSaLa-CY included an open-ended question in the distributed questionnaire asking participants to describe how they felt during the tour, as a preliminary enquiry into their emotional reactions to their overall experience. The response

rate by the local communities, archaeology students, professional guides and other interested parties was 60% and the responses suggest that people were more cognitively involved and somewhat emotionally engaged with variations in the degree of engagement. The participants learned about a region of negative memory, they observed through a different angle the Byzantine/Medieval religious monuments and landscapes they knew nothing about, while, most importantly, local inhabitants, most of them Greek-Cypriot refugees in the region since 1974, felt they came closer to their new home and appreciated its similarities and differences with their villages of origin.

Another aspect of the UnSaLa-CY project in connection to memory and sacred space is a collaboration with Silversky3D, RISE and the Department of Psychology at the University of Cyprus, in which it brings in a challenging and unconventional dimension to Byzantine Studies and to the experience of cultural heritage by contemporary communities. Following the observation that there is a preference for churches as the most affective places in the region may reflect what most Greek Cypriots feel about Christian places of cult, "representing the Greek Cypriot collective identity more than anything else in the island" (Harmanşah 2014, 77), UnSaLa-CY proceeded with the employment of Cognitive Psychology in the study of sacred monuments.

On the outskirts of UnSaLa-CY's research area in the Xeros valley, lies a fourteenth-century church dedicated to Panagia Astathkiotissa. During the bi-communal conflicts in the 1960s, Turkish Cypriot villagers originally from the area or displaced there, most probably shepherds, had the habit of visiting this Medieval church, abandoned and inaccessible to Greek Cypriots at that time. There is evidence of specific Turkish names and dates inscribed on the walls, next to the removed faces of some of the saintly figures. Through anthropological, ethnographic, and cultural heritage research, UnSaLa-CY aims to bring this Medieval sacred space into conversation with religious competition, conflict and violence in the contemporary world (cf. Kong, Woods 2016). At the same time, with the support of computational applications, such as Virtual Reality Technologies, and the development of a number of cutting-edge methods in Cognitive Psychology, memory and spatial cognition (by Marios Avraamides, Department of Psychology, University of Cyprus), UnSaLa-CY combines current trends and approaches in archaeology and psychology, to open up new horizons and opportunities for the exploration of memory, experience and perception of this religious space and its historical fate. More specifically, the project and the application of computational approaches combined with Cognitive Psychology explores how religious groups in the area (first the Christians in the Middle Ages, then the Greek Cypriots and the Muslim Turkish Cypriots from the Ottoman era to today) make claims to and remember or experi-

ence sacred spaces (such as the church of Panagia Astathkiotissa). In the end, this particular Medieval sacred monument and others in Cyprus give rise to new forms of negotiations, strengthening the development of social and religious resilience, and contributing to resilient societies (Papantoniou, Morris, Vionis 2019a, xv).

5 Conclusions

Despite the deterministic nature of digital tools and approaches to the exploration of sacred spaces and landscapes, from Geographical Information Systems to remote sensing and Augmented Reality, the successful convergence of new computational techniques and visualisation technologies with the Humanities can potentially result in the development of novel approaches to the study of Byzantine landscapes and society. When combined with contemporary theoretical and interpretative trends, the investigation of Byzantine sacred landscapes can become a truly interdisciplinary field, aiming at a better knowledge of the *Homo Byzantinus*.

New-generation research projects in the field of Byzantine Archaeology have the potential to adopt a truly holistic inter-/multi-disciplinary approach to the study of Byzantine ritual, sacred space and landscapes, involving archaeologists, computer scientists, geophysicists, geologists, topographers and cognitive psychologists. Such attempts can bring together textual, epigraphic, art-historical, sociological, and anthropological data, incorporating field archaeology (archaeological and geological surveys, geophysical subsurface reconnaissance, aerial survey, targeted excavations), digital approaches (e-databases, GIS, 3D technologies), laboratory analyses (chemical analyses, petrography) and ethnographic studies. Moreover, by employing a range of heritage management practices and educational techniques (as we saw in the case of the Xeros valley in Cyprus), we can bridge the gap between the Byzantine past and contemporary cultural identities. Ethnographic and anthropological approaches are also able to provide an innovative anthropocentric interpretation of the collected data and digital methodologies. Finally, the development of cultural heritage management tools can create new ways to investigate and promote Byzantine ritual and sacred landscapes and improve contemporary experiences of them, serving to bridge the gap between the Byzantine past and the present, and between scholarly and non-scholarly audiences in a global context.

Bibliography

Alcock, S.E. (2001). "The Reconfiguration of Memory in the Eastern Roman Empire". Alcock, S.E. et al. (eds), *Empires. Perspectives from Archaeology and History*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 323-50.

Antonopoulos, S. et al. (2017). "Soundscapes of Byzantium". *Speculum*, 92, 321-35. https://doi.org/10.1086/693378.

Ashburner, W. (2015). "A Byzantine Treatise on Taxation". *Journal of Hellenic Studies*, 35, 76-84. https://doi.org/10.2307/624524.

Berry, D.M. (ed.) (2012). *Understanding Digital Humanities*. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan. https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230371934.

Bielmann, C.; Thomas, B. (2018). *Debating Religious Space and Place in the Early Medieval World (c. AD 300-1000)*. Leiden: Sidestone Press.

Bintliff, J.L.; Howard, P.; Snodgrass, A.M. (eds) (2007). *Testing the Hinterland. The Work of the Boeotia Survey (1989-1991) in the Southern Approaches to the City of Thespiai*. Cambridge: McDonald Institute of Archaeological Research.

Bis-Worch, C.; Theune, C. (2017). *Religion, Cults and Rituals in the Medieval Rural Environment*. Leiden: Sidestone Press. Ruralia 11.

Caseau, B. (2001). "Sacred Landscapes". Bowersock, G.W.; Brown, P.; Grabar, O. (eds), *Interpreting Late Antiquity. Essays on the Postclassical World*. Cambridge (MA); London: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 21-59.

Caseau, B. (2004). "The Fate of Rural Temples in Late Antiquity". Bowden, W.; Lavan, L.; Machado, C. (eds), *Recent Research on the Late Antique Countryside*. Leiden: Brill, 105-44. Late Antique Archaeology 2.

Caseau, B. (2013). "Experiencing the Sacred". Nesbitt, C.; Jackson, M. (eds), *Experiencing Byzantium. Papers from the 44th Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies, Newcastle and Durham, April 2011*. Farnham: Ashgate, 59-77. Society for the Promotion of Byzantine Studies Publications 18.

Cavanagh, W. et al. (eds) (2002). *Continuity and Change in a Greek Rural Landscape. The Laconia Survey*. Vol. 1, *Methodology and Interpretation*. London: British School at Athens. Annual of the British School at Athens Supplementary Volume 26.

Chatford Clark, D.L. (2007). "Viewing the Liturgy. A Space Syntax Study of Changing Visibility and Accessibility in the Development of the Byzantine Church in Jordan". *World Archaeology*, 39(1), 84-104. https://doi.org/10.1080/00438240601148798.

Clarke, D.L. (1977). "Spatial Information in Archaeology". Clarke, D.L. (ed.), *Spatial Archaeology*. London: Academic Press, 1-32.

Crow, J.; Turner, S.; Vionis, A.K. (2011). "Characterizing the Historic Landscapes of Naxos". *Journal of Mediterranean Archaeology*, 24(1), 111-37. https://doi.org/10.1558/jmea.v24i1.111.

Ćurčić, S. (1991). "Late Byzantine Loca Sancta? Some Questions Regarding the Form and Function of Epitaphioi". Ćurčić, S.; Mouriki, D. (eds), *The Twilight of Byzantium: Political, Spiritual, and Cultural Life in Byzantium during the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 251-61.

Dale, T.E.A. (2010). "Sacred Space from Constantinople to Venice". Stephenson, P. (ed.), *The Byzantine World*. London: Routledge, 406-27.

Đorđević, Z.; Penezić, K.; Dimitrijević, S. (2017). "Acoustic Vessels as an Expression of Medieval Musical Tradition in Serbian Sacral Architecture". *Musicology*, 22, 105-32. https://doi.org/10.2298/MUZ1722105D.

Đorđević, Z.; Novković, D. (2019). "Archaeoacoustic Research of Ljubostinja and Naupara Medieval Monastic Churches". Papantoniou et al. 2019, 274-83. https://doi.org/10.1515/opar-2019-0018.

Eade, J. (2020). "The Invention of Sacred Places and Rituals. A Comparative Study of Pilgrimage". *Religions*, 11(12), 1-12. https://doi.org/10.3390/rel11120649.

Eliade, M. (1987). *The Sacred and the Profane. The Nature of Religion*. New York: Harvest Book.

Flanders, J.; Jannidis, F. (eds) (2019). *The Shape of Data in the Digital Humanities. Modeling Texts and Text-Based Resources*. London; New York: Routledge.

Forbes, H. (2007). *Meaning and Identity in a Greek Landscape. An Archaeological Ethnography*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Gamberi, V. (2017). "Incarnations. The Materiality of the Religious Gazes in Hindu and Byzantine Icons". *Material Religion. The Journal of Objects, Art and Belief*, 13(2), 206-30. https://doi.org/10.1080/17432200.2017.1291168.

Gerstel, S.E.J. (1998). "Painted Sources for Female Piety in Byzantium". *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, 52, 89-111. https://doi.org/10.2307/1291778.

Gerstel, S.E.J. (1999). *Beholding the Sacred Mysteries. Programmes of the Byzantine Sanctuary*. Seattle: University of Washington Press.

Gerstel, S.E.J. (2005). "The Byzantine Village Church. Observations on Its Location and on Agricultural Aspects of Its Program". Lefort, J.; Morrisson, C.; Sodini, J.-P. (éds), *Les Villages dans l'Empire byzantin, IVe-XVe siècle*. Paris : Lethielleux, 165-78. Réalités byzantines 11.

Gerstel, S.E.J. (2013). "Mapping the Boundaries of Church and Village. Ecclesiastical and Rural Landscapes in the Late Byzantine Peloponnese". Gerstel, S.E.J. (ed.), *Viewing the Morea. Land and People in the Late Medieval Peloponnese*. Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Byzantine Symposia and Colloquia, 335-68.

Gerstel, S.E.J. et al. (2018). "Soundscapes of Byzantium. The Acheiropoietos Basilica and the Cathedral of Hagia Sophia in Thessaloniki". *Hesperia*, 87(1), 177-213. https://doi.org/10.2972/hesperia.87.1.0177.

Gerstel, S.E.J. et al. (2021). "Holy, Holy, Holy. Hearing the Voices of Angels". *Gesta*, 60(1), 31-49. https://doi.org/10.1086/712644.

Harmanşah, R. (2014). *Performing Social Forgetting in a Post-Conflict Landscape. The Case of Cyprus* [PhD dissertation]. Pittsburgh (PA): University of Pittsburgh.

Häussler, R.; Chiai, G.F. (eds) (2020). *Sacred Landscapes in Antiquity. Creation, Manipulation, Transformation*. Oxford: Oxbow.

Hodder, I.; Orton, C. (1976). *Spatial Analysis in Archaeology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. New Studies in Archaeology 1.

Ioannou, E. et al. (2021). "Augmented Reality Cultural Route at the Xeros River Valley, Larnaca, Cyprus". Ioannides, M. et al. (eds), *Digital Heritage. Progress in Cultural Heritage. Documentation, Preservation, and Protection. EuroMed 2020*. Cham: Springer, 695-702. Lecture Notes in Computer Science 12642. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-73043-7_61.

Kalas, V. (2009). "Sacred Boundaries and Protective Borders. Outlying Chapels of Middle Byzantine Settlements in Cappadocia". Gates, C.; Morin, J.; Zimmermann, T. (eds), *Sacred Landscapes in Anatolia and Neighboring Regions*. Oxford: Archaeopress, 79-91. British Archaeological Reports International Series 2034.

Kasdagli, A. (1999). *Land and Marriage Settlements in the Aegean. A Case Study of Seventeenth-Century Naxos*. Venice: Hellenic Institute of Byzantine and Post-Byzantine Studies.

Keane, C.T. (2021). "Ecclesiastical Economies. The Integration of Sacred and Maritime Topographies of Late Antique Cyprus". Papantoniou, Vionis, Morris 2022, 1-27. https://doi.org/10.3390/rel12110989.

Keen, A. (2018). *How to Fix the Future. Staying Human in the Digital Age*. London: Atlantic Books.

Kenderdine, S. (2016). "Embodiment, Entanglement, and Immersion in Digital Cultural Heritage". Schreibman, S.; Siemens, R.; Unsworth, J. (eds), *A New Companion to Digital Humanities*. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 22-41.

Kong, L.; Woods, O. (2016). *Religion and Space. Competition, Conflict and Violence in the Contemporary World*. London: Bloomsbury.

Krueger, D. (2014). *Liturgical Subjects. Christian Ritual, Biblical Narrative, and the Formation of the Self in Byzantium*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Kyriakou, N. (2019). "The Sacred Landscapes of Cyprus in Late Antiquity. Cityscapes and Peripheries in Context". Papantoniou, Morris, Vionis 2019b, 47-66.

Le Deuff, O. (2018). *Digital Humanities. History and Development*. London: Wiley. Intellectual Technologies Set 4. https://doi.org/10.1002/9781119308195.

Levenberg, L.; Neilson, T.; Rheams, D. (eds) (2018). *Research Methods for the Digital Humanities*. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan.

Lidov, A. (2006). "Hierotopy. The Creation of Sacred Spaces as a Form of Creativity and Subject on Cultural History". Lidov, A. (ed.), *Hierotopy. The Creation of Sacred Spaces in Byzantium and Medieval Russia*. Moscow: Indrik, 32-58.

Manolopoulou, V. (2019). "Processing Time and Space in Byzantine Constantinople". Papantoniou, Morris, Vionis 2019b, 155-67.

Marinis, V. (2014). "Structure, Agency, Ritual, and the Byzantine Church". Wescoat, B.D.; Ousterhout, R.G. (eds), *Architecture of the Sacred. Space, Ritual, and Experience from Classical Greece to Byzantium*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 338-64.

Morgan, D. (2010). "The Material Culture of Lived Religion. Visuality and Embodiment". Vakkari, J. (ed.), *Mind and Matter. Selected Papers of Nordic Conference 2009*. Helsinki: Society of Art History, 14-31. Studies in Art History 41.

Neilson, T.; Levenberg, L.; Rheams, D. (2018). "Introduction. Research Methods for the Digital Humanities". Levenberg, Neilson, Rheams 2018, 1-14.

Newberg, A.B. (2010). *Principles of Neurotheology*. Farnham: Ashgate.

Newberg, A.B. (2014). "The Neuroscientific Study of Spiritual Practices". *Frontiers in Psychology*, 5(215), 1-6. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2014.00215.

Nixon, L. (2006). *Making a Landscape Sacred. Outlying Churches and Icon Stands in Sphakia, Southwestern Crete*. Oxford: Oxbow.

Nyhan, J.; Terras, M.; Vanhoutte, E. (2013). "Introduction". Terras, M.; Nyhan, J.; Vanhoutte, E. (eds), *Defining Digital Humanities. A Reader*. Farnham: Ashgate, 1-10.

Ousterhout, R. (2010). "Remembering the Dead in Byzantine Cappadocia. The Architectural Settings for Commemoration". *Architecture in Byzantium and Kievan Rus from the 9th to the 12th Centuries = Materials of the International Seminar* (17-21 November 2009). Saint Petersburg: The State Hermitage Publishers, 87-98.

Paliou, E.; Knight, D.J. (2013). "Mapping the Senses. Perceptual and Social Aspects of Late Antique Liturgy in San Vitale, Ravenna". Contreras, F.; Melero, F.J. (eds), *Conference on Computer Applications and Quantitative Methods in Archaeology (CAA 2010)*. Oxford: Archaeopress, 229-36. British Archaeological Reports International Series 2494.

Papantoniou, G. (2012). *Religion and Social Transformations in Cyprus. From the Cypriot 'Basileis' to the Hellenistic 'Strategos'*. Leiden: Brill. Mnemosyne 347.

Papantoniou, G. (2021). *'Abandonment'. Archaeology in the Service of Society*. https://hestia-blog.squarespace.com/blog/abandonment-archaeology-in-the-service-of-society.

Papantoniou, G.; Kyriakou, N. (2018). "Sacred Landscapes and the Territoriality of Iron Age Cypriot Polities. The Applicability of GIS". *American Journal of Archaeology*, 122(4), 541-77. https://doi.org/10.3764/aja.122.4.0541.

Papantoniou, G.; Morris, C.E.; Vionis, A.K. (2019a). "Spatial Analysis of Ritual and Cult in the Mediterranean. An Introduction". Papantoniou, Morris, Vionis 2019b, ix-xviii.

Papantoniou, G.; Morris, C.E.; Vionis, A.K. (eds) (2019b). *Unlocking Sacred Landscapes. Spatial Analysis of Ritual and Cult in the Mediterranean*. Nicosia: Astrom Editions.

Papantoniou, G. et al. (eds) (2019a). "Unlocking Sacred Landscapes. Digital Humanities and Ritual Space". Special issue, *Open Archaeology*, 5(1). https://www.degruyter.com/journal/key/opar/5/1/html.

Papantoniou, G. et al. (2019b). "Digital Humanities and Ritual Space. A Reappraisal". Papantoniou et al. 2019a, 598-614. https://doi.org/10.1515/opar-2020-0103.

Papantoniou, G.; Vionis, A.K. (2017). "Landscape Archaeology and Sacred Space in the Eastern Mediterranean. A Glimpse from Cyprus". *Land*, 6(40), 1-18. https://doi.org/10.3390/land6020040.

Papantoniou, G.; Vionis, A.K. (2020). "Popular Religion and Material Responses to Pandemic. The Christian Cult of the *Epitaphios* during the COVID-19 Crisis in Greece and Cyprus". *Ethnoarchaeology*, 12(2), 85-117. https://doi.org/10.1080/19442890.2021.1896129.

Papantoniou, G.; Vionis, A.K.; Morris, C.E. (eds) (2022). "Unlocking Sacred Landscapes. Religious and Insular Identities in Context". Special issue, *Religions*.

Perdiki, O. (2021). "Through the Eyes of a Mapmaker. Maritime Shrines on Cyprus during the Late Middle Ages". Papantoniou, Vionis, Morris 2022, 1-21. https://doi.org/10.3390/rel12111022.

Popović, M.S. et al. (eds) (2019). *Power in Landscape. Geographic and Digital Approaches on Historical Research*. Leipzig: Eudora-Verlag Leipzig.

Posluschny, A.G; Beusing, R. (2019). "Space as the Stage. Understanding the Sacred Landscape Around the Early Celtic Hillfort of the Glauberg". Papantoniou et al. 2019a, 365-82. https://doi.org/10.1515/opar-2019-0023.

Schreibman, S.; Siemens, R.; Unsworth, J. (eds) (2016). *A New Companion to Digital Humanities*. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell.

Sweetman, R.J. (2010). "Christianization of the Peloponnese. The Topography and Function of Late Antique Churches". *Journal of Late Antiquity*, 3(2), 203-61.

Sweetman, R.J. (2017). "Networks and Church Building in the Aegean. Crete, Cyprus, Lycia and the Peloponnese". *Annual of the British School at Athens*, 112, 207-66. https://doi.org/10.1017/s0068245417000016.

Thomas, B. (2018). "A Case for Space. Rereading the Imperial Panels of San Vitale". Bielmann, C.; Thomas, B. (eds), *Debating Religious Space & Place in the Early Medieval World*. Leiden: Sidestone Press, 61-76.

Tronchin, L.; Knight, D.J. (2016). "Revisiting Historic Buildings through the Senses. Visualising Aural and Obscured Aspects of San Vitale, Ravenna". *International Journal of Historical Archaeology*, 20, 127-45. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10761-015-0325-2.

Turner, S. (2006). *Making a Christian Landscape. The Countryside in Early Medieval Cornwall, Devon and Wessex*. Exeter: University of Exeter Press.

Vionis, A.K. (2017a). "Sacred Townscapes in Late Antique Greece. Christianisation and Economic Diversity in the Aegean". *Journal of Mediterranean Archaeology*, 30(2), 141-65. https://doi.org/10.1558/jmea.35403.

Vionis, A.K. (2017b). "Understanding Settlements in Byzantine Greece. New Data and Approaches for Boeotia, Sixth to Thirteenth Centuries". *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, 71, 127-73.

Vionis, A.K. (2019). "The Spatiality of the Byzantine/Medieval Rural Church. Landscape Parallels from the Aegean and Cyprus". Papantoniou, Morris, Vionis 2019b, 67-83.

Vionis, A.K. (2020). "Landscape Approaches to the Evolution of the Byzantine/Medieval Village-Community in Greece". *Journal of Greek Archaeology*, 5, 468-94. https://doi.org/10.32028/9781789697926-18.

Vionis, A.K. (2022). "The Construction of Sacred Landscapes and Maritime Identities in the Post-Medieval Cyclades Islands. The Case of Paros". Papantoniou, Vionis, Morris 2022, 1-25.

Vionis, A.K.; Papantoniou, G. (2017). "Sacred Landscapes as Economic 'Central Places' in Late Antique Naxos and Cyprus". *Antiquité Tardive*, 25, 263-86. https://doi.org/10.1484/j.at.5.114862.

Vionis, A.K.; Papantoniou, G. (2019). "Central Place Theory Reloaded and Revised. Political Economy and Landscape Dynamics in the Longue Durée". *Land*, 8(2), 1-21. https://doi.org/10.3390/land8020036.

Walker White, A. (2015). *Performing Orthodox Ritual in Byzantium*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Winckler, K. (2019). "The Territory of the Bishop. Ritual and Diocesan Boundaries in Early Medieval Bavaria". Popović et al. 2019, 33-44.

Yasin, A.M. (2009). *Saints and Church Spaces in the Late Antique Mediterranean. Architecture, Cult, and Community*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Literature. No Longer the Cinderella of Byzantine Studies

Ingela Nilsson
Uppsala University

Abstract   This paper offers an overview of recent developments in philology and literary studies, arguing that the field has become more modern and inclusive, thus gaining a central place in Byzantine Studies at large. Three concepts are used to structure the discussion and target different areas of interdisciplinarity: metaphrasis, reception and hybridity. Theory is identified as crucial and necessary to the advancement of Byzantine Studies, along with an awareness of reception processes and our own role as scholars. Such a development, it is argued, can revitalise the study of Byzantium within the broader Humanities.

Keywords   Philology. Literature. Theory. Metaphrasis. Reception. Hybridity. Tradition.

Summary   1 Introduction. – 2 Among Orchids and Cinderellas. – 3 Metaphrasis as Discursive Practice. – 4 Reception as a Modality of Change. – 5 Hybridity as Inevitable Process. – 6 Theory. Inescapable or a Cloud-Cuckoo-Land? – 7 No longer the Cinderella of Byzantine Studies.

1 Introduction

It is safe to say that philology has always had a central place in Byzantine Studies, since texts are crucial even to scholars with little or no interest in literature. Even Cyril Mango, who criticised Byzantine literature in his 1975 lecture so harshly that it took decades for the field to get over it, underlined the importance of texts to all Byzantinists (Mango 1975; Mullett 2021, 725). Needless to say, the need for texts does not equal an interest in literature, and even philological studies can be undertaken with no great attention to the literary aspects of the texts under examination. My aim here is not to censure such an approach, but rather to show how Byzantine philology has developed in recent years, becoming more modern and more inclusive, and how literary studies of Byzantine texts – both as part of and independent of such a development of philology – have become not only more frequent, but also more interdisciplinary and methodologically advanced. I hope to show here how such a development has led to a more central place of literary studies as an integral part of Byzantine Studies at large. Such a development can in turn, I argue, help put Byzantium back into the Humanities.

2 Among Orchids and Cinderellas

There is a general tendency for many disciplines in the Humanities to feel marginalised and under constant threat; in German, such disciplines go under the name *Orchideenfächer* – unnecessary disciplines in need of protection, not capable of surviving on their own. In times of new public management, philology is certainly not the only such discipline, but its identity is very much marked by a sense of being endangered. However, philology is not only one of the oldest disciplines, but also one that has managed to catch up with recent developments in, for instance, cognitive sciences and digital humanities; it is, in fact, considerably less dusty than some of its defenders seem to acknowledge. Most importantly, philology provides access to texts: a crucial basis for the study of history and the way in which history was produced. But of course, there is much more to philology than just the texts.

Philology traditionally consists of textual criticism, linguistics and literary history, but literary studies should not be seen as a too recent addition – early on in the tradition, what must be seen as literary aspects were a significant part of the philological endeavour. So was literary criticism, even if the modern branch of that field came to Byzantine philology rather late and primarily through the pioneering work of Margaret Mullett. In a groundbreaking article published in 1990, Mullett noted that "literature is still the Cinderella of Byzantine

Studies", by which she meant that it was given a marginal place at conferences, congresses and in journals (Mullett 1990, 261-2). Thirty years after, I think we can breathe a sigh of relief and note that the hard of work of Mullett herself and others have led to a definite change. Not only has the interest in Byzantine literature grown, resulting in numerous editions, translations and studies of all kinds of texts, but literary criticism has also slowly gained a more or less self-evident place in the study of Byzantine texts. Mullett's call for historians to start treating texts as literature has been heard, resulting in numerous studies of the literariness of historiography.[1] There is still no complete literary history of Byzantium, but the purposeful work of Panagiotis Agapitos is taking us there (Agapitos 2015a; 2020), and as I write this, *The Oxford Handbook of Byzantine Literature*, edited by Stratis Papaioannou, has just been published (Papaioannou 2021).

This is not to say that we have reached our goal and can rest on our laurels, but we have certainly come a long way. This goes also for the place of literature in the field of Byzantine Studies. When John Haldon (2016, 5) summarised the development of Byzantine Studies in the fortieth anniversary volume of *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies*, he noted some aspects that concerned literary studies in particular:

> In particular issues of intertextuality, of authorial intention, of reception, and of the relativizing of cultural interpretive possibilities (in respect of our own perspective) have become part and parcel of scholarly discourse, thus greatly enriching our discipline.[2]

More importantly, Haldon (2016, 5) noted the significance of such progress for the field at large:

> I believe this shift also facilitated a much greater degree of cross-disciplinary reading, comparative thinking, and in respect of historical context and setting, a generally more open approach to the medieval west and the Islamic world in terms of both material and method.

Since Haldon made this observation, a new generation of scholars have taken on the challenge of developing new approaches, and in the following I will turn to recent examples of work that take on new

---

1 Most notably Odorico, Agapitos, Hinterberger 2006; Nilsson, Scott 2007; Macrides 2010. See also Nilsson 2014, 87-111, and more recently Kinloch, MacFarlane 2019. Note also the plenary session in ICBS Belgrad 2016 on "How the Byzantines Wrote History", moderated by Ruth Macrides and with contributions by Leonora Neville, Warren Treadgold and Anthony Kaldellis in Marjanović-Dušanić 2016, 257-306.

2 By "discipline", Haldon most probably refers to Byzantine Studies as a whole, not just history; cf. Myrto Veikou's paper in the present volume.

theory and cross various traditional boundaries within or in relation to philological and literary studies. I will use three concepts to structure my discussion and target different areas of interdisciplinarity: metaphrasis, reception and hybridity. These in many ways overlapping concepts are central not only to literary studies, but for the overall study of Byzantine culture, society and history.

3 Metaphrasis as Discursive Practice

A central issue of any discussion of Byzantine literature has always been imitation – also for the Byzantines themselves. At the core lies, ultimately, the Byzantine relation to the so-called classical tradition and with that comes questions of originality and change. Alexander Kazhdan's emphasis on innovation and change was a decisive turning-point in the study of Byzantine texts, allowing for new ways of understanding and analysing texts. Kazhdans' work helped students and early career scholars to move away from disparaging views of Byzantine culture as marked by repetition of empty commonplaces while scholars like Mullett assisted in the discovery of modern criticism. Against that background, the step from imitation to inter- and transtextuality was not very large (e.g. Nilsson 2010; Marciniak 2013). The challenge, however, is not to start employing new terms for basically the same processes, but to also change hermeneutical approach; it is not enough to use the term intertextuality but still only be interested in locating 'sources' – we need to understand what kind of theoretical underpinning the terminology brings to the table.

While traditional *Quellenforshung* – still a backbone of philology – focuses on the use of previous texts, intertextuality in its original sense as used by the poststructuralist feminist philosopher Julia Kristeva aims to understand texts in a much larger picture (e.g. Kristeva 1980). Accepting such a perspective, that all texts are connected to other texts and other human expressions, can help us move away from the idea of mere 'influence' and instead look at looser connections and, more importantly, the creative process that is involved in imitating or alluding to previous or contemporary works. Moreover, it can help us take a step in at least two important directions of cross-disciplinary and cross-cultural analysis. First, thinking of intertextuality as a sociocultural phenomenon – a network of relations that characterise not only literature but also architecture, art and urban space – allows for fruitful comparison between textual and material culture. A recent example of such collaboration is a volume on "spoliation as translation", in which philologists, art historians and archaeologists use the same or similar methods to approach recycling in various kinds of material (Jevtić, Nilsson 2021). Second, thinking of literary connections as not only textual, but al-

so of stories as orally and culturally transmittable artefacts, we can move on to comparative studies without constantly focusing on textual dependence. A recent article by Carolina Cupane (2019) points us in such a direction by noting the "narrative koine" of the Middle Ages – a shared bulk of motifs and characters that travelled across linguistic and cultural borders.[3]

The interest in textual relations rather than dependence has made the transtextual model of Gérard Genette suitable for the study of Byzantine texts: they are clearly "palimpsestuous" in their layering of linguistic and literary traditions. A recent study by Stavroula Constantinou, "Metaphrasis. Mapping Premodern Writing", points at the crucial connection between rewriting as an inevitable part of creative writing and, in the words of Milan Kundera, "the spirit of our times", and rewriting in Byzantium. Rewriting is thus seen as "a persistent characteristic of Western literature from antiquity to the present" and Byzantine metaphrasis can finally be seen as a discursive practise shared by most times and cultures, no longer as mere repetition of the obsolete (Constantinou 2021, 4). Constantinou's useful analysis shows how fruitful the perspectives of modern criticism can be for the study of premodern texts and is accordingly indicative of current trends in our field. Progymnasmata and schedography are no longer seen as tedious exercises and testimonies of the educational cycles, but as crucial parts of a tradition of literary recycling that goes back to (at least) Homer and spans to current rewritings of the Trojan story stuff by authors like Pat Barker and Natalie Haynes. Byzantinists should thus be aware of the use of Byzantium in the award-winning science fiction novels by Arkady Martine as well as the presence of Empress Theodora in the videogame *Civilization V. Gods and Kings*.[4]

The way in which we understand rewriting has also been affected by an increasing interest in the sociopolitical aspects of literature. While such angles were investigated decades ago by Mullett and others in their study of Byzantine performance culture and *theatra*, it took some time for the approach to become an integrated part of the field. Now, the study of Byzantine texts in the large majority of cases includes rather an entire chain of circumstances: the materiality of the text, the social situation of its author, the performance of the text and its audience, its circulation and later reception (e.g. Bourbouhakis 2017; Shawcross, Toth 2018; Papaioannou 2021). Here, too, the

---

3 For similar comparative approaches, see Priki 2019 and Söderblom Saarela 2019, the latter discussed in Nilsson 2021b, 30-1.

4 Behind the pen name Arkady Martine is Byzantinist Anna Linden Weller with the two novels *A Memory Called Empire* (2018) and *A Desolation Called Peace* (2020). On videogames and Antiquity/Byzantium, see Vázquez-Miraz, Matos, Freire 2020; Fasolio, forthcoming.

significance of rewriting is crucial. While the use of the Greek heritage in Byzantium used to be seen primarily as a way of showing off one's learning, scholars are now interested in what that use actually means: why a certain citation was placed here, why a 'tragic' or 'epic' style was relevant for this particular story, or in what way it was relevant for a writer to adopt the voice of an ancient author for this performance. Not only were texts in the Byzantine culture palimpsestuous, so were narrative strategies and authorial voices (Nilsson 2021a). Rewriting has cultural, social and political meaning.

Rewriting, finally, does not end with the Byzantine practices; it includes also our own translation efforts and interpretation. In a recent book by Adam Goldwyn (2021), it is noted how translation choices entail ideologically tainted interpretations that seriously affect subsequent readings of the passages in question. In this particular case, Goldwyn argues that the emotional quality of the work – Eustathios' *Capture of Thessalonike* – is suppressed in favour of the translator's – John Melville-Jones – understanding of it as historiography:

> Indeed, in this light, Melville-Jones' decision as translator of the work to render *pathos* under the neutral framework of "experience" or similar rather than the more emotionally-freighted "suffering" is suggestive of a view of the work as historiography rather than testimony; the process of translation thus becomes not just a transfer of languages from Greek to English but also of genre and interpretation from affective witness testimony into objective (and thus dispassionate) historiography. (Goldwyn 2021, 62)

A fuller understanding of both rewriting processes, including our own part in that chain of transmission, along with the import of new approaches from affective and cognitive studies will certainly help us become better readers of both Byzantine sources and our predecessors in the field. In the future, Goldwyn's reading of Eustathios as witness literature will probably be interpreted in a cultural and/or political context of which we may not even yet be aware. Every translator and every philologist is part of a long chain of interpretation, whether they know it or not.[5]

---

[5] This awareness has not quite reached Byzantine Studies, but is finally being discussed in Classics; see e.g. the recent discussions on ideological and gendered translation practices by Emelie Wilson, the first woman translator of the *Odyssey* into modern English. See Wilson 2017, esp. 86; 2020.

4 Reception as a Modality of Change

First of all, let me admit that reception and metaphrasis overlap in many significant ways. Metaphrasis is a kind of reception, and reception most often contains metaphrasis. Here they are used as separate categories for structural purposes, but they are both marked by intertextuality in the Kristevan sense: all text belongs in a social context which means that it is inevitably connected and contextualised (Kristeva 1980; Nilsson 2021b, 22-3). And the last example of the previous section clearly involves reception: our translations and interpretations of Byzantine texts is part of the reception of Byzantium. One could perhaps say that the term 'reception' has partly replaced that of 'tradition' over the past few decades, placing the emphasis on active appropriation rather than on a kind of effortless but preservative transfer of a canon. The influence from other fields in the Humanities and Social Sciences is clear, making us more aware of the complexities of 'cultural transfer' and the problems of 'cultural appropriation'. This has helped Byzantinists to move away from the idea of (the classical) tradition as stable and understand that innovation exists within the frames of convention. Tradition is not a solid entity; it is an ongoing process and, more importantly, a modality of change.

This ties in with what I said above about rewriting having cultural, social and political meaning. The use of a 'tradition' is very helpful in order to convince people of something's value. A contemporary example with which we are all sadly familiar is the way in which nationalist and populist movements all over Europe now draw upon folklore imagery, so-called Christian values, or the idea of a unified 'Europe' that never really existed (Heilo, Nilsson 2017; Vukašinović 2021). Fiction and popular science can easily be used for promoting such ideas, selling themselves thanks to the awareness of a 'joint tradition'. Another example, partly related and still surprisingly prevalent in both scholarly and popular circles, is the notion of a pure ancient Greek culture, untouched by oriental or Barbarian influence. It is useful to remember Jan Assman's idea, developed in relation to collective memory and cultural identity, that change in society must be legitimised as non-change – otherwise people are unlikely to follow (Assman 1992). In practice, this means that tradition is often invented, as has been argued in the case of modern nation building and the creation of national identity.

Byzantine texts offer so many instances of such processes that it is difficult to choose one example, but the *Patria of Constantinople* is a case in point. It represents the invention of a patriographical tradition, based on earlier material but probably compiled at some point in the tenth century in order to create a unified tradition of the capital. In fact, Constantinople itself is a material example of such constant reinvention in terms of a glorious past or glorious parallels, as in the

launching of Constantinople as the New Rome. It is a palimpsestuous city, marked by spoliation, recycling, rewriting, but yet claimed by many as 'theirs' and a constant object of cultural, religious and political contest. Tradition, then, can look very different depending on whose version it presents, and scholarly literature is not entirely free from such contesting and preservative narratives. Such narratives – that is, scholarly narratives that reproduce not only the Byzantine sources, but also each other – have only recently been subject to investigation by Matthew Kinloch and Milan Vukašinović (Kinloch 2018; Vukašinović 2019). Both scholars approach the material from a narratological perspective, combining it with modern approaches to history and ideology respectively. The result is refreshingly provocative, reminding us that we too, as scholars, repeat and thus preserve the tradition we are set to examine (see also Kinloch, MacFarlane 2019). And as noted by Leonora Neville in her excellent book *Byzantine Gender*, the Byzantine empire is bound to change with us, because our representations change with our approaches and interpretations (Neville 2019, 87-92).

Even more traditional philology is increasingly marked by this trend. In a long series of articles investigating the history of the study of Byzantine literature, Agapitos (2015b; 2017a; 2019) has shown how the way in which our study objects have been selected and examined has been marked by numerous political and ideological choices, subsequently repeated and preserved by scholars. To expose such paradigms may be seen as disturbing and even insulting, but it is necessary in order to properly understand our field and our own place in it. Agapitos' quest may be seen as an internal affair for philologists, but considering the crucial function of texts in Byzantine Studies at large, it is rather a concern we should all share, not least historians. Just like the exposures made by Kinloch and Vukašinović, mentioned above, such engagements with our research history are crucial for moving on and keeping up with developments in the Humanities and Social Sciences at large.

Another undertaking in recent years – less provocative but very important for our movement forward – is the new approach to different kinds of Byzantine commentaries: from scholia and book epigrams to paraphrases and more traditional commentaries. The Database of Byzantine Book Epigrams (DBBE), based in Ghent, has been instrumental in the change in attitude, not only making the material available but also underlining its importance from the cultural and literary perspective. It is a good example of how new methods drawn from Digital Humanities (digital editions and online collections allowing for searches and big data investigations) can be fruitfully combined with traditional philological investigations (textual criticism and close readings). Another recent addition is the online publication of a new critical edition and English translation of the *Com-*

mentary on the Odyssey by Eustathios of Thessalonike, published by Brill, so unfortunately not open access (Cullhed, Olson 2020). Such endeavours are bound to lead to more study of the texts and, moreover, a greater awareness of Byzantine texts beyond our own circles.

In a forthcoming volume on Byzantine commentaries on ancient Greek texts, a new and more inclusive approach is clear. In their introduction, Baukje van den Berg and Divna Manolova describe commentary-writing as a creative engagement with ancient texts and as "a targeted enterprise of identity building" on the part of the commentators, indicating an awareness of one's place in a long tradition rather than an unreflected focus on a glorious past. As van den Berg and Manolova note (Van den Berg, Manolova, Marciniak, forthcoming), "Fashioning oneself as another link in the chain of commentators perhaps brought additional cultural capital we cannot fully recognize yet".[6] When commentaries are thus allowed to include very different kinds of texts, including elaborate rewritings like Theodore Prodromos' Lucianic satires, and then read as a means of shedding light on Byzantine attitudes towards their ancient heritage, we have left behind the idea of Byzantine commentaries as containers of ancient material for classical philologists to harvest and present devoid of context. Commentaries make up an important and fruitful part of the Byzantine endeavour of rewriting and recycling, and while they may still be seen as "somehow subordinated" in relation to the texts they comment on, recent work shows how primary they can be for our understanding of Byzantine culture (Bértola 2021, 11).

An important aspect of the increasing interest in and updated approach to Byzantine commentaries is that it allows us to go beyond both philological-literary concerns and the Greek-speaking part of the Byzantine empire. Commentaries deal not only with ancient Greek authors, but also with the Bible, philosophy, medicine and science, which allows for interconnectedness and dialogue with other languages and cultures (e.g. Bydén, Radovic 2018). Tradition as a chain of receptions thus expands and evolves, reaching beyond the traditional view of Byzantium as a combination of Greek, Roman and Christian. Traditional boundaries between genres are dissolved (a commentary can also be a paraphrase, a paraphrase a highly individual work of self-fashioning), as are those between learned and vernacular, religious and profane, and the modern reception of Byzantium becomes more relevant for our understanding of what is Byzantine in a larger perspective. The study of modern reception is much more than entertaining or curious details about films, novels or commercials drawing on Byzantine imagery; it is also the story of how

---

6   Cf. recent studies of Byzantine authors' self-fashioning after ancient models, esp. Lovato 2021 with references.

our field came about and what contributions we can make in a world where unsolicited uses of Byzantium for populist, sexist and nationalistic purposes abound.[7]

5   Hybridity as Inevitable Process

Metaphrasis as a discursive practice and reception as a modality of change inevitably leads to an intense mixing of ideas, forms and expressions. I have often been reluctant to use the term 'hybrid' because it seemed to imply the combination of preexisting clear-cut categories and thus carried a certain notion of something gone wrong. After being introduced to other ways of looking at hybridity, drawn from Cultural Studies, I have changed my mind and think that we need this term in order to describe what characterises most Byzantine literature and culture. The main reason for this need is the overall academic urge for neat dichotomies, for instance between tradition and change, repetition and innovation, Christian and pagan, and for clear distinctions between periods and intellectual trends, for example between classical and postclassical, Second Sophistic and Late Antique, Late Antique and Byzantine. While a certain change can be seen in neighbouring fields, we are still largely dominated by such Linnean thinking and I believe it hinders our scholarly imagination.

Criticism and discussions of cultural dichotomies are by no means new. Homi Bhabha's concept of 'hybridity' is a way of working against bipolar distinctions:

> Hybridity to me is the third space that enables other positions to emerge. The process of cultural hybridity gives rise to something different, new and unrecognizable, a new area of negotiation of meaning and representation. (Bhabha 1990, 211, cit. in Veikou 2016, 151)

It is exactly this new area of negotiation that should interest us, emerging in the new study of rewriting and reception noted above. And it is certainly not just a concern for the study of literature and art, but for culture and society at large. In cultural geography, similar reactions against clear-cut distinctions were voiced in the 1990s, most notably by Edward Soja (1996; see Veikou 2016, 152) in his notion with the complex name "thirding as othering". What Soja wanted to achieve was similar to Bhabha's "third space" mentioned above: he wanted to introduce the space that is placed in-between. His aim

---

[7] On the latter, see Goldwyn 2018a. As I am writing this, at least two edited volumes on reception are in the making: Kulhánková, Marciniak forthcoming; Bhalla, Kotoula forthcoming.

was accordingly to break out of established interpretation schemes and mainstream bipolar schemes.

Regardless of whether we work with geography or not, these are crucial considerations to us as scholars in general and historians in particular. Soja wished to respond to all binarisms, to any attempt to confine thought and action to only two alternatives. In such a model, the original binary choice is not entirely dismissed, but it is subjected to a creative process of restructuring, drawing the scholar selectively and strategically from two opposite categories to new alternatives. Most of us have not been trained to look for such alternatives; on the contrary, we have been trained to look for that one specific answer to a question, never (or rarely) for the in-between. Constantinople again offers good examples of how this works in practice. Geographically, the spatial structure of settlements from various periods cannot easily be divided into urban and rural. The periodisation of the city's history poses constant challenges: when did Constantinople stop being late antique and become Byzantine, and to what extent was it still Byzantine under early Ottoman rule? We can also move to cultural micro-levels and consider, in the case of Byzantine literature, the dichotomy between learned and vernacular texts, verse and prose, Christian and pagan. In all cases, the scholarly discussion would gain from considering various middle positions.

Scholars moving in such directions have already been noted above, with Agapitos as the most ardent opponent to traditional distinctions between learning and vernacular, Christian and pagan (Agapitos 2015a; 2017b; Nilsson 2021a, 116-17). In a similar vein, Nikos Zagklas has argued for less clear boundaries between the different settings of court poetry in twelfth-century Constantinople, bringing in the concept of "communicating vessels" (from hydraulic technology) in order to describe how three settings in particular overlapped and cannot be clearly distinguished from one another: the court, the rhetorical *theatra* and the classroom (Zagklas 2014, 73-87). Another modern concept for describing processes at work in twelfth-century literature has been brought in by Eric Cullhed, referring to certain kinds of texts that combine education with entertainment as "edutainment" (from the media world) (Cullhed 2016, 11*). Previous needs to define genres and settings as separate are now thwarted by such in-between positions, often influenced by "travelling concepts" from other fields (Bal 2002). Just like past societies profit from being looked at from such angles, avoiding binary interpretation, our own scholarly process profits from the bringing in of concepts and ideas from other fields – cross-disciplinary hybridity is as important to accept as are any crossings noted in the material we study. This ties in with the present interest in identity and the seemingly endless quest for who the Byzantines really were, how they identified themselves, and how they saw the Other (Durak, Jevtić 2019; Vukašinović 2020).

The growing awareness of and interest in the Byzantine engagement with non-Greek societies have led to new attempts to situate Byzantium within the entangled medieval world of the Mediterranean, both diachronically and geographically. Relations with the medieval west have been more or less part of the scholarly tradition from the start, and also the connections between Byzantium and the Arab world, or Byzantium and China (now with the PAIXUE project[8] at the University of Edinburgh), have received quite a bit of attention for a while, but the encounters and interactions between Greek-speaking Byzantines and Turkish-speaking groups have often been mentioned in passing rather than properly investigated.[9] A recent monograph by Buket Kitapçı Bayrı hopefully represents a turning-point, presenting readers with a comparative investigation of Byzantine and Turkish sources, focusing on formations of identity in liminal spaces (Kitapçı Bayrı 2020). The importance of Kitapçı Bayrı's work is not only that is presents Byzantinists with texts that are often not read or even known to us, but also that it offers a modern and useful approach to both identity and space – two concepts that are very much in vogue right now and which are central to most discussions of cross-cultural interaction.

The inevitable processes of hybridity that appear in societies marked by rewriting and reception have already been noted in the case of commentaries, but it could be said to imbue Byzantine production on the whole – again, not just in traditionally cultural expressions but also in areas like law, military and politics. Indeed, all of Byzantine society could fruitfully be seen in terms of Bhabha's "area of negotiation of meaning and representation", not only as a constantly changing continuation of ancient and late antique (Greek) traditions, but also as a multilingual empire in regular and intense contact with neighbouring societies, perhaps politically fragmented but still culturally entangled. This means that we have to work together – philologists with historians, archaeologists and art historians – in order to better understand not only what we study, but also who we are as scholars.

6 Theory. Inescapable or a Cloud-Cuckoo-Land?

Much in this essay has been focused on new theoretical and methodological perspectives, simply because such developments have marked philological and literary studies in the last ten years. New ways of

---

[8] http://paixue.shca.ed.ac.uk/.

[9] Significant exceptions are provided in the work by Alexander Beihammer and Nevra Necipoğlu, offering fruitful directions for future studies in history.

working (databases, digital editions, webinars) have created new ways of approaching the material, and more material has been made available in new editions and translations. But a large part of the texts we study remain the same, especially when it comes to what happened in the central parts of the empire and the capital, or at crucial moments in the history of Byzantium. This is where the need for new ways of looking at the material comes in. If we cannot manage that, we will end up merely repeating what has already been said, perhaps with slight variation, or contradicting it, according to the binary model examined above. An additional advantage of bringing in modern theory is that it opens for interdisciplinary collaboration and cross-fertilisation – by interpreting the same material from different angles, we are forced to think differently, or at least to take other positions into consideration. As importantly, new approaches offer us a way to reach out to other fields and talk about our material in a way that they understand, which could make Byzantine Studies less insular.

But let us admit that philology still is a conservative field where modern theory is not always welcome, which could perhaps be said for parts of Byzantine Studies at large. In philology, the usefulness of theory is being questioned, and 'simply reading the texts' with the use of 'common sense' is still rather often put forward as a sensible way of approaching the literary production of past societies; they are simply our 'sources'. In a similar way, the historical 'evidence' is often seen as the only way to reach any knowledge, as in Peter Sarris' argument that social history "must be written on the basis of the primacy of practical reason and a pragmatic approach to the evidence" (2009, 94). The question is how we can approach anything without a specific set of ideas in mind; *theory*, which should be clear to any Greek-speaking or Greek-reading Byzantinist, is how we *see* things; *method* is how we *do* things. A theory is not the same thing as a hypothesis, so while much research in recent years has been hypothesis-driven, that does not mean that it is theorised or even theoretically aware. In order to be scholars – or even to write a BA thesis – we need to make up our mind not only about the material and the questions we want to ask, but also how we look at it and how we will carry out our investigation.

While Sarris sees theorisation of the field as an ascent "to a methodological Cloud-cuckoo-land that only leads one further away from life as if was actually lived by *homo byzantinus*" (2009, 94), many scholars would now argue that we cannot have immediate access to that life, or even that there is no such thing as a typical *homo byzantinus*. However, such disagreement does not have to be an unbridgeable gap, but rather a point of departure for fruitful discussions and negotiations. The new generation of scholars have often been trained in theory as an inherent part of scholarly work and see explicit theorising as normal and necessary – indeed, inescapable. To such schol-

ars, positivistic clinging to sources and evidence, too, is a theoretical stance, and terms like 'common sense' are just a cover for the historically constructed subject position that prioritises able-bodied, colonialist, white, heterosexual men.

While theory was for a long time (and still is) associated with 'jargon' and complicated terminology, recent years have seen the implementation of wider theoretical perspectives in Byzantine Studies, ranging from gender studies and intersectionality to ecocriticism and narratology, and beyond. Noticeable is also the increasing awareness of our own scholarly position in this new theorised study of what we call the Byzantine, related to the interest in identity and the Other noted above. Neville (2019, 7) puts is aptly in her book on Byzantine Gender, noting how not only Byzantium's historical characters (women *and* men) but also Byzantium itself has been gendered throughout history:

> Most working Byzantinists think the old derogatory images of Byzantium have long been recognized as wrong and are no longer relevant. Few of them think that their research has much of anything to do with gender, which is still occasionally confused with the history of women. Assumptions and prejudices of which we are unconscious are the ones most likely to deceive us. Given that most Byzantinists think gender has no bearing on their work, they are likely to be oblivious to the ways assumptions about Byzantine gender play out in their research. We have not begun to confront the reality that the Western denigration of Byzantium is a discourse about gender.

Neville reminds us that our viewpoint matters, and that it may affect us in ways of which we are not aware. Roland Betancourt (2020, 15) takes a similar stance in his recent book on sexuality, gender and race, explaining that

> This book is titled *Byzantine Intersectionality* not only because it studies the intersectionality of identity across the Byzantine world but also because the pejorative "byzantine" speaks to the inherent queerness of these stories and the empire from which that slur was taken. Intersectional identity is Byzantine – it is infinitely complicated, and it is often characterized as devious, deceitful, and corrupt.

The reception element that I discussed above is in this way turned into an important presence in scholarly studies of texts and images; it is indeed theorised as a crucial part of our scholarly investigation. The increasing awareness of our own part in the tradition is noticeable in other recent studies applying modern theory, most notably perhaps in those that apply ecocritical, queer, spatial and affective per-

spectives.[10] Important to note from a philological angle is the way in which all these scholars work with texts, but in ways that take material, visual, emotional and even sensory issues into account. They thus open up towards other fields and provide new ways for texts and textual studies to be relevant for the field as a whole.

7   No longer the Cinderella of Byzantine Studies

Moving from the philological and textual towards the cultural and social, I hope to have shown how literature – in the widest sense of the word – matters more than ever before for the study of the Byzantine world. Recent developments have made Byzantine literary studies more relevant for interdisciplinary dialogue with students and scholars in fields where theory and marginal perspectives are normalised. I believe that this has contributed also to new ways of reading texts in our neighbouring sub-disciplines: historians, art historians, and even archaeologists are now performing 'close readings' with new glasses, profiting from and in turn enriching philological studies. It is gratifying that an historian, not a philologist, wrote the first study of gendered grammar in Byzantine texts (Kinloch 2020). It is equally rewarding to see how Spatial Studies and cognitive narratology have greatly enriched the study of literature over the past few years.[11] I am not saying that disciplinary boundaries do not matter, but I do believe that some of the best scholarship is produced when they are crossed and partly dissolved.

For philologists and literary historians, this development is certainly to our advantage. When Ihor Ševčenko imagined the future of Byzantine Studies at the Nineteenth International Congress of Byzantine Studies in Copenhagen, he said: "Everything is circular. Art historians will go back to looking at style, literary historians will edit texts and we shall all stop talking about patronage" (cited in Mullett 2003, 47). He was right and wrong: art historians do look at style and philologists do edit texts, but we do much more than that and we do it with theoretical awareness (Mullett 2021, 728). More importantly, we do it together, across disciplinary boundaries and with different aims; an *ekphrasis* is no longer either a depiction of an image or a rhetorical exercise – it is also a spatial representation that opens up a storyworld on multiple levels (Veikou 2018; Nilsson 2021c). And yes, we do still talk about patronage but in entirely new and, to us,

10   Arentzen 2019; Arentzen, Burrus, Peers 2021; Betancourt 2020; Goldwyn 2018b; 2021; Pizzone 2021; forthcoming; Veikou 2016; 2018; 2020.

11   In addition to work cited above, see also various contributions in Messis, Mullett, Nilsson 2018 and in Veikou, Nilsson, forthcoming; Kulhánková 2021.

more exciting ways. When Mullett (2021, 733) looks toward the future in the new *Handbook of Byzantine Literature*, it is an image that feels closer to what we actually see: "It can be truly literary, a history and not a rigid system or isolated pen-portraits, and it will involve a bigger and longer Byzantium".

Texts will remain central to the field, and when literary criticism is applied in a competent yet visionary manner it does not compete with the sources but rather help us to appreciate and interpret them. When I was writing my dissertation, I was told that I had been deceived by 'the hocus pocus of literary theory'. While some colleagues may still accuse me of that, it is no longer a general attitude in Byzantine philology. On the contrary, modern theory and travelling concepts have allowed us to open up and communicate with other fields, to be part of larger developments in Humanities and Social Sciences, even if we remain – to be honest – a little bit behind.

As noted by the editors of the volume *Reading in the Byzantine Empire and Beyond*, in the Byzantine world "the written word was always a living thing: generative and transactional, it shaped individuals and bound them together in communities" (Shawcross, Toth 2018, xx). In a similar way, every instance of philological research is part of its history, "to be a philologist means to appropriate a term and recover a practice" (Gurd 2010, 1). It is therefore important to remember that our task as scholars includes the contest of conceptual boundaries. Of course we should strive to present new data and solid interpretations, but a central concern should always be to question and reconsider not only the results and methods of others, but also our own. We, too, are just one link in that ongoing process that we call tradition.

Bibliography

Agapitos, P.A. (2015a). "Contesting Conceptual Boundaries. Byzantine Literature and Its History". *Interfaces*, 1, 62-91. https://doi.org/10.13130/interfaces-4914.

Agapitos, P.A. (2015b). "Karl Krumbacher and the History of Byzantine Literature". *Byzantinische Zeitschrift*, 108, 1-52. https://doi.org/10.1515/bz-2015-0002.

Agapitos, P.A. (2017a). "Dangerous Literary Liaisons. Byzantium and Modern Hellenism". *Byzantina*, 35, 33-126.

Agapitos, P.A. (2017b). "John Tzetzes and the Blemish Examiners. A Byzantine Teacher on Schedography, Everyday Language and Writerly Disposition". *Medioevo Greco*, 17, 1-57.

Agapitos, P.A. (2019). "Franz Dölger and the Hieratic Model of Byzantine Literature". *Byzantinische Zeitschrift*, 112, 707-80. https://doi.org/10.1515/bz-2019-0031.

Agapitos, P.A. (2020). "The Insignificance of 1204 and 1453 for the History of Byzantine Literature". *Medioevo Greco*, 20, 1-58.

Arentzen, T. (2019). "Arboreal Lives. Saints among the Trees in Byzantium and Beyond". *Scandinavian Journal of Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies*, 5, 113-36.

Arentzen, T.; Burrus, V.; Peers, G. (2021). *Byzantine Tree Life. Christianity and the Arboreal Imagination*. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan.

Assman, J. (1992). *Das kulturelle Gedächtnis. Schrift, Erinnerung und politische Identität in frühen Hochkulturen*. München: C.H. Beck.

Bal, M. (2002). *Travelling Concepts in the Humanities. A Rough Guide*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Bértola, J. (2021). *Using Poetry to Read the Past. Unedited Byzantine Verse Scholia on Historians in the Margins of Medieval Manuscripts* [PhD dissertation]. Ghent: Ghent University.

Betancourt, R. (2020). *Byzantine Intersectionality. Sexuality, Gender, and Race in the Middle Ages*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Bhabha, H.K. (1990). "The Third Space". Rutherford, J. (ed.), *Identity, Community, Culture, Difference*. London: Lawrence & Wishart, 207-21.

Bhalla, N.; Kotoula, D. (eds) (forthcoming). *A Handbook to the Modern Reception of Byzantium*. London; New York: Routledge.

Bourbouhakis, E.C. (2017). *"Not Composed in a Chance Manner". The Epitaphios for Manuel I Komnenos by Eustathius of Thessalonike*. Uppsala: Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis.

Bydén, B.; Radovic, P. (eds) (2018). *The Parva Naturalia in Greek, Arabic and Latin Aristotelianism. Supplementing the Science of the Soul*. Cham: Springer International Publishing.

Constantinou, S. (2021). "Metaphrasis. Mapping Premodern Writing". Constantinou, S.; Høgel, C. (eds), *Metaphrasis. A Byzantine Concept of Rewriting and Its Hagiographical Products*. Leiden: Brill, 3-60.

Cullhed, E. (ed.) (2016). *Eustathios of Thessalonike: Commentary on Homer's Odyssey*. Vol. 1, *On Rhapsodies A-B*. Uppsala: Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis.

Cullhed, E.; Olson, S.D. (eds) (2020). *Eustathius of Thessalonica: Commentary on the Odyssey*. Leiden: Brill. `https://scholarlyeditions.brill.com/library/urn:cts:greekLit:tlg4083.tlg002`.

Cupane, C. (2019). "Intercultural Encounters in the Late Byzantine Vernacular Romance". Goldwyn, Nilsson 2019, 40-68.

Durak, K; Jevtić, I. (eds) (2019). *Identity and the Other in Byzantium*. Istanbul: Koç University Press.

Fasolio, M. (forthcoming). "Byzantium and the Classic Strategy Video Games. From Age of Empires II to Medieval II: Total War". Kulhánkova, Marciniak forthcoming.

Goldwyn, A. (2018a). "The Byzantine Workings of the Manosphere". *Eidolon*, 11 June. `https://eidolon.pub/the-byzantine-workings-of-the-manosphere-37db3be9e661`.

Goldwyn, A. (2018b). *Byzantine Ecocriticism. Women, Nature, and Power in the Medieval Greek Romance*. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan.

Goldwyn, A. (2021). *Witness Literature in Byzantium. Narrating Slaves, Prisoners, and Refugees*. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan.

Goldwyn, A.; Nilsson, I. (eds) (2019). *Reading the Late Byzantine Romance. A Handbook*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Gurd, S. (2010). "Introduction". Gurd, S. (ed.), *Philology and Its Histories*. Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1-19.

Haldon, J. (2016). "Res Publica Byzantina? State Formation and Issues of Identity in Medieval East Rome". *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies*, 40(1), 4-16. https://doi.org/10.1017/byz.2015.2.

Heilo, O.; Nilsson, I. (2017). "Back to Byzantium. Rethinking the Borders of Europe". Stagnell, A.; Schou Terkildsen, L.; Rosengren, M. (eds), *Can a Person be Illegal? Refugees, Migrants and Citizenship in Europe*. Uppsala: Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis, 87-105.

Jevtić, I.; Nilsson, I. (eds) (2021). *Spoliation as Translation. Medieval Worlds in the Eastern Mediterranean*. Brno: Convivium Supplementum.

Kinloch, M. (2018). *Rethinking Thirteenth-Century Byzantine Historiography. A Postmodern, Narrativist, and Narratological Approach* [PhD dissertation]. Oxford: University of Oxford.

Kinloch, M. (2020). "In the Name of the Father, the Husband, or Some Other Man. The Subordination of Female Characters in Byzantine Historiography". *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, 74, 303-28.

Kinloch, M.; MacFarlane, A. (eds) (2019). *Trends and Turning Points. Constructing the Late Antique and Byzantine World*. Leiden: Brill.

Kitapçı Bayrı, B. (2020). *Warriors, Martyrs, and Dervishes. Moving Frontiers, Shifting Identities in the Land of Rome (13th-15th Centuries)*. Leiden: Brill.

Kristeva, J. (1980). *Desire in Language. A Semiotic Approach to Literature and Art*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Kulhánková, M. (2021). "Narrative Coherence in Digenes Akrites (G)". *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies*, 45(2), 184-98. https://doi.org/10.1017/byz.2021.14.

Kulhánkova, M.; Marciniak, P. (eds) (forthcoming). *Imagining Byzantium. The Modern Reception of the Byzantine Empire*. London: Bloomsbury.

Lovato, V.F. (2021). "Living by His Wit. Tzetzes' Aristophanic Variations on the Conundrums of a 'Professional Writer'". *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies*, 45(1), 42-58. https://doi.org/10.1017/byz.2020.29.

Mango, C. (1975). *Byzantine Literature as a Distorting Mirror. An Inaugural Lecture Delivered before the University of Oxford on 21 May 1975*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Macrides, R. (ed.) (2010). *History as Literature in Byzantium*. Farnham: Ashgate.

Marciniak, P. (2013). "Theodore Prodromos' *Bion Prasis*. A Reappraisal". *Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies*, 53, 219-39.

Marjanović-Dušanić, S. (ed.) (2016). *Proceedings of the 23rd International Congress of Byzantine Studies. Plenary Papers* (Belgrade, 22-27 August 2016). Belgrade: The Serbian National Committee of AIEB.

Messis, C.; Mullett, M.; Nilsson, I. (eds) (2018). *Storytelling in Byzantium. Narratological Approaches to Byzantine Texts and Images*. Uppsala: Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis.

Mullett, M. (1990). "Dancing with Deconstructionists in the Garden of the Muses. New Literary History vs?". *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies*, 14(1), 258-75. https://doi.org/10.1179/byz.1990.14.1.258.

Mullett, M. (2003). "New Literary History and the History of Byzantine Literature. A Worthwhile Endeavor?". Odorico, P.; Agapitos, P.A. (éds), *Pour une nouvelle «histoire» de la littérature byzantine*. Paris: CEB (École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales), 37-60.

Mullett, M. (2021). "Thoughts on the Recent Past and the Future of Byzantine Literary Studies". Papaioannou 2021, 725-42.

Neville, L. (2019). *Byzantine Gender*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.

Nilsson, I. (2010). "The Same Story but Another. A Reappraisal of Literary Imitation in Byzantium". Schiffer, E.; Rhoby, A. (Hrsgg), *Imitatio. Aemulatio. Variatio*. Wien: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 195-208.

Nilsson, I. (2014). *Raconter Byzance. La littérature au XIIᵉ siècle*. Paris : Belles Lettres.

Nilsson, I. (2021a). *Writer and Occasion in Twelfth-Century Byzantium. The Authorial Voice of Constantine Manasses*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Nilsson, I. (2021b). "Imitation as Spoliation, Reception as Translation? The Art of Transforming Things in Byzantium". Jevtić, Nilsson 2021, 20-37.

Nilsson, I. (2021c). "Describing, Experiencing, Narrating. Introduction". Spingou, F. (ed.), *Sources for Byzantine Art History*. Vol. 3, part 2, *The Visual Culture of Later Byzantium (1081-c. 1350)*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 55-63.

Nilsson, I.; Scott, R. (2007). "Towards a New History of Byzantine Literature. The Case of Historiography". *Classica et Mediaevalia*, 58, 319-32. `https://doi.org/10.4324/9781351219464-5`.

Odorico, P.; Agapitos, P.A.; Hinterberger, M. (eds) (2006). *L'écriture de la mémoire. La littérarité de l'historiographie*. Paris: CEB (École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales).

Papaioannou, S. (ed.) (2021). *The Oxford Handbook of Byzantine Literature*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Pizzone, A. (2021). "'A Hand of Ivory'. Moving Objects in Psellos' Oration for His Daughter Styliane. A Case Study". *Emotion Review*, 7 October 2021. `https://doi.org/10.1177%2F17540739211040178`.

Pizzone, A. (forthcoming). "Emotions and λόγος ἐνδιάθετος. Πάθη in John Sikeliotes' Commentary on Hermogenes' *On Types of Style*". Cairns, D. et al. (eds), *Emotions through Time. From Greece to Byzantium*. Heidelberg: Mohr Siebeck.

Pizzone, A. (forthcoming). "Κατήφεια from Heroic Failure to Christian Dejection". Mullett, M.; Ashbrook Harvey, S. (eds), *Managing Emotion in Byzantium*. London: Routledge.

Priki, E. (2019). "Dreams and Female Initiation in *Livistros and Rhodamne* and *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*". Goldwyn, Nilsson 2019, 69-100.

Sarris, P. (2009). "Social Relations and the Land. The Early Period". Haldon, J. (ed.), *A Social History of Byzantium*. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 92-111.

Söderblom Saarela, E. (2019). *Her Story in Partonopeu de Blois. Rereading Byzantine Relations*. Linköping: Linköping University Press.

Shawcross, T.; Toth, I. (eds) (2018). *Reading in the Byzantine Empire and Beyond*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Soja, E.W. (1996). *Thirdspace. Journeys to Los Angeles and Other Real-and-Imagined Places*. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell.

van den Berg, B.; Manolova, D.; Marciniak, P. (eds) (forthcoming). *Byzantine Commentaries on Ancient Greek Texts, 12th-15th Centuries*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Vázquez-Miraz, P.; Matos, C.; Freire, G. (2020). "Representaciones de la antigua cultura helenística en los videojuegos Civilization (1991-2018)".

Byzantion Nea Hellás, 30, 185-205. `https://doi.org/10.4067/s0718-84712020000100185`.

Veikou, M. (2016). "Space in Texts and Space as Text. A New Approach to Byzantine Spatial Notions". *Scandinavian Journal of Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies*, 2, 143-75.

Veikou, M. (2018). "'Telling Spaces' in Byzantium. *Ekphraseis*, Place-Making and 'Thick Description'". Messis, Mullett, Nilsson 2018, 15-32.

Veikou, M. (2020). *Spatial Paths to Holiness. Literary "Lived Spaces" in Eleventh-Century Byzantine Saints' Lives* [PhD dissertation]. Uppsala: Uppsala University.

Veikou, M.; Nilsson, I. (eds) (forthcoming). *Byzantine Spatialities. From the Human Body to the Universe*. Leiden: Brill.

Vukašinović, M. (2019). *Nicée, Épire, Serbie. Idéologie et relations de pouvoir dans les récits de la première moitié du XIIIᵉ siècle* [PhD dissertation]. Paris : École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales.

Vukašinović, M. (2020). "The Better Story for Romans and Byzantinists?". *Scandinavian Journal of Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies*, 6, 185-210.

Vukašinović, M. (2021). "Ink, Bronze, and Blood of the Nation. Living in Medieval Serbia Today". *The Nordic Byzantine Network*, 23 April 2021. `https://bit.ly/3zeeW5y`.

Wilson, E. (transl.) (2017). *Homer: The Odyssey*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company.

Wilson, E. (2020). "Ah, How Miserable!". *London Review of Books*, 42(19), 8 October 2020. `https://www.lrb.co.uk/the-paper/v42/n19/emily-wilson/ah-how-miserable`.

Zagklas, N. (2014). *Theodore Prodromos. The Neglected Poems and Epigrams (Edition, Commentary and Translation)* [PhD dissertation]. Vienna: University of Vienna.

Linking Fields, Approaches, and Methods in Byzantine Legal Studies

Daphne Papadatou
Aristotle University of Thessaloniki

Abstract   In this paper I will be presenting the means and methodology that the researcher of Byzantine law has at their disposal to investigate their research subject. I aim through this presentation to address the question as to whether the study of Byzantine law comes under the umbrella of the humanities, as does history, or the social sciences, such as Law. Furthermore, the relevance that the study of Byzantine law has today will be discussed here. That is to say, if its relevance is exhausted through the reconstitution of a legal culture, or if in itself it may be of use as a science to help resolve contemporary legal issues.

Keywords   Byzantine law. Byzantine legal studies. Research methodology (in Byzantine legal studies). Law history. History of Byzantine law.

Summary   1 The Question. And a Second Question. – 2 The Research Tools for the Historian of Byzantine Law (Answer to the First Question). – 2.1 Philology, Legal Papyrology, History and its Auxiliary Sciences. – 2.2 Folklore Studies. – 2.3 Legal Anthropology. – 2.4 Sociology of Law. – 2.5 Comparative Law. – 2.6 Preliminary Conclusions. – 3 The Significance of the Research of Byzantine Law Today (Answer to the Second Question). – 3.1 Byzantine Law and Greek Legal Science, Nineteenth and Mid-Twentieth Centuries. – 3.2 And Today? – 3.3 To Finish Off.

1   The Question. And a Second Question

Legal historians are 'scientifically homeless' academics: to historians, they are lawyers who study legal cultures of the past, frequently employing concepts and terminology incomprehensible to them, while to lawyers they are former fellow students who specialise in a field they consider as a mere luxury on a Law course, since it does not provide any practical use to the knowledge they acquired in the same lecture theatre.[1]

What indeed is legal history? Does the fact that it is cultivated by lawyers with a bent for History and historians drawn to the legal field make it a specialisation of Law or of History? Is it, that is, a discipline of Social Sciences or the Humanities?

In the lines below, I will be addressing the above question, with the focus on Byzantine law, which as a law professor, I continue to study until the present. I will attempt to provide answers through investigating research tools that the researcher of Byzantine law avails themselves of, the means loaned from other disciplines so as to process their research subject. That is to say, I'll be looking at what it is that comprise the linking fields, approaches and methods in Byzantine legal studies, as the title of the paper assigned to me requires.

In this context I believe it is of interest to venture a second question. That relates to the relevance that the study of Byzantine law has today: Is its significance exhausted through the reconstitution of a legal culture of the past in order to preserve its memory or does it perhaps offer other services? It may seem at first that I'm digressing; however, I think that it is actually the reverse side of the first question; that is to say, that apart from revealing the academic environment that frames, completes, supports and directs research into Byzantine law, it would be of interest to see if and under which conditions the knowledge derived from studying it would be useful as a helpful tool for resolving contemporary issues. From the answer to this question, the practical usefulness of the study of Byzantine law today will emerge.

---

1 Legal history was a popular field of enquiry in Europe up until the Second World War. A great many studies of Roman law as well medieval, secular and ecclesiastical law appeared at that time. In Greece, historical conditions prevailing until the midtwentieth century meant that the research and objectives of Greek researchers in Byzantine legal history took on a particular character, objective and orientation; for more on this see below, under § 3.1.

From the second half of the last century until today, interest in legal history has declined the world over, which can perhaps be explained by the tendency in Western society to prioritise "cutting edge" sciences "focused on the future" and not on those examining the past, such as the historical sciences (Havet 1978, 999-1000).

2 The Research Tools for the Historian of Byzantine Law (Answer to the First Question)

The use of supporting or methodological tools that the researcher of Byzantine law borrows from other disciplines, apart from that of law, depends on the subject matter of one's study.

2.1 Philology, Legal Papyrology, History and its Auxiliary Sciences

An important field of enquiry in Byzantine legal studies relates to the publication of its sources.[2] Of the most seminal pieces of research of this nature to have been carried out in the second half of the twentieth century to the present, we need look no further than the contemporary critical edition of the *Basilica*, which over a period of more than forty years (1945-88) was completed by the research team of professors of Roman and Byzantine law at the university of Groningen. Also of crucial importance is the contribution of the Max Planck Institute's *Edition und Bearbeitung byzantinischer Rechtsquellen*, the fruits of which have been published in the *Forschungen zur byzantinischen Rechtsgeschichte* and the *Fontes Minores* series from the 1970s until the present date. The aim of this research programme was not just to record all Byzantine law sources, but also to publish sources, whether known or unknown until today, supported by all their manuscript tradition. To present, new editions have appeared as well studies on Byzantine legislative texts, imperial *Novellae*, private legislative collections, patriarchal *sigillia* (i.e. official documents bearing a seal), canonical collections, *scholia*, treatises, court judgments, transactional documents, legal dictionaries and so on.

It is self-evident that for such publications which require archival research, transcription and manuscript dating, the sketching of a *stemma*, or the establishing of the author of a text or the scribe, the specialised knowledge linked with philological fields such as Palaeography, Codicology and Textual criticism and also History are the tools that are absolutely essential if these publications are to be realised. It is no accident that the law academics in the Max Planck Institute research team have collaborated closely with philologists and historians so that they may offer modern and topical *instrumenta studiorum* to the research community.

Apart from the engagement with legal sources *per se*, research of Byzantine law can of course take on the form of a study of its content,

---

[2] The term 'legal sources' is used here to refer to the provenance of information relevant to Byzantine law. Other content is employed however in the context of the Sociology of Law, on which see below under § 2.4.

of its institutions, of its legal concepts, persons and events linked to it. In such instances, the researcher will initially depend on the material provided to them in texts with legal content, but they will also lean on supplementary supporting material from which they will draw indirect information on their subject. Such indirect information is to be found in such texts as historical (from Byzantine historians and chroniclers), hagiographic (lives of the saints) and philological (letters, speeches, poetry).

The researcher of Byzantine law will also seek out other supplementary material from other academic disciplines, some of which have led to the development of subjects such as Epigraphy, Sigillography and Numismatics. From here, as also from Art, the researcher can extract supplementary material which will support and complete their research.[3]

Special mention should be made of Legal Papyrology, the study of papyri of Byzantine Egypt until its conquest by the Arabs in the seventh century. This material is of particular interest since in this region, the Greek presence had been unbroken in the centuries which preceded. Consequently, there is an interest in research into locating surviving legal institutions and practices of non-Roman provenance in this distant region of the Byzantine empire.[4]

It goes without saying that, beyond the supplementary support material, the historian of Byzantine law also requires from other fields the means they provide. I am referring to History, an absolutely necessary discipline to shine a light on historical, social, economic and political conditions that prevailed and that are likely to explain the advent of legal phenomena and facts of legal interest.

2.2 Folklore Studies

A useful material for the historian of Byzantine law deriving from the Humanities is that of Folklore studies, "the field, whose subject is people and their culture" (Kyriakidou-Nestoros 2006, 15). More recent folklore researchers study the forms of traditional culture, employing the historical method, i.e. examples of folklore phenomena over their historical course ('vertical historical method'). This approach is diametrically opposite the comparative method which the

---

3 Karayannopoulos (1987, 39-84) gives a detailed account of all these categories of byzantine material.

4 Beaucamp (2010, 445-82) gives a detailed account on the state of the art in byzantine juristic papyrology.

first folklore researchers[5] of the nineteenth and early twentieth century employed, which through studying forms of oral language from different periods and languages they would go on to make comparisons and correlations of traditional cultures over time and from place to place ('horizontal comparative method') (Sifakis 2003, 22; Kyriakidou-Nestoros 2006, 99-100).

A record of Byzantine folklore material exists in the work of Faidon Koukoules' "Byzantine life and culture" (Koukoules 1948-55), unique in its genre. Its sources, legal (secular legislation as well as canons and their *scholia*), from the works of historians and chroniclers, hagiological texts, papyri, works of art, poems, epigrams, sayings, riddles, folk texts such as home remedies, astrology and oneiromancy, all provide information on customs and attitudes. They also shed light on the legal doctrines of the Byzantines on legal subjects, such as marriage, divorce, concubinage, marriage relations, professions, trades, crimes, penalties, the courts, prisons etc.[6]

2.3   Legal Anthropology

Modern folklore researchers[7] tend to borrow their methodological tools from Social Anthropology.[8] Thus, the study of works of popular culture does not take place on its own but in connection with organising structures, ideology and doctrines from the society that generates it.[9] When they first emerged in the nineteenth century, Folklore studies and Social Anthropology were two distinct fields which diverged significantly as far as concerned the subject of study, the geographical regions focused on, the methods they used and their

---

5 The birth of Folklore studies as a science is linked to the emergence of nation-states in Europe and the need to showcase the peculiar cultural features which make up the national identity of a social whole (Sifakis 2003, 21).

6 Byzantine folklore material can also be found in Koukoules 1950 and Kougeas 1913.

7 Kyriakidou-Nestoros (2006, 15-85) and Sifakis (2003, 21-4) give a detailed account on the history of Folklore studies and its methods in Greece and globally.

8 Social Anthropology was born in the nineteenth century together with colonialism with the aim of studying the native people of the colonies. The first field studies of Malinowski (on the Trobriand Islands in the Sea of New Guinea) and Radcliffe-Brown (on the Andaman Islands in the Indian Ocean) appeared in 1922. The gradual liberation of the European colonies in the twentieth century, shifted the focus of Social Anthropology towards the study of European societies, such as in the case of Greece, which presented an historical depth, preserving up until the mid-twentieth century its peculiar traditions (Sifakis 2003, 15-16, 24-5). Folklore studies, born in Europe in the nineteenth century along with nationalism, at the time of the disintegration of the multiethnic empires and the creation of nation states, aimed to show the particular cultural elements which mark the 'ethnic' character of each people (Kyriakidou-Nestoros 2006, 142).

9 The fact that Social Anthropology employs such an approach, has resulted in it being described as the "universal science of man".

expressed aims (Sifakis 2003, 20-1). Today, however, Social Anthropology seems to "include what once belonged to Ethnology and Ethnography and to some extent Folklore studies" (Kyriakidou-Nestoros 2006, 19-20; Sifakis 2003, 13).

A special branch of Social Anthropology is Legal Anthropology, which "sets itself the task of understanding the discourse, practices, values and beliefs which all societies consider essential to their operation and reproduction" (Rouland 1994, 1), or "(a) pour objet l'étude de l'homme par référence à son milieu social et culturel" (Arnaud 1993, 34). It emerged as a separate discipline when, studying small traditional colonial societies in the nineteenth century, anthropologists observed that the rules regulating social life did not always derive from some central authority, as was the case in western societies, where they themselves came from. In contrast, social peace was achieved through a smooth coexistence of groups integrated into these societies, which functioned as mechanisms generating legal rules. Under these conditions, the study of law as a factor in assuring order as well as the functioning and self-perpetuation of these societies was disconnected from the one and only (non-existent in any case in these 'primitive' traditional societies) central authority, which monopolises the mechanisms for generating rules of law and shifted to these groups and the relations they developed amongst themselves.

Consequently, contrary to the idea of legal centralism, on which research into the legal life of a society up to then was based, the notion of legal pluralism was born.[10]

Legal pluralism leads to a sociological-anthropological approach to the phenomenon of law, which focuses on the relations developed between a central legal system and normative orders emanating from social groups (Roberts 1994, viii).[11]

The manner in which legal pluralism manifests itself in the Byzantine period has itself already been a subject of study. Those groups which next to the central authority give a picture of pluralism, characterising the Byzantine legal phenomenon, are the Church, professional guilds, the army, farmers, minorities (Jews, Armenians) (Zepos 1985, 460). Viewed from another angle, Byzantine legal pluralism specialises in the relation developed between state and customary law (Michaelidès-Nouaros 1977, 419-46). Consequently, research into the above parameters which comprise legal pluralism, as expressed in Byzantium, places the study of Byzantine law on a basis which goes

---

10 On legal pluralism see Gilissen (971, the synthetical work of Vanderlinden 1971, commented by Rouland 1994, 79-80, 42-102, with suggestions for further reading.

11 Social groups as components of society, which, through their interaction produce social relations are described in Laburthe-Tolra, Warnier 1993, 55-7.

beyond a static approach of its rules, and extends to those factors related to the mechanisms of its production, reception and functioning.

2.4   Sociology of Law

From the social sciences, the Sociology of Law is also useful for the historian of Byzantine law. This discipline studies law as a phenomenon in a discourse with the society to which it is connected: "une discipline qui a pour objet d'étude les rapports ([...] la fonction) du droit à (dans) la société" (Carbonnier 1978, 14).[12] The answer therefore to the question 'What is law' is not exhausted – from the sociological point of view – in the mission it accomplishes as a part of society; in other words, the law is not defined as "the total of general obligations and abstract rules, through which human (and therefore societal) co-habitation is regulated externally" (Simantiras 1977, 29-30),[13] as the classical legal definition has it, but the "totality of obligatory rules which regulate social relations and imposed by the group to which we belong" (Lévy-Bruhl 1951, 3-4; 1981, 21-2). Which is this group? Supporters of the monistic school argue that it is the group that possesses political authority and therefore also has a monopoly over the production of the rules of law (Gilissen 1971, 7-8): proponents of the pluralistic school on the other hand see that such a group may be any group integrated into society that may produce rules of law mandatory for its members (Lévy-Bruhl 1951, 4-5; 1981, 24-6, 29-30), which may not always be in consensus with the laws of society in general (Lévy-Bruhl 1981, 30-1). On the basis of the above, the notion of law is entwined with that of legal pluralism, which seeks multiplicity and heterogeneity (Carbonnier 1978, 356) in its mechanisms for generating it, a perspective which, as well have seen, also employs Legal Anthropology.

The approach to the phenomenon of law in the context of legal pluralism takes us to another useful methodological tool which is connected to the sources the researcher will draw upon. The classical definition, perceived as legal sources "the monuments from which we draw our information on legal matters" (Pappoulias 1927, 12), does not suffice since it identifies them with their external form. For the Sociology of Law, sources are those internal parameters of law, which, irrespective of their external expression, refer to the function of law; to its birth, its theoretical elaboration, its reception and

---

[12]   Carbonnier (1978, 14) also discusses the distinction between "sociologie juridique" and "sociologie du droit".

[13]   In Simantiras 1977, 30 fn. 4 eighteen more definitions of law to the same effect are to be found.

its application in practice. In this sense, sources are not – from a sociological perspective – inscriptions, papyri, parchments, historians, chroniclers etc. (known also as "diagnostic sources" [Pantazopoulos 1974, 21-46]), but law and custom, legal science, transactional practices and case law (Pantazopoulos 1974, 46-52). An enquiry into all the aforementioned perspectives, places the study of the phenomenon of law of a society, both contemporary and/or historical, as in the case of the Byzantine empire, on a basis which supersedes a positivist approach. For historical law of course such a 'holistic' approach depends on the degree to which this is permitted by the condition of the extant sources the researcher has at their disposal today. Particularly, when it comes to the Byzantine empire, the material from where information on all the aforementioned aspects of legal operation is drawn can be found in: legislation and private legislative collections, in *nomocanons*, in scattered testimonies on customary practices, in public and private documents, in the jurisprudence of secular and ecclesiastical courts (the *Peira* of Eustathios Romaios, the court decisions an legal opinions of the bishop of Ohrid, Demetrios Chomatenos, the judgments of the metropolitan bishop of Naupakos, John Apokaukos and of the patriarchal synodic court; Lokin 2009, 416-17; Stolte 2009, 239-40), in interpretative philology (Basilica *scholia*, canon commentaries), in the work of legal philology, (brief monographs, extended treatise, teaching manuals, *specula principum*).

2.5 Comparative Law

Another interpretative tool available to the historian of law is Comparative law.[14] This branch of law,[15] which compares legal cultures and/or legal traditions (Moustaira 2012, 97),[16] aims "to bring to light the differences existing between legal models, and to contribute to the knowledge of these models" (Mousourakis 2019, 6). The fact that a subject for comparison, being not legal rules but legal systems, results in, apart from statute law, the examination of those social parameters which gave rise to its birth and implementation (Moustaira 2012, 97). Thus, from this point of view, Comparative law is a branch related to the Sociology of Law (Zweigert, Kötz 1988, 10; Mousourakis 2019, 6).

---

14 The origins of Comparative law, the field of its application and the institutional framework of research and teaching in this field are being discussed by Havet (1978, 979, 981-3).

15 On the discussion whether Comparative law is a self-sufficient discipline or a method in the study of law see Watson 1974, 1 ff.; Havet 1978, 979-81; Mousourakis 2019, 3-6.

16 The context of the term 'legal culture' has been analysed by Nelken 2012, 480-90.

Historical legal systems can be studied from a comparative perspective. The study of Byzantine legal institutions, especially in terms of comparative law can take three forms:

a. compared in relation to other legal systems in antiquity. The aim is to ascertain institutional commonalities, shared elements, ultimate origins or survivals. In particular, as regards Roman law, the comparison has a special significance, since Byzantine law is of Roman provenance and specifically Roman law, which was codified in its entirety by Justinian in the sixth century AD. By comparing institutions, such as those relating to later Byzantine imperial legislation (*Novellae*) and case law until the fall of Constantinople in 1453 with their respective ancient Greek and Roman institutions, it is possible to track the gradual transition from the Roman to the Byzantine legal order.[17] In the latter, we can observe that in some instances survivals of institutions and legal perceptions of Greek provenance which come in conflict with the corresponding Roman institutions, such as for example the inheritance rights of a daughter who has received a dowry, the institution of 'horizontal ownership' and others.

b. Byzantine law may also be compared with other foreign law, contemporary with it. Through the juxtaposition of Byzantine institutions with their equivalents among other peoples, with whom they come in contact, influences can be spotted, which either receive from or exercise on the foreign legal system, such, as, for example the Serbian (*Farmer's Law*, Dusan's code), the western Roman empire (ordeal), the Ottoman (*pronoia*). This comparison can be linked in with the theory of legal transplants, formulated in the 1970s, and according which "the moving of a rule or a system of law from one people to another" (Watson 1974, 21) is a very important source of the evolution of law (see also Siems 2018, 231-61).

c. Finally, the study of institutions of Byzantine law may be done in juxtaposition with equivalents in contemporary law: this is particularly the case in Modern Greek private law, where the comparison bears out the historical depth of the institutions of modern Greek law, which to a great extent have their roots in 'Byzantine-Roman law' (βυζαντινορωμαϊκό δίκαιο), as it is called today. The link between Modern Greek law and its Byzantine past took on great significance in Greece in the

---

17 The absence of any clearly established date for the beginning of Byzantine law led to a doubt concerning its self-existence as a legal order separate from Roman law. Today, this position is no longer widely accepted by researchers in the field, who define it as the law of the eastern Roman Empire which is expressed in Greek (Pitsakis 2005, 1035).

nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In any case, beyond the Greek case, to which we refer below (§ 3.1), the importance of comparing institutions of the present with their equivalents of the past has already been emphasised. Indeed, such particularly close relationship is established between Comparative law and legal history (Zweigert, Kötz 1988, 10; Gordley 2006; Mousourakis 2019, 11-17) to the degree that, as has been suggested recently, these two disciplines should merge (Pihlajamäki 2018).

2.6 Preliminary Conclusions

The twofold nature of the history of Byzantine law provides the researcher with the chance to use on their subject of study research tools and methods of approach which are connected both with the Humanities as well as with Social Sciences.

From the first, they will seek out this crucial and necessary material, so as to supplement their information, they will place their subject matter in an historical context, will explain the emergence or *ratio* of a legal rule, and will restore the texts and publish in accordance with modern specifications. In this sense, History, Philology, Papyrology, Folklore studies and other branches in the Humanities make use of those support tools which will give to the research scientific completeness and reliability.

From the Humanities, the historian of Byzantine law draws supplementary support material, while from the Social Sciences they borrow methods which allow them to approach the Byzantine phenomenon of law in its dynamic dimension, in relation, that is to say, on the one hand with the society from which it emerges and to which it addresses itself, and on the other with other legal systems, earlier, contemporary or subsequent to it.

In light then of the research tools and the approach used by the researcher, the answer to the initial question if the history of Byzantine law belongs to the Humanities or to Social Sciences, the answer I think is: It straddles them both. The 'interdisciplinary' nature of research means, if I may be allowed to use the expression, renders the study of Byzantine law a subject which finds itself bordering the Humanities and the Social Sciences.

3 The Significance of the Research of Byzantine Law Today (Answer to the Second Question)

Now I come to the second question I posed at the beginning of my paper. Beyond its research into a legal culture of the past, does the study of Byzantine law today have any practical use? Can researchers contribute with their knowledge to resolving contemporary legal problems?

To this question, for which I consider myself qualified to answer limiting myself to the data that pertain to modern Greece, allow me first briefly to turn to history.

3.1 Byzantine Law and Greek Legal Science, Nineteenth and Mid-Twentieth Centuries

The foundations of the contemporary Greek state after more than three hundred years of Turkish rule are to be found in the first decades of the nineteenth century. The first proclamations for drafting a Civil Code which would regulate the private relations of Greeks were being made during the Greek Revolution of 1821 and up to 1834, when the legal expert, Georg Ludwig von Maurer, a member of Othon's regency left Greece. There were two tendencies dominating the subject: on the one side, that which wished to adopt Byzantine law as the valid legal system until the drafting of the Civil Code; this would lead the modern Greeks to reconnecting themselves with their legal past before Turkish rule. On the other side, that which, aligned with the perception of the Historical School, which was in the ascendant at that time, argued that the Civil Code must include 'national' law, which echoes the 'popular spirit' (*Volksgeist*) of the Greeks: that was to be found in the customary practices which they had been applying over the centuries before the liberation (Triantaphyllopoulos 2009, 616-20).

Already from 1841, Byzantine law was a taught course in the Law school of the Othon's University founded in Athens in 1836. Its teaching aimed to facilitate the implementation in practice of the law then in force. What was that law? It was the *Hexabiblos* of Armenopoulos, the private legislative collection of the fourteenth century, which the Decree of 1835 established as the legal system to be temporarily in force in the Greek kingdom until the drafting of a Civil Code.[18] Consequently, Byzantine law continued to be the temporarily valid legal system of the Greek state; not however in the form it had in the

---

[18] What exactly the legal order which the *Hexabibilos* introduced was has occupied the Greek literature (Pitsakis 2000, 64 fn. 1).

Hexabiblos, but in the interpretation given in its provisions by Greek legal experts of the time. This interpretation was made on the basis of the ultimate source of the *Hexabiblos*, code of Justinian, which was at that time the basis of newly established Civil Codes in European states, in combination with the Basilica of the Macedonian emperors, who adapted the Latin text of *Corpus Iuris Civilis* to Greek. This knowledge of the sources of the *Hexabiblos* would reveal the ratio of its provisions, and therefore, their adaptation to modern Greek reality (Zepos 1949, 81-2; Dimakopoulou 2018, 184-5). Greek legal experts of the time then were knowledgeable about Byzantine law, since that was what legal reality of the period required. Lining their libraries were the *Basilica*, the *Hexabiblos*, the *Novellae* of the Byzantine emperors, while at the time studies on Byzantine law were appearing, which up to the present remain reference works.[19]

Eventually, the Greek Civil Code, the same which with amendments is in force today, came into force in 1946 immediately after the end of the Second World War.[20]

It becomes eminently clear that a knowledge of Byzantine law took on a particularly practical significance in Greece from the first decades of the nineteenth century until the mid-twentieth century. Having knowledge of it as well as the study of it was made available to serve those needs emanating from the legal conditions of the time. The preservation of Byzantine law as a temporarily valid law, and its teaching and interpretation with the help of its own sources, placed it centre stage for legal experts of the period and showed it to be playing a leading role as well as a supporting tool in the service of practical needs related to the legal circumstances that prevailed in the Greek state for more than a century from its formation.

3.2   And Today?

More than fifty years after the Greek Civil Code was put into force, the legal environment is different, both at a national and at an international level. In the context of contemporary society which is moving towards globalisation, "the new paradigm of society" (Michaels 2013, 287), and as a member of the European Union, Greece participates in shaping a new *ius commune*, as its been called, which moves towards legislative standardisation not just of economic but also the

---

19   Such legal experts were Konstantinos Triantaphyllopoulos, Georgios Maridakis, Panagiotis Zepos et al.

20   The main attributes of the contemporary Greek legal system are given by Dacoronia (2012, 371-6).

private relations of individual member states.[21] In this context, the practical use of Byzantine law for the need to exercise a 'national' legislative policy has no scope. One could argue that today research into Byzantine law, as with every legal system linked with the history of Hellenism, has a purely historical character.

That is true, but only partly.

In Greece the history of law remains today in some cases a *sine qua non* for the resolution of disputes related to ownership rights on real estate, which are founded on historical property documents. This concerns property in areas which were not included from the beginning within the borders of the Greek state, such as in the Ionian Islands, the 'New Lands' [Νέες Χώρες, i.e. Macedonia, Thrace and islands in the north Aegean sea], Crete, Samos, the Dodecanese. In some of these regions local codes were in force (Ionian Code, Cretan Code, Code of Samos), which remained in force after the incorporation of these regions into the Greek state throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. These local codes were abolished with the placing into force of the Greek Civil Code in 1946, under Article 5 of the Introductory Law of the Civil Code. However, Article 51 of the same Introductory Law provides that rights *in rem* (including those of ownership), which were acquired before the introduction of the Civil Code, are still judged even after its introduction according to the law that was in force at the time of their acquisition. And so, right up until the present, disputes arise whereby the judge is called upon to rule on the basis of historical ownership documents, where the type, extent and correspondence of rights with contemporary rights is a subject of investigation by a historian of law. Greek court rooms continue to hear disputes which hinge on such ownership rights. Though in most cases, these rights can be traced back to post-Byzantine titles (Venetian decrees, Ottoman *tapu*), there are others which invoke Byzantine titles, such as the *chrysobulls*. In these cases, the court relies on opinions and expert advice of a lawyer specialised in the history of law. This person will evaluate the extent of the right being awarded with these crucial documents and will investigate on the one hand its correspondence with contemporary ownership rights, and on the other its unbroken historical survival in the centuries that followed its acquisition until today.

It is true that the courts do not receive Byzantine property documents very often. It does demonstrate however the practical importance that the study of Byzantine law may have today; the handling of such legal matters would not be possible without the contribution and specialised knowledge of one well-versed in Byzantine law.

---

21   European legal history was born after the Second World War and was built on the ruins of national legal history (Lesaffer 2018, 84-9).

3.3 To Finish Off

The researcher of Byzantine law cultivates a discipline which, to the extent that it relates to History, would appear to be on the wane, as are indeed all the other Humanities subjects these days. And indeed as far as it relates to the science of Law, it is included in those branches at the cutting edge of this subject. Despite the decline in the significance of the 'national' factor in the law of states emerging in the nineteenth century and the trends towards homogenising law which dominate today at a European and international level, the pre-history of the institutions of modern Greek law is not negligible. In some special cases, such as those I mentioned earlier, knowledge of Byzantine law does *itself* operate as a support tool to serve today's Greek court practice.

Bibliography

Arnaud, A.-J. (éd.) (1993). *Dictionnaire encyclopédique de théorie et de sociologie du droit. Deuxième édition entièrement refondue corrigée et augmentée*. Paris: Librairie Générale de Droit et de Jurisprudence.

Beaucamp, J. (2010). "L'histoire du droit byzantin face à la papyrologie juridique. Bilan et perspectives". *Femmes, patrimoine, normes à Byzance*. Paris: Association des Amis du Centre d'Histoire et Civilisation de Byzance, 445-82. Bilans de recherches 6.

Carbonnier, J. (1978). *Sociologie juridique*. Paris: Presses Universitaires de France.

Dacoronia, E. (2012). "Greek Law". Smits 2012, 371-6.

Dimakopoulou, H. (2018). "Τὸ πρῶτο ἐγχειρίδιο Ἱστορίας τοῦ δικαίου στὸ Πανεπιστήμιο". *Epetiris tou Kentrou Ereunis tis Istorias tou Ellinikou Dikaiou*, 48, 173-87.

Gilissen, J. (1971). "Introduction à l'étude comparée du pluralisme juridique". Gilissen, J. (éd.), *Le pluralisme juridique. Études publiées sous la direction de John Gilissen*. Bruxelles: Éditions de l'Université de Bruxelles, 1-17.

Gordley, J. (2006). "Comparative Law and Legal History". Reimann, M.; Zimmermann, R. (eds), *The Oxford Handbook of Comparative Law*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 753-73.

Havet, J. (ed.) (1978). *Main Trends of Research in the Social and Human Sciences*. Vol. 2, *Legal Science. Philosophy*. The Hague: Mouton Publishers; UNESCO.

Karayannopoulos, I. (1987). *Πηγαὶ τῆς βυζαντινῆς Ἱστορίας*. 5th ed. Thessaloniki: Pournaras.

Kougeas, S. (1913). "Αἱ ἐν τοῖς σχολίοις τοῦ Ἀρέθα λαογραφικαὶ εἰδήσεις". *Laographia*, 4, 236-69.

Koukoules, Ph. (1948-55). *Βυζαντινῶν βίος καὶ πολιτισμός I-VI*. 9 vols. Athens: Papazisis.

Koukoules, Ph. (1950). *Θεσσαλονίκης Εὐσταθίου τὰ Λαογραφικά*. 2 vols. Thessaloniki: Publications of the Society for Macedonian Studies.

Kyriakidou-Nestoros, A. (2006). *Η θεωρία της ελληνικής Λαογραφίας. Κριτική ανάλυση*. 6th ed. Athens: Society for the Study of Modern Greek Culture and General Education.

Laburthe-Tolra, Ph.; Warnier, J.-P. (1993). *Ethnologie Anthropologie*. Paris: Presses Universitaires de France.

Lesaffer, R. (2018). "The Birth of European Legal History". Pihlajamäki, H.; Duber, M.; Godfrey, M. (eds), *The Oxford Handbook of European Legal History*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 84-99.

Lévy-Bruhl, H. (1951). "Esquisse d'une théorie des sources du droit". *L'année sociologique*, 4, 3-33.

Lévy-Bruhl, H. (1981). *Sociologie du droit*. 6ème éd. Paris: Presses Universitaires de France.

Lokin, J.H.A. (2009). s.v. "Procedure - Byzantine Law". Katz, S. (ed.), *The Oxford International Encyclopedia of Legal History*, vol. 4. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 416-17.

Malinowski, B. (1922). *Arguments of the Western Pacific: An Account of Native Enterprise and Adventure in the Archipelagoes of Melanesian New Guinea*. London; New York: Routledge.

Michaelidès-Nouaros, G. (1977). "Quelques remarques sur le pluralisme juridique en Byzance". *Byzantina*, 9, 419-46.

Michaels, R. (2013). "Globalisation and Law. Law Beyond the State". Banakar, R.; Travers, M. (eds), *Law and Social Theory*. 2nd ed. Oxford: Hart Publishing, 287-303.

Moustaira, E. (2012). *Συγκριτικό δίκαιο*. Athens: Nomiki Vivliothiki.

Mousourakis, G. (2019). *Comparative Law and Legal Traditions. Historical and Contemporary Perspectives*. Cham: Springer.

Nelken, D. (2012). "Legal Culture". Smits 2012, 480-90.

Pantazopoulos, N. (1974). *Ρωμαϊκὸν δίκαιον ἐν διαλεκτικῇ συναρτήσει πρὸς τὸ ἑλληνικόν*. Thessaloniki: P. Sakkoulas.

Pappoulias, D. (1927). Εἰσηγήσεις τοῦ ρωμαϊκοῦ δικαίου *I-II*. Athens: Estia.

Pitsakis, C. (2000). "…Πολιτικὸν νόμον αἴφνης προκύπτοντα εἰς φῶς ἐξ ἀρχαιολογικῆς ἀνασκαφῆς ἐν τοῖς βυζαντινοῖς χειρογράφοις. Μνήμη Ἀναστασίου Π. Χριστοφιλοπούλου (1921-1998)". *Digesta*, 64-103.

Pihlajamäki, H. (2018). "Merging Comparative Law and Legal History: Towards an Integrated Discipline". *The American Journal of Comparative Law*, 66, 733-50.

Pitsakis, K. (2005). "*Oikonomein*. Droit rigide et droit flexible dans l'ordre juridique byzantine (Une esquisse d'introduction)". Stathopoulos, M. et al. (Hrsgg), *Festschrift für Apostolos Georgiades zum 70 Geburtstag*. Athens: A. Sakkoulas, 1035-61.

Radcliffe-Brown, A. (1922). *The Andaman Islanders: A Study in Social Anthropology*. Cambridge: The University Press.

Roberts, S. (1994). "Foreword". Rouland 1994, vii-viii.

Rouland, N. (1994). *Legal Anthropology*. Transl. by P.G. Planel. London: The Athlone Press.

Siems, M. (2018). *Comparative Law*. 2nd ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Sifakis, G. (2003). "Λαογραφία, Ανθρωπολογία και Ιστορία ή τα ετερώνυμα που δεν έλκονται Folklore Studies". *Το παρόν του παρελθόντος. Ιστορία, Λαογραφία, Κοινωνική Ανθρωπολογία, Επιστημονικό συμπόσιο* (19-21 Απριλίου

2002). Athens: Society for the Study of Modern Greek Culture and General Education, 13-35.

Simantiras, C. (1977). *Γενικαὶ ἀρχαὶ τοῦ Ἀστικοῦ δικαίου*, vol. 1. Athens: A. Sakkoulas.

Smits, J. (ed.) (2012). *Elgar Encyclopedia of Comparative Law*. 2nd ed. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.

Stolte, B. (2009). s.v. "Courts- Byzantium". Katz, S. (ed.), *The Oxford International Encyclopedia of Legal History,* vol. 2. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 239-40.

Triantaphyllopoulos, C. (2009). "Ἱστορία τῶν σχεδίων τοῦ Ἑλληνικοῦ Ἀστικοῦ Κώδικος". Tsoukas, P. (ed.), *Κωνσταντίνος Δ. Τριανταφυλλόπουλος, Ἅπαντα*, vol. 2.1. Athens: Academy of Athens, 613-31.

Vanderlinden, J. (1971). "Le pluralisme juridique. Essai de synthèse". Gilissen, J. (éd.), *Le pluralisme juridique. Études publiées sous la direction de John Gilissen*. Bruxelles: Éditions de l'Université de Bruxelles, 19-56.

Watson, A. (1974). *Legal Transplants. An Approach to Comparative Law*. Athens (GA): University of Georgia Press.

Zepos, P. (1985). "Droit officiel et droit populaire dans les pays du sud-est européen". *Ἑλληνικαί ἀνακονώσεις εἰς τὸ Ε´ Διεθνές Συνέδριο Σπουδῶν Νοτιοανατολικῆς Εὐρώπης*. Athens, 83-90 Repr. in *Annales. Περιοδική έκδοση του Τμήματος Νομικής της Σχολής Νομικών και Οικονομικών Επιστημών*, 2(1), 1988, 457-63.

Zweigert, K.; Kötz, H. (1988). *Introduction to Comparative Law*. Transl. by T. Weir. 3rd rev. ed. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Climate History of Byzantium at the Crossroads

Adam Izdebski

Max Planck Institute for the Science of Human History, Jena; Jagiellonian University, Kraków

Abstract   This chapter is meant as a basic introduction to the field of climate history of Byzantium as of AD 2022. After explaining what climate history is, it discusses the source base and the big questions of the field, as well as it outlooks for the future.

Keywords   Byzantium. Eastern Roman Empire. Climate history. History of climate and society. Mediterranean. Environmental history.

Summary   1 Introducing Climate History. – 2 Climate History of Byzantium. Source Base. – 3 Climate History of Byzantium. The Big Questions. – 4 Climate History of Byzantium. The Future.

Edizioni
Ca'Foscari

1 Introducing Climate History

Natural phenomena, including weather, have been present in historical accounts ever since historical writing emerged in Classical Greece. As we all well know from our own experience, benign or inclement weather can facilitate or derail human action. It is thus no surprise that the earliest accounts of human experience already included references to weather conditions, often connected to divine agency.

Climate history as a field also looks at extreme weather events and their impacts on human action, but its goals can be defined more broadly (White, Pfister, Mauelshagen 2018; Degroot et al. 2021). Generally speaking, climate historians (who could be historians by training, but also archaeologists or natural scientists) work, first, on reconstructing past climate variability and, second, on understanding the role this variability played for historical societies. They deal with several temporal and spatial scales. The smallest of them is a local extreme weather event that lasts a few hours (such as torrential rain), but studies in climate history could also look at whole regions or countries, discussing changes in climatic conditions (such as the average temperature or rainfall) that occurred in these areas over several generations or centuries. Consequently, climate historians look at a very broad variety of phenomena also on the human side of the equation: from specific military operations or cataclysmic events to infrastructural and institutional developments that might have unrolled over several decades. This results in the field of climate history being highly diverse and forces it to rely on a wide range of natural scientific, material and written evidence. To some extent, it also raises the bar for reaching general conclusions, especially if we think about pronouncing statements about how specific historical societies (such as the 'Byzantines') coped with weather shocks and climate variability.

Even if there has been a continued tradition of climate determinism within the social sciences and the humanities, reaching deep into the past – determinism both geographical (for instance, associating racial or cultural traces with specific climates) and historical in character (explaining historical changes through climate or weather disasters) – climate history as a field emerged only in the second half of the twentieth century. At that time, pioneering historians such as Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie started noticing that weather conditions – which could, for instance, determine harvest time and quality – were highly variable over time and that they can be reconstructed from the written record (Le Roy Ladurie 1959; 1961; 1967). Hence, the foundation of climate history was the realisation that climate was not a constant background to human history – as previously assumed even by Braudel in his monumental *The Mediterranean in the Age of Philip II* (Braudel 1949, with some qualifying observations in the 1966 edition) – but

that it varied over historical timescales and thus it also continuously redefined natural conditions for human activity. Crucially, it was a discovery made by historians using historical sources. Only as the time progressed, and the natural sciences developed new methods to reconstruct past climate conditions on the fine-grained timescales of centuries, decades, and years, did the study of climate history begin to require more substantial engagement with the natural scientific data on the part of historians and archaeologists.

Thus, for decades historians had to rely solely on the written documentation for the study of past climate. Consequently, climate history initially focused on reconstructing past climate and weather conditions, an activity that is known as historical climatology (Brázdil et al. 2005) (in contrast to palaeoclimatology, which is the natural-science-dominated reconstruction of past climate conditions and explanation of past climate dynamics, relying heavily on physics, chemistry and often also biology [Bradley 2014]). Historical climatology developed complex methodologies for collecting testimonies of past weather conditions from historical sources (narrative as well as documentary), and of synthesising them into tentative climate reconstructions. The other branch of climate history, recently named "history of climate and society" (Degroot et al. 2021), focuses on the interaction of human societies with the past weather and climate conditions, as reconstructed by historians and natural scientists. While these research questions were on the radar of climate historians from the very beginning of the discipline, and constitute the ultimate goal of their research, they were subject to a more systematic scrutiny only as more data on past climates was being collected. The foundations for this sub-field were laid by Christian Pfister, a Swiss early modern historian, who published his first groundbreaking study in the late 1970s, still relying primarily on the written evidence (Pfister 1978; 1988a; 1988b).

Today, climate history *aka* history of climate and society is an interdisciplinary field that could not exist without a continuous dialogue and cooperation between historians and social and natural scientists, in particular historians, archaeologists, and climatologists (Haldon et al. 2014; Izdebski et al. 2016; Haldon et al. 2018a). It has become standard to rely primarily on the natural scientific data for past climate when studying the interplay between climatic change and human activities, especially for premodern societies, which also includes Byzantium. Even if the scientific climate data has its own limitations, it has become a widely accepted view that engaging with the 'archives of nature' makes it possible to overcome the cultural bias of the 'archives of societies' (written and material evidence), and a proper study in climate history combines the two.

Natural scientific data on past climate are called proxies, a term that is used for measurements of physical or chemical properties

of natural remains that exist today and contain 'traces' of past climate conditions. It could be living or dead trees, stalactites or stalagmites (speleothems), sediments in all kinds of locations, particularly lakes (in lay terms, sediments are 'the mud at the bottom'), and many more, including human bones. Everything that grows or accumulates over time contains traces of the past in its structure, and it is 'just' a matter of finding proper scientific methods to read this information and relate it to specific aspects of climate. Moreover, improvements in the dating methods, and the increase in scientists' interest in the most recent millennia, have resulted in the incredible increase in the availability of proxy-based reconstructions of past climatic conditions for the historical times (or the Late Holocene, the last 3,000 years).

Written sources, material evidence, and natural archives are subject to different limiting factors when it comes to their availability, and achieving the coincidence of them all often happens to an extent by chance (Haldon et al. 2014; Izdebski et al. 2016; Haldon et al. 2018a). Since the history of climate and society depends on the availability of both palaeoclimatic data (ideally, from the 'archives of nature') and historical evidence, studies in this field usually assume the form of case studies. These are not always the case studies historians would dream of in order to answer the 'big questions' on the impact of climate on a specific historical society, and there are many potentially exciting stories of past climate impacts that would perhaps never advance to a scientifically rigorous form, simply because there is no natural archive that could yield the necessary proxies or no detailed historical record that would help to contextualise the proxies in a satisfactory way. Even in ideal situations, when all the three types of evidence are available, it remains a challenge to establish historical causation and offer certainty with respect to the 'agency' of climate in the historical process (Sessa 2019). With historical causality remaining an elusive goal even outside of the context of climate, new approaches and theoretical frameworks are being developed, moving away from a linear 'impacts' model' to a networked model in which the agency of climate is explored through embedding a specific climate 'event' into an entire social-ecological system which it 'encountered' in a specific time and place (Zanchetta et al. 2021).

2   Climate History of Byzantium. Source Base

Since the early 2010s, several Byzantinists became interested in the role of climate in the history of Byzantium. In parallel, due to the vulnerability of the Mediterranean region to future climate change and its crucial role as the crossroad between Europe and the Middle East, natural scientists have been producing a steadily growing number of

natural proxies for this part of the world since the beginning of the twenty-first century Together with the initiatives fostering interdisciplinary dialogue, such as Princeton's *Climate Change and History Research Initiative*,[1] this creates fertile grounds for the development of the climate history of Byzantium. Its mature stage and broader success is visible in the presence of Byzantine case studies (or even Byzantinists' leadership roles) in recent high-impact reviews summarising the state of the art in climate history (Haldon et al. 2018a; Degroot et al. 2021). Byzantium – or the Eastern Roman Empire, in particular in Late Antiquity – has become known as one of the more advanced case studies in the history of climate and society, on equal terms with such famous 'climate change heroes' as the Maya or the Norse communities of Iceland and Greenland.

The basis for that is the good availability of the natural proxy data (described in detail in Luterbacher et al. forthcoming). The most important natural proxies for Byzantine history mainly come from three types of natural archives: trees, caves, and lakes.

Trees can be used to achieve reconstructions of climatic conditions that are significant for the trees' growing season (they allow the approximation of the key limiting factor for tree growth, such as the summer temperature for the Bosnian pine, or the late spring precipitation for the Greek juniper). Because dendro-reconstructions are based on the analysis of tree rings, they are annually resolved: in other words, when dendroclimatology comes into play, we are able to say what was the summer temperature or May-June precipitation in a particular year. In the case of Byzantium, the two most important and longest (reaching farthest back) proxy reconstructions of that kind are the summer temperatures for Greece (Esper et al. 2020, starting 730 AD) and May-June precipitation in the northern Aegean area (Touchan et al. 2007, starting 1097 AD).

In caves, climatologists examine speleothems, that is the mineral formations that grow on cave ceilings, floors, and walls, such as stalactites. Their physical and chemical properties allow for the reconstruction of a variety of climatic conditions, depending on the climate zone; in the Mediterranean, they are most often used to approximate winter hydroclimate conditions (snow cover or rainfall). For the Eastern Roman world of Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages, there is more speleothem-based climate proxy data for Anatolia than for the Balkans, with the most important speleothem coming from the Sofular Cave east of Constantinople (Göktürk et al. 2011). The published Balkan speleothems stopped growing in Late Antiquity and do not reach into the Middle Ages; there is, however, a very good speleothem record available for northern Italy (Zanchetta et al. 2021).

---

[1] https://cchri.princeton.edu.

Speleothems can be dated relatively precisely with uranium-thorium dating, yet their resolution ('precision/accuracy') is not as high as that of the tree-based reconstructions, usually around a few decades.

As regards lakes, for climate proxies we rely on the analyses of the chemical and biological composition of the sediments, that is the matter accumulating at the bottom of the water body. Like cave formations, lake-originating climate proxies are used to approximate winter conditions, mostly rainfall. The most important lake for which this kind of analysis is available is Lake Nar in Cappadocia (Anatolia), which thanks to having varved sediments (with annual layers visible to the human eye) offers palaeoclimate data with decadal precision for Central Anatolia. Several other lakes, which are not as precise in terms of chronology as Lake Nar is, are located in other parts of Turkey, Greece, North Macedonia, Albania, and Italy.

In addition to the proxies based on the archives of nature, Byzantinists can rely on a large database of descriptions of climatic conditions in Byzantine sources collected in the 1990s by Ioannis Telelis (Telelis 2004, summarised in Telelis 2008). While Telelis' analyses made clear that the written sources cannot be relied upon for the reconstruction of medium- or long-term trends, they provide very important record of short-term weather extremes, and – perhaps even more importantly – evidence on the cultural perception of climate variability, and its entanglement in the life of the Byzantine society, state, and economy. Thanks to this combination of a rich base of natural proxies and easily accessible written evidence, the history of climate and society in Byzantium has been flourishing in the recent decade and promises to continue to develop in the 2020s.

The study of the history of climate and society in Byzantium is also particularly advanced when compared to several case studies from other parts of the world thanks to its engagement with climate modelling (Xoplaki et al. 2016; 2018; 2021). In very simple terms, in this case we do not deal with proxies – reconstructions – coming from specific locations, but with mathematical simulations of past climate conditions. They use more or less the same set of complex equations that are used to predict future climate change. In a way, these are 'predictions' of past climate conditions, and just like the future predictions are based primarily on different possible scenarios of greenhouse gases' emissions, the modelling of the past is based on the available reconstructions of the sun's activity or the timing and magnitude of volcanic eruptions. While models cannot tell us what were the 'real' conditions on the ground, unlike proxies, they give us a range of possibilities and they help us connect the actual climate extremes and trends, visible in the proxies and in the written sources, with more general atmospheric phenomena and forcing factors influencing climate (such as volcanic eruptions). This exploration of the model-proxy dialogue in the historical context makes the climate

history of Byzantium particularly interesting for climate historians working on other parts of the world.

3 Climate History of Byzantium. The Big Questions

What are then the most debated questions and hypotheses which draw on this rich basis of natural and historical data? They revolve mainly around two periods of Byzantine history: Late Antiquity and the High Middle Ages (the Middle Byzantine period). For both, historians, archaeologists and natural scientists formulated complex arguments for both 'negative' or 'positive' role of climate in historical developments (see Izdebski 2022).

The most spectacular of this hypotheses is of course the idea that climate variability contributed – or perhaps even caused – the collapse of the (Eastern) Roman Empire. Since the 2010s, the main proponent of this hypothesis has been Kyle Harper (2017), but these ideas are actually based on the earlier research of dendroclimatologist Ulf Büntgen who led a larger team of historians and climate scientists. Based on a tree-ring reconstruction of summer temperatures – for the Alps and the Altai – they established that there occurred a multi-decadal period of colder summers in the Northern Hemisphere, starting in 536 CE, which they called the Late Antique Little Ice Age (LALIA) (Büntgen et al. 2016). With a simple graph, which showed several chronological coincidences between the LALIA summer cold phase and several historical processes (such as the 'expansion of the Slavs', numerous migrations in the Eurasian Steppe, or the rise of the Arabic Empire), they suggested causal connections between the cooling and societal change.

Harper went much further and extended the LALIA in time, to stand for a longer period of what would have been in his view adverse climate, starting already around 450 CE, and elaborated the historical argument surrounding its damaging impact on the Roman Empire. Thus, in part contrary to the initial idea of Büntgen, in Harper's version the LALIA became a longer, more severe, and more universal period of weather hardships, akin to the Little Ice Age of the early modern period (such as in Parker 2013; however, the idea of severity and universality of the Little Ice Age is also a matter of ongoing debate: Pfister et al. 2018). The Büntgen-Harper thesis, even if it made it to the headlines and attracted popular attention, remains a matter of controversy (overview of the debate: Haldon et al. 2018c; 2018d; 2018b; Harper 2018); in particular, the role of the volcano-induced climatic downturn of 536 has been reevaluated, with the indications that it might have been much less of a challenge for Mediterranean societies than it has been for the northern European (Newfield 2018).

The main positive hypothesis about the role of climate in the development of the Eastern Roman Empire has been advanced on the macroregional scale by Adam Izdebski (2011; Izdebski et al. 2016). It is based on the now relatively solid evidence that there was a period of particularly wet conditions in Late Antiquity, roughly from the mid/late fifth to the early/mid seventh century CE (depending on the region) (Labuhn et al. 2018; Xoplaki et al. 2021). Izdebski and several other colleagues connected these changes to the widespread expansion of the rural settlement and, in particular, the introduction of often intensive farming on lands previously uncultivated or little used, and prone to dryness (such as the Konya plain in Central Anatolia or many semi-arid areas in the Levant). This hypothesis remains, for now, less debated than the Büntgen-Harper vision of the LALIA's damaging impact on the Roman Empire; it should be noted, however, that the wetter period hypothesis does not necessarily contradict the LALIA's negative role. Rather, it points out to the potentially advantageous role of climate variability for the economic growth in the Eastern Roman Empire of Late Antiquity.

Building on this hypothesis, and on the idea of the sequence of dry-wet-dry conditions in the Eastern Mediterranean during Late Antiquity, John Haldon proposed a third hypothesis on the role of climate in the Eastern Roman history in this period (in his 2016 monograph on the seventh century transformation of the Eastern Roman Empire: Haldon 2016; reformulated with a stronger natural science focus, in Roberts et al. 2018). Following Izdebski's observation on the shift of the focus of agricultural activities in much of Anatolia from mixed farming to cereal production in the seventh-eighth centuries CE (Izdebski 2013), Haldon demonstrated the role of the state administration in bringing about this change and framed the agricultural change as a response to the supply needs of the army and the capital. Crucially, Haldon noticed that climate conditions at the time might have also encouraged Anatolia farmers to refocus their activities on cereal production. Haldon's hypothesis demonstrates that there is still space for exploring connections between climate variability and political or economic transformations that took place at the end of Antiquity. Its entanglement in the rise and development of the Arab Empire, and the Abbasid revolution, for instance, still awaits in-depth scrutiny.

For the Middle Byzantine period, the most influential hypothesis has been the catastrophic vision of the eleventh century developed by Ronnie Ellenblum (2012). He consciously rejected the natural proxies, as useless for the kind of short-term *histoire événementielle* he was interested in. Thus, based on the written evidence from the Arabic, Syriac and Byzantine sources, Ellenblum argued that in the tenth and eleventh centuries there occurred an accumulation of catastrophic weather extremes, which significantly weakened the big

states of the Eastern Mediterranean, including Byzantium, and put in place a domino effect of social collapse, which for Byzantium culminated in the loss of Anatolia in the later eleventh century. Ellenblum's hypothesis remains highly controversial, in particular with regard to Byzantium; in large parts, it has been rejected, for instance, by Johannes Preiser-Kapeller, who observed that while weather extremes might have indeed occurred frequently in this period, their broader impact on the fate of the Byzantine State was limited (Preiser-Kapeller 2015).

The second hypothesis on the role of climatic variability in the Middle Byzantine period has been advanced by an interdisciplinary team led by climatologist Elena Xoplaki (Xoplaki et al. 2016). In their wide-ranging study, which made use of natural scientific, archaeological, and historical data, Xoplaki and her team investigated several regions of the Byzantine world during different time intervals throughout the Medieval Climate Anomaly (850-1300 CE). While they refrained from arguing for strong causal connections between climate and societal change, partly because of the team's macro-scale approach, Xoplaki and others detected no obvious negative impact of climatic variability on Byzantium during this period, except, perhaps, the weather anomalies caused by the Samalas volcanic eruption in the 1260s. In this way, they supported Preiser-Kapeller's re-evaluation of the Ellenblum hypothesis with respect to Byzantium. They also pointed out to the possibly positive role of wetter climatic conditions in Anatolia in the economic recovery and agricultural expansion in this part of the Byzantine world in the tenth-eleventh centuries.

4 Climate History of Byzantium. The Future

During the last decade, the climate history of Byzantium continued to flourish, advancing and revising several hypotheses on the role of climatic variability in the history of the Eastern Roman Empire. Surely, all of them will continue to be debated and will be further revised and improved. Hopefully, the field will move beyond debating the existing 'big' hypothesis and break them down into more concrete and manageable questions.

To begin with, in the coming years we should expect more natural proxies to be published, filling in the geographical gaps in our record, in particular in the Balkans, and improving the already good data situation in Anatolia. It is to be expected that the increased availability of climate proxy data will actually complicate the overall picture, as it will allow researchers to reconstruct different regional trajectories of climatic variability (as already demonstrated on the micro-scale by Labuhn et al. 2018). Significant differences and lack of spatial correlation is to be expected with regard to precipitation, to a

large extent determined by local conditions, such as orography. Connecting these regional, or even local, past climatic phenomena to social life will require abandoning or downscaling the big hypotheses described above and undertaking more focused studies, limited in time and space, but thus promising to bring concrete and solid insights into the interplay between climate and society in Byzantium. Many of such regional/local projects will definitely try to tie together purpose-created evidence coming from several disciplines, taking a holistic view of (local) societies as social-ecological systems, in which climate and weather are in a way integrated (as outlined in Haldon, Rosen 2018; Izdebski 2022).

At the same time, we should expect growing research interest in other periods, in particular the late medieval period (see, for instance, Preiser-Kapeller, Mitsiou 2019). More attention will probably be given as well to cultural history, engaging closely with the textual evidence and asking questions about Late Antique and Byzantine perceptions of climate and weather, and the complex interplay between the natural and the cultural processes (Sessa 2019; Zanchetta et al. 2021). Going forward, climate history of Byzantium will look more closely at the interaction of the different ethnic and social groups, in particular the elites, and the Byzantine state, with climate extremes, and the role of gender in this process (which is, as of yet, almost completely unexplored). Through these detailed studies, the field will gradually overcome its 'inchoate problems' of adopting simple positive/negative narratives, and will move on to looking into interaction between climate and society, and climate/weather's entanglement in social life and the cultural sphere. Altogether, we will come closer to developing a comprehensive history of the Byzantines' living with a variable climate, moving away from just adding climate as a factor to the existing 'big narratives'.

Bibliography

Bradley, R.S. (2014). *Paleoclimatology. Reconstructing Climates of the Quaternary*. 3rd ed. Amsterdam: Elsevier.

Braudel, F. (1949). *La Méditerranée et le monde méditerranéen à l'époque de Philippe II*. Paris: Colin.

Braudel, F. (1966). *La Méditerranée et le monde méditerranéen à l'époque de Philippe II*. 2ème éd. Paris: Colin.

Brázdil, R. et al. (2005). "Historical Climatology in Europe. The State of the Art". *Climatic Change*, 70(3), 363-430. `https://doi.org/10.1007/s10584-005-5924-1`.

Büntgen, U. et al. (2016). "Cooling and Societal Change during the Late Antique Little Ice Age from 536 to around 660 AD". *Nature Geoscience*, 9(3), 231-6. `https://doi.org/10.1038/ngeo2652`.

Degroot, D. et al. (2021). "Towards a Rigorous Understanding of Societal Responses to Climate Change". *Nature*, 591(7851), 539-50. https://doi.org/10.1038/s41586-021-03190-2.

Ellenblum, R. (2012). *The Collapse of the Eastern Mediterranean. Climate Change and the Decline of the East, 950-1072*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Esper, J. et al. (2020). "Eastern Mediterranean Summer Temperatures since 730 CE from Mt. Smolikas Tree-Ring Densities". *Climate Dynamics*, 54(3), 1367-82. https://doi.org/10.1007/s00382-019-05063-x.

Göktürk, O.M. et al. (2011). "Climate on the Southern Black Sea Coast during the Holocene. Implications from the Sofular Cave Record". *Quaternary Science Reviews*, 30(19-20), 2433-45. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.quascirev.2011.05.007.

Haldon, J. et al. (2014). "The Climate and Environment of Byzantine Anatolia. Integrating Science, History and Archaeology". *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, 45(2), 113-61. https://doi.org/10.1162/jinh_a_00682.

Haldon, J. (2016). *The Empire that Would not Die. The Paradox of Eastern Roman Survival, 640-740*. Cambridge (MA): Harvard University Press.

Haldon, J. et al. (2018a). "History Meets Palaeoscience. Consilience and Collaboration in Studying Past Societal Responses to Environmental Change". *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 115(13), 3210-18. https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.1716912115.

Haldon, J. et al. (2018b). "Plagues, Climate Change, and the End of an Empire. A Response to Kyle Harper's The Fate of Rome (1). Climate". *History Compass*, 16(12), e12508. https://doi.org/10.1111/hic3.12508.

Haldon, J. et al. (2018c). "Plagues, Climate Change, and the End of an Empire. A Response to Kyle Harper's The Fate of Rome (2). Plagues and a Crisis of Empire". *History Compass*, 16(12), e12506. https://doi.org/10.1111/hic3.12506.

Haldon, J. et al. (2018d). "Plagues, Climate Change, and the End of an Empire. A Response to Kyle Harper's The Fate of Rome (3). Disease, Agency, and Collapse". *History Compass*, 16(12), e12507. https://doi.org/10.1111/hic3.12507.

Haldon, J.; Rosen, A. (2018). "Society and Environment in the East Mediterranean ca 300-1800 CE. Problems of Resilience, Adaptation and Transformation. Introductory Essay". *Human Ecology*, 46, 275-90. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10745-018-9972-3.

Harper, K. (2017). *The Fate of Rome. Climate, Disease, and the End of an Empire*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. Princeton History of the Ancient World.

Harper, K. (2018). "Integrating the Natural Sciences and Roman History. Challenges and Prospects". *History Compass*, 16(12), e12520. https://doi.org/10.1111/hic3.12520.

Izdebski, A. (2011). "Why did Agriculture Flourish in the Late Antique East? The Role of Climate Fluctuations in the Development and Contraction of Agriculture in Asia Minor and the Middle East from the 4th till the 7th c. AD". *Millennium. Jahrbuch zu Kultur und Geschichte des ersten Jahrtausends n. Chr.*, 8, 291-12.

Izdebski, A. (2013). *A Rural Economy in Transition. Asia Minor from Late Antiquity into the Early Middle Ages*. Warsaw: Taubenschlag Foundation. Journal of Juristic Papyrology Supplement Series 18.

Izdebski, A. et al. (2016). "Realising Consilience. How Better Communication between Archaeologists, Historians and Natural Scientists Can Transform the Study of Past Climate Change in the Mediterranean". *Quaternary Science Reviews*, 136, 5-22. `https://doi.org/10.1016/j.quascirev.2015.10.038`.

Izdebski, A. et al. (2016). "The Environmental, Archaeological and Historical Evidence for Regional Climatic Changes and Their Societal Impacts in the Eastern Mediterranean in Late Antiquity". *Quaternary Science Reviews*, 136, 189-208. `https://doi.org/10.1016/j.quascirev.2015.07.022`.

Izdebski, A. (2022). *Ein vormoderner Staat als sozioökologisches System. Das oströmische Reich 300-1300*. Dresden: Sandstein. Forschungen zur Geschichte und Kultur des östlichen Mitteleuropa 59.

Labuhn, I. et al. (2018). "Climatic Changes and Their Impacts in the Mediterranean during the First Millennium A.D.". Izdebski, A.; Mulryan, M. (eds), *Environment and Society in the Long Late Antiquity*. Leiden: Brill, 65-88. Late Antique Archaeology 12.

Le Roy Ladurie, E. (1959). "Histoire et Climat". *Annales. Histoire, Sciences Sociales*, 14(1), 3-23. `https://doi.org/10.3406/ahess.1959.2795`.

Le Roy Ladurie, E. (1961). "Aspects historiques de la nouvelle climatologie". *Revue Historique*, 225(1), 1-20.

Le Roy Ladurie, E. (1967). *Histoire du climat depuis l'an mil*. Paris : Flammarion.

Luterbacher, J. et al. (forthcoming). "Palaeoclimatology of Byzantine lands (300-1500 A.D.)". Izdebski, A., Preiser-Kapeller, J. (eds), *A Companion to the Environmental History of Byzantium*. Leiden: Brill.

Newfield, T.P. (2018). "The Climate Downturn of 536-50". White, Pfister, Mauelshagen 2018, 447-93. `https://doi.org/10.1057/978-1-137-43020-5`.

Parker, G. (2013). *Global Crisis. War, Climate Change and Catastrophe in the Seventeenth Century*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Pfister, C. (1978). "Climate and Economy in Eighteenth-Century Switzerland". *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, 9, 223-43. `https://doi.org/10.2307/203226`.

Pfister, C. (1988a). "Fluctuations climatiques et prix céréaliers en Europe du XVIe au XXe siècle". *Annales. Histoire, Sciences Sociales*, 43(1), 25-53. `https://doi.org/10.3406/ahess.1988.283474`.

Pfister, C. (1988b). *Klimageschichte der Schweiz 1525-1860. Das Klima der Schweiz von 1525-1860 und seine Bedeutung in der Geschichte von Bevölkerung und Landwirtschaft*. Bern: Haupt.

Pfister, C. et al. (2018). "Early Modern Europe". White, Pfister, Mauelshagen 2018, 265-96.

Preiser-Kapeller, J. (2015). "A Collapse of the Eastern Mediterranean? New Results and Theories on the Interplay between Climate and Societies in Byzantium and the Near East, ca. 1000-1200 AD". *Jahrbuch der österreichischen Byzantinistik*, 65, 195-242.

Preiser-Kapeller, J.; Mitsiou, E. (2019). "The Little Ice Age and Byzantium within the Eastern Mediterranean, ca. 1200-1350. An Essay on Old Debates and New Scenarios". Bauch, M.; Schenk, G.S. (eds), *The Crisis of the 14th Century*. Berlin; New York: De Gruyter, 190-220. `https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110660784-010`.

Roberts, N. et al. (2018). "Not the End of the World? Post-Classical Decline and Recovery in Rural Anatolia". *Human Ecology*, 46, 305-22. `https://doi.org/10.1007/s10745-018-9973-2`.

Sessa, K. (2019). "The New Environmental Fall of Rome. A Methodological Consideration". *Journal of Late Antiquity*, 12(1), 211-55. https://doi.org/10.1353/jla.2019.0008.

Telelis, I.G. (2004). *Μετεωρολογικα φαινομενα και κλιμα στο βυζαντιο*. Athens: Akadēmia Athēnōn.

Telelis, I.G. (2008). "Climatic Fluctuations in the Eastern Mediterranean and the Middle East AD 300-1500 from Byzantine Documentary and Proxy Physical Paleoclimatic Evidence. A Comparison". *Jahrbuch der österreichischen Byzantinistik*, 58, 167-207.

Touchan, R. et al. (2007). "May-June Precipitation Reconstruction of Southwestern Anatolia, Turkey during the Last 900 Years from Tree Rings". *Quaternary Research*, 68(2), 196-202. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.yqres.2007.07.001.

White, S.; Pfister, C.; Mauelshagen, F. (eds) (2018). *The Palgrave Handbook of Climate History*. London: Palgrave Macmillan. https://doi.org/10.1057/978-1-137-43020-5.

Xoplaki, E. et al. (2016). "The Medieval Climate Anomaly and Byzantium. A Review of the Evidence on Climatic Fluctuations, Economic Performance and Societal Change". *Quaternary Science Reviews*, 136, 229-52. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.quascirev.2015.10.004.

Xoplaki, E. et al. (2018). "Modelling Climate and Societal Resilience in the Eastern Mediterranean in the Last Millennium". *Human Ecology*, 46, 363-79. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10745-018-9995-9.

Xoplaki, E. et al. (2021). "Hydrological Changes in Late Antiquity. Spatio-Temporal Characteristics and Socio-Economic Impacts in the Eastern Mediterranean". Erdkamp, P.; Manning, J.G.; Verboven, K. (eds), *Climate Change and Ancient Societies in Europe and the Near East. Diversity in Collapse and Resilience*. Cham: Springer International Publishing, 533-60. Palgrave Studies in Ancient Economies. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-81103-7_18.

Zanchetta, G. et al. (2021). "Beyond One-Way Determinism. San Frediano's Miracle and Climate Change in Central and Northern Italy in Late Antiquity". *Climatic Change*, 165(1), no. 25. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10584-021-03043-x.

A Race Against Time
The Impact of Contemporary Environmental and Demographic Changes on the Research of the Historical Geography of Byzantium

Mihailo St. Popović
Austrian Academy of Sciences, Vienna

Abstract   In the first part of the article, infrastructural developments, technological progress and demographic changes in the world and in Europe, especially in the Balkan Peninsula, are addressed. This overview is provided in order to contextualise in which way the basis for historic-geographical research of the Byzantine World, conducted by the project *Tabula Imperii Byzantini* (*TIB*), has changed since 1966. In the second part of the article strategies are emphasised, how the race against time and the spirit of time should be approached, based on the current research of the *TIB Balkans*, by applying 'regressive engineering', Digital Humanities and Geocommunication.

Keywords   Historical geography. Tabula Imperii Byzantini (TIB). Balkans. Digital humanities. Regressive engineering. Geocommunication.

Summary   1 Introduction. – 2 State and Changing Circumstances of Research. – 3 The Reaction of the *TIB Balkans*, Its Adaptation and the Expansion of Methods Since 2016.

1   Introduction

The aim of this article is to outline in a comprehensible way, how the living environment has changed over the past fifty years in the former core areas of the Byzantine Empire (i.e. especially in the Balkan Peninsula) due to infrastructural developments, technological progress and demographic changes, which leads directly to the question, whether and how the Long-Term Project *Tabula Imperii Byzantini* (*TIB*) of the Austrian Academy of Sciences, and here especially the *TIB Balkans*, has already adapted its historic-geographical research work in the present or should adapt it in the near future. For this reason, the article is divided into two parts. The first part offers an observation and survey of the changes in our living environment in the twenty-first century and their consequences for research in Historical Geography, while the second deals with the adaptation of existing working methods and the introduction of new methods by the *TIB Balkans* since 2016. Hereby, the year 2016 was deliberately chosen as a turning point, because the *TIB* has been designated as a Long-Term Project of the Austrian Academy of Sciences in this very year after an excellent international evaluation with the author as Project Leader of the *TIB Balkans* since 1 January 2016, and his colleague Andreas Külzer as Project Leader of *TIB Asia Minor*.

Therefore, the article should be regarded as a presentation of how a project based on fundamental research, such as the *TIB*, breaks new ground in the twenty-first century and should continue to break it in order to remain nationally and internationally competitive in the field of Historical Geography in the years to come.

2   State and Changing Circumstances of Research

Since the 1960s, in which the *TIB* has begun its research work, Europe and the entire world have experienced a rapid technical progress, which is currently accompanied by the unstoppable digitisation of data and content. It is, therefore, not surprising that these developments cannot and do not leave the *TIB* unaffected, which means that the conditions for historic-geographical work in general are constantly changing. It should be noted, by no means in a provocative way, that Historical Geography is persistently confronted with three main factors:
- a race against time;
- a change or decay of relevant monuments and at the same time;
- a need to keep pace with the spirit of time (i.e. the *Zeitgeist*).

I will address all three of the aforesaid factors in detail below and would like to show both the challenges for our future scholarly work

as well as new lines of development (Popović 2014). In the past decades it has become apparent that we are demographically in a state of upheaval all around the world. Two aspects of crucial importance for the Historical Geography of the Byzantine World (Sundhaussen 2005) are in my opinion the keywords 'rural exodus' and 'urbanisation'.

The United Nations published a report in 2014, according to which the urban population worldwide rose from 746 million people in 1950 to 3.9 billion in 2014. For the year 2045 it is predicted that the urban population on our planet will exceed the mark of six billion. The strongest processes of urbanisation are expected in India, China and Nigeria. The associated, considerable infrastructural challenges lie in the creation of sufficient capacities in the segments of living space, urban infrastructure, public transport, energy supply, jobs, educational institutions and health care. The management of urban centres is, thus, seen as the greatest administrative task of the twenty-first century. In contrast, the world's rural population is steadily declining. In 2014 it was 3.4 billion people and is expected to drop to 3.1 billion by 2050 (United Nations 2014). The *Neue Zürcher Zeitung* reported already in 2007 that, for the first time in world history, there were more city than rural dwellers on our planet (*Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, 27 June 2007).

At the same time, green spaces in urban areas are continuously being reduced due to urban expansion and transformation, especially due to building densification. The Viennese district newspaper for the twelfth district reported for example in January 2020 (*bz Wiener Bezirkszeitung Meidling*, 8-9 January 2020):

> Wien hat nämlich gesamt fast 2.000 Hektar Grünfläche weniger als noch vor 20 Jahren. 150,66 Hektar waren es 2000 in Meidling. Jetzt verfügt der Bezirk über 101,42 Hektar Grünfläche.

> Vienna has a total of almost 2,000 hectares less green space than it did 20 years ago. In 2000 it was 150.66 hectares in Meidling. Now the district has 101.42 hectares of green space. (Author's transl.)

In order to counteract this development, the German futurologist Daniel Dettling (born in 1975) recommended the following in a guest commentary in the Austrian media (*Die Presse*, 29 August 2019; Bastin et al. 2019):

> Immer mehr Menschen wohnen weltweit in Städten und Ballungsgebieten. Die Folgen des Klimawandels zwingen in den nächsten Jahren vor allem die Städte zur Anpassung. Eine neue Studie der ETH Zürich prognostiziert für das Jahr 2050 einen Anstieg der durchschnittlichen Temperaturen in Europas Städten um bis zu vier Grad im Sommer und um fünf Grad im Winter. [...] Die Städ-

te müssen in Zukunft grüner werden. Dazu gehören nachhaltiges Bauen, mehr Grünflächen und Wälder sowie urbane Lebensmittelmärkte. Die Landwirtschaft muss zur Stadtwirtschaft werden. Mehr Landwirtschaft in den Städten sorgt für besseres Klima, mehr Artenvielfalt und eine nachhaltige Stadtentwicklung.

More and more people live in cities and metropolitan areas around the world. The consequences of climate change will force cities in particular to adapt in the next few years. A new study by the ETH Zurich predicts an increase in average temperatures in European cities of up to four degrees in summer and five degrees in winter for 2050. […] The cities must become greener in the future. This includes sustainable building, more green spaces and forests, and urban food markets. Agriculture must become an urban economy. More agriculture in the cities ensures a better climate, more biodiversity and sustainable urban development. (Author's transl.)

With regard to the number of the rural population, the difference between the current situation in Austria – 2 to 3% of the total population worked in agriculture in 2014 – and during the Byzantine millennium is striking due to the technical developments of the last two centuries. According to the Byzantinist Johannes Koder, the agriculture in the Byzantine Empire formed the natural backbone of the state. It was by far the largest branch of production and was likely to have tied up over 80% of the population in times of peace, which is why the urban settlements (especially after the sixth century) had a clearly agrarian character (Koder 2001, 56; 2016a; 2016b).

The Byzantine, Serbian and Bulgarian medieval charters and the Ottoman tax registers (in Turkish *defter*) prove, amongst others, the agrarian character of the landscape in the Balkan Peninsula in Byzantine and Ottoman times. The evaluation and analysis of these written sources is one of the core scholarly tasks of the *TIB Balkans* and reveals a multi-layered settlement structure of the past (Popović 2009; 2010; 2012; 2015; 2016; 2017).

The worldwide processes of urbanisation in combination with a continuous rural exodus or migration in the twenty-first century represent a great challenge for the scholarly work and tasks of Historical Geography, thus also for the *TIB* in its core areas, the Balkan Peninsula and Asia Minor, now as well as in the near future. A crucial element of our research work – based on four categories of sources (i.e. the written sources, archaeological data, the toponyms and the state of landscapes) – are regular research trips in the respective *TIB* areas (Popović 2014, 10-17).

These trips are meticulously planned for years in advance and are based on open questions on localisations in the respective areas of research. Following up on these questions, a travel route is composed

before the research trip based on various maps and additional data sets, which is then accomplished with a great zeal, expenditure of time and personal commitment *in situ*. Due to the climatic conditions and the prevailing vegetation in the areas of research, these trips take place mainly in the periods from late May to mid-June or late August to mid-September and usually last from two to four weeks. During these trips the scholars of the *TIB* work every day – also on weekends – due to the favourable light conditions and the aim to achieve maximum efficiency in the localisation of monuments and toponyms as well as in their description and their documentation by digital photography and GPS. The journey to the respective destinations in the areas of research by car, the hikes in the landscape, the orientation *in situ* based on maps, compass and GPS device and the inquiries with the local population in different local languages require of the scholars of the *TIB* appropriate professional qualifications, a high level of concentration, a thoughtful and prudent approach as well as an adequate physical performance.

As an example of the research work *in situ* just described, I would like to highlight the ascent to the Monastery of the Holy Mother of God in Treskavec, to the North of the city of Prilep in the Republic of North Macedonia, which my retired colleague Peter Soustal and I undertook for my volume *TIB* 16 ("Macedonia, Northern Part") on 21 June 2016. We started with water supplies and little provisions in order to avoid weight at 9 o'clock in the morning in the partially deserted village of Dabnica at 924 metres above sea level with the aim to locate the remains of the medieval Eastern route to the monastery and to document them photographically and with GPS. We intended to reach the monastery on this route as well, having already used the Early Modern Western route in September 2008 **[fig. 1]** (Popović, Schmid, Breier 2017). Peter Soustal and I succeeded to locate the beginning of the Eastern route, to follow it and to reach our destination at 1,280 metres above sea level around 2 p.m. The maximum temperature on that day was around 35° Celsius with a cloudless sky. After detailed documentation of the monastery, its church and the surrounding area, we started the descent at 3 p.m. following the same path and reached our starting point at 4:30 p.m.

During our research trips in search of monuments and toponyms *in situ*, we are in many cases largely dependent on the knowledge and support of the local population, which in turn requires significant language skills from our part. Without the hospitable and often selfless help of the locals, certain places in difficult terrain are often very hard or impossible to find. As a vivid example, I would like to mention the Church of *Sveti Prorok Ilija* (Holy Prophet Elijah) between the villages of Gabrene and Skrăt in South-Western Bulgaria, which we found only with the help of an elderly peasant woman from Gabrene called Petra in June 2007, because the building has been
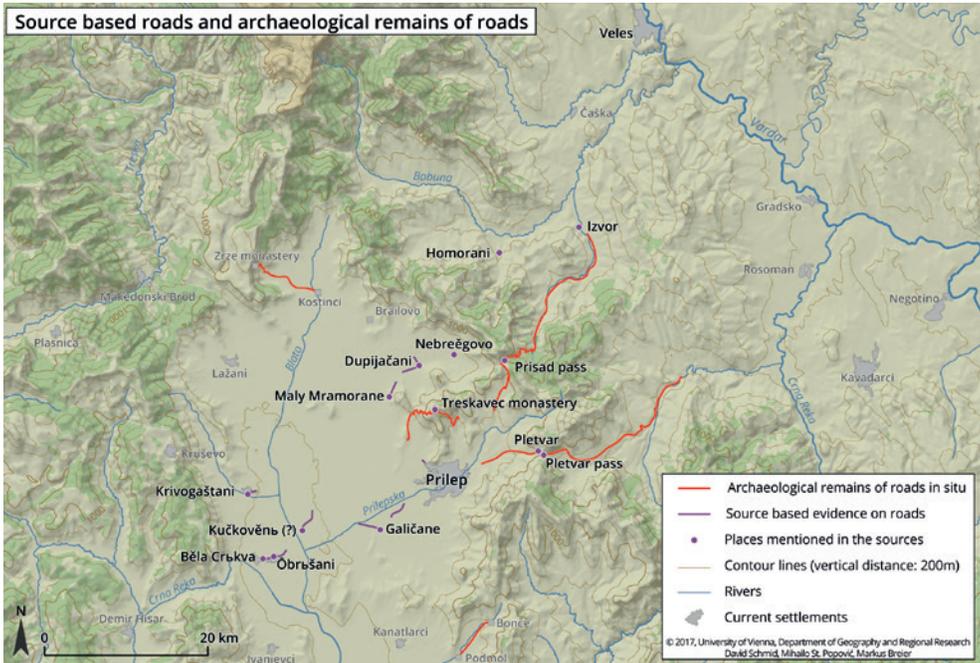
solely preserved in its foundations and is located amidst abundant vegetation in the woods **[fig. 2]**.

This example shows the usefulness of documenting a monument or toponym using GPS, because archaeological research will be made possible in the near or distant future, even if there should be no information available from the local population anymore or if the monument should no longer be visible.

The aforesaid *race against time* becomes more obvious and noticeable from year to year, when we have the depopulation of the rural regions in Europe (also in the Balkan Peninsula) in mind, which we, as scholars of the *TIB*, witness time and again in deserted settlements. The processes of desertification have reached considerable proportions in certain regions of the Balkan Peninsula as well as in Europe as a whole.

As an example, I would like to highlight the village of Lomnica in South-Western Bulgaria, which had 184 inhabitants at the beginning of the 1970s (Koledarov, Mičev 1973, 156) and only two (!) during my research trip in June 2010, which makes the consequences of the aforesaid problem more than obvious. The emigration of the local population and the resulting dissolution of the village structures has

Figure 2 Mihailo St. Popović, church of Sveti Prorok Ilija (Holy Prophet Elijah) between the Villages of Gabrene and Skrăt in South-Western Bulgaria. 2007. *Tabula Imperii Byzantini* 16. Vienna: Austrian Academy of Sciences

far-reaching consequences for the respective states and their societies, but also for the discipline of Historical Geography.

The French ethnologist and anthropologist Marc Augé (born in 1935) writes about the relationship between place, inhabitant and history:

The inhabitant of an anthropological place does not make history; he lives in it. The difference between these two relationships to history is still very clear to my generation of Frenchmen and women, who lived through the 1940s and were able in the village (perhaps only a place they visited for holidays) to attend Corpus Christi, Rogation days or the annual feast-day of some local patron saint ordinarily tucked away in an isolated chapel: when these processions and observances disappear, their memory does not simply remind us, like other childhood memories, of the passage of time or the changing individual; they have effectively disappeared – or rather, they have been transformed: the feast is still celebrated from time to time, to do things the old way, just as a little threshing is done in the old way every summer; the chapel has been restored and a concert or show is sometimes put on there. These re-

furbishments cause a few perplexed smiles and a certain amount of retrospective musing among the older locals: for what they see projected at a distance is the place where they used to believe they lived from day to day, but which they are now being invited to see as a fragment of history. (Augé 2008, 45)

In the core areas of the *TIB* historical settlement structures are abandoned, whereas toponyms remain in the landscape as silent witnesses. The result is a kind of 'Big Country', having the title of the film with the same name with the actor Gregory Peck (1958) in mind, a 'Big Country', which is characterised by abundant flora and fauna without human presence or intervention.

This phenomenon is to be seen globally. The Austrian press reported quite recently on the worldwide disappearance of cities, countries, landscapes and rivers. Examples are the rainforest in the Congo Basin, the Yamuna River in India, the Chihuahua Desert on the border between Mexico and the USA, the Great Wall of China and the medieval clay buildings in Timbuktu (*Die Presse*, 9 February 2020).

The rapid expansion of the transport infrastructure and the acceleration of traffic have consequences for the world in general, and for the Balkan Peninsula in particular, which Marc Augé (2008, 28) describes as follows:

Its concrete outcome involves considerable physical modifications: urban concentrations, movements of population and the multiplication of what we call 'non-places' [...]. The installations needed for the accelerated circulation of passengers and goods (high-speed roads and railways, interchanges, airports) are just as much non-places as the means of transport themselves, or the great commercial centres, or the extended transit camps where the planet's refugees are parked.

This leads us to the aforesaid factor of the *change or decay of relevant monuments*, on which the same author writes:

The monument, as the Latin etymology of the word indicates, is an attempt at the tangible expression of permanence or, at the very least, duration. [...] Without the monumental illusion before the eyes of the living, history would be a mere abstraction. The social space bristles with monuments – imposing stone buildings, discreet mud shrines – which may not be directly functional but give every individual the justified feeling that, for the most part, they pre-existed him and will survive him. (Augé 2008, 48-9)

Fortunately, the continuous, worldwide media coverage of cultural monuments has made a significant contribution to sensitising the

Tabula Imperii Byzantini (TIB) – State 2021
Long-Term-Project of the OEAW

in preparation
work in progress
completed

Work in Progress:
11 Macedonia, Southern Part
14 Western Asia Minor: Lydia and Asia
16 Macedonia, Northern Part
17 Nea Epeiros and Praevalis
18 Caria

Completed:
1 Hellas and Thessaly
2 Cappadocia
3 Nicopolis and Cephalonia
4 Galatia and Lycaonia
5 Cilicia and Isauria
6 Thrace
7 Phrygia and Pisidia
8 Lycia and Pamphylia
9 Paphlagonia and Honorias
10 Northern Aegean
12 Eastern Thrace
13 Bithynia and Hellespont
15 Syria

Figure 3 Bernhard Koschiček-Krombholz, Mihailo St. Popović, the state of the *Tabula Imperii Byzantini* in 2021. Austrian Academy of Sciences, Vienna

authorities and the public in our times, and has consequently led in many cases to the preservation and – sometimes excessive – conservation of monuments (Kila 2012; Kila, Zeidler 2013).

Scholarly projects at the Austrian Academy of Sciences, including the *TIB* and especially the *TIB Balkans*, have a long tradition of contributing significantly to the research of the World's Cultural Heritage. Since 1966, monuments and their (then) current state have been systematically documented by means of slides during research trips of the *TIB*. This unique collection of Byzantine monuments – around 52,000 slides and thousands of black and white photographs – is a rich cultural asset and a focal point of current and future *TIB* research work. In this way, monuments in the Mediterranean and their fate in the past decades can be embedded and contextualised within the World's Cultural Heritage.

A significant contribution in this respect is also made by the *TIB Balkans*, here its volumes *TIB* 16 ("Macedonia, Northern Part"; Mihailo St. Popović) and *TIB* 17 ("Nea Epeiros and Praevalis"; Mihailo St. Popović) **[fig. 3]**, as well as its accomplished or current sub-projects "Die digitale Tabula Imperii Byzantini (Dig-TIB) als Beitrag zum Weltkulturerbe",[1] "Byzantino-Serbian Border Zones in Transition: Mi-

---

Figure 4a   Ljiljana Popović, the Antique Theatre in Ohrid, Republic of North Macedonia. 1988.
Private Collection of the Author

Figure 4b   Mihailo St. Popović, the Antique Theatre in Ohrid, Republic of North Macedonia. 2008.
Tabula Imperii Byzantini 16. Austrian Academy of Sciences, Vienna

gration and Elite Change in pre-Ottoman Macedonia (1282-1355)",[2] "Cultural Heritage in Times of World War I: The Case of the Austro-Hungarian Relief Map of Montenegro (1916-1918)"[3] and "Beyond East and West: Geocommunicating the Sacred Landscapes of 'Duklja' and 'Raška' through Space and Time (11th-14th Cent.)".[4]

At this point, it should be emphasised that numerous positive initiatives and projects for the preservation and conservation of monuments have been accomplished or are conducted at the moment in the Balkan Peninsula, which are illustrated by **[figs 4a-b]** as vivid examples.

According to Marc Augé (2008, 55), the construction of bypasses and the resulting reorganisation of space have also consequences for the monuments in a region:

> Every town or village not of recent origin lays public claim to its history, displaying it to the passing motorist on a series of signboards that add up to a sort of "business card". Making the historical context explicit in this way, which in fact is quite a recent practice, coincides with a reorganization of space (the creation of bypasses and main motorway routes avoiding towns) that tends, inversely, to short-circuit the historical context by avoiding the monuments that embody it.

Cities are increasingly turning into museums, while bypasses, motorways and high-speed trains ignore or help to avoid them:

> Motorway travel is thus doubly remarkable: it avoids, for functional reasons, all the principal places to which it takes us; and it makes comments on them. Service stations add to this information, adopting an increasingly aggressive role as centres of regional culture, selling a range of local goods with a few maps and guidebooks that might be useful to anyone who is thinking of stopping. [...] In the France of thirty years ago, the *routes nationales*, departmental main roads and railways used to penetrate the intimacy of everyday life. (Augé 2008, 79)

And elsewhere (Augé 2014, 123):

> Die Großstädte definieren sich zunächst einmal durch ihre Fähigkeit zum Import oder Export von Menschen, Produkten, Bildern und Nachrichten. In räumlicher Hinsicht bemisst sich ihre Bedeu-

---

[2] https://tib.oeaw.ac.at/sub_projects/borderzones.

[3] https://tib.oeaw.ac.at/sub_projects/montenegro.

[4] https://tib.oeaw.ac.at/sub_projects/holdura.

tung an Qualität und Umfang des Autobahn- oder Eisenbahnnetzes, das sie mit ihren Flughäfen verbindet. Ihre Außenbeziehung hinterlässt gerade dann ihre Spuren in der Landschaft, wenn die als «historisch» bezeichneten Zentren zu Anziehungspunkten für immer mehr Touristen aus aller Welt werden. [...] Globalisierung bedeutet auch Urbanisierung der Welt, doch Urbanisierung der Welt bedeutet zugleich einen Wandel der Stadt, die sich neuen Horizonten öffnet.

The big cities define themselves first of all by their ability to import or export people, products, images and messages. In spatial terms, their importance is measured by the quality and extent of the motorway or railroad network, which connects them with their airports. Their relationship with the outside world leaves especially its mark on the landscape, when the centres designated as "historic" become attractions for more and more tourists from all over the world. [...] Globalisation also means urbanisation of the world, but urbanisation of the world means at the same time a change of the city, which opens up to new horizons. (Author's transl.)

However, the income from tourism, even if it is based on a reorganisation of space with corresponding motorway signs, contributes in my opinion to the conservation and restoration of monuments as well as to their analysis and interpretation. An example is the project *Skopje 2014* in the capital of the Republic of North Macedonia, which has led, amongst others, to a systematic archaeological excavation of the elevation *Kale* since 2006.

Museums all over the world play a crucial role in communicating the World's Cultural Heritage by preserving and researching artefacts and monuments, as expressed in a brochure by the British Museum:[5]

The British Museum tells the story of cultural achievement throughout the world, from the dawn of human history more than two million years ago until the present day. The Museum is a unique resource for the world: the breadth and depth of the collection allows the world's public to re-examine cultural identities and explore the connections between them.

From the perspective of *TIB* research, the narrowing of the view to monuments, which are made known to the general public through museums or the media, is neither expedient nor desirable. To put it simply, the aforesaid Church of *Sveti Prorok Ilija* (Holy Prophet Eli-

---

5 The British Museum (2019). *The Parthenon Sculptures.* London.

jah) near Gabrene is just as important and significant for the *TIB* as the elevation *Kale* in Skopje. However, there are limitations to raising public awareness for historical landscapes and monuments, because the perception of space has changed fundamentally due to the digitisation of our world, which in turn leads us to the third aforesaid factor, namely the *spirit of time* (i.e. the *Zeitgeist*).

Without doubt, this is a question of age and generation. There is a clear tendency to use digital tools and to access the virtual world among pupils and students in our part of the world. The German psychiatrist Manfred Spitzer (born in 1958) writes about this issue (2018-19, 212):

> Wir wissen aus anderen Untersuchungen, dass der Verlust des Wissens über die Natur zu einer wachsenden Entfremdung von ihr führt. Die Menschen sorgen sich um das, was sie kennen. Bei einem Anstieg der in Städten lebenden Weltbevölkerung um 160 000 Menschen täglich ist es erforderlich, dass Naturschützer die Verbindung der Kinder zur Natur wiederherstellen.

> We know from other studies that the loss of knowledge about nature leads to increasing alienation from it. People care about what they know. With the world's urban population increasing by 160,000 a day, conservationists need to reconnect children with nature. (Author's transl.)

Marc Augé (2014, 124) adds on this subject:

> Auch der Einzelne hat in gewisser Weise eine Dezentrierung seiner selbst erfahren. Er ist mit Instrumenten ausgerüstet, die ihn ständig in Kontakt zur fernsten Außenwelt bringen. Sein Handy ist zugleich auch Fotoapparat, Fernsehgerät und Computer. So kann er als Vereinzelter in einer intellektuellen, musikalischen oder visuellen Umwelt leben, die vollkommen unabhängig von seiner aktuellen physischen Umgebung ist.

> In a certain way, the individual has also experienced a decentration of himself. He is equipped with instruments, which bring him into constant contact with the most distant worlds. His mobile phone is also a camera, television and computer. So he can live as an isolated person in an intellectual, musical or visual environment, which is completely independent of his current physical environment. (Author's transl.)

Associations are also becoming increasingly aware of this fundamental change in our societies. The Vice President of the Austrian Alpine Club, Wolfgang Schnabl (born in 1960), writes (2019, 3) for

example about the virtual world and a balance to be striven for in dealing with technology:

> Leben wir doch inzwischen in einer Welt, die zunehmend von der faktischen Realität unabhängig wird, deren Wirklichkeit sich immer mehr in der virtuellen Realität abspielt. [...] Zum anderen wachsen unsere Kinder in einer Welt auf, die immer virtueller wird, die bei falschen Entscheidungen einen Reset-Knopf bietet und so einfach einen Neustart erlaubt oder in der man ohnehin, wie in Computerspielen, mehrere Leben hat.

> We are now living in a world that is becoming increasingly independent of factual reality, the reality of which is increasingly taking place in virtual reality. [...] On the other hand, our children grow up in a world that is becoming more and more virtual, that offers a reset button in the event of wrong decisions and, thus, easily allows a restart, or in which one has several lives anyway, as in computer games. (Author's transl.)

Since the end of the 1990s, the spirit of time (i.e. *Zeitgeist*) regarding the virtual world has also affected and sometimes revolutionised History and Historical Geography. At this point, it should be emphasised that, in my opinion, both fundamental research and Digital Humanities are meanwhile of the same importance for the *TIB*, especially for the *TIB Balkans*, which I will explain below in more detail. However, the Digital Humanities should be used with a sense of proportion and be regarded as an enrichment of the fundamental research in the sense of an expansion of methods.

From the perspective of Historical Geography, the autopsy in the field must be and remain an integral part of the scholarly approach despite all technical innovations, because landscape and space cannot be recorded and interpreted solely with the help of satellite images sitting at the office desk (Popović 2013).

Walking and hiking through actual (former historical) landscapes – in the literal sense – create a deeper understanding of the pre-modern space-time perception.

The aforesaid thoughts are by no means to be considered as a pessimistic view of our present. Rather, I have summarised and commented on data, facts and perceptions in order to use them as a basis to pose the question to what extent our Long-Term Project *TIB* at the Austrian Academy of Sciences can and should reposition itself in such ongoing dynamic developments in the present as well as in the near future.

3 The Reaction of the *TIB Balkans*, Its Adaptation and the Expansion of Methods Since 2016

Based on all aforesaid aspects, I would like to explain, what kind of measures the *TIB Balkans* and I, as its Project Leader, have taken and are taking, with regard to the major changes in the Balkan Peninsula as well as to the technical progress since the 1960s, in order to continue to be future-oriented and stay competitive. Above all, I would like to emphasise that the *TIB* is a unique project in the field of Byzantine Studies worldwide. There is no other comparable international project that researches the Historical Geography of the Byzantine World in this scholarly depth and length of time. The initiatives in the field of Digital Humanities at the Austrian Academy of Sciences and also the related developments in Byzantine Studies in the last couple of years have encouraged the *TIB Balkans* to step up its efforts to provide a platform for the adequate presentation and sustainable usage of its data, which was and is published in respective *TIB* volumes. Such an initiative is and can only be implemented with a team of young, committed scholars funded by third-party sub-projects of the *TIB Balkans*, namely Bernhard Koschiček-Krombholz, Jelena Nikić, David Schmid, Dorota Vargová, Florian Wiltschnig, Vratislav Zervan and the associated scholars Veronika Polloczek and Moisés Hernández Cordero.[6]

Therefore, the *TIB*, here especially the *TIB Balkans*, is pursuing three main lines of development.

The first line of development comprises the ongoing scholarly work and resulting printed publications, i.e. the *TIB* volumes with their maps on a scale of 1:800,000, following the Long-Term Project scheme of the Austrian Academy of Sciences until 2027. On this basis the *TIB* volume "Bithynia and Hellespont" (*TIB* 13, Klaus Belke) was published in 2020. Another volume – "Macedonia, Southern Part" (*TIB* 11, Peter Soustal) will be printed in 2022. At the end of 2023 I will submit my volume entitled "Macedonia, Northern Part" (*TIB* 16) for evaluation and publication to the Austrian Academy of Sciences. Until 2027 the *TIB* volumes "Western Asia Minor: Lydia and Asia" (*TIB* 14, Andreas Külzer), "Nea Epeiros and Praevalis" (*TIB* 17, Mihailo St. Popović) and "Caria" (*TIB* 18, Fritz Hild and Andreas Külzer) should also be finished **[fig. 3]**.[7]

The second line of development is constituted by the scholarly, archival and digital (re)processing of published and unpublished data of the *TIB*, which has been collected from 1966 until 2016. The year 2016 is to be regarded as a marker, because the *TIB* is since then following

---

6 https://tib.oeaw.ac.at/team.

7 https://tib.oeaw.ac.at/current_status.

the aforesaid Long-Term Project scheme. Our published and unpublished data comprises three main collections: the slides, which were made during *TIB* field trips from 1966 until 2007-08 (about 52,000); thousands of black-and-white photographs from the 1960s and 1970s from different areas of research; the published *TIB* volumes 1-10, 12, 13 and 15 with their respective maps.

Since 2016 the *TIB Balkans* has been applying 'regressive engineering' to these data sets through the aforesaid third-party funded projects. In this way we are and will be able to digitise and process them, to save them sustainably within the technical framework of the Austrian Academy of Sciences, to present them to the scholarly community and general public and to preserve them for future generations.

First, crucial results of our endeavour are to be found on the *TIB* homepage, which are constantly expanded and enriched. Thus, a complete list of geographic registers of the published *TIB* volumes 1-10, 12 and 13 may be accessed.[8] It enables the user to search and compare the toponomastic evidence from all areas of research of the *TIB* since 1966, whereby previously overlooked connections may be recognised and new research questions are stimulated.

Each geographic register of a published *TIB* volume may also be accessed and researched separately (including *TIB* 15 "Syria"). In all lists the pdf files of the respective *TIB* volume may be accessed by selecting the page number, which is tagged to the respective page in the volume's pdf. Due to copyright regulations of the Austrian Academy of Sciences these functions are available for the *TIB* volumes 1-7, 12 and 13. As a consequence, the toponomastic evidence may not only be compared between different areas of research, but also the historical and archaeological context may be read in the respective headwords (*lemmata*).

Finally, a 'best practice' has been created for the slides of the *TIB* via the third-party funded project "Die digitale *Tabula Imperii Byzantini* (Dig-TIB) als Beitrag zum Weltkulturerbe". For the time being, 7,172 slides of the *TIB* volumes 5 ("Cilicia and Isauria", Friedrich Hild; 4,981 slides), 12 ("Eastern Thrace", Andreas Külzer; 1,252 slides) and 16 ("Macedonia, Northern Part", Mihailo St. Popović; 939 slides) have been scanned and embedded with the respective metadata in the open-source software *CollectiveAccess*.[9] These slides may be searched and compared and their metadata viewed, but they may not be downloaded for scholarly or private use due to copyright regulations of the Austrian Academy of Sciences. As a next step the *TIB Balkans* will try to include the slides from the *TIB* volumes 1 ("Hellas

---

8 https://tib.oeaw.ac.at/digtib.

9 https://catalogue.tib.oeaw.ac.at.

and Thessaly"), 3 ("Nicopolis and Cephalonia") and 6 ("Thrace"), subject to successful applications of third-party funded projects.

The third line of development is state of the art Geocommunication of current content and results of the *TIB Balkans*. Therefore, the *TIB Balkans* is creating, developing and upkeeping the online atlas (front-end) "Maps of Power: Historical Atlas of Places, Borderzones and Migration Dynamics in Byzantium (*TIB Balkans*)" via its aforesaid third-party funded projects since 2019.[10]

Scholarly results as well as digital photographs of the *TIB Balkans*, i.e. from the *TIB* volumes 16 ("Macedonia, Northern Part", Mihailo St. Popović) and 17 ("Nea Epeiros and Praevalis", Mihailo St. Popović), and of related sub-projects of the *TIB Balkans* are regularly embedded in English into our back-end, the *TIB OpenAtlas Database*.[11] This gives us the opportunity to continuously present our latest research and to make additions or corrections to the data at any time, which has already been entered.

The online atlas (front-end), which is developed in cooperation with the Department of Geography and Regional Research of the University of Vienna (Prof. Dr. Karel Kriz), enables live queries of the embedded data and the download of current map views as an image. Via additional map layers of the printed maps *TIB* 1 to *TIB* 16 on a scale 1:800,000 and their respective pictograms in the web application the queried data is connected visually to the printed volumes of the *TIB* and their headwords (*lemmata*), which may be searched separately in the aforesaid lists. For the time being, the online atlas is further developed by the aforesaid third-party funded projects of the *TIB Balkans* until autumn 2023.

This is a prerequisite for the next step, which I would like to realise until 2027 and which will comprise the technical merging and harmonisation of the second and third lines of development in a joint, new web application with a strong emphasis on Geocommunication. In this way, we will permanently combine 'regressive engineering' with ongoing research. Strong emphasis will be put during this process on techniques like enhanced Story Maps, 3D scans and models **[fig. 5]**, filming with drones and respective movies **[fig. 6]**, which all form an integral part of the project HOLDURA and have yielded first, remarkable results during a field trip to Montenegro from 24 September to 10 October 2021.

In my opinion, the aforesaid aspects illustrate the complexity of our research work within the *TIB Balkans*, not only in terms of content, but also from a methodological, technical, public- and future-oriented

---

10 https://data1.geo.univie.ac.at/projects/tibapp; https://oeaw.academia. edu/MapsofPower.

11 https://openatlas.eu/.
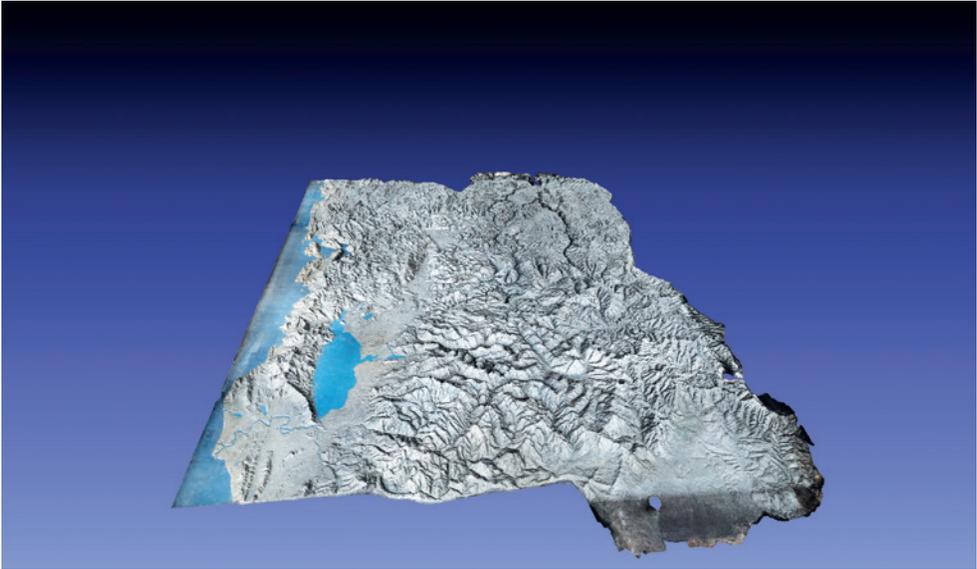
Figure 5   Moisés Hernández Cordero, "Screenshots of the 3D Model of the Austro-Hungarian Relief Map of Montenegro" (1916-18). 2020. Austrian Archaeological Institute, Austrian Academy of Sciences, Vienna

Figure 6   Lukas Neugebauer, "Drone Picture of the Church Prečista Krajinska in Montenegro". 2021. Department of Geography and Regional Research, University of Vienna, Vienna

point of view. While we will certainly neither be able to divert the *spirit of time* as historical geographers nor to prevail in the race against time, I deem the aforesaid second and third line of development a viable approach to document, preserve, provide our expertise and data to the national and international scholarly community as well as to the general public and especially to raise awareness for our field of study and its aims as well as obstacles in the twenty-first century.

I would like to close with the words of Marc Augé (2008, 29):

> The world of supermodernity does not exactly match the one in which we believe we live, for we live in a world that we have not yet learned to look at. We have to relearn to think about space.

In my opinion this applies not only to the future, but also to the past. It is to this that the *TIB Balkans* contributes significantly and will continue to contribute in the years to come.

Bibliography

Augé, M. (2008). *Non-Places. An Introduction to Supermodernity*. London; New York: Verso.

Augé, M. (2014). *Nicht-Orte. Aus dem Französischen von Michael Bischoff*. München: Verlag C.H. Beck.

Bastin, J.F. et al. (2019). "Understanding Climate Change from a Global Analysis of City Analogues". *PLOS ONE*, 14(10), e0224120. `https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0224120`.

Belke, K. (2020). *Bithynien und Hellespont*. Wien: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften. Tabula Imperii Byzantini 13.

Kila, J. (2012). *Heritage under Siege. Military Implementation of Cultural Property Protection following the 1954 Hague Convention*. Leiden: Brill. Heritage and Identity 1.

Kila, J.D.; Zeidler, J.A. (2013). *Cultural Heritage in the Crosshairs. Protecting Cultural Property during Conflict*. Leiden: Brill. Heritage and Identity 2.

Koder, J. (2001). *Der Lebensraum der Byzantiner. Historisch-geographischer Abriß ihres mittelalterlichen Staates im östlichen Mittelmeerraum. Nachdruck mit bibliographischen Nachträgen*. Wien: Faßbänder. Byzantinische Geschichtsschreiber, Ergänzungsband 1.

Koder, J. (2016a). *Die Byzantiner. Kultur und Alltag im Mittelalter*. Wien; Köln; Weimar: Böhlau Verlag.

Koder, J. (2016b). "8.1. Landschaft und Klima; 8.2. Veränderungen der Umwelt; 8.5. Ernährung und Lebensmittelversorgung". Daim, F. (Hrsg.), *Byzanz. Historisch-kulturwissenschaftliches Handbuch*. Stuttgart: J.B. Metzler, 617-48. Der neue Pauly, Supplementband 11.

Koledarov, P.; Mičev, N. (1973). *Промените в имената и статута на селищата в България 1878-1972 г.* (The Change of Names and Status of Settlements in Bulgaria 1878-1972). Sofija: Nauka i izkustvo.

Popović, M.S. (2009). "Siedlungsstrukturen im Wandel. Das Tal der Strumica bzw. Strumešnica in spätbyzantinischer und osmanischer Zeit (1259-1600)". *Südost-Forschungen*, 68, 1-62.

Popović, M.S. (2010). "Altstraßenforschung am Beispiel des Tales der Strumica bzw. Strumešnica in spätbyzantinischer Zeit (1259-1375/76)". Rakocija, M. (ed.), *Ниш и Византија. Осми научни скуп* (Niš and Byzantium. 8th Scholarly Congress) (Niš, 3.-5. jun 2009). Niš: Sven, 417-32. Zbornik radova 8.

Popović, M.S. (2012). "The Dynamics of Borders, Transportation Networks and Migration in the Historical Region of Macedonia (14th-16th Centuries)". Borgolte, M. et al. (Hrsgg), *Europa im Geflecht der Welt. Mittelalterliche Migrationen in globalen Bezügen*. Berlin: De Gruyter, 155-72. Europa im Mittelalter 20.

Popović, M.S. (2013). "Networks of Border Zones. A Case Study on the Historical Region of Macedonia in the 14th Century AD". Kriz, K.; Cartwright, W.; Kinberger, M. (eds), *Understanding Different Geographies*. Berlin; Heidelberg: Springer, 227-41. Lecture Notes in Geoinformation and Cartography.

Popović, M.S. (2014). *Historische Geographie und Digital Humanities. Eine Fallstudie zum spätbyzantinischen und osmanischen Makedonien*. Mainz; Ruhpolding: Harrassowitz. Peleus, Studien zur Archäologie und Geschichte Griechenlands und Zyperns 61.

Popović, M.S. (2015). "Die Topographie der mittelalterlichen Stadt Skopje zwischen Byzantinischem und Serbischem Reich (13.-14. Jh.)". *Initial. A Review of Medieval Studies*, 3, 35-55.

Popović, M.S. (2016). "Raumordnung und Stadtgestalt in den Städten auf der Balkanhalbinsel in der spätbyzantinischen Zeit". Gruber, E. et al. (Hrsgg), *Städte im lateinischen Westen und im griechischen Osten zwischen Spätantike und Früher Neuzeit. Topographie. Recht. Religion*. Wien: Böhlau, 79-95. Veröffentlichungen des Instituts für Österreichische Geschichtsforschung 66.

Popović, M.S. (2017). "Vlachen in der historischen Landschaft Mazedonien im Spätmittelalter und in der Frühen Neuzeit". Pohl, W.; Hartl, I.; Haubrichs, W. (Hrsgg), *Walchen, Romani und Latini. Variationen einer nachrömischen Gruppenbezeichnung zwischen Britannien und dem Balkan*. Wien: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 183-96. Forschungen zur Geschichte des Mittelalters 21.

Popović, M.S.; Schmid, D.; Breier, M. (2017). "From the *Via Egnatia* to Prilep, Bitola and Ohrid. A Medieval Road Map Based on Written Sources, Archaeological Remains and GIScience". Külzer, A.; Popović, M.S. (eds), *Space, Landscapes and Settlements in Byzantium. Studies in Historical Geography of the Eastern Mediterranean Presented to Johannes Koder*. Vienna; Novi Sad: Akademska knjiga, 289-317; 511-18. Studies in Historical Geography and Cultural Heritage 1.

Schnabl, W. (2019). "Unsere virtuelle Welt. Die Ausgewogenheit macht es aus". *Bergauf. Das Magazin des Österreichischen Alpenvereins seit 1875*, 5, 3.

Spitzer, M. (2018-19). *Die Smartphone Epidemie. Gefahren für Gesundheit. Bildung und Gesellschaft*. Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta.

Sundhaussen, H. (2005). "Die Wiederentdeckung des Raums. Über Nutzen und Nachteil von Geschichtsregionen". Clewing, K.; Schmitt, O.J. (Hrsgg), *Südosteuropa. Von vormoderner Vielfalt und nationalstaatlicher Vereinheitlichung. Festschrift für Edgar Hösch*. München: R. Oldenbourg, 13-33. Südosteuropäische Arbeiten 127.

United Nations (2014). *World's Population increasingly Urban with more than Half living in Urban Areas*. `https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/news/population/world-urbanization-prospects-2014.html`.

Interdisciplinary Field Methods in the Study of Byzantine Landscapes
The Land and the Sea in Rough Cilicia

Günder Varinlioğlu
Mimar Sinan Fine Arts University, Istanbul

Abstract   This paper presents an archaeological case study exemplifying the efforts to integrate methods, such as airborne LiDAR, Cosmogenic Nuclide Exposure Analysis, and Artificial Intelligence for the study of a Late Antique islandscape in Rough Cilicia/Isauria. The extensive limestone quarries on Dana Island (Pityoussa) may have functioned as an industrial settlement servicing the work of the renowned Isaurian builders. In this context, researchers face the challenge of bridging the gap between disciplines like landscape archaeology and architectural history that operate within a framework of fragmentary data and imprecise chronologies, with the premium placed on accurate and precise data acquisition by the fields of engineering.

Keywords   LiDAR. Quarries. Isauria. Builder. Remote sensing. Island. Consilience.

Summary   1 Introduction. – 2 Byzantine Landscapes of Rough Cilicia.Remarks on the State of the Field – 3 Case Study. A Landscape Between the Coast and the Sea – 4 Isaurian Builders. From Texts to Remote Sensing – 5 Airborne LiDAR. Modelling the Industrial Settlement and Its Quarries on Dana Island – 6 Dating Quarrying Activity on Dana Island – 7 Where Do We Go from Here?

1 Introduction

In the seventeenth International Byzantine Congress in 1986, James Russell (1986), who is among the pioneers of the archaeology of Rough Cilicia (Isauria), gave a talk during a session devoted to the transformation of urban life in the Early Byzantine Empire. At this session five papers covered topics ranging from traditional approaches to methodological discussions that indicated an increasing interest in interdisciplinary studies.[1] His was entitled, "Transformations in Early Byzantine Urban Life. The Contribution and Limitations of Archeological Evidence". Russell commended Byzantine historians for their willingness to incorporate archaeological and numismatic evidence in their interpretation of the disappearance of the *polis*. In Russell's words "the subject is now potentially subject to a refinement that would have been unthinkable a decade ago" (1986, 138). Archaeology, mainly excavations, have enabled historians to find "solutions to the questions that the written texts fail to answer or even address". While attempting to bridge the gap between historians and archaeologists, Russell warned the readers about the limitations of the material evidence which historians may be less critical about. Almost four decades later, the divide between historians and archaeologists is much less problematic as many scholars have been trained in both fields or are involved in collaborative projects, giving them a greater exposure to each other's tools of trade. Since Russell's seminal paper, archaeology has certainly carved for itself a greater niche in Byzantine Studies.[2]

We seem to have reached another turning point as new field and analysis methods promise to take us beyond the interpretations based on historical texts and archaeological evidence in a traditional sense. We owe this to the increasing level of interdisciplinary research in Byzantine Studies, from archaeoacoustics to climate modelling, network analysis, and digital humanities with its diverse sub-fields that offer new ways of collecting, (re)processing, and modelling different types of legacy data, as well as to new means of data collection through new innovative technologies. Byzantine scholars

---

[1] In another paper in the same volume, J. Koder (1986) applied area planning theories of the nineteenth and twentieth century (Location Theory and Central Place Theory) to the study of Early Byzantine cities.

[2] In the past two decades, seminal publications appeared on Late Antique and Byzantine archaeology. *The Late Antique Archaeology* series edited by L. Lavan has been published annually since 2003. K. Bowes's (2008) overview of the current state of Early Christian archaeology prompted the publication of the first handbook on the topic (Pettegrew, Caraher, Davis 2019). Meanwhile, M. Decker has been working on the first companion on Byzantine archaeology for the Cambridge University Press. For his commentary of recent developments in Byzantine archaeology, see Decker 2018.

are more and more interested in collaborating with a wider range of disciplines, such as remote sensing, computer science, landscape architecture, and paleoenvironmental sciences, the last mentioned being at the forefront of interdisciplinary endeavours in Byzantine archaeology and history (Izdebski, Mulryan 2019). This interest is reciprocal as researchers in non-humanities fields are equally inclined to produce, analyse, and present historical material. The bright new future promised by new technologies has already prompted self-reflection not only about the boundaries but also about the future of our field, our educational process, and the manner in which we assemble archaeological projects. Keeping our distance from the digital revolution does not seem to be a viable option anymore, especially after the Covid-19 pandemic. Instead, we need to be active participants in the redefinition of what we do, how we do it, and where we go from here. How does Byzantine studies, a notoriously old-fashioned field, adapt to these sea changes? What will be the contribution of Byzantine scholars to bridging the gap between disciplines and to making new connections?

Russell had underlined that historians, as non-specialists in archaeological and numismatic evidence, often relied on published conclusions rather than on the data that formed the basis of said conclusions, thereby overlooking the inherently interpretative quality of the results. Three decades later, this concern has assumed greater imperative as Byzantinists attempt to collaborate with scholars in disciplines that employ a contrasting range of methodologies, terminologies, research design, and publication culture. Archaeology has, time and again, incorporated methods from other disciplines. As such, one might argue that all archaeological projects are multidisciplinary by nature, regardless of whether they engage with sister fields, such as art and architectural history, numismatics, epigraphy, or with more distant disciplines, such as geology, remote sensing, or archaeometry. However, the fact remains that true interdisciplinary research is a goal that we often aspire to, yet seldom achieve. The concept of consilience, or the integration of the research methods of different disciplines to investigate similar questions, was addressed comprehensively by Adam Izdebski (Izdebski et al. 2016), John Haldon (Haldon et al. 2018), Michael McCormick (2011) and others, in the context of the relationship between climate and cultural change. Their interdisciplinary collaborations with paleoenvironmental scientists is significant not only for the results but also for the recommended guidelines for a successful collaboration between scholars and scientists of different research traditions and cultures.

In the study of Byzantine landscapes, the robust tradition of art and architectural history (not to mention, philology, history, and historical geography) inevitably gears the collaboration towards the humanities and social sciences, as opposed to the hard sciences or engi-

neering. My paper is intended to offer a relevant case study of recent efforts to integrate novel methods to our small-scale archaeological survey investigation of a Late Antique islandscape in Rough Cilicia. In the long run, we aspire to be an example – hopefully a successful one – for the intellectual merger of survey archaeology and architectural history, with geology, remote sensing and Artificial Intelligence. The challenge before us is to actualise the consilience of fields like landscape archaeology and architectural history that operate within a framework of fragmentary data and imprecise chronologies, with the premium placed on accurate and precise data acquisition and processing by the field of engineering.

2 Byzantine Landscapes of Rough Cilicia. Remarks on the State of the Field

Field research in Rough Cilicia has witnessed a slow but steady growth since the 1960s. Elisabeth Alföldi-Rosenbaum's survey in coastal western Rough Cilicia was followed by her excavations at Anemurium (1962-67), which continued until the auspices of James Russell in 1971-87. Excavations have been carried out at urban centres both coastal (e.g. Antiochia at Cragum, Celenderis, Elaiussa-Sebaste) and inland (e.g. Diocaesarea, Olba); rural settlements (e.g. Kilisetepe); pilgrimage centres and churches (e.g. Alahan, Aphrodisias, Meryemlik). Archaeological surveys assumed different forms, including intensive and extensive pedestrian survey (e.g. Western Rough Cilicia, Göksu River valley), the documentation and mapping of settlements, watchtowers, churches and early Byzantine houses, architectural sculpture, inscriptions, and olive presses. By 2021, Rough Cilicia is no longer the *terra incognita* that it was a few decades ago.[3] However, despite the lively archaeological research and the rich Late Antique architectural heritage of the region, publications remain lagging even for a subject as commonplace to Byzantine architectural history and archaeology as churches. On the other hand, systematic landscape surveys – especially intensive pedestrian survey – are scarce.[4] While the body of knowledge obtained in Rough Cilicia dis-

---

[3] A 2018 colloquium focused on Early Christianity mainly in central parts of Cilicia (Cortese 2020). The conference (2007) that had brought together specifically scholars of Rough Cilicia is already more than a decade old (Hoff, Townsend 2013).

[4] The 2015 legislation of the Turkish Heritage Authority has initially banned, then severely restricted the collection of surface material, which has deeply affected field methodology. It should also be noted that survey permits have been mostly held by researchers trained in the old tradition of Classical Archaeology or Byzantine art history, which rarely include the theoretical framework and methodology for the study of landscapes in their curriculum or field practice. With the exception of a few international

plays geographical and material breadth, its chronology remains irksome, in large part because survey pottery, especially locally produced common and coursewares, and architectural features such as masonry, sculpture, and church forms lack the necessary stratigraphic *comparanda*. Furthermore, the scholarship on Rough Cilicia still needs an accurate and comprehensive documentation of settlements and their architecture, high-quality photographs, detailed descriptions of sites and landscapes, printed catalogues or preferably digital (geo)databases with comprehensive metadata.[5] Finally, novel methods of field documentation and analysis, and interdisciplinary collaboration beyond the usual partners such as archaeometry and geophysics remain limited in the scholarship of Rough Cilicia.[6]

3 Case Study. A Landscape Between the Coast and the Sea

The case study I will discuss in this paper is the Boğsak Archaeological Survey (2010-19, 2021) under my direction, that has investigated closely two coastal islands of the Taşucu Gulf, namely Boğsak (Asteria) and Dana (Pityoussa), and their mainland hinterlands [fig. 1]. The livelihood of these island communities deprived of water or significant agricultural resources was contingent upon their connectivity to nearby and/or distant places. Their most robust period of settlement activity occurred during late antiquity following the foundation of Constantinople. Our intensive pedestrian survey and architectural study on the small Boğsak Island (c. 7 hectares) suggests dense inhabitation from the late fourth into the late seventh/eighth centuries. Settlement seems to have survived in some form until the ninth or tenth century CE, or even into the twelfth century, although the latest phase may represent renewed activity on a drastically reduced scale (Rauh, Wohmann, Varinlioğlu forthcoming). Dana Island, the largest island of Rough Cilicia (c. 260 hectares) presents a more complex picture. The earliest occupation may go back to the sixth century

projects, scholarship on Rough Cilicia continues to be a traditional field with limited interdisciplinary collaboration.

5 The online pottery databases, initiated and led by Nicholas K. Rauh, first for the Rough Cilicia Archaeological Survey Project (RCSP), then for the Boğsak Archaeological Survey (BOGA) are the only examples of raw data made digitally accessible for Rough Cilicia: Autret et al. 2019; Varinlioğlu et al. 2020; Varinlioglu, Rauh, Pejša 2020.

6 The Rough Cilicia Archaeological Survey (RCSP) stands out with its paleoenvironmental research on deforestation and human occupation in the Roman period. See Akkemik et al. 2012; Karlıoğlu et al. 2016. More recently, two survey projects (including ours) in Rough Cilicia joined the interdisciplinary collaboration for the application of Optically Stimulated Luminescence (OSL) profiling for dating agricultural terraces, see Turner et al. 2021.
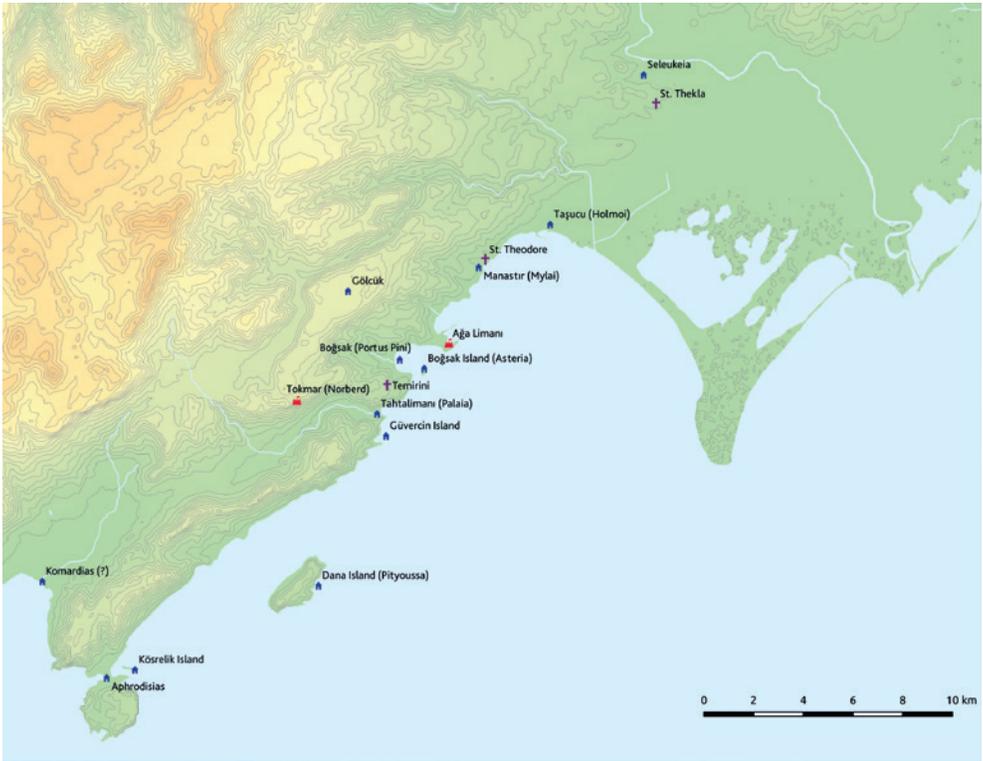
Figure 1 The Taşucu Gulf in Rough Cilicia (map: Kıvanç Başak)

BCE when two Iron Age ring forts, possibly serving as temporary military outposts, were built on its crest (Kaye, Rauh, Varinlioğlu 2020) [fig. 2]. The southern fort was reoccupied and modified in late antiquity when a church with a subsidiary chapel (perhaps added in a later phase) was built within the preexisting fortifications. The main settlement developed along the western shore and slopes of the island, which witnessed limited occupation in the Early Roman period, yet grew into a large maritime settlement (c. 10 hectares) during late antiquity, with a peak period of activity in the fifth and sixth centuries, contemporaneous with the settlement on Boğsak Island. Across the lower settlement, dozens of stone-built structures, including a coastal bath, houses, six churches (probably fifth-sixth centuries) were organised on wide terraces. For other nondescript structures, we may infer general functions that one would expect to find at a maritime community site, including hostels, shops, and warehouses (Varinlioğlu et al. 2017).
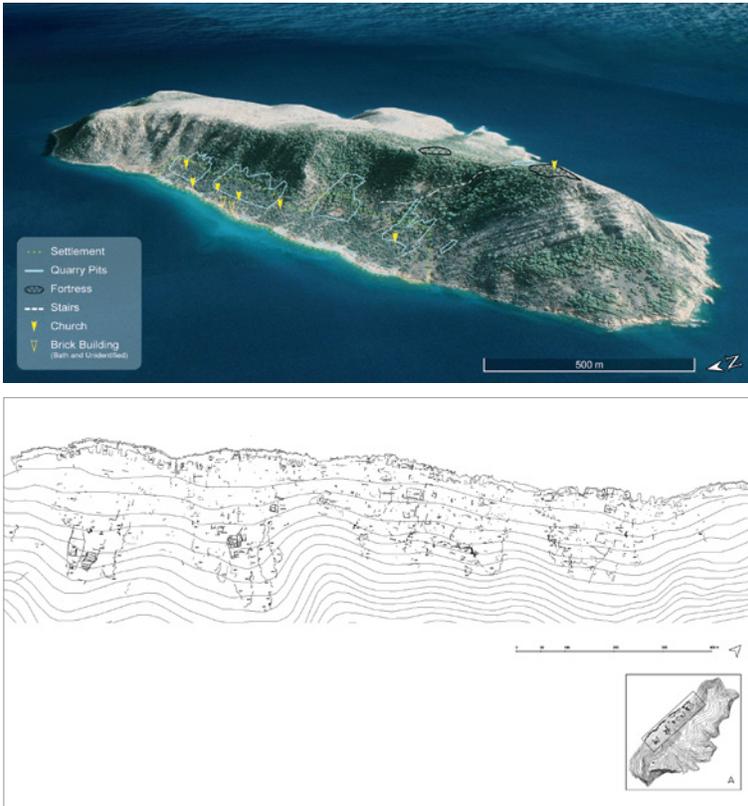
Figure 2 Google Earth Image of Dana Island showing the two settlements, quarry areas, and major buildings (church, bath, residential complex) (image: Hilal Küntüz)

Figure 3 The plan of the lower settlement and quarries on Dana Island (drawing: Nihan Arslan, 2019; image: Hilal Küntüz)

The most noteworthy characteristic of the island is its immense limestone quarries cutting directly through building remains along the shore and extending inland through the settlement to the slopes behind **[fig. 3]**. Still other quarry cuts have been identified preliminarily on the eastern side of the island below the summit (c. 250 metres above sea level) but not far from the upper settlement. Along the shoreline of the settlement, are several rectangular, sloped surfaces located side by side (Jones 2021). These rock-cut areas extending to the water's edge may have been used as loading ramps to slide stone blocks down to the shore where they could be loaded onto boats. This is not the only coastal quarry landscape in the region, but it is the largest and the only one undeniably associated with a settlement. Supported by the island's connectivity, the settlement of Pityoussa

on Dana Island presents itself as a rare example for the study of the quarrying industry of utilitarian building material.[7]

4   Isaurian Builders. From Texts to Remote Sensing

In his article entitled "Isaurian Builders", Cyril Mango (1966) introduced our scholarship to the existence of construction workers who probably originated from Isauria (Rough Cilicia), yet, who were identifiably the builders of choice across the Byzantine empire during the latter part of the fifth century (from the 490s to the 560s CE). He underlined the recurring mention of Isaurian architects, masons, construction workers, and workshops active in North Syria, Palestine, and Constantinople.[8] Scholars have subsequently searched for the handiwork of these builders in architectural remains at home and abroad.[9] The Basilica A in Resafah-Sergiopolis and Qalat Siman in North Syria (Castelfranchi 2007), the church at Tomarza in Cappadocia (Hill 1975), and Theoderic's mausoleum in Ravenna (Deichmann 1974, 230-3) were tentatively associated with the presence of Isaurian builders and pilgrims. Isaurian building know-how seems to have also been put into use in the Byzantine army (Procopius, *The Wars of Justinian* 5.9.11-21, 6.12.6, 6.27.5-8 [transl. Dewing and ed. Kaldellis 2014]; Elton 2000). As the most skilled master builders on the market, Isaurians were known to charge exorbitant fees for their services (Zanini 2007). The emergence of Isaurian crews as experienced construction specialists coincided with the ambitious building activity across Isauria after the fourth century CE, and especially during the fifth and sixth centuries. The epigraphic record from the province has also revealed a wide range of wealthy architectural professionals, such as architects, (master) builders, stone-cutters, contractors, carpenters, and marble workers (Trombley 1987). The

---

[7]   Our rough calculation suggests that quarry pits covered at least c. 7.5 hectares, while the industrial area (including work surfaces, spoil dumps, ramps) reached at least 16 hectares. This brings to mind other industrial sites such as the Early Byzantine marble quarries of Aliki on Thasos, or the much larger and more complex Roman imperial quarries at Mons Claudianus and Mons Porphyrites in Egypt.

[8]   In *The Life of Saint Sabas* two Isaurian *architektones* were responsible for the construction of the saint's lavra between Jerusalem and the Dead Sea (494-550). The *Life of St. Martha* and *the Life of St. Symeon Stylite the Younger* (541-58) describe the work of Isaurian quarrymen, masons, architects, workshops, and unskilled workers, employed or volunteering in building projects in and around Antioch. Isaurians were also mentioned in the reconstruction of the dome St. Sophia after its partial collapse in 558. For detailed discussion of textual evidence, see Mango 1966; further elaborated in Magoulias 1976.

[9]   The vast settlements with their churches across Rough Cilicia may represent the work of Isaurian builders at home. For examples, see Dagron, Callot 1998.

ateliers that were responsible for these stone-built structures comprised skilled artisans who excelled in the construction of arches, vaults, and domes, such as those we have documented on Boğsak and Dana Islands. These workshops must also have included unskilled or low-skilled labourers, employed in tasks such as digging trenches, cutting quarry channels, removing debris, mixing mortar, and transporting stone blocks. The necessary building material was quarried directly at or in the vicinity of the construction site, or more rarely, it was transported from further afield.[10]

In this context, the limestone quarries on Dana Island pose the question whether or not the island functioned as an industrial settlement servicing the work of Isaurian builders. The study of Dana Island presented two main challenges: First, how does one model a terrain heavily modified by human action via quarrying and building? Second, how could one date the quarries? The preponderance of the material evidence for quarrying and stone transport, and the low visibility of the remains due to dense vegetation pose major impediments. Even though a considerable number of quarry faces are visible along and through the slope behind the settlement **[fig. 4]**, except for the remains along the coastline, the settlement itself cannot be studied short of the removal of several hectares of dense vegetation that hides the remains.[11] To calculate the total area and volume of quarrying, to entangle the spatial and temporal relationship between quarry zones and the settlement, and to understand the transformation of the natural terrain into a highly-modified industrial area, methodologies such as traditional mapping, aerial photogrammetry, Terrestrial Laser Scanning (TLS) – all of which we had successfully deployed on both islands – simply proved inadequate. Our logistical, environmental, labour-intensive, and financial challenges necessitated new tactics employing novel methods of data collection, analysis, and modelling. Given the availability of more advanced technologies, we knew that we could raise more cogent questions about the transformation of the terrain, the capacity of the quarries, and the energy consumption required by quarrying activities. To this end, our collaborator, Professor Nicholas K. Rauh of Purdue School of Languages and Cultures, was able to connect our project with the ROSETTA Ini-

---

10   Ordinary materials such as lime and sandstone often travel regionally. Stone transport exceeding 20-30 kilometres distances is significantly cheaper than land transport, especially in the difficult terrain of Rough Cilicia. Cargoes of ordinary stones have not yet been discovered along the south coast of Asia Minor. For Late Antique Eastern Mediterranean, the existence of stone trade in building stones (not marble) is attested by the fifth–sixth century Dor 2001/1 wreck off coastal Israel carrying sandstone (Mor, Kahanov 2006) Stone transport in the Roman period has been thoroughly studied by Russell (2013a; 2013b).

11   The island is a protected archaeological and natural site.

Figure 4   Orthophoto of one of the major quarry zones on Dana Island (orthophoto: Kıvanç Başak, 2018)

tiative under way at the College of Liberal Arts at Purdue University. Initiated by Dr. Sorin Matei, Associate Dean for Research, ROSETTA stands for Remote Observation and Sensing Technologies and Techniques in Archaeology or AI enabled humanities.[12] The first and main component of this collaboration entailed airborne LiDAR and aerial photogrammetry, carried out during the 2019 field season by a team led by Professor Ayman Habib of the Purdue College of Engineering. The processing of this data will also entail AI inverse modelling and design in collaboration with a team led by Professor Daniel Aliaga of the Purdue College of Computer Science. A second collaboration concerned geological sampling to date the quarries, a project undertaken by Professor Darryl Granger and his PhD student Angus Moore at the Purdue College of Earth, Atmospheric, and Planetary Sciences.[13]

5   Airborne LiDAR. Modelling the Industrial Settlement and Its Quarries on Dana Island

LiDAR (Light Detection And Ranging) is a non-invasive remote sensing technology that uses laser scanners to collect 3D geospatial data to map natural and man-made features and landscapes. Widely used since mid-1990s in geosciences, it has gained ground in archaeological projects in the past decade, especially in landscape archaeology.[14] Terrestrial Laser Scanners (TLS) mounted on a tripod, a platform, or a vehicle, are commonly used to generate 3D documentation of architectural remains as these offer better spatial resolution and accuracy than aerial systems. Airborne LiDAR mounted on airplanes or more recently on Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAV)'s, are employed for mapping sites and landscapes which have larger spatial coverage. The ad-

---

12   The ROSETTA Initiative may be reached at https://www.cla.purdue.edu/research/rosetta-initiative/index.html.

13   This collaboration would not be possible without the support of Sorin A. Matei, Associate Dean of Research at the College of Liberal Arts at Purdue University. The 2019 and 2021 fieldwork was financed by the following grants: Seed Grant of the Office of the Vice President of Research at Purdue University (2019); Koç University GABAM Fieldwork Grant (2019); Mimar Sinan Fine Arts University Research Fund (2019); Mary Jaharis Center Project Grant (2021); Mersin Metropolitan Municipality Fieldwork Grant (2021). The LiDAR analysis is currently supported by Purdue University's Humanities without Walls (HWW) Seed Grant (May 2021). The AI project received the grant of the NSF Division of Computer and Information Science and Engineering (no. 2032770, July 2020), "EAGER: Minimal 3D Modeling Methodology, Modeling Ancient Settlements in South Coastal Anatolia" (D. Aliaga, PI; N.K. Rauh and G. Varinlioğlu, co-PI's).

14   For a comprehensive overview of the history of air and space-based remote sensing methods used in archaeological research, see Luo et al. 2019. The use of LiDAR in archaeology is beyond the scope of this paper but the following publications may be consulted for technical introductions for non-specialists: Opitz, Cowley 2013; Chase, Chase, Chase 2017; Crutchley, Crow 2018.

vantage of the latter lies in its capability to cover large swaths of terrain and to enable the discovery and/or mapping of features through dense vegetation cover and even underwater. The laser pulses emitted by the scanner penetrate the foliage; thus, measuring every single surface they hit, including the canopy, archaeological features and the terrain that lies underneath, provided, that is, that the foliage is sufficiently patchy. Airborne LiDAR produces a point cloud that must undergo enhancement procedures of filtering and classification, followed by visualisation in order to be useful for archaeological interpretation.[15] While the analysis and visualisation of the data is often carried out by remote sensing professionals, the archaeologists familiar with the terrain and the subject matter are expected to judge the validity of the featural results revealed by the analysis. The visual interpretation by the archaeologist – often aided by GIS – is a method that is still considered more reliable than (semi)automatic detection techniques such as image enhancement; however, the knowledge, capability, and biases of the archaeologist also play a significant role in the final results (Luo et al. 2019, 22-3). Meanwhile, research on machine-learning methods to increase the accuracy and reliability of automatic identification has also made significant advances, offering the potential to reduce the amount of human effort, and hence the cost to evaluate big data that are measured in terabytes and occasionally even in petabytes. At the same time, machine-learning, in which "digital device and/or technological agency is to exceed human agency" (Huggett 2021, 427) might be the most extreme form of black boxing as archaeologists have limited capability to comprehend or control its techniques.[16]

The remote sensing survey on Dana Island used a mobile mapping system custom-built at Purdue University and mounted on site on a high-end drone.[17] The mapping system consisted of a high-resolution topographic laser scanner, a Global Navigation Satellite System/Inertial Navigation System (GNSS/INS), and a high-resolution, full-frame DSLR camera for Red-Green-Blue (RGB) 2D imagery.[18] The

---

15   Filtering methods and classification parameters are determined based on the characteristics of the territory scanned with the LiDAR. Archaeologists often depend on various visualisations of these numerical datasets, which make them human-readable. About the visualisation of the raster data, see Kokalj, Hesse 2017.

16   Regarding automation in remote sensing, see Opitz, Herrmann 2018; for an earlier discussion about automation versus manual interpretation, see Bennett, Cowley, De Laet 2014.

17   The LiDAR team carried out five flight missions in three days during the 2019 campaign. The team members were, Ayman Habib (PI), Evan Flatt (drone operator), Günder Varinlioğlu and Nicholas Rauh (field consultants).

18   The models of the equipment are as follows: DJI Matrice 600 Pro hexacopter (UAV), Velodyn VLP-32C Ultra Puck (Laser scanner), APX-15 UAV V2 (GNSS/INS), Sony Alpha ILCE-7R camera (36.4 MP resolution) with a fixed lens. For a detailed discussion

LiDAR and imagery data, collected simultaneously by this system, were georeferenced using the coordinates provided by the on-board GNSS. Thus, it was possible to match details in the photographs with those acquired by the laser scanner and vice versa.[19] Airborne photographs serve two purposes: first, high-resolution, georeferenced, and accurate (1 centimetre) orthophotos can be created for each flight; second, the point cloud created by laser scanning may be coloured using the RGB values recorded in the photographs. The result of the latter is a colour-coded and georeferenced Digital Surface Model (DSM) that looks very close to what the eye perceives **[fig. 5]**. Laser beams are mostly reflected off the vegetation, which means that the point cloud data documents foremost the canopy itself. For Dana Island, however, because the tree and shrub cover are relatively patchy, LiDAR collected a considerable amount of data about the terrain and the archaeological remains below, enabling the production of a reliable Digital Terrain Model (DTM) and as many profiles as we may need **[fig. 6]**.

One of the common misconceptions about LiDAR for the general public is that it functions as a sort of X-ray which automatically removes the canopy impeding clear sight. In fact, the different types of data collected by the field team on-site and the detailed knowledge of the landscape are crucial for interpreting the settlement and the features that lie under the vegetation as well as for reconstructing the topography of the island at high resolution. After several campaigns of extensive survey and mapping on the island (2016-19, 2021), our field team has acquired an intimate knowledge and record of the terrain, the vegetation, and the archaeological remains. Our dataset on physical features (buildings, quarries, ramps) was obtained through various formats and scales, including plans, elevations, and sections drawn by hand on paper and measured by GNSS-CORS units, tape measures, laser metres; a comprehensive photographic documentation; Structure-from-Motion data for quarries and select objects, TLS data for a single building complex, and field notes. The airborne LiDAR point cloud and georeferenced 2D imagery complement and contextualise in 3D the data already acquired through field survey and will help to resolve the discrepancies between different types and scales of data.

---

of the technical aspects of the equipment, the LiDAR survey and preliminary results, see Lin et al. 2019.

19 The I-LIVE software, currently under development by a team led by Ayman Habib, allows users to have simultaneous access to photographs and the coordinates measured by the scanner.
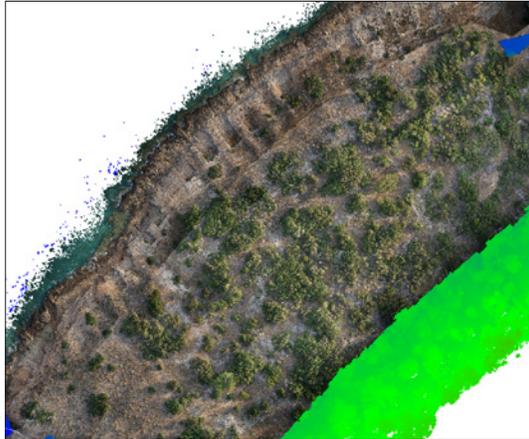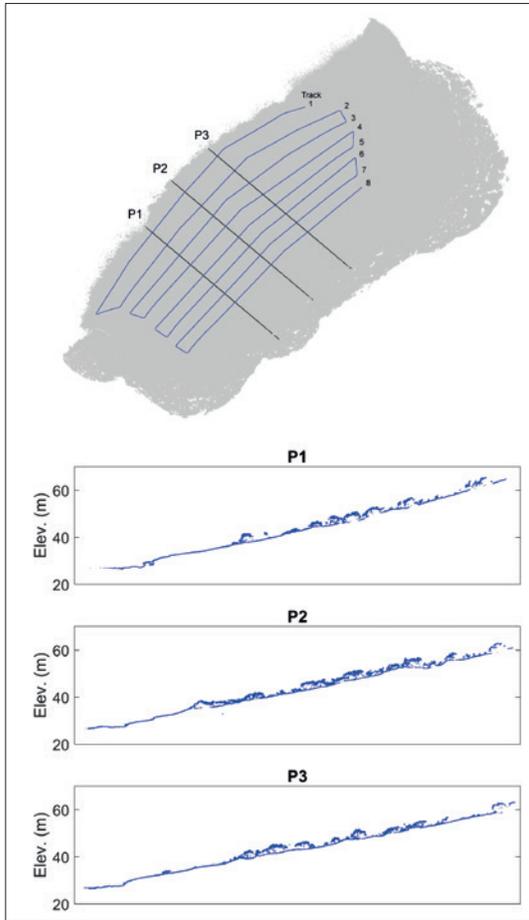
6 Dating Quarrying Activity on Dana Island

Dating quarries is notoriously difficult. First, quarrying technology shows a remarkable continuity until the introduction of modern industrial practices. Toolmarks occasionally help with general periodisation, such as the festoon-like marks created by the heavier pick introduced at the end of first-beginning of second centuries CE. These are actually quite common across Dana Island. The entire range of tools used in stone extraction can rarely be identified because quarries were used either over sustained periods of time or intermittently during different eras, thereby, eliminating the evidence for earlier phases. Furthermore, extraction and working techniques depend heavily on the physical properties of the stone, such as its stratification, hardness, and splitting patterns, all of which make periodisation even more challenging. The debris resulting from the quarrying activity is not stratified; thus, datable material such as potsherds demonstrate only that the quarry was functional at a particular given time. Mason marks and graffiti inscribed on the quarry faces or on the extracted material may also provide chronological *termini*. Similarly, the destination of the material extracted from a particular quarry may help date the quarrying activity (Waelkens, De Paepe, Moens 1990; Fant 2008; Russell 2013a, 81-2).

Dating the quarries of Dana Island is further complicated by the fact that the extracted material was suitable only as ordinary building stone and simple architectural sculpture like those preserved in the churches of the island. We have not come across any inscriptions, graffiti or other symbols at any of the quarries. The dates suggested by the intensive pedestrian survey, also correlating with the Christianisation of the landscape, provide a rough chronology for the development of the settlement but the question how this relates to the quarrying phases does not have a straightforward answer. The buildings, if datable, would provide *termini ante quem* for the quarries lying directly underneath or in very close proximity. Unlike Boğsak Island where almost all the structures employed mortar-bound small stonework of roughly hewn, rectangular stones (Varinlioğlu, Esmer 2017), the buildings on Dana Island display a variety of masonry styles. Larger stone blocks bound with little or no mortar are more common across the lower settlement. This does not necessarily suggest a different chronology (such as Early Roman as opposed to Early Byzantine); instead, this might reflect the practices of the quarrying industry on the island and the properties of the native stone types (Varinlioğlu, Esmer 2019). The rocky outcrops rising above and extending beyond the settlement consist of true limestone like in Boğsak. This is a denser, hence heavier stone that is hard to cut into large pieces as it may easily break along natural fractures and

bedding planes. However, the quarries themselves and the building blocks of the structures often belong to a geological formation known as clastic limestone or limestone alluvium. This type of limestone has significant porosity and is lighter in weight than true limestone.[20] As such, it is easier to cut, lift, and move large blocks of clastic limestone. In addition, the existence of a quarrying industry with experienced quarrymen and lifting equipment and know-how may have facilitated the production of larger blocks.

Operating within the limits of the survey places, we have sought alternative methods that might help us understand the phases of quarrying on Dana Island. Darryl Granger suggested the method of Cosmogenic Nuclide (^{36}Cl) exposure analysis that is used elsewhere to date geomorphic features (e.g. river terraces, fault scarps). This method measures the accumulation of very rare nuclides that are produced by cosmic ray particles passing through mineral grains of the rocks exposed in the upper few metres of the ground surface. By measuring the concentration of ^{36}Cl (according to its recognised calibration), it is possible to determine the length of time surfaces, such as quarry faces, have been exposed to cosmic rays. In ideal conditions, the precision of the dating is +/-250 years. During the 2019 campaign, Angus Moore collected twenty-six samples from nine quarries, four along the coastline, and the remaining five inside and beyond the settlement. So far, we have the preliminary results of the analysis of a single coastal quarry near the southern end of the industrial area of the island (DA-250), which gave a mean quarry age of -1600 +/- 1950 (1σ) before present. Following a Bayesian inference of probability, this large temporal interval may be constrained using two types of priors independent of the dates provided by the analysis. In the first model, since the quarries were excavated before the present day, one may give all ages in the past uniform probability, while assigning zero probability to future ages. In the second model, one may use the overall chronological span of the pottery recorded by the intensive pedestrian survey, as a way to render uniform probability to all the periods between 1200 BCE and 1400 CE. The Bayesian interpretation (using either model) furnishes a narrower probable date range between 550 and 1180 CE. In the second model which relies on the pottery prior, the median probability age would be 760 CE and the mean age 570 CE (Moore, unpublished research report).

The results of these preliminary analyses have, thus, introduced our team to the sampling, analysis, and interpretative methods used

---

20 Alluvial fans are geologically younger than the limestone bedrock of Dana Island, which may be observed at higher elevations. Through erosion, the exposed bedrock accumulated and cemented by secondary calcium carbonate (caliche) in alluvial fans (Moore, e-mail to Varinlioğlu, 23 September 2019).

by two vastly different disciplines. Although the dates obtained by archaeologists using pottery, masonry, architectural sculpture, church forms, and texts may lack precision and complex statistical models, as we come to understand the analytical and interpretive methods of these other disciplines, we should be able to combine the different types of data into a more rigorous statistical model, one capable of placing our suggestions for the dating of the quarrying and the settlement on Dana Island on firmer ground.

7 Where Do We Go from Here?

Our small research team comprising archaeologists, earth scientists, and remote sensing and machine-learning engineers, is still its initial phases of deploying new field and analysis methods for the collaborative study of (Byzantine) landscapes in Rough Cilicia. In this paper, I laid out the beginnings of an interdisciplinary collaboration that research teams separated by space and time are trying to sustain after a successful field campaign two years ago. The Covid-19 pandemic suspended the lab analysis, access to computer facilities and libraries for over a year. Although this long hiatus is slowly coming to an end, the financial and institutional repercussions of the pandemic will continue to affect interdisciplinary collaboration especially when it involves research partners from multiple countries with different institutional schedules, expectations, and infrastructure.

This is by no means the first instance of a collaboration between archaeology, engineering, and earth sciences, but it is unusual for survey projects in Turkey, likewise, in Byzantine Studies. Landscape archaeologists have already appealed to "break down the boundaries within and between disciplines" (Turner 2013, 139). In Byzantine (landscape) archaeology, novel field methods, new technologies and digital tools, including machine-learning, encourage us to push the temporal, theoretical, and methodological boundaries of our fields. As Byzantinists where do we stand on this matter? Byzantine Studies still abides by the scholarly tradition in which the command of ancient and medieval languages continues to be central, while at the same time, there is an increasing demand for researchers proficient in new technologies and methods. Also, as interdisciplinary collaboration takes a greater share in research agendas and as the data exponentially increases with new field methods, there is growing demand for publishing the raw data and detailed final reports that include a description of the evidence alongside the interpretation of this data (Izdebski et al. 2016, 13; Lavan 2015, 7).

Thirty years ago, Russell had warned us about the need to communicate the limitations of the archaeological evidence:

> For while historians are all too conscious of the fragmented and imprecise character of the literary sources that are their stock in trade, they seem to be less aware, and certainly less critical, of similar failings in the archaeological evidence. Of particular concern is a tendency to invest archaeological and numismatic evidence with a decisiveness, especially in matters of chronology and causation that it cannot provide. (Russell 1986, 138)

To this I would add that the scrutiny we have learned to apply to historical and archaeological evidence must now be expanded and adapted to address the results obtained from our collaborations with new disciplines. In the case study I have presented, archaeologists need a basic scientific literacy, including a working knowledge of remote sensing, machine-learning, geological dating, and statistical modelling, and at the same time scientists must be willing to learn about the uncertainties of archaeological data and the interpretative complexities of humanistic and social sciences. This hurdle is harder to overcome than the one posed by technological or digital infrastructure, because there are fewer resources and less allocated time for the kinds of training, brainstorming, and intensive communication that it requires.

As we try to bridge the gap between disciplines, the gap between practitioners in our fields is widening alarmingly due to the discrepancy in the digital, logistical, technological, and human infrastructure. Small projects and institutions are finding it harder and harder to find the needed financial and technical support as ground-breaking field methods, impressive visualisations in mixed reality, new digital platforms and databases requiring super computers, take over the scholarly landscape and are expected to be available in all projects.[21] Among them, remote sensing and machine-learning receive a lot of attention, as institutions like the National Geographic pump up the hype over the 'discovery' of hidden features which generation after generation of archaeologists supposedly could not achieve (Clynes 2018; response in Smith 2018). In fact, the various methods that we borrow or rather use in collaboration with other disciplines are not magical solutions (Joyce 2012). Airborne LiDAR data does not automatically remove the vegetation; Cosmogenic Nuclide Exposure does not easily provide absolute and precise dates for the quarries. The analysis, whether manual, automated, or by machine-learning, requires archaeological and historical knowledge acquired by field archaeologists following the robust methodologies of their discipline.

---

[21] The critique of digital archaeology has become more vocal in the past five years. My discussion was informed foremost by the following works: Huggett 2015; Caraher 2016; Kersel 2016; Rabinowitz 2016.

Ultimately, we will have to synthesise old and new evidence having different degrees of precision and scale. Isaurian builders recorded in texts offer a chronological precision down to half a century, and a trans-regional geographical distribution, but we are not even sure what the term 'Isaurian' signifies. Architectural data, especially from the churches, may narrow the construction at a certain area of the island down to a few centuries. Surface pottery has a large temporal coverage but little geographical precision, even though it extends the connectivity of the island across the Mediterranean. Although the geological analysis may eventually result in absolute dates down to +/-250 years; for the time being, the probabilistic models need archaeological evidence that are likewise imprecise and uncertain. To interpret the LiDAR data with its empty or obscure patches, we use another kind of incomplete data collected by the field teams. McCormick's (2011, 255) remark on the collaboration between climatologists and historians is valid also for us: "Scientists, it turns out, need historians and archaeologists as much as historians and archaeologists need scientists".

As we use the tools and methods offered by advanced technologies created, mastered, and shared by collaborating disciplines, the necessity for a critical approach to data collection, its manipulation by humans or machines, its representation, and interpretation, ultimately falls upon scholars in the humanities and social sciences. While recognising the challenges posed by the need to balance human and technological agency and autonomy,[22] we still believe that our interdisciplinary collaboration with the Earth Sciences, Remote Sensing and AI science, is crucial to our effort to generate multiple hypothetical models for the transformation of Dana Island into a complex archaeological landscape. Alternative models, created by machine-learning, human agents, and interdisciplinary collaboration will hopefully enable us to write multiple narratives, which can be modified, updated, or refuted through further research and analysis. This might be the hook that will connect architectural history, landscape archaeology, earth sciences, LiDAR, and Artificial Intelligence.

---

[22] I refer specifically to the discussions by Huggett 2021, esp. 428-9. Our team insists upon digital augmentation rather than full automation. Archaeologists are willing to share the agency but not yield the authority to digital technology.

Bibliography

Akkemik, Ü. et al. (2012). "The Archaeology of Deforestation in South Coastal Turkey". *International Journal of Sustainable Development & World Ecology*, 19, 395-405. `https://doi.org/10.1080/13504509.2012.684363`.

Autret, C. et al. (2019). "Rough Cilicia Archaeological Survey Project (RCSP) Collections". *Purdue University Research Repository* (*PURR*). `https://doi.org/10.4231/3P20-MG91`.

Averett, E.W.; Gordon, J.M.; Counts, D.B. (eds) (2016). *Mobilizing the Past for a Digital Future. The Potential of Digital Archaeology*. Grand Forks (ND): The Digital Press; University of North Dakota. `https://doi.org/10.31356/dpb008`.

Bennett, R.; D. Cowley, D.; De Laet, V. (2014). "The Data Explosion. Tackling the Taboo of Automatic Feature Recognition in Airborne Survey Data". *Antiquity*, 88(341), 896-905. `https://doi.org/10.1017/S0003598X00050766`.

Bowes, K. (2008). "Early Christian Archaeology. A State of the Field". *Religion Compass*, 2(4), 575-619. `https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1749-8171.2008.00078.x`.

Caraher, W. (2016). "Slow Archaeology. Technology, Efficiency, and Archaeological Work". Averett, Gordon, Counts 2016, 421-41.

Castelfranchi, M.F. (2007). "Resafa nel VI secolo". Quintavalle, A.C. (a cura di), *Medioevo mediterraneo. L'Occidente, Bisanzio e l'Islam = Atti del Convegno internazionale di studi* (Parma, 21-5 settembre 2004). Milano: Electa, 153-9.

Chase, A.S.Z.; Chase, D.Z.; Chase, A.F. (2017). "LiDAR for Archaeological Research and the Study of Historical Landscapes". Soldovieri, F.; Masini, N. (eds), *Sensing the Past. From Artifact to Historical Site*. Cham: Springer International Publishing, 89-100.

Clynes, T. (2018). "Exclusive. Laser Scans Reveal Maya 'Megalapolis' Below Guatemalan Jungle". *National Geographic*, 1 February. `https://www.nationalgeographic.com/history/article/maya-laser-lidar-guatemala-pacunam`.

Cortese, A. (ed.) (2020). *Identity and Cultural Exchange in Ancient Cilicia. New Results and Future Perspectives = Internationales Kolloquium* (München, 18-19 Mai 2018). Wiesbaden: Dr. Ludwig Weichert.

Crutchley, S.; Crow, P. (2018). *Using Airborne Lidar in Archaeological Survey. The Light Fantastic*. Swindon: Historic England.

Dagron, G.; Callot, O. (1998). "Les bâtisseurs Isauriens chez eux". Ševčenko, I.; Hutter, I. (eds), *Aetos. Studies in Honour of Cyril Mango Presented to Him on April 14, 1998*. Stuttgart; Leipzig: B.G. Teubner, 55-70, pls 20-5.

Decker, M. (2018). "The Current State of Byzantine Archaeology". *History Compass*, 16(9), 1-8. `https://doi.org/10.1111/hic3.12459`.

Deichmann, F.W. (1974). *Ravenna, Haupstadt des spätantiken Abendlandes*, Bd. 2. Wiesbaden: F. Steiner.

Dewing, H.B. (transl.); Kaldellis, A. (ed.) (2014). *Prokopios: The Wars of Justinian*. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, Inc.

Elton, H. (2000). "The Nature of the Sixth-Century Isaurians". Mitchell, S.; Greatrex, G. (eds), *Ethnicity and Culture in Late Antiquity*. London: Duckworth & The Classical Press of Wales, 293-307.

Fant, J.C. (2008). "Quarrying and Stoneworking". Oleson, J.P. (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Engineering and Technology in the Classical World*. Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 121-35.

Haldon, J. et al. (2018). "History Meets Palaeoscience. Consilience and Collaboration in Studying Past Societal Responses to Environmental Change". *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 115(13), 3210-18.

Hill, S. (1975). "The Early Christian Church at Tomarza, Cappadocia. A Study Based on Photographs Taken in 1909 by Gertrude Bell". *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, 29, 149-64.

Hoff, M.C.; Townsend, R.F. (eds) (2013). *Rough Cilicia. New Historical and Archaeological Approaches = Proceedings of an International Conference* (Lincoln, Nebraska, October 2007). Havertown (PA): Oxbow Books.

Huggett, J. (2015). "A Manifesto for an Introspective Digital Archaeology". *Open Archaeology*, 1, 86-95. `https://doi.org/10.1515/opar-2015-0002`.

Huggett, J. (2021). "Algorithmic Agency and Autonomy in Archaeological Practice". *Open Archaeology*, 7(1), 417-34. `https://doi.org/10.1515/opar-2020-0136`.

Izdebski, A. et al. (2016). "Realising Consilience. How Better Communication between Archaeologists, Historians and Natural Scientists can Transform the Study of Past Climate Change in the Mediterranean", in "Mediterranean Holocene Climate, Environment and Human Societies", monogr. no, *Quaternary Science Reviews*, 136, 5-22. `https://doi.org/10.1016/j.quascirev.2015.10.038`.

Izdebski, A.; Mulryan, M. (eds) (2019). *Environment and Society in the Long Late Antiquity*. Boston: Brill.

Jones, M.R. (2021). "The Rock-Cut Shoreline Features of Dana Island and the Maritime Landscape of the Taşucu Gulf, Rough Cilicia". Demesticha, S.; Blue, L. (eds), *Under the Mediterranean*. Vol. 1, *Studies in Maritime Archaeology*. Leiden: Sidestone Press Academics, 335-52.

Joyce, R. (2012). "Good Science, Big Hype, Bad Archaeology". *The Berkeley Blog*, 7 June. `https://blogs.berkeley.edu/2012/06/07/good-science-big-hype-bad-archaeology`.

Karlıoğlu, N. et al. (2016). "Palynological Evidence for Human Occupation in Western Rough Cilicia (Southwest Turkey)". *Quaternary International*, 401, 109-22.

Kaye, N.; Rauh, N.K.; Varinlioğlu, G. (2020). "Iron Age Citadels on Dana Island". *ANMED News Bulletin on Archaeology from Mediterranean Anatolia*, 18, 24-6. `https://doi.org/10.5615/neareastarch.80.1.0050`.

Kersel, M.M. (2016). "Response. Living a Semi-Digital Kinda Life". Averett, Gordon, Counts 2016, 475-92.

Koder, J. (1986). "The Urban Character of the Early Byzantine Empire. Some Reflections on a Settlement Geographical Approach to the Topic". *The 17th International Byzantine Congress. Major Papers* (Dumbarton Oaks; Georgetown University, Washington, D.C., 3-8 August 1986). New Rochelle (NY): Aristide D. Caratzas, 156-87.

Kokalj, Z.; Hesse, R. (2017). *Airborne Laser Scanning Raster Data Visualization. A Guide to Good Practice*. Ljubljana: Založba ZRC.

Lavan, L. (2015). "Field Methods and Post Excavation Techniques in Late Antique Archaeology. Anyone for Discussion?". Lavan, L.; Mulryan, M. (eds), *Field Methods and Post-Excavation Techniques in Late Antique Archaeology*. Leiden: Brill, 1-13.

Lin, Y-C. et al. (2019). "Evaluation of UAV LiDAR for Mapping Coastal Environments". *Remote Sensing*, 11(24), 2893. `https://doi.org/10.3390/rs11242893`.

Luo, L. et al. (2019). "Airborne and Spaceborne Remote Sensing for Archaeological and Cultural Heritage Applications. A Review of the Century (1907-2017)". *Remote Sensing of Environment*, 232, 111280. `https://doi.org/10.1016/j.rse.2019.111280`.

Magoulias, H.J. (1976). "Trades and Crafts in the Sixth and Seventh Centuries as Viewed in the Lives of the Saints". *Byzantinoslavica*, 37, 11-35.

Mango, C. (1966). "Isaurian Builders". Wirth, P. (Hrsg.), *Polychronion. Festschrift Franz Dölger zum 75. Geburstag*. Heidelberg: C. Winter, 358-65.

McCormick, M. (2011). "History's Changing Climate. Climate Science, Genomics, and the Emerging Consilient Approach to Interdisciplinary History". *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, 42(2), 251-73. `https://doi.org/10.1162/JINH_a_00214`.

Moore, A. (unpublished research report). "Cosmogenic ^{36}Cl Difference Dating of Quarries on Dana Island: Preliminary Results". June 2021.

Mor, H.; Kahanov, Y. (2006). "The Dor 2001/1 Shipwreck, Israel. A Summary of the Excavation". *The International Journal of Nautical Archaeology*, 35(2), 274-89. `https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1095-9270.2006.00110.x`.

Opitz, R.S.; Cowley, D.C. (eds) (2013). *Interpreting Archaeological Topography. Airborne Laser Scanning, 3D Data and Ground Observation*. Oxford; Oakville (CT): Oxbow Books.

Opitz, R.S.; Herrmann, J. (2018). "Recent Trends and Long-Standing Problems in Archaeological Remote Sensing". *Journal of Computer Applications in Archaeology*, 1(1), 29-31. `https://doi.org/10.5334/jcaa.11`.

Pettegrew, D.K.; Caraher, W.R.; Davis, T.W. (eds) (2019). *The Oxford Handbook of Early Christian Archaeology*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Rabinowitz, A. (2016). "Response. Mobilizing (Ourselves) for a Critical Digital Archaeology". Averett, Gordon, Counts 2016, 493-520.

Rauh, N.K.; Wohmann, R.; Varinlioğlu, G. (forthcoming). "Boğsak Pedestrian Survey. Pottery and Settlement Chronology". Varinlioğlu, G. (ed.), *Settlements on the Sea. The Boğsak Archaeological Survey Investigation of Islandscapes in Rough Cilicia*.

Russell, B. (2013a). *The Economics of the Roman Stone Trade*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Russell, B. (2013b). "Roman and Late-Antique Shipwrecks with Stone Cargoes. A New Inventory". *Journal of Roman Archaeology*, 26, 331-61. `https://doi.org/10.1017/S1047759413000184`.

Russell, J. (1986). "Transformations in Early Byzantine Urban Life. The Contribution and Limitations of Archeological Evidence". *The 17th International Byzantine Congress. Major Papers* (Dumbarton Oaks; Georgetown University, Washington, D.C., 3-8 August 1986). New Rochelle (NY): Aristide D. Caratzas, 137-54.

Smith, M.E. (2018). "Why I Am Skeptical about the New Maya LiDAR Results from NGS". *Publishing Archaeology*, 4 February. `http://publishingarchaeology.blogspot.com/2018/02/why-i-am-skeptical-about-new-maya-lidar.html`.

Steadman, S.R.; McMahon, G. (eds) (2017). *Archaeology of Anatolia*. Vol. 2, *Recent Discoveries (2015-2016)*. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

Trombley, F.R. (1987). "Korykos in Cilicia Trachis. The Economy of a Small Coastal City in Late Antiquity (Saec. V-VI). A Precis". *The Ancient History Bulletin*, 1(1), 16-23.

Turner, S. (2013). "Landscape Archaeology". Howard, P.; Thompson, I.; Waterton, E. (eds), *The Routledge Companion to Landscape Studies*. London; New York: Routledge, 131-42.

Turner, S. et al. (2021). "Agricultural Terraces in the Mediterranean. Medieval Intensification Revealed by OSL Profiling and Dating". *Antiquity*, 95(381), 773-90. `https://doi.org/10.15184/aqy.2020.187`.

Varinlioğlu, G.; Esmer, M. (2017). "Houses on an Island. Boğsak (Asteria) in Isauria in Late Antiquity". Steadman, McMahon 2017, 255-74.

Varinlioğlu, G.; Esmer, M. (2019). "From an Abandoned Quarry to a Residential Complex. A Case Study on Dana Island in Isauria (Rough Cilicia)". Steadman, McMahon 2017, 246-59.

Varinlioğlu, G. et al. (2017). "The 2016 Dana Island Survey. Investigation of an Island Harbor in Ancient Rough Cilicia by the Boğsak Archaeological Survey (BOGA)". *Near Eastern Archaeology*, 80(1), 50-9. `https://doi.org/10.5615/neareastarch.80.1.0050`.

Varinlioglu, G. et al. (2020). "Boğsak Archaeological Survey. Processed Ceramics, 2016 and 2017". *Purdue University Research Repository* (*PURR*). `https://doi.org/10.4231/WF3E-2W39`.

Varinlioglu, G.; Rauh, N.K.; Pejša, S. (2020). "Boğsak Archaeological Survey. Processed Ceramics, 2015". *Purdue University Research Repository* (*PURR*). `https://doi.org/10.4231/08XY-XJ30`.

Waelkens, M.; De Paepe, P.; Moens, L. (1990). "The Quarrying Techniques of the Greek World". True, M.; Podany, J. (eds), *Marble. Art Historical and Scientific Perspectives on Ancient Sculpture*. Malibu: Paul Getty Museum, 47-72.

Zanini, E. (2007). "Technology and Ideas. Architects and Master-Builders in the Early Byzantine World". Lavan, L.; Zanini, E.; Sarantis, A.C. (eds), *Technology in Transition, A.D. 300-650*. Leiden: Brill, 381-406. Late Antique Archaeology 4.

Which Interdisciplinarity?
Reinvigorating Theory and Practice as an Opportunity for Byzantine Studies

Myrto Veikou
Uppsala University

Abstract   Examinations of the methods and goals of knowledge production at its core are crucial for future scientific developments and challenging for the academic status quo. Interdisciplinarity is a central aspect: at its best, it represents innovation, making knowledge more relevant, balancing integration and specialisation, and raising questions on the viability of expertise. These issues are discussed within the context of Byzantine studies in respect to the latter's particular traditions, practices, and interests. Ways of bridging interdisciplinary gaps are proposed, together with a paradigmatic study based on the concept of space.

Keywords   Byzantine studies. Interdisciplinarity. Interdisciplines. Knowledge production. Education. Academic practices. Methodology. Theory. Space. Concepts.

Summary   1 Interdisciplinarity and Byzantine Studies. – 2 Interdisciplinary Concerns Around Theory and Practice, Methodology and Interpretation, Across Byzantine Studies. – 2.1 Methodology. Inter-, Intra-, Trans-, and Cross-Disciplinary Scientific Practices. – 2.2 Theorisation. Transdisciplinary Interpretations. – 3 Byzantine Spatialities Used as Bridges Among Disciplines in Humanities, Natural and Social Sciences. – 3.1 Space as Physical Dimension. – 3.2 Space as Social Parameter. – 3.3 Space as Cultural Component. – 3.4 Space as Physical Dimension, Social Parameter and Cultural Component. – 4 Inter Those Disciplines! An Opportunity for Byzantine Studies. – 4.1 Re-Theorising Byzantine Studies. An Educational Challenge. – 4.2 Advantageous Academic Practices for Flexibility and Growth. – 4.3 Historicising as 'Undisciplining' Knowledge. A New Perspective. – 4.4 'Travelling Concepts'. A Ground for Future Collaboration.

1   Interdisciplinarity and Byzantine Studies

"What is it that we do? Do we do archaeology, history, or philology?..." an old friend, prehistoric archaeologist, protested during our collaboration on a comparative study of prehistoric and historical cavernous spaces around the Aegean Sea. As understandable as the complaint is from my friend's point of view, so inconceivable it is from mine, although we are both trained as archaeologists and have parallel academic interests. In my head, how could I ever claim to understand ways, in which Byzantine people used caves, if I overlooked the ways in which those people saw and thought about caves, as expressed by their own words?

Byzantinists have this privilege, in comparison to other scholars in historical studies, to have access to their object of study through extensive, diverse, material and immaterial remains. This privilege potentially allows them a profound comprehension of their subject, i.e. the Byzantine society and culture. This privilege also supports my main argument in this paper: interdisciplinarity is not a free choice in Byzantine studies – it is fundamentally inherent in them, simply because a big variety of cultural expressions constitutes the footprint of the Byzantine people's lives in the Eastern Mediterranean. Towards their potential grasp of those lives, Byzantinists – like classicists and other medievalists – are able to consider traces of historical landscapes, material remains of art, architecture, technology and material culture, as well as people's languages and written communications. Thus, Byzantine studies are a multidisciplinary field. Therein, it would be hard to imagine any scientific work conducted amidst strictly impermeable disciplinary boundaries, to turn out adequately meaningful in our contemporary scientific context.

But then, why do we need to fragment this broad-ranged consideration into different sections of understanding during our academic practice? Why do we have to 'discipline' knowledge by breaking it down to pieces that we must, then, re-articulate so as to comprehend the big picture composed of 'Byzantine experiences' of human life on earth? It is because, in *our* modern world, "disciplines discipline disciples" (Barry, Born 2013, 1). In Andrew Barry's and Georgina Born's words:

> A commitment to a discipline is a way of ensuring that certain disciplinary methods and concepts are used rigorously and that undisciplined and undisciplinary objects, methods and concepts are ruled out. By contrast, ideas of interdisciplinarity imply a variety of boundary transgressions, in which the disciplinary and disciplining rules, trainings and subjectivities given by existing knowledge corpuses are put aside. (Barry, Born 2013, 1)

As a result of that inevitable contrast, boundaries among social and natural sciences are being reconfigured and new scientific fields constantly emerge. The ubiquity of the term 'interdisciplinary' in current academic and educational writing suggests that it is rapidly becoming the dominant form of scholarly work. Interdisciplinarity has emerged as a key political preoccupation albeit an ambiguous one. More often than not both scholars and commentators disagree about what they mean by 'interdisciplinary'. According to Harvey Graff (2015, 1) "the term tends to obscure as much as illuminate the diverse practices gathered under its rubric".

What is, therefore, important in this case, is a 'historicised' perspective: it is much more productive to consider our contemporary formations of interdisciplinarity – not the concept per se. This perspective elucidates ways in which interdisciplinarity has come to be seen as a solution to a series of current social problems: in particular, the relations between science and society, the development of accountability, and the need to foster innovation in knowledge economy (Barry, Born 2013). Through this perspective the present situation can be understood as a problematisation: the question of whether a given knowledge practice is too disciplinary, or interdisciplinary, or not disciplinary enough becomes an issue and an object of enquiry for governments, funding agencies and researchers (Barry, Born 2013). In what follows, I specify this situation's implications for Byzantine studies in respect to the latter's particular traditions, practices, and interests, and I propose some ways of bridging interdisciplinary gaps within this context.

2 Interdisciplinary Concerns Around Theory and Practice, Methodology and Interpretation, Across Byzantine Studies

At different times and in different contexts, interdisciplinarity takes recognisably different terms, forms, and locations and faces distinctively different chances of success or failure. Byzantine studies, in specific, are constantly obliged to deal with division debates: Byzantinists must distinguish between general (non-specialised) and advanced (specialised) work and they must make respective judgements about privileging disciplinary borders to integrational perspectives or vice versa. Harvey Graff (2016) explains that such judgments are important factors, almost a signature, and they have also become forms of authority nowadays. He has an interesting insight on one fundamental divide:

> By far the greatest amount of interdisciplinary research and teaching lies in specialized and advanced studies. Also claiming the

mantle of interdisciplinarity, general or so-called integrative work emphasizes teaching. Yet both can be integrative. Our conceptions of interdisciplinarity, including specialized research and teaching, should encompass distinct forms of integration, indeed interrelationships. (Graff 2016, 775)

Graff's argument is valid and effective in Byzantine studies, since the need for integration is already here imposed by the subject and objects of study – only additionally is this need further emphasised by contemporary central and academic politics, and by established and influential academic practices. The question is how advanced this integration is, when it comes to interfering with disciplinary boundaries. What red lines are – officially or unofficially– drawn by Byzantinists, in relation to their collaborations with other scholars and their enrichment of scientific scope, vocabulary and tools with the help of the repository of natural and social sciences? Also, are Byzantinists equally eager to extend beyond their disciplinary boundaries in both practice (methodology) and theory (approach and interpretation)?

Furthermore, under the general term of interdisciplinarity, literature distinguishes among several alternative ways in which Byzantinists may collaborate (among themselves and with non-Byzantinists): interdisciplinary or pluridisciplinary, cross-disciplinary or multidisciplinary, transdisciplinary, intradisciplinary. The underlying goal of these terms is to distinguish among low, moderate, and high levels of interconnectedness or intellectual integration (Jacobs, Frickel 2009, 45). The concept of interdisciplinarity, for example, involves the combination of two or more academic disciplines into one activity (e.g. a research project) so as to allow creating new meanings by thinking across boundaries (Nissani 1995). The concept of transdisciplinarity responds to somewhat different needs: it connotes a research strategy which crosses many disciplinary boundaries to create a holistic approach and may also include non-scientific stakeholders. Transdisciplinary research is defined as research efforts conducted by an investigator trained in different fields (or by investigators from different disciplines working jointly) so as to create new conceptual, theoretical, methodological and translational innovations that integrate and move beyond discipline-specific approaches to address a common problem (Nicolescu 2002). Last but not least, intradisciplinarity means the collaboration which occurs within the scope of a scholarly or academic discipline or between the people active in such a discipline, whether working in the same field of studies or in different ones. There is also considerable terminological ambiguity in literature. Some scholars draw clear distinctions between research that is cross-disciplinary or multidisciplinary (contributions from two or more fields to a research problem), interdisciplinary or pluridisciplinary (integration of knowledge originating in two or more fields),

or trans-disciplinary (knowledge produced jointly by disciplinary experts) (Jacobs, Frickel 2009, 45-6; Thompson Klein 2010).

In the next pages, I offer some insights on the aforementioned issues, by distinguishing among inter-, intra-, cross- and trans-disciplinary scientific practices in theory and methodology (as defined above) within Byzantine studies. As paradigmatic study I consider the multiple approaches towards the concept of space, which invites interdisciplinary work in both theory and practice (see § 3). I conclude my discussion by proposing a set of interdisciplinary practices that I consider constructive towards imminent developments in our field (see § 4).

2.1 Methodology. Inter-, Intra-, Trans-, and Cross-Disciplinary Scientific Practices

To begin with methodology, the emphasis on interdisciplinarity therein is often linked to contemporary concerns and to pressures in the 'real world'.[1] A certain 'convergence' across humanities and sciences exemplifies this orientation in Byzantine studies during the first two decades of the twenty-first century. This orientation has generated a major tendency for interdisciplinary and intradisciplinary team work reflected in abundant research projects and joint publications in archaeology, history, art history, philology, and literary studies. The list is too long to cite in this context, yet, among the most regular examples seem to be collaboration networks in archaeology and environmental history (for indicative discussions: Turner et al. 2021; Haldon et al. 2018). Interdisciplinarity usually offers solutions in practical terms, since, as a multidisciplinary field, Byzantine studies require a greater command of methodologies than scholars may individually possess.[2] Working out eventual tensions proves very rewarding (e.g. Izdebski et al. 2016).

Cross-disciplinary approaches are common in large projects and thematic research networks. An example may be seen in the new joint investigation of interrelationships between medieval arts – visual, performing, and literary – and rituals, by means of combined method-

---

1 The term 'real world' is introduced in the discussion of interdisciplinarity by Harvey Graff (2015, 6-7). It refers to life conditions and necessities outside academia and to the ways in which they relate with – and negotiate – the use of scientific knowledge. On similar issues see Cirella, Russo 2020.

2 Amongst classic patterns within Byzantine studies are, for example, various methodological combinations from archaeology, history, sciences, historical geography, material culture, art and literary studies. Find indicative discussions in Izdebski et al. 2016; Ladstätter 2016; Ladstätter, Magdalino 2019; Kontogiannis, Skartsis 2020; Vroom 2016a; 2016b; Gwynne, Hodges, Vroom 2014.

ologies from the humanities.[3] Cross-disciplinarity in big publication projects, especially if ensured a priori by principle, may lead to new research ideas and fields of study (e.g. Bauden et al. forthcoming).

Transdisciplinarity has commonly been embraced and pursued by Byzantinists during the last two decades by means of several successive graduate specialisations. It is currently an established trend within the field as evident in the big number of scholars who seek to expand their research in new directions by acquiring additional skills in related fields within the humanities and social sciences.[4] Vice versa, scholars educated in other fields or disciplines occasionally embrace Byzantine studies hence contributing new perspectives and ideas (della Dora 2016; Maddrell et al. 2015).

Combinative approaches are rarer yet present. A combination of inter-, intra- and transdisciplinary work is conducted within a new international research programme.[5] The latter involves a series of investigations of the production of cultural and literary landscapes in Byzantium and its neighbouring lands, by means of creating a bridge among philology, history, narratology, literary-, manuscript- and translation-studies, as well as computational linguistics.

2.2   Theorisation. Transdisciplinary Interpretations

While an emphasis on interdisciplinary methodologies is justified by 'real world' necessities and concerns, as explained above (§ 2.1), this is not the case in theory. When it comes to theorising Byzantium, there is a bigger tendency, as a rule, to simply and easily assume differences between disciplines and interdisciplines rather than relationships and connections. Oppositional dichotomies contribute to a sense of distance and disconnection between disciplines and interdisciplines, blurring their connections.

As discussed below (§§ 4.1-4.2), this aspect is related to Byzantinists' education and formation through successive stages and filters which seem still attached to modernist academic traditions. But the meaning of current developments in interdisciplinarity is a response to those modern traditions. Harvey Graff, in fact, argues that a clearer understanding of interdisciplinarity's development is root-

---

3   See the *Research Network for Medieval Arts and Rituals* (NetMAR) in collaboration by the University of Cyprus, the University of Southern Denmark and the University of Bamberg: https://netmar.cy.

4   Indicatively: Goldwyn 2018; 2021; Messis, Mullett, Nilsson 2018; Veikou 2022.

5   Research programme *Retracing Connections. Byzantine Storyworlds in Greek, Arabic, Georgian, and Old Slavonic (c. 950–c. 1100)* in collaboration by Uppsala University, the University of Southern Denmark, the Swedish Research Institute in Istanbul, and the Swedish Institute at Athens: https://retracingconnections.org.

ed in looking backward, to at least the nineteenth-century origins of modern disciplines in the developing research university (Graff 2016; Jacobs, Frickel 2009, 54-7).

In the article "Byzantium after 2000. Post-Millenial, but not Post-Modern?" John F. Haldon sketched the landscape of Byzantine centuries at the beginning of this century, as follows:

> Byzantine Studies is a small field compared to many others, and outside Greece and the Balkan countries always potentially threatened by what outsiders perceive as its lack of immediate relevance. It is about to enter the next millennium: if it is to maintain its intellectual credibility and respectability among its sister disciplines, its exponents might also consider familiarising themselves with such debates, the better to participate with scholars in other fields in debates relevant to all intellectual discourse. (Haldon 2002, 11)

Two decades later, perhaps Haldon would not exactly complain. While mainstream Byzantine Studies are far from postmodern as a whole, there has been a considerable number of fresh and novel alternative perspectives as a result of Byzantinists' interdisciplinary concerns. Their discussion unfortunately cannot be pursued in the context of this paper but a few indicative examples are mentioned below.

The first example is Byzantine landscape studies, a study area which has displayed outstanding development during the last three decades. From considerations of landscapes' purely physical change to reflections upon of their sensorial experience and assessments of their ideological and symbolic significance in Byzantine culture, an extremely broad range of diverse approaches has dealt with the roles of landscapes within political, social and cultural phenomena.[6]

The second one is the study area of Byzantine identities and social division, which has flourished in more recent years. The Byzantine paradigm has been commissioned in urgent contemporary discussions of social issues such as collective identities, social segregation, intersectionality, marginalisation, migration.[7] In these socially sensitive research topics, the onlookers' theoretical standpoints turn out critical for the authenticity of their final interpretations (Vukašinović 2020).

More diverse and interesting insights upon the Byzantine paradigm as a 'methodology' in modern and contemporary societies are

---

[6]   Indicatively: Brooks Hedstrom 2017; Caraher 2008; della Dora 2016; Crow, Hill 2018; James 2004; 2011; 2013; Kardulias 2008; Külzer, Popović 2017; Maddrell et al. 2015; Roussos 2017; Turner, Crow 2010; Varinlioğlu 2008; Yasin 2009; 2017.

[7]   Indicatively: Ariantzi, Kislinger, forthcoming; Betancourt 2020; Constantinou, Meyer 2019; Goldwyn 2021; Kaldellis 2019; Messis 2011; 2016; Messis, Kaldellis 2016; Preiser-Kapeller, Reinfandt, Stouraitis 2020; Stouraitis 2014.

found in recent cross-disciplinary works. Some of them address this issue directly (Betancourt, Taroutina 2015) while others draw links and invite to reflection by focusing on a specific topic (Høgel 2018; Jevtić, Nilsson 2021).

The aforementioned research rings a bell for uprooting paradigm shifts in the field. It clearly demonstrates that Byzantine culture is currently being reflected upon by a broad range of interdisciplinary perspectives in theoretically up-to-date terms.

3 Byzantine Spatialities Used as Bridges Among Disciplines in Humanities, Natural and Social Sciences

Spatial studies – historical and contemporary – constitute a typical area of interdisciplinary research. As such it largely remains academically 'homeless', being conducted under the umbrella of numerous, diverse, academic faculties and other institutions. The concept of space certainly invites for interdisciplinary research, because it can be approached through a diversity of scientific categories depending upon onlookers' particular interests and perceptions. This diversity is the theme of an upcoming collection of Byzantine studies, engaged in the promotion of a holistic approach (Veikou, Nilsson 2022). In the following brief discussion, I borrow examples from this collection as well as from literature of the latest two decades, so as to argue for the value of holistic approaches towards bridging interdisciplinary gaps in Byzantine studies.

3.1 Space as Physical Dimension

The analysis of physical aspects of natural space is a meeting point of several disciplines within the natural sciences and the humanities (e.g. numerous branches of contemporary physical geography, space science, physics, while past developments are investigated in archaeology, historical geography, environmental history and its subfields). Reconstructions of the natural environment in Byzantine territories of the Eastern Mediterranean have been proposed by extensive recent research; this demonstrates that this area of studies receives active and imaginative attention. An overview of respective developments is offered by Adam Izdebski (2021).

3.2 Space as Social Parameter

Critical issues for modern sciences, social sciences and humanities are the spatial organisation of human (economic, social, and politi-

cal) activities across the environmental backdrops. Social space is investigated by the numerous branches of contemporary human geography, urban studies, literary studies, while past developments are investigated in history of architecture, archaeology of space, social history, historical geography and topography. The interaction between humans and natural environment in Byzantium has been investigated, since the 1990s, by Archie Dunn in a series of articles.[8] Through this work, Dunn has introduced, established and refined a particular combination of methodologies from geography, archaeology and history, adopted by numerous later scholars. The research on the Historical Geography of the Byzantine Empire at the Austrian Academy of Sciences in Vienna, conducted by the *Tabula Imperii Byzantini* (*TIB*), remains the main resource for investigators of Byzantine social space. The project is expanding (five new volumes are currently in progress) while additional publications by *TIB*-project members demonstrate interdisciplinary concerns related to digital humanities.[9] In archaeology, the term 'landscape' commonly focuses upon natural and social features of historical environments (landscape archaeology) and that is usually the case also in Byzantine studies (Gerstel 2015, 10). Amongst current surveys, the international Small Cycladic Islands Project is perhaps the most impressive in terms of interdisciplinary methodological scope as it allows contextualising Byzantine human spaces within the diachronic transformation of the Aegean landscape, by means of investigating some 100 insular sites from prehistory to the present day.[10] A recent volume presents a combination of inter- and cross-disciplinary considerations of historical landscapes as a comment on the earlier concept of central place theory (Papantoniou, Vionis 2019).

3.3 Space as Cultural Component

Cultural dimensions of space are scrutinised in both social sciences and humanities. Contemporary aspects are considered within cultural geography (a branch of human geography), art and literary studies, while past developments are investigated in archaeology, archaeology of space, art history, cultural history, historical cultural geography. Sharon Gerstel's study of the Byzantine village landscape of-

---

8 See Dunn 1994; 1996; 1997; 2000; 2004; 2005; 2006a; 2006b; 2007; 2009; forthcoming.

9 See *The Long-Term Project Tabula Imperii Byzantini (TIB). Current Status*: https://tib.oeaw.ac.at/current_status; Külzer 2010; 2018; Külzer, Polloczek, Popović 2020; Popović 2019; Popović et al. 2019.

10 *Small Cycladic Islands Project* (*SCIP*): https://smallcycladicislandsproject.org/the-project.

fers a good example of transdisciplinary consideration of the topic through archaeology, history, art studies, ethnography and social anthropology (Gerstel 2015). An example of similar approach in literary studies can be found in Ingela Nilsson's recent discussion of authorial voice as outcome of an occasion and as cultural expression of particular Byzantine spatial contexts (Nilsson 2020). Two more works, by Christodoulos Papavarnavas (2021) and Buket Kitapçı Bayrı (2020), display a combination of methodologies from literary studies and cultural geography (as well as narratology and history, respectively) towards cultural considerations of Byzantine texts.

3.4 Space as Physical Dimension, Social Parameter and Cultural Component

The holistic approach towards space's different dimensions is an older conception which has long remained – and still does – at the front stage of spatial studies due to its actuality and its value.[11] This perspective allows creating an area of spatial studies within Byzantine studies (Veikou 2016). This area may serve as host of combined methodologies from different disciplines and interdisciplines, which come to dialogue and collaboration in order to create new meaning and a better comprehension of Byzantine culture. A recent scientific meeting (2017)[12] was an experiment in that direction and it generated a series of Byzantine spatial studies which work together towards promoting such a holistic approach (Veikou, Nilsson 2022). This approach suggests that the concept of space constitutes an exemplary lens through which Byzantine culture can be viewed. Byzantium offers an example of a medieval culture which was deeply aware of nature and very closely related to it. Its populations had a strong sense of belonging to their land, which in turn determined their personal and collective identities. These residents were very sensitive in producing their own appropriated space specifically designed to be of human-friendly scale; the translation of space to place. Accordingly, Byzantine spaces, whose abundant traces have come down to us either as material, artistic, or literary remains, constitute a re-

---

11   This approach is articulated in Henri Lefebvre's theory of spatial trialectics, Michel de Certeau's theories of spatial practices, and Michel Foucault's theories of connectivity among space, power and social order: Lefebvre 1974; de Certeau 1984; Foucault 1975; 1994. Later elaborations (indicatively) in Elden 2004; Massey 1995; 1999; 2005; Soja 1989; 1996; 1999; Thrift 2007.

12   The international conference *From the Human Body to the Universe - Spatialities of Byzantine Culture* was organised in Uppsala University by the Author and Professor Ingela Nilsson, on 17-21 May, 2017, with the kind support by Riksbannkens Jubileumfond of Sweden.

markable kaleidoscope of late antique and medieval cultures of the Eastern Mediterranean. Moreover, this raw data of Byzantine space constantly increases, through surveys, excavations, and archival research. The analysis and interpretation of these manifold spatial vestiges open a large window towards our understanding of medieval people. All that is needed is a mindful and determined chain of efforts to bridge the gap between spatial analysis and spatial interpretation as well as an 'open' disposition towards imaginary theoretical reconsiderations and shifts of attention proposed by other fields (Veikou, Nilsson, James 2022, 2).

This volume exemplifies interdisciplinarity and diversity as a response to the fact that many cultural aspects speak for the crucial importance of spatialities for the Byzantines. Their bodies and minds have been performed as their most personal spaces – their places – of social identity and control. Byzantine people interacted with their natural environments in their struggle to survive and create, thus producing their spatial experiences. In that way they have constructed their own culturally appropriated spaces, producing Byzantine landscapes. These landscapes have been dominated by power relations, which divided them into territories, and they have been performed by cultural practices. Passing from the body to the mind, imaginary spaces have hosted moments of a universe of heaven and human passions. These are the spatial aspects of Byzantine cultures dealt with by each of the six sections in the volume: the space of the body; the body in its natural environment; the dialectic natural and human landscape; the territories of Byzantium; the spatial practices; the spatial imaginaries. As a whole, the book aspires to provide various answers to the question: how are all these Byzantine spaces relevant to us, today, and in what ways can we grasp them? To ensure pluralism, this question has been addressed by numerous scholars working in most fields of Byzantine studies: philology and literary studies, history, art history, archaeology, historical geography, historical topography, epigraphy. There has also been a conscious effort to embrace interdisciplinarity and intradisciplinarity in a more specific manner. In this way, the concept of space has been established as a platform on which many different conceptualisations and developments offer a fruitful intradisciplinary dialogue on theory and method in contemporary Byzantine studies (Veikou, Nilsson, James 2022, 4).

4 Inter Those Disciplines! An Opportunity for Byzantine Studies

4.1 Re-Theorising Byzantine Studies. An Educational Challenge

The preceding discussion aimed to show that interdisciplinarity, with the broad sense of the term, is a contemporary trend in Byzantine studies. This condition generates a set of current challenges which spring from the situation described by Haldon (2001, 10) as follows: "The historical past does possess a meaning of significance itself (although other significances can be imposed upon it), and the historian both discovers as well as creates significance".

How can Byzantinists distinguish whether a meaning of significance is deriving – at least to a certain degree if not entirely – from the Byzantine past itself, or if it is barely imposed on this past by themselves? The accomplishment of such distinction requires from Byzantinists a set of advanced interdisciplinary skills: knowledge about human societies and cultures, and the human mind, as well as overview of historiographical theories.

While several Byzantinists are self-instructed in relevant fields (sociology, social anthropology, philosophy and epistemology, cognitive studies etc.) in order to advance their research, no systematic education is offered to apprentices. Such topics escape many graduate and doctoral Programmes of Byzantine Studies: they are (almost) entirely absent from respective curricula of European universities and they are very limited within those of American universities. In almost all Programmes worldwide, emphasis is, instead, laid upon the instruction of languages and of methodologies related to individual disciplinary and auxiliary fields (i.e. history, archaeology, philology, art history, epigraphy, palaeography, sigillography, numismatics etc.).[13]

As a result, in research, theoretical terms are randomly used. But even in these cases, that does not mean that the particular research is theorised or even theoretically aware.[14] Without the existence of proper relevant education, the crucial aspect of historical interpretation of the Byzantine past is pretty much left to the hands of fate.

---

[13] A report is discussed during the oral presentation since it exceeds the size limits of this paper.

[14] See Ingela Nilsson's chapter in this volume.

4.2 Advantageous Academic Practices for Flexibility and Growth

Strangely enough, the cause of interdisciplinarity is simultaneously advanced and retarded by the cultural and political associations of interdisciplinarity. Interdisciplinary research, for instance, has been reported to be "experiencing growing pains" because of countervailing institutional pressures (Graff 2015, 2). Conventional departmental hiring, review, tenure, and promotion practices can slow or block careers; developing new procedures to evaluate the work of interdisciplinary scholars represents a real challenge (Graff 2015, 2; Pfirman et al. 2005; Huutoniemi 2010).

In Byzantine studies, as a rule, new academic positions at lower levels (e.g. postdoctoral researchers) are announced with an interdisciplinary orientation due to their common connection with big research projects; research projects, as a rule, owe their funding to their wide range of interdisciplinary concerns. On the contrary, academic positions at the next (higher) levels (lectureships, tenure-track associate and full professorships) are announced within the traditional and bulky disciplinary boundaries which are outdated as such by contemporary research and education.

So, against the main trend in other fields, the great majority of academic staff departments involved in Byzantine studies seems to be interested in interdisciplinary research but, at the same time, holding on to a disciplinary academic system which is not equally inclusive of interdisciplinary scholars.[15] Institutional responsibilities are incontestable but it is high-time for academics to step in (Miller 2010; Pfirman, Martin 2010). A prevision for interdisciplinarity being integrated at the advanced level of research and education would produce much better learning of interdisciplinary practices and greater scientific advance for the next generation of junior researchers.[16]

4.3 Historicising as 'Undisciplining' Knowledge. A New Perspective

How useful, adequate, and indispensable are disciplines? Disciplinarity, on one hand, has been seriously questioned within theory of knowledge (Krohn 2010). There have been voices such as that of the philosopher of science, Steve Fuller, suggesting that disciplines are artificial "holding patterns" of inquiry whose metaphysical sig-

---

[15] For an assessment of trends in historical and literary sciences, against other disciplinary fields, see Jacobs, Frickel 2009.

[16] For the challenges and possible gains of such intervention see DeZure 2010.

nificance should not be overestimated. Fuller suggests that inquiry needs a social space where it can roam freely and finds its natural home in the university; he even characterises disciplinarity as "a necessary evil of knowledge production [...] and a function of institutionalization" in the existing academic system (Fuller 2003). He, in fact, argues (2016) that a big problem, for which interdisciplinarity is the solution, is the "epistemic rent-seeking", namely, the tendency for disciplines to become increasingly proprietary in their relationship to organised inquiry. In his opinion, a "proactive reading across disciplines" is our way to "exploit undiscovered public knowledge" (Fuller 2016, 83). Robert Frodeman (2010, xxxii-xxxiii) sees the same problem:

> disciplinary knowledge has tacitly functioned as an abdication. By focusing on standards of excellence internal to a discipline academics have been able to avoid larger responsibilities of how knowledge contributes to the creation of a good and just society.

Interdisciplinary work, on the other hand, inevitably engages with implicit tensions between applied research and fundamental problems of knowledge or theory as well as between existing disciplines and emerging interdisciplines (Graff 2015, 1). The complexity in the relationships is shown in a pilot study by Carlos Andrés Charry Joya (2017), considering relations and interdependencies between sociology and history, and the consolidation of the field of historical sociology. Charry Joya demonstrates that each of the two disciplines has been erected in relation and in opposition to the other. He argues that the development of a new practice of the new interdiscipline requires overcoming the conventional idea that it is a combination of the two older disciplines. And, yet, this development is inseparable from the framework evolution of the older disciplines, in which theorisation plays a crucial role in the construction of knowledge. Obviously, then, professional knowledge of both older disciplines is an absolute prerequisite for the production of solid research within the interdiscipline.

As a solution to the aforementioned tensions and conflicts, Graff proposed a conception of interdisciplinarity as a process of "undisciplining knowledge" which potentially sets scientific research free from unnecessary and avoidable disciplinary constraints (Graff 2015). He explains:

> Undisciplining Knowledge begins with the understanding that interdisciplinarity is part of the historical making and ongoing reshaping of modern disciplines. It is inseparable from them, not oppositional to them. (Graff 2015, 5)

His argument is very relevant to the necessity of interdisciplinarity, which Byzantinists experience as imposed by their own subject of studies (see §§ 1-2). He suggests that interdisciplinarity can be better understood when it is situated within a longer chronological span of intellectual and sociocultural development and he historicises it in a non-progressive narrative and a non-linear path (Graff 2015, 12-13).

As interdisciplinarity is historicised, disciplines and disciplinary clusters, their relationships, and their university bases are recognised as active elements (Graff 2015, 13-14). Historisation removes tensions and conflicts; in his own words:

> Interdisciplinarity is neither a dream nor a nightmare; a romantic, nostalgic golden age of integrated, unified knowledge did not exist before the triumph of modern disciplines; there was no golden age of interdisciplinarity before the late nineteenth century. (Graff 2015, 14)

It is a contemporary need, a response to overspecialisation and knowledge fragmentation; as Graff puts it (2015, 16) "all interdisciplinary efforts reflect external factors" – hence pretty much agrees with Frodeman (2010) and Fuller (2003; 2016). In this particular context, the legitimation of "undisciplining knowledge" can help reverse these conditions. Through an 'un-disciplinary' scientific perspective, our efforts to understand the past can potentially be unreserved from existing disciplinary constraints established by nineteenth century conceptions of knowledge. This perspective pays justice to our very subject of studies, a historical society and culture which chronologically precedes modernity and whose expressions more often than not call for interdisciplinary considerations.[17]

4.4 'Travelling Concepts'. A Ground for Future Collaboration

How can we – conceptually and programmatically – reapproach scientific research and this time detached from the predominance of the disciplinary organisational pattern? Mieke Bal, in her challenging work *Travelling Concepts* (2002), intended as a guidebook for interdisciplinary cultural analysis in the humanities, argues that interdisciplinarity must seek its heuristic and methodological basis in concepts rather than in methods. She analyses a variety of concepts – such as meaning, metaphor, narrative, and myth – which 'travel' from one discipline to another and she illustrates the possibilities of these concepts with the help of examples drawn from several disciplines.

---

17 For discussions of affinities and conflicts between Byzantium and modernity see Betancourt, Taroutina 2015.

A recent archaeological study used the concepts of 'cave', 'travel', and 'ritual' as a basis for comparative consideration of prehistoric and Byzantine historical contexts in the Aegean Sea (Veikou, Mina forthcoming). This study, meant as an intradisciplinary comment on current epistemological concerns, argues precisely that archaeology necessitates a common vocabulary and intradisciplinary comprehension, which would also transfer through archaeologists' interdisciplinary concerns, even in cases of methodological diversion. New research projects also make use of a number of concepts in order to form collaboration platforms among researchers with different specialisations.[18]

Concepts serve as an efficient tool for communication and collaboration in Byzantine Studies: among Byzantinists and other researchers within the same discipline; among Byzantinists from distinct disciplines; among Byzantinists and other researchers in humanities, sciences and social sciences. After all, concepts are what we all share and contemplate, inside and outside academia.

Bibliography

Ariantzi, D.; Kislinger, E. (eds) (forthcoming). *Marginalization and Subculture Groups. Prostitutes, Actors and Tavern-Keepers in Byzantium*.

Bal, M. (2002). *Travelling Concepts in the Humanities: A Rough Guide*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Barry, A.; Born, G. (2013). "Interdisciplinarity. Reconfigurations of the Social and Natural Sciences". Barry, A.; Born, G. (eds), *Interdisciplinarity. Reconfigurations of the Social and Natural Sciences*. London; New York: Routledge, 1-56.

Bauden, F. et al. (eds) (forthcoming). *Handbook of Mediterranean History (300-2020)*. 4 vols.

Betancourt, R. (2020). *Byzantine Intersectionality. Sexuality, Gender, and Race in the Middle Ages*. Princeton; Oxford: Princeton University Press.

Betancourt, R.; Taroutina, M. (eds) (2015). *Byzantium/Modernism. The Byzantine as Method in Modernity*. Leiden; Boston: Brill.

Brooks Hedstrom, D.L. (2017). *The Monastic Landscape of Late Antique Egypt. An Archaeological Reconstruction*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Caraher, W.S. (2008). "Constructing Memories. Hagiography, Church Architecture, and the Religious Landscape of Middle Byzantine Greece". Caraher, W.S.; Jones Hall, J.L.; Scott Moore, R. (eds), *Archaeology and History in Roman, Medieval and Post-Medieval Greece. Studies on Method and Meaning in Honor of Timothy E. Gregory*. Aldershot; Burlington: Ashgate, 267-80.

Certeau, M. de (1984). *The Practice of Everyday Life*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

---

18 See the projects mentioned above (nos. 3, 5), and the historical-archaeological project *Medieval Smyrna / İzmir: The Transformation of a City and its Hinterland from Byzantine to Ottoman Times* (MESMY) of the Austrian Academy of Sciences: `https://tib.oeaw.ac.at/index.php?seite=sub&submenu=mesmy`.

Charry Joya, C.A. (2017). "Tan cerca y tan lejos. Los problemas disciplinares entre sociología e historia y la práctica de una nueva sociología histórica". *Revista de Estudios Sociales*, 60, 36-48. `https://doi.org/10.7440/res60.2017.03`.

Cirella, G.T.; Russo, A. (eds) (2020). *Sustainable Interdisciplinarity, Human-Nature Relations*. Basel: Multidisciplinary Digital Publishing Institute.

Constantinou, S.; Meyer, M. (eds) (2019). *Emotions and Gender in Byzantine Culture*. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan. New Approaches to Byzantine History and Culture 4.

Crow, J.; Hill, D. (eds) (2018). *Naxos and the Byzantine Aegean. Insular Responses to Regional Change*. Athens: The Norwegian Institute at Athens. Papers and Monographs from the Norwegian Institute at Athens 7.

della Dora, V. (2016). *Landscape, Nature, and the Sacred in Byzantium*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

DeZure, D. (2010). "Interdisciplinary Pedagogies in Higher Education". Frodeman, Klein, Mitchum 2010, 372-86.

Dunn, A.W. (1994). "The Transition from Polis to Kastron in the Balkans (III-VII cc.). General and Regional Perspectives". *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies*, 18, 60-80.

Dunn, A.W. (1996). "The Control and Exploitation of the Arboreal Resources of the Late Byzantine and Frankish Aegean Region". Cavaciocchi, S. (a cura di), *L'uomo e la foresta, secc. XIII-XVIII = Atti della Ventisettesima Settimana di Studi* (Prato, 8-13 maggio 1995). Firenze: Le Monnier, 479-97. Atti delle 'Settimane di Studio' e altri Convegni 27.

Dunn, A.W. (1997). "Stages in the Transition from the Late Antique to the Middle Byzantine Urban Centre in S. Macedonia and S. Thrace". *Αφιέρωμα στον N. Hammond*. Thessaloniki: Etaireia Makedonikon Spoudon, 137-51. Makedonika Parartima 7.

Dunn, A. (2000). "Loci of Marine Traffic in the Strymon Delta iv-xviii cc. Commercial, Fiscal, Manorial". *Οι Σέρρες και η περιοχή τους από την αρχαιότητα στην μεταβυζαντινή κοινωνία, Διεθνές συνέδριο* (Σέρρες, 29 Σεπτεμβρίου-3 Οκτωβρίου 1993). Serres: Dimos Serro, 339-60. Πρακτικά 1.

Dunn, A.W. (2004). "Continuity and Change in the Macedonian Countryside, from Gallienus and Justinian". Bowden, W.; Lavan, L. (eds), *Recent Research on the Late Antique Countryside*. Leiden; Boston: Brill, 535-86. Late Antique Archaeology 2.

Dunn, A.W. (2005). "The Problem of Early Byzantine Rural Settlement in Eastern and Northern Macedonia". Lefort, J.; Morrisson, C.; Sodini, J.P. (éds), *Les villages dans l'empire byzantin (IVᵉ-XVᵉ siècle) = Actes des Tables Rondes dédiées à 'Le village'. XXᵉ Congrès International des Études Byzantines*. Paris: Lethielleux, 267-78. Réalités byzantines 11.

Dunn, A.W. (2006a). "The Rise and Fall of Towns, Ports, and Silk-Production in Western Boeotia. The Problem of Thisvi-Kastorion". Jeffreys, E. (ed.), *Byzantine Style, Religion and Civilization. In Honour of Sir Steven Runciman*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 38-71.

Dunn, A.W. (2006b). "East Mediterranean Surveys and Byzantine Studies". Jeffreys, E.; Haarer, F.K. (eds), *Proceedings of the 21st International Congress of Byzantine Studies* (London, 21-6 August 2006). Vol. 2, *Abstracts of Panel Papers*. London: Ashgate, 45-6.

Dunn, A.W. (2007). "Rural Producers and Markets. Aspects of the Archaeological and Historical Problem". Grünbart, M. et al. (eds), *Material Culture and*

Well-Being in Byzantium (400-1453). Wien: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 101-9. Philosophisch-historische Klasse Denkschriften 356.

Dunn, A.W. (2009). "Byzantine and Ottoman Maritime Traffic in the Estuary of the Strymon. Between Environment, State, and Market". Bintliff, J.; Stöger, H. (eds), *Medieval and Post-Medieval Greece*. Oxford: Archaeopress, 15-31. The Corfu Papers, British Archaeological Reports (International Series) 2023.

Dunn, A.W. (forthcoming). "The Medieval Byzantine Town. Producers, Suppliers, and Consumers". Vroom, J. (ed.), *New Perspectives on the Byzantine City as Consumption Centre*. Turnhout: Brepols. Medieval and Post-Medieval Mediterranean Archaeology Series.

Elden, S. (2004). *Understanding Lefebvre. Theory and the Possible*. London; New York: Continuum.

Foucault, M. (1975). *Surveiller et punir*. Paris: Gallimard.

Foucault, M. (1994). "Des espaces autres". *Dits et écrits 1954-1988*. Vol. 4, *1980-1988*. Paris: Gallimard, 752-62.

Frodeman, R. (2010). "Introduction". Frodeman, Klein, Mitchum 2010, xxix-xxxviii.

Frodeman, R.; Klein, J.; Mitchum, C. (eds) (2010). *Oxford Handbook of Interdisciplinarity*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Fuller, S. (2003). "Interdisciplinarity. The Loss of the Heroic Vision in the Marketplace of Ideas". October 1, 2003. `http://www.academia.edu/1161664/Rethinking_Interdisciplinarity`.

Fuller, S. (2016). "What Is the Problem for Which Interdisciplinarity Is the Solution?". *Items. Social Science Research Council*, 7 June. `https://items.ssrc.org/interdisciplinarity/what-is-the-problem-for-which-interdisciplinarity-is-the-solution`.

Gerstel, S.E.J. (2015). *Rural Lives and Landscapes in Late Byzantium. Art, Archaeology, and Ethnography*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Goldwyn, A.D. (2018). *Byzantine Ecocriticism. Women, Nature and Power in the Medieval Greek Romance*. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan.

Goldwyn, A.D. (2021). *Witness Literature in Byzantium. Narrating Slaves, Prisoners, and Refugees*. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan.

Graff, H.J. (2015). *Undisciplining Knowledge: Interdisciplinarity in the Twentieth Century*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Graff, H.J. (2016). "The 'Problem' of Interdisciplinarity in Theory, Practice, and History". *Social Science History*, 40(4), 775-803. `https://doi.org/10.1017/ssh.2016.31`.

Gwynne, P.; Hodges, R.; Vroom, J. (2014). "Archaeology and Epic. Butrint and Ugolino Verino's Carlias". *Papers of the British School at Rome*, 82, 199-235. `https://doi.org/10.1017/s0068246214000099`.

Haldon, J. (2002). "Byzantium After 2000. Post-millenial But not Post-modern?". Sode, C.; Takacs, S. (eds), *Novum Millenium. Studies in Byzantium History and Culture Dedicated to Paul Speck*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 1-11.

Haldon, J. et al. (2018). "History Meets Palaeoscience. Consilience and Collaboration in Studying Past Societal Responses to Environmental Change". *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America*, 115(13), 3210-18. `https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.1716912115`.

Huutoniemi, K. (2010). "Evaluating Interdisciplinary Research". Frodeman, Klein, Mitchum 2010, 309-20.

Høgel, C. (2018). "World Literature is Trans-Imperial. A Medieval and a Modern Approach". *Medieval worlds*, 8, 3-21. `https://doi.org/10.1553/medi‑evalworlds_no8_2018s3`.

Izdebski, A. (2021). *Ein vormoderner Staat als sozioökologisches System. Das oströmische Reich 300-1300*. Dresden: Sandstein Verlag.

Izdebski, A. et al. (2016). "Realising Consilience. How Better Communication between Archaeologists, Historians and Geoscientists Can Transform the Study of Past Climate Change in the Mediterranean". *Quaternary Science Reviews*, 136, 5-22. `https://doi.org/10.1016/j.quasci‑rev.2015.10.038`.

Jacobs, J.A.; Frickel, S. (2009). "Interdisciplinarity. A Critical Assessment". *Annual Review of Sociology*, 35(1), 43-65.

James, L. (2004). "Senses and Sensibility in Byzantium". *Art History*, 27(4), 522-37. `https://doi.org/10.1111/j.0141‑6790.2004.00436.x`.

James, L. (2011). "'Seeing's Believing but Feeling's the Truth'. Touch and the Meaning of Byzantine Art". Lymberopoulou, A. (ed.), *Images of the Byzantine World. Visions, Messages and Meanings. Studies Presented to Leslie Brubaker*. Farnham; Burlington (VT): Ashgate, 1-14.

James, L. (2013). "Things. Art and Experience in Byzantium". Nesbitt, C.; Jackson, M. (eds), *Experiencing Byzantium = Papers from the 44th Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies*. Farnham; Burlington (VT): Ashgate, 17-34.

Jevtić, I.; Nilsson, I. (eds) (2021), *Spoliation as Translation. Medieval Worlds in the Eastern Mediterranean*. Brno: Convivium Supplementum.

Kaldellis, A. (2019). *Romanland. Ethnicity and Empire in Byzantium*. Cambridge (MA): Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.

Kardulias, P.N. (2008). "Interpreting the Past through the Present. The Ethnographic, Ethnoarchaeological, and Experimental Study of Early Agriculture". Caraher, W.R.; Jones Hall, L.; Scott Moore, R. (eds), *Archaeology and History in Roman, Medieval and Post-Medieval Greece. Studies on Method and Meaning in Honor of Timothy E. Gregory*. Aldershot; Burlington: Ashgate, 109-26.

Kitapçı Bayrı, B. (2020). *Warriors, Martyrs, and Dervishes. Moving Frontiers, Shifting Identities in the Land of Rome (13th-15th Centuries)*. Leiden; Boston: Brill. The Medieval Mediterranean 119.

Kontogiannis, N.D.; Skartsis, S.S. (2020). "Ceramic Vessels and Food Consumption. Chalcis as a Major Production and Distribution Center in the Byzantine and Frankish Period". Waksman, S.Y. (ed.), *Multidisciplinary Approaches to Food and Foodways in the Medieval Eastern Mediterranean*. Lyon: Maison de l'Orient et de la Méditerranée Éditions, 239-53.

Krohn, W. (2010). "Interdisciplinary Cases and Disciplinary Knowledge". Frodeman, Klein, Mitchum 2010, 31-49.

Külzer, A. (2010). "Möglichkeiten zur Rekonstruktion historischer Landschaften: Die Historische Geographie". Gastgeber, C. et al. (Hrsgg), *Fragmente Der Umgang mit lückenhafter Quellenüberlieferung der Mittelalterforschung = Akten des internationalen Symposiums des Zentrums Mittelalterforschung der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften Wien* (Wien, 19.-21. März 2009). Wien: Österreichische Akademie Der Wissenschaften, 173-84. Philosophisch-Historische Klassedenkschriften 415.

Külzer, A. (2018). "Reconstructing the Past in a Changing Landscape. Reflections on the Area of Ephesus and Other Sites in Western Asia Minor". *Gephyra*, 16, 75-90. `https://doi.org/10.37095/gephyra.479912`.

Külzer, A.; Polloczek, V.; Popović, M. (Hrsgg) (2020). *Raum und Geschichte. Der historische Atlas „Tabula Imperii Byzantini" an der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften*. Wien; Novi Sad: Akademska knjiga. Studies in Historical Geography and Cultural Heritage 3.

Külzer, A.; Popović, M. (eds) (2017). *Space, Landscapes and Settlements in Byzantium. Studies in Historical Geography of the Eastern Mediterranean Presented to Johannes Koder*. Wien; Novi Sad: Akademska knjiga. Studies in Historical Geography and Cultural Heritage 1.

Ladstätter, S. (2016). "Ephesos". Daim, F. (Hrsg.), *Byzanz. Historisch-kulturwissenschaftliches Handbuch*. Stuttgart: J.B. Metzler Verlag, 679-85. Der Neue Pauly, Supplemente Band 11.

Ladstätter, S.; Magdalino, P. (eds) (2019). *Ephesos from Late Antiquity until the Late Middle Ages*. Wien: Verlag Holzhausen. Österreichisches Archäologisches Institut Sonderschriften 58.

Lefebvre, H. (1974). *La Production de l'espace*. Paris: Anthropos.

Maddrell, A. et al. (2015). *Christian Pilgrimage. Landscape and Heritage Journeying to the Sacred*. New York; London: Routledge.

Massey, D.B. (1995). *Spatial Divisions of Labor. Social Structures and the Geography of Production*. 2nd ed. New York: Routledge.

Massey, D.B. (1999). "Spaces of Politics". Massey, Allen, Sarre 1999, 279-94.

Massey, D.B. (2005). *For Space*. London: Sage.

Massey, D.; Allen, J.; Sarre, P. (eds) (1999). *Human Geography Today*. Cambridge: Polity.

Messis, Ch. (2011). "Lectures sexuées de l'altérité. Les Latins et identité romaine menacée pendant les derniers siècles de Byzance". *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik*, 61, 151-70.

Messis, Ch. (2016). "Les voix littéraires des eunuques. Genre et identité du soi à Byzance". *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, 70, 191-207.

Messis, Ch.; Kaldellis, A. (2016). "Conjugal Violence and the Ideological Construction of the Byzantine Household". *Limes Plus. Journal for Social Sciences and Humanities*, 13(2), 21-40.

Messis, Ch.; Mullett, M.; Nilsson, I. (eds) (2018). *Storytelling in Byzantium. Narratological Approaches to Byzantine Texts and Images*. Uppsala: Uppsala University. Studia Byzantina Upsaliensia 19.

Miller, C.A. (2010). "Policy Challenges and University Reform". Frodeman, Klein, Mitchum 2010, 333-44.

Nicolescu, B. (2002). *Manifesto of Transdisciplinarity*. Transl. by K.-C. Voss. New York: State University of New York Press.

Nilsson, I. (2020). *Writer and Occasion in Twelfth-Century Byzantium. The Authorial Voice of Constantine Manasses*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Nissani, M. (1995). "Fruits, Salads, and Smoothies. A Working Definition of Interdisciplinarity". *The Journal of Educational Thought*, 29(2), 121-8. https://doi.org/10.11575/jet.v29i2.52385.

Papantoniou, G.; Vionis, A.K. (eds) (2019). *Central Places and Un-Central Landscapes. Political Economies and Natural Resources in the Longue Durée*. Basel: Multidisciplinary Digital Publishing Institute.

Papavarnavas, C. (2021). *Gefängnis als Schwellenraum in der byzantinischen Hagiographie Eine Untersuchung früh- und mittelbyzantinischer Märtyrerakten*. Berlin; Boston: De Gruyter. Millennium-Studien 90.

Pfirman, S.L. et al. (2005). "Collaborative Efforts. Promoting Interdisciplinary Scholars". *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, 11 February. https://www.

chronicle.com/article/collaborative-efforts-promoting-interdisciplinary-scholars.

Pfirman, S.; Martin, P.J.S. (2010). "Facilitating Interdisciplinary Scholars". Frodeman, Klein, Mitchum 2010, 387-403.

Popović, M.S. (2019). "8.6. Spatial Structuring Models". Dillon, J.N. (ed.), *Brill's New Pauly Supplements 2*. Vol. 10, *History and Culture of Byzantium*. Transl. by D.A. Smart. Brill Online Reference, 295-6. http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/2468-3418_bnps10_COM_203605.

Popović, M. et al. (eds) (2019). *Power in Landscape. Geographic and Digital Approaches on Historical Research*. Leipzig: Eudora Verlag Leipzig.

Preiser-Kapeller, J.; Reinfandt, L.; Stouraitis, Y. (eds) (2020). *Migration Histories of the Medieval Afroeurasian Transition Zone. Aspects of Mobility between Africa, Asia and Europe, 300-1500 C.E.* Leiden; Boston: Brill. Studies in Global Migration History 39/13.

Roussos, K. (2017). *Reconstructing the Settled Landscape of the Cyclades. The Islands of Paros and Naxos during the Late Antique and Early Byzantine Centuries*. Leiden: Leiden University Press. Archaeological Studies Leiden University 40.

Soja, E.W. (1989). *Postmodern Geographies. The Reassertion of Space in Critical Social Theory*. London; New York: Verso.

Soja, E.W. (1996). *Thirdspace. Journeys to Los Angeles and Other Real-and-Imagined Places*. Oxford; Cambridge (MA): Blackwell.

Soja, E.W. (1999). "Thirdspace. Expanding the Scope of the Geographical Imagination". Massey, Allen, Sarre 1999, 260-78.

Stouraitis, Y. (2014). "Roman Identity in Byzantium. A Critical Approach". *Byzantinische Zeitschrift*, 107(1), 175-220. https://doi.org/10.1515/bz-2014-0009.

Thompson Klein, J. (2010). "A Taxonomy of Interdisciplinarity". Frodeman, Klein, Mitchum 2010, 15-30.

Thrift, N. (2007). *Non-Representational Theory. Space, Politics, Affect*. New York; London: Routledge.

Turner, S.; Crow, J. (2010). "Unlocking Historic Landscapes in the Eastern Mediterranean. Two Pilot Studies Using Historic Landscape Characterisation". *Antiquity*, 84(323), 216-29. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0003598X00099889.

Turner, S. et al. (2021). "Agricultural Terraces in the Mediterranean. Medieval Intensification Revealed by OSL Profiling and Dating". *Antiquity*, 95(381), 773-90. https://doi.org/10.15184/aqy.2020.187.

Varinlioğlu, G. (2008). "Living in a Marginal Environment. Rural Habitat and Landscape in Southeastern Isauria". *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, 61, 287-317.

Veikou, M. (2016). "Space in Texts and Space as Text. A New Approach to Byzantine Spatial Notions". *Scandinavian Journal of Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies*, 2, 143-75.

Veikou, M. (2022). *Spatial Paths to Holiness. Literary "Lived Spaces" in Eleventh Century Byzantine Saints' Lives*. Uppsala: Uppsala University. Studia Byzantina Upsaliensia.

Veikou M.; Mina, M. (forthcoming). "Caves as Cultural Landmarks in the Eastern Mediterranean. A Comparative Discussion of Prehistoric and Historical Contexts".

Veikou, M.; Nilsson, I. (eds) (2022). *Byzantine Spatialities from the Human Body to the Universe*. Leiden; Boston: Brill. The Medieval Mediterranean.

Veikou, M.; Nilsson, I.; James, L. (2022). "(Byzantine) Space Matters! An Introduction". Veikou, Nilsson 2022, 1-16.

Vroom, J. (2016a). "Pots and Pies. Adventures in the Archaeology of Eating Habits of Byzantium". Sibbesson, E.; Jervis, B.; Coxon, S. (eds), *Insight from Innovation. New Light on Archaeological Ceramics. Papers Presented in Honour of Professor David Peacock's Contributions to Archaeological Ceramic Studies*. St. Andrews: The Highfield Press, 221-44.

Vroom, J. (2016b). "Byzantine Sea Trade in Ceramics. Some Case Studies in the Eastern Mediterranean (ca. Seventh-Fourteenth Centuries)". Magdalino, P.; Necipoğlu, N. (eds), *Trade in Byzantium = Papers from the Third International Sevgi Gönül Byzantine Studies Symposium* (Istanbul, 24-27 June 2013). Istanbul: Koç University Research Center for Anatolian Civilizations (ANAMED). 157-77.

Vukašinović, M. (2020). "The Better Story for Romans and Byzantinists?". *Scandinavian Journal of Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies*, 6, 185-210.

Yasin, A. (2009). *Saints and Church Spaces in the Late Antique Mediterranean. Architecture, Cult and Community*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Yasin, A. (2017). "The Pilgrim and the Arch. Channeling Movement and Transforming Experience at Late Antique Holy Sites". Kristensen, T.M.; Friese, W. (eds), *Excavating Pilgrimage. Archaeological Approaches to Sacred Travel and Movement in the Ancient Mediterranean and Near East*. London: Routledge, 166-86.

Section 3
Textual Exchanges

Textual Exchanges in Late Antiquity

East and South of Byzantium Seen Through an Eastern Christian Lens

Muriel Debié

École pratique des hautes études; Université PSL; Institut Universitaire de France, Paris

Abstract   Scientific and philosophical texts circulated as is expected between the Roman and Sasanian empires as well as more east and west towards Europe and towards India and China. Arabia, though still often absent from the mental map of Late Antiquity, was also involved in exchanges of written texts, mainly letters. It is more surprising to see that religious texts were also discussed in the courts. Byzantium engaged in geopolitical and religious dialogue with its eastern and southern neighbours through clerics who played also a role as ambassadors of knowledge and cultural delegates. Syriac texts written in the eastern Roman empire or east of Byzantium offer a slightly decentred picture of these relations viewed from and beyond the borders of empires.

Keywords   Eastern Christianity. Syriac studies. Byzantium. History of sciences. Cultural history. Sasanian empire. History of religions. Global history. Late antiquity.

Summary   1 Introduction. – 2 Eastern Transfers. – 2.1 From Byzantium to Ērānšahr and Back.Medicine and Philosophy. – 2.2 The Two Eyes of the Earth in the Sixth Century. Justinian and Ḵosrow. – 2.3 Geography and Astronomy. – 2.4 Literary Texts from the East to the West and Back. – 3 Southern Exchanges.

1   Introduction[1]

The angle and standpoint are central in the way we envision the notion of relations with neighbours. Since this session is planned in a congress of Byzantine studies, its perspective is overtly 'imperial' (in the sense of the Byzantine empire) and implies an insider view of Byzantium's neighbours. Viewing the Sasanians or the Arab and Persian Muslims from the perspective of Greek, Syriac or Armenian texts and not Parthian, Middle Persian, Sogdian or Arabic shows how Byzantium is placed at the centre of the circle of neighbouring countries and cultures. Because of a relative dearth of written sources in Middle Persian, the history of Sasanian Iran, just as that of the Achaemenid period, is still largely seen through 'western' eyes and 'western' sources written in Latin, Greek, and Syriac.[2]

   Inviting a specialist of Syriac texts, however, allows for a slightly de-centred viewpoint, having recourse to peripheral texts produced in the eastern empire and east of the empire, in the Sasanian and Islamic periods. Syriac texts offer an insider/outsider view of Byzantium, not only from a geopolitical point of view but also from a geo-ecclesial perspective. They are generally considered by Byzantinists as representative of 'eastern Christianity' (eastern 'Christianities'/ christianismes orientaux, in the plural, would be more appropriate) and not as Byzantine texts proper, although they were produced in the third cultural language of the empire in terms both of the size of its literature and its unique presence in the first Church councils, whereas Latin and Greek were the only official languages of the Church (Millar 2006). This is primarily due to the hierarchic position of Greek and Latin as the official languages of the Roman "cosmopolis" (on this notion see Pollock 2006) and as *hiéroglossies,* the official and hence dominant languages of imperial Christianity (Debié forthcoming a). Syriac – as well as Coptic, Arabic, Armenian, and Georgian – , is not either an idiom of ancient or 'classical' culture as it is defined in the West, whose only languages are Latin and Greek, although the cultures expressed in these languages took over and acculturated to a large extent the ancient Hellenic *paideia*. Syriac's marginal position is also related to the fact that Orthodoxy over time became more and more equated with Greek and Byzantium, although Roman, with Hellenism (Dagron 1994; Cameron 2014). Since those who refused the conclusions of the ecumenical councils of Ephesus (431) and Chalcedon (451) in Syria and Mesopotamia increasingly used Syriac (Coptic, or Armenian) as their ecclesiastical and cultur-

---

1 I am grateful to Emiliano Fiori for his reading and suggestions. All mistakes and infelicities remain mine.

2 This has started to change in the past twenty years.

al language (whatever language they may have spoken otherwise: Greek, other forms of Aramaic, Arabic etc.), and were gradually rejected as 'others': they were not part of the Orthodox world although they deemed themselves as the true Orthodox. They are still viewed in modern scholarship as Oriental Orthodox, through the lens of confessional affiliations and as outsiders in terms of Byzantine Orthodoxy. From the perspective of Byzantinists, Syriac texts are already in many ways 'eastern', while they are produced inside the Empire. In a sense, they tend to be considered as 'neighbouring' productions within the Roman Empire, as peripheral to the main cultural, religious and linguistic streams. They are all the more so when they were written beyond the Byzantine polity, in the Sasanid empire and even further in Central Asia or China or when they originated from Arabia.

Syriac texts are instrumental as sources for Sasanian history, since they provide information from inside the Empire, while we have few Middle Persian texts. Just as in the Byzantine Empire, however, they were somehow peripheral, since they were prominently produced in former Aramaic-speaking areas in the western part of the Empire, by a religious minority within the Zoroastrian official religion.[3] Since they were written in both empires, they occupy nonetheless a central position for understanding the relations between them and attest two-way exchanges.

The Southern neighbours of Byzantium were not included in the programme of this session, although the Arabian Peninsula was part of the geopolitical and geo-religious relations between Byzantium, Axum and the Sasanian Empire in Late Antiquity (Bowersock 2017). Syriac sources offer an insider view of the exchanges of the Roman Empire with Persia and Arabia (in the sense of Southern Arabia, not only the Roman province of Arabia) since some of them were written or circulated in the Arabian Peninsula. They can thus provide a broader view of Byzantium's neighbouring worlds. Ethiopia and Nubia should also be considered in that network of civilisations and empires.

2 Eastern Transfers

After the belligerent state of the Romano-Sasanian relations in the third century, more consensual relations developed in the following centuries in spite of recurrent wars (Dignas, Winter 2007; Greatrex, Lieu 2002), and a common verbal and iconographic language was used in the two courts to present the king in an increasingly sa-

---

3 They have thus been often considered as 'tertiary' by specialists of Iranian studies after Gignoux's classification, which separated Sasanian sources, considered as primary, from the Roman ones, treated as tertiary (Gignoux 1978).

cred way (Canepa 2009; Payne 2013). The two hostile systems of sacred universal sovereignty nevertheless implied cross-cultural relations. The artistic, ritual, and ideological interactions between the late Roman and Persian Empire were accompanied by textual productions and exchanges in spite of – or perhaps because of – their constant rivalry.

Letters were exchanged between sovereigns, like the famous letter sent by Constantine to Shapur II about the Christians in Iran (Smith 2016). Peace treaties entailed negotiations and exchanges through translations and written accounts in both Greek and Middle Persian that were also probably sent to the Arab clients of each empire, who were involved in the discussions, since their situation was discussed in the treaties' clauses. Official letters and documents circulated between Constantinople and Ctesiphon and among the Arab, Hunnic and Turkish clients or enemies of both empires. A written multilingual culture was weaved through these official interactions beyond the borders of each empire. Bureaux of the barbarians in both empires gathered information, provided interpreters, and managed the sometimes troublesome allies. Exchanges existed at an administrative level and produced texts that are seldom considered as literary production. They were, however, a crucial part of the interactions between the various late antique polities at a political level.

If we focus on texts, translations are the most obvious way of following their transmission.[4] They exemplify how Hellenic culture circulated in languages other than Greek and outside of the Roman/Byzantine Empire (Debié 2017), and how in turn it was permeated by external texts. Circulation of people was an important means for the transmission of ideas and texts. Ambassadors sent from one court to another were agents of intellectual and literary transfers. They were chosen among the high-ranking officials of each empire in order to negotiate peace, but scholars were also sent for discussions. Byzantine physicians were especially popular for these missions since they could cure the Persian kings, their family or their courtiers, and thus gain their trust and have direct access to their person. Conversely, bishops were often sent by the shah to the Christian emperor with the same goal of winning his trust and finding a familiar ground for conversation more easily. Encounters and dialogues held at court, in the presence of the king in Constantinople and in Ctesiphon, whether on philosophical, scientific or religious matters, were privileged occasions of direct contact and intellectual exchanges in spite of the linguistic obstacles and cultural differences. In addition to discussions about military and economic questions over peace treaties, both empires deployed a diplomacy based on science, philosophy, and re-

---

4 For exchanges in terms of material culture and artistic productions, see Canepa 2009.

ligion aimed at answering the curiosity of each party for its adversary, and at creating the conditions of a better understanding – or political leverage.

A long-term process of cultural transfer and amalgamation took place in the Sasanian period, during which Iran was a crossroad of knowledge coming from east and west in the various languages in use in the empire (Dignas, Winter 2007; Zakeri 2022). Late antique Iran hosted "Roman philosophers, Indian sages, and Jewish and Christian religious leaders from within and outside the empire" (Zakeri 2022, 55) who contributed to a cosmopolitan and connected culture well before the Abbasid period and its translation movement (Debié 2014). Yet Sasanian Iran is still little included in studies dealing with Late Antiquity although, in principle, its importance has long been acknowledged (Walker 2002). The links of Byzantium with Central Asia and India are even less considered.

2.1 From Byzantium to Ērānšahr and Back. Medicine and Philosophy

The history of sciences in Zoroastrian sources (which are preserved in written form dating to the Islamic period) relies on the constructed memory of a major divide between the Greek west and Iran provoked by Alexander the Great's invasion of Persia, which led to the nearly total destruction and dispersal of all sacred and profane Iranian wisdom and religious texts (although the *Avesta* was in fact transmitted orally until the Sasanian period).[5] The loss would be repaired under the Parthians and more actively by the Sasanians, especially by Ḳosrow I Anuširvān (r. 531-79), who reclaimed the traces of knowledge from all quarters of the world (Shaki 1981; Zakeri 2022, 58). The religious text of the *Avesta* and scientific knowledge shared the same fate of dispersion after the Greek conquest and destruction and were associated in progressive restoration according to the Zoroastrian tradition (*Dēnkard*, ninth century). The image of the 'Greeks' is thus marred by the layer of Hellenistic memory, although Greek became the *lingua franca* used in western Asia alongside Aramaic under Alexander and the Seleucids, until at least the first century CE. In the Sasanian period, Greek and Indian texts on

---

[5] Alexander was viewed in a very negative light in the Sasanian period, which is why it is very improbable, from a historical point of view, that the *Alexander Romance* was translated from Greek into Middle Persian (and then into Syriac) as has long been stated and is still defended by some (Van Bladel 2007). Other linguistic arguments point in the same direction (Ciancaglini 2015). The consensus now is that it was translated directly from Greek into Syriac, without a Middle Persian intermediary of which there is no trace (Debié forthcoming b).

astrology and astronomy, physics, medicine, and mathematics were translated into Middle Persian starting with the reign of Ardashir I (r. 211/212-224), the founder of the Sasanian dynasty, and his son Shapur I (r. 240-70), and then under Ḵosrow I (Zakeri 2022, 68-70).

In Roman imagination, conversely, Persia was the place where Chaldean magic and astrology originated. It was also the gateway to India and the wisdom of the Brahmins and had a special appeal to philosophers.

Physicians played an important role in the transmission of knowledge and in the diplomatic relationships between the Roman and Sasanian empires. The first attestation of Greek physicians settling in the Sasanian Empire date to the third century, purportedly following the marriage of the daughter of the Roman emperor Aurelian (r. 270-275) with the Sasanian king. Hippocratic medicine was thus taught in Iran at least since that time and the city of Gondešapur may have become since then a centre for medical practice and study, although it is attested mostly in the ninth century when East-Syriac physicians educated in the local school flourished (Debié 2014).

Shapur's head physician was a Persian Christian named Theodore, who wrote a compendium of medicine, according to Ibn al-Nadīm (*Kitāb al-Fihrist* [ed. Flügel 1872, 303.16-18]). This is only the first example of a long line of very influential Christian physicians at the Sasanian court (Debié 2014, 33-5).

Around 532, another physician, Uranius, a Syrian, was sent as an ambassador to the Persian court and made a great impression with his knowledge of philosophy (Blockley 1980). When he came back to Constantinople, he was invited to dinner by the civic elites so that he could read passages of the letters he had received from Ḵosrow – who purportedly presented himself as Uranius' disciple – and narrate his encounters with the shah (Agathias, *Histories* II.29-30.2 [ed. Keydell 1967, 78-9; transl. Frendo 1975, 63-4]; Walker 2002, 67). The courtiers of Byzantium were obviously curious and eager to hear about the Sasanian court and king.

In 544, Stephen, a physician from Edessa, was chosen by the inhabitants of the city to negotiate with Ḵosrow who was besieging the city, because he had sojourned at the Persian court and cured Kawad, the previous king (d. 531). Several other physicians are mentioned in Ḵosrow's entourage: Tribunus, also an envoy of Justinian, was a Byzantine *archiatros*, head physician, as well as one Sergius.

East-Syriac physicians were also influential at his court: Birway, Qišway (who gave to Abraham d-Bet Rabban the piece of land where he constructed the hospital of the East-Syriac school of Nisibis), Gabriel of Šiggar, and Joseph, who was also the *catholicos* of the Church of the East and enjoyed *parrhesia*/freedom of speech with the king according to the sources. Soon after 574, the physician Zachariah was sent four times as an ambassador of Justin II to the Sasanian king (Debié 2014, 35).

Trained as physicians, these learned men also studied philosophy – and theology. They belonged to the elites of the two empires and ensured the relations of both courts at the highest level. They were also likely the instruments of transmission of philosophical and medical knowledge between empires, and, more marginally, of *belles lettres* (see below).

In 489, when the School of the Persians in Edessa was closed because of its Dyophysite teaching, the students and professors settled in Nisibis, which became one of the most famous schools of the Persian Empire where Greek texts of theology, law and medicine were read, translated into Syriac and commented (Becker 2006; 2008). Maʿna of Shiraz, who studied at the School of the Persians in Edessa and was elected metropolite of Rew Ardashir c. 480, translated from Greek into Syriac the works of Diodore of Tarsus and Theodore of Mopsuestia, which became the theological and scholastic basis of teaching in the Church of the East. Philosophy and medicine were closely linked and were both taught at the School, with theology as the crowning subject of the curriculum for clerics. As in Byzantium, the *trivium* or *quadrivium* remained the normal curriculum of study in the East-Syrian schools. It included geometry, mathematics, astronomy, and meteorology.

Sergius of Rēšʿaynā (a city located in Northern Mesopotamia; d. 536) who had studied medicine in Alexandria and was a priest as well as an *archiatros*, was the first to translate Greek philosophical and medical texts into Syriac and write commentaries on Aristotle's *Organon* (Brock 2011c). He also composed two works of his own, *On the Influence of the Moon* and *The Movement on the Sun*. His translations formed the basis of translations from Syriac into Arabic at the Abbasid period, thus disseminating Greek culture over time and across languages and religions. Sergius occupied a prominent position in the Byzantine Empire: in 535, Ephrem, the Orthodox Patriarch of Antioch (526/8-545) entrusted him with letters for the Pope and sent him to Rome. He was among those who escorted to Constantinople Pope Agapetus I who travelled in a mission to Justinian at the behest of King Theodahad of the Ostrogoths. He was thus part of ecclesiastical diplomacy at the highest level and is exemplary of the links between Rome and Antioch on the one hand, Italy and Constantinople on the other. We cannot but wonder if his geo-ecclesial embassy also implied the circulation of texts from the eastern Roman Empire to the West. His career ended there since he died in Constantinople the following year. It is noticeable that he had also personal links east of Byzantium, in Iran. He addressed his commentary on the *Categories*, as well as several of his translations of Galenic medical texts, to one Theodore, bishop of Karḫ Ǧuddān, a town located on the River Diyālā in Iran. He thus had connections from one end to the other of the Roman Empire, between Constantinople and Rome, as well as

east of the empire. His case exemplifies the circulation of texts beyond the political borders of empires and the high status a physician aka philosopher held at the Byzantine court.

Fascination for Persia and India probably partly explains why philosophers repeatedly went to the Iranian court. In 242 CE the philosopher Plotinus accompanied the army of Emperor Gordian III (238-44) when he invaded the Sasanian territory. It seems that he was trying to get to India and wanted to meet with philosophers of both empires. In 337, the philosopher Metrodorus went from the eastern Roman Empire to India via Iran. It is likely that he stopped at the Persian court since Emperor Constantine I (306-37) threatened the Sasanian shah with war if Metrodorus' goods that were stolen on his way back were not returned. Eustathius, a noble Roman and a pupil of the philosopher Iamblichus, was sent in 358 to Shapur II as an ambassador of Constantius II (r. 337-61). According to Ammianus Marcellinus and Eunapius, he impressed the shah to the point that the latter was almost ready to adopt the philosopher's cloak (Zakeri 2022, 70).

Conversely, we know that at the court of king Ḵosrow I, Paul the Persian, an East-Syriac theologian and philosopher, wrote a short commentary on Aristotle's *De interpretatione* (Bennett 2003). Aristotelian philosophy was taught in East Syriac schools in Syriac, and probably partly in Greek. But this text was written in Middle Persian and translated from Middle Persian into Syriac by the already mentioned Severus Sebokht (d. 666-667), who was of Iranian origin and himself taught Aristotelian philosophy and astronomy. It is still extant in Syriac. It was also translated into Arabic later on. Paul also produced a text exposing Aristotelian logic for the Sasanian king, the *Treatise on the Logic of Aristotle the Philosopher Addressed to King Ḵosrow* (Bennett 2003). It was also likely written in Middle Persian since it was intended for the king who, as far we know, did not know Greek. Through this example, we witness the double movement of Greek philosophy making its way into the Persian court by way of a Middle Persian commentary dependent upon Porphyry's *Isagoge*, written by a scholar who was a member of the Church of the East. This particular treatise made its way back to Syria thanks to the translation into Syriac made by Severus, a scholar active in the monastery of Qenneshre on the Euphrates, which was famous for its lineage of monks, patriarchs and bishops who were also scientists and philosophers (Jacob of Edessa and George of the Arabs in particular). The fate of this text exemplifies the circulation of texts across the borders from east of Byzantium.

2.2 The Two Eyes of the Earth in the Sixth Century. Justinian and Ḵosrow

We have no other detailed account of a Roman-Sasanian peace treaty like the one of 561 CE recorded by Menander Protector (Blockley 1985). It emphasises the degree of interactions and exchanges between the Two Eyes of the Earth. This cosmic expression that designates the Roman and the Sasanian empires is used in Theophylact Simocatta's history, in a letter addressed by Ḵosrow II to the emperor Maurice (Canepa 2009, 1), but can be applied as well to earlier periods, in particular to the powerful kings Justinian and Ḵosrow.

Ḵosrow's reign marks an acme in the interest in philosophical and scientific texts at the Sasanian court. The Persian king had texts of astronomy and medicine translated from Greek, Sanskrit, and Syriac into Middle Persian, making his court a crossroad open to sciences coming from east and west. He was also interested in texts of other religious traditions. John of Ephesus (c. 507-c. 586), a historian in the service of Justinian who wrote in Syriac, reports that the king was keen on reading the religious books of all creeds, as well as philosophy.

It is well known that in 529, when Justinian closed the Neoplatonic school in Athens, seven philosophers reputedly took refuge at the court of Ḵosrow I who was interested in philosophy and sciences and was hailed by them as Plato's Philosopher King.[6] The reason for their exile, according to the historian Agathias (*Histories* II.30.3-31.9 [ed. Keydell 1967, 80-1]), was that:

> They were forbidden by law to take part in public life with impunity owing to the fact that they did not conform to the established religion. (transl. Frendo 1975, 65)

These Hellenic (non-Christian) philosophers, however, went back to the Roman Empire when peace was signed between the two empires in 532, apparently disappointed by the king's erudition and the corruption of the Persian court (a Greek topos) if we follow what Agathias says. In the peace treaty of 532-533, Ḵosrow made sure to stipulate that the philosophers would be allowed to return to their homeland. They were permitted to keep their belief but not to teach it, in order to conform to Justinian's regulations. The Persian king thus appears as the protector of the non-Christian philosophers in the Byzantine Empire through the peace treaty negotiations just as Constantine had

---

6 There is a large bibliography on the subject, with sceptic or positive views of the reality of the philosophers' travel. See in particular Watts 2004; 2011; Beaucamp 2002; Hartmann 2002; Walker 2002; Tardieu 1994; Marcotte 2014; 2015; Dan 2017.

posed as the protector of Christians in the Sasanian Empire. According to Agathias, Ḵosrow verified adherence to the stipulations (Agathias, 2.31.2-4; Kettenhofen 2009).

We have a unique trace of their participation in a discussion at the Sasanian court in presence of Ḵosrow in the form of a short treatise that one of them, Priscian of Lydia, addressed to the Persian king. It has not survived in Greek – neither in Middle Persian – but a Latin translation made in the Carolingian period, maybe in the entourage of John Scotus Eriugena (c. 800-c. 877), is preserved under the title *Solutiones eorum quibus dubitavit Chosroes Persarum rex*. It consists in ten chapters, each providing answers to a question asked by the king about meteorology (as Aristotle envisioned it) and physics. Rather than a mere collection of random subjects, it was an introduction to Aristotle for the Platonic king (Tardieu 2015). It started with the soul's nature, went on with medicine, the body as the place of the soul and ended with the cosmos as the place of the body. In the *proemium*, Priscian gives an ideal list of sources, of which only a few are actually cited in the work, likely from collections of extracts (Marcotte 2014; 2015). Ḵosrow, according to Agathias, knew the *Timaeus* and *Phaedo* and other Platonic dialogues. Priscian cited them in the first place, then passing to Plotinus and Proclus, the Neoplatonic teacher, through Aristotle, Theophrastus, and Poseidonius's and Arrian's meteorology, following the late antique Neoplatonic curriculum as it was transmitted in scholarly text-books of ἐκλογαί, extracts, or in the teachers' ὑπομνήματα, notes (Dan 2017, 574).

2.3 Geography and Astronomy

Interest in the eastern empire and the routes to Iran and India is manifest in Byzantium in the sixth century. The *Chrestomathies* (χρηστομάθεια, 'useful knowledge') of Strabo were recomposed in the sixth century in the region of Osrhoene (or northern Syria), as we can infer from the central position it occupies in the reorganisation of the matter. To Strabo's geography were added citations of Xenophon, Arrian and Ptolemy. The recension 'E' of the *Chrestomathies* was also associated in the Paris manuscript with Isidore of Charax' *Parthian Stations*, Σταθμοὶ Παρθικοί, an itinerary from Antioch to India commissioned by the emperor Augustus (Marcotte 2014; 2015). The special interest shown in the text – and in this particular manuscript – for the region of Osrhoene and the itineraries to Persia and India coincides with the reconstruction of strongholds in the region by Justinian. Geography was an important form of practical knowledge for both empires in the context of the Roman-Persian wars.

A similar version of the *Chrestomathies* was also cited by Priscian in his *Solutiones*, reflecting Neoplatonic adaptations made in north-

ern Syria or Osrhoene. His choice of topics like naphtha or biting snakes may reflect an adaptation to local interests at the Sasanian court. He may have in turn observed or found in Iran a detailed description of the evolution of rabies *per regionem persarum* (Dan 2017, 585). He introduced Greek geography in Iran, whereas Zoroastrian cosmology and sacred history were the guiding knowledge and principles for the Sasanian kings and their court (Shapira 2001; Payne 2013).

Astronomy was another important field of interest in Late Antiquity, although astrology as such was condemned by the Church. Astrologers, like physicians, had direct access to the Persian kings and as such also played an important role at the court since they were in charge of establishing military horoscopes and personal horoscopes of important people (Panaino 2017). In the Byzantine Empire, too, and in spite of the condemnation of astral determinism, astrology was part of the everyday life of the population and was influential at the Byzantine court (Magdalino 2006). Iatromathematics was of special importance and the presence of both physicians and astrologers at the Sasanian court enhanced the complementary character of these fields, where theory and practice were implemented and confronted in schools, hospitals, and in the entourage of the shah (Delaini 2014). We know that Kawād had a personal Christian astrologer named Musa (or Maswi) who used his influence for the election of one of his relatives as *catholicos* of the Church of the East, in which the king had a say (Panaino 2017, 151). Ḵosrow II Parwēz (590-628) was also influenced for the election of the *catholicos* Gregory by a Christian astrologer, philosopher and physician who was also an archdeacon, named Aba of Kaškar (Panaino 2017, 152-3). His high position at the court is confirmed by the fact that Ḵosrow sent him as an ambassador to the emperor Maurice (Sako 1986), following the tradition of sending high clerics who were also renowned scholars to the neighbouring and rival empire. The circulation of these ambassadors of knowledge probably fostered the cross-cultural circulation of texts and ideas between empires.

We have an interesting report of such circulation in the context of applied sciences at the Sasanian court. As with medicine, the practical aspects of astronomy were the main reason for the emperors' interest and their sponsoring of scholarly activities. In 556, in the twenty-fifth year of his reign, Ḵosrow I convened a conference of astronomers in order to update the royal astronomical tables and had an Indian text compared with Ptolemy's *Syntaxis*. These tables needed to be revised regularly in order to conform to the astronomical year and enable the calculation of political and personal horoscopes as well as set up the yearly calendar. It was the occasion of a confrontation of mathematical calculations based on various traditions coming from east and west. This circulation from India to the Sasan-

ian Empire might explain how the Syriac scholar Severus Sebokht (d. 666/7) who was active in the monastery of Qenneshre on the Euphrates and wrote a *Treatise on the Astrolabe* and a *Treatise on the Constellations* heard about Indian numbers (Villey 2014; Debié 2014).

In the sixth-eighth centuries, astronomical knowledge circulated from China and India through Persia to the Jazira and Byzantium. Émilie Villey recently found evidence of Chinese vocabulary and classification of comets in Syriac texts. The Syriac *Book of Medicine*, in a passage that might be dated before 550 and was composed in Huzistan, seems to have preserved Sanskrit terms whereas Chinese influence is attested in Jacob of Edessa's *Hexaemeron* (before 708) and later Syriac-Orthodox texts (Villey 2021). This material from Chinese astronomy can be explained by the presence of Syriac-Orthodox, since at least the beginning of the seventh century, in Ḥerat, in Khorasan (ancient Bactria or Tokharistan, modern Afghanistan), which became a bishopric and an ecclesiastical metropolis. Since 648, the region was under the control of the Tang dynasty, which facilitated the circulation from and to the Chinese capital Chang'an and the implantation of Chinese officials, including astronomers in charge of the observation of the sky for the establishment of the calendar and of horoscopes. We know also from Chinese sources that embassies reached Byzantium in the seventh and eighth centuries, enabling cross-cultural artistic exchanges (Walker 2003).

The other way around, astronomers/astrologers who were members of the Church of the East disseminated western astronomical science all the way to the court of the Tangs. The discovery in the 1980s of a funerary tombstone confirmed that a Christian astrologer of Iranian origin named Li Su (743-817), also known as Wenzhen, was also one and the same as the Luqa mentioned on the famous Chinese-Syriac stele of Xi'an (781), who likely was a cleric of the Church of the East. He was sent to the Chinese court in Chang'an between 766 and 779, where he became the director of the bureau of astronomy (Panaino 2017). He supplanted an Indian dynasty of astronomers, just as Chinese vocabulary and classification of comets seem to have overtaken Indian knowledge in Syriac texts. From the little information we have in Syriac, a shift of influence from Indian to Chinese astronomy seems to have taken place at the beginning of the eighth century.

Closer to Byzantium, Severus Sebokht sent one of his disciples to teach Stephanos, *illustris* and *chartularius* of the Jazira, how to use Ptolemy's astronomical tables. The practice of astronomy went on based on the Greek tradition. In the eighth century, the famous Theophilus of Edessa (Debié 2015; 2016), a Maronite astrologer at the court of the Abbasid caliphs, wrote astronomical treatises in Greek. These treatises attest that he knew Indian and Iranian astronomy. They were later cited by Arab scholars on the one hand and reached Constantinople c. 775 on the other, through the intermediary of Pseu-

do-Stephen of Alexandria, and were kept there. Pseudo-Stephen also wrote treatises in Greek in Baghdad that were then translated into Arabic (Tihon 1993; Magdalino 1998).

2.4   Literary Texts from the East to the West and Back

Religious and, interestingly, profane literature circulated with these high clerics who were also scholars. The famous Aba I, the future *catholicos* of the Church of the East (d. 552), who was educated in Middle Persian *belles lettres*, learned Syriac in Nisibis and Greek in Edessa. He visited with his teacher of Greek, Thomas, Alexandria, Egypt, Athens, Corinth, Constantinople, and Antioch before coming back to Nisibis and Ctesiphon. He is mentioned under the name of Patrikios by Cosmas Indicopleustes as his teacher for biblical studies. Translations from Greek into Syriac made Christian authors known in the Sasanian Empire.

A literary text enjoyed a tremendous success in the Middle East and then in the West, where it was translated into many languages. The collection of fables called *Kalila and Dimna* from the name of the two protagonists, two jackals, in which the actors are animals, treated political questions and was translated from the now lost Sanskrit *Pañcatantra* and other Indian collections of tales and fables into Middle Persian (Brock 2011a). The translation of tales from these collections was made in the 570s by Burzoy (Barzaway), who was also a physician at the court of Ḵosrow I and was sent to India by the king, as is stated in his 'autobiography' that precedes the Arabic translation by Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ. His translation does not survive but it was in turn translated into Syriac by Bodh, a *periodeutes* (ecclesiastical visitor) of the Church of the East, and is still extant. A later translation from Middle Persian into Arabic was made in the first half of the eighth century, by the Persian scholar Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ. This does not survive either but formed the basis for all the subsequent translations into Arabic, Persian, Greek, Hebrew and Old Spanish. It was also translated into Syriac in the tenth or eleventh century in an expanded version, compared to the first one, including the narrative of Burzoy, which the first translation did not include. A second translation from Arabic into Syriac was made in the nineteenth century by Thomas Audo. Under the title of the *Fables of Bidpay*, or Pilpay, this small collection was translated into Turkish and into western languages: John of Capua translated it into Latin in 1270. The French version (*Le Livre des lumières ou la Conduite des rois*, 1644) inspired Jean de La Fontaine for his own fables. It is also known in translations in Thailand, Laos and Indonesia. It reached Byzantium only in the eleventh century, when a Greek translation was made in 1080 by the Jewish scholar Simeon Seth, under the title *Stephanites and Ich-*

nelates. A more complete Greek version was made in twelfth-century Sicily, connected with Admiral Eugenius of Palermo. Although the first Syriac translation that made the stories known in the Middle East dates to the sixth century, it did not circulate in Byzantium and was known only later on from the Arabic version. The retranslation into Syriac from Arabic confirms the little success met by the first one. Although both were made in Iran, only the second one reached Byzantium via a Greek intermediary.

A similar text of 'oriental' tales, Sindbad/Sintypas the sage (not to be confused with the even better-known Sindbad the sailor), was translated from a Persian or Indian original dating to the late Sasanian period from Middle Persian into Arabic in the ninth century (Brock 2011d). It enjoyed great popularity and was also translated into Hebrew and hence into Spanish and other European languages where it was known under the title of *The Seven Sages of Rome*. It was translated early on from Arabic into Syriac. In the eleventh century, Michael Andreopoulos translated it from Syriac into Greek in Melitene, a city of contacts between the Syrian-Orthodox and Greek Orthodox after the Byzantine reconquest. He gave Sindbad the name of Syntipas under which it is generally known today.

Another fictional text, the *History of Alexander the Great*, probably composed in the sixth century,[7] stages a war between Alexander, reimagined as a pious monotheistic king, and a fictitious Persian king named Tubarlaq. Alexander receives a revelation from an otherworldly being and triumphs over the Persian king. He also builds an impregnable door that reminds the reader of the formidable Sasanian walls reconstructed in the sixth century against the Huns. In two of these texts, the Huns are equated with the eschatological people of Gog and Magog. These apocalypses function as additional and independent Christianised episodes of the so-called *Alexander Romance* known in countless languages and cultures – including Syriac. They are a literary means to come to terms with the Roman-Persian wars and the related eschatological anxieties, and to reclaim for a 'Greek' king the exploit of keeping at bay both the Persians and the barbarians from the north. The anonymous author who composed the core of the *History of Alexander* weaved a story on what he heard about the military and political situation of his time on the borders between empires. We can find strong echoes of the *History of the Exploits*, that is a development of this first version, in surah 18 of the Qur'ān. This successful story should be replaced in the context of the images con-

---

7 For a date at the beginning of the sixth century and not in the seventh century of this history, which is known in three different versions in Syriac (in the *Chronicle of Zuqnin*, in the *Mimro*, falsely attributed to Jacob of Serugh, and in the *History of the Exploit of Alexander*), see Debié forthcoming a.

veyed on the shared (and often conflictual) history of the Roman and Sasanian empires, and read as a comforting as well as entertaining literary composition intended for Syriac Christians living in the borderlands of both empires.

Christians in both empires shared a common spirituality based on the cult of martyrs. Whereas persecutions ceased in the Roman Empire after the so-called edict of Milan, they went on in the Sasanian Empire, although in a more specific and less massive mode than in the third and fourth centuries. Numerous Acts of martyrs were written in Syriac (Brock 2008). The names of Persian martyrs reached the Roman Empire and became part of one of the most ancient lists of martyrs copied at the end of the earliest dated Syriac manuscript, written in Edessa in November 411 (Brock 2011a). This transmission of the martyrs' names was accompanied by the translation of relics from the Persian Empire and the translation into Greek of some of these Acts (Brock 2011b). Marutha of Maypherqat is the driving force behind these movements. Trained as a physician before he became the bishop of Maypherqat (Greek Martyropolis, modern Silvan in Turkey), he gained the favour of Yazdegerd I (399-420) and was sent to his court in 410 as a legate by Theodosius II. He obtained to convene a council for the Church of the East in Seleucia-Ctesiphon in 410. He reputedly translated into Syriac the canons of the ecumenical council of Nicaea and several documents linked to it. We know that he brought back with him the relics of Persian martyrs that owed his city the name of Martyropolis. He was probably also at the origin of the translation of Acts of the martyrs under Shapur II (309-79) that he had gathered while in Iran. Information about these martyrs also made their way into the *Ecclesiastical History* of Sozomen.

Due to massive deportations of war prisoners from the Roman Empire in the third and fourth centuries, Greek-speaking Christians and their hierarchy played an important role in the Church of the East until at least the fifth century. This might explain the translations and regular contacts on both sides of the border. The interest for Persian martyrs in the west did not end with the martyrs under Shapur. In the case of two Persian martyrs under Ḵosrow I (531-79) and Ḵosrow II (591-628), Shirin (*BHG* 1637) and Golindouch (*BHG* 700-702; *CPG* 7521), two noble women belonging to the royal family, only the Greek versions survive, the Syriac originals having been lost. In the seventh century the Acts of Anastasius the Persian were written in Greek in Palestine where he was deported before his death, during the Persian occupation of the Eastern provinces of the Roman Empire (Flusin 1992). These translations or compositions in Greek attest the interest for fellow Christians in the Sasanian empire and conveyed information about everyday life in the neighbouring realm as well as about the administrative and ecclesiastical (Zoroastrian) institutions.

Polemics and controversies as well as political concerns sparked translations from and into several languages. Agatangełos' *History of the Armenians* was thus translated into Middle Persian at the Sasanian court in order to give proof to the shah of the ancient nobility of the Armenians. The *catholicos* Aqāq purportedly translated an account of Christian beliefs into Middle Persian for the Sasanian ruler Kawād, in order to help him understand Christianity. A debate between a delegation of six members of the Church of the East (including the future *catholicos* Īšōʿyahb I) led by Paul, bishop of Nisibis, and the emperor Justinian took place in 562 in Constantinople (Rigolio 2019, no. 58, 219-22). Recorded in writing, this dispute relied on citations of Biblical and Patristic excerpts. Paul wrote his own account of the dispute that was addressed to Kashwai, one of Ḳosrow I's physicians mentioned above. The *Catalogue* of Syriac writers compiled by ʿAbdīšōʿ bar Brīkā of Nisibis (thirteenth century) mentions a *Conversation with Caesar* (*Debate with Caesar, CPG* 6897) that Paul of Nisibis had authored and that could be this report (now lost). Christological debates were thus transmitted in both empires and manifest the implication of both sovereigns who were interested in keeping religious unity and peace in their realm between religions and between Christian confessions and churches. They applied theology to their political agenda.

Interestingly an anonymous fictitious *Conversation at the Sasanian Court* (Διήγησις or Ἐξήγησις τῶν πραχθέντων ἐν Περσίδι [*De gestis in Perside*], *CPG* 6968) was composed in the sixth century (Rigolio 2017, no. 59, 222-9). Four debates in presence of a Sasanian king called Arrhinatus opposed representatives of the main religions of Late Antiquity – Hellenic paganism, Christianity, Zoroastrianism, and Judaism – , who also bore fictitious names and competed through miracles. One of the main interests of this text are the passages in Pseudo-Persian, the language in which the debates supposedly took place. Set at the Sasanian court, it reports that extracts from the ecclesiastical historian Philip of Side were read. It adds letters and the *Legend of Aphroditianus*, an apocryphal text on the Magi, that circulated independently. It also heavily relies on the Book of Daniel. The text is an imaginative rendition by a Byzantine author of the Sasanian court as a place of confrontation and at the same time of *convivencia* between religions, where the judge, a high-ranking Sasanian official and philosopher, proffered a discourse of religious freedom. This dialogue romance was probably inspired to a Christian author in the Roman Empire who heard about the interreligious dialogues held at Justinian's or at the two Ḳosrow's courts (Guillaumont 1969-70; 1970). It is indicative of the image a Christian of the Roman Empire had of the Sasanians' practice of public dialogues.

Scientific and philosophical texts circulated as is expected between the Roman and Sasanian empires as well as more east and

west towards Europe and towards India and China. It is more surprising to see that religious texts were also discussed at the courts. The political impact of religious dissents and violence actually meant that knowing better one's adversaries and talking with them was instrumental in order to maintain a balance between the official religion of the empire and the other ones, in the variety of their internal movements. Whether from intellectual curiosity or more practical political concerns, religious dialogues were also the occasion for the circulation of texts.

3 Southern Exchanges

The new discoveries of the past decades in terms of Arabian epigraphy have changed in depth our understanding of the history of the Peninsula before Islam and have in particular shown how integrated it was, not only in the economic networks of Late Antiquity, but also in the geopolitical and geo-religious relations between Byzantium, the Sasanian, South Arabian and Ethiopian kingdoms (Hoyland 2001; Bowersock 2004; 2017; McDonald 2009; Fisher 2011; Robin 2014; Robin, al-Ghabbān, al-Saʿīd 2014; Genequand, Robin 2015). Although the map of Late Antiquity should fully integrate the region, not just as a grey zone of desert, but as a region with courts, buildings and cities, economic as well as religious and political networks, the impact of these changes very slowly sinks in the historiography of the region and the history of religions. The history of Late Antique Judaism hardly considers Arabian Judaism and Christianity in Arabia is seldom part of the picture of ancient Christianity.

Emperors in Byzantium were not only interested in securing alliances with their Arab clients but also eager to have some weigh in Arabia. Justin I (518-27) sent to the Lakhmid king al-Mundhir at Ḥirta/al-Ḥīra (the capital of the Naṣrids in northwest Arabia) Abramios, a priest and diplomat, son of Euphrasius and father of Nonnosos, who belonged to a family of diplomats. During the reign of Justinian and the Roman-Persian war in 530, Sergius, a deacon known to the Arab king, travelled back and forth holding the letters of al-Mundhir. These clerics were sent as delegates for peace discussions and travelled with letters from both parties.

Texts also circulated in and from the Arabian Peninsula in attempts to gain Arabs and Ḥimyarites to the miaphysite faith. Competition between the various Christian affiliations fostered religious-diplomatic encounters: Severus of Antioch and Philoxenus of Mabbug sent letters to the phylarch and *stratelates* of Ḥirtha/al-Ḥira, on Christological and ecclesiastical issues, in the context of the competition with the dyophysites of the Church of the East. Discussions were held at the enemies Arab courts of Ḥira and Gabitha, spon-

sored by the Arab 'kings' on neutral ground. Envoys of the Byzantine emperor, members of the Church of the East, and the highest authorities of the miaphysite party were present. In 536, when Justinian enacted laws against the Miaphysites, Ephrem, the patriarch of Antioch, tried to gain al-Ḥarith b. Jabala/Arethas to the Chalcedonian cause. In the 580s, the miaphysite patriarchs of Antioch and Alexandria participated in a discussion convened by the Jafnid phylarch in Gabitha at his encampment, and aimed at bridging the gap between them. As in the Church councils, convocation letters were sent in Greek, extracts from dogmatic texts were produced by each party and discussed in these reunions, letters dispatched the results of the discussions. Echoes of these sophisticated theological discussions can be traced in the Qur'ān (Debié 2016).

The hagiographic dossier of the so-called martyrs of Najran exemplify the circulation of various clerics – Greek Orthodox, Syriac Miaphysites, members of the Church of the East, miaphysite Ethiopians and local Arabs and Ḥimyarites belonging to these Christian denominations – inside Arabia and between empires (Beaucamp, Briquel-Chatonnet, Robin 2011). Simeon of Beth Arsham, 'the Persian debater', who circulated in the Sasanian Empire in order to convert to Miaphysitism Christians of the Persian Empire, was also active in the Arabian Peninsula. He received at the court of Ḥirtha/al-Ḥira in 523 the news of the massacre of Christian in Najran by Dhū Nuwās, the Ḥimyarite king converted to Judaism. He wrote a letter that was brought to a monastery in northern Syria in order to make the news known in the Roman Empire. Acts of the martyrs were written in Greek, in Syriac (the *Book of the Ḥimyarites*) and in Ethiopic, and were translated into Arabic. Echoes of the massacre were also identified in the Qur'ān.

Texts were thus exchanged between Constantinople and the Arabian Peninsula, as they were also with the neighbouring kingdoms of Ethiopia and Persia. A literate culture existed in Arabia, which explains how quickly written documents started to be written in Arabic shortly after Muḥammad (Debié forthcoming c). Byzantium engaged in geopolitical and religious dialogue with its eastern and southern neighbours through clerics who played also a role as ambassadors of knowledge and cultural delegates.

Bibliography

Primary Sources

Frendo, J. (transl.) (1975). *Agathias. The Histories*. Berlin: De Gruyter.
Keydell, R. (Hrsg.) (1967). *Agathias Myrinaei Historiarum libri quinque*. Berlin: De Gruyter. Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae.

Secondary Literature

Dignas, B.; Winter, E. (2007). *Rome and Persia in Late Antiquity. Neighbours and Rivals*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Beaucamp, J. (2002). "Le philosophe et le joueur. La date de la 'fermeture de l'école d'Athènes'". *Travaux et Mémoires*, 14, 21-35 (Mélanges Gilbert Dragon).
Beaucamp, J.; Briquel-Chatonnet, F.; Robin, C.J. (2011). *Le massacre de Najrân*. Tome 2, *Juifs et chrétiens en Arabie aux Ve et VIe siècles. Regards croisés sur les sources*. Paris: Association des Amis du Centre d'Histoire et Civilisation de Byzance. Monographies 32.
Becker, A. (2006). *Fear of God and the Beginning of Wisdom. The School of Nisibis and Christian Scholastic Culture in Late Antique Mesopotamia*. Philadelphia (PA): University of Pennsylvania Press. Divinations.
Becker, A. (2008). *Sources for the Study of the School of Nisibis*. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press.
Bennett, B. (2003). "Paul the Persian". *Encyclopedia Iranica online*. `https://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/paul-the-persian`.
Blockley, R.C. (1980). "Doctors as Diplomats in the Sixth Century A.D.". *Florilegium*, 2(1), 89-100. `https://doi.org/10.3138/flor.2.005`.
Blockley, R.C. (1985). *The History of Menander the Guardsman*. Liverpool: F. Cairns.
Bowersock, G. (2004). "The Ḥadramawt between Persia and Byzantium". *La Persia e Bisanzio = Atti del Convegno internazionale* (Roma, 14-18 ottobre 2002). Roma: Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei, 263-73. Atti dei convegni Lincei 201.
Bowersock, G. (2017). *The Crucible of Islam*. Cambridge (MA); London: Harvard University Press.
Brock, S.P. (2008). *The History of the Holy Mar Ma'in. With a Guide to the Persian Martyr Acts*. Piscataway (NJ): Gorgias Press.
Brock, S.P. (2011a). "Kalila and Dimna". Brock et al. 2011. `https://gedsh.bethmardutho.org/Kalila-and-Dimna`.
Brock, S.P. (2011b). "Marutha of Maypherqaṭ (4th/5th Cent.)". Brock et al. 2011. `https://gedsh.bethmardutho.org/Marutha-of-Maypherqat`.
Brock, S.P. (2011 c). "Sergios of Reshʿayna". Brock et al. 2011. `https://gedsh.bethmardutho.org/Sergios-of-Reshayna`.
Brock S.P. (2011d). "Sindbad Syntipas". Brock et al. 2011. `https://gedsh.bethmardutho.org/Sindbad`.
Brock, S.P. et al. (eds) (2011). *The Gorgias Encyclopedic Dictionary of the Syriac Heritage. Electronic Edition*. `https://gedsh.bethmardutho.org/index.html`.
Cameron, A. (2014). *Byzantine Matters*. Princeton (NJ); Oxford: Princeton University Press.

Canepa, M. (2009). *The Two Eyes of the Earth. Art and Ritual of Kingship between Rome and Sasanian Iran*. Berkeley; Los Angeles; London: University of California Press. Transformation of the Classical Heritage 45.

Ciancaglini, A. (2015). "Ancora sulla versione siriaca del Romanzo di Alessandro. Le oscillazioni grafiche nella resa dei nomi greci". Benedetti, M. (a cura di), *Rappresentazioni linguistiche dell'identità*. Napoli: Università degli Studi di Napoli "L'Orientale", 51-92. Quaderni di AIΩN, n.s. 3.

Dagron, G. (1994). "Formes et fonctions du pluralisme linguistique à Byzance (IXe-XIIe siècle)". *Travaux et Mémoires*, 12, 219-40.

Dan, A. (2017). "Les Solutiones ad Chosroem de Priscien de Lydie et les transferts de savoirs pendant l'Antiquité tardive et le Moyen Âge". Bouloux, N.; Dan, A.; Tolias, G. (éds), *Orbis disciplinae. Hommages en l'honneur de Patrick Gautier Dalché*. Turnhout: Brepols, 557-606.

Debié, M. (2014). "Sciences et savants syriaques. Une histoire multiculturelle". Villey, É. (éd.), *Les Sciences en syriaque*. Paris: Geuthner, 9-66. Études syriaques 11.

Debié, M. (2015). "Theophanes' 'Oriental Source'. What Can We Learn from Syriac Historiography?". Jankowiak, M.; Montinaro, F. (eds), "Studies in Theophanes". Monogr. no., *Travaux et Mémoires*, 19, 365-82.

Debié, M. (2016). "Christians in the Service of the Caliph. Through the Looking Glass of Communal Identities". Borrut, A.; Donner, F. (eds), *Christians and Others in the Umayyad State*. Chicago: The Oriental Institute, 53-72. Late Antique and Medieval Islamic Near East 1.

Debié, M. (2017). "'La science est commune'. Sources syriaques et culture grecque en Syrie-Mésopotamie et en Perse par-delà les siècles obscurs byzantins". Flusin, B.; Cheynet, J.C. (éds), "Autour du *Premier humanisme byzantin* et des *Cinq études sur le XIe siècle*, quarante ans après Paul Lemerle". Monogr. no., *Travaux et Mémoires*, 21(2), 87-127.

Debié, M. (forthcoming a). *Alexandre le Grand en syriaque. Du roman grec aux apocalypses chrétiennes et au Coran*. Paris: Les Belles Lettres.

Debié, M. (forthcoming b). "'La reine de toutes les langues'. Les relations hiéroglossiques du syriaque avec les langues environnantes". Robert, J.-N. (éd.), *Hiéroglossie*, vol. III. Paris: Collège de France-IHEJ.

Debié, M. (forthcoming c). "Languages and Scripts of the Arabs before Islam". Borrut, A.; Ceballos, E.; Vacca, A. (eds), *Navigating Language in the Early Islamic World. Multilingualism, Arabicization, and Language Change in the First Centuries of Islam*. Turnhout: Brepols.

Delaini, P. (2014). *Medicina del corpo, medicina dell'anima. La circolazione delle conoscenze medico-filosofiche nell'Iran sasanide*. Milano: Mimesis. Indo-iranica et orientalia. Serie Lazur 9.

Fisher, G. (2011). *Between Empires. Arabs, Romans, and Sasanians in Late Antiquity*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Flusin, B. (1992). *Saint Anastase le Perse et l'histoire de la Palestine au début du VIIe siècle*. 2 vols. Paris: Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique Éditions.

Flügel, G. (Hrsg.) (1872). *Kitâb al-Fihrist*. 2 vols. Leipzig: Vogel.

Genequand, D.; Robin, C.J. (2015). *Les Jafnides, rois arabes au service de Byzance (VIe siècle de l'ère chrétienne) = Actes du colloque de Paris, 24-25 novembre 2008*. Paris: De Boccard. Orient et Méditerranée 17.

Gignoux, P. (1978). "Problèmes de distinction et de priorité des sources". Harmatta, J. (ed.), *Prolegomena to the Sources on the History of Pre-Islamic Central Asia*. Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 137-41.

Greatrex, G.; Lieu, N.C. (2002). *The Roman Eastern Frontiers and the Persian Wars, AD 363-630*. London; New York: Routledge.

Guillaumont, A. (1969-70). "Justinien et l''Église de Perse". *Dumbarton Oaks-Papers*, 23-4, 39-66.

Guillaumont, A. (1970). "Un colloque entre orthodoxes et théologiens nestoriens de Perse sous Justinien". *Compte-rendus de l'Académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres*, 114(2), 201-7.

Hartmann, U. (2002). "Geist und Exil. Römische Philosophen am Hof der Sasaniden". Schuol, M. et al. (Hrsgg), *Grenzübschreitungen. Formen des Kontakts zwischen Orient und Okzident im Altertum*. Stuttgart: Steiner, 123-60. Oriens et Occidens 3.

Hoyland, R. (2001). *Arabia and the Arabs*. *From the Bronze Age to the Coming of Islam*. London: Routledge.

Kettenhofen, E. (2009). "Justinian I". *Encyclopedia Iranica online*. `https://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/justinian-i-flavius-petrus-sabbatius-justinianus`.

McDonald, M.C.A. (2009). "Arabs, Arabias, and Arabic before Late Antiquity". *Topoi*, 16, 277-332. `https://doi.org/10.3406/topoi.2009.2306`.

Marcotte, D. (2014). "Priscien de Lydie, la géographie et les origines néoplatoniciennes de la Collection philosophique". *Journal des Savants*, 2, 165-203. `https://doi.org/10.3406/jds.2014.6316`.

Marcotte, D. (2015). "Chosroès Ier et Priscien. Entretiens de physique et de météorologie". Jullien, Ch. (éd.), *Husraw Ier. Reconstructions d'un règne, sources et documents*. Paris: Association pour l'avancement des études iraniennes, 285-304. Studia Iranica. Cahier 53.

Magdalino, P. (1998). "The Road to Bagdad in the Thought-World of Ninth-Century Byzantium". Brubaker, L. (ed.), *Byzantium in the Ninth Century. Dead or Alive? = Papers from the Thirtieth Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies* (Birmingham, March 1996). Aldershot: Ashgate, 195-213.

Magdalino, P. (2006). *L'Orthodoxie des astrologues. La science entre le dogme et la divination à Byzance (VIIe-XIVe siècle)*. Paris: Lethielleux. Réalités Byzantines 12.

Millar, F. (2006). *A Greek Roman Empire Power and Belief under Theodosius II (408-450)*. Berkeley; Los Angeles: University of California Press. Sather Classical Lectures 64.

Panaino, A. (2010). "The Astronomical Conference of the Year 556 and the Politics of Xusraw Anōšag-ruwān". Börm, H.; Wiesehöfer, J. (eds), *Commutatio et contentio. Studies in the Late Roman, Sasanian, and Early Islamic Near East. In Memory of Zeev Rubin*. Düsseldorf: Wellen, 293-306. Reihe Geschichte 3.

Panaino, A. (2017). "Astrologi cristiani alle corti Sassanide e Cinese". *Bizantinistica*, 18(5), 149-65.

Payne, R. (2013). "Cosmology and the Expansion of the Iranian Empire, 502-628 CE". *Past & Present*, 220(1), 3-33. `https://doi.org/10.1093/pastj/gtt008`.

Pollock, S. (2006). *The Language of the Gods in the World of Men. Sanskrit, Culture, and Power in Premodern India*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Rigolio, A. (2019). *Christians in Conversation. A Guide to Late Antique Dialogues in Greek and Syriac*. Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press. Oxford Studies in Late Antiquity.

Robin, C.J. (2014). "The Peoples beyond the Arabian Frontier in Late Antiquity. Recent Epigraphic Discoveries and Latest Advances". Dijkstra, J.H.F.; Fisher, G. (eds), *Inside and Out. Interactions between Rome and the Peoples on*

the Arabian and Egyptian Frontiers in Late Antiquity. Leuven: Peeters, 33-79. Late Antique History and Religion 8.

Robin, C.J.; al-Ghabbān, A.I.; al-Saʿīd, S.F. (2014). "Inscriptions antiques de la région de Najrān (Arabie Séoudite Méridionale). Nouveaux jalons pour l'histoire de l'écriture, de la langue et du calendrier Arabe". Comptes-rendus des séances de l année. Académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres, 158(3), 1033-128. https://doi.org/10.3406/crai.2014.94960.

Sako, L. (1986). Le rôle de la hiérarchie syriaque orientale dans les rapports diplomatiques entre la Perse et Byzance aux Vᵉ-VIIᵉ siècles. Paris: s.l.

Shaki, M. (1981). "The Dēnkard Account of the History of the Zoroastrian Scripture". Archív Orientální, 49, 114-25.

Shapira, D.D.Y. (2001). "Was There Geographical Science in Sasanian Iran?". Acta Orientalia Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae, 54(2-3), 319-38. https://doi.org/10.1556/aorient.54.2001.2−3.6.

Smith, K. (2016). Constantine and the Captive Christians of Persia. Martyrdom and Religious Identity in Late Antiquity. Oakland: University of California Press. Transformation of The Classical Heritage 57.

Tardieu, M. (1994). "Chosroès". Goulet, R. (éd.), Dictionnaire des philosophes antiques. Vol. 2, Babélyca d'Argos à Dyscolius. Paris: Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique Éditions, 309-18.

Tihon, A. (1993). "L'astronomie à Byzance à l'époque iconoclaste (viiie-ixe siècle)". Butzer, P.L.; Lohrmann, D. (eds), Science in Western and Eastern Civilization in Carolingian Times. Basel: Birkhauser, 181-203.

Van Bladel, K. (2007). "The Syriac Sources of the Early Arabic Narratives of Alexander". Prabha, R.H.; Potts, D. (eds), Memory as History. The Legacy of Alexander in South Asia. New Dehli: Aryan Books International, 54-75.

Villey, É. (2014). Les Sciences en syriaque. Paris: Geuthner. Études syriaques 11.

Villey, É. (2021). "'Comètes en forme de balai'. Cas d'influence culturelle chinoise sur des syriaques orthodoxes au viiie s. AD". Brelaud, S. et al. (éd.), Le calame et le ciseau. Colophons syriaques offerts à Françoise Briquel-Chatonnet. Paris: Geuthner, 469-90. Cahiers d'Études syriaques 8.

Walker, J.T. (2002). "The Limits of Late Antiquity. Philosophy between Rome and Iran". Ancient World, 33(1), 45-69.

Walker, J.T. (2003). "Against the Eternity of the Stars. Disputation and Christian Philosophy in Late Sasanian Mesopotamia". Atti dei Convegni Lincei, 184, 509-38.

Watts, E. (2004). "Justinian, Malalas, and the End of Athenian Philosophical Teaching in AD 529". Journal of Roman Studies, 94, 168-82. https://doi.org/10.2307/4135014.

Watts, E. (2011). "Doctrine, Anecdote, and Actio. Reconsidering the Social History of the Last Platonists (c. 430-c. 550 CE)". Classical Philology, 106(3), 226-44. https://doi.org/10.1086/661544.

Zakeri, M. (2022). "Translations from Greek into Middle Persian as Repatriated Knowledge". Gutas, D. (ed.), Why Translate Science? Documents from Antiquity to the 16th Century in the Historical West (Bactria to the Atlantic). Leiden: Brill, 52-169. Handbook of Oriental Studies. Section 1 The Near and Middle East 160. https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004472648_004.

Une appropriation impossible. Textes et formes littéraires entre Byzance et l'Occident

Paolo Odorico
École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, Paris

Abstract   The topic of the translation and appropriation of texts and literary forms in the relations between Byzantium and the West presents several preliminary aspects that should be considered, such as the form, which is indebted to different literary traditions, the question of the message, the anthropological or social dimension. Very few translations or adaptations of literary texts were made in Byzantium from the seventh to the twelfth century: I shall try to explain it through the education of Byzantine scholars. I shall consider some aspects of this education by taking into account some products that are specific to the transmission of knowledge in Byzantium, such as the culture of the collection, the chronicles and the descriptions of cities, to reach the conclusion of the impossibility of translating and adapting Western models in Byzantium.

Keywords   Literature. Translations. Adaptations. Culture of the collection. Chronicles. Description of cities.

Edizioni
Ca'Foscari

1 Introduction

Traiter de la traduction et de l'appropriation des textes et des formes littéraires dans les rapports entre Byzance et l'Occident – c'est le sujet qui m'a été confié par les Stambouliotes, premiers organisateurs du Congrès – n'est pas une tâche aisée, et mériterait à elle tout seule une longue monographie. D'autant plus qu'il faudrait bien s'entendre sur la période qu'on prend en considération, et la discussion sur les siècles proprement 'byzantins' n'est pas encore close, loin de là. Par exemple, assez récemment notre regrettée collègue Evelyne Patlagean considérait qu'il faudrait parler de Byzance surtout pour les IXe-XIe siècles, en rejoignant ainsi les savants qui ont toujours considéré les « imperial centuries », des Macédoniens aux Comnènes, comme ceux qui expriment le vrai caractère byzantin de la civilisation que nous étudions (Jenkins 1966 ; Patlagean 2007). Entrer dans cette question, veut dire consacrer des longues heures à la discussion sans aboutir à une solution quelconque.

1.1 Le temps de Byzance

Prenons d'abord en considération l'échelle temporelle. En ce qui concerne la relation des textes littéraires entre Byzance et l'Occident, il est évident qu'à l'époque de Justinien, lorsque la production écrite byzantine s'exprime dans les deux langues, grecque et latine (sans parler des autres, à commencer par le syriaque), nous avons des relations entre les deux productions artistiques. D'ailleurs le latin est encore largement pratiqué à la cour (Garcea, Rosellini, Silvano 2019). Encore faudrait-il établir les critères de distinction. Devons-nous parler de tradition littéraire au sens formel ? Le discours n'a pas beaucoup de sens : il est évident que les formes exprimées dans une langue donnée, sur la base d'une tradition séculaire, jouent un rôle extrêmement important. Mais la production d'œuvres 'littéraires' n'est pas seulement la forme : il faut prendre en compte d'autres éléments comme par exemple le message contenu dans chaque ouvrage, qui reçoit une forme donnée, fruit de la tradition qui agit en profondeur. Faut-il souligner cette tradition, ou alors la dimension anthropologique ou sociale ? Le catalogue des traductions du latin en grec, récemment réalisé par A. Kaldellis (2018) est en ce sens éclairant : si des traductions ont été réalisées jusqu'au VIe siècle, leur nombre est infime par la suite, pour se multiplier pendant la période paléologue. Et l'affirmation de R. Forrai (2021, 180) « Traductions du latin en grec sont de manière signifiante peu par rapport aux textes grecs traduits en latin », mérite une discussion.

1.2   La première époque. Une culture commune

Prenons deux exemples. Corippe écrit en latin à la cour de Constantinople et à Carthage redevenue byzantine. Sa *Johannide* aux couleurs virgiliennes (Didderen, Teurfs 2007 ; Diggle, Goodyear 1970) s'insère parfaitement dans la littérature latine, tout en reflétant les manières de concevoir les relations sociales et l'étiquette de la société constantinopolitaine. Son message ne peut que s'adresser aux seigneurs qui tiennent les rênes du pouvoir dans la capitale, et au public qui l'écoute déclamer son poème en Afrique, et qui veut saluer le retour de la province dans le giron 'romain', à savoir oriental. La forme de ses écrits est certainement latine, mais le contenu répond aux attentes du lecteur 'oriental', comme lorsqu'il célèbre la gloire du nouveau maître de Constantinople, Justin II, et décrit les funérailles de Justinien. Si le long poème *In laudem Justini minoris* nous est parvenu grâce à un manuscrit espagnol, c'est parce que le livre était passé dans la péninsule ibérique au moment de la grande influence byzantine dans cette région, sous le règne du wisigoth Léovigild (Antès 1981). Un intérêt politico-culturel justifie la présence de ce texte en Espagne. Sur quoi devons-nous porter notre attention ? Sur la forme du poème latin, qui était bien compris à Constantinople au VIe siècle ? Sur l'attente des lecteurs, et de quels lecteurs ? Ceux de Constantinople pour lesquels le poème avait été composé ? Sur les attentes du mécène, le questeur du palais impérial Anastase ? ou sur les attentes du public wisigoth d'Espagne ? Les divisions entre littérature latine et grecque, si commodes aux catégories d'enseignement universitaire, montrent ici toutes leurs limites.

Jordanès, qui écrit en latin en prenant pour modèle de son sujet Cassiodore, exprime l'idéologie politique de l'Empire de Justinien (Goffart 1988 ; Van Hoof, Van Nuffelen 2017). Son histoire porte sur les Goths, mais c'est bien à Constantinople qu'il l'a composée. On a cru pendant longtemps que son texte n'était rien d'autre qu'un résumé des douze livres sur les Goths que Cassiodore avait écrit à la demande de Théodoric. Cette opinion est aujourd'hui largement mise en doute, et la perte de l'ouvrage de Cassiodore ne nous permet d'en dire davantage. Mais le message contenu dans l'ensemble de l'ouvrage de Jordanès semble plutôt adressé à l'empereur pour célébrer la gloire des souverains de Constantinople. Son latin ne suit pas une tradition classique précise, et nous nous trouvons dans l'embarras de savoir sur quoi mettre l'accent : sur la langue, le message, les destinataires ou les rapports impossibles à détecter avec la source perdue, si elle en était une, comme Jordanès affirme au début de l'ouvrage.

2   L'époque paléologue. Un autre Byzance

En théorie les choses sont plus simples dans la phase finale de l'Empire, à l'époque paléologue. Par exemple, nous trouvons des traductions et des appropriations de romans d'amour occidentaux, comme par exemple *Floire et Blancheflor* qui devient *Phlorios et Patzia Flore*, *Imberios et Margarona* ou, plus tard encore, la *Theseide*, ou le texte du *Vecchio Cavaliere*, dont nous ignorons la date (entre la fin du XIIIe et le XVe siècle, produit probablement à Chypre ; cf. Carbonaro 2014). Ce n'est pas les seules œuvres qui ont été traduites ou adaptées en grec, mais la littérature sur ce sujet est immense et répéter les mêmes observations n'est pas un bon exercice. Il en reste que, en dépit des études, nombreuses, nous ne savons pas à qui ces ouvrages étaient destinés, s'ils étaient davantage pensés pour un public occidental présent dans l'espace oriental, et fortement 'byzantinisé', ou pour des lecteurs byzantins 'occidentalisés', ou – hypothèse très possible – pour les deux à la fois. Les écrits théologiques, de saint Augustin à Thomas d'Aquin ou à Boèce, sont nombreuses à avoir connu une traduction grecque, surtout dans un contexte de querelles religieuses.

Certes, après les effets catastrophiques sur la société et la culture byzantine de la Quatrième Croisade, quand Byzance a perdu son rôle de puissance dominante, les cultures et les littératures occidentales pénètrent en Orient, même si souvent les classes sociales auxquelles les ouvrages sont destinés ont subi profondément la fascination byzantine, créant ainsi des hybrides qui méritent une étude approfondie. Mais là encore, à l'exception des ouvrages fictionnels, et de quelques textes à contenu moral ou théologique (Koltsiou-Nikita 2008), nous n'avons pas de matériel sur lequel porter notre attention. Par contre, reste ouverte la question des romans de la période comnène (nous sommes encore dans des œuvres fictionnelles), lorsque nous assistons à la renaissance du 'roman d'Antiquité', qui utilise les modèles grecs dans une cour où la politique de Manuel s'ouvre vers l'Occident, grâce aussi au rôle joué par sa femme Berta de Sulzbach. Les études de Carolina Cupane à ce propos ont porté à l'attention des chercheurs plusieurs aspects qui méritent d'être pris en compte. Cependant nous n'avons pas, à proprement parler, une 'traduction' ou une 'appropriation' de modèles occidentaux : même si nous acceptions l'hypothèse que l'Occident a contribué à la renaissance du roman byzantin, comme les voudrais C. Cupane (par exemple Cupane 1973), nous pourrions tout au plus parler d'influence culturelle, ou plutôt de l'influence sur un circuit de la cour, et certainement non d'une acculturation. D'autre part, sur ce sujet de dérivation des textes de l'Occident on s'est souvent trompé, comme le démontre l'étude de M.J. Jeffreys (1975) à propos de la *Chronique de Morée*, pour laquelle elle parle plutôt d'une influence en sens inverse, de Byzance vers l'Occident, Sur quoi donc tourner notre attention ?

3 Une continuité. L'hagiographie

Une catégorie particulière est représentée par les récits hagiographiques : les voyages des textes continuent entre les deux parties de la Méditerranée (Gounelle 2005 ; Lequeux 2011). Nous savons qu'une activité assez intense de traductions s'est développée dans l'Italie byzantine et à Rome (Sansterre 1983 ; Efthymiadis 2017). Au-delà des textes hagiographiques, qui peuvent être comparés aux œuvres fictionnelles, d'autres ouvrages ont été traduits : par exemple, au VIIIe siècle Zacharie traduit Grégoire le Grand (Louth 2013). De l'autre côté, nous avons des rapports entre l'Orient et Byzance, et probablement le soi-disant roman hagiographique de Barlaam et Joasaph en est l'exemple le plus célèbre (Basso 2020). Mais cette littérature d'influence ou d'inspiration orientale (qu'on pense au roman *Stéphanitès kai Ichnélatès*, traduction du *Kalīla wa-Dimna d'Ibn al-Muqaffa'*) nous renseigne sur les proximités de Byzance avec le monde oriental et arabe.

4 La période de formation d'une culture byzantine

Tout étonnant qu'il puisse sembler, les deux frères de la chrétienté médiévale, le monde byzantin et l'occidental, échangent assez peu en ce qui concerne la production littéraire. Certes, les études qui veulent souligner l'existence d'une culture européenne conjuguée sur plusieurs échelles, montrent l'intérêt que porte la cour papale pour des ouvrages grecs, et les quelques traductions qu'ici sont réalisées. Mais à Byzance, de ces traductions ou adaptations, dans la période médiane, nous n'en voyons pas, ou tout au plus nous n'en voyons que quelques pâles images.

Si la division chronologique nous montre déjà la rare existence jusqu'au XIIe siècle de traductions ou adaptations, cela dépend en grand partie d'un autre aspect, là aussi sans solution immédiate, lié au concept de 'littérature' ou d''ouvrage littéraire'. Si nous considérons que le concept de littérature est une invention des temps modernes, comme il est de plus en plus avancé, nous nous trouvons face à la nécessité de définir sur quelle base parler de traductions et appropriations comme le voudrait le sujet qui m'a été proposé. Les œuvres fictionnelles n'existent presque pas – mis à part les récits hagiographiques – ce qui nous interroge sur le sens même de littérature. Qu'est-ce qui définit la littérature pendant la période médiévale ? Sur quoi devons-nous mettre l'accent ? Sur les formes de l'expression écrite ? Sur le message que chaque texte transmet ? Sur les relations et l'horizon d'attente qui définissent le rapport entre producteur et consommateur de produits écrits ? En outre, un parcours d'étude qui est largement sous-étudié dans son ensemble est celui du

rôle social de l'auteur, de sa formation à son influence sur la société, qui pourrait probablement nous aider à résoudre partiellement l'interrogation sur le sujet qui nous occupe. Enfin, comment s'y prendre lorsque le texte traduit n'est pas une pièce de littérature traditionnelle, mais un document de la chancellerie, dans lequel – nous le savons – les écrivains s'évertuaient souvent à y mettre des trésors de rhétorique ? (Gastgeber 2020).

Si nous regardons la longue période qui va des soi-disant 'siècles obscurs' à l'époque comnène, nous pouvons y voir clairement une différentiation de la culture byzantine, qui crée les fondements sur lesquels sera fondée toute la construction littéraire byzantine. Or, si la tendance aujourd'hui est de parler d'un « large Moyen Âge » (Muresan 2016), d'une époque qui voit le développement d'une culture partagée à l'Ouest comme à l'Est, ce qui n'est pas pour déplaire à la construction européenne d'aujourd'hui, je crois qu'il faut plutôt souligner les différences, pour mieux comprendre les enjeux d'une civilisation (Campos Rubilar, Ciolfi, Panoryia 2018). Et à mon sens justement cette période qui s'étend de fin de l'Antiquité tardive au XIIe siècle, marque la construction des identités qui seront en conflit dans les époques successives.

Certes, il faudrait discuter longtemps sur les différences en ce qui concerne la religion, où le péché social de saint Augustin demeure inconnu en Orient, ou anthropologiques, ou encore sociologiques ; mais limitons-nous aux différences en ce qui concerne la production 'littéraire'. La présence en Orient d'une cour unique, ce qui n'est pas le cas en Occident même pas avec et après Charlemagne, même pas en considérant la papauté, marque profondément la composition littéraire. Un parallèle pourrait être fait entre Byzance et la cour chinoise, où les intellectuels se confrontent et se disputent à coups de savoir accumulés et exhibés, mais cela nous porterait loin. Evidemment, il n'y a pas que la cour de Constantinople, mais certainement elle attire et encadre les savoirs. C'est donc dans la formation des élites intellectuelles que nous voyons les différences avec l'Occident s'installer. Et ces élites ne sont pas presque exclusivement formées par des membres du clergé, comme c'est le cas en Occident, mais comptent nombre de fonctionnaires civils.

Leur savoir est, sinon indispensable, au moins très utile à ces personnages pour accéder à des positions importantes au sein de la cour, et plus en général de la société. Montrer leurs capacités dans l'écriture était pour eux un moyen fondamental pour avancer dans la considération des membres de ces élites. C'est pourquoi la connaissance des auteurs anciens était privilégiée, et le lien entre écriture nouvelle et modèles de l'Antiquité ne s'est jamais interrompu. Certes, en Occident aussi la production écrite des auteurs du passé constituait la partie essentielle du bagage culturel des nouveaux écrivains, mais le phénomène en Orient semble être plus répandu à l'intérieur de la

société, et en même temps plus concentré dans l'espace. Ces élites byzantines avaient développé tout un répertoire de connaissances qui leur permettait d'être à la hauteur pour affronter les nécessités liées à leur position.

5 Mentalité et pratiques des hommes de lettres

Je voudrais porter quelques exemples de cette culture qui caractérise Byzance et qui est différente, ou moins présente, voire presque inexistante, en Occident, et qui marque, sinon l'incompatibilité, au moins la difficulté de traductions ou adaptations de modèles occidentaux dans la façon de concevoir une production écrite en Orient. En effet, cette culture représente le 'bon ton' qu'il faut tenir lorsqu'on s'exprime dans l'écrit, tout au moins dans les préfaces, pour montrer qu'on est capable de comprendre et d'écrire comme il faut, quitte à dénoncer sa propre ignorance, dans un jeu de dupes (Odorico 2010). Mais ce qui compte est aussi le fait que derrière ces expressions de 'bon ton', se cache un impact idéologique très puissant, qui résiste à toute possibilité de traductions et d'adaptations.

5.1 Un exemple. Les recueils

L'aspect primordial de cette production littéraire est justement lié à la continuité de la culture ancienne, continuité souvent proclamée, souvent non réelle, imaginée et nécessaire pour rendre acceptable un ouvrage par un public qui doit s'y reconnaître. La formation des hommes qui pratiquaient la culture écrite passait largement par l'utilisation de recueils de morceaux d'ouvrages du passé : c'est ce qui est aujourd'hui largement reconnu comme « culture de la syllogè » (Odorico 1990 ; 2011). Constituer des recueils en tirant des auteurs du passé des morceaux de textes était une pratique ancienne, et pendant l'Antiquité tardive maints recueils ont vu le jour, tant en Orient qu'en Occident : il suffit de penser à Isidore de Séville pour la partie latine, et – d'un autre genre – à Jean de Stobi pour la partie grecque. A Byzance non seulement cette tradition continue, mais elle se développe, notamment au IXe et Xe siècle ; si la pratique par la suite s'estompe, le grand nombre de manuscrits qui continuent de transmettre ce type d'ouvrages assure sa continuité dans les siècles suivants, avant que certains auteurs ne renouvellent l'exercice en ayant recours à leurs propres lectures pour constituer des recueils plus personnalisés (Pérez Martín 2015). La fonction de ces recueils était de fournir un instrument utile dans l'écriture, mais aussi dans la transmission du savoir. Mais travailler par *excerpta* était une façon d'assurer une continuité fictive avec la tradition, tout en innovant autant qu'on le voulait.

Je donne un exemple. Parmi ces recueils, nous retrouvons ceux qu'on appelle *gnomologes* ou florilèges, où on traitait de plusieurs aspects de la morale, ou des comportements considérés comme justes ou fautifs : c'est pourquoi, dans la littérature moderne, ils ont parfois reçu le titre *De virtutibus et vitiis*. Certains de ces florilèges mélangent des sentences des auteurs chrétiens avec celles des auteurs de l'Antiquité, donc païens (Richard 1962). Il est évident que cela est très souvent fait au prix de la distorsion de la pensée des auteurs ; si des *gnomai* sur l'ébriété peuvent avoir du sens hors de leur contexte original auprès d'auteurs imbibés de morale chrétienne, d'autres, comme celle qui portent sur la charité chrétienne, sur le pardon, sur la providence divine etc., ne peuvent être réutilisées qu'en détournant à leurs propres fins le contexte initial. Peu importe : les auteurs avaient besoin d'un ensemble qui fournissait aux utilisateurs de ces recueils un répertoire qui pouvait servir pour développer des idées, tout en respectant – théoriquement – la tradition. Le monde latin aussi connait une pléthore de florilèges, même si l'insertion de la composante païenne des citations semble être plus tardive par rapport à Byzance (Rochais 1962 ; Delehaye 1962 ; Munk Olsen 1980 ; 1982 ; Blair 2007).

Pour les Byzantins, la nécessité de valider ainsi son propre discours par des sentences devient viral : des actes des synodes aux traités militaires, l'utilisation des *gnomai*, tirées de la tradition ou inventées et faisant semblant de transmettre un savoir ancien se généralise, et on embellit le texte, ou même on le construit, en ayant recours à elles. Kekauménos, au XIe siècle, bâtit son récit qui va sous le nom de *Stratégikon*, en se servant d'*exempla* tirés de son expérience. Mais il a l'habitude de construire son raisonnement en partant d'une affirmation, suivie par l'*exemplum*, et en se concluant par une *gnomè* qui valide la pensée. Par exemple, il écrit :

> Au cas où un meurtre a été commis, que l'un ne paye pas pour un autre, mais que soit seulement puni celui qui en est l'auteur. J'ai vu des innocents traînés en justice, et des coupables innocentés grâce à des pots-de-vin. C'est là que je me suis souvenu de Dion le Romain, qui disait que « même les hommes les plus fiables sont pris au piège des discours habiles et de l'argent ». (Kékaumenos, *Stratégikon* 1.17 [ed. Litavrin 1972 ; trad. Odorico 2015, 65-6])

La *gnomè*, qu'il attribue à Dion Cassius, sert à corroborer ce qu'il veut dire et que son expérience lui a enseigné.

Déjà cinq siècles auparavant, l'empereur Maurice (ou celui qui écrit pour lui), tout en parlant des techniques militaires et de la stratégie à adopter au combat, n'hésite pas à consacrer un livre entier, le huitième, sur les douze que l'ouvrage comporte, aux recommandations suivies par des sentences, une centaine de *gnômika*. La nécessité de recourir à la tradition est forte : elle ne représente pas simple-

ment une justification par rapport à l'étiquette qu'il faut avoir, mais constitue une manière de penser et d'écrire. On construit sa propre pensée sur la base d'un corpus de connaissances établi, qui est le fondement sur lequel bâtir du nouveau sans que cela se voie, ou en effectuant des 'variations sur le thème de…', une nouvelle musique sur des airs connus. Rien de tel en Occident, et la culture qui se développe en Orient suit des parcours moins pratiqués par les mondes qui se réclament de la tradition latine.

5.2   Deuxième exemple. Les recueils dans l'hagiographie

Les recueils sont à la base de nombreuses autres œuvres littéraires. Pour les récits hagiographiques, là aussi nous pourrions essayer des comparaisons, encore une fois dans le domaine des recueils. Les Byzantins avaient deux textes fondamentaux pour reconnaître la sainteté de ceux qui avaient consacré leur vie à la foi, les ménologes et les synaxaires. Là encore, ce qui prime est la volonté de réunir des documents, de les réécrire dans le cas de Syméon le Métaphraste, pour donner une forme convenable et adaptée aux critères formels que la tradition désirait. En Occident, on se borne à des calendriers, comme le *Martyrologium Romanum*. En Orient, on collecte, on dispose dans une structure, on se sert de la tradition rhétorique de l'Antiquité pour donner à l'ensemble une forme qui répond aux exigences requises par la tradition, comme dans le cas des synaxaires (Luzzi 2014). Les enseignements de la rhétorique sont mis à profit pour créer des recueils (Odorico, à paraître) beaucoup plus complets que ceux qui étaient en usage en Occident. On a même pensé que Bède s'était inspiré des Grecs pour composer son Martyrologe (Quentin 1908), et il faut attendre la deuxième moitié du XIIIe siècle et la *Légende dorée* de Jacques de Voragine pour voir une sorte de ménologe réalisé en latin.

5.3   Troisième exemple. Les chroniques comme recueils

Ce poids de la tradition, ce goût de la citation, censé lier à jamais l'auteur byzantin à ses prédécesseurs, devient contraignant, et le seul moyen de s'exprimer dans une société qui reconnait cette façon de faire, cette étiquette littéraire : c'est la rencontre avec l'horizon d'attente du lecteur, rencontre indispensable, car c'est le moyen pour faire passer le message contenu dans le texte. Les circuits fermés de la société qui gère l'État ne demandent qu'à reconnaître ce qu'ils connaissent, même si par le biais de la citation le contenu devient nouveau. On innove sans apparemment le faire, car le bon ton byzantin ne veut pas d'innovation. Nous le voyons clairement dans

un autre genre littéraire, toujours en relation avec la culture du recueil, qui connait un développement peu pratiqué en Occident, les chroniques *ab anno mundi*. Bien sûr, des histoires et des chroniques existaient aussi en Occident, mais la chronique universelle est un produit typique de Byzance (Odorico 2021).

On raconte l'histoire de l'humanité, en déterminant ainsi le cadre de l'action humaine, qui ne fait rien d'autre que suivre ce que la Providence divine avait dessiné. Chaque auteur aurait pu raconter par des mots propres les vicissitudes des hommes, la succession des Empires, le triomphe du christianisme et la lutte incessante contre ceux qui déstabilisent l'ordre parfait, qu'un *basileus* chrétien peut instaurer sur terre. Mais on choisit de le faire en coupant des *excerpta* d'autres traités, parfois en recopiant des parties d'autres chroniques, en les adaptant à un canevas nouveau, mais souvent en extrapolant des informations hétérogènes qui sont ensuite cousues ensemble pour former un nouveau tissu. Ce patchwork littéraire est un produit de la culture de la citation, de la culture du recueil, adapté à des exigences nouvelles, pour servir à une vision particulière du monde.

Mais agissant de la sorte, les auteurs parviennent à créer un cadre à la fois social et idéologique qui comporte une vision du monde et de l'histoire humaine. Certes, la pratique d'écrire des histoires de l'humanité depuis le commencement on la retrouve dans le monde gréco-latin de l'Antiquité tardive, et comprend aussi un auteur latin, et non des moindre, saint Jérôme, mais elle ne semble pas avoir eu des conséquences aussi importantes en Occident qu'en Orient. Et il ne faut pas oublier qu'à l'origine de la tradition il y a aussi Sextus Julius Africanus, un latin, dont l'œuvre est perdue. Mais en Occident elle ne se développe que très peu, et il faut attendre des siècles pour la voir reprendre son chemin. Encore une fois, nous voyons que la construction d'une culture écrite à Byzance suit des cheminements différents de ceux que la culture latine médiévale a empruntés, et ces cheminements construisent l'imaginaire littéraire des Byzantins, leurs horizons d'attente, de manière à rendre les deux productions écrites toujours plus éloignées l'une de l'autre, rendant impossible des traductions ou adaptations de textes latins à Byzance. Par contre, c'est en Occident, à la cour du pape, que des chroniques byzantines sont traduites, par le soin d'Anastase Bibliothécaire, au IXᵉ siècle : son *Historia Tripartita* comprend les ouvrages de Théophane, de Nicéphore et de Georges Syncelle, et il a porté son intérêt aussi sur les récits concernant saint Démétrius.

Pour les chroniques byzantines, nous pourrions résumer le processus en disant qu'une pratique intellectuelle, nécessaire pour appartenir à l'élite cultivée en Orient, participe à la naissance d'ouvrages historiques, auxquels elle donne la forme, et ces ouvrages historiques concourent à constituer le fondement de la vision du monde, où l'histoire de l'homme est considérée dans son ensemble, encadrée par

l'idée qu'on a de l'action de Dieu, idée héritée de la Bible. Cette forme d'une catégorie d'ouvrages historiques, les chroniques, est certes redevable à une tradition indépendante de la culture du recueil, mais elle doit à celle-ci la façon de se constituer. Sans exagérer la fonction de cette culture, nous pouvons y retrouver des expressions typiques du monde byzantin, qui lient dans un *continuum* leur culture à celle du passé, de manière beaucoup plus étroite et étendue que leurs collègues d'Occident.

Si nous comparons les chroniques universelles byzantines aux produits théoriquement semblables écrits en langue latine, nous voyons clairement la différence de structure. Pendant la période du Haut Moyen Âge, la chronique la plus remarquable est celle d'Adon de Vienne (Lucas 2016), écrite au IXe siècle : il s'agit d'une histoire brève, divisée en six 'époques' (ce qui a des rapports de conception avec les chroniques grecques), fondée sur la Bible, sur les historiens de l'Antiquité, et sur l'histoire de Bède ; mais il s'agit surtout d'une paraphrase de la Bible, et le monde de l'Antiquité mythique n'a pas droit d'existence : chez lui il n'y a pas l'essai de trouver un accord entre toute la tradition littéraire du passé et les données de la nouvelle pensée et de la nouvelle anthropologie chrétienne. Des autres chroniques occidentales, la plus connue est probablement le *Speculum historiale* de Vincent de Beauvais, mais il est beaucoup plus tardif, datant du XIIIe siècle.

5.4 Les recueils. Usage à la cour

Revenons-en aux recueils. Byzance attache une importance majeure à ce genre de production écrite, ce qui montre encore une fois l'importance que la culture de l'Antiquité revêtait dans l'imaginaire collectif. La comparaison avec les recueils chinois (Odorico 2017), dans une société autre, mais qui présente plusieurs traits en commun avec la byzantine, peut nous éclairer. L'analyse menée récemment par P.A. Blitstein (2015) sur les recueils chinois nous montre l'importance que ces textes avaient à la cour de l'Extrême Orient : « la convergence entre l'organisation administrative et curiale », le fait que « l'écriture, régie par l'ensemble des codes éthiques et rituels de la cour, « ornait » symboliquement la *vertu* qui était censée fonder le pouvoir impérial », et le fait que « toute forme d'écriture se trouvait au centre même des disputes sur la *forme correcte* de symbolisation du pouvoir », peut s'appliquer à la cour des *basileis*. Ce lien intrinsèque entre forme de l'écriture et idéologie politique revient constamment, même si parfois les auteurs (souvent les empereurs, ou ceux qui écrivent pour eux) avancent des critiques. Le *Stratégikon* de Maurice, au début du VIIe siècle, précise que les traités des auteurs anciens sont la base, mais il faut mettre à jour leurs en-

seignements en se fondant sur l'expérience personnelle (nous pourrions dire, sur la base des réalités nouvelles auxquelles il faut se confronter), « car on trouve plus de profit dans la réalité que dans les paroles » (*Proœmium* 1.14-15 [éd. Dennis 1981] ; trad. par l'Auteur). En effet, puisqu'on constate que le savoir transmis se trouve dans « un état d'oubli complet », il faut toujours le renouveler, sans jamais le trahir. Ce sont les mêmes concepts qu'utilise Constantin Porphyrogénète trois siècles plus tard, pour dénoncer l'état du cérémoniel de la cour. Redonner gloire et décence à l'Empire passe par les traités de l'Antiquité, tout en innovant, même au niveau linguistique, si nécessaire.

C'est justement le lien indissoluble entre la culture écrite et l'idéologie qui prime à Byzance, une idéologie fondée sur l'idée de la légitimité tirée de l'ancien Empire romain, dont Byzance est l'héritière. Les formes qui étaient celles de l'Antiquité doivent être reprise, sinon l'État lui-même serait en danger. Dans l'introduction au livre sur les cérémonies de Constantin Porphyrogénète nous trouvons très clairement énoncé ce lien entre culture écrite et idéologie :

> Parce que le cérémonial impérial était négligé et, pour ainsi dire, mort, on voyait l'Empire vraiment sans parure et sans beauté. De même, en effet, qu'on appellerait désordre un corps mal constitué et dont les membres seraient réunis pêle-mêle et sans unité, ainsi de l'état impérial, s'il n'était conduit et gouverné avec ordre : il ne différerait en rien de la conduite d'un particulier sans éducation. Pour échapper à cela et ne pas paraître par nos agissements désordonnés insulter à la majesté impériale, nous avons cru qu'il convenait de recueillir soigneusement [...] tout ce qui a été trouvé par les anciens. (*De Cerimoniis Aulae Byzantinae*, *Proœmium* [éds Dagron, Flusin, Feissel 2020] ; trad. par l'Auteur)

Retenons l'observation, précieuse, que le gouvernement doit soigner la culture (représentée ici par le cérémonial), sinon les agissements d'une conduite sans éducation porteraient attente à la majesté impériale. Respecter les formes dans les écrits littéraires était en quelque sorte renforcer l'État. De ce constat dépend le recours à la tradition, qui assure la continuité idéologique depuis l'Antiquité. Cela, bien entendu, dans la théorie. Dans ce contexte, il n'y a pas beaucoup d'espace pour des textes importés, traduits ou adaptés de l'Occident.

5.5   Encore un exemple. Les descriptions des monuments

Quant aux textes orientaux, les choses sont un peu différentes. Outre des textes hagiographiques (comme le roman hagiographique *Barlaam et Josaphat*, déjà cité), nous avons des textes de fiction (*Stéphanitès*

kai Ichnélatès), et des collections d'*oneirokritika* pour l'interprétation des rêves, et de nombreux textes de médecine et de sciences. C'est à ce propos que je voudrais parler d'un autre texte qui nous est parvenu, qui n'est ni une traduction ni une adaptation d'un texte oriental quelconque, mais qui nous intrigue : les *Parastaseis Syntomoi Chronikai* (Cameron 1984 ; Dagron 1984). Nous sommes en présence encore une fois d'un recueil de textes, probablement composé vers la fin du IXᵉ siècle à partir de matériaux de la période précédente. La description des merveilles de la ville de Constantinople est conçue dans une langue très particulière et éloignée des modèles classiques. A la différence des autres recueils, les *Parastaseis* ne sont pas des outils pour assurer un lien avec la culture censée être partie intégrante du bagage culturel d'un homme cultivé, ou de quelqu'un qui veut paraître en maîtrise du langage des circuits savants. Pire encore, les *Parastaseis* ne décrivent pas une ville réelle, selon les enseignements de la rhétorique classique toujours enseignée, mais une ville imaginaire et imaginée, pleine de statues et de monuments à la nature surhumaine, qui remplissent de stupeur et d'émerveillement celui qui lit ce texte.

Comment donc concilier cette 'description' avec la nécessité de composer pour une élite savante, avec laquelle il faut se confronter ? Je pense qu'encore une fois il faut se référer à l'idéologie politique. Dans les *Parastaseis* la partie du 'merveilleux' a toute sa place, dans la volonté de créer une description 'imaginaire' de la ville de Constantinople. La capitale devient ainsi un monde magique, non hanté mais habité par des puissances surnaturelles, qui soulignent le rôle de l'Empire dans l'économie du monde. Nous pourrions comparer ce recueil et l'image qu'il donne, à la description de villes imaginées présentes dans la littérature arabe. L'Occident, par contre, connaît un récit qui pourrait lui être comparé, les *Mirabilia Urbis Romae*, du XIIᵉ siècle, (Kinney 2007) souvent enrichi par la suite, mais la différence entre ces deux textes est saisissante. Dans ce dernier ouvrage il n'y a rien de magique ou de merveilleux : il s'agit d'une description des monuments de Rome, des arcs de triomphe, des thermes, des églises, avec le souvenir de certains épisodes marqués par des miracles ou des historiettes extraordinaires, mais dans l'ensemble la ville n'a rien d'imaginaire, rien qui la projette dans une dimension métaphysique censée soutenir un pouvoir, comme à Byzance, où elle de quelque manière assoit le pouvoir impérial et le rôle providentiel de l'Empire. Nous sommes en face d'un guide du pèlerin qui visite la Ville éternelle, et qui doit être ébloui par ses merveilles et ses anecdotes, un guide compte tenu de tout, plutôt réaliste de la cité. Bien d'autres descriptions imaginaires des monuments de Constantinople obéiront à la même nécessité de glorifier la capitale byzantine, devenue de quelque manière une cité symbole.

Nous pourrions ajouter à cela un texte latin traduit en grec autour de la moitié du XIIᵉ siècle : il s'agit d'une description de la ville

de Constantinople faite probablement par un pèlerin anonyme (Ciggaar 1973). Le fait que le texte ait été traduit en grec reste à expliquer : le traducteur est probablement un occidental, mais non un orthodoxe. Il se peut que la traduction ait été réalisée pour des Grecs d'Italie, mais certainement le texte n'a pas circulé. Ce que nous pouvons retenir est la diversité d'approche : ici encore, nous y retrouvons des éléments 'réels' de Constantinople, la description des églises et des reliques conservées dans la capitale byzantine, mais rien (au-delà d'une référence à l''ange gardien' de Sainte-Sophie) ne nous transporte dans un monde merveilleux et habité par des puissances surnaturelles. L'attitude latine est radicalement différente de la byzantine.

6   Le XIIᵉ siècle. Une époque finale

Le lien entre la littérature et la tradition classiques, même par le biais de déformations (qu'on pense à Malalas) et parfois d'entorses à la culture et à la langue traditionnelles, donc apparemment à contresens du bon ton qui doit caractériser la production, ne cesse jamais, au contraire. Tout cela devient plus évident au XIIᵉ siècle, au moment de la prétendue confrontation avec des modèles occidentaux dans la littérature fictionnelle jusque-là totalement (hormis les récits hagiographiques) mise de côté.

Il est bien vrai qu'à la cour philo-occidentale de Manuel Comnène on commence à écrire des romans d'amour, après des siècles et des siècles de silence. Il est possible que des modes occidentaux aient donné naissance à cette vague, pour faire plaisir à des puissants commanditaires. Il se peut que les écrivains liés à la cour aient voulu faire plaisir aux maîtres qui étaient friands de contes d'amour, comme en Occident. Mais ce qui est important, est le fait que cette 'renaissance' du roman d'antiquité a pris les couleurs qu'il avait dans le passé, dans la tradition classique, dont le lien – comme nous venons de le voir – ne s'était jamais interrompu. Et d'ailleurs nous ne pouvons pas exclure que la reprise ait été influencée aussi par le succès d'un roman d'amour totalement atypique, hors des conventions de la cour, mais qui néanmoins circulait avec un succès fracassant, le *Digénis Akritas,* qui ne répondait pas aux canons littéraires et au bon ton que les circuits classicistes aimaient.

La réaction, que ce soit vers la nécessité de faire plaisir à des mécènes ou vers la volonté de réaffirmer une façon de faire littérature contre des manières littéraires qui commençaient à prendre de l'ampleur, était déterminée encore une fois par la volonté de persévérer dans l'usage des expressions écrites qui étaient si chères à ceux qui maniaient le discours.

7   Conclusions

C'est plutôt après la chute de la puissance byzantine, au XIIIe siècle, que traductions et adaptations de textes littéraires commencent à paraître. Mais là encore ce ne fut que graduellement : d'ailleurs déjà Herbert Hunger (1968), en parlant du roman *Callimaque et Chrysorrhoé* avait mis en garde contre toute tentation de parler d'adaptations aux modèles occidentaux, en soulignant l'esprit byzantin qui demeure très fort dans ce récit.

Mais cette période doit faire encore l'objet de nombreuses études pour en voir plus clairement les rapports entre Byzance et l'Occident, pour souligner le rôle des intellectuels qui, nombreux, se tournent vers l'Occident au moment où l'ancien Empire Romain Oriental a perdu de sa superbe et recherche des nouvelles stratégies pour s'inventer. Ce sont ces intellectuels qui s'intéressent aux débats religieux, ou encore qui se transfèrent dans les villes plus riches à l'Ouest, en Italie en premier lieu, pour porter la connaissance du grec. Un nouveau monde s'ouvre.

Bibliographie[1]

Antès, S. (éd.) (1981). *Corippe : Éloge de Justin II*. Paris : Les Belles Lettres.

Basso, S. (2020). « Circulation périphérique et 'fluidité' des textes. L'exemple du 'Barlaam et Ioasaph' au XIe siècle ». Odorico, P. (éd.), *La culture écrite des périphéries du Moyen-Âge à l'époque moderne*. Heidelberg : Herlo Verlag UG, 25-40. Études Byzantines et Post-Byzantines, n.s. II [IX].

Bianconi, D. (2004). « Le traduzioni in greco di testi latini ». Cavallo, G. (a cura di), *Lo spazio letterario del Medioevo*. Vol. 3, *Le culture circostanti. La cultura bizantina*. Roma : Salerno Editrice, 519-68.

Blair, A. (2007). « Le florilège latin comme point de comparaison ». Bretelle-Establet, F. ; Chemla, K., « Qu'était-ce qu'écrire une encyclopédie en Chine ? What Did It Mean to Write an Encyclopedia in China ? », suppl., *Extrême-Orient, Extrême-Occident*, 185-204. https://doi.org/10.3406/oroc.2007.1076.

Blitstein, P.A. (2015). *Les fleurs du Royaume. Savoirs lettrés et pouvoir impérial en Chine, V^e-VIe siècles*. Paris : Les Belles Lettres.

Cameron, A. (1984). *Constantinople in the Early Eight Century. The Παραστάσεις σύντομοι χρονικαί*. Leiden : Brill.

Campos Rubilar, B. ; Ciolfi, L. ; Panoryia, M. (éds) (2018). *Un large Moyen Âge ? L'œuvre de Jacques Le Goff et les études byzantines*. Paris : École des Hautes

---

[1] La bibliographie sur les traductions et adaptations au Moyen Âge et à Byzance est immense : je me limite ici à donner des indications sur des études qui ont contribué plus directement à l'écriture de mon texte ; dans les ouvrages cités, on trouvera toujours une riche bibliographie. Pour une bibliographie plus complète, qui peut constituer un point de départ sur le sujet, on peut consulter Bianconi 2004; Forrai 2021; Rychterová 2020.

Études en Sciences Sociales/Centre d'Études Byzantines, Néo-Helléniques et Sud-Est Européennes. Autour de Byzance 5.

Carbonaro, G. (2014). « Il cronòtopo del *Vecchio Cavaliere* (Ἱππότης ὁ Πρεσβύτης) ». Lalomia, G. et al. (a cura di), *Forme del tempo e del cronotopo nelle letterature romanze e orientali = Atti del X convegno della Società italiana di Filologia Romanza, VIII Colloquio Internazionale Medioevo romanzo e orientale* (Roma, 25-9 settembre 2012). Soveria Mannelli : Rubbettino, 363-73.

Ciggaar, K.N. (1973). « Une description anonyme de Constantinople du XIIe s. ». *Revue des Études Byzantines*, 31(1), 335-54. https://doi.org/10.3406/rebyz.1973.1474.

Cupane, C. (1973). « Ἔρως βασιλεύς. La figura di Eros nel romanzo bizantino d'amore ». *Atti dell'Accademia di Scienze Lettere e Arti di Palermo*, s. 4, 33, 243-97.

Dagron, G. (1984). *Constantinople imaginaire. Études sur le recueil des « Patria »*. Paris : Presses Universitaires de France. Bibliothèque Byzantine, Études 8.

Dagron, G.; Flusin, B.; Feissel, D. (2020). *Constantin VII Porphyrogénète : Le livre des cérémonies. Corpus fontium historiae byzantinae 52/1-5*. 5 vols. Paris : Association des Amis du Centre d'Histoire et Civilisations de Byzance.

Delehaye, P. (1962). s.v. « Florilèges médiévaux d'éthique ». *Dictionnaire de Spiritualité*, 5(33-4). Paris : Beauchesne, coll. 460-75.

Dennis, G.T. (éd.) ; Gamillscheg, E. (trad.) (1981). *Mauricii Strategikon*. Wien. Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae XVII.

Didderen, J.-Ch. ; Teurfs, Ch. (éds) (2007). *Corippe : La Johannide ou Sur les guerres de Libye*. Paris : Errance.

Diggle, J. ; Goodyear, F.R.D. (eds) (1970). *Flavii Cresconii Corippi Iohannidos libri VIII*. Cambridge : Cambridge University Press.

Efthymiadis, S. (2017). « L'hagiographie grecque de l'Italie (VIIe-XIVe siècle) ». Goullet, M. (éd.), *Hagiographies. Histoire internationale de la littérature hagiographique latine et vernaculaire en Occident des origines à 1550*. Turnhout : Brepols, 345-421.

Forrai, R. (2021). « Translations I. From Other Languages into Greek. Section I. Latin ». Papaioannou, S. (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Byzantine Literature*. Oxford : Oxford University Press, 180-8.

Garcea, A. ; Rosellini, M. ; Silvano, L. (eds) (2019). *Latin in Byzantium I. Late Antiquity and Beyond*. Turnhout : Brepols.

Gastgeber, C. (2020). « The Byzantine Imperial Chancery and Its Language Policy from Justin II to Leo III (Sixth-Eighth Centuries). From Latin to Greek ». *Ideologies of Translation I. Medieval World. Comparative and Interdisciplinary Studies*, 11, 17-59. https://doi.org/10.1553/medievalworlds_no11_2020s17.

Litavrin, G. (ed.) (1972). *Советы и рассказы. Поучение византийского полководца XI века* (Conseils et histoires. Enseignements d'un général byzantin du XIe siècle). Moscou 1972.

Goffart, W. (1988). *The Narrators of Barbarian History, A.D. 550-800. Jordanes, Gregory of Tours, Bede and Paul the Deacon*. Princeton (NJ) : Princeton University Press.

Gounelle, R. (2005). « Traductions de textes hagiographiques et apocryphes latins en grec ». *Apocrypha*, 16, 35-73. https://doi.org/10.1484/j.apocra.2.3017502.

Hunger, H. (1968). « Un roman byzantin et son atmosphère. Callimaque et Chrysorrhoè ». *Travaux et Mémoires*, 3, 405-22.

Jeffreys, M.J. (1975). « The Chronicle of the Morea. Priority of the Greek Version ». *Byzantinische Zeitschrift*, 68(2), 304-50. https://doi.org/10.1515/byzs.1975.68.2.304.

Jenkins, R. (1966): *Byzantium. The Imperial Centuries, AD 610-1071*. New York : Weidenfeld & Nicholson.

Kaldellis, A. (2018). *Catalogue of Translations into Byzantine Greek from Texts in Any Other Language, 300-1453 AD*. https://www.academia.edu/36711128/Kaldellis_Catalogue_of_Translations_into_Byzantine_Greek_version_III_.

Kinney, D. (2007). « Fact and Fiction in the Mirabilia urbis Romae ». Carragáin, É.Ó. ; Neuman de Vegvar, C. (eds) *Roma Felix. Formation and Reflections of Medieval Rome*. Aldershot ; Burlington : Ashgate, 235-52.

Koltsiou-Nikita, A. (2008). « Ο ρόλος της μετάφρασης και των ερμηνέων στο θεολογικό διάλογο ελληνόφωνης Αντολής και λατινόφωνης Δύσης ». Pachès, P. (ed.), *Φιλία και Κοινωνία. Τιμητικός τόμος στον καθηγητή Γρηγόριο Δ. Ζιάκα*. Thessalonique : Banias, 301-23.

Lequeux, X. (2011). « Latin Hagiographical Literature Translated into Greek ». Efthymiadis, S. (ed.), *The Ashgate Research Companion to Byzantine Hagiography*. Vol. 1, *Periods and Places*. Farnham : Ashgate, 386-99.

Louth, A. (2013). « Gregory the Great in the Byzantine Tradition ». Neil, B. et al. (eds), *A Companion to Gregory the Great*. Leiden : Brill, 343-58. https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004257764_016.

Lucas, G. (2016). *Vienne dans les textes grecs et latins. Chroniques littéraires sur l'histoire de la cité, des Allobroges à la fin du Ve siècle de notre ère*. Lyon : Maison de l'Orient et de la Méditerranée Éditions. Travaux de la Maison de l'Orient et de la Méditerranée. https://books.openedition.org/momeditions/946?lang=fr.

Luzzi, A. (2014). « Synaxaria and Synaxarion of Constantinople ». Efthymiadis, S. (ed.), *The Ashgate Research Companion to Byzantine Hagiography*. Vol. 2, *Genres and Contexts*. Farnham : Ashgate, 197-208.

Munk Olsen, B. (1980). « Les classiques latins dans les florilèges médiévaux antérieurs au XIIIe siècle ». *Revue d'Histoire des Textes*, 9, 47-121. https://doi.org/10.3406/rht.1980.1195.

Munk Olsen, B. (1982). « Les classiques latins dans les florilèges médiévaux antérieurs au XIIIe siècle ». *Revue d'Histoire des Textes*, 10, 115-64. https://doi.org/10.3406/rht.1982.1217.

Muresan, D. (2016). « Marc Bloch revisité. Pour un large Moyen Âge ». Delacroix-Besnier, C. (éd.), *Byzance et l'Europe. L'héritage historique d'Evelyne Patlagean*. Paris : École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales/Centre d'Études Byzantines, Néo-Helléniques et Sud-Est Européennes, 55-71. Autour de Byzance 3.

Odorico, P. (1990). « La cultura della sillogé. 1) Il cosiddetto enciclopedismo bizantino. 2) Le tavole dei saperi di Giovanni Damasceno ». *Byzantinische Zeitschrift*, 83, 1-23.

Odorico, P. (2010). « 'Parce que je suis ignorant'. Imitatio/Variatio dans la chronique de Georges le Moine ». Rhoby, A. ; Schifer, E. (Hrsgg), *Imitatio. Aemulatio. Variatio = Akten des internationalen wissenschaftlichen Symposions zur byzantinischen Sprache und Literatur* (Wien, 22-5 Oktober 2008). Wien : Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 209-16. Österreichische Aka-

demie der Wissenschaften, philosophisch-historische Klasse, Denkschriften 402, Veröffentlichungen zur Byzanzforschung 21.

Odorico, P. (2011). « Cadre d'exposition / cadre de pensée. La culture du recueil ». Van Deun, P. ; Macé, C. (eds), *Encyclopedic Trends in Byzantium ?*. Louvain ; Paris : Peeters, 89-107. Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta 212.

Odorico, P. (trad.) (2015). *Kékauménos. Conseils et récits d'un gentilhomme byzantin*. Texte présenté et traduit du grec par Paolo Odorico. Toulouse.

Odorico, P. (2017). « Les recueils historiographiques à Byzance. Un cas de 'sélection de textes raffinés' (*Wenxuan*) ? ». *Byzantinoslavica*, 75, 203-20.

Odorico, P. (2021). « What's in a Name. The Byzantine Chronicles ». James, L. ; Nicholson, O. ; Scott, R. (eds), *After the Text. Byzantines Enquiries in Honour of Margaret Mullet*. London ; New York : Routledge, 83-94.

Odorico, P. (à paraître). *Ἄθλησις καὶ μνήμη. The Rhetoric of Sanctity. A Study on the Byzantine Synaxaria*.

Patlagean, E. (2007). *Un Moyen Âge grec*. Paris : Albin Michel.

Pérez Martín, I. (2015). « The Role of Maximos Planudes and Nikephoros Gregoras in the Transmission of Cassius Dio's *Roman History* and of John Xiphilinos' *Epitome* ». *Medioevo Greco*, 15(1), 175-93.

Quentin, H. (1908). *Les Martyrologes historiques du Moyen Age. Étude sur la formation du martyrologe romain*. Paris : Gabalda.

Richard, M. (1962). s.v. « Florilèges grecs ». *Dictionnaire de Spiritualité*, 5(33-4). Paris : Beauchesne, coll. 475-512.

Rochais, M. (1962). s.v. « Florilèges spirituels latins ». *Dictionnaire de Spiritualité*, 5(33-4). Paris : Beauchesne, coll. 435-60.

Rychterová, P. (2020). « Instead of an Introduction. Medieval Europe Translated ». *Ideologies of Translation I. Medieval World. Comparative and Interdisciplinary Studies*, 11, 2-16. `https://doi.org/10.1553/medievalworlds_no11_2020s2`.

Sansterre, J.-M. (1983). *Les moines grecs et orientaux à Rome aux époques byzantine et carolingienne (milieu du VIe s.-fin du IXe s.)*. Bruxelles : Académie Royale de Belgique. Mémoire de la Classe des Lettres 66(1). Palais des Académies.

Van Hoof, L. ; Van Nuffelen, P. (2017). « The Historiography of Crisis. Jordanes, Cassiodorus and Justinian in Mid-Sixth-Century Constantinople ». *Journal of Roman Studies*, 107, 1-26.

Texts and Tales of Byzantium in Primarily Oral Cultures
From the Caucasus to Canterbury

Jonathan Shepard
The Khalili Research Centre, University of Oxford

Abstract   This paper considers the unregulated 10th-12th-century outflow northwards of Eastern Christian persons, written texts, oral tales and artefacts via the waterways spanning Rus. Responses to this outflow varied across northwest Europe, helping to consolidate regimes or legitimise rebels, while bolstering individual's status. Comparable dynamics are seen in the Caucasus, with the titles and visible trappings of a God-blessed court enhancing Alan rulers' imperial and dynastic ambitions, while tales of Byzantium helped legitimise regional clans. But intensive engagement was finite and fitful, registering the changing needs of developing polities/cultures.

Keywords   Alans. Anglo-Danish. Basileus. Byzantine-awareness. Caucasus. Cnut. Dynasties. Edgar. Edward the Confessor. Elite. Gold. Harald Hardrada. Iceland. Laudes. Mercenaries. Normans. Ragnvald. Stratagems. Tales. Texts. Viking. Weaponry. William the Conqueror. Writing.

Summary   1 Introduction. – 2 Byzantine Things, Terms and Tall Stories in the Nordic World. – 3 Praise-Singers of Harald Hardrada and the Anglo-Danish king Cnut. – 4 England's Anomalousness: The Canterbury Connection. – 5 England's Anomalousness: Royal Couples and Imperial Hegemony from Edgar to William the Conqueror. – 6 Mercenaries as *Kulturträger*. – 7 Byzantine Texts, Tales and Royal Couples Among the Alans.

Edizioni
Ca'Foscari

1   Introduction

Texts will here carry the broadest sense: words formatted for repetition or public attention. They may be few or extensive, on any materials (including lead or stone) or even unwritten – what is known as "entextualization" (Barber 2007, 22-4, 28-9). Tales may emanate from the Byzantine and Eastern Christian world, word-of-mouth or written, or they may simply tell of it, without empirical knowledge. The Byzantine phenomenon is complicated by its imperial leadership's zeal to propagate tales, enshrining the imperial order through its moving picture-show in Constantinople (Constantine Porphyrogenitus, *De administrando imperio* ch. 13 [ed. and transl. Moravcsik, Jenkins 1967, 66-77]; Constantine Porphyrogenitus, *De cerimoniis* [ed. and transl. Dagron, Flusin 2020]). Our focus, though, will be on the *un*-regulated outflow north from the Black Sea of persons bearing texts and tales, especially in the tenth to twelfth centuries. The link-up of waterways across Rus unleashed a medley of divines or fortune-seekers from the Byzantine world, Greek- and Armenian-speaking clerics (three 'Armenian bishops' among them) reaching the Atlantic (Garipzanov 2012; Shepard 2021a, 77-85). Their fingerprints show in texts like a *Life of Gregory the Illuminator* translated into Icelandic (Ciggaar 1996, 124-5; see also Zalizniak 2003). Responses varied according to Northerners' fluctuating requirements, whether local ambitions among the *Svear*, sea-empires spanning the North Sea, or hegemonial leaderships among the Rus and Alans. Texts, some illuminated, might serve their purposes, as also writing-implements. These could help consolidate dynasties, yet also legitimise disruptors' regimes. Counterbalancing the outflow was the inflow of persons from the North – mostly slaves (Shepard 2021b), but also fortune-seeking mercenaries. Few returned. But whatever their home-communities may have made of the tales, texts and artefacts attributable to them (Appadurai 1986), the impact was often in inverse proportion to warriors' numbers; mercenary service is the connecting thread between the societies surveyed here.

2   Byzantine Things, Terms and Tall Stories
   in the Nordic World

For our purposes, these Northern societies range from the Alans to the Normans who, despite adopting Western Frankish language and culture, long engaged with the Viking world (Ridel 2007). Although many entering imperial service never went home, this did not necessarily mean their possessions stayed in Byzantium. The 911 Russo-Byzantine treaty provides for returning a deceased warrior's chattels if no relatives are on hand to inherit (*Повесть временных лет*

[ed. Likhachev, Adrianova-Peretts, Sverdlov 1996, 19]). This presupposes communications with the north, presumably being only worthwhile for valuables such as weaponry. Other types of valuables might merit such care: gold, for instance. This would challenge modern assumptions that the ban on exporting gold held fast for warriors' pay: Byzantine narratives mention gold being sent to rulers in return for military operations (Leo the Deacon, *Historiae* 4.6 [ed. Hase 1828, 63]), while diplomatic gifts of gold are well-documented. Recent metal-detector discoveries reveal the extent of Anglo-Saxon wealth in gold (Kershaw 2019) and it is unlikely that the tendency for earlier chance-finds to go unreported is confined to England. Swedish runestones have warriors taking their "share of gold" (Sö165) or winning "wealth […], out in Greece, for his heir" (U792) (Källström 2016, 173-4): although few in number they are unlikely to be fantasising.

Occasionally, additional evidence corroborates the runestones. In the earlier eleventh century, Ragnvald commissioned a stone in Uppland (U112): "commander of the host" in Byzantium, he offered a prayer for his mother Fastvé's soul **[figs 1a-1b]**. The well-carved inscriptions attest Ragnvald's status, prosperity and piousness (Mel'nikova 2001, 75; 352-3, appendix 1, no. 22; Runer 2006, 138). The likely founder of one of Uppland's earliest stone churches, at Ed, only a kilometre from the runestone (Runer 2006, 138-9, fig. 77, with thanks to Torun Zachrisson), Ragnvald's career suggests how individuals could make their fortunes in Byzantium and associate this with Christian faith.

The runestones commemorating veterans suggest that Byzantine devotional modes had some impact. Many bear crosses, even if others (including Ragnvald's) do not and crosses also appear on runestones where no voyages to "the Greeks" feature. Thus very many Uppland stones bear crosses, irrespective of any "East-Way" connection (Ruprecht 1958, 169-70; Jansson 1987; Mel'nikova 2001, 319-40). More suggestive is how they style those who died among the Byzantines: *anda/andask* 'pass away' or *deyja/dauðr* 'die', rather than the commoner terms for those killed elsewhere – *drepa* 'slay' or *falla* 'fall' (Ingmar Jansson's cautious remarks [2005, 49, 80 fn. 33] complement the data in Mel'nikova [2001, 348-53, appendix 1]). Also noteworthy is widespread recourse to terminology redolent of Byzantine piety: over 300 stones pray "God help the soul of", and many invoke the "Mother of God", too. *Theotokos* was standard among Eastern Christians, as was "Lord, help thy servant" on Byzantine seals (Segelberg 1972, 165-7, 173-4; Jansson 1987, 113-15; Lind 2013, 348-51; Cheynet 2008, 72-6). Admittedly, the runestones' formulation diverges from this and "God help the soul of" occurs (along with "Mother of God") on runestones commemorating persons *without* eastern connections. However, there are no Latin Western formulations bearing close comparison, "Mother of God" being a less common Western appellation

for Mary (see Maunder 2019). Here, one seems to see Eastern Christian concepts and terms put to new ends by Northerners and becoming widespread.

Few codices made it north, but seals authenticating documents are found from the ninth century onwards, as are personal seals bearing Greek names as far northwest as Dublin (Androshchuk 2016, 95-7; for the name *Philipo*[*s*] on a seal-matrix, from a grave at Dublin's *longphort*: Harrison, O'Floinn 2014, 207). Officeholders' and clerics' seals were not uncommon on the Middle Dnieper and points north – hardly surprising given the Russo-Byzantine treaty's provision for returning deceased warriors' chattels. Some were inscribed "*Kyrie boēthei*" or invoked the Mother of God; image-bearing cone-seals ended up in Rus, too (Bulgakova 2004, 49-50, 53-7, 69-70, 173-4; Murasheva, Eniosova 2013, 220-2; Shepard 1986). The Byzantines came to assume the Rus' recourse to the written word: a mid-940s treaty stipulates that their vessels arriving at Constantinople present documents instead of simply seals (*Повесть временных лет* [ed. Likhachev, Adrianova-Peretts, Sverdlov 1996, 24). This should have stimulated recourse to writing, whatever their previous uses of characters, and Byzantium offered a medium for learning. This may be inferred from exercises on waxed wooden tablets found at Novgorod in a stratum datable to the early eleventh century (Franklin 2002, 46-7, 203; Zalizniak 2003, 202; Guimon 2021, 20). Taken alone, they could merely attest literacy following Rus' Conversion, but comparable tablets occur at Birka and especially Sigtuna, along with styluses of various materials, used to write vernacular, runic characters and Latin letters (Hedenstierna-Jonson 2010; Zacharopoulos 2021, 23-40). Such use of styluses on waxen tablets was of longstanding in Byzantium (Cutler 1991), without obvious alternative sources of inspiration. Besides, tenth-century Birka's warrior-elite seemingly aspired to ranking orders of vestments evoking imperial ceremonial, albeit with silken kaftans and belts styled after steppe-peoples' gear, rather than Byzantines'. (Some connection with the emperor's court is cautiously suggested by Hedenstierna-Jonson, Holmquist Olausson [2006, 65, 68]; see also Hägg 2016). Given their links with the Rus of the Upper and Middle Dnieper, virtually sharing political culture and practices, their adopting diverse modes and customs from the Byzantines around the same time is understandable.

What is striking are the variegated uses to which Byzantine objects were put. Such eclecticism might indicate merely indirect contact between Northerners and Byzantium, showing how limited was the latter's impact. However, the apparent quirkiness of the borrowings could suggest the attention paid to artefacts and practices from the South and, as with styluses and waxen tablets, adaptation for new purposes. No less importantly, phenomena like ranking orders of vestments may have owed something to observations at Con-

stantinople, rather than artefacts sporadically reaching the North. This is unsurprising, given that "baptised Rus" were on parade at palace receptions by 946, St. Sophia with its mosaic of the Mother of God was on the itinerary of visiting envoys, and certain Northerners chose to carve their names there (Constantine Porphyrogenitus, *De cerimoniis* 2.15 [ed. and transl. Dagron, Flusin 2020, 3: 118-19]; Drocourt 2015, 2: 589-91; Källström 2016, 185). Indeed, journeying to the Greeks features on the runestones as a distinction in itself. Nordicised place-names are taken to be familiar to readers, notably *Gríkland* and *Langbarđaland* (*Langobardia*) (Mel'nikova 2001, 306 [§ 5.10], 318-19 [§ 5.33]).

Such apparent familiarity could imply other processes of adapting Byzantine terms and customs. Long ago Stender-Petersen drew attention to parallels between stories and motifs in Old Norse sagas and those known in Byzantium. Picked up by Northerners serving with imperial forces and brought back North, these tales entered the mainstream of storytelling, sometimes appearing in written sagas. Stender-Petersen highlighted ruses credited to the most celebrated of Northern veterans, Harald Hardrada, noting comparable stratagems recounted in the "Counsels and Tales" of a near-contemporary commander, Kekaumenos (Stender-Petersen 1934, 80-1, 84-9, 141-54), and spotting themes and narrative-devices in other Anglo-Norman and Danish literary works drawing on Greco-Roman lore, supposedly mediated through Byzantine texts and diffused by returning mercenaries. His thesis has undergone thoroughgoing critique from Scheel, showing how many stories and elements in writers like Saxo Grammaticus and later sagas draw on Latin or medieval Western vernacular texts (Scheel 2015, 1: 408-23, 737-43, 759-65, 772-3). Other motifs are commonplace, lacking any necessary Byzantino-Nordic intermediation, Scheel argues (2015, 1: 302-3).

Valuable as these corrections are, one risks throwing the baby out with the bathwater. Firstly, parallels between Norse stories and certain Rus narratives are undeniable (Mel'nikova 2000). Rus literary culture is virtually devoid of texts or motifs from classical antiquity (Franklin 1983) whereas the *Rus Primary Chronicle*, our main narrative, relays tales of Greco-Roman cast alongside word-of-mouth reports (Guimon 2021, 102-4, 170, 263-76, 281-2). Such tales as the luckless birds attached to firebrands by a city's besiegers are likeliest to have reached Rus chroniclers and Northern saga-writers via returnees from Byzantium (*Повесть временных лет* [ed. Likhachev, Adrianova-Peretts, Sverdlov 1996, 28-9; *Haralds saga* ch. 6, [ed. Bjarni Aðalbjarnarson 1951, 76-7]; Stender-Petersen 1934, 127-9, 141-52; Stepʿanos Tarōnecʿi, *Universal History* [transl. Greenwood 2016, 246]). Secondly, Rus and Nordic warriors attaining top commands were generally conversant with Greek, as were the Frankish commanders issuing Greek-language seals from the mid-eleventh

century on. In 1057, the commanders of Rus and Frankish units were tricked with forged imperial orders placing them under a rebel general's command, "easily brow-beaten" and bound "with oaths" (Skylitzes, *Synopsis* [ed. Thurn 1973, 491]). This tale stems from the general himself, Katakalon Kekaumenos, whose memoirs also depict him debating tactics with the Georgian potentate Liparit and befriending a Pecheneg auxiliary-commander's son (Skylitzes, *Synopsis* [ed. Thurn, 452, 469]; Shepard 2018, 190-3). For liaising effectively, knowledge of spoken Greek was indispensable, and one may presuppose the same of other foreign-born commanders.

A third consideration is the military-literary culture which enabled those officers of middling education to debate ethics, tactics and technical matters, adducing facts, cautionary tales and fables from Greco-Roman antiquity (Roueché 2002; Holmes 2010). Katakalon's memoirs exemplify this, involving interplay between spoken and written word, while citing (albeit apologetically) barbarian sayings (Shepard 2018, 189, 193-4, 201-2). One might expect counterflow, with barbarian commanders picking up saws, fables, even tactics, from Byzantine officers. *Haralds Saga* not only tells of homing birds attached to firebrands setting a city ablaze: its tale of tunnelling beneath city-walls so that warriors could surprise the defenders recalls a stratagem of Polyainos (*Haralds saga* ch. 7 [ed. Bjarni Aðalbjarnarson 1951, 77-8]; Polyainos, *Strategika* 7.11.5 [ed. and transl. Brodersen 2017, 522-3]; Stender-Petersen 1934, 86). Sapping is prescribed in Middle Byzantine manuals, drawing on ancient techniques while sometimes rejecting them in favour of modern methods (Nikephoros Ouranos, *Taktika* ch. 65.19-22 [ed. and transl. McGeer 1995, 160-3]); *Parangelmata Polioorketika* chs. 11-19 [ed. and transl. Sullivan 2000, 42-57 (text), 19 (introduction)]; Sullivan 2003, 228-9, 256-7; Holmes 2010, 75-8).

Stories illustrating stratagems could circulate among returnees northwards without naming Byzantium, as in the *Rus Primary Chronicle*'s tale of the fiery birds Olga despatched against the Derevlians (see above). This prompts a fourth consideration: that tales of doings in Byzantium could carry a social, even political charge. Ragnvald (and others) needed narrative to warrant claims of being "commander of the host". Indeed, possessors of Byzantine-manufactured weaponry needed anecdotal evidence for their acquisition: an owner deemed unworthy of a well-crafted sword was open to challenge, as the farmer Þorvarðr found with *Brynjubítr* 'Mail-Biter' in 1217 (Jakobsson 2020, 117-18). Savoir-faire and stratagems associable with the Greeks would have complemented such possessions in Iceland, and assertions on warriors' runestones. For the most ambitious, such claims might carry political connotations. Thus Ragnvald is probably the "Ragnvald the Old" whose son, Stenkil, became king of the *Svear*, controlling Sigtuna (Sawyer, Sawyer 1991, 34-5; Runer 2006,

138). One cannot dismiss the possibility of Stenkil benefiting from tales of Ragnvald's southern exploits. After all, his near-contemporary Ingvar's expedition spawned stories culminating in an Icelandic saga, along with runestones commemorating losses (*Yngvars saga* [ed. Olson 1912]; Gritton 2020).

3 Praise-Singers of Harald Hardrada and the Anglo-Danish king Cnut

One may, then, envisage interplay between deeds, spoken words, and words inscribed on runestones (especially among the *Svear*). And this is before turning to that hyper-ambitious veteran, Harald Hardrada. He was not unusual amongst Nordic rulers in hosting poets, but his talent for composing and appraising verses seems to stand out. Capable of composition even during the last battle, at Stamford Bridge in 1066 (Turville-Petre 1968, 19), Harald sought celebration of his deeds, beginning with those in the South. The assemblage of strophes mostly composed by Harald's favourite poet apparently relays claims made by Harald himself (Þjóðólfr Arnórsson, *Sexstefja* [ed. and transl. Whaley 2009a]; Turville-Petre 1968, 13). These include capturing eighty cities in "Africa" and his blinding of the Greek emperor. The latter can only be Michael V: Harald cast himself as star of an event occurring while he was in Byzantium (Þjóðólfr Arnórsson, *Sexstefja* § 7 [ed. and transl. Whaley 2009a]). Thus verses recounting their exploits could serve Northern power-seekers' agendas, supplementing tales of stratagems with recreational yet also political, even practical purposes. If Stender-Petersen ascribed too many tales to "Varangians", his pinpointing Harald was not utterly misconceived. *Haralds Saga*'s strophes and stratagems seem to echo the talk in officers' messes – indeed, both Katakalon and Harald joined Byzantium's last Sicilian expedition (Stender-Petersen 1934, 80-1, 153-4; Shepard 2018, 194).

Others traced Harald's fortune back to Byzantium, as witness the prayers another of his poets addressed after his death "to the wise guardian of the Greeks and Rus" (Arnórr jarlaskáld Þórðarson, *Haraldsdrápa* § 17 [ed. and transl. Whaley 2009a]); Turville-Petre 1968, 10 fn. 1). Arnórr seemingly drew a connection between Harald, the God of his erstwhile patrons along "the East-Way", and his wealth. Despite his "gold-reddened helmet" at Stamford Bridge, Harald was left unprotected by his warriors' "spear-points inlaid with gold" (Arnórr jarlaskáld Þórðarson, *Haraldsdrápa* §§ 3, 13 [ed. and transl. Whaley 2009b]). Such talk of gold receives corroboration from Adam of Bremen, alongside numismatic evidence (Adam, *Gesta* 3.52(51), scholium 83(84) [ed. and transl. Trillmich 1961, 394-5]; Morrisson 1981, 138-40; Scheel 2016, 64). Taken alone, Arnórr's dirge

follows skaldic conventions. Equally, one could argue, Harald need-
ed little prompting to tell Archbishop Adalbert of Bremen's envoys:
"he knew of no other archbishop or master in Norway than the king
himself". This might pass for bluster during a dispute over ecclesi-
astical jurisdiction (Adam, *Gesta* 3.17(16) [ed. and transl. Trillmich
1961, 348-9]; Krag 2002, 187-8). Yet Harald would not have been
alone in presenting himself as possessing an unmediated relation-
ship with God, reminiscent of the Greek ruler's. A generation earlier,
such claims were made of another aspirant to overlordship spanning
the North Sea. Poets praised Cnut to the skies, literally. Hallvarðr
Háreksblesi's comparison of Cnut, defending "the earth", to "the lord
of all [defending] the splendid hall of the mountains [Heaven]", appar-
ently echoed Þórarinn Praise-Tongue's characterisation of Cnut de-
fending the land "as the guardian of *Gríklands* defends the heavenly
kingdom" (Þórarinn loftunga, *Hǫfuðlausn* 1 [ed. and transl. Townend
2012]). While "the guardian of *Gríklands*" may denote God's special
care for the empire, it could imply a role for the *basileus* as heaven's
gatekeeper.

Scholars have inferred Anglo-Saxon royal ideology from the re-
frains associating Cnut with God, depicting him "in cosmic high re-
lief" (Frank 1994, 116-17; Lawson 2004, 125-6). One should, however,
bear in mind that Cnut and Harald presided over elites whose fam-
ily-members had been, or were, in Byzantine service. For example,
Ragnvald's cousin Ulf had collected geld for Cnut in England, but al-
so for Thorkell the Tall, by turns Cnut's henchman and enemy (for
the runestones concerning Ulf [U343, U344]: Syrett 2002, 38-9; An-
droshchuk 2014, 227-8). In such circles, comparisons with the emper-
or would resonate. A degree of Byzantine-awareness in Baltic regions
is apparent from the imitation of a *miliaresion* found on Gotland. The
die-caster crammed in elements from several coin-types, including
two emperors' heads (Audy 2018, 190 and fig. 9.5). Such Byzantine-
awareness might verge on veneration of the emperor's overarching
lordship (Jakobsson 2020, 138-45, 161-4), yet he could be fair game,
judging by Harald's claim to have blinded "a Greek-king".

Whether elites based around the Baltic Rim were equipped to ab-
sorb coherently into their own cultures tales and imagery from Byz-
antium is questionable (Scheel 2016, 58-66), notwithstanding motifs
found on Swedish runestones or Kekaumenos' averral that the *basile-
us* Harald "maintained friendship and love towards the Romans" af-
ter returning North (Kekaumenos, *Counsels and Tales* [ed. and transl.
Roueché 2013, 97.25-7]). But both Cnut and Harald claimed rulership
extending to the British Isles, parts of which had undergone Scan-
dinavian settlement (Wrathmell 2020). Reportedly, Harald "added
to his *imperium* the Orkneys" (Adam, *Gesta* 4.33(32) [ed. and transl.
Trillmich 1961, 390-1]), whose jarls – besides Harald himself – re-
ceived praise from Arnórr Þórðarson. And Cnut's "empire" encom-

passed five realms, according his widow's encomium (*Encomium Emmae Reginae* 2.19 [ed. and transl. Campbell 1998, 34-5]). Supra-regional terminology and symbolism was therefore of interest, and England had much to offer. With Roman monuments, an ideology of kingship propounded by prelates and, even, secular elites possessing vernacular literacy (Pratt 2014; McCann 2018), England stands apart from Russo-Scandinavian polities, its political culture dependent upon Latin texts and rites interpreted by Western churchmen. This was not, however, to the exclusion of Easterners or the Eastern embodiment of *imperium*: England itself was open to Eastern arrivals, especially once under Danish rule (on an authority-symbol in England under Cnut, see Abrams 2016, 49-50).

4 England's Anomalousness: The Canterbury Connection

Trying to determine whether returnees from imperial service or Anglo-Saxon ideology inspired Cnut's poets to depict him "in cosmic high relief" would be futile. Anglo-Saxons were probably now serving the emperor, alongside Scandinavians (Shepard 2016, 23-4). And England had its own links with Byzantium, some harking back to the opening centuries of Anglo-Saxon Christianity, but others of tenth-century vintage, when journeying between Black Sea and Baltic became feasible. England's anomalousness throws into relief the multifarious ways in which Byzantium could serve other Northern societies' would-be overlords, elite-families, and the well-to-do. It was to outshine such magnates as Ragnvald, "commander of the host", that symbols of supra-regional rulership came in useful. For those – like Cnut – whose imperial dominion encompassed England, titles and visual imagery (if not texts) of Byzantine origin could conjoin with Anglo-Saxon ones. Indeed, England's case may illuminate processes underway in other, less well-documented polities: interplay between the written and spoken word, and fitful recourse to Byzantine exemplars. Often becoming available fortuitously, these might be seized upon.

The generations following the Kentish king Aethelbert's baptism may illustrate the fortuitousness. Pope Vitalian's despatch in 668 to Canterbury of two well-educated Greek-speakers owed little to Constantinopolitan statecraft. But Theodore of Tarsus and the African-born Hadrian, respectively Archbishop of Canterbury and Abbot of Saints-Peter-and-Paul, introduced Eastern texts, translating into Latin and expounding them at the school they founded. From their Biblical commentaries, it seems they favoured literal interpretation of sacred texts, often citing Basil of Caesarea, John Chrysostom and Theodore of Mopsuestia, explaining computus alongside astronomi-

cal and astrological know-how. The *Laterculus Malalianus* drew upon Malalas' *Chronicle* to elucidate Jesus' life on earth, and things to come (Lapidge 1996; Stevenson 1995, 15-47; Siemens 2007; Dempsey 2015). Outstanding pupils like Aldhelm knew some Greek, peppering their writings with grecisms, a style reviving in the late Anglo-Saxon period. Clearly, they were helped by being conversant with Latin, highlighting the significance of persons capable of expounding texts. Theodore was *sui generis*, his achievement unrepeatable: by the time he died in 690 the English church possessed written rules that made it self-sustaining. But his case raises the question whether anything comparable occurred once the sea-link between Byzantium and Rus opened up communications with the North.

5 England's Anomalousness: Royal Couples and Imperial Hegemony from Edgar to William the Conqueror

Having already noted the "Armenian bishops" on Iceland, one may turn to "a Greek", known to the *Book of Ely* as "Bishop Sigewold", almost certainly a calque on the name "Nikephoros". Sigewold-Nikephoros' historicity – albeit not his episcopal ranking – is beyond reasonable doubt (Lilie et al. 2013, #27069; Shepard 2016, 25-6). Being a 'magnate' at the court of King Edgar (959-75), Sigewold-Nikephoros would have needed enough erudition to carry conviction with ecclesiastics given to grecisms (Stephenson 2015, 8-11, 14-19, 25-6). He may even have made himself more 'episcopal' through Greek texts: Sigewold-Nikephoros' arrival and concern with a key monastery in the Danelaw was well-timed, coinciding with Edgar's hegemonial aspirations as *rex* [*totius*] *Britannia* and styling as *basileus* on charters (Lestremau 2018, 215-18). Wholly unprecedented was the imperial coronation (besides anointing) of Edgar and his queen, Aelfthryth, amidst Bath's Roman monuments. This set the couple apart, privileging their offspring over Edgar's pre-existing children (Stafford 1997, 62-4, 162-8; Pratt 2017, 219-24; Lestremau 2018, 210, 214-18). While Byzantine concepts of *Porphyrogeniti* were probably lacking, one should note how the Benedictional commissioned by Bishop Aethelwold of Winchester effectively formatted such aspirations. Illuminations in this manuscript drew on Eastern iconographic themes, including the Virgin's Birth and Death and the choirs of saints. Deshman suggests a Gospel-Book inspired Aethelwold to concoct an "iconographic counterpart" to the royal couple's coronation in 973 (Deshman 1995, 213, 162-4, 125-38, 147-8, 204-7, 252, 260-1). Although such a text might have reached Wessex from the Ottonian court, a role for Sigewold-Nikephoros is conceivable, as also, perhaps, in Edgar's celebrated coin-reform (Shepard 2016, 26-7). Since Aethelwold re-found-

Figure 2 *Liber Vitae*. Winchester, c. 1031. King Cnut and Queen Emma receive a crown and a veil from the angels respectively. British Library, ms. Stowe MS 944, fol. 6*r*. Public domain

ed Ely in 970, he will have been acquainted with "the Greek bishop": whether or not Sigewold-Nikephoros provided the text inspiring the Benedictional's imagery, he could have expounded its meaning. Here, as with Theodore and Hadrian, word-of-mouth exposition could amplify texts and imagery reaching the North. Not that Sigewold-Nikephoros' capability was so extraordinary. It was probably from oral informants, perhaps imperial service veterans, that Aethelweard, the Latin translator of Bede's *Ecclesiastical History*, picked up contemporary Byzantine terminology for ships (Shepard 2016, 24, 28).

The "cosmic high relief" in which Cnut's poets depict him fits this background. Icelanders like Þórarinn Praise-Tongue could have heard tales of Byzantium from returning veterans, and cross-fertilisation with conceptions of imperial dominion in England might be presumed. Besides the use of *basileus* and such terms as "God-crowned" on Cnut's charters, one should note the illumination in the *Liber Vitae*, executed at Winchester's New Minster in 1031. Its Byzantinesque depiction of Cnut and his wife Emma receiving respectively a crown and veil from angels under Christ's direction may reflect German designs, themselves imbued with Byzantine iconography (*Liber Vitae* [ed. Keynes 1996, 38-9, 79-80, pl. V]); Ott 1998, 200-9; Breay, Story 2018, no. 147) **[fig. 2]**. Yet there seems no reason why an illuminated text, arriving directly from the east, should not lie behind the picture. Around this time Winchester, a royal city, was host to Byzantine envoys bearing seals and silks, while New Minster housed a Greek monk (Lilie et al. 2013, #20400; *Liber Vitae* [ed. Keynes 1996, 90]). Indeed, Emma gave a "Greek shrine" to New Minster (*Liber Vitae* [ed. Keynes 1996, 105-6]; Jones 2009). If Eastern illuminations of the Mother of God offered scope for projecting Edgar and his queen in Aethelwold's Benedictional, the need to represent Cnut and Emma as jointly crowned beneath Christ was the more urgent. Cnut was, after all, a conqueror who had taken to wife the defeated King Aethelred's widow: Aethelred was born of the very marriage the Benedictional's illumination was meant to sanctify. Thus Cnut sought imperial dominion over a realm already acquainted with collating earthly with heavenly hierarchies.

To infer this from manuscript-illuminations alone would be rash. But their meaningfulness to members of the politico-ecclesiastical elite should not be underestimated. The importance of enrollment into the New Minster's *Liber Vitae*, thereby joining its confraternity and benefitting from its monks' prayers, was such that some thirty years after Cnut and Emma, proponents of Edgar *Aetheling* as "heir apparent" entered after Edward (1042-66) and his queen the name of Aethelred's great-grandson (Licence 2017, 122-3; *Liber Vitae* fol. 29r [ed. Keynes 1996, 96-7]). Coming towards the end of a reign characterisable as "one long power-struggle" (Tyler 2017, 137), this belongs to a series of demarches to enshrine the childless couple's imperial stature, along with Edgar's, amidst sundry successor candidates.

Figure 3
Adewardi Anglorum Basilei: two-sided seal.
After Wyon 1887, pl. I, nos 5-6

Given such circumstances, Byzantium's imperial order had its charms for the throne's incumbents and contenders alike. Several aspects deserve highlighting, starting with Edward's elaboration upon the title *basileus*. On a seal whose double-sidedness recalls Byzantine gold bulls, *Adewardi Anglorum Basilei* sits enthroned (Jones [2002] 2003, 103-5; Mureşan 2019, 144-5) **[fig. 3]**. The styling presupposes acquaintance with its implication: God-given entitlement to oversee earthly affairs. Secondly, Edward consulted the Eastern *basileus* after a vision of the Seven Sleepers of Ephesus, sending envoys with sealed letters to Constantinople. Such communications are also implied by the enamelled encolpion and Byzantine silk found in Edward's tomb, and one cannot dismiss this tale told by his hagiographer soon after Edward's death (*Life* [ed. and transl. Barlow 1992, 106-7]; Ciggaar 1996, 136; Licence 2016). The *Life of Edward* sought to honour his widow Edith, and its representation of their joint 'imperial' authority offers a third intimation of Byzantium. Edith is extolled beyond the heights already attained by the *consors imperii* since Aelfthryth's coronation at Bath. Rather than hagiographical rhetoric, this echoes *laudes* sung for Edith, perhaps at her coronation in 1045 (*Life* [ed. and transl. Barlow 1992, 6-7, 22-7, 36-9, 64-5]; Cowdrey 1981, 72-3 (text); Mureşan 2019, 141-2; Stafford 1997, 183 fn. 106). The likelihood of Byzantine inspiration is reinforced by a set of *laudes* datable to Edward's reign: styled *basileum*, Edward is filled with Solomonic wisdom; the *basilea* "bears the pitcher of doctrine" (Cowdrey 1981, 71-2 (text); Mureşan 2019, 114, 119-20). Such terms and conceptions complement the imagery already noted. Probably chanted outdoors for William I's coronation at Westminster on 25 December 1066, these *laudes* formerly acclaiming Edward now greeted the Conqueror, bonding him with his new subjects (Guy, *Carmen* [ed. and transl. Barlow 1999, 46-8]; Mureşan 2019, 119-20, 122-6).

Two years later, another set of acclamations celebrated the coronation of William's queen Mathilda, "crowned-by-God", invoking Mary, Archangels Michael and Raphael, and a host of other saints to help them, and the clerical and secular leaderships. Their focus "upon the king and queen in the glory of a regality that [...] reflected Christ's heavenly reign" and the "balance, order, and relationship between the hierarchies of heaven and earth" is unparalleled in other *laudes regiae* (Cowdrey 1981, 52-3, 70-1). To regard such interlinking of hierarchies vested in an imperial couple as intimating Eastern ceremonies is not overbold. Nor should one discount Byzantine-awareness on the English politico-ecclesiastical elite's part: William would scarcely have favoured chants that failed to resonate with them barely two months after Hastings. Bishop Guy's *Song of Hastings* climaxes with the imperial symbolism, minutely described, of the golden crown commissioned from a craftsman from "Greece" (Guy, *Carmen* [ed. and transl. Barlow 1999, 44]; Mureşan 2019, 134-6). A degree of Byzantine-awareness on William's and his Norman household's part is anyway clear. Before 1066 William received requests for mercenaries and, perhaps consequently, his steward's son spent a while at the imperial court (William of Poitiers, *Gesta* 1.59 [eds and transl. Davis, Chibnall 1998, 96-7]; *Chronique* [ed. Sauvage 1906, 57-8]; Ciggaar 1987, 48-51). Odo Stigand's studies there included horse-medicine, useful for cavalrymen, and he could have brought home notes taken, if not texts. The same goes for Bishop Ealdred of Worcester's pilgrimage to Jerusalem, probably via Constantinople. The court's acclamations and doings could have featured in this traveller's tales (Mureşan 2019, 146-51).

6 Mercenaries as *Kulturträger*

However, the principal vector of tales northwards was probably returning mercenaries. For all the turns their accounts might take, those performing palace duties – the Rus on parade in 946, for instance (see above) – will have been exposed to the year-round *taxis* reflecting the cosmic order Constantine Porphyrogenitus envisaged (Constantine Porpyrogenitus, *De cerimoniis* 1 (preface) [ed. and transl. Dagron, Flusin 2020, 1: 4-5]). Birka's warrior-elite seemingly essayed to evoke this sartorially, if not ceremonially. On an earthier plane, *Haralds Saga*'s account of his affairs at court reflects awareness of women's centrality to court-life, whether *Augustae* or *Porphyrogenitae* like Zoe (*Haralds saga* chs 13, 15 [ed. Bjarni Aðalbjarnarson 1951, 85, 88-9]; Jakobsson 2020, 140-1; for the *Augustae* see, e.g. Constantine Porphyrogenitus, *De cerimoniis* [ed. and transl. Dagron, Flusin 2020, 5: 29]; Herrin 2021, 311). Oral tales, reminiscences and imagery would have sufficed to convey notions of courts attuned to heavenly rhythms, women's role as intercessors, even the

gist of acclamations. That some such 'package' was known to Anglo-Danish elites, blending with pre-existing idea of queenship, emerges just after 1066. William the Conqueror's charters' 'imperial' formulations are in harmony with the acclamations for his crowning with a Greek-made *stemma* at Westminster, and Mathilda's coronation (Mureşan 2019, 120-5, 131-2).

This phase was short-lived. After rebellions and Danish invasion, William abandoned a modus operandi akin to Cnut's overlordship, resorting instead to tighter supervision of the conquered lands (Crouch 2017, 21-2). William's initial adaptation of a political culture evoking the Eastern empire is nonetheless noteworthy. Such elements could consolidate dynasties intent on imperial overlordship, like Edgar's. But they were of particular value to conquerors like Cnut and William. These bouts of Byzantine-awareness owed much to the spoken word, invigorating available texts or images. A handful of Greek-speakers sufficed to translate and expound Eastern religious texts, as witness Theodore of Tarsus. But it was probably mercenaries' toing-and-froing that spread word of the imperial order furthest amongst external elites.

7 Byzantine Texts, Tales and Royal Couples Among the Alans

Rus offers plentiful points of comparison with Northwest Europe, sending Byzantium mercenaries and receiving miscellaneous Eastern Christian texts from the Conversion era onwards (Franklin 2002; Zalizniak 2003; Griffin 2019; Guimon 2021). But another provider of military manpower will – like Rus – have received texts when a Constantinopolitan-appointed metropolitan was installed in the mid-tenth century: the Alans. Lack of autochthonous writings makes information even scarcer and more ambiguous than for Rus or Northwest Europe, and their geopolitical situation was markedly different. But there are hints from texts (in the broadest sense) and tales of comparable dynamics – not least the divergent uses that external political elites could make of associations with Eastern imperial order. The titles and visible trappings of a God-blessed court served to enhance Alan rulers' 'imperial' ambitions. Yet tales of Byzantium could legitimise clans holding only regional sway. In Northwest Europe such stances were struck amidst the toing-and-froing of mercenaries, with veterans ranging from Harald Hardrada to Ragnvald displaying wealth and weaponry. Þorvarðr, in contrast, overstepped the mark in acquiring 'Mail-Biter', rather than by naming his farm *Miklagarðr* after Constantinople (Jakobsson 2020, 117-18). Returnees acquainted with the imperial court could make a receptive audience for would-be monarchs with tales to tell (like Harald).

The Alan rulers' diplomatic exchanges with Byzantium were closer and livelier than any Northwestern potentate's from the mid-tenth to the twelfth century. A few texts and tales may illustrate developments. A seal styling Gabriel *exousiokratōr* shows the Alan ruler associating his rulership with Byzantium. Dating from the 1030s-40s, it echoes the formula for addressing Gabriel's predecessor a century earlier (Seibt 2004, 54; Constantine Porphyrogenitus, *De cerimoniis* 2.48 [ed. and transl. Dagron, Flusin 2020, 3: 364-5]). Adherence to the *basileus*' order is likewise suggested by an inscription on the *Theotokos*' church at Senty in 965, renovated "in the reign (*basileia*) of Nikephoros" and the *Augusta*, and "the *exousiokratōr* David and the *exousiokratōrissa* Maria"; the carver was an *apokrisiarios*, probably part of the mission sent to build the church (Beletskii, Vinogradov 2011, 241-3; Latham-Sprinkle 2018, 146-8; Evans forthcoming). David and Maria are effectively accompanying the imperial pair in exercise of *basileia*, albeit occupying a lowlier plane. Seemingly this was a diplomatic compliment which David and his entourage would presumably have understood: Senty abounds in Greek graffiti (Beletskii, Vinogradov 2011, 243-54). Such coupling of male and female rulers foreshadows the eleventh-century joint-acclamations for rulers over England. One doubts whether fostering this sense of a dynasty, exercising quasi-imperial overlordship under divine benediction, came within Byzantine calculations. Yet this is what texts, tales and imagery involving the imperial court seem to have imparted to would-be monarchs. It is perhaps no coincidence that, without sweepingly coercive power across the Northern Caucasus, the Alan ruler's regime stabilised and became dynastic (Latham-Sprinkle 2018, 150-3, 183-7). This was, after all, the era of the dynastic imagery of Aethelwold's Benedictional and, indeed, Cnut's praise-singers.

Liturgical texts solemnising notions of the imperial court's proximity to God will have circulated and been chanted among the Alans, as they were in Rus following the Conversion. Without expressly sacralising the imperial order, these texts commemorate and celebrate God's salvation of the City on the Bosporus from successive perils (Griffin 2019, 30, 82-90, 181-2). Tenth- or eleventh-century texts are lacking from Northern Caucasia. But their likely availability is indicated by the survival of a lectionary dating from 1275, in Greek but with glosses by an Alanic-speaking cleric, explaining matters of interest to him and his congregation. For example, he seemingly rendered into Alanic as "Day of Punishment" the Greek title for the feast-day commemorating "the Avar surprise" (Constantinople, 5 June 617) (Lubotsky 2015, 7-8, 35-6; Latham-Sprinkle 2018, 307-8). Thus the idea of the City as exemplary for mankind, whose conduct could incur God's wrath or reprieve, was enshrined in the liturgies of polities whose ecclesiastical leadership hailed from there.

Such liturgies will have been chanted – and expounded – from the time metropolitans took up residence in Alania. The eleventh century saw Alan rulers launching attacks on Muslim powers in the Caucasus, in step with imperial policy, while units served with Byzantine forces (Shepard 1984-85, 247-53; Latham-Sprinkle 2018, 214-15, 221-2). Their commanders presumably picked up tales in the manner of Rus and other Northerners, sometimes retelling and recasting them back home. These two currents of cultural intercourse were enlivened by exchanges between courts: the Alan princess arriving as a 'hostage' only to become Constantine IX's mistress and have shiploads of deluxe goods despatched home is perhaps the most spectacular episode (Michael Psellos, *Chronographia* 6.151-4 [ed. Reinsch 2014, 175-7]). Alania was especially close-engaged with Byzantium, but the interplay between mercenaries, court ideals and realities and, indeed, storytelling bears comparison with more northerly societies'. As on Iceland (Jakobsson 2020, 124-33; Scheel 2015), stories involving the emperor or St. Sophia were told, regardless of whether mercenaries still served him. Echoes may be found in the tale told of three brothers gaining ascendancy over Dvaleti in the central Caucasus. This culminates with the foremost brother visiting the God-crowned emperor "Justinian the Builder", a connoisseur of monuments. Perceiving his worthiness, "Justinian" invests Rostom with his own costume, weapons and banner. Rostom then establishes dynastic rule over the mountain communities (*Памятник Эриставов* [transl. Kakabadze 1979, 12, 21-4 (text)]; Latham-Sprinkle 2018, 260, 269). In this foundation-myth – concocted for a local clan and transmitted in an early fifteenth-century text, the *Dzegli Eristavta* – one may find aspirations and world-pictures not so far removed from those of the Viking-Age Baltic, or even from Þorvarðr's thirteenth-century Icelandic farm. But here, too, periods of intensive engagement were finite and fitful, registering an external polity's changing needs and pattern of development. Texts and tales were malleable instruments, though of potential use to local elites as well as hegemons.

Bibliography

Abrams, L. (2016). "Connections and Exchange in the Viking World". Androshchuk et al. 2016, 37-52.

Androshchuk, F.O. (2014). *Viking Swords*. Stockholm: Historiska.

Androshchuk, F.O. (2016). "What Does Material Evidence Tell Us about Contacts between Byzantium and the Viking World c. 800-1000?". Androshchuk et al. 2016, 91-116.

Androshchuk, F.O. et al. (eds) (2016). *Byzantium and the Viking World*. Uppsala: Uppsala Universitet.

Appadurai, A. (ed.) (1986). *The Social Life of Things*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Audy, F. (2018). *Suspended Value: Using Coins as Pendants in Viking-Age Scandinavia (c. AD 800-1140)*. Stockholm: Stockholms Universitet.

Barber, K. (2007). *The Anthropology of Texts*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Barlow, F. (ed. and transl.) (1992). *The Life of King Edward Who Rests at Westminster*. 2nd ed. London: Thomas Nelson.

Barlow, F. (ed. and transl.) (1999). *The Carmen de Hastingae proelio of Guy, Bishop of Amiens*. 2nd ed. Oxford: Clarendon.

Beletskii, D.V.; Vinogradov, A.I. (2011). *Нижний Архыз и Сенты* (Nizhny Arkhyz and Senty). Moscow: Indrik.

Bjarni Aðalbjarnarson (ed.) (1951). "Haralds saga Sigurðarsonar" (The Saga of Harald Sigurdsson). Snorri Sturluson, *Heimskringla*, vol. 3. Reykjavik: Hið Íslenzka Fornritafélag, 68-202.

Bjerg, L. et al. (eds) (2013). *From Goths to Varangians*. Aarhus: Aarhus University Press.

Breay, C.; Story, J. (eds) (2018). *Anglo-Saxon Kingdoms. Art, World, War*. London: British Library.

Brodersen, K. (Hrsg. und Übers.) (2017). *Polyainos: Strategika*. Berlin: de Gruyter.

Bulgakova, V. (2004). *Byzantinische Bleisiegel in Osteuropa*. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz.

Campbell, A. (ed. and transl.) (1998). *Encomium Emmae Reginae*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Cheynet, J.-C. (2008). "Introduction à la sigillographie byzantine". *La société byzantine*, vol. 1. Paris: Association des Amis du Centre d'Histoire et Civilisations de Byzance, 1-82.

Ciggaar, K. (1987). "Byzantine Marginalia to the Norman Conquest". *Anglo-Norman Studies*, 9, 43-64.

Ciggaar, K. (1996). *Western Travellers to Constantinople*. Leiden: Brill.

Cowdrey, H.E.J. (1981). "The Anglo-Norman *Laudes regiae*". *Viator*, 12, 37-78.

Crouch, D. (2017). *Medieval Britain, c. 1000-1500*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Cutler, A. (1991). "Writing Tablets". *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*, 3, 2205-6.

Dagron, G.; Flusin, B. (éds et trads) (2020). *Constantin VII Porphyrogénète: Le livre des cérémonies*. 6 vols. Paris : Association des Amis du Centre d'Histoire et Civilisations de Byzance.

Davis, R.H.C.; Chibnall, M. (eds and transl.) (1998). *William of Poitiers: Gesta Guillelmi*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Dempsey, G.T. (2015). *Aldhelm of Malmesbury and the Ending of Late Antiquity*. Turnhout: Brepols.

Deshman, R. (1995). *The Benedictional of Aethelwold*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Drocourt, N. (2015). *Diplomatie sur le Bosphore*. 2 vols. Louvain; Paris: Peeters.

Evans, N. (forthcoming). *Mountains, Steppes and Empires. Approaches to the North Caucasus in the Early Middle Ages*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Frank, R. (1994). "King Cnut in the Verse of his Skalds". Rumble, A.R. (ed.), *The Reign of Cnut*. London: Leicester University Press, 106-24.

Franklin, S. (1983). "The Empire of the *Rhomaioi*". *Byzantion*, 53, 505-37.

Franklin, S. (2002). *Writing, Society and Culture in Early Rus*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Gade, K.E. (ed.) (2009). *Poetry from the Kings' Sagas*. Vol. 2, *From c. 1035 to c. 1300*. Turnhout: Brepols. `https://skaldic.org/skaldic/m.php?p=vol&i=2`.

Garipzanov, I. (2012). "Wandering Clerics and Mixed Rituals in the Early Christian North". *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 63(1), 1-17. `https://doi.org/10.1017/s0022046911002545`.

Greenwood, T. (transl.) (2016). *The Universal History of Stepʿanos Tarōnecʿi*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Griffin, S. (2019). *The Liturgical Past in Byzantium and Early Rus*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Gritton, J. (2020). "*Yngvars saga víðförla* and the Ingvar Runestones". *Apardjón. Journal for Scandinavian Studies*, 1, 54-86.

Guimon, T. (2021). *Historical Writing of Early Rus*. Leiden: Brill.

Hägg, I. (2016). "Silks from Birka". Androshchuk et al. 2016, 281-304.

Harrison, S.H.; O'Floinn, R. (2014). *Viking Graves and Grave-Goods in Ireland*. Dublin: National Museum of Ireland.

Hase, C.B. (ed.) (1828). *Leonis Diaconi: Historiae libri decem*. Bonn: Weber.

Hedenstierna-Jonson, C. (2010). "I en skrivkunnig miljö" (In a Literate Environment). *Situne Dei 2010*, 175-81.

Hedenstierna-Jonson, C.; Holmquist Olausson, L. (2006). *The Oriental Mounts from Birka's Garrison*. Stockholm: Almkvist & Wiskell.

Herrin, J. (2021). "Byzantium. Imperial Order, Constantinopolitan Ceremonial and Pyramids of Power". Holmes, C. et al. (eds), *Political Culture in the Latin West, Byzantium and the Islamic World*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 290-329.

Holmes, C. (2010). "Byzantine Political Culture and Compilation Literature in the Tenth and Eleventh Centuries. Some Preliminary Inquiries". *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, 64, 55-80.

Jakobsson, S. (2020). *The Varangians. In God's Holy Fire*. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan.

Jansson, I. (2005). "Situationen i Norden och Östeuropa" (The Situation in the North and Eastern Europe). Janson, H. (ed.), *Från Bysans till Norden* (From Byzantium to the North). Skellefteå: Artos & Norma Bokförlag, 37-95.

Jansson, S.B.F. (1987). *Runes of Sweden*. Möklinta: Gidlunds.

Jones, L. [2002] (2003). "From *Anglorum Basileus* to Norman Saint. The Transformation of Edward the Confessor". *Haskins Society Journal*, 12, 99-120. `https://doi.org/10.1017/upo9781846150852.007`.

Jones, L. (2009). "Emma's Greek *Scrine*". Baxter, S. et al. (eds), *Early Medieval Studies*. Farnham: Ashgate, 499-508.

Kakabadze, S.S. (transl.) (1979). *Памятник Эриставов* (Monument of the Eristavis). Tbilisi: Metsniereba.

Källström, M. (2016). "Byzantium Reflected in the Runic Inscriptions of Scandinavia". Androshchuk et al. 2016, 169-86.

Kershaw, J. (2019). "Gold as a Means of Exchange in Scandinavian England". Kershaw, J. et al. (eds), *Silver, Butter, Cloth*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 227-50.

Keynes, S. (ed.) (1996). *Liber Vitae of the New Minster and Hyde Abbey, Winchester*. Copenhagen: Rosenkilde & Bagger.

Krag, C. (2002). "The Early Unification of Norway". Helle, K. (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Scandinavia*. Vol. 1, *Prehistory to 1520*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 184-201.

Lapidge, M. (1996). "The Study of Greek at the School of Canterbury". *Anglo-Latin Literature 600-899*. London: Hambledon Press, 123-39.

Latham-Sprinkle, J. (2018). *Political Authority in North Caucasian Alania, 800-1300* [PhD dissertation]. London: SOAS University of London.

Lawson, M.K. (2004). *Cnut*. Stroud: Tempus.

Lestremau, A. (2018). "*Basileus Anglorum*. La prétention impériale dans les titulatures royales à la fin de la période anglo-saxonne". *Médiévales*, 75(2), 197-226. https://doi.org/10.4000/medievales.9530.

Licence, T. (2016). "The Date and Authorship of the *Vita Ædwardi regis*". *Anglo-Saxon England*, 44, 259-85. https://doi.org/10.1017/s0263675100080133.

Licence, T. (2017). "Edward the Confessor and the Succession Question". *Anglo-Norman Studies*, 39, 113-27.

Lilie, R.-J. et al. (eds) (2013). *Prosopographie der mittelbyzantinischen Zeit*. Vol. 2 (867-1025), *Prolegomena*. 7 vols and indices. Berlin: de Gruyter. https://www.degruyter.com/database/pmbz/html.

Likhachev, D.S.; Adrianova-Peretts, V.P.; Sverdlov, M.B. (eds) (1996). *Повесть' Временных Лет* (Tale of Bygone Years). St. Petersburg: Nauka.

Lind, J.H. (2013). "Darkness from the East?". Bjerg et al. 2013, 341-67.

Lubotsky, A. (2015). *Alanic Marginal Notes in a Greek Liturgical Manuscript*. Wien: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften.

Maunder, C. (ed.) (2019). *The Oxford Handbook of Mary*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

McCann, K. (2018). *Anglo-Saxon Kingship and Political Power*. Cardiff: Wales University Press.

McGeer, E. (ed. and transl.) (1995). *Sowing the Dragon's Teeth*. Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection.

Mel'nikova, E.A. (2000). "The Death in the Horse's Skull". Hansson, S.; Malm, S. (eds), *Gudar på jorden* (Gods on Earth). Stockholm: Brutus Östlings Bokförlag Symposion, 152-68.

Mel'nikova, E.A. (2001). *Скандинавские рунические надписи* (Scandinavian Runic Inscriptions). Moscow: "Vostochnaia Literature" RAN.

Moravcsik, G.; Jenkins, R.J.H. (ed. and transl.) (1967). *Constantine Porphyrogenitus: De administrando imperio*. Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Center for Byzantine Studies. Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae 1.

Morrisson, C. (1981). "Le rôle des Varanges dans la transmission de la monnaie". Zeitler, R. (éd.), *Les pays du nord et Byzance*. Uppsala: Almqvist & Wiksell, 131-40.

Murasheva, V.; Eniosova, N. (2013). "Finds of Byzantine Origin from the Early Urban Centre Gnezdovo in the Light of the Contacts Between Rus' and Constantinople (10th-Early 11th Centuries AD)". Bjerg et al. 2013, 213-56.

Mureşan, D.I. (2019). "'*Ego Wilhelmus victoriosus Anglorum basileus*'". *Annales de Normandie*, 69(1), 107-64.

Olson, E. (ed.) (1912). *Yngvars saga viðfǫrla* (The Saga of Yngvar the Traveller). Copenhagen: Møller.

Ott, J. (1998). *Krone und Krönung*. Mainz: P. von Zabern.

Pratt, D. (2014). "Kings and Books in Anglo-Saxon England". *Anglo-Saxon England*, 43, 297-377. https://doi.org/10.1017/s026367511400012x.

Pratt, D. (2017). "The Making of the Second English Coronation *Ordo*". *Anglo-Saxon England*, 46, 147-258. https://doi.org/10.1017/s0263675118000078.

Reinsch, D.R. (Hrsg.) (2014). *Michaelis Pselli Chronographia*. 2 Bde. Berlin; Boston: de Gruyter.

Ridel, E. (2007). "From Scotland to Normandy". Ballin Smith, B. et al. (eds), *West over Sea*. Leiden: Brill, 81-94.

Roueché, C. (2002). "The Literary Background of Kekaumenos". Holmes, C.; Waring, J. (eds), *Literacy, Education and Manuscript Transmission in Byzantium and Beyond*. Leiden: Brill, 111-38.

Roueché, C. (ed. and transl.) (2013). *Kekaumenos: Counsels and Tales*. http://www.ancientwisdoms.ac.uk/library/kekaumenos-consilia-et-narrationes.

Runer, J. (2006). *Från hav till land eller Kristus och odalen* (From Sea to Land or Christ and the Odal). Stockholm: Stockholms universitet.

Ruprecht, A. (1958). *Die ausgehende Wikingerzeit im Lichte der Runeninschriften*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht.

Sauvage, R.N. (éd.) (1906). *La Chronique de Sainte-Barbe-en-Auge*. Caen: Henri Delesques.

Sawyer, P.H.; Sawyer, B. (1991). *När Sverige blev Sverige* (When Sweden Became Sweden). Alingsås: Viktoria Bokförlag.

Scheel, R. (2015). *Skandinavien und Byzanz*. 2 Bde. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht.

Scheel, R. (2016). "Concepts of Cultural Transfer between Byzantium and the North". Androshchuk et al. 2016, 53-87.

Segelberg, E. (1972). "God Help His Soul". Bergman, J. et al. (eds), *Ex orbe religionum*, vol. 1. Leiden: Brill. 161-76. Numen Book Series 21.

Seibt, W. (2004). "Metropoliten und Herrscher der Alanen auf byzantinischen Siegeln des 10.-12. Jahrhunderts". Stepanova, E.V. (ed.), *Сфрагистика и история культуры* (Sphragistics and the History of Culture). St. Petersburg: Gosudarstvennyi Ermitazh, 50-9.

Shepard, J. (1984-85). "Yngvarr's Expedition to the East and a Russian Inscribed Stone Cross". *Saga-Book of the Viking Society*, 21, 222-92.

Shepard, J. (1986). "A Cone-Seal from Shestovitsy". *Byzantion*, 56, 252-74.

Shepard, J. (2016). "Small Worlds". Androshchuck et al. 2016, 3-35.

Shepard, J. (2018). "Memoirs as Manifesto". Toth, I.; Shawcross, T. (eds), *Reading in the Byzantine Empire and Beyond*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 185-214.

Shepard, J. (2021a). "Networks". Lambourn, E. (ed.), *A Cultural History of the Sea*, vol. 2. London: Bloomsbury, 71-92.

Shepard, J. (2021b). "Looking Along the East-Way from Gotland". Guimon, T. et al. (eds), *Dísablót*. Moscow: Kvadriga, 52-61.

Siemens, J.R. (2007). "Christ's Restoration of Humankind in the *Laterculus Malalianus*, 14". *The Heythrop Journal*, 48(1), 18-28. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468–2265.2007.00303.x.

Stafford, P. (1997). *Queen Emma and Queen Edith*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Stender-Petersen, A. (1934). *Die Varägersage als Quelle der Altrussischen Chronik*. Aarhus: Universitetsforlaget.

Stephenson, R. (2015). *The Politics of Language*. Toronto: Toronto University Press.

Stevenson, J. (1995). *The "Laterculus Malalianus" and the School of Archbishop Theodore*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Sullivan, D.F. (ed. and transl.) (2000). *Siegecraft. Two Tenth-Century Instructional Manuals by "Heron of Byzantium"*. Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection.

Sullivan, D.F. (2003). "A Byzantine Instructional Manual on Siege Defence". Nesbitt, J. (ed.), *Byzantine Authors*. Leiden: Brill, 139-266.

Syrett, M. (2002). *The Vikings in England*. Cambridge: University of Cambridge, Department of Anglo-Saxon, Norse, and Celtic.

Thurn, H. (Hrsg.) (1973). *Ioannis Scylitzae: Synopsis historiarum*. Berlin: de Gruyter. Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae 5.

Townend, M. (ed. and transl.) (2012). "Þórarinn loftunga: *Hǫfuðlausn* 1". Whaley 2012, 850. https://skaldic.org/skaldic/m.php?p=verse&i=4520&x=0&v=t.

Trillmich, W. (Hrsg. und Übers.) (1961). *Magister Adam Bremensis: Gesta Hammaburgensis ecclesiae pontificum*. Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft. Quellen des 9. und 11. Jahrhunderts zur Geschichte der Hamburgischen Kirche und des Reiches, 137-499.

Turville-Petre, G. (1968). *Haraldr the Hard-Ruler and His Poets*. London: H.K. Lewis.

Tyler, E.M. (2017). *England in Europe*. Toronto: Toronto University Press.

Whaley, D. (ed. and transl.) (2009a). "Þjóðólfr Arnórsson: *Sexstefja*". Gade 2009, 108-47. https://skaldic.org/m.php?p=text&i=1444.

Whaley, D. (ed. and transl.) (2009b). "Arnórr jarlaskáld Þórðarson, *Haraldsdrápa*". Gade 2009, 260-80. https://skaldic.org/m.php?p=text&i=1099.

Whaley, E. (ed.) (2012). *Poetry from the Kings' Sagas*. Vol. 1, *From Mythical Times to c. 1035*. Turnhout: Brepols. https://skaldic.org/skaldic/m.php?p=vol&i=1.

Wrathmell, S. (2020). "Sharing Out the Land of the Northumbrians. Exploring Scandinavian Settlement in Eastern Yorkshire Through -bý Place-Names and Township Boundaries (Part One)". *Medieval Settlement Research*, 35, 16-26. https://doi.org/10.5284/1083497.

Wyon, A.B. (1887). *The Great Seals of England*. London: Elliot Stock.

Zacharopoulos, T.D. (2021). *Orð Víkinganna. The Level and Scale of Literacy in the Viking World. The Cases of Birka and Sigtuna* [MA thesis]. Uppsala: Uppsala Universitet.

Zalizniak, A.A. (2003). "Проблемы изучения Новгородского кодекса XI века" (Problems of Studying the Eleventh-Century Novgorodian Codex). Moldovan, A.M. (ed.), *Славянское языкознание: XIII Международный съезд славистов: Любляна, 2003 г.* (Slavic Linguistics. XIII International Congress of Slavists, Ljubljana 2003). Moscow: Indrik, 190-212.

Section 4
Continuity and Break:
From Ancient to Medieval Worlds

Understanding Urban Transformation in Amorium from Late Antiquity to the Middle Ages

Zeliha Demirel-Gökalp
Anadolu University

Nikos Tsivikis
Institute for Mediterranean Studies, Foundation for Research and Technology Hellas, Rethymno

Abstract   The excavation of Amorium already from the late 1980s and until today has been pioneering a hands-on approach to the study of urban evolution by exploring a major early medieval and middle Byzantine provincial capital that after the 7th century and until the 11th played a paramount role in the forefront of Byzantine history. Especially the 'prehistory' of the excavation of Amorium is shown to have been an early episode in the famous Kazhdan-Ostrogorsky debate on the survival of Byzantine cities into the Middle Ages. At the same time, the paper presents how this tradition endures in the new phase of the Amorium Project by continuing on the basic principles set and expanding on new questions as the articulation of built civic space and the later medieval transition from Byzantine to Seljuk and Ottoman.

Keywords   Byzantine archaeology. Urban archaeology. Survival of cities. Transitional period. Amorium. Asia Minor. Anatolia.

Summary   1 Amorium and the Historiography of Byzantine Urban Studies. – 2 The New Directions of Amorium Excavation. – 3 Church B in the Upper City. – 4 The Inner Fortress in the Upper City. – 5 The Renewed Excavation at the 'Large Building'. – 6 Concluding Remarks.

1 Amorium and the Historiography of Byzantine Urban Studies

Talking about Amorium is always a challenging subject, even for the people who have been working for many years at the site, documenting its rich archaeology and studying its tumultuous Byzantine history. This paper on Amorium was part of the original programme of the 24th International Congress of Byzantine Studies that was scheduled to be held in Istanbul in the summer of 2021. It was included among the papers about other Byzantine sites and regions of Asia Minor intended to represent some of the breakthroughs in Anatolian medieval archaeology.

It is certainly a different situation now that the discussion about the Byzantine urban archaeology of Amorium is presented in the Congress at Venice and Padua, far distant from Asia Minor with its rich Byzantine past that echoed for centuries even after the termination of an actual Byzantine presence. At the same time, it is evidence of the present-day vigour in the field of Byzantine archaeology, contributing to the discussion about cities and urban settlements. To this discussion, fieldwork at Amorium has been providing us with an overarching framework of understanding and a methodology of practice that can actually be helpful to bridge the distant areas of the vast empire (Tsivikis, forthcoming). The last-minute complications and the change of venue for the 24th ICBS meant also the unfortunate distancing from Istanbul and modern-day Turkey, an area where archaeological practice has been extremely productive during the past decades, especially with regard to the exploration of the Byzantine remains of Anatolia, one of the main heartlands of Byzantium.

Indeed, the archaeological work conducted at Amorium is intertwined with the urban evolution of Byzantine settlements in the Middle Ages. In some ways the evolution of the excavation project itself echoes views on Byzantine urban archaeology and a methodological transition of archaeological interest from Late Antique to Medieval remains. Thus, we will start by tracing some of the main historical points in the evolution of the excavation itself.

Although knowledge of the location of Amorium goes back to the first half of the eighteenth century, the first point of interest can be traced in the prehistory of the excavation of Amorium (Lightfoot 2012, 469-71). The influential director of the Istanbul Archaeological Museum, Nezih Fıratlı, was the first archaeologist actually to open a trench at the site of Amorium; that was in 1959, although his main interest was in the possible discovery of Hittite and Phrygian antiquities (Lightfoot 2012, 470). A few years later in 1962 the visit of Cyril Mango, then professor at Oxford University, marked the beginning of a radically different understanding of the visible ruins and the still buried remains of Amorium (Lightfoot 2012, 470).

The result of this visit was a short unpublished typewritten unofficial report by Cyril Mango bearing the date 13 August 1962, and the title *Report on Amorium*. The concluding remarks of this report hold great importance for the history of the Amorium excavations. In this we read:

> I believe that Amorium would be much more interesting to excavate than St. Polyeuctes [sic], and cheaper too. The point is that here we have an entire Byzantine town (boundaries still visible), a town that did not lose its importance in the 7th century as most other towns did, but actually gained in importance during the 'dark period'. This will give a solution to the Kazhdan-Ostrogorsky controversy of what happened to the Byzantine town in the 7th century. In short, Amorium is the most exciting Byzantine site I have ever seen so far, and it is situated in the midst of a highly exciting region bristling with other Byzantine remains. (Mango, C. *Report on Amorium*. 13 August 1962. Amorium Excavations Archive)

Indeed, Mango seems to have been a proponent of the prospect of an excavation project of Amorium as a more promising project than the later famous St. Polyeuctos/Saraçhane excavation in Istanbul. This is a quite interesting observation since he was one of the main persons responsible for the identification of the great Constantinopolitan monument (Mango, Ševčenko 1961). In Mango's short note the main argument – besides the constant for all field projects' budgetary concern – was that Amorium was a unique site to excavate as it remained an urban settlement from the seventh century on, and even more during the Transitional period it became a major urban centre of the diminished Byzantine state. This, in his opinion, would offer a solution to the famous post-war debate about the survival of Byzantine cities during the 'Dark Ages', phrased originally in a debate between Alexander Kazhdan (1954) and Georg Ostrogorsky (1959). In this way, we see that the question about the transformation – as is the current terminology of Byzantine urban studies – of Byzantine cities was engrained in the ancestral DNA of the archaeological exploration of the city of Amorium.

Cyril Mango's report, however, did not manage to spur an archaeological project at Amorium and the excavation of the church of St. Polyeuktos in Istanbul by Martin Harrison became the focus of a very important Byzantine archaeology initiative for some years to come (Harrison 1986; 1989b). We had to wait until the late 1980s after the conclusion of the St. Polyeuktos excavation, study of the material and major publications and after Martin Harrison's move to become Professor of Roman Archaeology at Oxford in 1985 for the Anatolian city of Amorium to attract once more archaeological interest. Cyril Mango's role was again paramount and it seemed that this time he could

offer the needed push to Harrison and the institutions involved for the excavation that, according to his own words, "intended to throw light on urban life in the […] Byzantine Dark Age" and thus offer answers to the question of the survival of Byzantine cities (Schachner, Parpulov 2011, 33).

Unfortunately, the project initiated by Martin Harrison in 1987 with a preliminary survey season was short-lived, as he himself passed away in 1992 after five excavation seasons at Amorium (Harrison, Christie 1993; Lightfoot 2012, 471). The brief period of research and the early problems of understanding the complex stratigraphy did not lead to spectacular results, as was expected, and apart from annual reports little was published that discussed and detailed the urban character of Late Roman, Early Byzantine, Byzantine Early Medieval and Middle Byzantine Amorium.

The next period of Amorium excavations started in 1993 under the direction of Christopher Lightfoot. The next fifteen years of work offered for the first time the much-sought information on the evolution and survival of the city through systematic and stratigraphical excavation across the settlement and regular publications, highlighted in the five volumes in a series entitled *Amorium Reports*.

In addition to the publication of crucial archaeological data attesting on the material culture coming from the continuous life of the city through the difficult period of the seventh until the eleventh centuries, several overview synthetic studies have appeared, reformulating the idea of the survival of Byzantine cities and adaptation to a new urban development model (Lightfoot 1998b; 2012; 2017; Ivison 2007). Soon, in the relative wider discussion of Byzantine urbanism, Amorium became one of the main examples offering substantial material evidence that could shed light on aspects little known during the Byzantine Early Medieval period (Brubaker, Haldon 2010, 531-63; Curta 2016; Tsivikis 2020, 329-31; Zavagno 2021, 43-68).

In general, it would not be wrong to say that the aims of the project team between 1993 and 2009 focused on finding changes in the city's urban fabric and understanding and dating the physical evidence of the continuous Byzantine urban habitation. A well-defined stratigraphy of the evolution of the city was developed based on archaeological finds from Early Byzantine (fourth-sixth century), to Byzantine Early Medieval (seventh to mid-ninth century) and finally to Middle Byzantine (mid-ninth to late eleventh century). It was also possible to connect major historical events that had a clear and definite consequence on the fortunes of the city of Amorium with the archaeological record. Firstly, the collapse of the Eastern provinces in the seventh century and the establishment of a military and civic administration centre at Amorium with the creation of the *thema of Anatolikoi* (Haldon 2016, 266-71) also brought about the reorganisation of Amorium as a provincial or thematic urban centre (Lightfoot

1998a; Ivison 2007). Secondly, the discovery of a consistent destruction layer of burnt buildings and violently-killed individuals across the lower city of Amorium and its correlation with the events of the siege and sack of the city by the Arab armies of the Abbasid Caliph al-Mu'taṣim in the late summer of 838 offered to the archaeologists a wealth of data on the city between the seventh and ninth centuries (Ivison 2012; Lightfoot 2017). Lastly, the collapse of most of Byzantine Anatolia soon after the battle of Manzikert in 1071 meant also for Amorium the end of Byzantine occupation and of the city as a Byzantine settlement (Lightfoot 2017). An important question was also the size of the city in the different Byzantine periods and whether there was a reduction of the inhabited area and the size of the town. Contrary to what was still often discussed at the time, it was shown that Amorium in the seventh to ninth centuries occupied all the walled area of the city to the limits of the Early Byzantine settlement (Lightfoot 2017).

This reality was acknowledged just a few years ago at the 23rd International Byzantine Studies Conference in Belgrade at the plenary session entitled *The Byzantine City and the Archaeology of the Third Millennium* where the importance of the results of the Amorium excavations to the relevant discussion was highlighted (Crow 2016, 65; Zanini 2016, 130).

2 The New Directions of Amorium Excavation

This brings us eventually to today. What has happened in the past decade in the archaeology of Amorium and in what way can our views on the transformation and survival of Byzantine cities be supplemented by new finds and additional data?

The first significant change is that Amorium Project has moved to a new era as it has become a Turkish-led project. In 2013, a transitional year, the Amorium excavations were carried out under the direction of the local Afyonkarahisar Museum authorities with the scientific advisory of Prof. Dr. Zeliha Demirel-Gökalp from Anadolu University, with the approval of the T.C. Ministry of Culture and Tourism. Since 2014, the excavations have been carried out under the direction of Prof. Dr. Zeliha Demirel-Gökalp with the generous support of the Turkish Ministry of Culture and Tourism, and Anadolu University and the Turkish Historical Society. The new project has become a hub for the training of a younger generation of Turkish archaeologists in the complex Byzantine archaeology of Anatolia, while remaining at the same time a hub for wider collaboration with researchers and institutions from both inside and outside Turkey. This has been an important move, exhibiting also the commitment of Turkish archaeology to the critical questions of transition
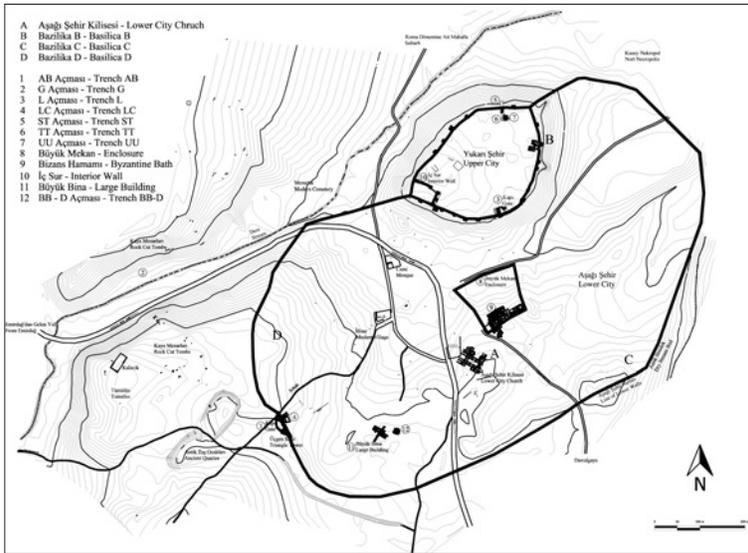
between Antiquity and the Middle Ages, and expanding also to encompass the questions of the next transitional period, that from Byzantine to Seljuk and Ottoman.

The main goal of the new team working at Amorium since 2013, continuing in many ways where work was left at, has been to examine the settlement in the city between the Roman, Byzantine, Seljuk, and Ottoman periods, and to identify new excavation locations that will provide answers to the question of the transformation, change, and development of the city through all these periods. For this reason, archaeological excavations have been carried out in three areas in the city since 2013. The newly-opened archaeological trenches are located in different areas across the city of Amorium. Two of them are in the fortified Upper City, the first in its northeast quadrant at the site of Church B, the other at its southwest quadrant at the location of a secondary Inner Fortification Wall. The third trench is in the southwest area of the Lower City at the site of the so-called Large Building [fig. 1].

3   Church B in the Upper City

Church B, located in the northeast of the Upper City, is one of the four large churches that have been identified inside the walled city of Amorium. Excavation at Church B started in 2013, but its location had been identified a long time before during the survey in 1987. According to the preliminary results, the church was the largest church in the city being a basilica with three aisles extending in an east-west direction and culminating with a large seven-sided apse to the east [fig. 2]. The first phase of the building should be dated to the fifth or sixth century. Excavations carried out in the building between 2013 and 2019 have shown that Church B lost its function during or just before the Middle Byzantine Period, and was divided into spaces of different sizes and for various uses, although occasional finds point

also to some continuing religious use in a limited area.[1] Signs of fire, destruction, and even deliberate destruction can be observed in the archaeological record, although there is still no certain explanation for the reasons of this change. The coins found in the excavations of the building do not provide evidence for the Early Byzantine Period of the church, as out of the 20 finds so far recorded only five date to the earlier period but all of them are surface finds. However, other rich finds from Church B trenches found at approximately the same elevations (ceramics, architectural elements, and metal fragments) point to the Early Byzantine Period and offer an idea of the initial church. Terracotta objects possibly connected with the liturgy such as a terracotta holy bread seal, one of the first found in Amorium (Demirel-Gökalp, forthcoming), and an inscribed sherd with a graffito, bearing the text of the Lord's Prayer, rare in Asia Minor (Tsivikis 2022), might point to this early activity in the church.

Middle Byzantine activity in Church B is better attested in the archaeological record with at least 15 coins found in various areas at similar occupation layers that can be dated to the period between Theophilos (829-842) and Romanos IV (1068-1071). Parts of the church lost their original function in the Middle Byzantine Period and were used as storage areas. This is evident from a *pithos* found *in situ*, traces of three more removed from their original location, and plentiful sherds of storage and cooking pots dating to the Middle Byzantine Period found inside the spaces created inside the body of the basilica. The partition of space initiated in the Middle Byzantine period, continued also in a later period, as the same space was probably used as a residence between the twelfth and fourteenth centuries during the Anatolian Beyliks and Early Ottoman periods, and even a ceramic workshop may have functioned inside it at this time, as is shown by ceramic kiln materials unearthed there.

4 The Inner Fortress in the Upper City

Close to Church B lies another area that is currently being studied in the context of the evolution of the settlement in the city of Amorium and especially the area inside the Upper City. This is the area of the Inner Upper City Wall, that formed a smaller well-fortified stronghold inside the Upper City [fig. 3]. Amorium consisted of two fortified urban cores, the Lower City and the Upper City. The Inner Wall area is located at the point where the Lower and Upper City walls meet

---

1 Demirel-Gökalp 2015, 653; Demirel-Gökalp et al. 2017, 453; Demirel-Gökalp, Erel, Yılmazyaşar 2018, 561; Demirel-Gökalp et al. 2019, 715; Demirel-Gökalp et al. 2020, 569; Tsivikis 2021.

Figure 3   Aerial photograph of the Upper City Citadel trench of Amorium (© Amorium Project)

in the south-west corner of the Upper City. The Inner Wall addition formed a horizontal L shape and abutted the preexisting wall segments and created a roughly rectangular new fortified space with walls as strong as the main city walls. This was not only a space separated from the rest of the Upper City area, but was also very important in terms of being the third and final line of defence for the city.

Although it is not possible to give a precise date due to the lack of epigraphic evidence recording the construction of the city walls, limited historical information and the results of the archaeological excavations carried out in the city indicate that the Lower City walls, built of large and well-shaped limestone blocks, were a creation of the late fifth or early sixth century (Ivison 2007, 30; Tsivikis 2021, 199-202). The excavation also recorded building initiatives that can be dated in the seventh-eighth centuries and then in the late ninth century representing the clear creation of the Upper City walled space (Harrison, Christie 1993; Tsivikis 2021, 199-202). Unlike the Lower City walls, it was determined that a large number of spolia materials from the Roman Period were used in the Upper City walls (Harrison 1990, 215; Harrison 1991b, 219). The Inner Wall addition seems to be a later addition to the preexisting fortifications, thus belonging to a third or fourth building initiative in the Amorium fortifications.

Although archaeological research on the Upper City mound began simultaneously with the Lower City, our understanding of the architectural features of the wall system surrounding the mound and the architectural features of the Inner Wall in the southwest quadrant, as well as their formation and change processes, are quite limited.

This limitation is also seen in the historical chronology of the Upper City, its relationship with the Lower City, and the diversity of buildings. In this context, we will attempt here to present new perspectives on the city walls of Amorium based on the archaeological work carried out in the Inner Wall area between 2014 and 2021 and the data reflected in the textual sources and other publications about the city wall system.

No substantial traces of Hellenistic or Roman fortifications have been found in Amorium, with the exception of some small evidence (Gill et al. 2002, 12). The earliest Greek reference to the defences of the city is by the eleventh-century Byzantine historian Kedrenos (Georgius Cedrenus, *Compendium historiarum* [ed. Bekker 1838, 615]).[2] The historian reports that Emperor Zeno was responsible for the erection of the walls of Amorium, which points to the years AD 474-91.[3] The hagiographical text of the Life of St. Theodore of Sykeon (BHG, *Bibliotheca hagiographica graeca* 1748) recounts that the people of Amorium met the saint outside the city walls during his late sixth-century visit, informing us about the existence of the Lower City walls at the end of the sixth century and that some residents had houses outside the city walls (Ivison 2007, 29; Lightfoot 1998b, 60; Tsivikis 2021, 195). Although limited, important data on the fortification system of Amorium also appears in the works of Arab geographers. One of these geographers, Hurdazbih, states that al-Muʿtaşim "burned down" Ankara and conquered Amorium (Ammûriye), and that Amorium was in the Natalus Region, which means 'east' and is the largest of the "Roman regions" and had 44 bastions (İbn Hurdazbih 2008, 88, 92). Al-Tabari is extremely important among the sources

---

2   However, there is also an Islamic source stating that the city was rebuilt by Emperor Anastasius (491-518), Belke, Restle 1984, 123.

3   Although the excavations related to the Lower City walls were carried out in a limited area, the data obtained were the source of some important inferences. During the studies carried out in trenches AB and LC, the presence of the gate of the city wall that delimits the south side of the city and the Triangular Tower was determined (Harrison 1989a; Harrison 1991b, 220-3.; Lightfoot 1998b, 60; Ivison 2007, 36). The main building material encountered in the entrance gate, fortification walls and triangular tower shows Late Antique features, and dendrochronological analysis of a charred wooden beam found during the excavation indicates the year 487 (Kuniholm 1995). These findings seemingly confirm the dating to Zeno's reign for the Lower City walls, as reported by Kedrenos (Lightfoot 1998b, 61). Except for the limited area, archaeological studies on the Lower City fortification system have not yet been carried out. With reference to the survey and aerial photographs, it is understood that the Lower City walls are approximately three kilometres long, and the fortification walls built parallel to the elevations surrounding the city and the spaces between them are included in the defence system as a moat. Archaeological excavations were carried out in the Lower City, the Lower City Church (Church A), whose first construction phase is dated to the fifth-sixth centuries, and the bath structure, whose first construction phase is also dated to the sixth century, are evaluated as construction activities contemporary with Lower City wall (Ivison 2007, 36-7).

on the city's defence system and the structure of the walls, as it contains details of the 838 siege, in which the most severe destruction took place in the history of Amorium (Bosworth 1991, 115-19). One of the remarkable points in al-Tabari's narrative is the information that Aetios[4] was in his "tower" with the soldiers and people around him. It is tempting to think that the Upper City walls could be identified with the "tower" of Aetios in the account of al-Tabari. According to this narration, after the Arab army entered the city, a group of Byzantine soldiers went to defend the church, but the church and those inside it were burned alive, and the rest of the population was slaughtered. Aetios was in his "tower" with his soldiers at this time, according to al-Tabari (Bosworth 1991, 115-19). Although it is necessary to approach such information with reservation, it can be a source of inference that the major fighting events of the siege and the sack of the town took place mostly in the Lower City, as in the scene described at the church.

It is significant that the archaeological data found in the excavation of various trenches in the Lower City confirms destruction across the city during this war event (Ivison 2012; Lightfoot 2017, 335-6; Tsivikis forthcoming) and that no such layer of fire and destruction was found so far in the excavations in the Upper City (Lightfoot 2017, 335; Yılmazyaşar, Demirel-Gökalp 2021). If the presumed location of Aetios "tower" was somewhere in the Upper city, it would be interesting to wonder whether some special fortification existed inside the ninth-century acropolis resembling the newly excavated Inner Fortress or some predecessor. Indeed, some parts of this fortification like the oval tower excavated in 2021 in the southwest corner, at the junction between the Lower City walls and the Upper City fortification, it was determined that the building stones were exposed to intense fire, although no destruction layer was detected. In addition, caltrops and arrowheads found there indicate a struggle in front of the tower.

The first assessment of the Upper City fortifications was offered early on by Martin Harrison and his team, as a result of the first year of survey at Amorium. According to this study, 30 of the estimated total 44 towers were recorded, the existence of a moat has been hypothesised in front of the Lower City wall especially the east part and at least five city gates was hypothesised: two leading into the Lower City and three into the Upper City (Harrison 1988, 177, 179; Harrison 1989a, 193; Gill et al. 2002, 11-13). If we focus on the line of fortifications at the west of the acropolis where the Lower City walls meet with the Inner Wall, today a total of 20 towers have been localised.

---

[4] Information about Aetios is limited to the historians' accounts of the siege and capture of Amorium. He is mentioned as an aristocrat, general of the Anatolia theme, and one of the officers caught defending the city of Amorium (Kolia-Dermitzaki 2002, 141).

Although an early and limited perspective has emerged regarding the Lower City and Upper City walls based on textual and field data, more extensive excavation is needed on the city wall system for a more complete picture. On the southern slope of the mound of the acropolis, the remains of a civil complex possibly belonging to the early Roman period, built with large ashlar blocks (Ivison 2007, 41), reveal that the area was used heavily during the earlier periods and before the construction of the fortification that isolated the acropolis mound from the rest of the city. The construction of Church B, the Upper City Basilica (Demirel Gökalp et al. 2019, 715; Tsivikis 2021, 208-10), which has been proposed to have been built in the fifth or sixth centuries is proof that the Upper City and the Lower City experienced a process of urban change that was approximately simultaneous. Regarding the fortifications, however, the Roman funerary steles and other spolia (Harrison 1991a, 253; Lightfoot 1998b, 63; Ivison 2007, 41-3), which were much used in segments of the Upper City fortifications unlike the uniform building style of the Lower City fortifications, reveal that this process had at least two distinct episodes.

Until today, the construction process of a city wall surrounding the Upper City has been evaluated mainly in the context of the transformations in the military and defence system of the Byzantine Empire after the seventh century and their reflection on Amorium as one of the main strategic hubs of the thematic system in Anatolia. It has been proposed repeatedly that the formation of the Upper City walls between the seventh and ninth centuries, much like the examples of Ankara, Sardis, and Ayasoluk hill at Ephesus, especially in terms of the widespread use of spolia (Lightfoot 1998b, 64-5; Ivison 2007, 41-3). This part of the wall was heavily destroyed after the 838 events and a new Middle Byzantine fortification was rebuilt for the acropolis mound in the late ninth or early tenth centuries after the place laid in ruins for some decades (Lightfoot 1998b, 66; Ivison 2000, 13-18, 20). In this later period the Upper City became the focus of the settlement of Amorium where the most intensive habitation occurred, while the Lower City with its non-functional fortifications exhibited rather a picture of scattered clusters of occupation. The newly-constructed or repaired fortifications of the Upper City with the additional Inner Citadel offered the settlement of Amorium and the thematic army of the Anatolikon that was still stationed there the needed protection against new enemies like the Emir of Tarsus who raided the city in 931 (Lightfoot, Lightfoot 2007, 59) or the growing insecurity of the late eleventh century.

The question of change and transformation in the city of Amorium, one of the most strategic centres of the Anatolian defence system throughout Byzantine Early Medieval and Middle Byzantine times, remains among the main objectives of the current Amorium excavation project. Additionally, nuancing the proposed chronologies and

establishing when exactly these interventions took place would eradicate any uncertainties as to when the Upper City walls were built and how they evolved. Unfortunately, we lack for the Upper City sources like Kedrenos, who remains our main historical reference about the Lower City walls.

Crucial archaeological data might be provided by the recent excavation of the Inner Wall and the Inner Fortress that the wall created. This Inner Fortress structure, which is a part of the later defence system of Amorium, is here discussed regarding its dating and intended use. The observation that the Inner Wall abuts on the Upper City walls both at its west and south ends offers a clear indication that it is a later addition. It was a building initiative that intended to the actual creation of the Inner Fortress, although the similarity of materials and technique characteristics between the two wall constructions suggests that there was not a long historical interval between the two phases.

The creation of inner keeps or limited space interior citadels in preexisting fortifications is a typical Middle Byzantine characteristic found in many Byzantine cities in the South Balkans and Asia Minor (Foss, Winfield 1986; Kontogiannis 2022) and continues even later as is evident by the twelfth-century Heptapyrgion in Thessaloniki (Koniordos 1997) or the early Ottoman Yedikule in Istanbul (Ahunbay 1997). However, the continuation of archaeological work in the citadel of Amorium is needed in order to determine the dating and use of this building complex at Amorium.

As yet, too, the archaeological explorations carried out in the city to date could not establish with any substantial architectural remains a connection between the last phase of the Byzantine city, which we know as dating to the end of the eleventh century, and the early Turkish period, that is, the Seljuk settlement (Lightfoot 2000; Tsivikis 2011). Inside the Inner Fortress of Amorium considerable architectural remains and a wealth of small finds related to the Turkish-Islamic settlement in the city have been uncovered. A number of finds prove that an active settlement of the Seljuk, Beylik Principalities, and Ottoman Periods was housed inside the Citadel. A settlement starting from the second half of the thirteenth century and continuing until the eighteenth century can be clearly traced in this archaeological data. It is possible that the settlement in question starting from the Seljuk Period was influenced later by the military and political relations of Germiyan, Karaman, and Ottoman Principalities, especially at the beginning of the fourteenth century when the settlement lay on the border of the different principalities. During and after the period of Murad II, Amorium remained only as a small village, perhaps called Hisarcık ('little fortress'), under the Ottoman Empire (Sümer 2001, 458; Yılmazyaşar, Demirel-Gökalp 2021, 523, 531). It is from the reign of Murad II also that the earliest Ottoman

coin found in Amorium excavations dates (Katsari, Lightfoot, Özme 2012, 176, no. 723).

5 The Renewed Excavation at the 'Large Building'

The third area of archaeological activity in Amorium since 2013 lies inside the southwest part of the fortifications of the Lower City at the site of the Large Building trench. The Large Building trench was one of the first areas excavated by Martin Harrison when the Amorium Project started but work there only took place in 1988 and 1989 (Harrison 1989a; 1990b). In 2009, and 21 years after the original excavation at the Large Building, a new initiative was undertaken (Lightfoot, Tsivikis, Foley 2011, 49-50) and from 2013 onward this became the excavation of an entirely new sector of the city [fig. 4] (Demirel-Gökalp et al. 2016, 202; 2017, 454-5; 2019, 716-17; 2020, 570-1).

A Rectangular Building was unearthed at the site that must have been part of a major and imposing structure in Late Roman and Early Byzantine Amorium [fig. 5]. Its heavily-robbed condition today and its partial excavation do not allow us to hypothesise much more about its first and original phase of use. It is almost certain that the uncovered building is only the foundation or substructure of whatever rose much higher on this western promontory of the city of Amorium. Albeit in ruined form, the Rectangular Building stood to a considerable height until the medieval period and around it a neighbourhood of the town developed in two distinct phases.

The second phase was characterised by plentiful Byzantine Early Medieval material, from the seventh to the middle of the ninth century, when a large domestic unit was established to the east of the Early Byzantine massive building, within which a rich layer of destruction was found with materials that can be dated to the fall and destruction of the city in 838. This domestic area consists of a ground floor or semi-subterranean rooms that served as depots for foodstuff, complete with more than 12 sealed *pithoi*. The layer of destruction yielded a number of small finds, including metal objects associated with recording and weighing, a large quantity of pottery with some intact vessels, and also dozens of offensive weapons and at least one human individual who had died a violent death and was left inside the storage rooms.

The third phase belongs to the Middle Byzantine evolution of the city of Amorium from the late ninth until the late eleventh century. During this period, the Byzantine Early Medieval unit with the *pithoi* was buried under the destruction layer and subsequent levelling and terracing. Parts of the ruined Rectangular Building would still have been visible to a considerable height and in its immediate surrounding area mainly industrial activities were taking place, much of it

Figure 4 Aerial photograph of the Large Building complex, old (LB) and new (LB/RB) trenches, in the southwestern Lower City of Amorium (© Amorium Project)

Figure 5 Aerial photograph of the Large Building new south trench (LB/RB) in the Lower City of Amorium (© Amorium Project)

probably connected with recycling material from the entire Large Building complex.

The evolution of this neighbourhood in the western part of the Lower City of Amorium during the three distinct phases (Early Byzantine, Byzantine Early Medieval, and Middle Byzantine) follows an interesting and reoccurring pattern. The Early Byzantine period sees a major investment in public construction in the area, which is perhaps connected also with its strategic position, as this location raises to the same elevation as the mound of the Upper City. The insecurity of the Byzantine Early Medieval phase with the frequent Arabic offensives against the city possibly made the area near the walls less desirable. In the same period the Upper City gets proper fortifications and developed into a fortified acropolis. The older Large Building complex was abandoned already, and a new substantial unit was built in this area during the eighth and ninth century, one connected with storing considerable amounts of agricultural surplus. In its last phase during the Middle Byzantine Period after the mid-ninth century, the area seems to be a marginal location within the destroyed city walls, where the main activity was connected with the recycling of older building material for the use of new constructions across the city, mostly fortifications and ecclesiastical buildings.

6　Concluding Remarks

In the continued archaeological activity at Byzantine Amorium from 2013 onward we can see breakthroughs and new evidence of the evolution of the city and its continuous transformation from the early days of the Eastern Roman Empire until the heydays of the Ottoman Empire.

The excavation of the Large Building in the western Lower City affirms the already proposed pattern of continuous use of urban space from the fourth to the eleventh centuries inside the fortifications. The Byzantine Early Medieval change that occurred in the seventh and eighth centuries is more one of different but still intensive use of space with houses, storage areas, and productive facilities occupying or substituting public buildings, but still following loosely the existing city grid. The Middle Byzantine change occurring in the later ninth and tenth centuries meant a radically-altered site with much looser organisation focusing on recycling and with scarce evidence for residential use.

On the other hand, inside the Upper City of Amorium a different story is being recorded. In the case of the Church B we see the complete and radical change of an Early Byzantine ecclesiastical building after the eighth or ninth century. This change occurred to such an extent that today although almost 40% of the area of the original

large basilica has been excavated it is still difficult to discern its initial architectural plan. From the Byzantine Early Medieval period in Church B a long period of constant reuse and adaptation of space begins, a process that continues well into the Turkish periods of the acropolis in a parallel horizontal stratigraphy that makes it very difficult to differentiate domestic or other units that had been inserted in the remains of the old basilica.

This later transition from Byzantine to Seljuk, Beylik, and Ottoman from the eleventh century onwards is better portrayed in the remains of the newly excavated Inner Fortress in the southwest of the Upper City. Here a distinctively medieval Byzantine fortification system becomes the focus of the settlement in the post-Byzantine era. A completely new arrangement inside the citadel created by the Turkish inhabitants of Amorium reveals the strongly military character of the settlement as an army outpost in the middle of the newly-conquered and deeply-disputed lands of western Central Anatolia.

Beyond the significance of the evidence, unearthed and published as part of the systematic excavation of Amorium, for our understanding of Byzantine cities, of equal importance is the continuation of work at the site for the future of Byzantine, Medieval, and Islamic archaeology in Turkey. The Amorium Project is solid evidence of the prominence that these periods have in the archaeology of Anatolia and the commitment by national and international scholars and institutions alike for the continuation of the exploration of the material remains of this complex and multi-level past.

Bibliography

Ahunbay, Z. (1997). "Yedikule, Istanbul, Turkey". Ćurčić, Hadjitryphonos 1997, 196-9.

Belke, K.; Restle, M. (1984). *Tabula Imperii Byzantini IV. Galatien und Lykaonien*. Wien: Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften.

Bekker, I. (ed.) (1838). *Georgius Cedrenus: Compendium historiarum*, Bd. 1. Bonn: Akademie der Wissenschaften. Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae 32.

Bosworth, C.E. (1991). *The History of al-Tabari*. Vol. 33, *Storm and Stress along the Northern Frontiers of the ʿAbbāsid Caliphate. The Caliphate of al-Muʿtaṣim A.D. 833-842/A.H. 218-227*. New York: State University of New York Press. SUNY Series in Near Eastern Studies.

Brubaker, L.; Haldon, J. (2010). *Byzantium in the Iconoclast Era c. 680-850. A History*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Crow, J. (2016). "Introduction (to 'The Byzantine City and the Archaeology of the Third Millennium' Plenary Session)". Marjanović-Dušanić 2016, 65-8.

Ćurčić, Sl.; Hadjitryphonos, E. (eds) (1997). *Secular Medieval. Architecture in the Balkan 1300-1500 and Its Preservation*. Thessaloniki: University Studio Press.

Curta, F. (2016). "Postcards from Maurilia or the Historiography of the Dark-Age Cities of Byzantium". *European Journal of Post-Classical Archaeologies*, 6, 89-110.

Demirel-Gökalp, Z. (2015). "2013 Yılı Amorium Kazısı" (The 2013 season of Amorium Excavation). *Kazı Sonuçları Toplantısı*, 36(2), 651-68.

Demirel-Gökalp, Z. (forthcoming). "Amorium Kazılarında Bulunan Kutsal Ekmek Mühürleri" (Holy-Bread Stamp Finds from the Excavation of Amorium). *Erol Altınsapan'a 60. Yaş Armağanı*. Eskişehir: Anadolu Üniversitesi.

Demirel-Gökalp, Z.; Erel, A.C.; Yılmazyaşar, H. (2018). "2016 yılı Amorium Kazısı" (The 2016 Season of Amorium Excavation). *Kazı Sonuçları Toplantısı*, 39(2), 557-70.

Demirel-Gökalp, Z. et al. (2016). "2014 Yılı Amorium Kazısı" (The 2014 Season of Amorium Excavation). *Kazı Sonuçları Toplantısı*, 37(3), 199-214.

Demirel-Gökalp, Z. et al. (2017). "2015 Yılı Amorium Kazısı" (The 2015 Season of Amorium Excavation). *Kazı Sonuçları Toplantısı*, 38(3), 451-60.

Demirel-Gökalp, Z. et al. (2019). "Amorium Kazıları 2017" (Amorium Excavation in 2017). *Kazı Sonuçları Toplantısı*, 40(3), 713-25.

Demirel-Gökalp, Z. et al. (2020). "2018 Yılı Amorium Kazıları"(The 2018 Season of Amorium Excavations). *Kazı Sonuçları Toplantısı*, 41(4), 567-77.

Foss, C.; Winfield, D. (1986). *Byzantine Fortifications. An Introduction*. Pretoria: University of South Africa.

Gill, M.A.V. et al. (2002). *Amorium Reports*. Finds 1, *The Glass (1987-1997)*. Oxford: British Archaeological Reports. International Series 1070.

Haldon, J. (2016). *The Empire that Would not Die. The Paradox of Eastern Roman Survival, 640-740*. Cambridge (MA): Harvard University Press.

Harrison, R.M. (1986). *Excavations at Saraçhane in Istanbul*, vol. 1. Princeton (NJ): Princeton University Press.

Harrison, R.M. (1988). "Amorium 1987. A Preliminary Survey". *Anatolian Studies*, 38, 175-84.

Harrison, R.M. (1989a). "Amorium 1988. The First Preliminary Excavation". *Anatolian Studies*, 39, 167-74.

Harrison, R.M. (1989b). *A Temple for Byzantium. The Discovery and Excavation of Anicia Juliana's Palace-Church in Istanbul*. Austin: University of Texas Press.

Harrison, R.M. (1990). "Amorium Excavation 1989. The Second Preliminary Report". *Anatolian Studies*, 40, 205-18.

Harrison, R.M. (1991a). "Amorium 1989". *Kazı Sonuçları Toplantısı*, 12(2), 251-67.

Harrison, R.M. (1991b). "Amorium Excavation 1990. The Third Preliminary Report". *Anatolian Studies*, 41, 215-29.

Harrison, R.M.; Christie, N. (1993). "Excavation at Amorium. 1992 Interim Report". *Anatolian Studies*, 43, 147-62.

İbn Hurdazbih (2008). *Yollar ve Ülkeler Kitabı* (The Book of Roads and Countries). Transl. by M. Ağarı. Istanbul: Kitabevi Yayınları.

Ivison, E.A. (2000). "Urban Renewal and Imperial Revival in Byzantium (730-1025)". *Byzantinische Forschungen*, 26, 1-46.

Ivison, E.A. (2007). "Amorium in the Byzantine Dark Ages (Seventh to Ninth Centuries)". Henning, J. (ed.), *Post-Roman Towns, Trade and Settlement in Europe and Byzantium*. Vol. 2, *Byzantium, Pliska, and the Balkans*. Berlin; New York: Walter de Gruyter, 25-59.

Ivison, E.A. (2012). "Excavations at the Lower City Enclosure, 1996-2006". Lightfoot, Ivison 2012, 5-151.

Katsari, C.; Lightfoot, C.S.; Özme, A. (2012). *Amorium Reports 4. The Amorium Mint and Coin Finds*. Berlin: Academia Verlag.

Kazhdan, A. (1954). "Византийские города в VII-IX вв." (The Byzantine City, 7th-9th c.). *Sovetskaja Arkheologija*, 21, 164-88.

Kolia-Dermitzaki, A. (2002). "The Execution of the Forty-Two Martyrs of Amorion. Proposing an Interpretation". *Al-Masaq. Journal of the Medieval Mediterranean*, 14, 141-62. https://doi.org/10.1080/0950311022000010547.

Koniordos, V. (1997). "Heptapyrgion, Thessaloniki, Greece". Ćurčić, Hadjitryphonos 1997, 192-5.

Kontogiannis, N. (2022). *Byzantine Fortifications. Protecting the Roman Empire in the East*. Barnsley: Pen and Sword Military.

Kuniholm, P.I. (1995). "New Tree-Ring Dates for Byzantine Buildings". *21st Annual Byzantine Studies Conference. Abstracts of Papers* (New York University and the Metropolitan Museum of Art, 9-12 November 1995). New York: Byzantine Studies Association of North America, 35.

Lightfoot, C.S. (1998a). "The Public and Domestic Architecture of a Thematic Capital. The Archaeological Evidence from Amorion". Lampakis, S. (ed.), *Byzantine Asia Minor (6th-12th c.)*. Athens: National Hellenic Research Foundation, 303-20.

Lightfoot, C.S. (1998b). "The Survival of Cities in Byzantine Anatolia". *Byzantion*, 68(1), 56-71.

Lightfoot, C.S. (2000). "Amorium. The History and Archaeology of an Ancient City in the Turkish Period". Aktaş-Yasa, A. (ed.), *Uluslararası Dördüncü Türk Kültürü Kongresi Bildirileri* (Proceedings of the Fourth International Turkish Culture Congress), vol. 2 (Ankara, 4-7 November 1997). Ankara, 79-89. Atatürk Kültür Merkezi Yayını 229.

Lightfoot, C.S. (2012). "Amorium. Myths, Facts and Misconceptions". Lightfoot, Ivison 2012, 469-91.

Lightfoot, C.S. (2017). "Amorium". Niewöhner, P. (ed.), *The Archaeology of Byzantine Anatolia. From the End of Late Antiquity until the Coming of the Turks*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 333-41

Lightfoot, C.S.; Ivison, E.A. (eds) (2012). *Amorium Reports 3. The Lower City Enclosure. Find Reports and Technical Studies*. Istanbul: Ege Yayinlari.

Lightfoot, C.S.; Lightfoot, M. (2007). *Amorium. A Byzantine City in Anatolia*. Istanbul: Homer Kitabevi ve Yayıncılık.

Lightfoot, C.S.; Tsivikis, N.; Foley, J. (2011). "Amorium Kazıları 2009" (2009 Amorium Excavations). *Kazı Sonuçları Toplantısı*, 32(1), 47-68.

Mango, C.; Ševčenko, I. (1961). "Remains of the Church of St. Polyeuktos at Constantinople". *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, 15, 243-7.

Marjanović-Dušanić, S. (ed.) (2016). *Proceedings of the 23rd International Congress of Byzantine Studies, Belgrade, 22-27 August 2016. Plenary Papers*. Belgrade: The Serbian National Committee of AIEB.

Ostrogorsky, G. (1959). "Byzantine Cities in the Early Middle Ages". *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, 13, 45-66.

Schachner, I.A.; Parpulov, G.R. (eds) (2011). *From the Bosporos to Oxford. Unseen Photographs of Prof. Harrison's Byzantine Excavations in Istanbul = Exhibition catalogue* (Stelios Ioannou Centre for Classical and Byzantine Studies, University of Oxford, January 2021). Oxford.

Sümer, F. (2001). s.v. "Karamanoğulları". *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi* (Turkiye Diyanet Foundation Encyclopedia of Islam).

Tsivikis, N. (2011). "The Day Before at Amorium. On the Eve of the Seljuk Arrival. Excavating Middle Byzantine Destruction Layers from Basilica A". *23rd Byzantine Studies Conference. DePaul University. Abstracts of Papers* (DePaul University Chicago, 20-23 October 2011). Chicago: Byzantine Studies Association of North America, 59-60.

Tsivikis, N. (2020). "Moving Beyond the Invisible Cities of Byzantium". *European Journal of Post-Classical Archaeologies*, 10, 325-34.

Tsivikis, N. (2021). "Amorium and the Ever-Changing Urban Space". Kontogiannis, N.D.; Uyar, T.B. (eds), *Space and Communities in Byzantine Anatolia = Papers from the Fifth International Sevgi Gönül Byzantine Studies Symposium* (Istanbul, 24-26 June 2019). İstanbul: Koç University, 191-215.

Tsivikis, N. (2022). "A Lord's Prayer Inscription from Amorium and the Materiality of Early Byzantine Christian Prayer". *Anatolian Studies*, 72, 1-13.

Tsivikis, N. (ed.) (forthcoming). *Byzantine Medieval Cities. Amorium and the Middle Byzantine Provincial Capitals*. Berlin: De Gruyter.

Yılmazyaşar, H.; Demirel-Gökalp, Z. (2021). "Amorium'da Yukarı Şehir İç Sur Kazıları (2014-2018)" (Excavation work at the Inner Fortress of the Upper City of Amorium [2014-2018]). *Anadolu Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi*, 21(4), 521-54.

Zanini, E. (2016). "Coming to the End. Early Byzantine Cities After the Mid-6th Century". Marjanović-Dušanić 2016, 127-40.

Zavagno, L. (2021). *The Byzantine City from Heraclius to the Fourth Crusade, 610-1204. Urban Life after Antiquity*. Cham: Palgrave MacMillan.

Understanding Societal Transformation Through Ceramic Production and Use in Pisidia and Isauria

Mark Jackson
Newcastle University

Abstract   This paper seeks to contribute to debates about Byzantine societal change between the 7th and 9th centuries AD. It considers the production of Late Roman D Ware at dispersed sites in Pisidia in Asia Minor and the production of painted jars found with globular amphorae in a rural settlement at Kilise Tepe in Isauria. These artefacts help us to examine both continuity of late Roman ceramic traditions and the emergence of new families of vessels in the 7th century. The paper considers the active role of material culture in understanding ideas shared by people across wide areas, including political and traditional chronological boundaries.

Keywords   Byzantine. Ceramic. Production. Red slip. Water jar. Globular amphora. Head loading.

Summary   1 Introduction. – 2 Late Roman D Ware from Pisidia. – 2.1 Background to Case Study 1. The Discovery of Late Roman D Ware Production in Asia Minor. – 2.2 The Significance of Late Roman D Ware. – 2.3 Quantitative Analysis of Material from the Production Sites. – 2.4 LRDW Form 9 and 'Well Form' in the Eastern Mediterranean. – 3 Painted Ware and Globular Amphorae from Isauria. – 3.1 Background to Case Study 2. Excavations in Isauria. – 3.2 Excavations at Kilise Tepe. – 3.3 Water Jars at Kilise Tepe. – 3.4 Carrying Loads. The Globular Amphora. – 3.5 Transforming Bodies. – 3.6 A Shift to New Kinds of Economy Based on Different Actors. – 4 Conclusions.

1 Introduction

Changes in late Roman ceramics during the seventh century signal the transformation of long-held ideas and the emergence of new kinds of material culture, economy and settlement during the second half of the first millennium AD (Wickham 2005, 693-824; Haldon 2016, 289-90; Brubaker, Haldon 2011, 1; Decker 2016).

While archaeological surveys which use ceramics as a proxy for the identification of settlements have reported an apparent drop in the period from the seventh to ninth centuries AD, the interpretation of the significance of the changing ceramic record in the Byzantine period is complicated by methodologies that are grounded in traditional classical archaeological approaches and assumptions that have prioritised particular elements of material culture (Jackson 2020). Ceramic repertoires after the mid-seventh century have become the focus of research that has increasingly revealed evidence of networks of trade both at a local level and across wide areas in the Mediterranean and beyond (Hayes 1992; Vroom 2017; Vionis 2020). What is emerging from synthetic analyses of ceramic assemblages from the period between the seventh and ninth centuries is a series of families of types in classes with shared attributes that Vionis has recently argued represent a shared *koine* (Vionis 2020). Unique characteristics of complex material assemblages from each locale reveal the extent to which potters and communities engaged at a local level in material ideas shared more widely.

This paper will consider case studies for pottery production at a key period of transition during the seventh and later centuries from southern Anatolia. As I hope to show, the ceramics from both case studies contribute datasets that help us to develop new narratives for understanding economic exchange and people's lives in the seventh century and beyond.

The first case study represents an example of the continuity of the late Roman table-ware tradition at a series of relatively small, nucleated workshop sites discovered in the southern foothills of the Pisidian Taurus in Asia Minor but thought until 2007 to be produced in Cyprus. These workshops were part of a very extensive network of production sites in a region dominated by cities in Late Antiquity whose duration of the production, trade and consumption helps us to see the continuity of late Roman traditions into a period during which new forms of pottery emerge in the Eastern Mediterranean trade.

The second case study concerns ceramics produced a rural settlement in Isauria, Kilise Tepe, located in a wide agricultural basin about 45 kilometres north west of Silifke (Seleukeia) in the Göksu pass. The wares made at Kilise Tepe include closed vessels decorated with painted motifs that are apparently unique in the Göksu Valley. Their decoration is characteristic of vessels found across the Eastern

Mediterranean and their morphological characteristics recall other closed forms including globular amphorae found at the site and beyond. Production and use at Kilise Tepe ceases suddenly when the site is abandoned but the painted vessel tradition and amphora types found in the assemblage at Kilise Tepe continue to be made and used elsewhere into subsequent centuries.

Both case studies remind us of the importance of writing material narratives at a local level. The unique characteristics of these assemblages caution against a uniform narrative, but they also help us to see ways in which these vessels form part of shared ideas across time and space.

In the Roman period, Pisidia, Pamphylia and neighbouring Lycia were among the most urbanised regions of Asia Minor (Willett 2020). Detailed understanding of the structural archaeology of the later phases within the cities is often lacking from the period after the seventh century. While there is evidence for continued occupation in places, evidence also points to the construction of walls and fortifications that suggest shifts in the type of urban investment (Hellenkemper, Hild 2004). Selected sites serve as examples. In the Pisidian Taurus, at Sagalassos some of the few stratified contexts dating between the late Roman and middle Byzantine material provide insight into dramatic shifts in ceramics alongside changes in the urban character (Vionis, Poblome, Waelkens 2009a, 193-7; 2009b). In Lycia, a fortified kastro at Arif contrasts with the earlier city at nearby Arycanda and indicates a new kind of settlement in the seventh century (Harrison 2001). While at Limyra on the Lycian coast, Joanita Vroom has presented ceramics, textual and other archaeological evidence for continued occupation in the city beyond the seventh century (Vroom 2007).

2 Late Roman D Ware from Pisidia

2.1 Background to Case Study 1. The Discovery of Late Roman D Ware Production in Asia Minor

Late Roman D ware has long been discovered at consumer sites across the Eastern Mediterranean and beyond since it was first described by Waagé (1948) following excavations at Antioch. Between 2007 and 2011, the first evidence for its production was found at seven ceramic sites surveyed around the modern town of Gebiz in southern Turkey in the foothills of ancient Pisidia close to the Pamphylian Plain (Jackson et al. 2012, 92-3, figs. 1-2). The intensive survey of seven relatively small sites took place in the Küçük Aksu valley as part of the Pisidia Survey Project but it seems likely that the clay beds would have extended beyond the area studied and there-

fore their exploitation for ceramic production may have continued beyond the locality sampled.

Evidence for the production of all forms of this ware, was found within a small part of a tributary of the Aksu river which runs through the southern Taurus across the Pamphylian Plain to the Mediterranean near the ancient city of Perge. From there, these vessels would have followed trade networks connecting coastal cities and beyond, linking Asia Minor, Cyprus, Egypt and Eastern Mediterranean regions especially (Meyza 2007, maps 1-16).

The discovery of workshops making Late Roman D Ware (LRDW) in southern Turkey (Jackson et al. 2012) was particularly significant because for decades it had been thought to have been produced in Cyprus where no kiln sites have been found to date. In 1972, in *Late Roman Pottery*, John Hayes had proposed that this group of table ware be named 'Cypriot Red Slip' and that it was most probably produced in Cyprus because at that time the concentration of finds of the ware seemed to be commonest on the island (Hayes 1972, 371). Hayes later acknowledged a Pamphylian origin might be possible as suggested by Nalan Fırat from evidence at Perge (Fırat 2000, 37; Hayes 2001, 277).

2.2 The Significance of Late Roman D Ware

LRDW production sites in Asia Minor demonstrated new evidence for connections between Asia Minor and the Eastern Mediterranean, since ceramics follow trade routes with other goods which may not survive well in the archaeological record. The durability of ceramics enables them to serve to some extent as proxy evidence for trade routes (Greene 2005).

A further issue relates to Pamela Armstrong's argument that LRDW production finished a century after the terminal date proposed by Hayes up to the end of the seventh century (Armstrong 2006; 2009; Hayes 1972, 382; Catling 1972; Catling, Dikigoropoulos 1970). Based on excavated archaeological deposits from Cyprus at the Kormakiti Panagia, the Kornos Cave, Dhiorios cooking pot factory and the Salamis Bench Deposit, Armstrong showed that LRDW Form 9 Types B and C can be identified in deposits which may be interpreted to belong to AD 750 and perhaps as late as AD 800.

When we consider Armstrong's interpretation for a later chronology alongside the discovery of the new production sites in Asia Minor, we can see the significance not only for understanding the pattern of settlement in the countryside (Armstrong 2006; 2009), but also the implications for wider trading patterns and excavated contexts across the Eastern Mediterranean (Armstrong 2009, 171).

While LRDW was indeed conspicuous by its absence in an assemblage of Umayyad-period material from Beirut published by Paul

Reynolds (Reynolds 2003a, 544; 2003b), Uscatescu notes that Late Roman D Ware "was imported regularly beyond the Islamic conquest (end of the seventh century), especially to coastal sites and Galilee. LRD is present but less important at the Transjordan region" (Uscatescu 2003, 551). This is significant since the amphora types in the Umayyad deposit seem to suggest connections with Byzantine types and the Aegean.

Pushing the terminal date of LRDW lengthens the production and consumption of these 'Roman' tables wares and shows that they overlapped with newer forms of ceramics. Material culture here connects people across time and large areas of space including what became international boundaries. This new chronology makes less pronounced a perceived rupture in society in the mid-seventh century in those areas where this material is identified.

2.3 Quantitative Analysis of Material from the Production Sites

Three seasons of intensive survey by the author and a team from Newcastle University as part of the Pisidia Survey Project in 2009, 2010 and 2011 demonstrated conclusively the presence of production of all forms of this ware published to date (Jackson et al. 2012). The piles of wasters from the sites around Gebiz reveal the enormous quantities produced **[fig. 1]**. Methods used included: the identification of kilns through the geomagnetic surveys; the identification of the fired walls of kilns on the surface of sites with other evidence for production; distorted (overfired) 'wasters' of all the main forms of Late Roman D published by Hayes and moulds for making flasks, as well as tools for stamping pottery of the kind used for decorating LRDW. The production sites are relatively small, dispersed workshops. Their concentration suggests numerous relatively independent workshops conforming to a shared repertoire.

It was recently suggested that the large quantities of misfired sherds and the comparatively thick walls of the sherds found at the LRDW production sites provide evidence of a lack of skills in pottery firing among workers and technical problems with firing (Decker 2016, 49). But wasters are a typical phenomenon of ceramic production in all periods. A better interpretation of the substantial quantities of ceramics recovered from the production sites in Pisidia would be that they are a reflection of the substantial scale of this extra-urban industry in late Antiquity. Its mottled colours, stamped decoration and rouletting suggest skeuomorphic links to metalwork production.

The quantitative analysis of the forms produced and recovered through systematic collection on the surface at each site helps to inform us of the duration production took place at individual work-

Figure 1 Section from LRDW Production site at POI216, Akçapınar Köyü, Camii Yıkığı, near Gebiz
(photo: M. Jackson)

shop sites. Significant numbers of Form 9B sherds recovered demonstrate relatively late production at sites surveyed. They constituted just under a third of the assemblage recovered from the site at POI261 Kadırgürü Mevkiisi – 1,021 rim sherds of a total of 3,498, 40,615 g of a total 134,616 g, 28.84% of the total Estimated Vessel Equivalent (EVE) **[table 1]**. At site POI199 Kömbeci Mevkii, Form 9B was the second-most common found (after Form 2), 111 out of 759 sherds, 16.77% total EVE, 15.51% total weight and 14.62% total number of sherds; at POI216 Akçapınar Köyü, Camii Yıkığı, Form 9B was the third-most common rim form (after forms 2 and 7), of 838 sherds analysed, Form 9B was represented by 12.38% total EVE, 6.95% total weight and 11.58% total number rim sherds.

Table 1 LRDW Production site POI261 Kadırgürü Mevkiisi, artefact quantification and dating (M. Jackson; dating after Hayes 1972, 1980; Meyza 2007; Armstrong 2009)

Form number	EVE	No. of rim sherds	Rim weight (g)	% total EVE	% total rim weight	% total no. of rim sherds
Hayes Form 98 (Jackson et al. 2012, fig. 16)	6,614	1,021	40,615	28.84	30.19	29.19
Meyza Form 6 (Jackson et al. 2012, fig. 18.1-3)	3,184	474	5,415	13.88	4.03	13.55
Hayes Form 8 (Jackson et al. 2012, figs 13-14)	3,216	440	14,567	14.02	10.83	12.58
Hayes Form 2 (Jackson et al. 2012, figs 10-11)	2,497	385	6,991	10.89	5.20	11.01
Hayes Form 10 (Jackson et al. 2012, fig. 17.4)	1,683	291	20,743	7.34	15.42	8.32
Meyza Form K5.2 (Jackson et al. 2012, fig. 15)	1,764	276	12,860	7.69	9.56	7.89
Hayes Form 7 (Jackson et al. 2012, fig. J 2)	1,253	193	17,663	5.46	13.13	5.52
Quantified rim forms with less than 5% representation	2,722	418	15,662	11.88	11.64	11.94
Totals	22,933	3,498	134,516	100	100	100

Form	l.4th	e.5th	m.5th	l.5th	e.6th	m.6th	l.6th	e.7th	m.7th	l.7th	+8th
Hayes Form 98							———	———	———	———	
Meyza Form 6								———	———		
Hayes Form 8						———	———	———			
Hayes Form 2		———	———	———	———	———					
Hayes Form 10									———	———	
MeyzaForm KS.2			———	———	———	———	———				

One of the difficulties we faced when trying to date products collected from the surface of these sites was that without excavation we needed to rely on existing chronologies. Some of the results from the survey, however, revealed problems with existing dates and serve as a useful caveat to remind us that existing chronologies are not to be accepted without question. Perhaps a most clear example is a waster made from two sherds of different forms fused together in a single kiln firing – a Form 1 and a Form 8 (Jackson et al. 2012, 109). These two types were previously thought to belong to very different periods: Form 1 is traditionally considered to be from the late fourth to late fifth century, whereas Form 8 is considered to be mainly late sixth or early seventh (Hayes 1980, lxii). If they had been found in excavated contexts at consumer sites, they would likely have been used to help date the assemblages in which they were found. The fact that their fusing together in a kiln demonstrates that they were clearly made at exactly the same time raises questions about the existing chronologies. Given that Forms 1 and 8 come from apparently well understood and accepted periods, we might rightly question ceramic chronologies for the much less well understood period after the seventh century!

2.4 LRDW Form 9 and 'Well Form' in the Eastern Mediterranean

Armstrong's reinterpretation of the date of Form 9 from the traditional end point in the mid-seventh century (Armstrong 2009) to as late as the early ninth century (AD 800), if we can accept it, has enormous implications for the historical narrative. The argument is significant because it reduces considerably the gap in the number of settlements identified between AD 650-800. The resulting graphs based on material recovered on the Balboura Survey show settlement into the eighth century, while on other surveys where such material has not been identified, there appears to be little or no evidence for that period (Roberts et al. 2018, 310, fig. 2). This apparent gap emphasises an important point about the extent to which ceramics represent an appropriate proxy for settlement. It leads us to question assumptions based on changes in material culture, an over/under representation by presence or absence of visible or identifiable ceramics and whether there may be misunderstanding of ceramic chronologies for the period between the seventh and ninth centuries (Pettegrew 2007; Sanders 2000; Jackson 2020).

The location of the kiln sites in southern Anatolia was made, completely independently, at almost the same time as Armstrong published her argument about the chronology of Form 9. Together these discoveries make a compelling case for us to re-evaluate our models and understanding.

While the discovery of sites in Pisidia does not prove that sherds in LRD Ware forms were not also produced in Cyprus or elsewhere, it does demonstrate for the first time that they *were* produced in Asia Minor and as we have seen the implications of this discovery are multiple.

Production of table wares is usually linked closely to the wider economy. The distribution of LRDW reveals trade links from the Pisidian Taurus to Cyprus and the Eastern Mediterranean during the Early Byzantine period, and importantly, afterwards (Meyza 2007, maps 13-16). It can be of no surprise that the location of the kiln sites, close to rivers, provided not only sources of water for pottery making but also a route and means of transportation to the coast. Fırat has reported various forms at Perge including 'Anemurium Well Form' dated after AD 630 by Caroline Williams at Anemurium (Williams 1977) and found also at Limyra (Vroom 2007, 272-3). It is highly likely that the pottery was following similar routes as other products and industries, and so Well Form and Form 9 provide important proxy evidence to change our understanding of the wider economy and networks of trade in other goods.

Indeed, the pattern of Form 9 at sites right around the Eastern Mediterranean is of considerable significance because from the mid-

seventh century many of the Eastern provinces became part of the new Islamic caliphates. Uscatescu had already reported LRDW in early Islamic contexts (Uscatescu 2003, 551) and while they were not found at Beirut (Reynolds 2003a, 544), the assemblages Armstrong used for the redating of Form 9 apparently post-date the invasion of Cyprus following the expansion of the Islamic world. In this context, the production of Late Roman D ware in Pisidia and its discovery on Cyprus and around the Eastern Mediterranean in areas that have become part of the Islamic Empire helps to transform our ideas about trade and exchange in the period after the seventh century by highlighting the communication not only of trade, but of ongoing cultural ideas relating to dining and decoration of vessels between these regions.

3   Painted Ware and Globular Amphorae from Isauria

3.1   Background to Case Study 2. Excavations in Isauria

In the second case study I would like to focus on other important traditions which emerge as significant in the period from the seventh century. These include painted wares and globular amphorae which are two of the families of vessels that become more popular in subsequent centuries across the Mediterranean (Vionis 2020; Vroom 2017).

In Turkey, Kilise Tepe represents one of very few intentional excavations of a Byzantine rural settlement (Izdebski 2017). Excavations at Kilise Tepe revealed very well-preserved evidence for domestic contexts that offers fresh insights into many aspects of rural life and economy at this important period of wider transition of society. These contexts provide a detailed record of the ceramic traditions at the site including locally produced wares. Kilise Tepe, therefore, represents a key case study to complement urban excavations such as Anemurium (Eski Anamur), Elaiussa Sebaste (Ayaş) and those at the ecclesiastical complex at Alahan.

Evidence from Elaiussa Sebaste and Anemurium has suggested that thriving late Roman settlements were largely abandoned by the eighth century AD (Equini-Schneider 2008; Russell 2021, xi). Inland in Isauria, the evidence from the rock-cut church Al Oda with its aniconic decoration may suggest occupation into the period after the seventh century AD (Gough 1957).

As noted above, ceramics are not used consistently through time and overreliance on easily recognisable imported amphorae and fine wares for recognising settlement density is a notoriously problematic issue (Pettegrew 2007; Sanders 2000; Jackson 2020). Locally produced coarse wares however represent the majority of material recovered from most sites, especially inland at rural settlements such

as Kilise Tepe where out of tens of thousands of early Byzantine sherds only a handful were red slipped wares. Ceramics remain one of several essential tools for understanding many aspects of society but to use them primarily as proxies for chronology is to neglect the insight they offer into their roles in the lives of people in the past.

3.2 Excavations at Kilise Tepe

The assemblages from Kilise Tepe, in the Göksu Valley of southern Turkey reveal rare, excavated evidence for domestic contexts in Asia Minor (Jackson 2015). Assemblages from this site afford fresh insight into artefacts produced by the inhabitants for use there. The aim of this case study is to consider how people made and used material culture as part of the rhythms of their daily lives. I hope these analyses will take us beyond arguments about settlement duration to offer insight into ways in which artefacts played roles in lives of people during a period of societal change.

The ceramics abandoned on the floors of houses from the final early Byzantine phase at Kilise Tepe enable us to develop an appreciation of the purpose of local production within the village economy on which many of the larger settlements relied. We can see the nature of trade from the coast directed inland as well as pottery made and used within the settlement itself. Among the most striking aspects of the assemblage of finds at Kilise Tepe are the decorated, locally made water jars found together with globular amphorae at a key moment of transition during the seventh century (Jackson, Postgate 2007, front cover; Jackson 2015). These locally made products belong to families of wares which seem to take on significance across the empire and beyond. The connections that emerge from the contextual relationships of artefacts at Kilise Tepe facilitate an approach which considers their morphology and use.

The mound at Kilise Tepe measures 150 metres by 100 metres with 13 metres of accumulated deposits dating from the early Bronze Age to the twelfth century AD. Kilise Tepe is located in a fertile, well-watered natural basin in the Taurus mountains of southern Anatolia; it sits on a conglomerate terrace some 30 metres above the flood plain of the River Göksu and commands a striking view over the landscape in all directions. The site lies at a spring, close to a bridge over the river and a junction of roads running towards the Mediterranean coast at Silifke (ancient Seleuceia), Aydıncık and Anemurium and inland towards the central Anatolian plateau. Nine seasons of excavation (1994-98, 2007-11) have been conducted at Kilise Tepe to investigate all phases of the site (Postgate, Thomas 2007; Bouthillier et al. 2014; Jackson 2015).

In the early Byzantine period, from the late fifth to the seventh century AD, the well-preserved remains of stone and mud-brick hous-

es provide evidence for a settlement located around a basilica church. Excavation of these houses has revealed that in their final phase they were abandoned. The objects lying on the floors of these buildings provide a remarkably rare, excavated example of domestic material culture at a key moment in the history of southern Asia Minor. Painted wares produced at Kilise Tepe and globular amphorae including those not produced at the site recall those found across the early medieval Mediterranean. The pottery has many affinities with new traditions of ceramics found in the eighth century, but the latest radiocarbon samples suggest that the abandonment probably took place during the seventh century AD.

Study of the assemblage as a whole helps to provide insight into practices at Kilise Tepe and serves as a useful case study in its own right. Changes in pottery production go hand-in-hand with other changes in the wider economy and society in the seventh century. In this case study I would like to consider how ergonomics might be one of a complex set of interconnected drivers that played a role in the adoption of globular forms and the economy. While we cannot transpose the situation at Kilise Tepe onto other regions, the evidence from the site provides a rare level of detail which may offer useful analogy for society elsewhere.

The remarkable assemblage at Kilise Tepe was excavated on floors in a series of domestic spaces (Jackson 2015). The room fill in area O15a, serves as an example of contexts featuring both globular amphorae and water jars typical of this phase across the site **[fig. 2]**. The assemblage in O15a included locally-made vessels: a jug with a flat base (O15/022) and two water jars with concave bases and side handles (O15/021 and O15/132). These were found with two large, decorated storage vessels or *pithoi* (O15/106 and O15/108), and a decorated globular amphora with a concave base (O15/150). The local jars were made from clay extracted in the immediate vicinity of Kilise Tepe (Jackson 2015, 372; Jackson 2008). Non-local or imported vessels included another globular vessel with a rounded base (O15/107), and a Late Roman Amphora 1 (O15/118) **[fig. 3]**.
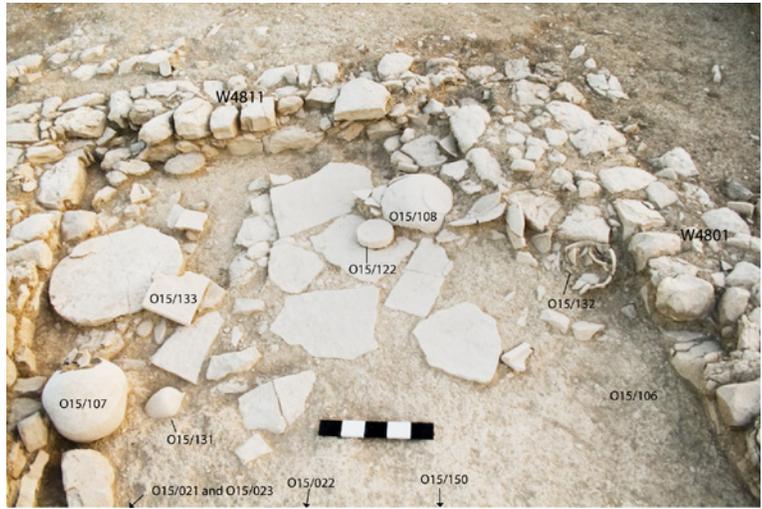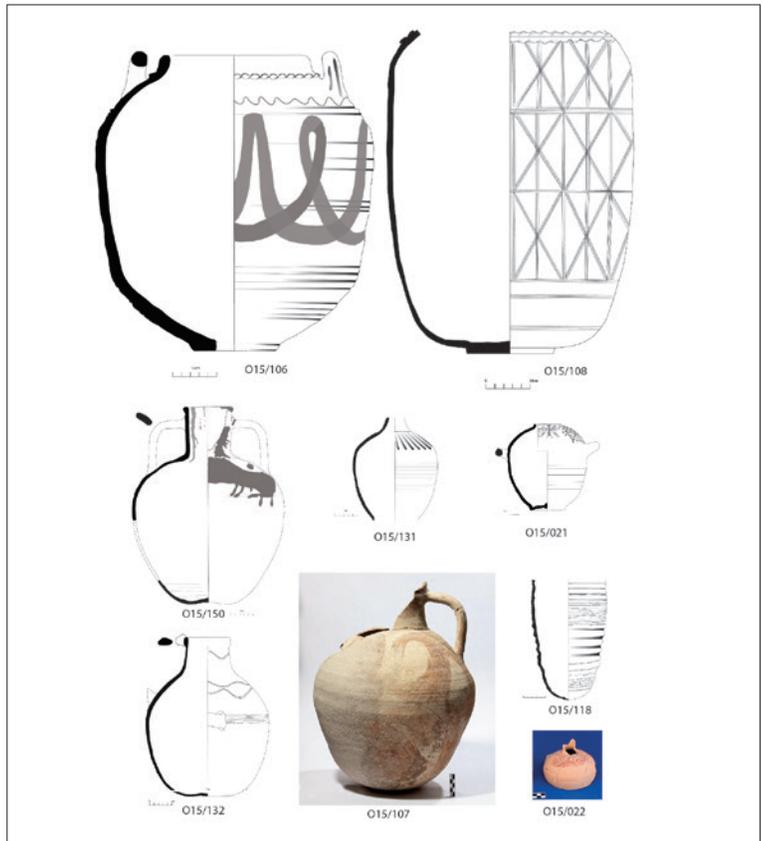
3.3   Water Jars at Kilise Tepe

The water jars such as O15/021 [fig. 4]; O15/132; and others found elsewhere at Kilise Tepe, for example, N11/076 decorated with painted fish, have three handles: a large vertical strap handle attached on one side from the rim to the shoulder and two looped handles placed opposite each other on the shoulders to the left and right of the vertical handle. The central and lower body of the vessels is often ribbed, while the shoulder is smooth but usually painted with ornate motifs in dark red-brown or purple paint: fish, crosses, birds, foliage, grapes, stars and other symbols. The porous fabric would have facilitated latent heat of evaporation to keep contents cool.

The vertical handles of these jars each have a convenient knob close to the rim that facilitated pouring, but for these large jars to be poured when full, another hand would have been required to support the lower belly. These vessels were designed in part as jugs.

The rounded horizontal handles, located on the shoulders of the vessels, would have been no use for pouring. They work with the concave bases of these vessels [fig. 3]. The base is shaped not just for resting on a surface but also for comfort so that the jar may be balanced on the head; the horizontal side-handles facilitate both a vertical lift and are located at just the right position for steadying with a raised hand when balanced on the head as with water jars found throughout the world since early antiquity. Experimentation of several vessel bases from Kilise Tepe confirmed that they fit well to the shape of one's head.

Vessels with a wide girth, low centre of gravity and gently rounded, saggy, or concave base are not easy to hold and when full, if carried in front of the body, or balanced on the hip or shoulder, these globular shapes would put considerable strain on any person's back. But as with objects found all over the world made in a variety of materials from baskets to metals, they are ideally suited for balancing upon the head. A slightly rounded base can be used with a circular cushion placed on the head beneath a vessel. A modern example is the Daranu, a doughnut-shaped circular object, one of three types made from rope and aricanut leaves in Sri Lanka (personal communication with Dulma Karunarathna, University of Peradeniya).

At Kilise Tepe, these decorated water jars were not simply artefacts for use in the house. As part of the daily routine, such jars would have spent much of their time travelling backwards and forwards to collect water from the spring on the north side of the mound. Regular journeys rarely more than a 200 metres, linked to performance of tasks, would have served to join these decorated objects to the people who carried them, to structure time and to afford human interactions with all the threats as well as opportunities venturing into to public would bring. Supporting a heavy load on the head would

Figure 5   Kilise Tepe, Decorated water jar O15/021 (photo: B. Miller)

have been conspicuous and would also have changed the shape of the body: impacted posture and gait in the short term and the physique through long-term trauma.

In Africa, Bonifay questioned whether his Amphora Type 7 with its small size, umbilical base and loop handles on the sides was in fact a water jar (Bonifay 2004, 91-2, fig. 48, jug no. 66; Riley 1981, 108, fig. 8, 111); he suggested a link between the globular amphora and existing Punic-Roman water jug traditions (Bonifay 2007, 143). While we cannot be certain that globular forms were all carried on heads, they would afford such a practice; we can verify this since contemporary communities all over the world continue to collect their water and carry other loads in this way today.

Regular transportation of water in jars at Kilise Tepe reveals embodied knowledge for carrying heavy loads in ceramic vessels. Through discovery of the globular amphora in the seventh-century assemblages at Kilise Tepe, we gain insight into the way large loads could be carried. For those already familiar with the practice, the globular amphora shape may have afforded certain advantages over the existing late Roman amphora forms such as the Late Roman Amphora 1. The form of amphorae is often studied typologically but the

ergonomic role of amphorae is central to their role as objects for transporting goods.

Two examples of globular amphorae from the same room serve as examples: O15/107 and O15/150. The best-preserved globular amphora from Kilise Tepe O15/107 **[fig. 3]** appears to have been imported to the settlement because the fabric is not local; O15/150 by contrast is made from local clay. Both O15/107 and O15/150 have relatively vertical necks and a wide rounded shape, with two vertical handles attached to the neck and shoulder. The base of O15/107 is only very slightly concave, O15/150 more so, as is typical for the form across the Mediterranean. A further vessel O15/132 seems to have the water-jar form with a single vertical handle as well as two horizontal handles and a concave base but its decoration is more similar to the amphorae than the water jars at Kilise Tepe.

3.4 Carrying Loads. The Globular Amphora

In the Roman period, examples of globular-shaped amphorae existed (Opait 2014), but in general most Roman amphorae were more elongated. This is well illustrated by the composite diagrams which map variously Roman and Late Antique amphorae (Bevan 2014, 394, fig. 4; Reynolds 2005, 586, map 2; Bonifay 2004, 88). When full, vessels with pointed lower bodies, slender toes or projecting bosses could be moved with one hand on a handle and the other grasping the toe or lower body; these shapes could be held against the stomach and chest (McCormick 2012, 63), or perhaps over the shoulder (see e.g. terracotta AD 300, Trustees of the British Museum Registration no. 1903,1117.1).

The increasing dominance of the globular amphorae is one of the most intriguing developments in material culture that occurred across the Mediterranean during the period from the sixth to eighth centuries AD in Byzantine and Islamic societies and beyond (Arthur 1993, 237; Saguì, Ricci, Romei 1997, 36, figs. 2, 4-5; Bonifay 2004, 88). By AD 700 many of the late Roman ceramic types are thought to have come to an end, signalling dramatic changes in the interregional exchange network (Wickham 2005, 717; Vroom 2017, 183, fig. 13.4). Though examples had existed in earlier times, from the Near East to the western Mediterranean, globular forms came to supplant many of the more elongated amphora types that for centuries had been typical in the classical world (Riley 1981, 117; Reynolds 2005; Bonifay 2007, 149; Williams 2014). Indeed, the globular amphora is well known in Italy, North Africa, the Aegean, and the Eastern Mediterranean (Murialdo 1993-94, 232, figs. 6.2-4; Bonifay 2004, 88, fig. 46, 151-3; Poulou-Papadimitriou 2017; Wickham 2005, 787). Scholars have questioned why these new amphora shapes appeared in the ceramic repertoire

and came to replace amphora traditions that had existed in the classical world for centuries (Bevan 2014, 397). They indicate something of the interconnectivity of these regions and the success of this new family of amphora types. Many different and interrelating factors will have combined to influence the rise of the globular amphora family.

There is significance in the fact that the globular form is *not morphologically the same* as other forms. The globular amphora is characterised not only by its shape but also by its somewhat standardised (smaller) size "evening out around 30 litres" (Arthur 2007, 174). The interpretation of these 'diminutive' vessels is often linked to narratives of degeneration at the end of the Roman period:

> Smaller amphorae, may reflect a decline in carrying capacities because of a decline in the quantities of surplus products to be shipped, but they may also have been adopted following technological difficulties in manufacturing large vessels on the wheel, or in firing them. (Arthur 2007, 175)

There is a danger of explaining the diminishing size in the pre-existing narrative of economic decline of the period for which the vessels are then used as supporting evidence. Saguì by contrast notes that the *Castrum Perti* globular type is very big relative to the very small *spatheion* whose size might reflect valuable contents (Saguì, Ricci, Romei 1997, 36).

The globular shape is ergonomically more similar to the globular LRA 5 or LRA 6 with their low centres of gravity. For centuries from the Roman period on into the Islamic period the bag-shaped amphora with loop handles on a narrow shoulder near the rim and a wide lower body with a rounded base continued changing remarkably little, well adapted to the roles it served (Uscatescu 2003, 547-9; Bonifay 2007, 145).

3.5 Transforming Bodies

Ergonomically practical in many ways, head loading is a logical response to the problem of needing to carry heavy loads. In the absence of wheeled vehicles head loading can be remarkably efficient. Studies of people in East Africa note that while a person can carry up to 20% of their own body weight relatively easily, women of the Luo tribe sometimes carry the equivalent of 70% of their body mass on their heads (Maloiy et al. 1986). In South Africa, containers used for head loading ranged from 16 to 78% of the carrier's body weight, with the mean average container weighing 41% (Geere, Hunter, Jagals 2010, 7). These figures seem to align reasonably well with the variety of globular-amphora forms and Arthur's estimation of the average contents of the globular amphora being about 30 litres (Arthur

2007, 174). If a person weighed perhaps 60-70 kilograms then a reduction in size from Roman-period amphorae to c. 30 litres of liquid would represent a considerable load to carry analogous to the burdens of many today. As social and economic contexts change, we may see the increasing adoption of this form as part of that wider societal change which involved elements of innovation.

3.6 A Shift to New Kinds of Economy Based on Different Actors

While there is a general view that the breakdown of international trade led to localised production and exchange (Haldon 2016, 289), it is clear that globular amphorae are traded across the Mediterranean and Aegean (Vionis 2020). Their places of production and their distribution are evidence that they were carried by ships. The implications of the adoption of a version of existing forms of amphora across the breadth of the Mediterranean reflect not only shifts away from the dominant forms of long-established and varied Classical ceramic traditions. They also signal a shift to new kinds of economy based on different actors at all levels, new methods of transportation and dramatically new ways of working.

4 Conclusions

In these two case studies we have snapshots from the seventh century of the overlap between long held late Roman and newer early medieval ceramic traditions and the variation, continuities and changes in society. The discovery of kiln sites producing all the forms of Late Roman D Ware reveals proxy evidence for the role of Pisidia in trade networks across the Eastern Mediterranean. The colour, surface treatment, stamped decoration and form of these dishes testify to continuity in long-held dining practices and shared ideas about material culture. But inland, at Kilise Tepe in Isauria, only a handful of red slip ware sherds were excavated from the same period as the LRDW was produced in Pisidia. This reminds us of the importance of considering whole local assemblages in rural contexts and both the potential and the dangers of focusing on key types.

At a time when red-slip wares and their metal counterparts may have dwindled somewhat, but show more continuity in late Roman traditions than was once recognised, the important globular form, increasingly adopted across the Mediterranean, reflects innovation. The form, function, and decoration of decorated water jars from Kilise Tepe help us to understand the significance of ornately decorated objects in rural contexts rarely studied. These jars offer in-

sight into the rhythms of daily life including the structuring of time through gendered tasks and considerable labour. It seems likely that the embodied knowledge for carrying the water jars would have extended to head loading of other vessels at Kilise Tepe including globular amphorae. It is tempting to see new ways of carrying loads as embodied knowledge which emerges alongside ideas and economies in a period of societal change.

Bibliography

Armstrong, P. (2006). "Rural Settlement in Lycia in the Eighth Century. New Evidence". Dörtlük, K. et al. (eds), *The 3rd International Symposium on Lycia = Symposium Proceedings*, vol. 1 (Antalya, 7-10 November 2005). Antalya: Suna-İnan Kıraç Research Institute on Mediterranean Civilizations, 19-29.

Armstrong, P. (2009). "Trade in the East Mediterranean in the Eighth Century". Mango, M.M. (ed.), *Byzantine Trade, 4th-12th Centuries. The Archaeology of Local, Regional and International Exchange*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 157-78.

Arthur, P. (1993). "Early Medieval Amphorae, the Dutchy of Naples and the Food Supply of Rome". *Papers of the British School at Rome*, 61, 231-44.

Arthur, P. (2007). "Form, Function and Technology in Pottery Production from Late Antiquity to the Early Middle Ages". Lavan, Zanini, Sarantis 2007, 159-86.

Bakirtzis, C. (éd.) (2003). *La céramique médiévale en Méditerranée = Actes du VIIᵉ Congrès International de l'AIECM2* (Tessaloniki, 11-16 octobre 1999). Athènes: Éditions de la Caisse des Recettes Archéologiques. `http://aiecm3.com/thessalonique-1999`.

Bevan, A. (2014). "Mediterranean Containerization". *Current Anthropology*, 55(4), 387-418.

Bonifay, M. (2004). *Etudes sur la céramique romaine tardive d'Afrique*. Oxford: Archaeopress. British Archaeological Reports, International Series 1301.

Bonifay, M. (2007). "Ceramic Production in Africa during Late Antiquity". Lavan, Zanini, Sarantis 2007, 143-58.

Bouthillier, C. et al. (2014). "Further Work at Kilise Tepe, 2007-2011. Refining the Bronze to Iron Age Transition". *Anatolian Studies*, 64, 95-162. `https://doi.org/10.1017/s0066154614000076`.

Brubaker, L.; Haldon, J. (2011). *Byzantium in the Iconoclast Era c. 680-850*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Catling, H.W. (1972). "An Early Byzantine Pottery Factory at Dhiorios in Cyprus". *Levant*, 4, 1-82.

Catling, H.W.; Dikigoropoulos, I. (1970). "The Kornos Cave. An Early Byzantine Site in Cyprus". *Levant*, 2, 37-62. `https://doi.org/10.1179/lev.1970.2.1.37`.

Decker, M.J. (2016). *The Byzantine Dark Ages*. London: Bloomsbury.

Equini-Schneider, E. (2008). *Elaiussa Sebaste. A Port City Between East and West. An Archaeological Guide*. Istanbul: Homer Kitabevi.

Fırat, N. (2000). "So-Called 'Cypriot Red Slip Ware' from the Habitation Area of Perge (Pamphylia)". *Rei Cretariae Romanae Fautorum Acta*, 36, 35-8.

Geere, J.L.; Hunter, P.R.; Jagals, P. (2010). "Domestic Water Carrying and Its Implications for Health. A Review and Mixed Methods Pilot Study in Lim-

popo Province, South Africa". *Environmental Health*, 9, 52. `https://doi.org/10.1186/1476-069X-9-52`.

Gough, M. (1957). "A Church of the Iconoclast (?) Period in Byzantine Isauria". *Anatolian Studies*, 7, 153-61. `https://doi.org/10.2307/3642352`.

Greene, K. (2005). "Roman Pottery. Models, Proxies and Economic Interpretation". *Journal of Roman Archaeology*, 18, 34-56. `https://doi.org/10.1017/s1047759400007200`.

Haldon, J. (2016). *The Empire That Would Not Die. The Paradox of Eastern Roman Survival, 640-740*. Cambridge (MA): Harvard University Press.

Harrison, R.M. (2001). *Mountain and Plain. From the Lycian Coast to the Phrygian Plateau in the Late Roman and Early Byzantine Period*. Ann Arbor (MI): University of Michigan Press.

Hayes, J.W. (1972). *Late Roman Pottery*. Oxford: Oxford Oxford University Press.

Hayes, J.W. (1980). *A Supplement to Late Roman Pottery*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Hayes, J.W. (1992). *Excavations at Saraçhane in Istanbul*. Vol. 2, *The Pottery*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Hayes, J.W. (2001). "Late Roman Fine Wares and Their Successors. A Mediterranean Byzantine Perspective (with Reference to the Syro-Jordanian Situation)". Villeneuve, E.; Watson, P.M. (éds), *La céramique byzantine et proto-islamique en Syrie-Jordanie (IVe-VIIIe siècles apr. J.-C.). Actes du colloque tenu à Amman les 3, 4 et 5 décembre 1994*. Beirut: Institut Français d'Archéologie du Proche-Orient, 275-82.

Hellenkemper, H.; Hild, F. (2004). *Tabula Imperii Byzantini 8. Lykien und Pamphylien*. Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften.

Izdebski, A. (2017). "Rural Settlements". Niewohner, P. (ed.), *The Archaeology of Byzantine Anatolia. From the End of Late Antiquity until the Coming of the Turks*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 82-9.

Jackson, M. (2008). "Byzantine Ceramics from the Excavations at Kilise Tepe 2007 and Recent Research on Pottery from Alahan". *Araştırma Sonuçları Toplantısı*, 26(2), 159-74.

Jackson, M. (2015). "2007-2011 Excavations at Kilise Tepe. A Byzantine Rural Settlement in Isauria". *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, 69, 355-80.

Jackson, M. (2020). "Historiographical and Methodological Implications for Understanding Gaps. A Case Study in Preparing for the Apalirou Environs Project, Naxos". *HEROM Journal on Hellenistic and Roman Material Culture*, 9, 261-90.

Jackson, M. et al. (2012). "Primary Evidence for Late Roman D Ware Production in Southern Asia Minor. A Challenge to 'Cypriot Red Slip Ware'". *Anatolian Studies*, 62, 89-114. `https://doi.org/10.1017/s0066154612000051`.

Jackson, M.; Postgate, N. (2007). "Kilise Tepe 2007". *Anatolian Archaeology*, 13, 28-31.

Lavan, L.; Zanini, E.; Sarantis, A. (eds) (2007). *Technology in Transition AD. 300-650*. Leiden: Brill.

Maloiy, G.M.O. et al. (1986). "Energetic Cost of Carrying Loads. Have African Women Discovered an Economic Way?". *Nature*, 319, 668-9. `https://doi.org/10.1038/319668a0`.

McCormick, M. (2012). "Movements and Markets in the First Millennium. Information, Containers, and Shipwrecks". Morrisson, C. (ed.), *Trade and Mar-*

kets in Byzantium. Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 51-98.

Meyza, H. (2007). *Nea Paphos V. Cypriot Red Slip Ware. Studies on a Late Roman Levantine Fine Ware*. Warsaw: Zaklad Archeologii Śródziemnomorskiej (Polska Akademia Nauk); Uniwersytet Warszawski. Centrum Archeologii Śródziemnomorskiej Im. Kazimierza Michalowskiego.

Murialdo, G. (1993-94). "Anfore tardantiche nel finale (VI-VII secolo)". *Rivista di studi liguri*, 59-60, 213-46.

Opait, A. (2014). "The Baggy Amphora Shape. A New Fashion". Poulou-Papadimitriou, N.; Nodarou, E.; Kilikoglou, V. (eds), *LRCW 4. Late Roman Coarse Wares, Cooking Wares and Amphorae in the Mediterranean. Archaeology and Archaeometry. The Mediterranean. A Market without Frontiers*. Oxford: Archaeopress, 441-50. British Archaeological Reports, International Series 2616(1).

Pettegrew, D.K. (2007). "The Busy Countryside of Late Roman Corinth. Interpreting Ceramic Data Produced by Regional Archaeological Surveys". *Hesperia. The Journal of the American School of Classical Studies at Athens*, 76(4), 743-84. https://doi.org/10.2972/hesp.76.4.743.

Postgate, J.N.; Thomas, D.C. (eds) (2007). *Excavations at Kilise Tepe*. 2 vols. Cambridge; Ankara: McDonald Institute-British Institute at Ankara.

Poulou-Papadimitriou, N. (2017). "Transport Amphoras and Trade in the Aegean from the Seventh to the Ninth Century AD. Containers for Wine or Olive Oil?". *Byzantina*, 35, 195-216.

Reynolds, P. (2003a). "2.2 Levant, 2.2.1 Lebanon". Bakirtzis 2003, 536-46.

Reynolds, P. (2003b). "Pottery and the Economy in 8th Century Beirut. An Umayyad Assemblage from the Roman Imperial Baths (BEY 045)". Bakirtzis 2003, 725-34.

Reynolds, P. (2005). "Levantine Amphorae from Cilicia to Gaza. A Typology and Analysis of Regional Production Trends from the 1st to 7th Centuries". Gurt i Esparraguera, J.M. et al. (eds), *LRCW I. Late Roman Coarse Wares, Cooking Wares and Amphorae in the Mediterranean. Archaeology and Archaeometry*. Oxford: Archaeopress, 563-611. British Archaeological Reports, International Series 1340.

Riley, J.A. (1981). "The Pottery from the Cisterns 1977.1, 1977.2 and 1977.3 (with Plates 1-5)". Humphrey, J.H. (ed.), *Excavations at Carthage 1977 Conducted by the University of Michigan*, vol. 6. Ann Arbor (MI): Kelsey Museum, 85-124.

Roberts, N. et al. (2018). "Not the End of World? Post-Classical Decline and Recovery in Rural Anatolia". *Human Ecology*, 46, 305-22. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10745-018-9973-2.

Russell, J. (2021). *The Canadian Excavations at Anemurium in Cilicia*. Drémil-Lafage: Éditions Mergoil.

Saguì, L.; Ricci, M.; Romei, D. (1997). "Nuovi dati ceramologici per la storia economica di Roma tra VII e VIII secolo". d'Archimbaud, G.D. (éd.), *La céramique médiévale en Méditerranée = Actes du VIᵉ Congrès de l'AIECM2* (Aix-en-Provence, 13-18 novembre 1995). Aix-en-Provence: Narration Éditions, 35-48. http://aiecm3.com/fr/aix-en-provence-1995.

Sanders, G. (2000). "New Relative and Absolute Chronologies for 9th to 13th Century Glazed Wares at Corinth. Methodology and Social Conclusions". Belke, K. et al. (Hrsgg.), *Byzanz als Raum*. Wien: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 153-73.

Uscatescu, A. (2003). "Report on the Levant Pottery (5th-9th Century AD)". Bakirtzis 2003, 546-58.

Vionis, A.K. (2020). "Bridging the Early Medieval 'Ceramic Gap' in the Aegean and the Eastern Mediterranean (7th-9th c.). Local and Global Phenomena". *HEROM Journal on Hellenistic and Roman Material Culture*, 9, 291-326.

Vionis, A.K.; Poblome, J.; Waelkens, M. (2009a). "Ceramic Continuity and Daily Life in Medieval Sagalassos, SW Anatolia (ca. 650-1250 AD)". Vorderstrasse, T.; Roodenberg, J. (eds), *Archaeology of the Countryside in Medieval Anatolia*. Leiden: Nederlands Institut voor het Nabije Oosten, 191-213.

Vionis, A.K.; Poblome, J.; Waelkens, M. (2009b). "The Hidden Material Culture of the Dark Ages. Early Medieval Ceramics at Sagalassos (Turkey). New Evidence (ca AD 650-800)". *Anatolian Studies*, 59, 147-65.

Vroom, J. (2007). "Limyra in Lycia: Byzantine/Umayyad Pottery Finds from Excavations in the Eastern Part of the City". Lemaître, S. (éd.), *Céramiques antiques en Lycie: VIIᵉ s. a.C-VIIᵉ s. p.C.: les produits et les marchés: actes de la table-ronde de Poitiers*. Paris: Ausonius, 261-92.

Vroom, J. (2017). "Ceramics". Niewöhner, P. (ed.), *The Archaeology of Byzantine Anatolia. From the End of Antiquity until the Coming of the Turks*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 176-93.

Waagé, F.O. (1948). *Antioch-on-the-Orontes IV.I. Ceramics and Islamic Coins*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Wickham, C. (2005). *Framing the Early Middle Ages. Europe and the Mediterranean, 400-800*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Willett, R. (2020). *The Geography of Urbanism in Roman Asia Minor*. Sheffield; Bristol: Equinox.

Williams, D. (2014). *Roman Amphorae. A Digital Resource. Archaeology Data Service*. `https://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/archives/view/amphora_ahrb_2005`.

Williams, C. (1977). "A Byzantine Well Deposit from Anemurium (Rough Cilicia)". *Anatolian Studies*, 27, 175-90.

Williams, C. (1989). *Anemurium. The Roman and Early Byzantine Pottery*. Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies.

Constantinople in the Middle Byzantine Age

Albrecht Berger
Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich

Abstract   The rebuilding of Constantinople after the so-called Dark Ages was a long-lasting process of more than four hundred years in which the appearance of the city changed continuously. Many still-existing buildings from the early period were restored and adapted to new purposes, while new buildings developed different architectural forms. Most old churches were rebuilt after a phase of decay, others were newly built in a novel and distinctly 'medieval' style.

Keywords   Constantinople. Byzantine age. Residential architecture. Ecclesiastical architecture. Monasteries. Triumphal columns.

Summary   1 Introduction. – 2 A City Falls into Ruins. – 3 Building Campaigns of the Ninth Century. – 4 The Monasteries. – 5 Residential Buildings. – 6 Memories of the Past. The Triumphal Columns. – 7 Constantinople in the Age of the Komnenoi.

1 Introduction

From its foundation by Constantine the Great in 324 to the so-called plague of Justinian in 542, Constantinople experienced an almost constant development, with an ever-increasing population, and the continuing construction of public buildings, streets and squares, and houses and churches. The only major setbacks were the big fire of 465 (Evagrius, *The Ecclesiastical History* [ed. Bidez, Parmentier 1898, 64.16-65.18]) and the destructions in the city centre which were caused by the Nika Riots in 532 (Greatrex 1997; Meier 2003). After the first outbreak of the plague in 542 (Stathakopoulos 2003, 110-54) the city recovered quickly, though probably with a reduced population, and the building activity resumed once more. In the early seventh century, however, the crisis of the whole empire arrived at its heart. The grain supply from Egypt to Constantinople ended forever in 619 (see, among others, Teall 1959, 97-8), and the city's water supply lines were destroyed during the Avar siege in 626 (Hurbanič 2019, 165). The city was repeatedly attacked by the Arabs in the years after 674 (Jankowiak 2013) and finally massively besieged by them from 717 to 718 (Olsen 2020). In this age of decline, the city lost most of its population, which decreased from several hundred thousand to about forty to fifty thousand persons (Mango 1990, 53-5), and almost no new buildings were erected for a long time.

After the plague of 747, and especially after the repair of the aqueduct in 766, the city slowly began to recover. From the ninth to the twelfth century Constantinople went through a long phase of prosperity, with growing population and wealth. Its solid fortifications, above all the double Theodosian land walls, saved the city from many attacks, and only the Russian siege in 860 brought it into an immediately dangerous situation (Vasiliev 1925). This second phase of prosperity went on, even as the empire already began to decline in the late eleventh century, and ended abruptly in 1204 when the city was conquered and plundered by the knights of the Fourth Crusade (Angold 2003; Laiou-Thomadaki 2005).

In the following contribution I will try to trace the stages of this development, and show how the cityscape of Constantinople changed over the centuries.

Figure 1 Medieval Constantinople, with principal objects mentioned in the text. Drawing by the Author

2   A City Falls into Ruins

The residential buildings of the early Byzantine age in Constantinople were mostly built of brick, or brick and stone and had wooden ceilings and roofs, the latter covered with ceramic tiles. Also, the major churches were not vaulted, except for their apses and some small chapels and baptisteries. Many of these churches, but not all, were replaced in the age of Justinian by bigger and more complex structures with domes or vaulted roofs, the most prominent examples being Hagia Sophia (Mark, Çakmak 1992) and the Church of the Holy Apostles (Mullett, Ousterhout, Gargova 2020). Since the new buildings were much more massive than their predecessors, they were mostly constructed on completely new foundations without using parts of the older structures.

But what happened to all these buildings in an age of neglect and decay? Houses and churches with wooden roof constructions would only last as long as they were rainproof. If not, the beams soon decayed, and after a while first the roof, then the ceilings below would collapse so that only the outer walls of the building still remained upright. Halls and churches with a single big interior space were destroyed even quicker. Of a basilica, therefore, only the vaulted apse, the outer walls and the rows of columns may have still existed after some decades of decay. The vaulted churches deteriorated slower than those with wooden roofs, and were destroyed by earthquakes and fire rather than by lack of maintenance (Erdik 2019).

When Constantinople rapidly declined in the seventh century, the city must have been full of ruins, even in the very centre of the city. Only the terrace walls and massive vaulted substructures, on which many buildings of the earlier time had been built, remained almost undamaged. The speed of decay in this age was greatly accelerated by the practice of building with spolia. Many old houses were dismantled and used as building material, and a great part of the architectural pieces such as cornices, columns and capitals, which we find in buildings of the middle and late age, are taken from destroyed monuments of the early period (Bauer 2009; Berger 2020). This procedure of recycling included also stone and brick, and in some cases even mosaic tesserae, as in the case of Saint Stephanos and All Saints (see below).

Between the early seventh and the mid-eighth century, almost the only recorded building activity was in the first reign of Justinian II, around 692, in the Great Palace where two new reception halls (*Scriptores*, ch. 3.130 [ed. Preger 1907, 257, 1-2]) and a ceremonial courtyard with a fountain were built (Theophanes, *Chronographia* [ed. De Boor 1883, 367.32-368.11]). The courtyard is the first known example of such an installation for the use of the circus factions, whose independent political role was soon going to end (Cameron 1976, 297-308).

The real rebuilding of Constantinople began, as previously mentioned, in the age of Constantine V with the repair of the aqueduct in 766 and the subsequent settling of craftsmen from Asia Minor, Thrace and Greece (Magdalino 2007a, 5-6). Very little, however, is known about the construction of new churches in this age, except for the famous Pharos chapel (Magdalino 2004). Then, in the time of Empress Eirene between 797 and 802, the restoration of an old aristocratic palace is reported, where possibly a group of immigrants from Athens was settled.

3 Building Campaigns of the Ninth Century

During the first major building campaign in Constantinople, which took place under Emperor Theophilos between 829 and 842, some new buildings were added to the Great Palace, and the fortifications of the city were reinforced.

Theophilos' buildings in the palace were all located south of its old centre, in an area where several new reception halls had already been built in the late sixth century and under Justinian II (*Chronographiae* 3.42-44 [ed. Featherstone, Signes Codoñer 2015, 200-10]). Although the *Continuation of Theophanes* claims that they were all new, most of them were probably older constructions, but now restored and redecorated – except for the complex of Trikonchos and Sigma on the edge of the southern terrace wall which was again equipped with a fountain and a ceremonial courtyard (*Chronographiae* 3.42.8-43.32 [ed. Featherstone, Signes Codoñer 2015, 200-4]).

The work on the fortifications in Theophilos' age was mainly done on the sea walls, probably as a reaction to the increasing Arabic threat in this time. It is only briefly mentioned by the sources, but well documented by a number of inscriptions. The sea walls were repaired, including the complete rebuilding of some towers (Schneider 1950; Dirimtekin 1953), and an impressive facade, the Boukoleon, was set on top of it at the seaside below the Great Palace (Mango 1997). Apparently, without a mention in the sources, the silted-up harbours on the Golden Horn were also given up in this time, that is, they were filled up with earth and enclosed by new walls (Kislinger 2016, 92-3), perhaps including a major part of the harbour of Sophia on the southern shore which was later turned into a shipyard (Heher 2016, 57-8).

Much more important for the whole city was another building campaign about forty years later, in the reign of Emperor Basileios I, in which many old churches, including Hagia Sophia and the Holy Apostles, were repaired or completely rebuilt. The repair of Hagia Sophia was, in fact, a major intervention which involved the dismantling and rebuilding of a major part of the gallery level, and the installa-

tion of a new, figural mosaic decoration (Mango 1962; Teteriatnikov 2004-05, 13-14).

The *Vita Basilii* lists twenty-four churches both in and near Constantinople which were repaired or rebuilt under Basileios (*Chronographiae* 5.78-93 [ed. Ševčenko 2012, 264-304]). In many cases, the text says that they were "rebuilt from the foundations", and for a number of churches some more details are given: the wooden roof of the Church of Anastasis or Anastasia, for example, was replaced by one of stone, which implies that a large basilica from the early Byzantine age was replaced here by a much smaller, but higher and more massive domed cross-in-square construction. Also noteworthy is the case of the Chalkoprateia church which was equipped with lateral arches and a higher roof to improve the lighting of the interior.

The *Continuation of Theophanes* does not say how long these churches of Constantinople were already in ruins when Basileios started his campaign. It seems, however, that many of them were only damaged by the series of heavy earthquakes which shook the city in 862, 866 and 869, that is, shortly before and at the beginning of his reign (Downey 1955, 599). The earthquake of 866 is mentioned in the *Patria* of Constantinople as the reason for the destruction of one church in the west of Constantinople, the Mother of God near the Sigma (*Scriptores* 3.182 [ed. Preger 1907, 272.15-273.5]; also *Synaxarium* [ed. Delehaye 1902, 380.19-23]). The same source dates the rebuilding of another nearby church, that of Saint Stephanos, to the reign of Basileios' son Leon VI, and remarks that its gold mosaic tesserae, marble revetments and columns were later reused for building the Church of all Saints (*Scriptores* 3.209 [ed. Preger 1907, 280.13-281.7]) – *nota bene* more than thirty years after the 866 earthquake.

The list in the *Continuation of Theophanes* ends with Basileios' new churches in the Great Palace, the most important of them being the monumental Nea or New Church. All these churches were, it seems, not restored older ones, but new, and obviously built with the intention to strengthen the Christian element in the palace.

The same can also be said for the only new church of Basileios' age outside the Great Palace, the chapel of the Mother of God on the Forum (Mango 1981). It was erected at the foot of the porphyry column which was, at that time, still crowned by the monumental statue of Constantine as a Sun God, naked and with a crown of seven solar rays on his head (Bardill 2012, 27-34). It seems that the pagan character of the Forum, whose decoration also included several ancient Greek statues, had meanwhile become problematic for a station of the regular religious and imperial processions, and was neutralised in this way.

The campaign of Basileios changed the appearance of most major churches of Constantinople, and with it the whole cityscape. Yet, some big churches of the early period do not appear on the list, among them

the church of John Prodromos of the Stoudios monastery, which perhaps did not need a restoration at the time, and the monumental and lavishly decorated church of Saint Polyeuktos. This church was later, in the eleventh century, abandoned, probably after being damaged by an earthquake, since it was impossible to replace it by an adequate construction.

Basileios' big church in the Great Palace, the Nea, is today long destroyed, and various attempts have been made to reconstruct it from literary evidence. The most plausible assumption is still that it was a monumental cross-in-square church with a main dome in the centre, with domed roof chapels and lateral galleries (Stanković 2008). This elaborate plan was new and fascinating in Basileios' age, and it seems that it was soon repeated by new churches of much smaller dimensions where there was actually no need for such a complicated layout. This is probably the origin of the miniaturised monumental architecture which became so characteristic of the later middle ages in Constantinople and elsewhere. In today's Istanbul, the older part of the church of the former Lips monastery, which dates back to the time of Leon VI, is the best surviving example (Marinis 2004).

4　The Monasteries

Since the first monasteries of Constantinople were founded in the late fourth century, most of them lay in the western part between the walls of Constantine and Theodosios (Dagron 1976), and their number rose from about twenty in the mid-fifth century to over seventy in the mid-sixth, as shown by the signatures of their abbots in the acts of the synods of 448, 518 and 536 (*Collectio Sabbaitica* [ed. Schwartz 1940]; Dagron 1976, 240-2). Only few monasteries existed in the more central parts of the city in the early Byzantine age. We actually only have clear evidence for three of them, namely that of the Akoimetoi, the non-sleeping monks, which lay on the old Akropolis, but was soon dissolved (Dagron 1976, 235-6); that of Saint Sergios and Bakchos in the house of Justinian near the Great Palace (Svenshon, Stichel 2000) and one near the aqueduct at the later Kalenderhane site (Striker, Kuban 1997, 1: 37-45). To the latter, the name *ta Kyrou* or *Kyriotissa* was transferred only in the middle Byzantine age, while its original name of two older churches is unknown (Striker, Kuban 1997, 7-17). It may be identified with the monastery of Anastasios "near the aqueduct" which is mentioned only in the list of 448 (*Collectio Sabbaitica* 36.26; 47.32).

Many foundations of the early Byzantine age are not mentioned again after the great crisis. Others survived, such as the famous monasteries of Dalmatos and Stoudios, and from the ninth century onward, the building of monasteries was resumed. Their majority was still located in the west of the city, though rather in the hilly north-

ern part near the Golden Horn than in the south. Some were newly built, and others were established in converted old residential buildings, as we shall presently see.

In the eleventh and twelfth centuries, the building of monasteries slowly extended from the northwestern part of Constantinople to the southeast. Yet, the number of monasteries in the city centre itself remained very small throughout the whole Byzantine age. In the most central area, that facing the Golden Horn between the Akropolis and the so-called third hill, we know only the three monasteries: that of Kyr Antonios, that in the house of Bassos, and one connected to the Anastasis church.

On the eastern shore, however, in a calm area without major streets, the famous Hodegon monastery was founded in the ninth century (Magdalino 2019, 260-2). The monastery of Saint Lazaros, a foundation of Leon VI, followed in the early tenth century (Janin 1969, 298-300), the Mangana monastery of Constantine Monomachos in the eleventh (Demangel, Mamboury 1939, 19-47), and a number of others still later, so that this small region became another centre of monasticism in Constantinople.

A final group of monasteries in Constantinople before the catastrophe of 1204 was built in the age of the Komnenian dynasty and is mostly, though not always, associated with the imperial family. The series begins with the Pammakaristos monastery, and ends with the monumental Pantokrator monastery of Ioannes II and his wife Piroshka/Eirene whose construction lasted from 1124 to 1136 (Kotzabassi 2013; Sághy, Ousterhout 2019).

5 Residential Buildings

Let us now turn to the non-religious buildings of Constantinople, that is, to the aristocratic palaces, tenements and private houses. When the city recovered, its population grew again, but probably never reached the numbers of the early Byzantine age. The high, multi-storeyed buildings, which were occasionally mentioned before (Vetters 1989), had disappeared forever, and residential houses mostly had no more than two or three storeys.

In a recent study, Paul Magdalino has drawn our attention to, as he calls it, the "modes of reconstruction in Byzantine Constantinople" (Magdalino 2019). Taking as examples the urban palaces of Marina, Pulcheria and Arkadia mentioned around 425 in the *Notitia urbis Constantinopolitanae*, he demonstrated how such large complexes survived, were restored after a time of decay and used for a new purpose.

A general problem in this context is that most of these former aristocratic houses changed their owners several times, and were often renamed at later reconstructions so their original name disappeared.

And if the old and new names of a house were simultaneously used, we are in danger of double counting, so that the number of buildings in the sources appears higher than it was in reality. Let us briefly look at Magdalino's examples.

The palace of Marina (Magdalino 2019, 260-2) on the eastern coast near the Great Palace became state property after her death, was later used as a textile workshop and disappears from the sources when one part was given to the Hodegon monastery in the eighth century, while the rest was overbuilt with new extensions of the Great Palace in the late ninth and tenth century.

The palace of Poulcheria (Magdalino 2019, 262-4) near the Hippodrome may have been the building known as the house of Probos in the early sixth, as that of Sophia in the late sixth, and – after a long time of silence – as that of Nikephoros Phokas in the tenth century; it possibly ended up as a hostel for merchants in the late twelfth century.

The palace of Arkadia (Magdalino 2019, 264-7) in the western part of the city is mentioned with this name only in the *Notitia*; when it was restored in the late eighth century by the empress Eirene, it was commonly called the palace of Eleutherios after an unknown previous owner, who should not, however, be dated back to the time of Constantine the Great: only the tenth-century *Patria* make Eleutherios the builder of a small harbour predating that of Theodosios (*Scriptores* 2.63 [ed. Preger 1907, 184.17-185.2]), but this is highly improbable, although it was usually believed due to a lack of more information. The upper part of the large area, which originally extended almost from the main street to the coast, was detached in the renovation or sometime later, and on the ruins of a monumental rotunda, which had been the entry hall of the palace, a smaller house called that of Krateros was built, which may have been property of Theodoros Krateros, a general who died as one of the 42 martyrs of Amorion in 845. This house became, another hundred years later, the Myrelaion monastery of emperor Romanos Lakapenos (Striker 1981; Niewöhner, Abura, Prochaska 2010; Bevilacqua 2013).

Another comparable case is the palace of Constantine the Great's mother Helena, the Helenianai, which lay outside the walls of Constantine and is therefore not mentioned by the *Notitia*. By the tenth century, it served as a home for old people, but its semicircular court was still used as a ceremonial station for imperial processions. In the eleventh century, finally, it was replaced by the Peribleptos Monastery of emperor Romanos Argyros, and its original name disappeared (Özgümüş 2000; Dalgıç 2010).

In other cases only the later owner of a house is known, which makes it difficult to identify the original founder. The house of Aspar, for example, lay somewhere near the big open cistern which bears his name, in the northwest of the Constantinian city or just outside of it. In this area, the *Notitia* locates the houses of empress

Eudokia and her daughter Arkadia, so it is plausible to assume that Aspar bought one of them or was endowed with it by the emperor. Later, in the tenth century, Aspar's house was also called the 'house of the Barbarian', and was temporarily given to the Armenian lords of Taron before it passed into the hands of the *parakoimomenos* Basileios (Magdalino 2016). Its fate after this time is unknown, but it may have been later replaced by the monastery of Saint Constantine (Berger 2007; Effenberger 2020).

Not far from here, the famous Pantokrator Monastery was built in the twelfth century. It may have stood, as again suggested by Paul Magdalino, on the place where the house of the lady Hilara had been in the sixth century, and the hospital of emperor Theophilos in the ninth (Magdalino 2007b, 50-2). It is hard to believe that there was nothing on this site before Hilara; in fact, the first house here may have been the other of the two houses just mentioned, which did not pass into the hands of Aspar.

Another case is the house of Bonos, which lay outside the Constantinian wall near the cistern of Aspar, where the mosque of Sultan Selim now stands. It was replaced in the tenth century by the so-called 'new palace of Bonos', thus keeping its old name, and later by the monastery of Christ Pantepoptes (Berger 2007, 49-53). The only known prominent person called Bonos was the patrician and defender of Constantinople in 626. It is unlikely that his house was the first on this prominent site, on top of a steep hill high over the Golden Horn, but so far its original founder has not been identified.

From the tenth century onward, the rebuilding and upgrading of old aristocratic houses reached a new dimension. After six hundred years of imperial rule in the city, both the mausolea of Constantine and Justinian at the Church of the Holy Apostles were full and could not accommodate new burials. The monasteries of Myrelaion, of Peribleptos and Pantokrator, therefore, were designed as dynastic foundations where the members of the now reigning family should be put to rest – and that, if possible, in an impressive building on a hill or an old substructure which dominated their surroundings. An exception here is the already mentioned Mangana monastery on the eastern shore which had no known predecessor.

A word may also be added here on the terminology of buildings: in the *Notitia urbis Constantinopolitanae*, the big public baths bear the name of their founders with the Latin suffix -*anae*, for example *Constantianae*, *Arcadianae*, *Anastasianae*. In Greek texts of the same period, this way of naming is also applied to aristocratic houses and palaces, as the *Helenianai*, *Pulcherianai* and *Sophianai*. In the middle Byzantine age, this terminology was still used only for a number of churches which had been added to such buildings when they were converted into charitable institutions. In common usage, it was mostly replaced by the neutral article *ta* with the founder's name in geni-

tive, for example *ta Ourbikiou*, *ta Areobindou*, *ta Armatiou*. This designation is used, however, for buildings of any size, such as houses, churches or monasteries, sometimes even for statues. It appears occasionally already in the early Byzantine age; Prokopios, for example, once calls the Helenianai *ta Helenes* (*De Bellis* 1.24.30 [ed. Haury 1905, 129.33]), and the *Chronicon paschale* mentions the Plakidianai as *ta Plakidias* (Dindorf 1832, 563.18, 700.15). In tenth-century texts like the *Patria* or the Synaxar of Constantinople, the number of locations named in this way has risen to more than a hundred.

As we have seen so far, many big urban palaces and aristocratic houses of the early Byzantine age continued to exist, but changed their owners several times, were converted to a different use, and even split up into more than one property. The most common new use was that as a hospital or a home for old people. In some cases, for example that of the Helenianai, this had lasted for so long that the tenth-century *Patria* of Constantinople believed they served as such from the beginning (*Scriptores* 3.5 [ed. Preger 1907, 216.1-3]).

Of course, there were also many old houses beneath the aristocratic level which still existed in the middle Byzantine age. And although most or all of them must have changed their owners in the course of time, a large number was still known by the name of their founders.

But what we do not know is how much of these old buildings was still intact when they were restored between the ninth and twelfth centuries. In many cases, to quote Paul Magdalino (2019, 267), "the authorities and the inhabitants of the Byzantine capital" may have "practised a culture of conservation and reuse; on the other hand, they projected a rhetoric of new construction from zero".

We may assume that often an ancient building was simply repaired by replacing damaged marble elements or by putting a new roof on it. If it was converted into a monastery, however, a church had to be added which could not always be accommodated on the already existing substructure. The church of the Myrelaion monastery, therefore, was built on a separate substructure next to the core of the already mentioned rotunda (Striker 1981, 13-29), while the church of the Peribleptos monastery seems to have stood on a substructure in front of the old terrace (Özgümüş 2000).

In any case, material of ruined buildings was used for rebuilding, or sometimes even material of buildings which had been still more or less intact at the time, but were now cannibalised. Probably the strangest incidence of this case is the reuse of a wooden ceiling from the fifth-century palace of Basiliskos which was mounted around 830, in the age of emperor Theophilos, in the Lausiakos, a reception hall in the Great Palace from the late seventh century (*Chronographiae* 3.44.5-8 [ed. Featherstone, Signes Codoñer 2015, 210]).

Then, from the tenth century onward, the architectural patterns of aristocratic houses and palaces begins to change: instead of the

traditional loose arrangement of rotundas, octagons, cruciform or longitudinal buildings along porticoes and around courtyards, new houses are now built on rectangular ground plans and are multi-storeyed, probably with the representative rooms on the first floor (Berger, Niewöhner, forthcoming).

6 Memories of the Past. The Triumphal Columns

But there was one element which still dominated the cityscape as a remnant of the glorious old days. This was the triumphal columns, seven in number, built between Constantine the Great in the early fourth and Justin II in the late sixth century. Except for the column of Constantine on the Forum and the rather modest column of Marcian they have all now disappeared, and their function of structuring and accentuating the silhouette has been taken over by the minarets of the mosques.

Of these columns, that of Constantine may have reached a height of about forty metres, and those of Theodosios and Arkadios of more than fifty metres (Boeck 2021, 24). But the statues which crowned them fell one after the other as a result of earthquakes and violent storms. The column of Theodosios had lost its statue already in the fifth century, before the last two monumental columns were even built; that of Arkadios fell in 740, that of Justin II in 866 (Berger 2021, 12-13, 18).

The statue of Constantine on the column of his Forum showed the emperor in the shape of a late antique Sun god, as mentioned before, and was one of the last visible memories of Constantinople's not-so-Christian origins. Its downfall in 1106, therefore, also marks a final step in its Christianisation. Anna Komnene reports that, when the statue had fallen, some people took this as a bad omen for her father, the emperor Alexios I. When Alexios heard about these rumours, however, he said: "I know one lord of life and death, and there is no reason why I should believe that the fall of pagan statues brings death" (*Alexias* 12.4.5 [ed. Reinsch, Kambylis 2001, 370.46-67]; see also Berger 2021, 10-11).

At the end of the middle Byzantine age, only the statues of Leon I (Peschlow 1986) and of Justinian still existed, and only that of Justinian remained on its column until the Ottoman conquest in 1453 (Boeck 2021).

7 Constantinople in the Age of the Komnenoi

The last major changes in the cityscape of Constantinople before the catastrophe of 1204 took place in the age of the Komnenian dynasty, which began with the accession of the same Emperor Alexios Komnenos in 1081.

As mentioned, a series of new monasteries was built in the northeast of Constantinople, most of which had no earlier predecessor, ending with the Pantokrator monastery which replaced an old aristocratic house and hospital.

The Blachernai palace in the extreme northwest of the city, which had long been used for imperial receptions after visits to the famous church of the Mother of God nearby, gained more importance in the age of Alexios Komnenos, before it became the main residence under his grandson Manuel. New, multi-storeyed buildings with reception halls in the *piano nobile* were added to it (Macrides 2015), and since it lay very close to the old city wall, a new wall with massive towers was constructed in Manuel's time further to the west to better protect it (Asutay-Effenberger 2007, 118-46). But still, the old Great Palace was used for ceremonial purposes, and chariot races were held in the Hippodrome in the emperor's presence (Magdalino 1993, 239). Since the emperor and his court often had to move between the old and new palace, either by boat or by horse, a new pattern of processions through the city emerged, and the old ceremonial route from the Golden Gate to the Great Palace was given up (Magdalino 1993, 241-2).

The Komnenian age also witnessed an increasing presence of foreigners in Constantinople, partly due to the establishment of the so-called concessions for merchants from Venice and other Italian cities, and partly as a consequence of the Crusades which passed through or near Constantinople.

The first of these concessions was granted in 1082 to the Venetians; it stretched about 300 metres on the Golden Horn, and contained a church, an administrative building and three wharves (Jacoby 2001). The Pisan concession, founded in 1111, lay to the east of the Venetian one; the Genoese concession was first established across the Golden Horn in Galata, but later transferred to Constantinople, to a place near the other concessions (Borsari 1991; Day 1977). Although these concessions had clearly defined borders, they were not separated from the remaining city, and public streets ran across them.

Bibliography

Angold, M. (2003). *The Fourth Crusade. Event and Context*. Harlow: Pearson Longman.

Asutay-Effenberger, N. (2007). *Die Landmauer von Konstantinopel-İstanbul*. Berlin: De Gruyter. Millennium Studies 18.

Bardill, J. (2012). *Constantine, Divine Emperor of the Christian Golden Age*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bauer, F.A. (2009). "Sagenhafte Herkunft. Spolien im Umkreis des byzantinischen Kaisers". Schattner, Th.G.; Valdés Fernández, F. (Hrsgg), *Spolien im Umkreis der Macht*. Mainz: Von Zabern, 59-80.

Belke, K. et al. (Hrsgg) (2003). *Byzantina Mediterranea. Festschrift für Johannes Koder zum 65. Geburtstag*. Vienna: Böhlau.

Berger, A. (2007). "Vom Pantokratorkloster zur Bonoszisterne". Belke et al. 2007, 43-56.

Berger, A. (2020). "'Переработка' Константинополя ('Recycling' Constantinople)". Vinogradov, A.; Ivanov, S. (eds), *Византий и Византия. провинциализм столицы и столичность провинции* (Byzantion and Byzantium. The Provincialism of the Centre and the Centrality of the Provinces). St. Peterburg: Aleteya, 25-46.

Berger, A. (2021). *The Statues of Constantinople*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Berger, A.; Niewöhner, P. (2022). "Residential Constantinople". Bassett, S. (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Constantinople*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 155-65.

Bevilacqua, L. (2013). *Arte e aristocrazia a Bisanzio nell'età dei Macedoni. Costantinopoli, la Grecia e l'Asia Minore*. Roma: Campisano. Milion 9.

Bidez, J.; Parmentier, L. (eds) (1898). *The Ecclesiastical History of Evagrius*. London: Metuen.

Boeck, E. (2021). *The Bronze Horseman of Justinian in Constantinople. The Cross-cultural Biography of a Mediterranean Monument*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Borsari, S. (1991). "Pisani a Bisanzio nel XII secolo". *Bollettino Storico Pisano*, 60, 59-75.

Cameron, A. (1976). *Circus Factions. Blues and Greens at Rome and Byzantium*. Oxford: Clarendon.

Dagron, G. (1976). "Les moines et la ville. Le monachisme à Constantinople jusqu'au concile de Chalcédoine (451)". *Travaux et Mémoires*, 4, 229-76.

Dalgıç, Ö. (2010). "A New Interpretation of the Church of Peribleptos and Its Place in Middle Byzantine Architecture". Ödekan, A. et al. (eds), *Change in the Byzantine World in the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries*. Istanbul: Vehbi Koç Vakfı, 424-31.

Day, G.W. (1977). "Manuel and the Genoese. A Reappraisal of Byzantine Commercial Policy in the Late 12th Century". *Journal of Economic History*, 37, 289-301.

De Boor, C. (ed.) (1883). *Theophanis chronographia*, vol. 1. Leipzig: Teubner.

Delehaye, H. (ed.) (1902). *Synaxarium ecclesiae Constantinopolitanae*. Bruxelles: Societas Bollandiana. Propylaeum ad Acta Sanctorum Novembris.

Demangel, R.; Mamboury, E. (1939). *Le quartier des Manganes et la première région de Constantinople*. Paris: Boccard.

Dindorf, L. (ed.) (1832). *Chronicon paschale*. Bonn: Weber.

Dirimtekin, F. (1953). *Fetihden önce Marmara surları*. Istanbul: İstanbul Fethi Derneği.

Downey, G. (1955). "Earthquakes at Constantinople and Vicinity, A.D. 342-1454". *Speculum*, 30, 596-600.

Effenberger, A. (2020). "Topographica corrigenda". *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik*, 70, 40-66.

Erdik, M. (2019). "Earthquake Performance of Hagia Sophia". Kasimzade, A.A. et al. (eds), *Seismic Isolation, Structural Health Monitoring, and Performance Based Seismic Design in Earthquake Engineering*. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 165-93.

Featherstone, M.; Signes Codoñer, J. (eds) (2015). *Chronographiae quae Theophanis continuati nomine fertur libri I-IV*. Berlin: De Gruyter. Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae 53.

Greatrex, G.B. (1997). "The Nika Riot. A Reappraisal". *Journal of Hellenic Studies*, 117, 60-86.

Haury, J. (ed.) (1905). *Procopius, 1-2: De Bellis*. Leipzig: Teubner.

Heher, D. (2016). "Julianoshafen; Sophienhafen; Kontoskalion". Daim, F. (Hrsg.), *Die byzantinischen Häfen Konstantinopels*. Mainz: Verlag des Römisch-Germanischen Zentralmuseums, 51-66. Byzanz zwischen Orient und Okzident 4.

Hurbanič, M. (2019). *The Avar Siege of Constantinople in 626. History and Legend*. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan.

Jacoby, D. (2001). "The Venetian Quarter of Constantinople from 1082 to 1261. Topographical Considerations". Sode, C.; Takács, S. (eds), *Novum millennium. Studies on Byzantine History and Culture Dedicated to Paul Speck, 19 December 1999*. Aldershot: Variorum, 153-70.

Janin, R. (1969). *Les églises et les monastères*. 2ème éd. Paris: Centre National De La Recherche Scientifique.

Jankowiak, M. (2013). "The First Arab Siege of Constantinople". *Travaux et Mémoires*, 17, 237-320.

Kislinger, E. (2016). "Neorion und Prosphorion. Die alten Häfen am Goldenen Horn". Daim, F. (Hrsg.), *Die byzantinischen Häfen Konstantinopels*. Mainz: Verlag des Römisch-Germanischen Zentralmuseums, 91-7. Byzanz zwischen Orient und Okzident 4.

Kotzabassi, S. (ed.) (2013). *The Pantokrator Monastery in Constantinople*. Berlin: De Gruyter. Byzantinisches Archiv 27.

Laiou-Thomadaki, A. (ed.) (2005). *Urbs Capta. The Fourth Crusade and its Consequences*. Paris: Lethielleux.

Macrides, R. (2015). "The 'Other' Palace in Constantinople. The Blachernai". Featherstone, M. et al. (eds), *The Emperor's House. Palaces from Augustus to the Age of Absolutism*. Berlin: De Gruyter, 159-68. Urban Spaces 4.

Magdalino, P. (1993). *The Empire of Manuel I Komnenos 1143-1180*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Magdalino, P. (2004). "L'église du Phare et les reliques de la Passion à Constantinople (VIIe/VIIIe-XIIIe siecles)". Durand, J.; Flusin, B. (eds), *Byzance et les reliques du Christ*. Paris: Association des Amis du Centre d'Histoire et Civilisation de Byzance, 15-30. Monographies 17.

Magdalino, P. (2007a). "Constantine V and the Middle Age of Constantinople". *Studies on the History and Topography of Byzantine Constantinople*. London: Ashgate Variorum, no. IV. Variorum collected studies series 855.

Magdalino, P. (2007b). "Medieval Constantinople". *Studies on the History and Topography of Byzantine Constantinople*. London: Ashgate Variorum, no. I. Variorum collected studies series 855.

Magdalino, P. (2016). "The House of Basil the Parakoimomenos". Delouis, O. et al. (éds), *Le saint, le moine et le paysan. Mélanges Michel Kaplan*. Paris: Sorbonne, 323-8. Publications de la Sorbonne 29.

Magdalino, P. (2019). "Modes of Reconstruction in Byzantine Constantinople". Capet, E. et al. (éds), *Reconstruire les villes. Temps et espaces réappropriés*. Turnhout: Brepols, 255-67. Semitica et Classica, Supplementa 1.

Mango, C.A. (1962). *Materials for the Study of the Mosaics of St. Sophia at Istanbul*. Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection. Dumbarton Oaks Studies 8.

Mango, C. (1981). "Constantine's Porphyry Column and the Chapel of St Constantine". *Deltion tes Christianikes Archaologikes Hetaireias*, 4, 103-10.

Mango, C. (1990). *Le développement urbain de Constantinople, IVᵉ-VIIᵉ siècles*. 2ᵉᵐᵉ éd. Paris: Boccard. Travaux et Mémoires du Centre de Recherche d'Histoire et Civilisation de Byzance 2.

Mango, C.A. (1997). "The Palace of the Boukoleon". *Cahiers archéologiques*, 45, 41-50.

Marinis, V. (2004). *The Monastery "Tou Libos". Architecture, Sculpture, and Liturgical Planning in Middle and Late Byzantine Constantinople*. Ann Arbor (MI): Pro Quest.

Mark, R.; Çakmak, A.S. (1992). *Hagia Sophia from the Age of Justinian to the Present* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Meier, M. (2003). "Die Inszenierung einer Katastrophe: Justinian und der Nika-Aufstand". *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik*, 142, 273-300.

Mullett, M. Ousterhout, R.G.; Gargova, F. (eds) (2020). *The Holy Apostles. A Lost Monument, a Forgotten Project, and the Presentness of the Past*. Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection.

Niewöhner, P.; Abura, J.; Prochaska, W. (2010). "Der frühbyzantinische Rundbau beim Myrelaion in Konstantinopel. Kapitelle, Mosaiken und Ziegelstempel". *Istanbuler Mitteilungen*, 60, 411-59.

Olsen, R.J. (2020). "The Last Arab Siege of Constantinople (717-718)". *Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies*, 60, 425-43.

Özgümüş, F. (2000). "Peribleptos (Sulu) Monastery in Istanbul". *Byzantinische Zeitschrift*, 93, 508-20.

Peschlow, U. (1986). "Eine wiedergewonnene byzantinische Ehrensäule in Istanbul". Feld, O.; Peschlow, U. (Hrsgg), *Studien zur spätantiken und byzantinischen Kunst Friedrich Wilhelm Deichmann gewidmet*. Bonn: Habelt, 23-33. Monographien des Römisch-germanischen Zentralmuseums 10.1.

Preger, T. (ed.) (1907). *Scriptores originum Constantinopolitanarum*, vol. 2. Leipzig: Teubner.

Reinsch, D.R.; Kambylis, A. (Hrsgg) (2001). *Annae Comnenae Alexias*. 2 Bde. Berlin; New York: De Gruyter. Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae 40. https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110881172.

Sághy, M.; Ousterhout, R. (eds) (2019). *Piroska and the Pantokrator. Dynastic Memory, Healing and Salvation in Komnenian Constantinople*. Budapest: Central European University Press. Central European University Medievalia 19.

Schneider, A.M. (1950). "Mauern und Tore am Goldenen Horn zu Konstantinopel". *Nachrichten der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Göttingen, phil.-hist. Klasse*, 5, 65-107.

Schwartz, E. (ed.) (1940). *Collectio Sabbaitica contra Acephalos et Origeniastas destinata. Insunt acta Synodorum Constantinopolitanae et Hierosolymitanae A. 536*. Straßburg: Trübner. Acta Conciliorum Oecumenicorum 3.

Ševčenko, I. (ed.) (2012). *Chronographiae quae Theophanis continuati nomine fertur liber quo Vita Basilii imperatoris amplectitur*. Berlin: De Gruyter. Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae 42.

Stanković, N. (2008). "Nea Ekklesia". *Encyclopaedia of the Hellenic World*. `http://constantinople.ehw.gr/forms/fLemma.aspx?lemmaid=12328&lang=en-US&contlang=58`.

Stathakopoulos, D.C. (2003). *Famine and Pestilence in the Late Roman and Early Byzantine Empire*. Aldershot: Ashgate. Birmingham Byzantine and Ottoman Monographs 9.

Striker, C.L. (1981). *The Myrelaion, Bodrum Camii, in Istanbul*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Striker, C.L.; Kuban, Y.D. (1997). *Kalenderhane in Istanbul*, Bd. 1. Mainz: Von Zabern.

Svenshon, H.; Stichel, R.H.W. (2000). "Neue Beobachtungen an der ehemaligen Kirche der Heiligen Sergios und Bakchos (Küçük Ayasofya Camisi) in Istanbul". *Istanbuler Mitteilungen*, 50, 389-409.

Teall, J. (1959). "The Grain Supply of the Byzantine Empire". *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, 13, 87-139.

Teteriatnikov, N. (2004-05). "Hagia Sophia, Constantinople. Religious Images and Their Functional Context after Iconoclasm". *Zograf*, 30, 9-19.

Vasiliev, A. (1925). *The Russian Attack on Constantinople in 860*. Cambridge (MA): Mediaeval Academy of America.

Vetters, H. (1989). "Das Baugesetz Zenons für Konstantinopel". *Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts*, 39, 575-84.

Section 5
Social, Cultural, and Material Networks

Les réseaux et les études byzantines

Michel Kaplan
Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne

Abstract   The introduction to the plenary session on networks focuses first of all on a history of the use of networks in the human sciences, starting with sociometry, then sociology and anthropology, to improve calculation procedures and transform them into representation. First in the family context, then in work relationships, camaraderie and friendship. Network analysis facilitates the study of conflicts and power relations. The behaviour and attitudes of an actor can be interpreted according to his or her structural position in the network. Given the importance of anthropology in historical analysis, the study of networks extends naturally to history.

Keywords   Sociometry. Sociology. Anthropology. Conflicts. Power relations.

Edizioni
Ca'Foscari

Même pour celles et ceux qui utilisent couramment les réseaux dans leurs recherches et les publications qui en résultent, ce dont les trois participants à cette séance vont vous faire une éclatante démonstration, le cheminement scientifique qui aboutit à utiliser les réseaux en histoire, en archéologie et en histoire de l'art, l'origine de cette technique scientifique n'est peut-être pas claire.

Au commencement est le cerveau humain, composé de neurones reliés par des synapses qui permettent aux neurones d'interagir, origine de l'intelligence humaine : c'est le réseau ainsi constitué qui permet au cerveau humain de fonctionner.

C'est ce fonctionnement que les promoteurs d'une intelligence artificielle tentent de copier. Ce n'est pas facile : le cerveau humain est très supérieur à toute machine. Pour obtenir une intelligence artificielle, il faut apprendre à une seule machine d'avantage de connaissances que ne le font la somme de tous les élèves européens durant leur scolarité. Ce serait même inimaginable sans la base de fonctionnement des ordinateurs : une puissance de calcul d'autant plus organisée qu'elle se rapprocherait du système de fonctionnement du cerveau humain.

> Les réseaux de neurones résolvent donc un problème statistique : fondamentalement, la problématique qu'ils abordent n'est pas différente de celle des instituts de sondage qui, après interrogation d'un échantillon représentatif de la population, généralisent les réponses à l'ensemble de la population.[1]

Qui dit calcul dit mathématiques, illustrées pour les byzantinistes par Léon le Mathématicien, l'homme le plus savant du IXe siècle, métropolite de Thessalonique de 840 à 843, cheville de l'école supérieure fondée à la Magnaure par le césar Bardas ; or les byzantinistes ne sont pas en général eux-mêmes mathématiciens. Mais il se trouve que mon université s'honorait d'une excellente professeure de mathématiques et directrice de laboratoire,[2] aujourd'hui émérite, spécialiste des réseaux de neurones, concept qui est la base des outils de travail adoptés par la sociologie ou plus exactement par la sociométrie, initiée par un psychologue, Jacob Moreno (1889-1974), médecin autrichien puis américain d'origine roumaine, dans les années 1930, à la recherche de moyens de calculs et de la représentation graphique de ceux-ci (cf. Moreno 1934).

De la sociométrie, on passe à la sociologie. Publiant une étude sur les relations familiales en 1957, l'anthropologue Élisabeth Bott propose que « le degré de ségrégation des rôles entre mari et femme va-

---

1 *Encyclopedia Universalis* (1996), s.v. « Réseaux de neurones ».
2 Marie Cottrell, par exemple : voir Cottrell 1992 ; Cottrell, de Bodt, Levasseur 1995.

rie dans le même sens que la densité du réseau social de la famille »
(Bott 1971, 58). Pour elle, plus les membres d'un réseau social sont
étroitement liés entre eux, plus élevée est la séparation distincte dans
la répartition des tâches domestiques selon le genre. L'utilisation de
l'analyse de réseaux, en plus de la famille, touche les relations de tra-
vail, de camaraderie, d'amitiés. Élisabeth Bott est l'un des membres
les plus éminents de la Manchester School of Social Anthropology.

> Contrairement à l'insistance traditionnellement axée sur l'intégra-
> tion et la cohésion sociales, [cette école] a développé l'analyse des
> réseaux pour étudier les conflits et les relations de pouvoir. Son
> déplacement du sujet de recherche des communautés africaines
> aux relations de voisinage dans les villes européennes a conduit à
> la découverte de l'importance des relations informelles en milieu
> urbain. (Chiesi 2001, 10500)

La suite cette école est prise par Harvard, notamment autour de Har-
rison White (White 1981), où se développe la notion d'analyse struc-
turelle : le comportement et les attitudes d'un acteur peuvent être
interprétés en fonction de sa position structurelle dans le réseau.

L'originalité qu'apporte l'analyse des réseaux pour la sociologie
et l'anthropologie, c'est de s'affranchir de l'observation selon des ca-
tégories prédéfinies, notamment des critères de classe et plus géné-
ralement des hiérarchies sociales. La structure ne résulte pas des
caractéristiques prédéfinies de chacun de ses membres mais de la po-
sition que chacun occupe. L'individu, acteur social, n'est plus l'unité
de base de l'analyse ; il importe moins que l'entité sociale à laquelle
il appartient ; son rôle social varie en fonction des diverses positions
au sein des réseaux sociaux dont il fait partie. Les relations entre les
acteurs sont plus importantes que les attributs de ceux-ci (cf. De-
genne, Forsé 1994, 5).

L'ouvrage sans doute le plus emblématique est celui de Jeremy
Boissevain, *Friends of Friends* (Boissevain 1974). Il est bon toutefois
de le lire jusqu'à la fin. Dans la conclusion, il met en garde contre les
dérives que peuvent induire l'excès dans la recherche des réseaux :

> L'élan vers le changement est toujours présent dans les relations
> inégales entre ceux qui ont plus de pouvoir et leurs rivaux qui
> cherchent plus de pouvoir, dans l'asymétrie entre l'établissement
> et l'opposition. Puisque cette inégalité est présente dans toutes
> les sociétés, la conclusion doit être, par conséquent, que les fac-
> teurs de changement sont présents dans toutes les sociétés et que
> l'équilibre social n'existe pas, et ne peut pas exister.
> Cette action intéressée est plus qu'une simple recherche égoïste
> du profit aux dépens des autres. Il s'agit plutôt de la tentative de
> personnes mutuellement interdépendantes de vivre le genre de

vie qu'elles souhaitent. Certains souhaitent le prestige et la gloire. D'autres préfèrent exercer discrètement le pouvoir. D'autres encore préfèrent être laissés seuls pour mener une vie tranquille. Beaucoup souhaitent aussi pouvoir se consacrer à l'aide aux malheureux et aux nécessiteux. Et certains, encore aujourd'hui, souhaitent simplement être libérés de la faim, du besoin et de la violence. Ces objectifs ne sont pas seulement prévus par la coutume, ils sont aussi influencés par les circonstances, les capacités et la faisabilité. Parce que les gens sont mutuellement dépendants les uns des autres, les objectifs d'une personne ne peuvent jamais être atteints sans aider et nuire aux autres, car les objectifs qu'elle vise – même celui de rester seule – sont des fins rares et précieuses pour lesquelles elle doit entrer en compétition avec d'autres. Ainsi, pour avoir la liberté de définir la situation de la manière la plus commode pour lui-même et pour ceux dont il dépend, un individu doit se libérer des contraintes qui l'en empêchent. Ces contraintes peuvent être biologiques, physiques ou personnelles. Elles peuvent consister en une incapacité. (284-5)

On est loin du déterminisme induit par l'inclusion dans un réseau par la seule grâce d'une étude sociologique.

L'analyse de réseaux a donné naissance à de nombreuses revues,[3] que ce soit des revues générales sur la science des réseaux ou bien sur les réseaux appliqués à des sciences particulières. L'un des derniers nés est *Journal of Historical Network Research*, apparu en 2017.[4]

Il m'est évidemment impossible de citer tous les livres et surtout articles qui ont illustré l'importance de l'étude des réseaux pour les études byzantines. L'un des ouvrages fondateurs est sans aucun doute celui de Margaret Mullett sur le métropolite d'Ochrid, Théophylacte (Mullett 1997, notamment 163-222). La correspondance de celui-ci permet d'établir les réseaux du métropolite, issu de la bonne société de Constantinople, et d'établir quelques réseaux entre ses correspondants. Il fut l'élève de Psellos dans les années 1060, devint diacre de Sainte-Sophie d'où il fut promu archevêque du principal siège de la Bulgarie conquise par Basile II, héritier du patriarcat qu'avait établi le royaume bulgare.[5] On retrouve les réseaux dans un article de Clau-

---

3 Par exemple : *Social Networks* (depuis 1979), *Computational Networks* (depuis 2014), *Network Science* (depuis 2013).

4 Dans le numéro 1 (2017), on trouve par exemple Brughmans, Peeples 2017 ; dans le numéro 3 (2019), Fernandez Riva 2019. Quant au numéro 4, il est consacré aux "Ties that bind. Ancient Politics and Network Research", et contient des articles utiles pour notre séance.

5 L'étude des réseaux des intellectuels du XIIe siècle a été reprise et approfondie par Grünbart 2005.

dia Rapp (1997),[6] où les termes network et networking apparaissent douze fois. Pour ne pas citer les nombreux articles de Joannes Preiser-Kappeller (2015) et la thèse de Koray Durak, *Commerce and Networks of Exchange between the Byzantine Empire and the Islamic Near East from the Early Ninth Century to the Arrival of the Crusaders* (Durak 2008). Joanita Vroom (2017, 295-8) a bien marqué l'importance de l'analyse de réseau pour les archéologues, par exemple pour montrer la diffusion de tel ou tel type d'amphore dans le monde méditerranéen médiéval.

Pour finir, je me tournerai vers l'Égypte des papyrus et l'article de Giovanni Ruffini :

> Je continue à croire que l'analyse de réseau est une méthodologie utile pour l'étude du monde antique. Mais je ne peux plus prétendre qu'il s'agit simplement d'entrer les données dans l'ordinateur et d'analyser les résultats qui sortent à l'autre bout, en imaginant qu'ils représentent la réalité sociale du monde antique. Au contraire, l'analyse des réseaux n'est que la première étape d'un processus plus long et plus compliqué. Elle nous permet de mesurer la forme des preuves qui subsistent, afin d'obtenir un "Dieu" de l'histoire. Elle nous permet de mesurer la forme des sources qui subsistent, afin d'obtenir une "vue d'ensemble" de toutes les connexions sociales qui subsistent. Mais nous devons ensuite faire un pas de plus, et former et tester des hypothèses sur les facteurs qui déforment ces preuves, quels changements s'opèrent dans le tissage de la société antique lorsqu'elle est enserrée dans le moule de l'écrit pour répondre aux circonstances d'un coin donné du monde écrit. Et puis, à notre tour, nous devons dupliquer et retester ces hypothèses au fur et à mesure qu'elles sont avancées par d'autres, dans une collaboration scientifique vraiment itérative. (Ruffini 2020, 338)

Bibliographie

Boissevain, J. (1974). *Friends of Friends. Networks, Manipulators and Coalitions*. Oxford : Blackwell.

Bott, E. (1971). *Family and Social Network*. 2nd ed. New York : Tavistock.

Brughmans, T. ; Peeples, M. (2017). "Trends in Archaeological Network Research. A Bibliometric Analysis". *Journal of Historical Network Research*, 2, 1-27.

Chiesi, A. (2001). "Network Analysis". *International Encyclopedia of Social and Behaviour Sciences*. Amsterdam : Elsevier, 10499-503. `https://doi.org/10.1016/B0-08-043076-7/04211-X`.

---

[6] Article prolongé par Rapp 2016, où les termes apparaissent 23 fois.

Cottrell, M. (1992). "Mathematical Analysis of a Neural Network with Inhibitory Coupling". *Stochastic Processes and their applications*, 40, 103-26.

Cottrell, M. ; Bodt, E. ; Levasseur, M. (1995). "Les réseaux de neurones en finance". *Finance*, 16, 25-91.

Degenne, A. ; Forsé, M. (1994). *Les réseaux sociaux. Une analyse structurale en sociologie*. Paris : Armand Colin.

Durak, K. (2008). *Commerce and Networks of Exchange Between the Byzantine Empire and the Islamic Near East from the Early Ninth Century to the Arrival of the Crusaders* [PhD dissertation]. Cambridge (MA): Harvard University Press.

Fernandez Riva, G. (2019). "Network Analysis of Medieval Manuscript Transmission". *Journal of Historical Network Research*, 3, 30-49. https://doi.org/10.25517/jhnr.v3i1.61.

Grünbart, M. (2005). "'Tis Love that Has Warm'd Us. Reconstructing Networks in 12th Century Byzantium". *Revue belge de philologie et d'histoire*, 83(2), 301-13. https://doi.org/10.3406/rbph.2005.4924.

Moreno, J. (1934). *Who Shall Survive ? A New Approach to the Problem of Human Interrelation*. Washington, D.C. : Nervous and Mental Disease Publishing Co.

Mullett, M. (1997). *Theophylact of Ochrid. Reading the Letters of a Byzantine Archbishop*. Aldershot : Ashgate.

Preiser-Kapeller, J. (2015). "Harbours and Maritime Mobility. Networks and Entanglements". Daim, F. ; Preiser-Kapeller, J. (Hrsgg), *Harbours and Maritime Networks as Complex Adaptive Systems*. Mainz : Verlag des Römisch-Germanisches Zentralmuseum, 1-24. Interdisziplinäre Forschungen zu den Häfen von der Römischen Kaiserzeit bis zum Mittelalter in Europa 2.

Rapp, C. (1997). "Ritual Brotherhood in Byzantium". *Traditio*, 52, 285-326.

Rapp, C. (2016). *Brother Making in Late Antiquity and Byzantium*. Oxford : Oxford University Press.

Ruffini, G. (2020). "An Epilogue. Social Network Analysis and Greco-Roman Politics". *Journal of Historical Network Research*, 4, 325-39. https://doi.org/10.25517/jhnr.v4i0.82.

Vroom, J. (2017). "The Byzantine Web. Pottery and Connectivity between the Southern Adriatic and the Eastern Mediterranean". Gelichi, S. ; Negrelli, C. (a cura di), *Adriatico altomedievale (VI-XI secolo). Scambi, porti, produzioni*. Venezia : Edizioni Ca' Foscari, 285-310. Studi e ricerche 4. http://doi.org/10.14277/6969−115−7/SR−4−8.

White, H. (1981). "Where Do Markets Come From". *American Journal of Sociology*, 87, 517-47.

Symploke and *Complexio*
Entangling and Dis-Entangling the Networks of the Roman Empire of the East in the Early Medieval World, Fourth-Ninth Century CE

Johannes Preiser-Kapeller
Austrian Academy of Sciences, Vienna

Abstract   The paper synthesises and develops further several attempts to model aspects of the complexity of the infrastructure and administrative organisation of the Roman Empire between the 4th and 8th century CE based on evidence from historiography, historical geography, sigillography and archaeology. It provides a short introduction into concepts and analytical tools of network theory. Furthermore, the paper combines this approach with a visualisation of the spatial range of Roman power and maps based on mobility and perceptions of contemporaries. Thereby, the already successful integration of the 'relational turn' to Byzantine studies shall be demonstrated.

Keywords   Complexity theory. Network analysis. Roman infrastructure. Roman administration. Late antiquity. Early Medieval Mediterranean.

Summary   1 Introduction. – 2 Interweaving the World through Roman Power. – 3 Networks of Routes and Imperial Ecologies. – 4 Excursus. A Short Introduction to Complexity Theory and Network Analysis. – 5 Network Models for the Fragmentation and Re-Integration of the Roman Empire, Fourth-Eighth Centuries. – 6 Conclusion. The Scope of the Roman World by the Eighth and Ninth Century.

Per Ewald Kislinger
in occasione del suo 65esimo compleanno.

1   Introduction

This paper synthesises and continues some 'experiments' I have un-
dertaken to approach aspects of the complexity of the infrastruc-
ture and organisation of the Roman Empire from the fourth century
CE onwards with the help of concepts and tools of network theory.
It aims to demonstrate both the potential (and theoretical basis) of
these methods as well as the possibility to apply them even to a pe-
riod identified as poor in sources or even as a 'dark age' in earlier
scholarship. Furthermore, it illustrates how these more abstract mod-
els can be connected to perceptions of Roman power, and the entan-
glements it caused, by contemporaries. Finally, this paper is based
on the important pioneering contributions from scholars of Byzan-
tium and Late Antiquity to what has been called the 'relational turn'
in social and historical studies.[1]

2   Interweaving the World through Roman Power

In the first Greek historiographical work devoted entirely to the Ro-
man Empire, the starting point for Polybios (c. 200-120 BCE) is the
unprecedented 'interweavement' (in Greek *symploke*, in Latin *com-
plexio*; see Walbank 1975; Davies 2019) of the three continents of Af-
rica, Asia and Europe around the Mediterranean by Roman power:

> Previously the doings of the world had been, so to say, dispersed,
> as they were held together by no unity of initiative, results, or lo-
> cality; but ever since this date history has been an organic whole,
> and the affairs of Italy and Libya [i.e. Africa] have been interwoven
> with those of Greece and Asia [*symplekesthai te tas Italikas kai Lib-
> ykas praxeis tais te kata ten Asian kai tais Hellenikais*], all leading
> up to one end. And this is my reason for beginning their system-
> atic history from that date. For it was owing to their defeat of the
> Carthaginians in the Hannibalic War that the Romans, feeling that
> the chief and most essential step in their scheme of universal ag-

---

1   Such as Mullet 1997; Ruffini 2008; Schor 2011; Arthur, Imperiale, Muci 2018; see al-
so Preiser-Kapeller 2020a for an overview. An exhaustive and constantly updated bib-
liography of historical network research can be found here: `https://historicalnet-
workresearch.org/bibliography`. The same website provides an introduction to the
first steps towards applying these methods: `https://historicalnetworkresearch.
org/first-steps`.

gression had now been taken, were first emboldened to reach out their hands to grasp the rest and to cross with an army to Greece and the continent of Asia. (Plb. 1.3.3-6 [transl. Paton 1922-27])[2]

Already before Polybios, for Herodotos (fifth century BCE) for instance the expansion of the Persian Empire had provided a framework to entangle the histories of various regions on all three continents. The Roman imperial project, however, for the first (and last) time would integrate all areas of the 'Oecumene' around the Mediterranean in one polity (Marincola 2007, 171-9; Dillery 2011, 171-218; Potter 2011, 316-45).

In the imagination of later imperial panegyrics, Roman power would range even far beyond this Mediterranean core, as in a Latin eulogy of Latinius Pacatus Drepanius on Emperor Theodosius I from 389 CE (see also Turcan-Verkerk 2003):

> For your guidance, Emperor, had frightened not only those people divided from our world by swathes of forest or rivers or mountains, but those which Nature has separated, made inaccessible by perpetual heat, set apart by unending winter, or cut off by intervening seas. The Indian is not protected by Oceanus, nor the man from Bosphorus by the cold, nor the Arab by the equatorial sun. Your empire (*imperium*) reaches places that the name of Rome has hardly reached before. (*Panegyrici Latini* 2.22.2 [ed. and transl. Mynors 1964, 99])

A similar scope of Roman power is still evoked in the twelfth century by Anna Komnene in the *Alexias*:

> For there was a time when the limits of the Roman rule [*tes ton Rhomaion hegemonias*] were the two pillars which bound east and west respectively, those on the west being called the "pillars of Heracles", those on the east the "pillars of Dionysus" somewhere near the frontier of India. It is hardly possible to define the Empire's former width. Egypt, Meroë, all the Troglodyte country, and the region adjacent to the torrid zone; and in the other direction far-famed Thule, and the races who dwell in the northern lands and over whose heads the North Pole stands. (Anna Komnene, *Alexias* 6.11.3 [ed. Reinsch, Kambylis 2001, 1: 193; transl. Sewter, Frankopan 2009, 176])

The Komnenian princess, however, had also to contrast this former glory with the sad state of the Roman Empire in the late eleventh

---

2   The translation is available online: https://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Roman/Texts/Polybius/1*.html.

century, at the nadir of crisis confined even to a mere corner of the Mediterranean and only partly restored by her father Alexios I Komnenos (1081-1118) despite his efforts:

> But in these later times the boundary of the Roman sceptres [*ton Rhomaion skeptron*] was the neighbouring Bosporus on the east and the city of Adrianople on the west. Now, however, the Emperor Alexios by striking with both hands, as it were, at the barbarians who beset him on either side and starting from Byzantium as his centre, enlarged the circle of his rule, for on the west he made the Adriatic Sea his frontier, and on the east the Euphrates and Tigris. And he would have restored the Empire to its former prosperity, had not the successive wars and the recurrent dangers and difficulties hindered him in his purpose (for he was involved in great, as well as frequent, dangers). (Anna Komnene, *Alexias* 6.11.3 [ed. Reinsch, Kambylis 2001, 193; transl. Sewter, Frankopan 2009, 176-7])

If modern scholars try to capture aspects of the swaying of Roman power from antiquity to the late Middle Ages with novel concepts such as 'networks', 'entanglements' and 'complexity', they follow the footsteps of earlier historians of the empire to a certain degree. New digital tools applied to data from written evidence, archaeology, and historical geography, however, allow to survey, visualise, measure, and even model the empire's *symploke* or *complexio* as well as the properties and dynamics of underlying structures beyond mere metaphors.

3   Networks of Routes and Imperial Ecologies

One enduring infrastructure for the entanglement of the regions around the Mediterranean through Roman power was the road system, into which the administrators and later the emperors invested heavily. Roman roads were built especially for military purposes (beginning with the Via Appia in 312 BCE leading from Rome to Capua and in 190 BCE expanded towards Brundisium at the Adriatic Sea, from where maritime routes led to the Greece). Finally, across the entire empire, the maximum extent of the road network was between 80,000 and 100,000 km.[3] For the transport of bulk goods, however, maritime links were even more important and became increasingly vital for the provision of the growing capital. Since 123 BCE, the city of Rome became dependent on consignments of grain from North Africa, which at that time were financed with the taxes from

---

[3] Kolb 2000; Sauer 2006; Schneider 2007, 72-5, 89; Ruffing 2012, 42-3; Klee 2010.

the recently acquired territories in Western Asia Minor, thus establishing an early triangle of flows of the 'imperial ecology' (Erdkamp 2005; Ruffing 2012, 98-9; Sommer 2013, 90-1).

The concept of 'imperial ecology' was introduced by Sam White (2011, 17) in his study on the Ottoman Empire in the sixteenth and seventeenth century CE; he defined it as the "particular flows of resources and population directed by the imperial center" on which its success and survival depended. Within the web of the imperial ecology, the supply of the imperial centre can be identified as a core element (González de Molina, Toledo 2014; Forman 2014; Schott 2014). Another analytical framework for this supply is the concept of 'urban metabolism'; its content and implications (for what has been called the 'colonisation of nature') have been described as follows:

> The concept [of urban metabolism] looks at resources which are essential for the reproduction of a city on both the level of physical reproduction of the urban residents (including animals), i.e. their 'biological' metabolism as well as collective reproduction of the city as a social, economic and cultural system, i.e. the construction and maintenance of houses, collective buildings such as churches, streets, walls etc., the material production of goods for the needs of the urban residents themselves or for trade to import necessary resources from other places. The focus of this concept lies on material flows and their transformation over time. The concept of 'colonization of nature' brings further dynamic temporal as well as spatial dimensions into this relationship: If cities and their population grow [...] they will need to reach beyond their immediate surroundings in order to fulfil their basic needs. They will tend to exercise either political dominance by extending the territory they control, or use market power to attract production surpluses from further distant regions. Thus cities mobilize in a variety of ways resources of an ever widening hinterland for their social metabolism. (Schott 2014, 172-3)

In 2014, Brian J. Dermody and his team modelled the imperial ecology of the Roman Empire as a "virtual water network" (Dermody et al. 2014), in which precipitation (or Nile floods) were transported across the Mediterranean in the form of agrarian surplus – with the urban metabolism of Rome at its centre, feeding on grain form North Africa and Egypt or olive oil from the south of the Iberian Peninsula, for instance. Regarding its dependency on the scale and reach of these networks, Peter Baccini and Paul H. Brunner made clear that the city of Rome in the imperial period had become

> an example of a system that could only maintain its size [...] on the basis of a political system that guaranteed the supply flows. The

drastic shrinking [of Rome from the fifth century onwards] was not due to an ecological collapse but to an institutional breakdown. The metabolism of such large systems is not robust because it cannot maintain itself without a huge colonized hinterland. It has to reduce its population to a size that is in balance with its economically and ecologically defined hinterland. (Baccini, Brunner 2012, 58; see also Morley 1996; Fletcher 1995)

The characteristics, cohesion, and robustness of such webs of infrastructures can be approached with the help of digital network models. The most exhaustive network model of historical sea and land routes of the Roman Empire in the fourth century CE so far is the "ORBIS Stanford Geospatial Network Model of the Roman World", developed by Walter Scheidel and Elijah Meeks in 2014 to estimate transport cost and spatial integration within the Roman Empire (Scheidel et al. 2014). ORBIS is based on a network of roads, riverine and sea routes (in total 1,104 links) between 678 nodes (places, mostly cities), weighted according to the costs of transport. Since it covers the entirety of the empire's traffic system, ORBIS is less detailed on the regional and local level than network models for smaller areas already existing or under development (Orengo, Livarda 2016). Nevertheless, it is useful as a heuristic tool to reflect upon the structures (cores and peripheries, over-regional and regional cluster) and robustness of such a complex system 'entangling' three continents under pre-modern transport conditions, as I have demonstrated in several papers (Preiser-Kapeller 2015d; 2020c; 2021). Before summing up and developing further these findings however, it is necessary to introduce some basic concepts and tools of complexity theory and network analysis.

4 Excursus. A Short Introduction to Complexity Theory and Network Analysis

It has been argued that

complexity is not a theory but a movement in the sciences that studies how the interacting elements in a system create overall patterns, and how these overall patterns in turn cause the interacting elements to change or adapt. (Arthur 2015, 3; see also Beaudreau 2011)

Complex systems are understood as large networks of individual components, whose interactions at the microlevel produce 'complex' changing patterns of behaviour of the whole system at the macrolevel (Mainzer 2007; Miller, Page 2007; Mitchell 2009).

Network models are one possible tool to capture elements and linkages of a complex system. Network theory assumes "not only that ties

matter, but that they are organised in a significant way, that this or that (element) has an interesting position in terms of its ties" (Lemercier 2012, 22). One central aim of network analysis is the identification of structures of relations. These structures emerge from the sum of interactions and connections between individuals, groups, or sites; at the same time, they influence the scope of (inter)actions of everything and everyone entangled in such relations. For this purpose, data on the categories, intensity, frequency and dynamics of interactions and relations between entities of interest (people, objects, places, semantic entities etc.) are systematically collected, allowing for further mathematical analysis. This information is organised in the form of matrices (with rows and columns) and graphs (with nodes [representing the elements to be connected] and edges [or links, representing the connections or interactions of interest]). Matrices and graphs are not only instruments of data collection and visualisation, but also the basis of further mathematical operation.[4]

A quantifiable digital network model created on this basis allows for a structural analysis on three levels (Collar et al. 2015). At the level of single nodes, respective measures consider the immediate 'neighbourhood' of a node – such as 'degree', which measures the number (or accumulated strength) of direct links of a node to other nodes.[5] 'Betweenness' measures the relative centrality of a node within the entire network due to its position on many or few possible paths between nodes otherwise unconnected. Betweenness can be interpreted as potential for intermediation; nodes with high betweenness provide cohesion and connectivity within the network.[6] A further possible measure of node centrality is 'closeness', which determines the length of all paths between a node and all other nodes (i.e. how many intermediary nodes would be necessary to get a message from one node to another node). The 'closer' a node is, the lower is its total and average distance to all other nodes. Closeness can also be used as a measure of how efficiently resources or information can be distributed from a node to all other nodes or how easily a node can be reached (and supplied with signals or material flows) from other nodes (Wassermann, Faust 1994, 184-8; Prell 2012, 107-9; see **[fig. 1]** for an example).

**4** Wassermann, Faust 1994, 92-6; Prell 2012, 9-16; Barabási 2016, 42-67; Brughmans 2012; Knappett 2013; Collar et al. 2015; Brughmans, Collar, Coward 2016.
  A short 'manual' on how to collect and to put network data on a map with the help of easily available software tools can be found can be found in Preiser-Kapeller 2019. Further tutorials can be found here: `https://historicalnetworkresearch.org/external-resources`.

5 Wassermann, Faust 1994, 178-83; de Nooy, Mrvar, Batagelj 2005, 63-5; Newman 2010, 168-9; Prell 2012, 96-9.

6 Wassermann, Faust 1994, 188-92; de Nooy, Mrvar, Batagelj 2005, 131-3; Newman 2010, 185-93; Prell 2012, 103-7; see **[fig. 2]** for an example.
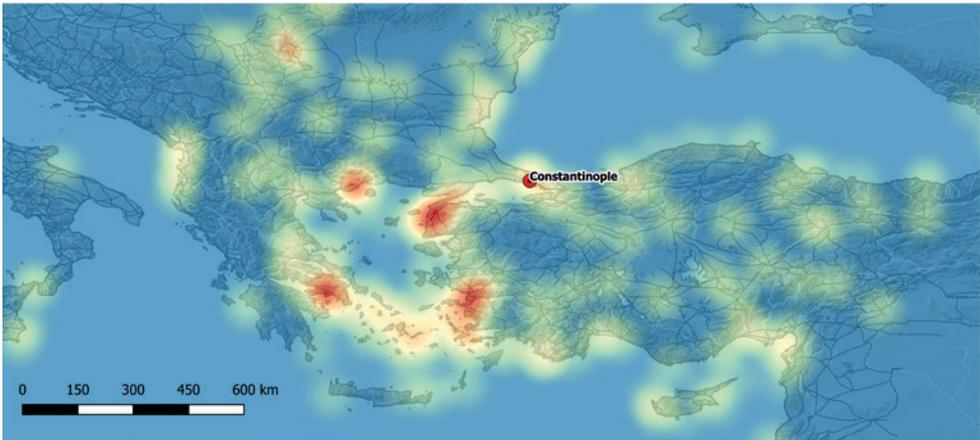
At the level of substructures of nodes, one approach is the identification of 'clusters', meaning groups of nodes more densely connected among each other than to the rest of the network (the number and/or strength of connections between them is stronger than on average between nodes within the network). A measure of the amount to which nodes in a graph tend to cluster together is the "clustering coefficient" (with values between 0 and 1) (Wassermann, Faust 1994, 254-7). To detect such clusters, an inspection of a visualisation of a network can be already quite helpful, since common visualisation tools arrange nodes more closely connected near to each other and thus provide a good impression of such substructures (Krempel 2005; Dorling 2012: see **[fig. 3]** for an example). For exact identification, there exist various algorithms of 'group detection', which aim at an optimal 'partition' of the network. A high 'clustering' within a network equally provides more opportunity for nodes to act as intermediaries between otherwise disconnected subgroups, thus providing them with high betweenness (see above). On the other hand, such a network could also tend towards fragmentation in case such connecting nodes or essential links fail or are destroyed.[7]

At the level of the entire network, possible measurements are the total numbers of nodes and of links, the maximum distance between two nodes (expressed in the number of links necessary to

---

[7] de Nooy, Mrvar, Batagelj 2005, 66-77; Newman 2010, 372-82; Prell 2012, 151-61; Kadushin 2012, 46-9.
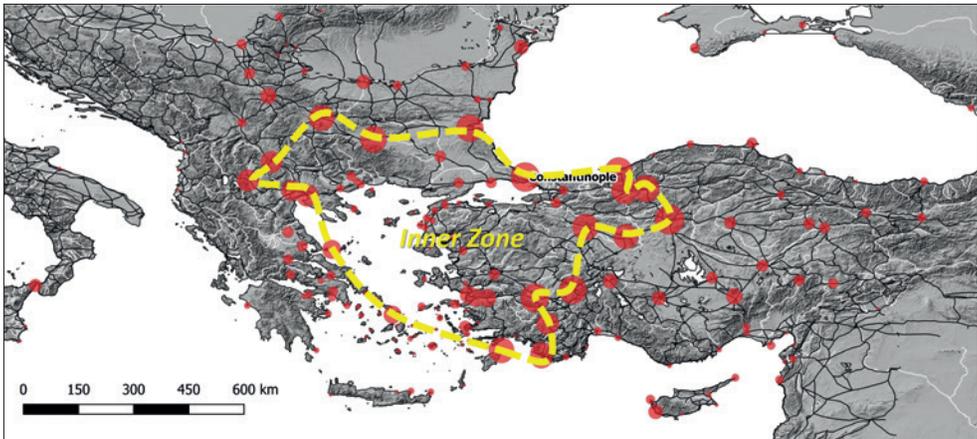
Figure 2   Spatial distribution of betweenness centrality among nodes in the modified ORBIS-network model of routes confined onto the Roman territories after the mid-7th century (data: Scheidel et al. 2014; calculations and visualisation: J. Preiser-Kapeller)

find a path from one to the other) and the average distance (or path length) between two nodes. A low average path length among nodes together with a high clustering coefficient can be characteristic of a 'small world network', in which information or resources between most nodes can be distributed via a relatively small number of links (the famous 'six [or even less] degrees of separation') (de Nooy, Mrvar, Batagelj 2005, 125-31; Prell 2012, 171-2; Watts 1999). 'Density' indicates the ratio of possible links actually present in a network: theoretically, all nodes in a network could be connected to each other (this would be a density of '1'). A density of '0.1' indicates that 10% of these possible links exist within a network. The higher the number of nodes, the higher the number of possible links in a network. Thus, in general, density tends to decrease with the size of a network, since not all nodes in a large-scale network are directly connected. Therefore, it only makes sense to compare the densities of networks of (almost) the same size. Density can be interpreted as one indicator for the 'cohesion' of a network, since a high density also implies a relative redundancy of connections (Prell 2012, 166-8; Kadushin 2012, 29). Other measurements are based on the equal or unequal distribution of centrality values such as degree, betweenness or closeness among nodes. A high 'degree centralisation' for instance indicates that many links are concentrated on a relatively small number of nodes (Prell 2012, 168-70). These distributions can also be statistically analysed and visualised for all nodes (by counting the frequency of single degree values) and used for the comparison of networks. Highly unequal degree distribution patterns have been interpreted
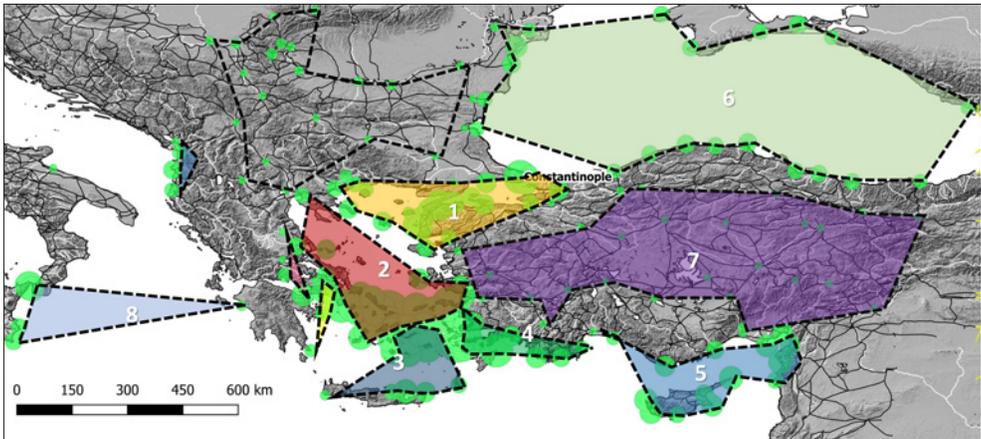
Figure 3 Spatial distribution of degree centrality among nodes in the modified ORBIS-network model of routes confined onto the Roman territories after the mid-7th century and identification of clusters (subgroups of nodes) by internal connectivity within the network (data: Scheidel et al. 2014; calculations and visualisation: J. Preiser-Kapeller)

as 'signatures of complexity' of a network, since they also suggest underlying (non-random) dynamics which privilege certain, already relatively well-connected nodes when it comes to the formation of new links during the growth of a network. Such patterns may also reflect strategies of individual actors, who try to link themselves to already well-connected individuals who may serve as intermediaries to as many other nodes as possible (Newman 2010, 243-61; Preiser-Kapeller 2020b).

In cases of networks of cities (such as the ORBIS model), certain places may serve as special attractors of interactions and connections due to locational advantages (being positioned at the intersections of important sea, riverine and land routes) and/or institutional privileges because of their functions as administrative centres, for instance. The modelling of networks of routes between places equally demands further specifications. Links in such a model are both weighted (meaning that a quantity is attributed to them) and directed (for instance, a link leads from point A to point B). Thereby, aspects of 'transport friction' are integrated into calculations (Isaksen 2008). Otherwise, the actual costs of communication and exchange between sites, which influenced the frequency and strength of connections, would be ignored in network building. Links can be, for instance, weighted by using the inverted geographical distance between them; thus, the shorter the distance, the stronger is a link between two nodes (what has been called 'distant decay'). If possible, existing historical information on the (temporal or economic) costs

for using specific routes could be included (as Walter Scheidel and his team did for ORBIS by integrating data from the maximum price edict of Emperor Diocletian on freight charges, for instance; Scheidel et al. 2014). Furthermore, cost calculation stemming from a modelling of terrain and routes with the help of Geographical Information Systems (GIS) software can be integrated (as Scheidel et al. 2014 also did). In riverine transport networks, directed links leading upstream (from point A to point B) are weighted differently from links leading downstream (from point B to point A), again reflecting different energy and time investments to overcome distance.[8]

Networks 'in real life' are dynamic: relationships can be established, maintained, modified, or terminated; nodes appear in a network and disappear (also from the sources). The common solution to capture at least part of these dynamics is to define 'time-slices' (divided through meaningful caesurae in the development of the object of research) and to model distinct networks for each of them. Yet, for infrastructure networks, a relative long-term stability of core elements can be assumed and the use of one static model can thus be justified.[9] Furthermore, routes and infrastructures are only one 'layer' of the various networks spanning across an imperial space, such as webs of ties of administration, commerce, or religion. All these categories of connections could be integrated as different (but often overlapping) network layers into a 'multi-layer' network model. Yet unfortunately, we do not possess the same density of evidence for these webs across the entire empire as we have for the routes. At the same time, flows of people and ideas were much more volatile than the infrastructural web, on which all these other categories of linkages in turn were depending.[10]

---

8   Rodrigue, Comtoi, Slack 2013, 307-17; Taafee, Gauthier 1973, 100-58; Ducruet, Zaidi 2012; Barthélemy 2011; Carter 1969; Pitts 1978; Gorenflo, Bell 1991; Graßhoff, Mittenhuber 2009; Leidwanger et al. 2014; van Lanen et al. 2015; Preiser-Kapeller 2015e; 2020c; 2020e.

9   de Nooy, Mrvar, Batagelj 2005, 92-5; Lemercier 2012, 28-9; Batagelj et al. 2014; Preiser-Kapeller 2020c.

10   Collar 2013; Auyang 2015; Bianconi 2018; Preiser-Kapeller 2015a; 2015b; 2015c; Preiser-Kapeller, Mitsiou 2019.

5 Network Models for the Fragmentation and Re-Integration of the Roman Empire, Fourth-Eighth Centuries

One of the earliest studies in the field of historical network research was published by F.W. Carter in 1969. He created a network model of the route system in the Serbian Empire of Stefan Uroš IV Dušan (1331-55), using the most important urban centres as nodes and the main trade routes as links. Carter's paper considered the actual geographical distances between places; one of its main aims was to "learn more about the position" of the "successive capitals" within the route network of the Serbian Empire and "whether Stefan Dušan made the right choice in Skopje as his capital". According to Carter´s calculations, Tsar Dušan residence of choice did not rank among the most central nodes in the network model. Other places would have been better situated, Carter argued, and would have provided better opportunities for economic development, the ease of "troop movement" or the flows of materials, thus central aspects of the "imperial ecology" (Carter 1969, 54-5).

Following Carter's pioneering study, I analysed the various network measures of centrality for the city of Rome within the ORBIS-model in an earlier study (Preiser-Kapeller 2020c). Results indicate high connectivity, especially regarding betweenness (i.e. the position as intermediary and connector), for which the value of Rome is four times higher than the average one. In total, however, Rome is not the most central hub in the network model. If we compare its centrality measures with the ones of cities selected as imperial residences in the fourth and fifth centuries CE, some such as Milan, Aquileia, Sirmium or Serdica, they match or even outperform Rome regarding their betweenness and closeness values. In terms of urban scale and population size, however, these places of course could not compete with Rome, which remained privileged regarding the inflows of supplies from across the Mediterranean (Erdkamp 2005; Scheidel, Morris, Saller 2007, 651-71).

Only Constantinople, inaugurated as the new capital by Emperor Constantine I in 330 CE, would eventually outperform the old capital on the Tiber also in these aspects over the course of the fifth century CE. Constantinople is also the only one among the eleven imperial capitals I analysed, which ranks in the ORBIS-network model among the top ten in all three centrality measures of degree (more than six times the average value), betweenness (more than six times the average value) and closeness (the values usually have a smaller spread, but Constantinople is equally among the top nodes). Following Carter's ideas on the "Medieval Serbian Oecumene", this multidimensional centrality may contribute to an explanation of Constantinople's longtime 'success' as imperial centre within the Mediterranean Oecumene

over almost 1,600 years until 1923 (the fall of the Ottoman dynasty), much longer than Rome itself (Preiser-Kapeller 2020c; 2021).

During these centuries, however, Constantinople experienced several cycles of imperial dis- and re-integration and of shrinking and re-expansion of the territories under its control. At certain times, core regions of the wider 'hinterland' for its 'urban metabolism' were lost (such as Egypt in the seventh century), and the entire imperial ecology had to be re-organised (Preiser-Kapeller 2021). A similar fragmentation of the Western Roman sphere in the fifth century resulted in a dramatic urban decline of Rome, as discussed above. A recent palaeobotanical study on Portus, the main harbour of Rome, by Tamsin C. O'Connell and her team identified the mid-fifth century, with the loss of North Africa to the Vandals and their plunder of Rome in 455, as the decisive turning point in Rome's urban metabolism. After this time, the share of the wheat cultivars imported from North Africa in the sample declined from more than 90% to less than 20% (O'Connell et al. 2019).

Such a scenario can be supported by a test of robustness I executed on the ORBIS network model in the already mentioned earlier study (Preiser-Kapeller 2020c). Step by step, I deleted all links in the network above a threshold of a calculated travel time of five, three or two days and finally one day. This, of course, leads to a steady decline of measures of 'connectedness' within the network model, where also the potential reach of diffusion of information or resource within the web decreases. The modified network model shows a 'disentanglement' of large parts of the Roman traffic system, especially in the West of Europe, in the interior of the Balkans or also between the North and South coasts of the Mediterranean (Preiser-Kapeller 2020c). The model is of course only an appropriation towards certain structural parameters of the web of transport links within the Roman Empire. Nevertheless, we observe some parallels to actual historical processes of the fifth to seventh century. Chris Wickham for instance described a partial "micro-regionalisation" of the Roman "world-system" during this period due to a contraction of long-distance connections (Wickham 2004; see also McCormick 2001, 270-7, 385-7). Within Italy, however, in the modified network model the (former) imperial residences of Rome and Ravenna are located within intact medium-sized clusters of connectivity (Preiser-Kapeller 2020c). In the fifth century, with the fragmentation of its former imperial sphere and the maritime axis to North Africa disturbed by the Vandals, the city of Rome contracted significantly and painfully, as we have discussed. Yet after a stabilisation of political conditions in Italy, especially with the establishment of the Ostrogothic Kingdom of Theodoric in 493, this smaller Rome could be supplied within an 'imperial ecology' reduced to Italy (with Sicily as an important asset), as also the results of my 'experiment' with the modified ORBIS-net-

work suggest. Further urban decline, however, came about with the devastations of the Gothic Wars between 534 and 554 and the outbreak of the so-called 'Justinianic Plague', which first reached Rome and Italy in 543 (Stathakopoulos 2004, 291-4; Wiemer 2018, 264-9, 433-5, 463-7).

Despite recently renewed doubts on the demographic impact of the pandemic (Mordechai et al. 2019, but see now Sarris 2021), the plague equally played a role in the decline of Constantinople's population from its peak of maybe 500,000 inhabitants in the early reign of Justinian before 542. Like Rome after the crisis of the fifth century, the smaller Constantinople of the seventh century was easier to supply within an imperial ecology dramatically reduced with the loss of Egypt (which maintains its internal connectivity as resilient cluster in the modified ORBIS-model; see also Wickham 2005, 759-69) first to Sasanian troops and then permanently to the Arabs, and of other rich provinces in the Levant and later in North Africa. As John Haldon and others have demonstrated in several studies, various regions of Asia Minor, in Central Greece and Sicily stepped in as sources of grain and other supplies for Constantinople (Howard-Johnston 1995, 136-7; Brubaker, Haldon 2011, 563; Haldon 2016).

In the reduced ORBIS network model, in which all connections that 'cost' more than one day's journey are deleted, the largest still fully connected component is in the Eastern Mediterranean between the Tyrrhenian Sea and the Levant, with its centre in the Aegean (Preiser-Kapeller 2020c). This would correspond to the central regions and communication routes, which remained under control of the Roman Empire after the loss of its eastern provinces to the Arabs in the seventh century CE, at the end of an actual process of increasing fragmentation of the (post)Roman world (Brubaker, Haldon 2011; Vaccaro 2013; Haldon 2016). A determination of centrality measures within such as reduced network locates all regions with the highest closeness values (those with the best accessibility within the entire network) in the Aegean, either along a West-East axis from Central Greece via the Cyclades to Western Asia Minor, or along the routes leading either along the coast of Central and Northern Greece or of Western Asia Minor to the Dardanelles and eventually to Constantinople (see **[fig. 1]**; on these sea routes see also Kislinger 2010). Equally, all nodes with the highest intermediary potential (betweenness centrality) are located at maritime or land routes leading to the capital and can be found in a wide circle around the centre of the empire (see **[fig. 2]**), marking something like an 'Inner Zone' of connectivity, again around the Aegean and the Sea of Marmara (for such a notion see also Koder 2001). A further analysis of the reduced Roman route network identifies clusters of increased internal connectivity mainly on the basis of maritime connections: one around Constantinople and the Sea of Marmara (cluster 1 in **[fig. 3]**), one ranging from Northern
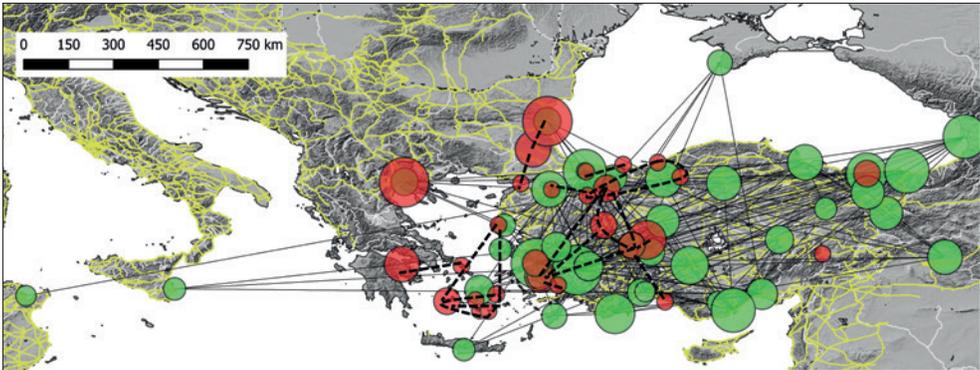
Figure 4 Network models of connectivity among provinces and places based on the data from the seals of the *genikoi kommerkiarioi* (673-728 CE; green circles and thin black lines) and from the seals of the *basilika kommerkia* (730-775 CE; red circles and bold black dotted lines) (data: Brandes 2002; calculations and visualisation: J. Preiser-Kapeller)

and Central Greece across the Central Aegean to Western Asia Minor (cluster 2), one entangling the Southern Aegean and Crete (cluster 3), one connecting the coast of Southwestern Asia Minor from Caria to Lycia (cluster 4), one linking the coasts of Pamphylia and Cilicia with Cyprus (cluster 5, an area where Roman authority was contested by the Arabs), and a cluster 6 of the coastal cities in the Black Sea. In contrast, cities in inland Asia Minor are all attributed to one landlocked cluster (7). Smaller clusters are identified by the algorithm in Central Greece and in the Peloponnese; another bigger maritime cluster (8 in **[fig. 3]**), however, connects the Peloponnese with Southern Italy and Sicily, correlating with one important axis of flows of resources from Sicily to the centre in the modified imperial ecology of the late seventh and early eighth century CE (Kislinger 2001; Vaccaro 2013).

This re-orientation of the imperial ecology is reflected in the activities of the so-called *genikoi kommerkiarioi* (documented only on their lead-seals), who between 650 and 730 acted as official 'managers' for the provision of armies and of Constantinople. These activities often integrated into one operational area several of the empire's remaining provinces and mobilised personnel between them, especially in Asia Minor, but also across the Mediterranean, under the supervision of one or two cooperating *kommerkiarioi* and their collaborators – for the purpose of resource transport between these

areas or the distribution of troops or prisoners of war, for instance.[11] By surveying these linkages between provinces and combining them into another network model, we gain insights into the complexity of the imperial ecology of the Roman Empire during what is considered the political and socioeconomic nadir in the early medieval period. From a series of lead seals from the years 673 to 728, I extracted a network of 157 links between 40 nodes (= provinces) (see **[fig. 4]**) based on their joint assignment to the same *kommerkiarios*. The structural analysis identifies some focal points of connectivity, indicated by the degree values of nodes, that is (in this model) the accumulated strength of the ties of one node to all other nodes due to the number of movements to this province (see **[tab. 1]**). Constantinople, however, has the highest betweenness centrality in the model, which may reflect its significance as a centre of coordination and redistribution of personnel and resources (see **[tab. 1]**). In any case, the model suggests a continuing web of 'metabolic' flows of people and resources across the entire (remaining) empire, which with regard to its range and complexity is at least beyond anything we can observe for post-Roman polities in the West during this period (Wickham 2005; Vaccaro 2013).

Table 1 Provinces and places (nodes) and their centrality measures in the network model for the *genikoi kommerkiarioi*, 673-728

Apotheke of	Betweenness	Degree
Africa	0.0	2
Aigaion Pelagos	0.0	1
Armenia II	4.59	3
Armenia IV	9.20	16
Asia	84.71	46
Bithynia	4.95	6
Blattion	6.93	4
Cappadocia	3.43	8
Caria	63.49	44
Chersonesos	4.11	5
Chios	0.0	3
Cilicia	26.48	11
Constantinople	273.36	30
Crete	4.59	3
Dekapolis	4.27	3

---

11 Brandes 2002, 281-426; Brubaker, Haldon 2011, 682-95; Haldon 2016; see also Prigent 2014, 195-7, for replacing earlier notions that the *genikoi kommerkiarioi* would have mainly collected taxes in kind with a scenario that they "managed vast operations of monetised public purchase".

Apotheke of	Betweenness	Degree
Galatia II	0.91	14
Helenopontus	11.24	17
Hellespontus	126.84	18
Honorias	52.93	18
Isauria	29.65	32
Kamacha	3.17	14
Kerasus	0.0	27
Koloneia	3.17	14
Lazika	10.00	31
Lesbos	0.0	3
Lycaonia	28.48	21
Lycia	58.92	24
Lydia	24.46	9
Mesembria	1.05	7
Nesoi	11.13	9
Pamphylia	41.20	7
Paphlagonia	14.93	16
Phrygia Pakatiane	24.46	9
Phyrgia Salutaria	4.95	6
Pisidia	41.20	7
Rhodos	4.11	5
Sikelia	0.12	3
Syllaion	0.0	2
Thessalonike	0.12	7
Trebizond	6.00	33

Both the network model for the data on the *genikoi kommerkiarioi* as well as the reduced ORBIS-network model suggest a continuity of a maritime axis from Sicily via Southern Italy to Greece, the Aegean and ultimately Constantinople (see [fig. 3] and [fig. 4]). It was via this axis that in 747 the bubonic plague once again reached the capital, coming from Sicily via Calabria and the Peloponnese (Monembasia) to the Bosporus, as Theophanes Confessor (*Chronicle* A.M. 6238 [ed. de Boor 1883-85, 422-3]) reports (see also McCormick 2001, 502-8, 565-9; Kislinger 2001; Stathakopoulos 2004, 384-5). Both Theophanes and Patriarch Nikephoros write that Constantinople became "almost unpopulated" due to the plague; therefore, Emperor Constantine V "populated it by transferring to it a multitude of people from the lands and the islands subject to the power of the Rhomaioi" (Nikephoros, *Short History* ch. 67-8 [ed. and transl. Mango 1990, 138-41]). Theophanes adds that the emperor "brought families from the islands, Hellas, and the southern parts [*ton katotikon meron*] and made them dwell in the City so as to increase the population"; furthermore,

he "transferred to Thrace the Syrians and Armenians whom he had brought from Theodosioupolis and Melitene" in campaigns across the frontier to the Arabs (Theophanes, *Chronicle* A.M. 6247 [ed. de Boor 1883-85, 429; transl. Mango, Scott 1997, 593-4]).

These measures must have successfully contributed to a repopulation of the capital and its hinterland, since some 20 years after the plague during a drought in 766/767, the demand for water in Constantinople could only be met by a repair of the aqueduct system destroyed during the Avar siege in 626. For 140 years, the failure of this infrastructure had not been regarded as a major problem; now, however,

> the emperor set about restoring Valentinian's [actually, Valen's] aqueduct [*agogon*] [...]. He collected artisans from different places and brought from Asia and Pontos 1,000 masons and 200 plasterers, from Hellas and the islands 500 clay-workers, and from Thrace itself 5,000 labourers and 200 brickmakers. He set taskmasters over them including one of the patricians. When the work had thus been completed, water flowed into the City. (Theophanes, *Chronicle* A.M. 6258 [ed. de Boor 1883-85, 440; transl. Mango, Scott 1997, 600-1])

Equally, Patriarch Nikephoros reports about the drought and the renewal of the aqueduct at the order of the emperor; furthermore,

> avaricious as he was, Christ's enemy Constantine proved to be a new Midas, who stored away all the gold. As a result, the taxed people, hard pressed as they were by the exaction of imposts, sold cheaply the fruit and produce of the earth, so that 60 modii of wheat and 70 of barley could be bought for one nomisma and many (other goods) were sold for very small sums. This was considered by the senseless as a sign of the earth's fertility and abundance of commodities, but by the wise as the result of oppression and avarice and inhuman sickness. (Nikephoros, *Short History* ch. 85 [ed. and transl. Mango 1990, 160-1])

In his third Antirrhetikos, Nikephoros provides another description of Constantine V as

> strict and relentless tax collector [*phorologos*], who weighed down the yoke of taxpayers as much as possible with frequent and annual surcharges on taxes; he oppressed all the peasants and squeezed them out so badly in all illegal ways that one could easily have bought a man's entire property for a nomisma. I have seen people myself who got into misery because of taxes and were hung by their hands on tall and tall trees so that they dangled in the air for a long time. And they endured this bitter and severe punish-

ment because they could not pay the taxes to the treasury. (Nikephoros, *Antirrh*. 3.75 [ed. *Patrologia Graeca* 100, 513D-516 A, cited in Brandes 2002, 382])

In fewer words, also Theophanes Confessor describes these measures of Constantine V:

he also at this time made commodities cheap in the City. For, like a new Midas, he stored away the gold and denuded the peasants who, because of the exaction of taxes, were forced to sell God's bounty at a low price. (Theophanes, *Chronicle* A.M. 6259 [ed. de Boor 1883-85, 443; transl. Mango, Scott 1997, 611])

Despite the allegations of Theophanes and Nikephoros, the latter has to concede that the supply policy of Constantine V for the capital was quite successful and popular among the inhabitants of Constantinople, who profited from a sufficient flow of commodities at good prices – even in times of population increase and drought. These measures not only indicate a reorganisation of taxation but anticipate a 'policy of provision' visible in the regulations of the *Book of the City Eparch* from the reign of Leo VI (886-912, ed. Koder 1991), through which quantity, quality, and prices of foodstuffs such a bread, fish or meat were maintained at an acceptable level for the metropolitan population (Preiser-Kapeller 2021). Paul Magdalino (2002, 532), for instance, has identified these measures of Constantine V as the "beginning of a revival" of Constantinople in terms of demography and economy "that continued until 1204".

These policies (as well as those of Constantine V's father Leo III) can also be connected with the activities of the *basilika kommerkia*, which became prominent on lead seals in succession (or replacement) of the *genikoi kommerkiarioi* from the 730s onwards (Brandes 2002, 365-83, esp. 382-3; Prigent 2014). If we map the geographical distribution of the provinces, cities and islands mentioned on the seals of the *basilika kommerkia* for the period between 730 and 775 (see **[fig 4]**), we see a concentration of their activities first in Western Asia Minor, then in the Aegean, Thessalonike and the Thracian hinterland of Constantinople. Again, the operational areas of some of these official institutions entangled several regions or places, including provinces now integrated within the same *thema* (Brandes 2002, 383-94, 552-60). As in the case of the *genikoi kommerkiarioi*, these seals indicate the reorientation and working of an imperial ecology restricted to a significantly smaller space than the circum-Mediterranean empire of the sixth century, but still providing for over-regional flows of people and material and generating an impressive *symploke* or *complexio* (for a network study on this period based on archaeological evidence coming to similar conclusions see Arthur, Imperiale, Muci 2018).

The anthropologist Joseph Tainter in an article of 2000 identified the Byzantine Empire of the seventh century as a rare case of a deliberate "decreasing of the complexity and costliness of problem solving" (Tainter 2000, 27-9). His interpretation was largely based on a selective reading of (by then and now) outdated secondary literature. John Haldon and other members of the Princeton University Climate Change and History Research Initiative on the contrary most recently argued that Byzantium of course contracted in term of spatial extent between the sixth and the seventh century, but that otherwise

> the state maintained an extremely effective central administrative apparatus that was able to efficiently extract, distribute and coordinate the consumption of what resources remained to the empire to best advantage

and that "systemic complexity was retained at all levels, except at that of spatial extent" (Haldon et al. 2020, 23-5; see also Prigent 2014).

Our experiments to model aspects of this systemic complexity of the imperial ecology with the help of network graphs very much confirm this statement and add a further dimension to this research.

6 Conclusion. The Scope of the Roman World by the Eighth and Ninth Century

The spatial contraction after the mid-seventh century centred the empire even more than before onto Constantinople and severed previous flows of the imperial ecology such as, for instance, between Egypt and the capital. It did not, however, impede a continuity of the mobility of individuals and groups between the remaining empire and centres now outside of the imperial borders. Within the framework of the FWF-Wittgenstein-project "Moving Byzantium. Mobility, Microstructures and Personal Agency" headed by Claudia Rapp (Vienna),[12] we have started a systematic survey of the movement of people across the empire's new borders after the Arab expansion. An invaluable basis is the data collected in the Prosopographie der mittelbyzantinischen Zeit (PmbZ 2013)[13] for this period. We extracted information on the itineraries of individuals travelling or migrating from or to certain economic, political, or religious centres formerly located within the empire in the period after the mid-seventh century. As selected examples, I put data on a map for the eighth century for Egypt, Jerusalem, and Rome (see [fig. 5]). In all three cases, the

12 https://rapp.univie.ac.at.

13 https://www.degruyter.com/database/pmbz/html?lang=de.
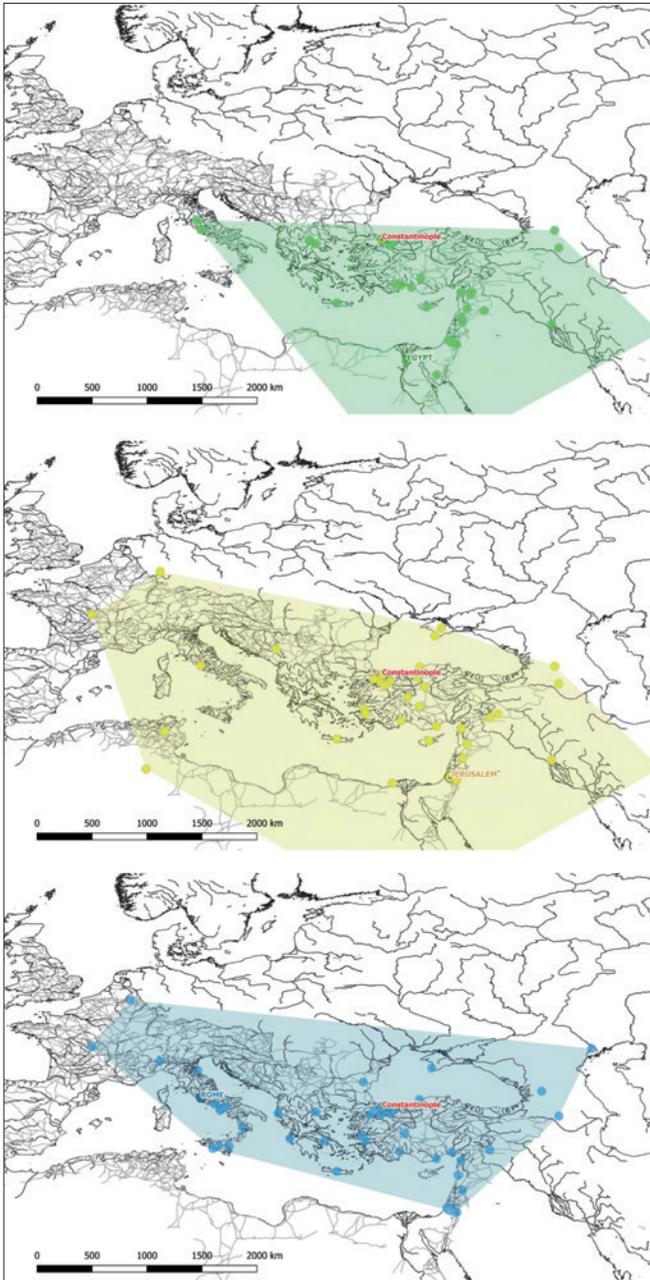
Figure 5 Places in and spatial range of the itineraries of individuals and groups mentioned in the PmbZ in the 8th century CE and travelling to or from Egypt (green), Jerusalem (yellow) and Rome (blue) (data: PmbZ; visualisation: J. Preiser-Kapeller)
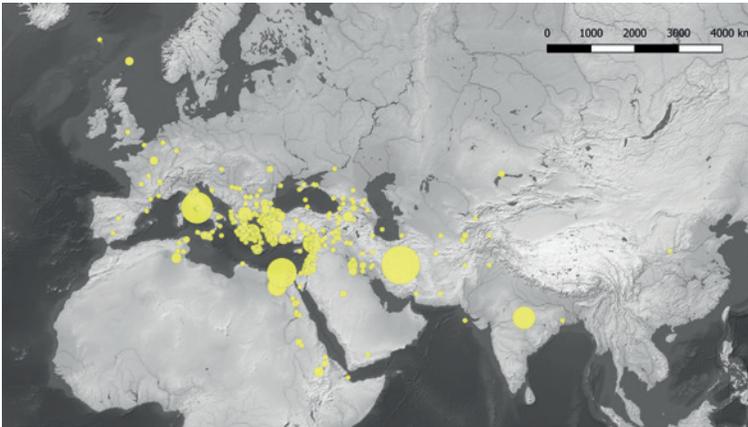
Figure 6 Frequency of toponyms and ethnonyms mentioned in the Bibliotheke of Photios, 9th century CE
(data: Bibliotheke, ed. Henry 1959-1991; calculation and visualisation: J. Preiser-Kapeller)

geographical range of mobility coming from or to these places within and beyond the former Mediterranean core of the Roman world was still significant in the years 700 to 800. All three maps equally show an overlap of coverage on Constantinople and the territories of the reduced Roman Empire in Asia Minor and around the Aegean (see [fig. 5]).

As discussed in earlier studies (Preiser-Kapeller 2015a; 2020d; 2020e, 357-79), this can be understood within the framework of 'stigmergy': earlier travels and exchanges have an enduring effect both in the form of material manifestations such as roads or harbours as well as of immaterial ones such as navigational or commercial know how, mental maps or religious imaginations (e.g Jerusalem as a destination of pilgrimage). They in turn serve as anchor points for a continuation or renewal of connectivity at the medium and long range even after the fragmentation of imperial formations. On this basis, Constantinople served as attractor and exerted (political, religious, cultural) influence far beyond its shrinking borders even in later periods (Preiser-Kapeller 2015a; 2020e, 357-79).

The geographical information and imagination of earlier centuries equally served as source of knowledge for educated Romans after the crisis of the seventh century. Such information was to be found in the hundreds of ancient books whose 'reviews' Patriarch Photios of Constantinople (c. 810/820-893) included in his *Bibliotheke* (or *Myriobiblion*, ed. Henry 1959-91). His text provides us with the potential extent of the 'mental map' of a scholar of the ninth century (see [fig. 6]) (Schamp 1987). To put these toponyms on a modern map ranging all the way to China, however, can be misleading. Al-
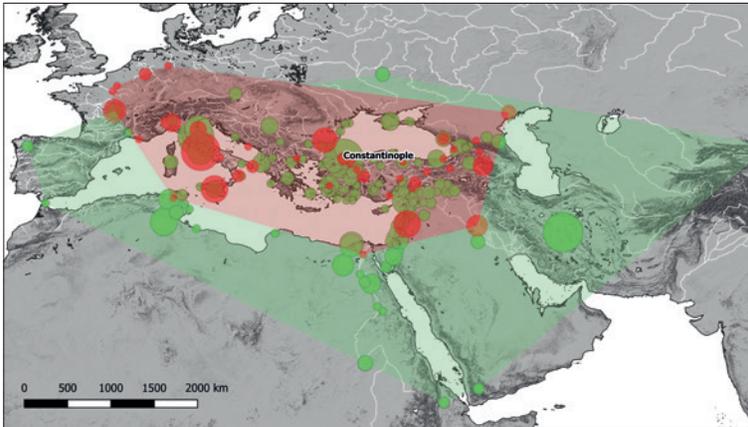
Figure 7 Places of destination of Roman imperial charters and delegations (sized by the number of attested documents) between 527 and 578 CE (green) and between 700 and 800 CE (red) (data: Lounghis, Blysidou, Lampakes 2005; Müller, Preiser-Kapeller, Riehle 2009; calculation and visualisation: J. Preiser-Kapeller)

though the reading list of Photios (who himself took part in a diplomatic mission to Baghdad)[14] included texts of authors who had visited faraway places like Persia or India (such as Ktesias, fifth century BCE, or Kosmas Indikopleustes, sixth century CE), the actual knowledge about these areas had become blurred in Constantinople. The term 'India' for instance could refer to various lands along the Western Indian Ocean, from East Africa via South Arabia to India itself (Darley 2013; Kominko 2013).

Furthermore, the actual horizon of the Roman empire's political interaction (and therefore also of most of its historiography and scholarship) was already in the sixth century more confined to polities and peoples around the Mediterranean and adjacent regions up to Persia or western Central Asia (see [fig. 7]). After the mid-seventh century, the geographical range of Constantinople's diplomacy was even more restricted to the more or less immediate geopolitical neighbourhood in the (Eastern) Mediterranean (see [fig. 7]; see also Drocourt 2015). Thus, the Roman Empire was still among the most complex polities of the later first millennium CE; but its actual power to 'interweave' (s*ymplekesthai*) the affairs of Europe, Africa and Asia was now dwarfed by new 'superpowers' such as the Caliphate or the Chinese Empire of the Tang dynasty (Preiser-Kapeller 2018a; Scheidel 2019). Their imperial ecologies have also been recently approached with the help of network models (Preiser-Kapeller 2020c; Romanov 2021), inviting to comparative studies on the complexity of empires

---

14 https://www.degruyter.com/document/database/PMBZ/entry/PMBZ17454/html.

of the past in the near future, which will again be based on the already significant network analytical work on the Roman Empire of ancient and medieval times.

Bibliography

Primary sources

de Boor, C. (Hrsg.) (1883-85). *Theophanis chronographia*. Leipzig: Teubner.
Henry, R. (éd.) (1959-91). *Photius: Bibliothèque*. 9 vols. Paris : Les Belles Lettres.
Koder, J. (Hrsg.) (1991). *Das Eparchenbuch Leons des Weisen*. Wien: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften.
Reinsch, D.R.; Kambylis, A. (Hrsgg) (2001). *Annae Comnenae Alexias*. Pars prior, *Prolegomena et Textus*. 2 Bde. Berlin; New York: De Gruyter. Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae 40.
Mango, C. (ed. and transl.) (1990). *Nikephoros, Patriarch of Constantinople. Short History*. Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks.
Mango, C.; Scott, R. (transl.) (1997). *The Chronicle of Theophanes Confessor. Byzantine and Near Eastern History A.D. 284-813*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
Mynors, R.A.B (ed.) (1964). *XII Panegyrici Latini*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
Paton, W.R. (transl.) (1922-27). *Polybius: The Histories*. `https://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Roman/Texts/Polybius/home.html`.
Sewter E.R.A.; Frankopan, P. (transl.) (2009). *Anna Komnene: The Alexiad*. New York: Penguin.

Secondary sources

Arthur, P.; Imperiale, L.; Muci, G. (2018). "Amphoras, Networks, and Byzantine Maritime Trade". Leidwanger, J.; Knappett, C. (eds), *Maritime Networks in the Ancient Mediterranean World*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 219-37. `https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108555685.010`.
Arthur, W.B. (2015). *Complexity and the Economy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Auyang, S.Y. (2015). *The Dragon and the Eagle. The Rise and Fall of the Chinese and Roman Empires*. Abingdon; New York: Routledge.
Baccini, P.; Brunner, P.H. (2012). *Metabolisms of the Anthroposphere. Analysis, Evaluation, Design*. Cambridge (MA); London: The MIT Press.
Barabási, A.-L. (2016). *Network Science*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Barthélemy, M. (2011). "Spatial Networks". *Physics Reports*, 499, 1-101. `https://doi.org/10.1016/j.physrep.2010.11.002`.
Batagelj, V. et al. (2014). *Understanding Large Temporal Networks and Spatial Networks. Exploration, Pattern Searching, Visualization and Network Evolution*. Chichester: Wiley.
Beaudreau, B.C. (2011). "On the Emergence and Evolution of Economic Complexity". *Modern Economy*, 2(3), 266-78. `https://doi.org/10.4236/me.2011.23030`.
Bianconi, G. (2018). *Multilayer Networks. Structure and Function*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Brandes, W. (2002). *Finanzverwaltung in Krisenzeiten. Untersuchungen zur byzantinischen Administration im 6.-9. Jahrhundert*. Frankfurt am Main: Löwenklau Gesellschaft.

Brubaker, L.; Haldon, J. (2011). *Byzantium in the Iconoclast Era c. 680-850. A History*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Brughmans, T. (2012). "Thinking through Networks. A Review of Formal Network Methods in Archaeology". *Journal of Archaeological Method and Theory*, 20(4), 623-66. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10816-012-9133-8.

Brughmans, T.; Collar, A.; Coward, F. (eds) (2016). *The Connected Past. Challenges to Network Studies in Archaeology and History*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Carter, F.W. (1969). "An Analysis of the Medieval Serbian Oecumene. A Theoretical Approach". *Geografiska Annaler. Series B, Human Geography*, 51(1), 39-56. https://doi.org/10.1080/04353684.1969.11879331.

Collar, A. (2013). *Religious Networks in the Roman Empire. The Spread of New Ideas*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Collar, A. et al. (2015). "Networks in Archaeology. Phenomena, Abstraction, Representation". *Journal of Archaeological Method and Theory*, 22(1), 1-31. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10816-014-9235-6.

de Nooy, W.; Mrvar, A.; Batagelj, V. (2005). *Exploratory Social Network Analysis with Pajek*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Darley, R. (2013). *Indo-Byzantine Exchange 4th-7th Centuries. A Global History* [PhD dissertation]. Birmingham: University of Birmingham.

Davies, S.H. (2019). "Weaving a Map of 'Global' Empire. The Second-Century BCE Origins of Mediterraneanism". *Mediterranean Studies*, 27(1), 1-35. https://doi.org/10.5325/mediterraneanstu.27.1.0001.

Dermody, B.J. et al. (2014). "A Virtual Water Network of the Roman World". *Hydrology and Earth System Sciences*. http://www.hydrol-earth-syst-sci.net/18/5025/2014/hess-18-5025-2014.html.

Dillery, J. (2011). "Hellenistic Historiography". Feldherr, A.; Hardy, G. (eds), *The Oxford History of Historical Writing*. Vol. 1, *Beginnings to AD 600*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 171-218. https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso bl/9780199218158.003.0009.

Dorling, D. (2012). *The Visualization of Spatial Social Structure*. Chichester: Wiley.

Drocourt, N. (2015). *Diplomatie sur le Bosphore. Les ambassadeurs étrangers dans l'empire byzantin des années 640 à 1204*. 2 vols. Leuven: Peeters.

Ducruet, C.; Zaidi, F. (2012). "Maritime Constellations. A Complex Network Approach to Shipping and Ports". *Maritime Policy and Management*, 39(2), 151-68. https://doi.org/10.1080/03088839.2011.650718.

Erdkamp, P. (2005). *The Grain Market in the Roman Empire. A Social, Political, and Economic Study*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Fletcher, R. (1995). *The Limits of Settlement Growth. A Theoretical Outline*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Forman, R.T.T. (2014). *Urban Ecology. Science of Cities*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

González de Molina, M.; Toledo, V.M. (2014). *The Social Metabolism. A Socio-Ecological Theory of Historical Change*. Heidelberg; New York: Springer.

Gorenflo, L.J.; Bell, Th.L. (1991). "Network Analysis and the Study of Past Regional Organization". Trombold, Ch.D. (ed.), *Ancient Road Networks and Set-*

tlement Hierarchies in the New World*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 80-98.

Graßhoff, G.; Mittenhuber, F. (Hrsgg) (2009). *Untersuchungen zum Stadiasmos von Patara. Modellierung und Analyse eines antiken geographischen Streckennetzes*. Bern: Bern Studies.

Haldon, J. (2016). *The Empire That Would not Die. The Paradox of Eastern Roman Survival, 640-740*. Cambridge (MA); London: Harvard University Press.

Haldon, J. et al. (2020). "Demystifying Collapse. Climate, Environment, and Social Agency in Pre-Modern Societies". *Millennium*, 17(1), 1-33. `https://doi.org/10.1515/mill–2020–0002`.

Howard-Johnston, J. (1995). "The Siege of Constantinople in 626". Mango, C.; Dagron, G. (eds), *Constantinople and Its Hinterland. Papers from the 27th Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 131-42.

Isaksen, L. (2008). "The Application of Network Analysis to Ancient Transport Geography. A Case Study of Roman Baetica". *Digital Medievalist*, 4. `https://doi.org/10.16995/dm.20`.

Kadushin, Ch. (2012). *Understanding Social Networks. Theories, Concepts and Findings*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Kislinger, E. (2001). *Regionalgeschichte als Quellenproblem. Die Chronik von Monembasia und das sizilianische Demenna. Eine historisch-topographische Studie*. Wien: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften.

Kislinger, E. (2010). "Verkehrsrouten zur See im byzantinischen Raum". Kislinger, E.; Koder, J.; Külzer, A. (Hrsgg), *Handelsgüter und Verkehrswege. Aspekte der Warenversorgung im östlichen Mittelmeerraum*. Wien: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 149-74.

Klee, M. (2010). *Lebensadern des Imperiums. Straßen im Römischen Weltreich*. Stuttgart: Theiss.

Knappett, C. (ed.) (2013). *Network-Analysis in Archaeology. New Approaches to Regional Interaction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Koder, J. (2001). *Der Lebensraum der Byzantiner. Historisch-geographischer Abriß ihres mittelalterlichen Staates im östlichen Mittelmeerraum*. Wien: Fassbaender Verlag.

Kolb, A. (2000). *Transport und Nachrichtentransfer im Römischen Reich*. Berlin: De Gruyter.

Kominko, M. (2013). *The World of Kosmas. Illustrated Byzantine Codices of the Christian Topography*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Krempel, L. (2005). *Visualisierung komplexer Strukturen. Grundlagen der Darstellung mehrdimensionaler Netzwerke*. Frankfurt; New York: Campus Verlag.

Leidwanger, J. et al. (2014). "A Manifesto for the Study of Ancient Mediterranean Maritime Networks". *Antiquity. A Review of World Archaeology*. `http://journal.antiquity.ac.uk/projgall/leidwanger342`.

Lemercier, C. (2012). "Formale Methoden der Netzwerkanalyse in den Geschichtswissenschaften. Warum und Wie?". Müller, A.; Neurath, W. (Hrsgg), *Historische Netzwerkanalysen*. Innsbruck; Vienna; Bozen: Studien Verlag, 16-41.

Lounghis, T.C.; Blysidou, B.; Lampakes, S. (Hrsgg) (2005). *Regesten der Kaiserurkunden des oströmischen Reiches von 476 bis 565*. Nikosia: Zyprisches Forschungszentrum.

Magdalino, P. (2002). "Medieval Constantinople. Built Environment and Urban Development". Laiou, A. (ed.), *The Economic History of Byzantium. From*

the Seventh through the Fifteenth Century. Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks, 529-37.

Mainzer, K. (2007). *Thinking in Complexity. The Computational Dynamics of Matter, Mind, and Mankind*. Berlin; Heidelberg: Springer.

Marincola, J. (2007). "Universal History from Ephorus to Diodorus". Marincola, J. (ed.), *A Companion to Greek and Roman Historiography,* vol 1. Malden; Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 155-63.

McCormick, M. (2001). *Origins of the European Economy. Communications and Commerce AD 300-900*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Miller, J.H.; Page, S.E. (2007). *Complex Adaptive Systems. An Introduction to Computational Models of Social Life*. Princeton (NJ): Princeton University Press.

Mitchell, M. (2009). *Complexity. A Guided Tour*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Mordechai, L. et al. (2019). "The Justinianic Plague. An Inconsequential Pandemic?". *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 116(51), 25546-54. https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.1903797116.

Morley, N. (1996). *Metropolis and Hinterland. The City of Rome and the Italian Economy 200 BC-AD 200*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Müller, A.; Preiser-Kapeller, J.; Riehle, A. (2009). *Regesten der Kaiserurkunden des oströmischen Reiches, 565-1453, ed. F. Dölger*. Teil 1, Bd. 1, *Regesten für die Jahre 565-867*. 2nd revised ed. München: C.H. Beck.

Mullett, M. (1997). *Theophylact of Ochrid. Reading the Letters of a Byzantine Archbishop*. Aldershot: Ashgate.

Newman, M. (2010). *Networks. An Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

O'Connell, T.C. et al. (2019). "Living and Dying at the *Portus Romae*". *Antiquity*, 93(369), 719-34. https://doi.org/10.15184/aqy.2019.64.

Orengo, H.A.; Livarda, A. (2016). "The Seeds of Commerce. A Network Analysis-Based Approach to the Romano-British Transport System". *Journal of Archaeological Science*, 66, 21-35. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jas.2015.12.003.

Pitts, F.R. (1978). "The Medieval River Trade Network of Russia Revisited". *Social Networks*, 1(3), 285-92. https://doi.org/10.1016/0378-8733(78)90025-4.

PmbZ (2013). *Prosopographie der mittelbyzantinischen Zeit Online*. Berlin; Boston: De Gruyter. https://doi.org/10.1515/pmbz.

Potter, D.S. (2011). "The Greek Historians of Imperial Rome". Feldherr, A.; Hardy, G. (eds), *The Oxford History of Historical Writing*. Vol. 1, *Beginnings to AD 600*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 316-45. https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:osobl/9780199218158.003.0014.

Preiser-Kapeller, J. (2015a). "Calculating the Synod? New Quantitative and Qualitative Approaches for the Analysis of the Patriarchate and the Synod of Constantinople in the 14th Century". Blanchet, M.-H.; Congourdeau, M.-H.; Mureşan, D.I. (éds), *Le Patriarcat oecuménique de Constantinople et Byzance hors frontières (1204-1586) = Actes de la table ronde organisée dans le cadre du 22e Congrès International des Études Byzantines* (Sofia, 22-7 août 2011). Paris : De Boccard, 159-71.

Preiser-Kapeller, J. (2015b). "Liquid Frontiers. A Relational Analysis of Maritime Asia Minor as Religious Contact Zone in the 13th-15th Century". Peacock, A.; de Nicola, B.; Nur Yıldız, S. (eds), *Islam and Christianity in Medieval Anatolia*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 117-46.

Preiser-Kapeller, J. (2015c). "Calculating the Middle Ages? The Project 'Complexities and Networks in the Medieval Mediterranean and the Near East'". *Medieval Worlds*, 2, 100-27. https://doi.org/10.1553/medieval-worlds_no2_2015s100.

Preiser-Kapeller, J. (2015d). "The Maritime Mobility of Individuals and Objects. Networks and Entanglements". Preiser-Kapeller, J.; Daim, F. (eds), *Harbours and Maritime Networks as Complex Adaptive Systems*. Mainz: Römisch-Germanisches Zentralmuseum Verlag, 119-40.

Preiser-Kapeller, J. (2015e). "Thematic Introduction". Preiser-Kapeller, J.; Daim, F. (eds), *Harbours and Maritime Networks as Complex Adaptive Systems*. Mainz: Römisch-Germanisches Zentralmuseum Verlag, 1-24.

Preiser-Kapeller, J. (2018a). *Jenseits von Rom und Karl dem Großen. Aspekte der globalen Verflechtung in der langen Spätantike, 300-800 n. Chr.* Wien: Mandelbaum.

Preiser-Kapeller, J. (2018b). "Central Peripheries. Empires and Elites across Byzantine and Arab Frontiers in Comparison (700-900 CE)". Drews, W. (Hrsg.), *Die Interaktion von Herrschern und Eliten in imperialen Ordnungen*. Berlin; Boston: De Gruyter, 91-113.

Preiser-Kapeller, J. (2019). *How to Put Network Data on a Map (with Excel, ORA, GoogleEarth and QuantumGIS) – A Practical Manual*. https://www.academia.edu/38786691/How_to_put_network_data_on_a_map_a_practical_manual_.

Preiser-Kapeller, J. (2020a). "Letters and Network Analysis". Riehle, A. (ed.), *Companion to Byzantine Epistolography*. Leiden; New York; Cologne: Brill, 431-65.

Preiser-Kapeller, J. (2020b). "The Ties that Do not Bind. Group Formation, Polarization and Conflict within Networks of Political Elites in the Medieval Roman Empire". *Journal of Historical Network Research*, 4, 298-324. https://doi.org/10.25517/jhnr.v4i0.81.

Preiser-Kapeller, J. (2020c). "Networks and the Resilience and Fall of Empires. A Macro-Comparison between the Imperium Romanum and Imperial China". *Siedlungsforschung. Archäologie – Geschichte – Geographie*, 36, 59-98.

Preiser-Kapeller, J. (2020d). "Aristocrats, Mercenaries, Clergymen and Refugees. Deliberate and Forced Mobility of Armenians in the Early Medieval Mediterranean and Near East (6th to 11th Century)". Preiser-Kapeller, J.; Reinfandt, L.; Stouraitis, Y. (eds), *Migration Histories of the Medieval Afroeurasian Transition Zone. Aspects of Mobility between Africa, Asia and Europe, 300-1500 C.E.* Leiden; Boston: Brill, 327-84. https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004425613_013.

Preiser-Kapeller, J. (2020e). "Small Worlds of Long Late Antiquity. Global Entanglements, Trade Diasporas and Network Theory". Guidetti, F.; Meinecke, K. (eds), *A Globalised Visual Culture? Towards a Geography of Late Antique Art*. Oxford: Oxbow Books, 357-80. https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctv13p-k7vx.18.

Preiser-Kapeller, J. (2021). "The Medieval Roman Empire of the East as Spatial Phenomenon (300-1200 CE)". Pines, Y.; Biran, M.; Rüpke, J. (eds), *The Limits of Universal Rule. Eurasian Empires Compared*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 141-79. https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108771061.006.

Preiser-Kapeller, J.; Mitsiou, E. (2019). "Mercantile and Religious Mobility between Byzantines, Latins and Muslims, 1200-1500. On the Theory and

Practice of Social Networks". *Medieval Worlds*, 9, 187-216. `https://doi.org/10.1553/medievalworlds_no9_2019s187`.

Prell, Ch. (2012). *Social Network Analysis. History, Theory and Methodology*. Los Angeles; London: SAGE Publications.

Prigent, V. (2014). "The Mobilisation of Fiscal Resources in the Byzantine Empire (Eighth to Eleventh Centuries)". Hudson, J.; Rodríguez, A. (eds), *Diverging Paths? The Shapes of Power and Institutions in Medieval Christendom and Islam*. Leiden; Boston: Brill, 182-229. `https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004277878_011`.

Rodrigue, J.-P.; Comtoi, C.; Slack, B. (2013). *The Geography of Transport Systems*. London; New York: Routledge.

Romanov, M. (2021). *Al-Ṯurayyā Gazetteer and Geospatial Model*. `https://al-raqmiyyat.github.io/althurayya`.

Ruffing, K. (2012). *Wirtschaft in der griechisch-römischen Antike*. Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft.

Ruffini, G.R. (2008). *Social Networks in Byzantine Egypt*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Sarris, P. (2021). "New Approaches to the 'Plague of Justinian'". *Past & Present*, 254(1), 315-46. `https://doi.org/10.1093/pastj/gtab024`.

Sauer, V. (2006). "Straße (Straßenbau)". Sonnabend, H. (Hrsg.), *Mensch und Landschaft in der Antike. Lexikon der Historischen Geographie*. Stuttgart; Weimar: J.B. Metzler, 518-24.

Schamp, J. (1987). *Photios historien des lettres. La Bibliothèque et ses notices biographiques*. Liège: Presses Universitaires de Liège.

Scheidel, W.; Morris, I.; Saller, R. (eds) (2007). *The Cambridge Economic History of the Greco-Roman World*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Scheidel, W. et al. (2014). *ORBIS. The Stanford Geospatial Network Model of the Roman World*. `http://orbis.stanford.edu`.

Scheidel, W. (2019). *Escape from Rome. The Failure of Empire and the Road to Prosperity*. Princeton; Oxford: Princeton University Press.

Schneider, H. (2007). *Geschichte der antiken Technik*. München: C.H. Beck.

Schor, A.M. (2011). *Theodoret's People. Social Networks and Religious Conflict in Late Roman Syria*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Schott, D. (2014). "Urban Development and Environment". Agnoletti, M.; Neri Serneri, S. (eds), *The Basic Environmental History*. Heidelberg: Springer, 171-98. `https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-09180-8_6`.

Sommer, M. (2013). *Wirtschaftsgeschichte der Antike*. München: C.H. Beck.

Stathakopoulos, D. (2004). *Famine and Pestilence in the Late Roman and Early Byzantine Empire*. Aldershot: Ashgate.

Taaffe, E.J.; Gauthier, H.L.Jr. (1973). *Geography of Transportation*. Englewood Cliffs (NJ): Pearson Education.

Tainter, J.A. (2000). "Problem Solving. Complexity, History, Sustainability". *Population and Environment. A Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies*, 22(1), 3-41. `https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1006632214612`.

Turcan-Verkerk, A.-M. (2003). *Un poète latin chrétien redécouvert. Latinius Pacatus Drepanius, panégyriste de Théodose*. Bruxelles: Éditions Latomus.

Vaccaro, E. (2013). "Sicily in the Eighth and Ninth Centuries AD. A Case of Persisting Economic Complexity". *Al-Masaq*, 25(1), 34-69. `https://doi.org/10.1080/09503110.2013.767011`.

van Lanen, R.J. et al. (2015). "Best Travel Options. Modelling Roman and Early-Medieval Routes in the Netherlands Using a Multi-Proxy Approach".

Journal of Archaeological Science. Reports, 3, 144-59. `https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jasrep.2015.05.024`.

Walbank, F.W. (1975). "Symploke. Its Role in Polybius' Histories". Kagan, D. (ed.), *Studies in the Greek Historians*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 197-212. `https://doi.org/10.1017/cbo9780511933769.011`.

Wassermann, S.; Faust, K. (1994). *Social Network Analysis. Methods and Applications, Structural Analysis in the Social Sciences*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Watts, D.J. (1999). *Small Worlds. The Dynamics of Networks between Order and Randomness*. Princeton; Oxford: Princeton University Press.

White, S. (2011). *The Climate of Rebellion in the Early Modern Ottoman Empire*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Wickham, Ch. (2004). "The Mediterranean around 800. On the Brink of the Second Trade Cycle". *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, 58, 161-74. `https://doi.org/10.2307/3591384`.

Wickham, Ch. (2005). *Framing the Early Middle Ages. Europe and the Mediterranean, 400-800*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Wiemer, H.-U. (2018). *Theoderich der Große. König der Goten. Herrscher der Römer*. München: C.H. Beck.

The Use of Non-Commercial Networks for the Study of Byzantium's Foreign Trade
The Case of Byzantine-Islamic Commerce in the Early Middle Ages

Koray Durak
Boğaziçi University, Istanbul

Abstract   Building upon the anthropological studies, I would like to put forward a fresh outlook on the nature of Byzantium's foreign exchanges in the example of the Byzantine-Near Eastern relations from the 7th to the 11th centuries. Examining the types of objects/people/information exchanged (i.e. diplomats, merchants, booty, gifts, military technology etc.) and the ways they moved through different modes of exchange (commerce, plunder etc.) critically and comparatively would help every Byzantinist elucidate areas that are less well understood, such as commercial exchanges; it also makes us aware of the fact that the categories presented above are *ideal types*, and that objects and people had multiple and changing identities while different modes occasionally coalesced.

Keywords   Byzantine-Islamic relations. Economic and non-economic exchange. Gifts. Plunder. Tribute. Commerce. Theories of exchange. Byzantine trade.

Summary   1 Introduction. – 2 Current Perspectives on Exchange. – 3 Constructing a Model. – 4 Using the Model for Heuristic Purposes (Holistic and Parallelist Approaches). – 5 Deconstructing the Model. – 6 Further Methodological Suggestions.

1   Introduction

Almost every modern work on Byzantine-Near Eastern relations acknowledges the multifaceted nature of their contacts when the Byzantines were neighbours to the Umayyad (661-750), Abbasid (750-945), and post-Abbasid dynasties in the eastern Mediterranean and western Asia until the arrival of the Crusaders and the Seljuks into the Near East in the eleventh century. Modern historians list diplomats, merchants, pilgrims and all other types of travellers together with various types of objects that passed between these realms, such as commodities and gifts, and occasionally refer to the modes in which these objects, people and information moved, such as commerce, diplomacy or violence.[1]

Benefiting from anthropological studies and building upon the previous scholarship on Byzantium, I would like to put forward a fresh outlook on the nature of Byzantium's foreign exchanges. Examining the *types of objects/people/information* exchanged (i.e. diplomats, merchants, booty, gifts, military technology etc.) and the ways they moved through different *modes of exchange* (commerce, plunder etc.) critically and comparatively would reward every Byzantinist with additional sets of historical data as well as fresh perspectives and conceptual tools. Bringing together and comparing types of objects, people, and information as well as modes of exchange serves a heuristic purpose, helping us elucidate areas that are less well understood, such as commercial exchanges; it also makes us aware of the fact that the types of objects and people we discuss are *ideal types*, and the modes of exchange are theoretical models that help us to find our way in the messy reality of historical experience. Separating types of exchanged objects, people, and information as well as modes of exchange (mode defined as a system of exchange with certain assumptions and limitations, a certain type of relationship between the participants, and a certain purpose which may be personal or social, economic or non-economic) into a set of distinct boxes is unnatural in view of the picture we get from the primary sources on Byzantine-Near Eastern relations. The sources present examples of fluidity in the identities of people and objects that were exchanged, and permeability among the modes of exchange.

With this point of view in mind, I will first present the current scholarship on Byzantine-Near Eastern relations from the perspective of how scholars conceptualise types and modes of exchanges (§ 2). Then,

by constructing a model, I will attempt a near-exhaustive categori-sation of types of exchanged objects and people in order to show the complexity of the exchanges (§ 3). At this point, I will present anthro-pological perspectives on exchange, specifically modes of exchange, in order to situate the discussion in Byzantine studies in a wider con-text. My focus will be on people and objects rather than information, although how the information was formed, manipulated, and carried through the agency of people (like diplomats or pilgrims) or objects deserve close examination, since "the medium is the message" (McLu-han 1964; Lounghis 1994; Griffith 1997, 250; Koutrakou 2007). In the section "Using the Model" (§ 4), I will show how considering the types of exchanged objects and people in a collective or comparative man-ner and studying the modes of exchange in comparison to each other would give us more historical data. In the next section entitled "De-constructing the Model" (§ 5), I will show the fluidity of the catego-ries constructed above. Objects and people had multiple and chang-ing identities and different modes occasionally coalesced. I will finish my discussion with further methodological suggestions.

2 Current Perspectives on Exchange

Byzantinists and medieval Islamists who attempt to provide a general view of the Byzantine-Near Eastern relations such as Gibb (1958), Ca-nard (1964), Bosworth (1991-92), and Reinert (1998), Mansouri (2000) list various groups of travellers, from diplomats and prisoners to arti-sans and merchants, who moved between the Umayyads and Byzan-tines, Abbasids and Byzantines, and Constantinople and the Islamic world. Usually, travellers and objects in motion are conceptualised without much questioning, studied separately or listed one after an-other without focusing on the relations among them. However, there are exceptions to this tendency. Although most of his examples comes from the communications between Byzantium and western Europe in the early Middle Ages, Mccormick (2001, 242, 274-5) concludes that "fluid boundaries among ambassadors, pilgrims, and merchants are unmistakable". He also (2001, 242; 2002) suggests utilising data ob-tained from one type of exchange to understand the other better or bringing the data from all types of exchange together to learn more about the routes. Likewise, Pryor (1988, 104) argues, "all major [na-val] engagements were fought along the trunk routes [in the Mediter-ranean]". Bonner (1996, 146, 152) shows on the basis of Arabic sourc-es relating to eighth- to tenth-century Islamic Cilicia how ascetics and religious scholars from this region were active in the holy war against Byzantium, and were also engaged in long-distance trade.

Following the traditional scheme, scholars of Byzantine-Islamic re-lations usually focus on major modes of exchange, in an almost hier-

archical order from military to cultural contacts, without examining the relations between these modes (Bonner 2004; Kaegi 2008). For instance, Vasiliev (1948) starts his discussion with a focus on booty and tribute moving between the Byzantine and Islamic worlds, followed by diplomatic exchanges and commerce, while Soucek's (c. 1997) examination of Byzantine-Islamic relations from an art historian's perspective foregrounds the role of diplomatic and commercial exchanges for artistic contacts. The same is true when certain areas like Crete or periods like tenth/eleventh century Byzantine-Fatimid relations are examined (Miles 1964; Lev 1995; Thomas 2012, 124-32). Commerce, tribute, gift, and booty are presented as the major but independent venues for the movement of objects, when modern historians study the Mediterranean Sea and its contacts, such as Abulafia (2011, 241-70), or when they study together Byzantium and the larger European and Eurasian world around it, such as Grierson (1959, 130-9), Preiser-Kapeller (2018), and Drauschke (2011). Similarly, those who focus on the Byzantine-Near Eastern frontier have a tendency to compartmentalise very complex, almost web-like relationships into a number of linear channels like the 'cultural', 'military', and 'commercial'. Although they acknowledge the impact of, e.g. the military (developments) or the political (decisions) on the commercial structures, they do not pay attention to the confluences and permeabilities among different modes that conveyed objects and people (Obolensky 1974; Haldon, Kennedy 1980; Eastmond 2001, XVI-XVII).

Exploring the movement of wealth outside the markets, historians of Byzantine economy have been receptive to thinking through modes of exchange. They suggest that objects moved within Byzantium and between the Byzantium and the Near East through a number of modes of exchange. While scholars like Harvey (1989, 82-5, 182-3), Temin (2012), Morrisson (2012), Carrié (2012), and Curta (2021) apply this dual system of economic/non-economic movement to the Byzantine economy itself; Patlagean (1993), Laiou (2002), and Wickham (2005, 693-6) carry the discussion to the field of Byzantium's foreign trade. Patlagean (1993, 614) wrote:

> Les échanges du grand commerce privé ne sont pas fondé exclusivement sur la chaîne régulière des transactions marchandes [...]. Le trafic des esclaves par excellence est alimenté, on l'a vu, par les prises des pirates enter rives grecques et rives étrangères. Le rachat des captifs n'est qu'une variante de la transaction.

Such an outlook underlines the importance of non-economic or non-commercial modes of exchange in the movement of people, objects, and information, dethroning the dominance of economic/commercial exchange, and opens the door to asking whether there were entanglements between the modes.

Taking a step further, some medievalists have already observed that the lines of separation between the modes of exchange were not so clear. In his study on early medieval European economy, Moreland (2000, 32) claims, "objects are not inherently gifts or commodities". Horden and Purcell (2000, 154-9, 388, 606-7) draw attention to the fluidity between piracy and commerce, calling piracy as a continuation of cabotage by other means. The strong correlation between the commodities and gifts exchanged between the Byzantines and Near Easterners was first referred to by Canard (1964, 54) and taken up again by Bauer (2006, 144), Hilsdale (2012, 179 fn. 7), and especially by Cutler (2001, 255, 266). Tolan (2011, 9) stated:

> Indeed, the borders were often thin between commerce, piracy and naval war […] Arab, Byzantine and Italian merchants made a lucrative business out of taking captives for ransom and buying and selling slaves.

Eger's (2015, 260-1) reading of raids on the Byzantine-Islamic Syrian frontier in the early Middle Ages as part of the transhumance movement of nomadic and semi-pastoralists groups, and Rotman's (2012) study of the intricate relations between captives and slaves, and the commercialisation of the booty obtained from military attacks and piracy in the early medieval eastern Mediterranean, are among other successful works that questions whether the modes of exchange can be strictly separated.

3　Constructing a Model

In order to build a picture of relations that goes beyond a simple laundry list of types of exchanged objects and people, and to explore the relations among them in order to produce a web of relations, one should create a table that combines the forms of movement as well as the purposes of exchanging objects and people [table 1].

Table 1   Types of people and objects exchanged

Purposes of exchange	Forms of exchange		
	People	Objects	Information
Political	Deserters	Tribute	Propaganda
Diplomatic	Envoys	Gifts Letters	Treaties
Military	Soldiers Spies Guides Raiders	Booty Captives	Military technology Espionage
Commercial	Merchants Artisans	Commodities Slaves	Production methods
Religious	Clergy Pilgrims	Relics Pilgrimage tokens	Apologetics
Cultural	Travellers Scholars and students	Art works Books/Manuscripts	Literature Translations
Relocation	Immigration Transhumance		Jewish diaspora Communications

The contact between the Byzantines and the Near Easterners took three forms – people, objects, information –, although again, making a sharp distinction between these categories and setting them on the same plane brings inconsistencies and exceptions to the surface. One should remember that people were the most important agents among the three, since information cannot travel except through people or objects (e.g. contained in books or silken garments), and similarly, objects also typically needed the agency of people (unless we talk about the flotsam that washed ashore or the slow diffusion of plants around the eastern Mediterranean via wind or animals spreading their pollen and seed). Captives, especially slaves, would fit both categories of people and objects, and one might find it difficult to define the favourite parrot of Emperor Basil I, known to be "a mimic and a chatterbox", as simply an object (John Skylitzes, *Synopsis of Byzantine History* [transl. Wortley 2010, 162]). Moreover, how can we separate the object from the human? Following the story of relics in the Middle Ages, Geary (1990, 3-4) writes, albeit from a highly anthropocentric perspective,

> it is the individuals who came into contact with these objects, giving them value and assimilating them into their history, who are the proper subject of historical inquiry.

Exchange in these three abstracted forms took place for certain purposes. Based on the accounts of the medieval writers and the almost universal needs of inter-society interactions, we can define politi-

cal, military, economic, religious, and cultural/educational purposes as the main reasons for contact, although relocation (immigrants, refugees, and transhumance pastoralism on the frontier) should be added to this list.

Frequency, duration, and association or proximity between these types of exchanged objects and people should be kept in mind in any study of relations, although they are not the focus of the present study. To take one example, Jewish Talmudic students' visits from Byzantium to Baghdad for education, or the travels of the likes of Ḥunayn ibn Isḥāḳ, who visited Byzantium to find rare manuscripts, would not be as frequent as the travels of merchants or the raids of soldiers, which would sometimes occur twice a year.

As I stated at the beginning, movement of objects, people, and information took place through diverse modes. Application of theories of exchange, which has found a warm welcome in the fields of Ancient Near Eastern and Greek studies (Gill, Postlethwaite, Seaford 1998; Klinkott et al. 2007; Carlà, Gori 2014), is still a desideratum in Byzantine studies. The major modes of exchange between Byzantium and the Near East – commercial transactions, gift exchanges, tributes, and plundering – fit nicely into the well-known categories of exchange as theorised in anthropological studies. In an attempt to explain how economies of past societies was instituted and embedded in social relations, Polanyi posited a tripartite model composed of reciprocity, redistribution, and market exchange. Reciprocity, in Polanyi's words (Polanyi, Arensberg, Peason 1957, 250), refers to "movements between correlative points of symmetrical groupings" in which constructing and sustaining social relations are more important than obtaining the objects themselves. This mode is most clearly represented in gift exchange. The second major mode of exchange, redistribution, "designates appropriational movements toward a centre and out of it again", and is best represented by taxation in a centralised state. This mode involves the movement of surplus through political means, which is similar to Marx's term "appropriation without exchange" (1993, 514-54), and in the case of Byzantine-Near Eastern relations is best represented by tribute. In the third mode – commercial exchange – objects change hands between free actors with a profit motive in a market environment. Byzantine-Near Eastern exchange largely took place in this mode, constrained by a number of political and military limitations on the free movement of commodities and merchants. Underlining the importance of reciprocity and redistribution for pre-modern societies, Polanyi's views are closer to the 'primitivist/substantivist' camp of economic historians who emphasise the predominant role of non-market forces in pre-modern exchanges, as opposed to the views of 'formalists' who see utility maximisation and rational behaviour as central and consider the social, political and cultural ties that appear on the surface to have been es-

tablished via exchange (Polanyi 1977, 35-8; Duncan, Tandy c. 1994, 9-10). However, according to the current consensus, neither the past economies were devoid of commodification, nor the modern societies are solely dominated by economies disembedded from the social, cultural, and religious. Moreover, the emphasis has moved from economic institutions to economic behaviour, exploring the individual decision-making process, and "maximizing" (Wilk, Cliggett 1996, 10-11).

Building his argument on the close relationship between social distance and exchange, Sahlins distinguished in *Stone Age Economics* (1972, 191-204) between generalised, balanced, and negative reciprocity. He attributed generalised reciprocity to the relations between near-kinsmen, socially closest to each other, where expectation of return is unseemly such as free gifts; he attributed negative reciprocity to relations between total strangers, where one party gets more than the other, or gets something for nothing. The most extreme example of negative reciprocity is theft, or in our case, plunder. Trade is an example of perfectly balanced reciprocity, where goods are exchanged simultaneously for other goods of equivalent value. There are other cases of balanced reciprocity involving "transactions which [stipulate] returns of commensurate worth or utility within a finite and narrow period" but not simultaneously, which characterises the exchange of diplomatic gifts between the Byzantines and the Near Easterners. However, by viewing gift and commodity exchanges not as opposites but as two extremes in a continuum, Sahlins presents the first signs of the late twentieth-century scholarship that questions the segregation of one mode from another.

Currently, rather than 'cordoning off' the theories of exchange within a number of spheres, the focus is on the fluid relationship between gifts and commodities, emphasising the ambiguous cases that do not fit the neat divisions (Morris 1986; Parry, Bloch 1989, 1-32; Carrier 1990; Yan 2005, 254-6; Peebles 2015, 476). Kujala and Danielsbacka (2019, 10) succinctly express:

> On the contrary, the gift institution functioned alongside commercial exchange and, depending on the time and the situation, the same commodity or service could be a gift or a commercial commodity (or appear as neither one).

4 Using the Model for Heuristic Purposes (Holistic and Parallelist Approaches)

Considering information on the types and modes of exchange together provides two kinds of insight from a heuristic perspective. First, a general picture of exchange emerges from this holistic approach that emphasises the commonalities among the types and modes of ex-

change (see **[fig. 1, arrow a]**). Bringing to bear evidence on the routes used by armies, pilgrims, merchants, and envoys travelling between Byzantium and the Near East would give us detailed information about the main routes that were used, and the changes to these routes over time. As tenth-century geographer al-Muķaddasī *Aḥsan al-taķāsīm fī maʿrifat al-aķālīm* (*The Best Divisions for Knowledge of the Regions* [transl. Collins 2001, 124-5]) emphasised, Muslims used the routes to Byzantium "to ransom prisoners, send dispatches, invade, or conduct trade". This method provides evidence on the seasons in which travel occurred as well as the means of transportation. Dimitroukas (1997) is a good example of such a holistic approach. Any work on the state control of the borders would also employ a holistic approach to reveal what universal control mechanisms were employed and how the Byzantine state employed a differentiated regime of control over different types of objects and people entering and leaving the empire. How can one understand the Byzantine decommoditisation of certain types of silk for diplomatic purposes without examining the larger silk market in the Byzantine world and its neighbours?
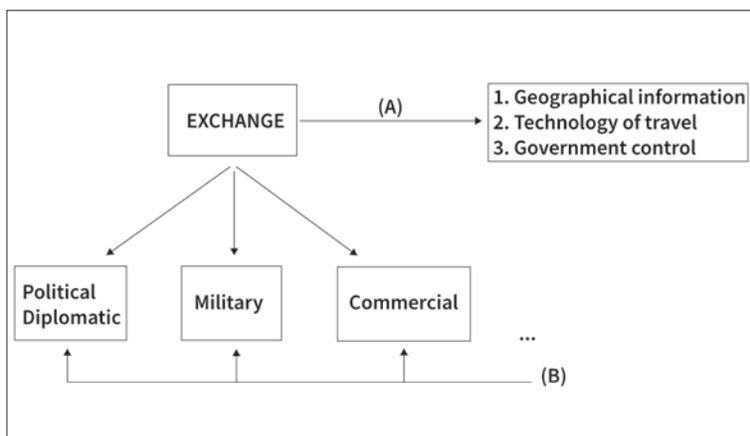

Figure 1   Holistic approach for heuristic purposes

Moreover, many types of objects exchanged hands through various modes of exchange simultaneously. For instance, relics were stolen, brought as gifts or transferred as a result of military conquests (James 2001, 119-21). Most of the relics from the Near East were brought to Byzantium in successful military campaigns, like the lock of hair from John the Baptist which was carried to Constantinople from Hierapolis in Syria by Emperor John Tzimiskes (Leo the Deacon, *Historiae* [ed. Hase 1828, 166]). However, there were also other means. For example, the relic of the arm of John the Baptist in the

Church of St. Peter the Apostle in Islamic Antioch was stolen by a deacon of the Antiochene Church and brought to Emperor Constantine VII in the mid-tenth century (Theodore Daphnopates, Θεοδώρου τού Δαφνοπάτου λόγοι Δύο [ed. Latyshev 1910, 17-38]), and the head of John the Baptist was brought to Constantinople by an envoy from Aleppo in 1032 (Felix 1981, 100). The Mandylion's transfer from Edessa to Constantinople was a result of both military action and diplomacy. An awareness of the multiplicity of modes of exchange for relics liberates us from the fallacy of associating relic transfer only with the imperial power, or of assuming that anything holy needs to be decommodified. Therefore, a scholarly work on the movement of books or relics or on any object from ambergris (Durak 2018) to giraffe (remember the giraffe of Constantine IX) between the Islamic Near East and Byzantium will certainly have to take into consideration all the possible modes of transfer. The holistic approach lets us ask questions like: what impact did the availability of exotic items in the market have on the ability of the imperial centre to monopolise the exotic? Or conversely, how did the supply of Byzantine silk to the Islamic world through plunder affect the market mechanisms of the Byzantine silk in the Islamic markets procured through import?

Secondly (see **[fig. 1, arrow b]**), information gleaned from one type or mode can be applied to less-understood areas. This is called the parallelist approach. As I will try to show below, additional pieces of evidence regarding Byzantine-Islamic commerce can be gleaned from studying commercial mode with the mode of gift exchange and plunder; and commodities can be understood better when studied in relationship to gifts and booty.

The relationship between commerce and diplomatic gift exchange can be summarised as gifts generating demand for the gifted objects, which would then be met by imitation in the state or private workshops of the receiving country (Cutler 2001, 272; Jacoby 2004, 214-16). For example, the Byzantine-style brocade available in the Fatimid court, as eleventh century travelling intellectual Nāṣir-i Ḵẖusraw (*Naser-e Khosraw's Book of Travels* [transl. Thackston 1986, 48]) wrote, was the product of Fatimid imperial workshops (*ṭirāz* factories) imitating Byzantine gifts. The demand for objects that arrived as gifts could also naturally be met by trade. An examination of Byzantine and Islamic sources for exchanged gifts and commodities confirms the correlation between them. Medieval Greek and Arabic sources show that Byzantines both exported and gifted textile items, vessels and utensils, jewelry pieces, hunting dogs and birds, as well as medicinal drugs to the Islamic world between the seventh and eleventh centuries. The correlation becomes even more clear when we look into the details of the textile items. Various silk types from brocade to wool-silk, "coloured cloth", linen, drapes, belts, kerchiefs, turbans, and velvet-cloaks are on the lists of both Byzantine

diplomatic gifts and Byzantine exports to the Near East. There are a few exceptions: wraps/blankets and furs were Byzantine gifts but not exports, as were Turkish slaves (Durak 2008, 265, 430). Focusing on the example of the Turkish slaves, that were included among the Byzantine gifts presented to Egypt in 1053 (*Kitāb al-Hadāyā* [transl. Al-Qaddumi 1996, no. 85]), we may ask: Did Byzantines, bypassed by slave routes to their west and to their east (Rotman 2009, 68-72), consider re-exporting northern slaves to the Islamic markets? The following evidence calls for a tentatively positive answer, at least for a short period sometime between the late tenth and the early eleventh century. First, the *Ḥudūd al-ʿĀlam* (ed. and transl. Minorsky 1937, 142), a geographical work from the late tenth century, describes Armenia and Arran (today's Azerbaijan, Armenia, Georgia, and eastern Turkey) as places where "Byzantine, Armenian, Patzinak, Khazar and Slav slaves are brought". Since Pontus was the major outlet of land-locked Armenia to the Black Sea, Patzinak and Slavic slaves might have entered Armenia through the Byzantine ports of Pontus, such as Trebizond, although the same slaves were alternatively or additionally brought to the Islamic markets over the land route connecting the north Caspian region to Arran. Secondly, there were enough supply of northern slaves in Byzantium to sell to the south. We know independently that the northern Black Sea region was a major source of slaves for Byzantine markets. Most slaves who were sent to Byzantium were Slavs in the tenth century (Ibn Rusta, *Kitāb al-Aʿlāḳ al-nafīsa* [ed. de Goeje 1892, 143]; Sorlin 1961, 329-50, 475) and Turkic people, such as Patzinaks, in the eleventh century (John Skylitzes, *Synopsis* [transl. Wortley 2010, 457-9]). Thirdly, two other products – Rhos linen and walrus tusk – were already imported regularly from the northern territories to the Islamic markets via Byzantium (Durak 2008, 157, 218-21). Fourthly, we have additional evidence that slaves were exported from today's southern Ukraine to the Near East via Asia Minor and Constantinople in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries (Heyd 1936, 2: 560-3; Balard 1978, 2: 785-833). Finally, as will be seen in the coming pages, medieval Mediterranean states were eager to promote their commodities in new markets via gift giving. Taken together, all this evidence leads me to raise the hypothesis that the Byzantine authorities of the tenth and eleventh centuries considered selling slaves from the north of the Black Sea to the Fatimids whose army was composed of Turkish and Berber soldiers.

Following the same methodology, one wonders if the specific types of textile items which we find as gifts but not as commodities – for examples, wraps or blankets – were actually imported from Byzantium into the Islamic markets; or if fur, which appears among the gifts sent from Byzantium, also arrived in the Near East as a commodity from Byzantium, not only, as it is assumed, through an eastern route around the Caspian Sea from the Eurasian plains. As one

can see, such comparisons may encourage scholars to ask new questions and test new hypotheses.

Comparing another set of objects, namely commodities and booty, allows us to draw similar conclusions about what could have been commercially exchanged between the Byzantines and the Near Easterners. The overwhelming majority of the information in the Byzantine and Arabic sources comes in the form of short references to the capture of booty and captives without further comment on the content of the booty. From the clearer references the following categories appear as the most frequently looted items:

- Money, gold and silver, jewelry. For instance, Nikephoros Phokas seized 390 talents of silver from Sayf al-Dawla when he captured Aleppo in 962 (Miskawayh, *Tajārib al-umam* [ed. and transl. Margoliouth, Amedroz 1920, 2: 192-3]) and the Seljuks found a large amount of money and jewelry in Artze when they attacked this town in eastern Anatolia in 1049 (Michael Attaleiates, *Historia* [ed. Bekker 1853, 148]; Stephanos of Taron, *Patmut'iwn* [eds Gelzer, Burckhardt 1907, 208]).
- Textile products. For example, during the sacking of Thessalonica in 904, Arabs carried away silk robes and linen garments (John Kameniates, Εις την άλωσιν της Θεσσαλονίκης [eds and transl. Frendo, Fotiou 2000, 96-8]). Hamdanid ruler Sayf al-Dawla passed into the Byzantine territory around the river Arsanas in eastern Cappadocia and seized "uncountable quantity of brocade" in 957 (Canard, Grégoire 1950, 128).
- Animals. In 846, when an Arab frontier leader from the Byzantine-Syrian border seized c. 1,000 head of cattle and 10,000 sheep from the Byzantines (Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīḫ al-rusul wa 'l-mulūk wa 'l-ḫulafā'* [ed. de Goeje et al. 1964-65, 3: 1357]).
- Merchandise. Large amounts of merchandise, pieces of furniture, and vessels (*āniyah*) from Byzantine merchant ships were carried away during the Muslim attack of Attaleia in 904 ('Arīb ibn Saʿd, *Tabarî continuatus* [ed. de Goeje 1897, 6]; Canard, Grégoire 1950, 167).

High value and portability were the main determinants in deciding what would be carried away. Precious metals, jewelry and textiles were chosen for their high value, while animals and people could carry themselves. In the comparison of commodities and booty, we find a full consonance too, because, the booty listed above were also exchanged commercially. We know from Islamic geographical sources that the eastern regions of the Byzantine Empire produced large amounts of livestock and silk and exported them to the Near East. Their mention as looted objects confirms the observation about their status as commodities (Nikephoros Ouranos [transl. McGeer c. 1995, 155-7]; Ibn al-ʿAdīm, *Zubdat al-ḥalab fī ta'rīḫ Ḥalab* [ed. Zakkār 1997,

1: 156]). Mentions of vases and pieces of furniture as booty from Byzantine Attaleia in the first decade of the tenth century are very significant in terms of the Byzantine manufacture or trade in southern Asia Minor. Al-Marwazī (Minorsky 1982, 456), the twelfth-century physician at the Great Seljuk Court, lists vessels (which means any type of container) among the major exports of Byzantium to the Islamic world. The vessels looted from Attaleia in 904 might have been either ceramic bowls or just amphorae used to carry goods on ships. However, since raiders looted valuable objects, the vessels looted from Attaleia were probably high-quality (perhaps glazed) bowls rather than amphorae. Pieces of furniture looted might be related to the Byzantine chests, cupboards and bedsteads that appear in the Genizah documents a century later (Goitein 1967, 1: 46). Similarly, looting of silk from Thessalonica during the Arab siege of 904 is in line with John Kameniates' report (*The Capture of Thessaloniki* [eds and transl. Frendo, Fotiou 2000, 18]) that silk was a common item of manufacture in the city. What does Sayf al-Dawla's capture of large amounts of brocade in eastern Cappadocia in 957 say about the textile industry or commercial routes of tenth-century Cappadocia, about which we know little? As the cases discussed above show, information obtained from exchanges of negative reciprocity (plunder) consolidates what we know about the markets and helps us understand the nature of commodities better.

Students of commercial history might study other types of people 'on the move' to learn more about merchants, commodity networks and industries. The Genizah documents provide a wealth of information on the ransoming of Byzantine Jews who were carried away by Muslim pirates in the eastern Mediterranean. For instance, the Jewish community in Alexandria was willing to pay the ransom money that the Muslim pirates demanded for the seven Jewish merchants of Attaleia (Cowley 1906). This piece of information might point to commercial networks between Byzantine Attaleia and Fatimid Alexandria.

The Arabic sources present a number of ascetics and religious scholars from Islamic Cilicia in the ninth and tenth centuries who were active in conducting holy war against Byzantium, and also engaged in long-distance trade. Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn ʿUbayd Allāh from the tenth century was a carpenter, Asab ibn Muḥammad was a lumber merchant from Massisa, and Abū Bakr Muḥammad ibn ʿĀlī was a cotton merchant who settled in Adana on the Cilician plain. ʿAbd Allāh ibn al-Ḥusayn from Massisa had the nickname *al-bazzāz* (cloth merchant), and he had moved to Damascus in 880 (Bonner 1996, 146, 152, 166-7, 179). The occupations of these individuals fit the commodities exported and imported through this region to the Islamic south and Byzantine north, such as timber, wooden products and cloth (Jacoby 2000). This concurrence between two data sets al-

lows historians to be more confident about their claims on the nature of trade on the Byzantine-Islamic frontier (Durak 2017).

Likewise, even though based on a small sample, the correlation between what the Byzantines commercially exchanged with the Near East and the occupations of the captives gives significant insight into the nature of artisans who might have travelled between Byzantine and Islamic worlds. Among the captives exchanged in Cilicia in 861, Abbasid authorities ransomed from Byzantium two Muslim goldsmiths. A Byzantine silk-dyer from Constantinople escaped to Egypt (Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīḫ al-rusul wa 'l-mulūk wa 'l-ḫulafā'* [ed. de Goeje et al. 1964-65, 3: 1451]; Goitein 1967, 50). Could it be just a coincidence that gold items, jewelry and silken products were among the major commodities exchanged in Byzantine-Islamic trade? (Ibn al-ʿAdīm, *Zubdat al-ḥalab fī ta'rīḫ Ḥalab* [ed. Zakkār 1997, 1: 156]).

5   Deconstructing the Model

Examining types and modes of exchange not only augments the information we have about movement in general and about each type or mode of exchange specifically, but also allows us to dispute the traditionally unquestioned terms such as *commerce*, *merchant*, and *commodity* in view of the blurred lines between the types and modes of exchange. Like any oversimplification, our model of types and modes of exchange becomes a straightjacket that reduces the complexity of the real past experience because it predisposes us to see each type of exchanged object and person as having an unchanging identity, and each mode of exchange as a sealed process.

The fluidity in the types of individuals and groups that travelled between the Byzantine and Near Eastern worlds speaks directly to the issue of identity, defined as referring to characteristics shared by a group that in turn help the group define itself as a distinct entity (Durak, Jevtić 2019, 4-5). Recent scholarship in the social sciences and humanities from sociology to queer studies challenges, the notion of well-defined identities, and instead suggests a focus on a number of situations or practices that individuals or groups occupy simultaneously (multiple identities) or successively (changing identities). What is meant by identities in this study includes occupations (e.g. merchants, soldiers), missions (diplomats, pilgrims, and warriors of the holy war), and statuses (captives, students and immigrants), each of which was a cause for moving between Byzantium and the Near East. And what is meant by multiple or changing identities is the co-existence of two identities from among the various occupations, mission and statuses described above. For instance, an Iraqi who happened to be a rich merchant moving between the two worlds had a singular merchant identity for the purposes of the present study. His eth-

nicity and class was not a direct cause for movement, although various religious, ethnic, and communal identities played important roles in shaping the ways networks were established between Byzantium and the Islamic East as Preiser-Kapeller and Mitsiou (2018; 2019), Krönung (2019), and Drocourt (2019) show. On the other hand, a diplomat to or from Byzantium who also acted as a merchant to or from Byzantium would be considered to have two identities.

There are, of course, further complications. Some identities were meant to be secret: spies were disguised as merchants or pilgrims. Some identities were temporary: one could be a captive for a while before being ransomed, or gradually cease to have the identity of an immigrant by becoming naturalised. In some cases, individuals carried more than one identity, just like the Muslim prisoners or slaves in Constantinople who made a living as artisans (al-Muḳaddasī, *Aḥsan al-takāsīm fī maʿrifat al-aḳālīm* [ed. de Goeje 1967, 148]; Aggelide 1985).

Byzantine and Islamic sources are full of individuals or groups who changed sides (Necipoğlu 1999-2000). An example that pushes the limits of changing one's avowed identity is that of a Muslim man in Amorion who was captured by the Byzantines, converted to Christianity, and married a Byzantine woman, only to convert back to Islam when the Abbasid armies under the Caliph al-Mutasım arrived in Amorion (Ṭabarī, *Taʾrīḫ al-rusul wa ʾl-mulūk wa ʾl-ḫulafāʾ* [ed. de Goeje et al. 1964-65, 3: 1245]). Byzantine law had already foreseen such cases: in the Novel 67, Leo VI, *Novellae* [ed. Noailles, Dain 1944, 245]) promulgated the pardon of a deserter to the enemy side in the first and second incidents of desertion and returning. Only when a Byzantine subject deserted for a third time would he be sold as a slave. Some actors certainly changed their mind, or their purpose during their travel. One example is the case of Seljuk envoy Siyavush, who was sent to the amir Karatekin in Sinope by the Seljuk ruler in the late tenth century, switched sides, and in doing so helped Emperor Alexios recapture this region (Anna Comnena, *Alexias* 6.9.3-5 [ed. Reinsch, Kambylis 2001]).

Sometimes actors were given multiple missions to accomplish, just as objects had varying or multiple uses. A sailor from Tyre who raided the Byzantine coast regularly was asked by the Umayyad ruler Muʿāwiyah to disguise himself as a merchant, visit Constantinople, and approach the palace with the pretext of selling luxury products from the East. After a few business visits, he enticed a specific palace official to come to his boat to check on the merchandise that the official had ordered. The Tyrian sailor then kidnapped the official and brought him back to Syria so that Muʿāwiyah could exact revenge, because this official had slapped an Arab prisoner in the face (Masʿūdī, *Les prairies d'or* [ed. and transl. de Meynard, de Courteille 1962, 75-86]). The Tyrian sailor was thus a raider who acted as a merchant and a secret government agent with a James Bond-like

mission. People made the best of the situations they were subjected to. For instance, seven Jewish merchants from Attaleia were taken prisoner by Arab pirates. They were ransomed by the Jewish community of Egypt before 1028. One did not return to Attaleia immediately, but visited Jerusalem for pilgrimage purposes (Cowley 1906). Here we have a case of a Byzantine Jew who was a merchant, made captive against his will, and became a pilgrim willingly.

What information can we learn about commercial networks from this perspective on people's multiple or changing identities? First, once we accept that people who could not be called merchants engaged in trade temporarily or permanently, we are freed from the conundrums and so-called ambiguities that we actually create ourselves due to the mistake of thinking in terms of strict either/or dichotomies. For instance, we do not need to call the sailors of the Emirate of Crete simply raiders and look for separate Cretan individuals whom we call traders. Raiders could be traders! The tenth-century geographer al-Muḳaddasī writes (*Aḥsan al-taḳāsīm fī maʿrifat al-aḳālīm* [ed. de Goeje 1967, 177]) the following about the Palestinian coast:

> The warships and galleys of the *Rūm* [Byzantines] pull into them [*ribāt*s: chain of castles for defence] bringing with them captives taken from the Muslims [...] at each of these *ribāt*s are men who know their language, since they have missions to them, and trade with them in foodstuffs.

It is not clear from al-Muḳaddasī's account whether the Palestinians who travelled to Byzantium were merchants or warriors, since *ribāt*s were military outposts for defending Islam that were settled by military volunteers. Instead of looking in vain for a separate population of merchants in these castles, we might see traders among the raiders. It is very easy to find examples of armed men (be they soldiers in regular armies or volunteers in the holy war) engaging in commercial activities. While the ascetic warriors of the Islamic Tarsus in the early tenth century engaged in forestry on the Tauros Mountains during times of truce with the Byzantines and carried timber to the Mediterranean coast to sell it, the warriors for faith, in Ibn Ḥawḳal's words, were pursuing commercial gain instead of fighting for religion in later tenth-century Syria (Bīrūnī, *Book on Pharmacy and Materia Medica* [ed. and transl. Said 1973, 216]; Ibn Ḥawḳal, *Kitāb Ṣūrat al-arḍ* [de Goeje 1967, 184, 188, 204-5]). On the other side of the frontier, Byzantine soldiers could sell the slaves that they received as part of their share of the booty in the Byzantine markets without paying the *kommerkion* while Emperor Leo VI did not approve of provincial generals engaging in trade in his *Taktika* (ed. Kolias 1995, 129-31; transl. Dennis 2010, 16).

With this new perspective on the multiple and changing identities of traders, we can begin to ask if they employed the advantages and networks that they developed through other identities, or vice versa. For instance, the Tyrian sailor employed by Muawiya as a merchant was a raider who spoke Greek, and he probably knew the physical and economic geography and culture of Byzantine Asia Minor better than an average merchant from Palestine. Another example is the tenth-century Ibn Zur'a, who went regularly to Byzantium for trade and was a Jacobite Christian (*Suryānī*) philosopher, physician, and translator ('*Uyūn al-anbā' fī ṭabaḳāt al-aṭibbā*' [ed. Al-Sūd 1998, 293-4]). To the best of my knowledge, there has not been extensive examination of the role of the merchant networks to facilitate the networks of manuscript transmission from Constantinople to Baghdad in the ninth and tenth centuries.

Moreover, an examination of the diplomats-*cum*-merchants or merchants-*cum*-diplomats might tell a lot about the nature and mechanism of luxury trade as conducted by officials in a sort of tied-trade. The use of merchant boats by Byzantine diplomats travelling to Egypt or the inclusion of merchants on diplomatic missions have already been noted by Jacoby (2004, 213 fn. 92). Reading the letter (ed. Canard 1936, 727) of the Ikhshidid ruler of Egypt to Emperor Romanos Lekapenos, in which the he writes that he gave permission to Romanos' ambassadors "to trade in goods that you have sent for this purpose", one wonders what goods there were, whose goods they were (the emperor's or ambassadors') and who was involved in their sale (professional merchants or diplomats themselves). Plus, there must have been a substantial difference in access to information, networking, and acquiring privileges between a diplomat-*cum*-merchant and a 'regular' merchant. This point must be constantly underlined to avoid the fallacy of assuming that there was a clearly defined market with a uniform set of rules and merchant profiles in Byzantine-Near Eastern trade.

Just like people, objects can be difficult to pigeonhole into a single category. The ways objects move via gift exchange, plunder, and market exchange present clear cases of the permeability among the modes of exchange. The strong correlation between diplomatic gifts and commodities can be explained by:

a. Byzantine and Near Eastern authorities receiving gifts of whatever luxurious items were available in the home markets of the senders. Some evidence of this comes from the case of Emperor Constantine VII recommending the purchase of textile goods from the market of Constantinople to give as gifts to the foreign potentates in the East (Constantine Porphyrogenitus, *Three Treatises on Imperial Military Expeditions* [ed. and transl. Haldon 1990, 109, 113]);

b. gifts tended to be the commodities that the sender thought the receiving party would appreciate the most, taking into consideration which commodities were already known to – and in some cases even directly demanded by – the receiving party (Pfälzner 2007);

c. sending parties actively sought to promote their own commodities by sending them as gifts in the diplomatic relations between the two worlds, a point raised by A. Cutler. A very clear example comes from the letter of the Ikhshidid ruler of Egypt to Emperor Romanos Lekapenos in 937 (ed. Canard 1936, 727):

> today we have given your envoys large numbers of precious gifts, which we ourselves chose carefully; they are the products of our capital and of the interior of our country; because, God, in his justice and wisdom, gave to each region a specialty in order that the attention of the foreigners are drawn to that specialty, and in order that the specialty contributes to the prosperity of the world and the subsistence of people. We would like you to learn about certain objects by giving them to your ambassadors who would carry them to you, if God wills.

The statement shows clearly how the amir saw gift-giving as a means of promoting the commercial products of Egypt. Such a motivation can be observed in other areas and periods from the Middle Ages to the Early Modern period (Tremml-Werner, Hellman 2020, 196-7). Furs, swords, slaves, wax, and honey exported to Byzantium by the Rhos were also the gifts that Prince Igor gave to the Byzantine envoys in 945 (Martin 1986, 39). Lopez writes that Venetians sold Byzantine *pallia* and spices only in Pavia in Italy, and Venice had to give an annual present of *pallia* to the treasury of Pavia in addition to some spices (Lopez 1945, 37). The Venetians in the early fifteenth century promoted their most expensive textile products to the Ottomans through diplomacy. Similarly, the Ottomans sent three types of velvet to the Venetians in 1483. The velvet in question was beginning to be produced locally in Bursa, which was in competition with the Italian textile industry. Mack claims (2002, 23-4, 176) that "Beyazid II undoubtedly anticipated that it [the Bursa velvet] would serve as an important source of revenue". There is no contemporary account of such a motive in Byzantine sources, but the Palaiologans in later centuries had such a policy in mind. Mansouri (1992, 238, 147-65) shows that the Byzantines sold slaves and fur, which they obtained from the Eurasian Steppes via the Black Sea, to Egypt in the thirteenth century, and sent them as diplomatic gifts too. At this point, one may ask again if the Turkish slaves and fur sent as diplomat-

ic gifts by the Byzantines in the tenth and eleventh centuries were meant to signal to the Near Easterners that Byzantium had access to the northern markets.

A similar permeability among modes of exchange can be observed in the case of booty. What did the looters do with the booty? Much of the booty, especially captives, was sold. The oil that the Byzantine admiral Nasar seized in 880 as a result of his raiding Sicily was poured into the market in such abundance that the price of olive oil in Constantinople fell sharply (Theophanes Continuatus, *Chronographia* [ed. Bekker 1838, 304-5]). Since the booty was sold in the market, we may ask if the looters were discriminating about what objects they looted on the basis of their knowledge concerning market demand. Should I plunder the *siḳlāṭūn* (*sigillatos*) type of silk rather than velvet since the former is in higher demand back home? The relationship between commodities and booty becomes even more interesting when we realise that in certain cases, plunder was sold in the markets of the looted rather than the looting party. For instance, the Aghlabid general Ibrāhīm ibn Aḥmad captured Taormina in 903, ordered the sale of captives and booty there, and then left to undertake more expeditions against the Byzantine towns in Sicily (Ibn al-Aṯīr [ed. Canard, Grégoire 1950, 134]). Similarly, Arab pirates arrived in the city of Demetrias with five shiploads of booty to sell in the 1030-40s (Kekaumenos, *Consilia et Narrationes* [ed. and transl. Roueché 2013, II]). The Arab pirates who pillaged the Byzantine shores came back to Byzantium to sell their booty, which then became a commodity. While the acquisition of the goods took place outside of the usual economic exchange, the supply of goods by the looters-turned-merchants, demand from the looted party, and sales (using currency) all took place within the market framework. This was a phenomenon that involved commercial calculations and consequences. Which raider would be foolish enough to miss the chance to capture a Jewish rabbi or a rich merchant, especially when he knew which buyer would pay the highest ransom?

Ransoming between the Christian and Muslim communities in medieval Spain from the ninth to the fifteenth centuries involved a high level of commercialisation, such as the easy commoditisation of already-bought slaves or involvement of merchants in ransoms and prisoner exchanges. The parents of a Christian captive had the right to buy any Muslim slave in their Christian hometown in order to exchange the slave for their son, even at the purchase price. Aragon's king in the twelfth century had given some merchants (Brodman 1985, 320, 328; Castro 2007, 319): "a commission for each captive that he redeemed in the amount of 10 percent of the ransom or one gold *maraveda* for each prisoner exchanged".

Kaiser and Calafat (2014) show how the ransoming of captives between southern Europe and the Maghreb from the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries involved a large number of actors, some of whom

were merchants, and was associated with fees and financial proce-
dures such as credit and insurance; they also argue that in the an-
tagonistic atmosphere of contact where merchants from the other
side were always under suspicion, the networks created by ransom-
ing acted as a lubricant of trade, allowing merchants and captains to
build commercial networks with the enemy. How much of the reali-
ty on the other side the Mediterranean can be applied to the eastern
Mediterranean? A cursory look at the multiple – including the com-
mercial – roles the pirates and slave-traders played in the medieval
eastern Mediterranean, and various stories of Byzantine saints go-
ing to the Islamic territories to ransom Byzantines calls for a posi-
tive answer (Burns 1980; Malamut 1982; Rotman 2009, 50-1, 74-6;
Gertwagen 2013; Preiser-Kapeller 2015, 132-44).

Finding market incentives in non-commercial exchanges does not
make these exchanges commercial, but it shows that the terms 'eco-
nomic/commercial' and 'non-economic/non-commercial' are concep-
tual tools that represent two extremes in any situation where ex-
change is involved. Many more ambiguous situations fall between
the two extremes, inviting us to go beyond the primitivist/substan-
tivist versus formalist/marketist debate. Non-commercial exchang-
es were influenced by commercial factors, just as markets were in-
fluenced by non-commercial factors such as the intervention of the
state or moral/social factors.

The commercial factors in question should not be confused with
utility or maximisation of gain, which can be found in almost eve-
ry transaction, and thus have little meaning. I am speaking instead
of the factors that come into play when a non-commercial transac-
tion, such as a military confrontation or diplomatic exchange, is car-
ried out with market mechanisms in mind. For instance, prisoner ex-
changes between the Byzantines and the Abbasids were ostensibly
non-commercial exchanges. The purpose was to free all the captives
taken by the enemy. However, if the Abbasids did not have enough
Byzantine captives to match the number of captives in the hands of
the Byzantine authorities, they would attempt to buy them, as oc-
curred in the case of 845 exchange where Caliph al-Wāṯẖiḳ bought
slaves in Baghdad and Rakka (Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīḵẖ al-rusul wa 'l-mulūk wa
'l-ḵẖulafā'* [ed. de Goeje et al. 1964-65, 3: 1353]).

Although the 'commercial' cannot be defined too broadly, as mere-
ly the act of pursuing gain, neither should it be defined as a well-
demarcated or sealed process where professional businessmen ex-
change goods on the market with the aim of making profits. The
commercial should rather be defined as a component in any process
of exchange; a component that is most visible in the behaviour of in-
dividuals and groups. The commercial can be found in 'intention/ad-
vertising' as in the case of gifts acting as promotional items in dip-
lomatic exchanges; in 'valuation' as in the case of determining the

value of objects or people to plunder or capture in raids or when one prisoner is swapped for another in an exchange where everyone is aware of the market value of each prisoner; in 'target consumers' as in the example of raiders selling booty back to the raided party; and in the very flexible 'commodity status' of objects.

Expanding on the last point raised above, it makes sense to describe the objects exchanged between the Byzantines and the Muslims as objects that acquired or lost the status of a commodity depending on the context. These objects had what we might call "commodity potential" (Appadurai 1986, 13-15). An enslaved person passed from the status of a commodity to that of a non-commodity when liberated through ransom. Relics were not commodities when they were stolen from their original locations, but they were commodities when a Byzantine monk paid money for them. An object was not a commodity before it was snatched away through looting, but became a commodity when it was offered back to the market. We can argue that the exchanges between Byzantines and Muslims in general were highly commercialised, because objects passed in and out of the 'commodity phase'. As Moreland (2000, 30-2) writes, "gifts are not invariably gifts, and commodities are not invariably commodities". Such an approach would help us scholars, especially art historians and artists, in tracing the social life and cultural biography of things.

6　Further Methodological Suggestions

All this being said, it was nevertheless the case that the fluidity and permeability of identities in the context of Byzantine-Near Eastern relations had their limits. The first level of limitation concerns the legal sphere. For instance, when the host country's legal system defined a certain person, among other categories, as *ḏḥimmī* (member of another Abrahamic religion under Islamic hegemony) or *ḥarbī* (non-Muslim living outside Islamic hegemony) on the Islamic side, or as a diplomat, slave, or a merchant on the Byzantine side, these primary definitions had practical advantages or disadvantages for actors who attempted to wear more than one hat. At this point we should remind ourselves that the permeability among the modes presented in this paper was not due to the lack of specialisation in the Byzantine and Islamic societies. Both sides had professional merchants or diplomats. The modes through which Byzantines and Near Easterners exchanged people and objects were well-established systems that facilitated movement between the two worlds; they were simply open-ended processes.

The second level of limitation concerns the labels or identities created by authors of the written sources. Historians, geographers or hagiographers of the medieval Greek and Arab worlds defined people

with the identity that they, the writers, deemed to be primary – driven by various motives, especially narrative or ideological ones. Some of the complexity of real life might have gotten lost 'in translation' to the literary page. The choices of the authors not only applied to people, but also to modes of exchange. Instead of "paying tribute" to the foreign potentates, Byzantine authorities preferred using the term "giving gifts" or used the term *pakton*, which might mean treaty or tribute (Engemann 2005, 39-40; Bartusis 1991, 1553). Leo the Deacon defines the tribute that Arabs brought to Emperor John Tzimiskes in his 974 campaign as gifts (Leo the Deacon, *Historiae* [ed. Hase 1828, 162-3]). Reading the written sources 'against the grain' would help Byzantinists recover some of this lost reality.

The third level of limitation constraining the fluidity of identities is imposed by us as modern historians, and it is the easiest one to overcome. Many times we prioritise the primary identity of actors, as attributed to them by the primary sources or by us, disregarding how multiple or changing identities affected the way these actors behaved and how their behaviour transformed the transaction in question, as well as how objects carried with them various histories and functions that gave them great versatility in use and perception. Maybe we modern historians should use the preposition *cum* in Latin more frequently when the case calls for it, such raider-*cum*-trader or diplomat-*cum*-clergy. For example, just as objects carried 'commodity potential', acquiring and losing the status of a commodity depending on the context, we should not disregard the 'trader potential' of Byzantine and Near Eastern warriors, diplomats, and pilgrims.

Going beyond the subject of trade and traders, this methodology can be applied to other areas of Byzantine-Near Eastern relations (such as the study of channels for the exchange of scientific and technological knowledge between the two worlds) or to, say, Byzantine-Russian religio-cultural interaction. Methodologically, we should first determine the primary identities of travellers (based on occupations, missions, and statuses that had direct relevance for the movement) and secondary identities (such as race, gender, religion that did not constitute a cause for movement, but had an impact on the way people moved), always being conscious of the differences between the categories of sending/hosting and receiving/travelling parties, as well as the differences between the categories we tend to use as modern historians and those of the cultures we study. We should secondly study the possibilities and limitations that define the potential behaviour and movement of the traveller, created by the external factors such as legal boundaries imposed by the hosting party, as well as internal factors such as cultural baggage – *habitus* – of the traveller. Finally, we should always be aware that individuals were bound by the templates of behaviour imposed by the modes of exchange in which they engaged, but they also knew how to make the best of their cir-

cumstances and developed tactics to pursue their goals, meet challenges, and attain or sustain positions in the society they visited. It would be useful to explore which 'spaces' gave more freedom to the actors to act on their multiple or changing identities such as the frontier regions, markets, or war conditions.

Likewise, in order to present a "thick description" of an object (Geertz 1973), we should acquaint ourselves with the use and perception of objects by both sending and receiving parties, based on:

  a.   the collective historical/hermeneutic traditions of both parties as well as the contemporary needs of those parties that would transform the traditions in question;
  b.   the biography of the specific object(s) in movement, which had its/their own independent agency;
  c.   the highly elastic mechanisms of exchange that allowed for (or inhibited) multiple or changing identities for an object.

I think that only in this way can we understand the captive, diplomat, and merchant potential of the same traveller, or the gift, booty, and commodity potential of the same object in the highly mobile and multi-centred world of the medieval Mediterranean.

Bibliography

Abulafia, D. (2011). *The Great Sea*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Aggelide, C. (1985). "Δούλοι στην Κωνσταντινούπολη τού Δ'αιώνα. Η μαρτυρία του Βίου του οσίου Βασιλείου του Νέου". *Byzantina Symmeikta*, 6, 33-51.

Al-Qaddumi, G.H. (transl.) (1996). *Kitāb al-Hadāyā wa al-Tuḥaf* (Book of Gifts and Rarities). Cambridge (MA): Harvard University Press.

Al-Sūd, M.B.U. (ed.) (1998). *Ibn Abī Uṣaybiʾa. ʿUyūn al-anbāʾ fī ṭabaḳāt al-aṭibbāʾ* (Sources of Information on Classes of Physicians). Beirut.

Appadurai, A. (ed.) (1986). *The Social Life of Things. Commodities in Cultural Perspective*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

ʿArīb ibn Saʿd al-Qurṭubī (1897). *Tabarî continuatus: Ṣilat tāʾrīḫ al-Ṭabarī*. Ed. by M.J. de Goeje. Leiden: Brill.

Balard, M. (1978). *Romanie génoise*. 2 vols. Rome : École Française de Rome.

Bartusis, M.C. (1991). "Pakton". Kazhdan, A. et al. (ed.), *Oxford Dictionary of Byzantiu*, vol. 3. Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 1553.

Bauer, F.A. (2006). "Potentieller Besitz. Geschenke im Rahmen des byzantinischen Hofzeremoniells". Bauer, F.A. (ed.), *Visualisierungen von Herrschaft. Frühmittelalterliche Residenzen. Gestalt und Zeremoniell. Internationales Kolloquium* (Istanbul, 3-4 Juni 2004). Istanbul: Ege Yayınları, 135-69.

Bekker, I. (ed.) (1838). *Theophanes Continuatus: Chronographia*. Bonn: Weber.

Bekker, I. (ed.) (1853). *Michaelis Attaliatae historia*. Bonn: Weber.

Bonner, M. (1996). *Aristocratic Violence and Holy War. Studies in the Jihad and the Arab-Byzantine Frontier*. New Haven (CT): American Oriental Society.

Bonner, M. (2004). *Arab-Byzantine Relations in Early Islamic Times*. Aldershot: Ashgate; Variorum.

Bosworth, C.E. (1991-92). "Byzantium and the Arabs. War and Peace Between Two World Civilizations". *Journal of Oriental and African Studies*, 3-4, 17-23.

Brodman, J.W. (1985). "Municipal Ransoming Law on the medieval Spanish Frontier". *Speculum*, 60(2), 318-30. https://doi.org/10.2307/2846474.

Burns, R.I. (1980). "Piracy as an Islamic-Christian Interface". *Viator*, 11, 165-78.

Canard, M. (éd.) (1936). "Une lettre de Muhammad ibn Ṯugj al-Ihshid, émir d'Égypte à l'empereur Romain Lacapène". *Annales de l'Institut d'études orientales*, *Université d'Algiers*, 3, 717-28.

Canard, M. (1964). "Les relations politiques et sociales entre Byzance et les Arabes". *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, 18, 33-56.

Canard, M.; Grégoire, H. (1950). *La dynastie Macédonienne. Extrait des sources arabes*. Bruxelles: Édition française.

Carlà, F.; Gori, M. (2014). *Gift Giving and the 'Embedded' Economy in the Ancient World*. Heidelberg: Universitätsverlag.

Carrié J.-M. (2012). "Were Late Roman and Byzantine Economies Market Economies?". Morrisson, C. (ed.), *Trade and Markets in Byzantium*. Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 13-26.

Carrier, J.G. (1990). "Gift in a World of Commodities. The Ideology of the Perfect Gift in American Society". *Social Analysis*, 29, 19-37.

Castro, V.F. (2017). "Le rachat de captifs musulmans en al-Andalus (VIIIe-XVe siècle)". *Hypothèses*, 10, 313-23. https://doi.org/10.3917/hyp.061.0313.

Chitwood, Z.; Pahlitzsch, J. (eds) (2019). *Ambassadors, Artists, Theologians Byzantine Relations with the Near East from the Ninth to the Thirteenth Centuries*. Mainz: Veröffentlichungen des Leibniz-Wissenschafts Campus Mainz.

Collins, B. (transl.) (2001). *Muḳaddasī: The Best Divisions for Knowledge of the Regions*. Reading: Garnet Publishing.

Cowley, A. (1906). "Bodleian Genizah Fragments, IV". *Jewish Quarterly Review*, 19, 251-4.

Curta, F. (2021). *The Long Sixth Century in Eastern Europe*. Leiden: Brill.

Cutler, A. (2001). "Gifts and Gift Exchange as Aspects of the Byzantine, Arab, and Related Economies". *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, 55, 247-78. https://doi.org/10.2307/1291821.

de Goeje, M.J. (ed.) (1873). *Ibn Ḥawḳal: Kitāb Ṣūrat al-arḍ* (Image of the Earth). Leiden: Brill.

de Goeje, M.J. (ed.) (1892). *Ibn Rusta*: *Kitāb al-Aʿlāḳ al-nafīsa* (Book of Precious Records). Leiden: Brill.

de Goeje, M.J. (ed.) (1967). *Muḳaddasī: Aḥsan al-taḳāsīm fī maʿrifat al-aḳālīm* (The Best Divisions in the Knowledge of the Regions). Leiden: Brill.

de Goeje, M.J. et al. (eds) (1964-65). *Ṭabarī: Taʾrīḵẖ al-rusul wa ʾl-mulūk wa ʾl-ḵẖulafāʾ* (History of the Prophets and Kings). Leiden: Brill.

de Meynard, B.; de Courteille, A. (éds et trad.) (1962). *Masʿūdī: Les prairies d'or*, vol. 8. Paris : Librairie Orientaliste Paul Geuthner.

Dennis, G.T. (ed.) (2010). *The Taktika of Leo VI*. Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection.

Dimitroukas, Ch. (1997). *Reisen und Verkehr im Byzantinischen Reich vom Anfang des 6. Jh. bis zur Mitte des 11. Jahrhunderts*. 2 Bde. Athens: Klaus Schwarz Verlag.

Drauschke, J. (2011). *Zwischen Handel und Geschenk. Studien zur Distribution von Objekten aus dem Orient, aus Byzanz und Mitteleuropa im östlichen Merowingerreich*. Rahden: Marie Leidorf.

Drocourt, B. (2019). "Arabic Speaking Ambassadors in the Byzantine Empire (from the Ninth to Eleventh Centuries)". Chitwood, Pahlitzsch 2019, 57-69.

Duncan, C.M.; Tandy, D.W. (eds) (1994). *From Political Economy to Anthropology. Situating Economic Life in Past Societies*. Montreal: Black Rose Books.

Durak, K. (2008). *Commerce and Networks of Exchange between the Byzantine Empire and the Islamic Near East from the Early Ninth Century to the Arrival of the Crusaders* [PhD dissertation]. Boston; Cambridge (MA): Harvard University Press.

Durak, K. (2017). "The Cilician Frontier. A Case Study of Byzantine-Islamic Trade in the Ninth and Tenth Centuries". Gaul, N.; Menze, V; Bálint, C. (eds), *Province and Periphery in the Age of Constantine VII Porphyrogennetos. From "De Cerimoniis" to "De Administrando Imperio"*. Budapest: Central European University, 168-83.

Durak, K. (2018). "From the Indian Ocean to the Markets of Constantinople. Ambergris in the Byzantine World". Pitarakis, B. (ed.), *Life Is Short, Art Long. The Art of Healing in Byzantium. New Perspectives*. Istanbul: Istanbul Research Institute, 201-25.

Durak, K.; Jevtić, I. (2019). "Identity and the Other in Byzantine Studies. An Introduction". Durak, K.; Jetvić, I. (eds), *Identity and the Other in Byzantium = Papers from the Fourth International Sevgi Gönül Byzantine Studies Symposium*. Istanbul: Koç University Press, 3-22.

Eastmond, A. (ed.) (2001). *Eastern Approaches to Byzantium = Papers from the Thirty-Third Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies, University of Warwick* (Coventry, March 1999). Aldershot: Ashgate.

Eger, A. (2015). *The Islamic Byzantine Frontier. Interaction and Exchange among Muslim and Christian Communities*. London: I.B. Tauris.

Engemann, J. (2005). "Diplomatische 'Geschenke'. Objekte aus der Spätantike?". *Mitteilungen zur spätantiken Archäologie und byzantinischen Kunstgeschichte*, 4, 39-64.

Felix, W. (1981). *Byzanz und die Islamische Welt im Früheren 11. Jahrhundert. Geschichte der Politischen Beziehungen von 1001 bis 1055*. Wien: Verlag der Osterreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften.

Frendo, D.; Fotiou, A. (eds and transl.) (2000). *John Kameniates*: *The Capture of Thessaloniki*. Canberra: Australian Association for Byzantine Studies.

Geary, P.J. (1990). *Furta Sacra. Thefts of Relics in the Central Middle Ages*. Princeton (NJ): Princeton University Press.

Geertz, C. (1973). "Thick Description. Toward an Interpretive Theory of Culture". *The Interpretation of Cultures. Selected Essays*. New York: Basic Books, 3-30.

Gelzer, H.; Burckhardt, A. (Hrsgg) (1907). *Armenische Geschichte des Stephanos von Taron*. Leipzig: B.G. Teubner.

Gertwagen, R. (2013). "Is There a Typology of Pirate Crews and Ships across the Byzantine and medieval Mediterranean? (11th-15th Centuries)". Jaspert, N.; Kolditz, S. (Hrsgg), *Seeraub im Mittelmeerraum. Piraterie, Korsarentum und maritime Gewalt von der Antike bis zur Neuzeit*. Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 67-82.

Gibb H.R. (1958). "Arab-Byzantine Relations under the Umayyad Caliphate". *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, 12, 219-33.

Gill, C.; Postlethwaite, N.; Seaford, R. (eds) (1998). *Reciprocity in Ancient Greece*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Goitein, S.D. (1967). *Mediterranean Society. The Jewish Communities of the Arab World as Portrayed in the Documents of the Cairo Geniza*, vol. 1. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Grierson, P. (1959). "Commerce in the Dark Ages. A Critique of the Evidence". *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 5(9), 123-40.

Griffith, S.H. (1997). "Byzantium and the Christians in the World of Islam. Constantinople and the Church in the Holy Land in the Ninth Century". *medieval Encounters*, 3(3), 231-65. https://doi.org/10.1163/157006797x00161.

Haldon, J.F.; Kennedy, H. (1980). "The Arab-Byzantine Frontier in the 8th and 9th Centuries. Military Organization and Society in the Borderlands". *Zbornik Radova Vizantoloski Institut*, 19, 79-116.

Haldon, J.F. (ed. and transl.) (1990). *Constantine Porphyrogenitus: Three Treatises on Imperial Military Expeditions*. Wien: Verlag der Osterreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften.

Harvey, A. (1989). *Economic Expansion in the Byzantine Empire*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Hase, K.B. (ed.) (1828). *Leonis Diaconi Caloënsis historiae libri decem*. Bonn: Weber.

Heyd, W. (1936). *Histoire du Commerce du Levant au Moyen-Âge*. 2 vols. Leipzig : Édition française.

Hilsdale, C. (2012). "Gift". *Studies in Iconography*, 33, 171-82.

Horden, P.; Purcell, H. (2000). *The Corrupting Sea. A Study of Mediterranean History*. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell.

Jacoby, D. (2000). "Byzantine Trade with Egypt from the Mid-Tenth Century to the Fourth Crusade". *Thesaurismata*, 30, 25-77.

Jacoby, D. (2004). "Silk Economics and Cross-Cultural Artistic Interaction. Byzantium, the Muslim World, and the Christian West". *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, 58, 197-240. https://doi.org/10.2307/3591386.

James, L. (2001). "Bearing Gifts from the East. Imperial Relic-Hunters Abroad". Eastmond 2001, 119-31.

Kaegi, W.E. (2008). "Confronting Islam. Emperors versus Caliphs (641-c. 850)". Shepard, J. (ed.), *The Cambridge History of the Byzantine Empire c. 500-1492*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 365-94.

Kaiser, W.; Calafat, G. (2014). "The Economy of Ransoming in the Early Modern Mediterranean. A Form of Cross-cultural Trade Between Southern Europe and the Maghreb (Sixteenth to Eighteenth Centuries)". Trivellato, F.; Halevi, L.; Antunes, C. (eds), *Religion and Trade. Cross Cultural Exchanges in World History, 1000-1900*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 108-30.

Klinkott, H. et al. (Hrsgg) (2007). *Geschenke und Steuern, Zölle und Tributen. Antike Abgabenformen in Anspruch und Wirklichkeit*. Leiden: Brill.

Kolias, T.G. (1995). "Kriegsgefangene, Sklavenhandel und die Privilegien der Soldaten". *Byzantinoslavica*, 56, 129-35.

Koutrakou, N.C. (2007). "Highlights in Arab-Byzantine Cultural Relations (9th -11th Centuries AD). An Approach Through Diplomacy". Al-Hijji, Y.Y.; Christides, V. (eds), *Cultural Relations between Byzantium and the Arabs*. Athens: Institute for Graeco-Oriental and African Studies, 85-102.

Krönung, B. (2019). "The Employment of Christian Mediators by Muslim Rulers in Arab-Byzantine Diplomatic Relations in the Tenth and Early Eleventh Centuries". Chitwood, Pahlitzsch 2019, 71-83.

Kujala, A.; Danielsbacka, M. (2019). *Reciprocity in Human Societies. From Ancient Times to the Modern Welfare State*. New York: Palgrave.

Laiou, A.E. (2002). "Economic and Non-Economic Exchange". Laiou, A.E. (ed.), *The Economic History of Byzantium. From the Seventh through the Fifteenth Century*. Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 681-96.

Latyshev, B. (ed.) (1910). "Θεοδώρου τοῦ Δαφνοπάτου λόγοι Δύο". *Pravoslavnyi Palestinkij Sbornik*, 59, 17-38.

Lev, Y. (1995). "Fatimids and Byzantium, 10th-11th Centuries". *Graeco-Arabica*, 6, 190-208.

Lopez, R.S. (1945). "Silk Industry in the Byzantine Empire". *Speculum*, 20(1), 1-43.

Lounghis, T.C. (1994). "Die byzantinischen Gesandten als Vermittler materieller Kultur vom 5. bis ins 11. Jahrhundert". Hundsbichler, H. (Hrsg.), *Kommunikation zwischen Orient und Okzident. Alltag und Sachkultur. 9. Internationaler Kongreß* (Krems an der Donau, 6-9 Oktober 1992). Wien: Verlag der Osterreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 49-67.

Mack, R.E. (2002). *Bazaar to Piazza. Islamic Trade and Italian Art, 1300-1600*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Malamut, É. (1982). "Les Insulaires des 10e-12e siècles. Marins ou soldats? La démobilisation de la marine insulaire du 10ᵉ au 12ᵉ s.". *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik*, 32(2), 63-72.

Mansouri, T.M. (1992). *Recherches sur les relations entre Byzance et l'Égypte, 1259-1453. D'après les sources arabes*. Tunis: Publications de la Faculté des lettres de la Manouba.

Mansouri, T.M. (2000). "Les Musulmans à Byzance du VIIᵉ au XIᵉ siècle". *Graeco-Arabica*, 7-8, 379-94.

Margoliouth, D.S.; Amedroz, H.F. (eds and transl.) (1920). *Miskawayh Tajārib al-umam* (The Experience of Nations). 7 vols. Oxford: Blackwell.

Marx, K. (1993). *Grundrisse*. Transl. by M. Nicolaus. London: Penguin.

Martin, J. (1986). *Treasure of the Land of Darkness. The Fur Trade and Its Significance for medieval Russia*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

McCormick, M. (2001). *Origins of the European Economy. Communications and Commerce A.D. 300-900*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

McCormick, M. (2002). "Byzantium on the Move. Imagining a Communications History". Macrides, R. (ed.), *Travel in the Byzantine World = Papers from the Thirty-Fourth Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies* (Birmingham, April 2000). Aldershot: Routledge, 3-21.

McGeer, E. (transl.) (1995). *Nikephoros Ouranos*: *Sowing the Dragon's Teeth. Byzantine Warfare in the Tenth Century*. Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection.

Mcluhan, M. (1964). *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man*. New York: McGraw Hill.

Miles, G. (1964). "Byzantium and the Arabs. Relations in Crete and the Aegean Area". *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, 18, 1-32.

Minorsky, V. (1982). *Marvazi on the Byzantines*. Vol. 8 of *Medieval Iran and Its Neighbours*. London: Variorum.

Minorsky, V. (ed. and transl.) (1937). *Ḥudūd al-ʿĀlam. The Regions of the World. A Persian Geography, 372 A.H.-982 A.D.* London: Luzac & Co.

Moreland, J.F. (2000). "Concepts of the Early medieval Economy". Hansen, I.L.; Wickham, C. (eds), *The Long Eighth Century. Production, Distribution and Demand*. Leiden: Brill, 1-34.

Morris, I. (1986). "Gift and Commodity in Archaic Greece". *Man*, n.s. 21(1), 1-17. https://doi.org/10.2307/2802643.

Morrisson, C. (2012). "Introduction". Morrisson, C. (ed.), *Trade and Markets in Byzantium*. Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 1-9.

Necipoğlu, N. (1999-2000). "The Coexistence of Turks and Greeks in medieval Anatolia (Eleventh-Twelfth Centuries)". *Harvard Middle Eastern and Islamic Review*, 5, 58-76.

Noailles, P. (ed.); Dain, A. (trad.) (1944). *Les novelles de Léon VI le Sage*. Paris : Société d'édition "Les belles lettres".

Obolensky, D. (1974). "Byzantine Frontier Zones and Cultural Exchange". Berza, M.; Stănescu, E. (ed.), *Actes du XIVe Congrès international des études Byzantines* (Bucarest, 6-12 septembre 1971). Bucharest: Editura Academiei Republicii Socialiste România, 302-14.

Parry, J.; Bloch, M. (1989). "Introduction". *Money and the Morality of Exchange*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1-32.

Patlagean, É. (1993). "Byzance et les marchés du grand commerce, vers 830-vers 1030. Entre Pirenne et Polanyi". *Mercati e Mercanti nell'Alto Medievo. L'area euroasiatica e l'area mediterranea*. Spoleto: Settimane di studio del Centro Italiano di Studi sull'Alto Medioevo, 587-632.

Peebles, G. (2015). "Exchange in Anthropology". Wright, J. (ed.), *International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences*. 2nd ed. Oxford: Elsevier, 476-81.

Pfälzner, P. (2007). "Das System des 'Kommerzialisierten Geschenkaustausches' Im 2. Jahrtausend V.Chr. In Syrien". Klinkott et al. 2007, 109-23.

Polanyi, K. (1977). *The Livelihood of Man*. Ed. by H.W. Pearson. New York: Academic Press.

Polanyi, K.; Arensberg, C.; Peason, H. (eds) (1957). *Trade and Market in the Early Empires*. Glencoe (IL): The Free Press.

Preiser-Kapeller, J. (2015). "Liquid Frontiers. A Relational Analysis of Maritime Asia Minor as Religious Contact Zone in the 13th-15th Century". Peacock, A.C.S.; de Nicola, B.; Yıldız, S.N. (eds), *Islam and Christianity in medieval Anatolia*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 117-46.

Preiser-Kapeller, J. (2018). *Jenseits von Rom und Karl dem Großen. Aspekte der globalen Verflechtung in der langen* Spätantike. Wien: Mandelbaum Verlag.

Preiser-Kapeller, J.; Mitsiou, E. (2018). "Moving Hands. Types and Scales of Labour Mobility in the Late Medieval Eastern Mediterranean (1200-1500 CE)". De Vito, C.G.; Gerritsen, A. (eds), *Micro-Spatial Histories of Global Labour*. Cham: Palgrave, 29-67.

Preiser-Kapeller J.; Mitsiou, E. (2019). "Mercantile and Religious Mobility between Byzantines, Latins and Muslims, 1200-1500. On the Theory and Practice of Social Networks". *medieval worlds*, 9, 187-217. https://doi.org/10.1553/medievalworlds_no9_2019s187.

Pryor, J.H. (1988). *Geography, Technology and War. Studies in the Maritime History of the Mediterranean 649-1571*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Reinert, S. (1998). "The Muslim Presence in Constantinople, 9th-15th Centuries. Some Preliminary Observations". Ahrweiler, H.; Laiou, A.E. (eds), *Studies on the Internal Diaspora of the Byzantine Empire*. Washington, D.C.: Harvard University Press, 125-50.

Reinsch, D.R.; Kambylis, A. (Hrsgg) (2001). *Annae Comnenae Alexias*. 2 Bde. Berlin; New York: De Gruyter. Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae 40.

Rotman, Y. (2009). *Byzantine Slavery and the Mediterranean World*. Cambridge (MA): Harvard University Press.

Rotman, Y. (2012). "Captif ou Esclave? Entre marché d'esclaves et marché de captifs en Méditerranée médiévale". Guillén, F.P.; Trabelsi, S. (eds), *Les esclavages en Méditerranée. Espaces et dynamiques économiques*. Madrid: Casa de Velázquez, 25-46.

Roueché, C. (ed. and transl.) (2013). *Kekaumenos*: *Consilia et Narrationes*. London: Sharing Ancient Wisdoms. `https://ancientwisdoms.ac.uk/library/kekaumenos-consilia-et-narrationes/index.html`.

Sahlins, M.D. (1972). *Stone Age Economics*. Chicago: Aldine.

Said, H.M. (ed. and transl.) (1973). *Al-Biruni's Book on Pharmacy and Materia Medica*. Karachi: Hamdard Academy.

Sorlin, I. (1961). "Les traités de Byzance avec la Russie au Xᵉ siècle (I)". *Cahiers du monde russe et soviétique*, 2-3, 313-60.

Soucek, P. (1997). "Byzantium and the Islamic East". Evans, H.C.; Wixom, W.D. (eds), *The Glory of Byzantium. Art and Culture of the Middle Byzantine Era, A.D. 843-1261*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 402-12.

Temin, P. (2012). "Byzantine Trade. Summary and Prospect". Morrisson, C. (ed.), *Trade and Markets in Byzantium*. Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 429-36.

Thackston, W.M. Jr. (transl.) (1986). *Naser-e Khosraw's Book of Travels*. Albany (NY): Bibliotheca Persica.

Thomas, T.K. (2012). "Ornaments of Excellence from the Miserable Gains of Commerce. Luxury Art and Byzantine Culture". Evans, H.C.; Ratcliff, B. (eds), *Byzantium and Islam. Age of Transition 7th-9th Century*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 124-32.

Thurn, J. (ed.) (1973). *Ioannis Scylitzae synopsis historiarum*. Berlin: de Gruyter.

Tolan, J. (2011). "Introduction". Thomas, D.; Mallett, A. (eds), *Christian-Muslim Relations. A Bibliographical History*. Vol. 3, *1050-1200*. Leiden: Brill, 1-14.

Tremml-Werner, B.; Hellman, L. (2020). "Introduction. Gift and Tribute in Early Modern Diplomacy. Afro-Eurasian Perspectives". *Diplomatica*, 2(2), 185-200. `https://doi.org/10.1163/25891774-02020001`.

Vasiliev A. (1948). "Byzantium and Islam". Baynes, N.H.; Moss, H.St.L.B. (eds), *Byzantium. An Introduction to East Roman Civilization*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 308-25.

Wickham, C. (2005). *Framing the Middle Ages. Europe and the Mediterranean, 400-800*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Wilk, R.R.; Cliggett, L. (1996). *Economies and Cultures. Foundations of Economic Anthropology*. Boulder (CO): Westview Press.

Wortley, J. (transl.) (2010). *John Skylitzes*: *A Synopsis of Byzantine History, 811-1057*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Yan, Y. (2005). "The Gift and Gift Economy". Carrier, J.G. (ed.), *A Handbook of Economic Anthropology*. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, 246-61.

Zakkār, S. (ed.) (1997). *Ibn al-ʿAdīm Zubdat al-ḥalab fī taʾrīḵẖ Ḥalab* (The Cream of the History of Aleppo). 2 vols. Damascus: Dar al-Kitab-al-Arabi.

Shifting Byzantine Networks
New Light on Chalcis (Euripos/Negroponte) as a Centre of Production and Trade in Greece

Joanita Vroom
Leiden University

Abstract   This paper aims to reconstruct the network of a production zone in the city of Chalcis (central Greece) by which certain glazed tablewares and amphorae were distributed within and outside the eastern Mediterranean basin between the 10th and the 13th centuries.

Keywords   Material culture networks. Production site. Trade hub. Ceramic finds. Distribution patterns.

Summary   1 Introduction. – 2 Chalcis. The Industrial Zone and Its Products. – 3 The Chalcis Workshop and Its Hinterland. – 4 The Chalcis Workshop and the Byzantine Empire. – 5 The Chalcis Workshop and Its Wider Spheres of Distribution. – 6 Conclusion.

1   Introduction

Ceramic finds of the Byzantine period, though omnipresent in most cities and rural settlements in the eastern Mediterranean, have seldom been studied to their full potential. If these 'later' wares – that is 'later' in the eyes of classical archaeologists – were studied at all, their value to yield valuable information about activities of production, trade, consumption, and cultural interaction in the Byzantine world remained often unexplored. Nevertheless, the relevance of pottery as a source of information and thus as an object of study is clear: it is not only the most common, durable, omnipresent, and most mobile category of material evidence, but also an indicator of broader patterns of economic, social, and cultural interaction, ranging from trade patterns to the diffusion of eating habits. Indeed, pottery reflects as an information carrier how ordinary people lived in the past. Even when found in many broken pieces, as is often the case with Byzantine pottery, it offers possibilities for statistical research in ceramic production, distribution, and consumption on multiple scales. In fact, visual mapping of the distribution of Byzantine pottery, which more or less forms the basis of the network approach in archaeology, has been around for some time.

The schematic mapping of sites with the help of Byzantine ceramics started already in 1930 with David Talbot Rice's seminal volume on *Byzantine Glazed Pottery*, but it really took off since the 1990s with more systematic approaches of distribution visualisation based on larger amounts of published data (e.g. Talbot Rice 1930, 80-1; François 1997; 2012; 2017; Vroom 2017; 2018; 2021). More recently, efforts have been made to introduce new interactive digital tools for mapping Byzantine ceramics by using network analysis for specific case studies in southern Italy and southern Greece (Arthur, Imperiale, Muci 2018; Yangaki 2018). These attempts ranged from 'affiliation networks' of sites based on selected eighth-century artefacts and amphorae within Byzantine territories to digital maps of imported pottery finds (specifically tableware and amphorae) in the Peloponnese and Crete between the fourth and fifteenth centuries. In this last case study, the emphasis was not so much on local ceramic finds, but rather on how both regions were in interaction with other parts of the Mediterranean over time.[1]

Despite these innovative digital applications, one needs to keep in mind that they are basically theoretical geographical networks and not necessarily 'historical' networks as far as these can ever be reconstructed on the basis of archaeological finds, which are much

---

[1] Yangaki 2018, figs 8-11 show for instance that the major sites in Crete are connected to each other.

more riddled with uncertainties than digitisation can digest.[2] Every computer can surely create wonderful visual networks, but the question remains if the epistemological gap between these models and archaeological argumentations, even those based on well-dated and well-quantified material evidence, can be bridged. In every case a model or a theoretical conception is imposed on archaeological data (among which pottery finds), caution is advised.

Digital network models do not seem to consider the fundamental question: what happens when pottery types move from their production site to alternative contexts across economic, political, and cultural boundaries. In fact, to limit the question to my own field of research, is it possible at all to trace how and which Byzantine ceramic products were moving to which rural site, urban centre or harbour along local, regional, interregional or intra-regional (long-distance) networks over land and sea? Which dated archaeological evidence has been found for such terrestrial and maritime networks? And more specific: can the movement of certain Byzantine pottery types be adequately documented from their production site to other contexts? In short, is it possible to shed any light on the problem in which quantities these products were transported, by whom and via which networks?

It is my aim to search for answers to some of these questions by presenting in this paper a preliminary overview of the distribution of Byzantine ceramics (ranging in date between c. tenth to thirteenth centuries) from one apparent production site within the Byzantine Empire. This production site is the recently excavated workshop or group of workshops[3] at Chalcis (in the past known as Euripos, Negroponte, Eğriboz and currently as Chalkida) in central Greece.[4] First, it is my intention to discuss the local/regional networks of pottery distribution in the city itself and in the immediate hinterland of Chalcis. Thereafter, the focus will be on the interregional and intra-regional exchange networks of the Chalcis pottery within the Byzantine Empire and beyond. I will argue that the Chalcis products can be used to reconstruct the network of a production site by which certain glazed tablewares and amphorae were distributed within and

---

2 Given the fact that two nodes are needed to reconstruct networks, such as the node regarding the location of the find-spot and the other one related to the pottery's place of origin.

3 Although we do not know yet whether it concerns here one workshop or more, I will in general refer to the 'Chalcis' workshop' from now on.

4 Over time the town has had various names: the name Chalcis is preserved from Antiquity and derives from the Greek word '*chalkis*' (copper, bronze), while in Byzantine times it was known as 'Euripos'. Afterwards, it functioned as a Venetian hub under the name of 'Negroponte' (Italian for 'black bridge'). And thereafter, the name became 'Eğriboz' during the Ottoman domination, and 'Chalkida' in recent times; cf. Koder 1973; Koder, Hild 1976. I prefer to use the name of Chalcis in this paper.

outside the eastern Mediterranean basin between the tenth and the thirteenth centuries.[5] Thus, the story is told from the perspective of a production zone in a city, which happened to be a vital port within Byzantium at the same time.

It is my objective to present the case study of Chalcis in the perspective of a larger personal network by using evidence from various archaeological projects in the Mediterranean in which I was involved in studying Byzantine material culture. These projects include excavations, survey projects as well as collaborations. Several of these projects took place in coastal urban sites, which were functioning as harbours or anchorages in Byzantine times, while others occurred in sites in the immediate surroundings of Chalcis. In the perspective of my goal to present new material data and different approaches based on this archaeological evidence, I will discuss first the connections of Byzantine ceramic finds in the hinterland of one production site before zooming out to larger terrestrial and maritime exchange networks.

2 Chalcis. The Industrial Zone and Its Products

Pottery finds from Chalcis during Byzantine and 'Frankish' times are particularly interesting because this city was not only an important production site of various pottery types, but also a crucial harbour and trade hub during Middle Byzantine times and into the Late Byzantine/Frankish era.[6] Since the sixth century, the city served as a fortress for the protection of central Greece. After 1204 it came gradually under Venetian control until it became a Venetian colony in 1390. In 1470, after a long siege, it passed to the Ottomans, who made it the seat of the Admiral of the Archipelago (Aegean islands).

During the Byzantine period, the ancient city of Chalcis was relocated to the west, in the area next to the Euripus Strait, in order to better serve the strategic and maritime interests of the Byzantine Empire. The town at the bridge over the Euripos, called '*Kastro*' (Castle), was surrounded by a full circuit of defence walls, until these were completely razed for modern urban development around the beginning of the twentieth century. Before that, the fortification walls defined the centre of the town's life. The '*Proasteion*' or '*bourgo*' (suburb), as it was called in the written sources, was situated outside the enceinte and extended over a wide area east of the castle (Koder 1973).

---

5 The focus in this paper is mostly on glazed tablewares and amphorae from the production site in Chalcis, because these can be better recognised in ceramic networks.

6 As the chief town of the island it is situated on the Euripus Strait at its narrowest point, where it is connected to the mainland by a bridge. As such, Chalkis is located in a strategic position, as it could control the Euripus Strait.

In this area outside the fortification walls of the Medieval town, a rescue excavation took place in 2007 at Orionos Street 10.[7] The excavated area had a total extent of some 100 square meters and was situated on a small elevation next to the old road. Architectural remains of the Byzantine period were recovered here, as well as huge quantities of broken pottery and other finds. These included fragments of glazed tablewares, of unglazed coarse wares, of storage and transport vessels, fragments of tile, mortar, and brick, vitrified masses of clay, copper and iron masses, slag, as well as animal bones, sea shells and even a few human bones.[8]

Between 2013 and 2016, all the finds were sorted out, recorded, documented, entered in a database, drawn and photographed by me and a small team of students.[9] In total, we counted over 66,000 fragments of diagnostic pottery fragments of glazed and unglazed varieties.[10] Of these, amphorae accounted for the largest group (with 37%) (Vroom, Tzavella, Vaxevanis forthcoming a-b). Looking at the ratio between glazed and unglazed pottery in general, there was more unglazed pottery found (c. 75%).[11] Furthermore, I would like to mention that over 700 fragments of over-fired pottery types were recorded so far. These included wasters of various pottery types (ranging from unglazed products to vitrified fragments or even completely distorted pieces), kiln furniture, tripod stilts, kiln separators and part of a potter's wheel.

The excavations at Orionos Street in Chalcis revealed a substantial workshop area with cross-craft interaction, among which the manufacture of metal, glass, bone, as well as unglazed and glazed ceramics. These included various types of the so-called 'Middle Byzantine Production Group' (shortened to 'MBP'), such as Slip-painted Ware, Green and Brown Painted Ware, (Painted) Fine Sgraffito Ware, In-

---

7 The excavation at Orionos Street 10 was carried out by Giannis Vaxevanis, and started in May 2007 at the owner's request to construct a modern building, and the excavation was completed in September of the same year. The excavated plot was 120 meters far from Frizi Street, where the northern part of the Medieval city wall has been recovered.

8 Large quantities of a diverse composition of land and sea animal species and various types of sea shells (among which the murex) were recovered at Orionos Street, of which the last ones are referring to the use of purple dye in the Byzantine silk industry.

9 In order to process the enormous quantities of finds, the previous ephor Dr. Kalamara and her staff invited me in 2011 to study the excavated material from Orionos Street 10. Consequently, we came with the idea to organise summer schools for students between the years 2013-16 in collaboration with the Ephorate of Chalkida and the Netherlands Institute at Athens (NIA).

10 Apart from counting, we were also weighing the fragments of various types for quantification purposes.

11 This is expected, because unglazed pottery is more common, easier to produce, and thus cheaper than glazed ceramics.
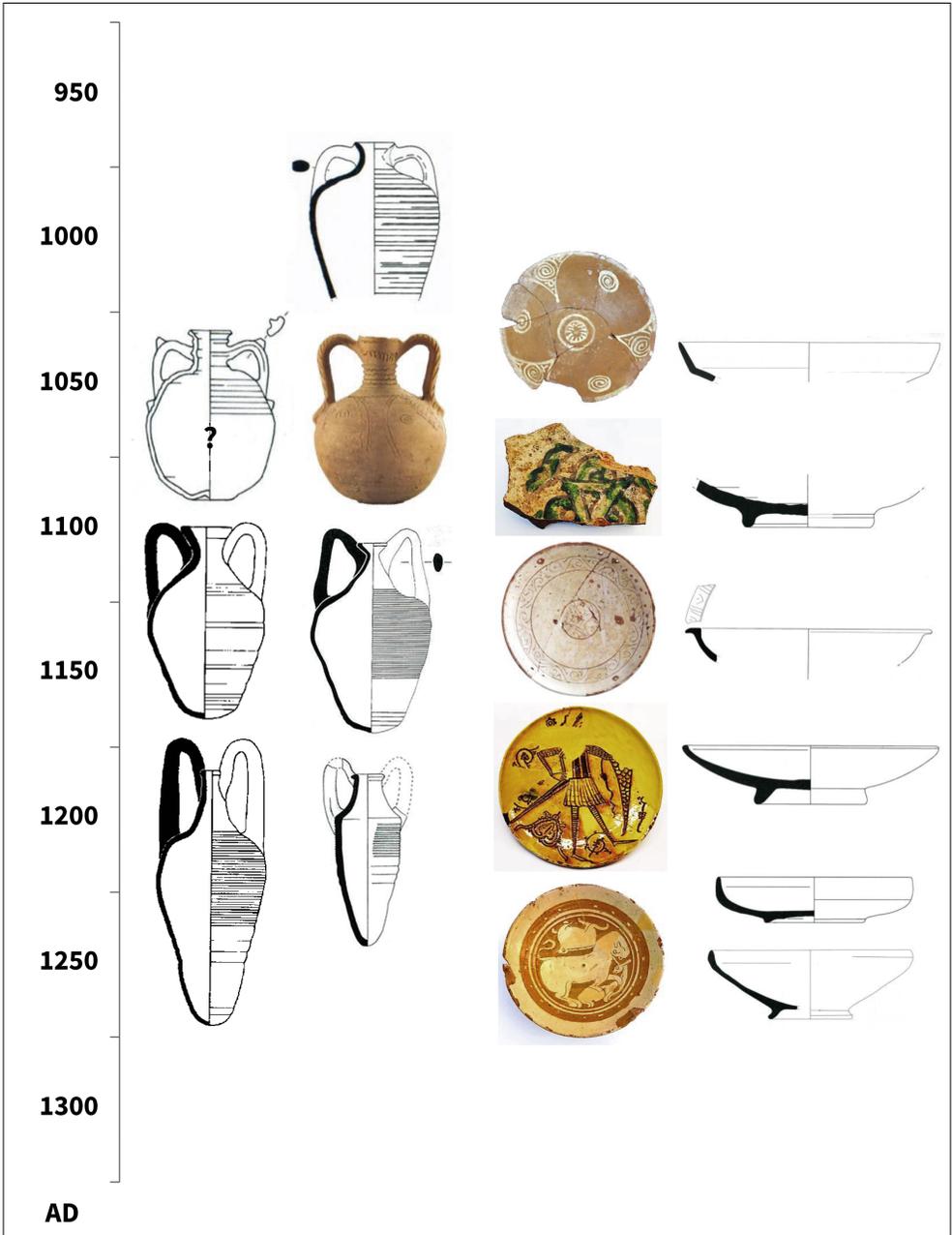
Figure 1 Chronological overview of main Byzantine amphora types (left) and glazed ceramic types (right) which were locally produced at the Orionos Street workshop in Chalcis, central Greece (J. Vroom; after Günsenin 1990, fig. 3; Vroom 2014, 80-5, 90-3, 96-8; Todorova 2018, fig. 3.5)

cised Sgraffito Ware and Champlevé Ware [fig. 1 right].[12] This is a group of glazed tablewares with similar characteristics (such as fabric, vessel form, surface treatment, use of lead glazes), but with various decoration techniques, which co-existed or followed each other in the period from circa the late eleventh/early twelfth to the mid thirteenth century.[13] The excavation yielded in particular many examples of Incised Sgraffito Ware and Champlevé Ware of the late twelfth to mid thirteenth century. Among the motifs depicted on these wares were human beings (such as fully equipped warriors with swords, spears and banners) as well as animals (birds, fishes, but most of all a hare in a gouged tondo). These finds are clear indications of large-scale standardised pottery production, in which the motifs on the wares were imitating luxurious metal vessels or textile designs.[14]

The evidence shows that the Chalcis workshop also produced unglazed coarse wares and plain wares. These included cooking jars and jugs, basins, pithoi, as well as plain jugs of a finer fabric with a gouged decoration on the exterior surface.[15] Furthermore, we were able to distinguish local production of several amphora types at the Orionos Street plot, ranging from a small unglazed incised jar to the so-called Günsenin 2(A), 3, (transitional) 1-3 and 20 amphorae [fig. 1 left].[16] Of these produced containers the most well-known is the Günsenin 3 or Saraçhane 61 amphora.[17] This amphora is a pear-shaped vessel with a rounded base, a long conical neck and two long heavy handles rising high above the rim. Generally, it can be dated to the twelfth-thirteenth centuries. Until now, c. 8,500 fragments of this amphora type have been diagnosed in the Orionos Street finds, among which many wasters, overfired pieces and kiln tools related to its production.[18]

---

12   Some early thirteenth-century vessels of Incised Sgraffito Ware and Champlevé Ware were previously described by A.H.S. Megaw (1975) as 'Aegean Ware' (referring to an Aegean provenance), although this term is no longer used; cf. François 2018.

13   The term Middle Byzantine Pottery group was firstly suggested by Guy Sanders, and later taken over by other scholars: cf. Waksman et al. 2014, 380, note 6.

14   Some dishes of these decorated glazed tablewares from the Orionos Street workshop were recorded in 3D by my project assistant Vasiliki Lagari.

15   With the help of experimental archaeology, we tried to reconstruct some of these cooking pots at Leiden University (NL). It was the intention to look into cooking techniques, cooking practices and eating habits in Medieval Chalkis. These consumption patterns were of course dependent on the availability of local foodstuffs.

16   Günsenin 2018, 98-102, figs. 6, 8, 9; 116, fig. 31; see also Vroom 2014a, 95-9; Todorova 2018, fig. 3, no. 5; Waksman et al. 2018a; Mozorova et al. 2020.

17   Günsenin 1990, 28-30; 2018, 100-2, fig. 9; Hayes 1992, 76, fig. 26.0, no. 11; see also Vroom 2003, 153-5, figs. 6.7 and 6.41; Vroom 2014a, 97-9.

18   It has been assumed by A. Vionis (2008, 38, fig. 17) that a waster of the Günsenin 3 amphora was retrieved during the Tanagra Survey on the basis of one over-fired handle fragment. However, this remains doubtful, because it concerns here a single sur-

To date, we were able to distinguish two phases of pottery production at the Orionos Street plot. The upper excavation layers yielded pottery (among which the MBP group) which belonged to the later phase of use (c. twelfth-thirteenth centuries), while the lower excavation layers contained finds which belonged to an earlier phase (c. tenth-eleventh centuries) (Vroom, Tzavella, Vaxevanis forthcoming).

Various samples of the local products (both glazed tablewares and amphorae) from this workshop and from other excavated parts in Chalcis were selected for petrographic and for chemical analyses (Waksman et al. 2014; 2018a; 2018b; Panagopoulou et al. 2021). The results indicate that the Chalcis finds form a uniform chemical group, which strongly suggests a common origin of the clay and also long-lasting production by a workshop or group of workshops operating in a well-defined geographical area (Waksman et al. 2014, 416-18). In addition, examination of samples of glazed tablewares by optical microscopy, SEM and WRF showed that the lead glazes had a similar small amount of alkali (Panagopoulou et al. forthcoming).

In short, the combination of the typo-chronological archaeological diagnoses of the finds and the archaeometrical data lead to the conclusion that the potters of the Chalcis workshop used an identical clay for the entire range of pottery types they produced. The locally manufactured amphorae and coarse wares as well as the glazed tablewares all have the same fabric: hard, fairly fine to semi-coarse, containing lime and quartz and large amounts of organics such as straw in the handles. The clay must have originated from a single geological source, probably from the clay-rich Vasiliko area in the nearby Lelantine Plain.[19]

This fertile plain is situated to the east of the workshop, between the ancient cities of Chalcis and Eretria. Substantial and extensive sourcing of clay in the past has created huge depressions of reused clay beds in the landscape.[20] Until recently, these beds were still exploited by traditional potters operating in the Varethousa area in modern Chalkida (Jones 1986, 144-6, 867-88; see also Matson 1972). Thus, clay was cheap, nearby and readily available for the Byzantine potters of the Orionos Street workshop. Furthermore, the Lelantine Plain was known during Byzantine times for its agricultural production, especially for olive oil and the famous Euboean wine which was popular

---

face find that could have been over-fired due to a secondary wild fire. The same can be said about similar production claims by him for the Günsenin 2 amphora on the basis of thin evidence; cf. Vionis 2017a, 359; 2017b, 168.

19 The plain is presumably named after the Lelantos River, now the Lilas River, which runs through it.

20 Sourcing of the clay already took place from the Bronze Age onwards, as is shown by the chemical composition of samples from the site of Lefkandi showing low contents of aluminium, iron and potassium; cf. Jones 1986, 144.
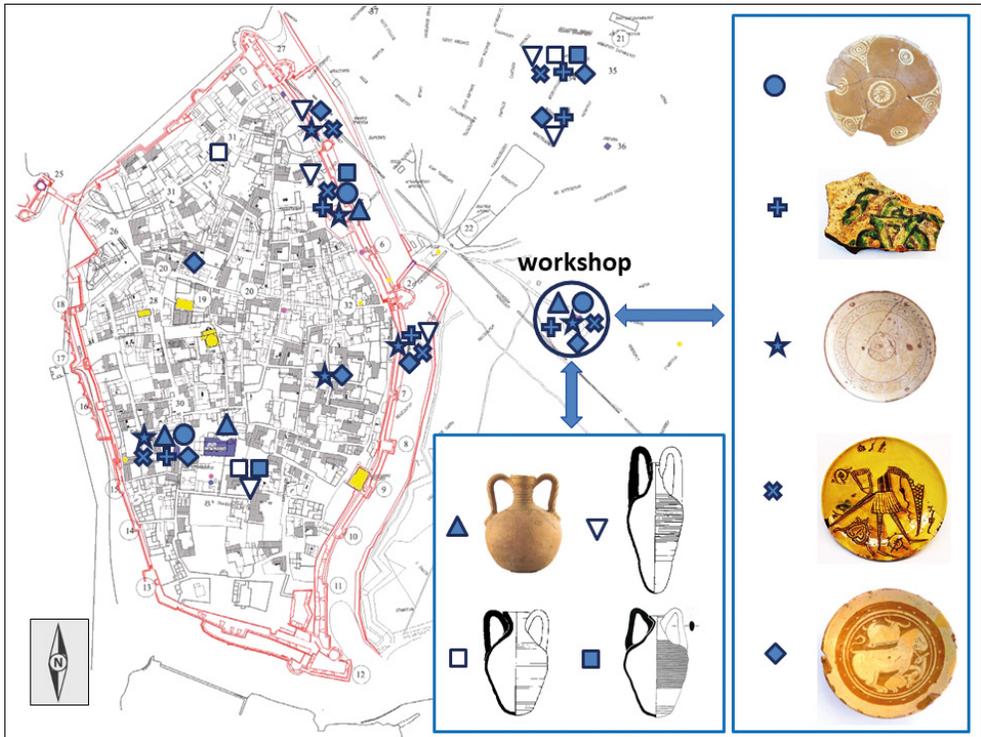
Figure 2 Finds of five selected glazed tableware types and of four selected amphora types of Byzantine date from the Orionos Street workshop as found in the city of Chalcis (J. Vroom; map after Kontogiannis 2012, fig. 1)

and praised in Constantinople.[21] So, it made sense to transport these commodities in locally made ceramic containers. In fact, the plain offered a remarkable combination of agricultural surplus and the availability of good clay deposits in the vicinity of an important harbour.[22]

To date, excavations in the present-day city of Chalcis have revealed the presence of five groups of glazed tablewares and four amphora types of Middle Byzantine date which were all produced by the Orionos Street workshop [fig. 2]. However, hardly any large-scale ex-

---

21 For residue analysis of amphorae from Chalkis and Thebes, see Pecci, Garnier, Waksman 2020 showing the transport of fermented substances, such as (red) wine or its derivatives and perhaps plant oils.

22 Traditional potters were operating in a nearby area at Chalkis in the late nineteenth-early twentieth century. They used the transport of their products by small sailing ships, which primarily operated during the warm months of the year from about April to October. The vessels were either directly loaded in these boats at the shore below the pottery workshops or at the harbour's quay; cf. Matson 1972.

cavations have taken place in this urban area, as most archaeological activity consisted of rescue excavations. Even when taking this into account, it is clear that the ceramic finds, which were excavated both inside and outside the Medieval city walls, include a large part of the repertoire of the Orionos Street production site (this holds especially true for the excavations at Agia Varavara Square, Frizi Street and in the Bailo House; see Kontogiannis 2012; Waksman et al. 2018b; Kontogiannis et al. 2020). This shows that the potters of the Orionos Street workshop produced for the local market of their own home town, and in any case not exclusively for markets further away.

3 The Chalcis Workshop and Its Hinterland

The primary distribution zone for the Chalcis workshop to be found directly outside the city itself was the countryside surrounding the urban area, the hinterland of Chalcis. This hinterland was not limited to the Island of Euboea, but extended also into mainland Greece. From the end of the ninth century the nearby city of Thebes was declared the capital of the Theme of Hellas (the administrative and military province of the Byzantine Empire, encompassing Attica, Euboea, Boeotia, and other areas of central Greece), and Chalcis became the naval station of the Theme's fleet and its port authorities. Thus, the city thrived as one of the most important harbours that connected southern Greece with Boeotia and from there via land and maritime routes with mainland Greece, Thessaloniki and finally Constantinople. Due to the arrival of the *strategos*, Chalcis and Thebes experienced a period of reorganisation from the ninth century onwards, which resulted for instance in the creation of suburbs.[23] Both cities undoubtedly increased in size and wealth; thus demand (including demand for pottery) became more differentiated and trickled down the socioeconomic scale to all segments of the population (Laiou 2012, 140).

In the last few decades, several surface survey projects have been taken place in the hinterland of Chalcis and Thebes, among which the Boeotia Project (around the ancient cities of Askra, Thespies and Hyettos), the Eastern Phokis Survey (around the excavations of a sanctuary near Kalapodi), the Thisbe Basin Survey, the Plataia-Survey, the Tanagra Project, the Skourta Plain Project and the Mazi Archaeological Project (MAP) [fig. 3a].[24] Unfortunately, some of these pro-

---

[23] This is shown by various coin finds and hoards. One of the earliest Byzantine coins at Chalkis includes a coin of Emperor Basil I (r. 867-886).

[24] See, in general, Bintliff et al. 2007 (Boeotia Survey); Armstrong 1989; 1996 (Eastern Phokis); Gregory 1984; 1986; Dunn 2006 (Thisbe-Kastorion); Konecny 1998 (Plataia); Vionis 2008; 2013 (Tanagra); Munn, Zimmerman Munn 1990 (Skourta); Kondyli, Craft 2020 (Mazi).

jects have not or not yet published their Middle Byzantine ceramic finds (Thisbe, Mazi, Skourta) while others have not quantified their material in an adequate statistical way (Eastern Phokis, Tanagra).

In fact, from the perspective of information on Byzantine pottery, only two projects can be considered as informative: the Boeotia Survey and the Plataia Survey. In these projects the quantification, diagnosis and dating of the Byzantine pottery was undertaken in a more systematic way by the author.[25] This means that there is data on Byzantine pottery available for further research from the mainland south-west of Chalcis, but hardly anything from the city's northeastern surroundings. However, this hitherto neglected area will be covered in the coming years by a new fieldwork project named 'Beyond Medieval Chalkida: Landscape and Socio-economic Transformations in the Hinterland of Medieval Chalkida' (HMC).[26]

On the basis of the currently available data on Byzantine pottery, it is possible to get a first overview of regional and sub-regional distribution of Middle Byzantine ceramics from the Chalcis workshop. For a perspective on the micro-zone, I have selected five glazed tableware types with a distinct decoration style (Slip-painted Ware, Green and Brown Painted Ware, Fine Sgraffito Ware, Incised Sgraffito Ware and Champlevé Ware) as well as two amphora types (the small Unglazed Incised Ware jar, and the Günsenin 3 amphora). These wares are very well represented in the survey material and thus form a solid body of information **[figs 3b-c]**. In particular, the two amphora types were well represented in the Boeotian countryside, with a clear dominance of Günsenin 3 amphorae which are of a later date than the Unglazed Incised jars **[fig. 3c]**. As far as the spread of the glazed tablewares in the hinterland of Chalcis in Boeotia is concerned, it is clear that there is a fair representation of all the selected types, except for Champlevé Ware (the latest product in the production series), which is quite scarce **[fig. 3b]**.

As an experiment, affiliation network graphs were created of the six selected wares of the Chalcis workshop in relation to their presence on sites in Boeotia **[figs 4a-b]**. The results look quite like networks, but are similarly confusing and difficult to read. The drawbacks of affiliation network graphs are perhaps the most clear here:

---

25 Vroom 2003 (Boeotia Survey); personal observation (Plataia-Survey). One needs to keep in mind, though, that my pottery recordings for both projects took place until the year 2003. It is possible that more sherds were sampled afterwards.

26 This new fieldwork will take place between 2020-25 as a collaboration of Leiden University (NL), the Ephorate of Antiquities of Euboea at Chalkida, the Netherlands Institute at Athens (NIA) and the Hellenic Society for Near Eastern Studies (HSNES) at Chalkida. Its project leaders are the Author (Leiden University) in collaboration with Dr. A. Kostarelli (Ephorate of Antiquities at Chalkida), Dr. K. Politis and Dr. A. Blackler (HSNES); cf. Blackler 2020.
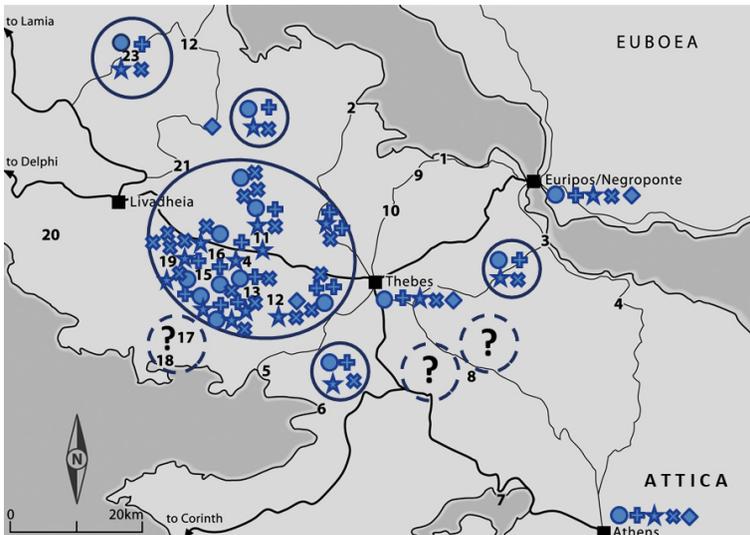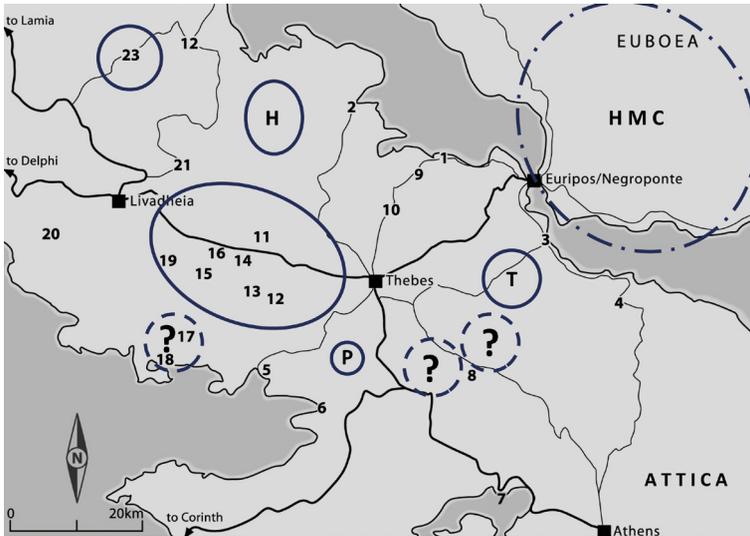
Figure 3a   Map showing various survey projects, most important places and routes in the hinterland of Chalcis. H = Hyettos Survey; HMC = Hinterland of Medieval Chalkida Project; P = Plataia- Survey; T = Tanagra Project. Numbers refer to: 1. Anthedon; 2. Larymna; 3. Aulis; 4. Oropos; 5. Livadostro; 6. Aigosthena; 7. Eleusis; 8. Panakton; 9. Loukisia; 10. Mouriki; 11. Haliartos; 12. Thespiae and Leondari; 13. Panaghia; 14. Mazi; 15. Evangilistria; 16. Petra; 17. Thisbe and Domvrena; 18. Vathy; 19. Koroneia; 20. Osios Loukas; 21. Orchomenos; 22. Atalanti; 23. Kalapodi; 24. Kaparelli (J. Vroom; map after Vroom 2003, fig. 8.1)

Figure 3b   Selection of five glazed tableware types (Slip-painted Ware, Green and Brown Painted Ware, Fine Sgraffito Ware, Incised Sgraffito Ware, Champlevé Ware) that were mostly represented on most important places and in surveyed areas in Chalcis' hinterland (J. Vroom; map after Vroom 2003, fig. 8.1)
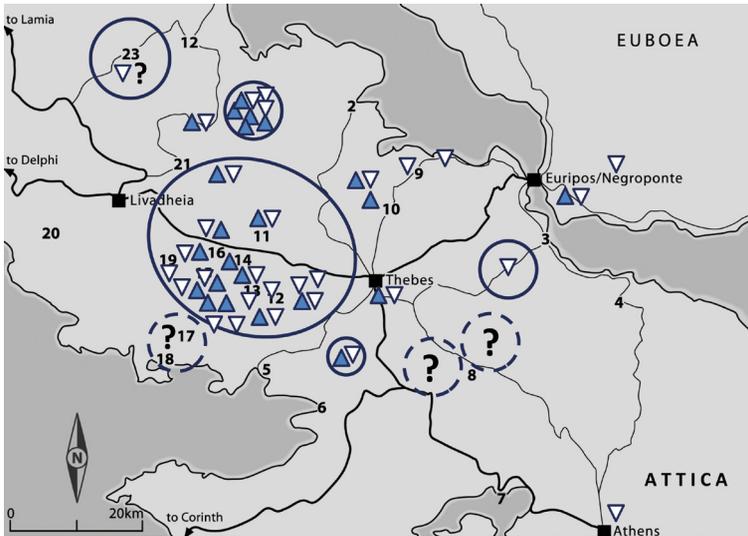
Figure 3c   Selection of two amphora types (Unglazed Incised Ware jar, Günsenin 3 amphora)
that were mostly represented on most important places and surveyed areas in Chalcis' hinterland
(J. Vroom; map after Vroom 2003, fig. 8.1)

the digital graphs suggest reciprocal relationships while they do not show quantification of the data. Without getting lost in methodological details, the major question that digital network graphs should always be asked is: what do they actually mean and why do they have this form? In other words, caveats for creating and interpreting network visualisations need to be taken into account (see also Leidwanger et al. 2018; Yangaki 2018, 1104, 1107).

Still, it is obviously worthwhile to explore ways to visualise pottery distribution in the past, as this can help to understand the circulation of this omnipresent product. An interesting and fruitful approach has for instance been offered by Michael McCormick. With the aim to detect regional and sub-regional micro-systems of ceramic distribution, he presented in his article "Byzantium on the Move" micro-zones of locally made Byzantine wares from two autonomous production centres in Galilee and Judaea (McCormick 2002, 14-16). He was able to recognise micro-zones of different densities around his two case studies, among which distribution zones within a radius of 15 km, 40 km and 100 km from their central points (McCormick 2002, 15, fig. 1.1).

This approach might also help us to better understand the distribution of the Chalcis pottery at various regional levels. For the micro-regional level of the direct hinterland, the distribution of the six selected ceramic groups (four glazed tableware types and two amphora types mentioned above) can be visualised in various zones.
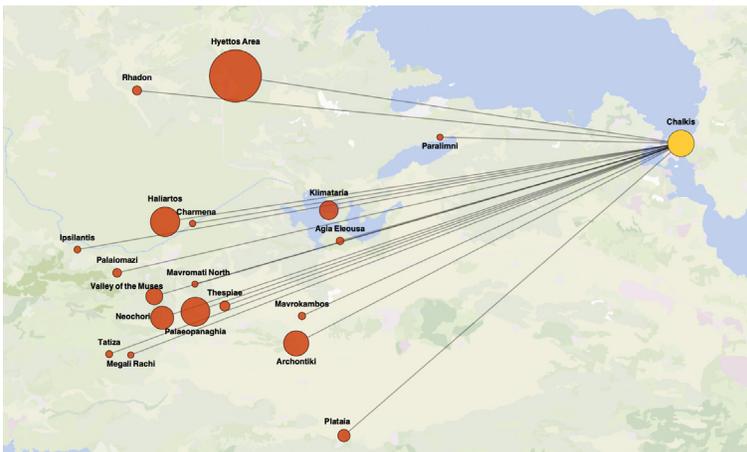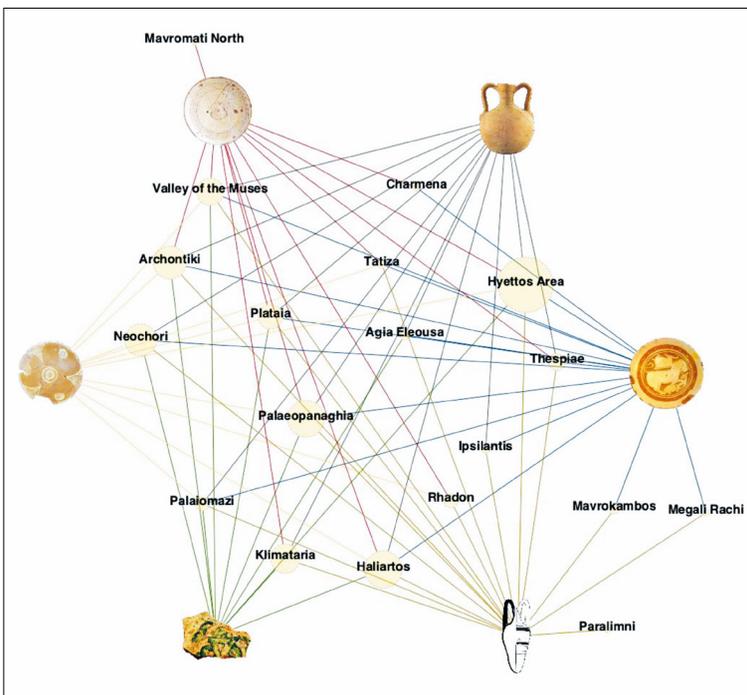
Figures 4a-b   Affiliation network graph and geographical network map of five glazed tableware types (Slip-painted Ware, Green and Brown Painted Ware, Fine Sgraffito Ware, Incised Sgraffito Ware) and of two amphora types (Unglazed Incised Ware jar and Günsenin 3 amphora) in relation to sites in Chalcis' hinterland (J. Vroom; T. Kodzhabasheva)

For the distances of the concentric circles, I have chosen micro-zones of 15 km (the first circle: a three hours' walk on foot), of 30 km (the second circle: circa half a day's walk on foot) and of 50 km (the third circle: circa 1 day travel on foot) from Chalcis' production site. In addition, I have selected 30 sites in Boeotia with Byzantine pottery finds, as published in my book *After Antiquity* (Vroom 2003, 136-7, tables 6.1-6.2). According to the classification of site function by the Boeotia Project, these included rural habitation sites (RUR), habitation sites with a Medieval/Post-Medieval tower (TOW), urban sites with fortification walls ('CITY') and special purpose sites containing for instance Medieval/Post-Medieval churches and monasteries (SP) (Vroom 2003, 87-134). Furthermore, it was possible to add the city of Plataia to this visualisation (due to a sufficient quantification of the finds), but unfortunately not Thebes as an important consumption centre in Boeotia (as it lacks solid quantified data on Byzantine finds so far).[27]

The maps show that the six selected ceramic groups from the Chalcis' workshop were omnipresent and evenly distributed across the landscape, both in rural sites in lowland areas as on hilltops in Boeotia [figs 5a-f]. Interestingly enough, there were not so many Chalcis products found in urban centres (Askra, Thespies and Hyettos), but rather in rural sites with special features.[28] It is evident that during Byzantine times the countryside in this part of central Greece used various types of glazed tablewares adorned with elaborate painted and incised decorations, and certainly not exclusively unglazed (or perhaps wooden) dishes. Although Athens was another substantial manufacture centre of glazed ceramics in this part of central Greece, its products were quite different in fabric, glaze and decoration from the Chalcis pottery, and were almost absent in the survey samples.[29]

One may notice that the two selected amphora types (the Unglazed Incised jar and the Günsenin 3 amphora) show a similar distribution pattern as common utility objects in hamlets and towns in the hinterland of Chalcis [figs 5e-f]. The amphorae found on the smaller sites could have been used for the regional transport of goods, such as wine or oil, and afterwards they could have been recycled for secondary use as a storage vessel for foodstuffs (the re-use of these containers as beehives has also been suggested [Hayes 1992, 76]). Or perhaps they were brought empty to the Boeotian rural sites in or-

---

27 To date, Byzantine pottery finds from excavated plots at Thebes are seldom well-quantified and published from this city; see recently Liard, Kondyli, Kiriatzi 2019.

28 This may raise questions about the survey techniques used: does this for instance imply that the Boeotian cities perhaps were not well surveyed? Or is maybe the division in site functions not satisfying?

**29** Vroom personal observation; cf. Panagopoulou et al. 2021.
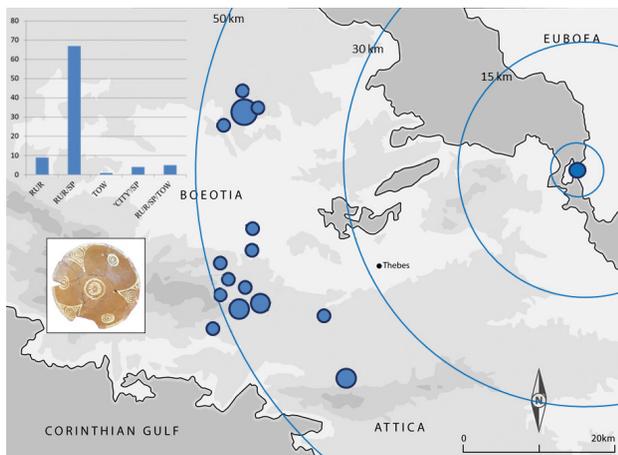
Figure 5a
Map with micro zones (of 15, 30 and 50 km) and graph of the total amounts of finds of Slip-painted Ware on various sites in Chalcis' hinterland (J. Vroom; map after Vroom 2003, fig. 5.1a)
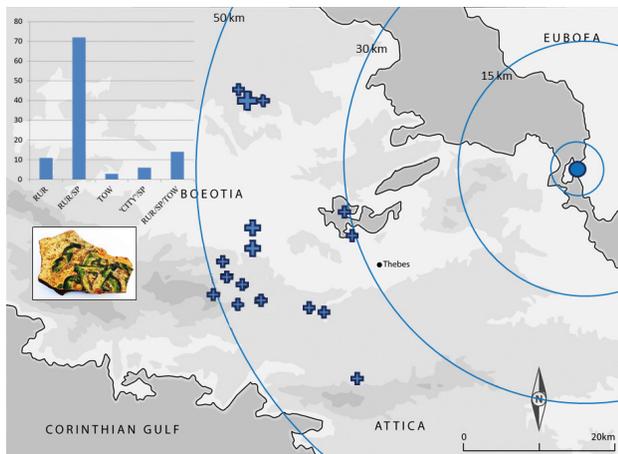

Figure 5b
Map with micro zones (of 15, 30 and 50 km) and graph of the total amounts of finds of Green and Brown Painted Ware on various sites in Chalcis' hinterland (J. Vroom; map after Vroom 2003, fig. 5.1a)
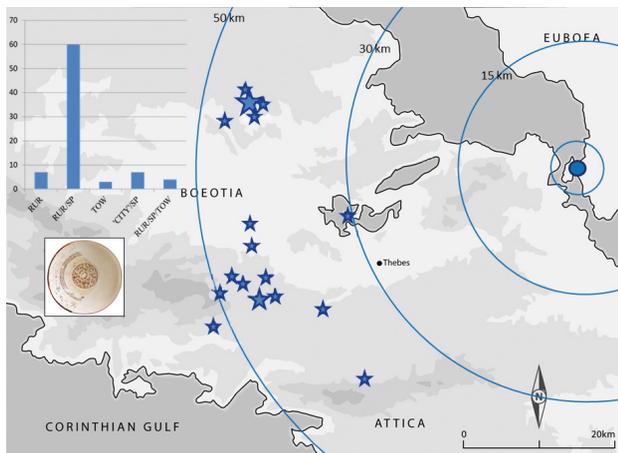

Figure 5c
Map with micro zones (of 15, 30 and 50 km) and graph of the total amounts of finds of Fine Sgraffito Ware on various sites in Chalcis' hinterland (J. Vroom; map after Vroom 2003, fig. 5.1a)
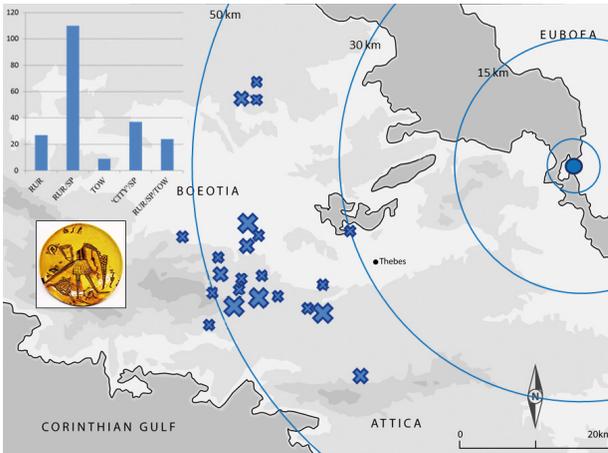
Figure 5d
Map with micro zones (of 15, 30 and 50 km) and graph of the total amounts of finds of Incised Sgraffito Ware on various sites in Chalcis' hinterland (J. Vroom; map after Vroom 2003, fig. 5.1a)

Figure 5e
Map with micro zones (of 15, 30 and 50 km) and graph of the total amounts of finds of the Unglazed Incised jar on various sites in Chalcis' hinterland (J. Vroom; map after Vroom 2003, fig. 5.1a)
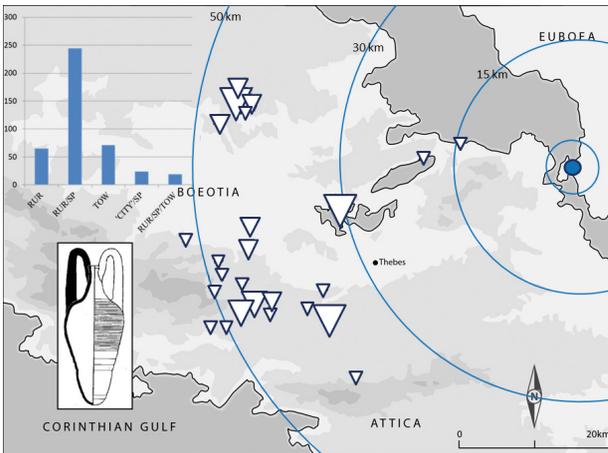
Figure 5f
Map with micro zones (of 15, 30 and 50 km) and graph of the total amounts of finds of the Günsenin 3 amphora on various sites in Chalcis' hinterland (J. Vroom; map after Vroom 2003, fig. 5.1a)

der to be refilled with local agricultural products for transport to other regions.[30]

The visualisation clearly indicates that prior to the thirteenth century not much pottery from the Chalcis workshop was found at tower sites, while typical thirteenth-century products (such as Incised Sgraffito Ware and Günsenin 3 amphorae) were not only found in much larger quantities at tower sites, but also circulated more at tower sites and urban centres in the Boeotian hinterland of Chalcis [figs 5d, 5f].[31] This is surely an indication of the use of these structures during the Frankish occupation of Greece after 1204.

In general, the Boeotian countryside appears to have been densely inhabited, and was thus a good and large outlet for the affordable Chalcis products. The increasing distribution and quantity of Byzantine pottery in the hinterland of the workshop, which becomes particularly discernible from the eleventh century onwards, may be taken as signs of a growing appreciation and demand for these specialised, locally manufactured items. The production in Chalcis surely responded to this growing demand with a further differentiation of types (Laiou 2012, 142-3).

Most of the wares produced between the tenth and thirteenth century in Chalcis seem to have been sold in the hinterland micro-zone within the second and third circles of 30 and 50 km (or a half day to one day of travel on foot from Chalcis). This suggests distribution through a permanent market (probably at Thebes, since it was an administrative centre) from where these products were acquired. Undoubtedly, the low-lying Boeotian sites could benefit from a road system, which would enable the transport of the ceramic products on donkeys and mules (Vroom 2003, 147-257).

[30]   Boeotia was famed for its production of wine, oil, honey and above all silk textiles made at Thebes.

[31]   That is to say, next to the usual main presence of these wares on special purpose sites in Boeotia.

## 4   The Chalcis Workshop and the Byzantine Empire

The archaeological evidence clearly proves that some main types of the Chalcis pottery made between the tenth and thirteenth centuries found their way beyond the micro-zone of the direct hinterland to the wider Aegean and Mediterranean area under control of the Byzantine Empire. Although the Chalcis workshop functioned as the key production centre for its hinterland, for wider interregional distribution it had to compete with other contemporary pottery workshops in the western Aegean which produced similar-looking Byzantine glazed tablewares. The most important of these were based at Corinth, Thessaloniki, Sparta, Larissa and Argos (and perhaps at Heraklion on Crete; see [fig. 6]) (see, for their markets, Bakirtzis 2007; Papanikola-Bakirtzi 2012).[32] The competition between these city-orientated production centres may be visualised by a site catchment analysis with a concentric circle representing c. 50 km (one day on foot). These circles make it quite evident that especially Chalcis and Athens were in direct competition with each other in central Greece, followed by Corinth, Argos and Sparta in the Peloponnese.[33]

Nevertheless, recent archaeometrical analyses have certainly proved that the Chalcis workshop was the main and most far-reaching provider of Middle Byzantine to Late Byzantine/Frankish ceramic products around the eastern Mediterranean and beyond (Waksman et al. 2014, 414). This is for instance shown by the matching of the Chalcis chemical group with samples from nearby shipwreck cargoes as well as with samples from various sites in the Aegean, Black Sea and the eastern Mediterranean (Waksman et al. 2014; 2018a; 2018b).

In the perspective of the wider commercial contacts of the Chalcis products, it is quite interesting to map the distribution of Byzantine glazed tablewares which found their way to various regions in the Byzantine Empire through maritime routes starting from the port on the Euripus Strait [figs 7a-e]. The visualisation makes it clear, for instance, that on a regional scale the main circulation of Slip-painted Ware was in the western Aegean (in central Greece and on the Peloponnese), while the interregional distribution extended to sites in the western Black Sea region, western Turkey and to a much lesser degree to sites in eastern Turkey, Cyprus, Ukraine and Italy [fig. 7a]. A similar distribution pattern can be seen with respect to Green and Brown Painted Ware, with the map showing a quite dense concentration of finds in the Aegean with an additional diffusion in a north-western direction; that is to say, to sites in the western Black Sea region [fig. 7b].

---

32   The suggestion of Heraklion was made by N. Poulou (personal communication).

33   According to Angeliki Laiou (2012, 141), there existed an "industrial triangle with very active trade between Thebes, Athens, Corinth and Euripos".
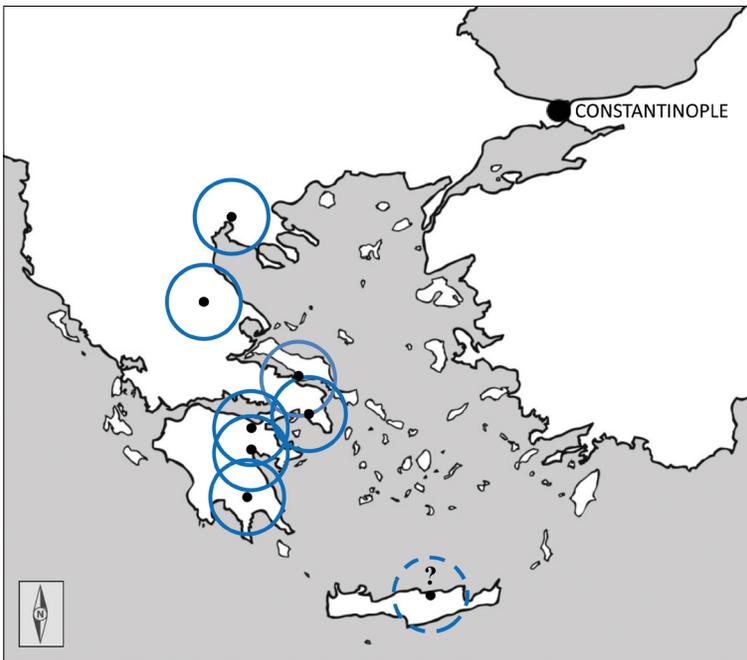
Figure 6   Map of pottery workshops and their encircled catchment areas producing similar looking Byzantine glazed tablewares as the Chalcis products in the Aegean (J. Vroom)

The circulation of Fine Sgraffito Ware from Chalcis (especially a variant decorated with spiral designs in a tondo) appears to have been even more widespread. Apart from the usual clusters in the Aegean and western Black Sea, one can clearly see on the distribution map that this pottery type found its way to south-eastern Turkey, Sicily, southern and northern Italy (often as *bacini* in church façades), as well as to Ukraine, Russia and even to eastern Sweden **[fig. 7c]**. The visualisation unmistakably demonstrates that the 'network' of Fine Sgraffito Ware extended much further to the North and to the western Mediterranean than the other wares from Chalcis.

Finds of Incised Sgraffito Ware from the Orionos Street workshop, on the other hand, were mainly recovered in the Aegean and the Black Sea, with a more or less even dispersal in the western Mediterranean (stretching all the way to sites in southern France). The distribution shows a remarkable cluster of this late twelfth-early thirteenth-century tableware in the Near East, specifically in the Crusader States in modern Syria, Israel and Palestine **[fig. 7d]**. In addition, finds of Incised Sgraffito Ware from Chalcis with a distinctive warrior motif were particularly recovered at sites in the western and eastern Aegean (shown in yellow dots in **[fig. 7d]**).
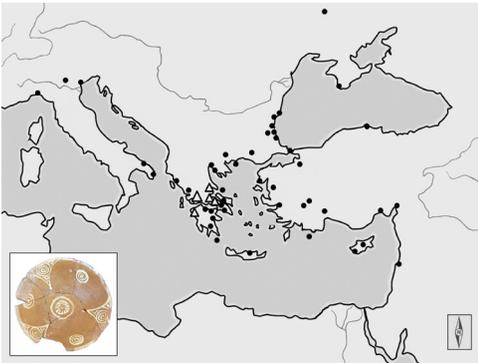
Figure 7a Distribution map of Slip-painted Ware in the Mediterranean and in the Black Sea region (J. Vroom)

Figure 7b Distribution map of Green and Brown Painted Ware in the Mediterranean and in the Black Sea region (J. Vroom)
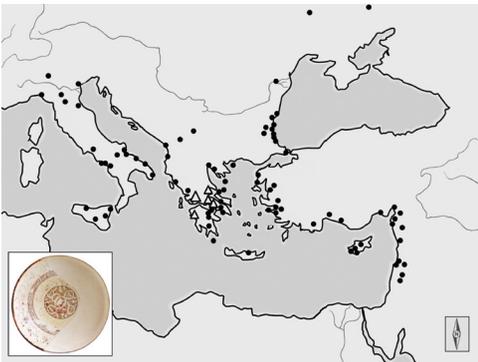
Figure 7c Distribution map of Fine Sgraffito Ware in the Mediterranean and in the Black Sea region (J. Vroom)
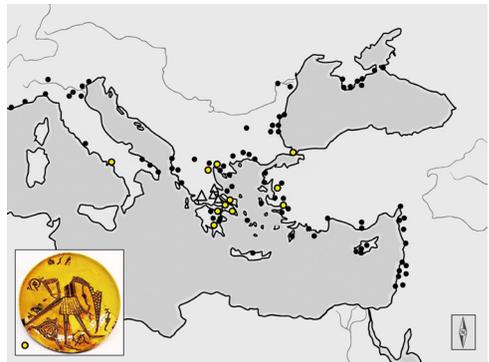
Figure 7d Distribution map of Incised Sgraffito Ware in the Mediterranean and in the Black Sea region; yellow dots refer to finds of the warrior motif (J. Vroom)
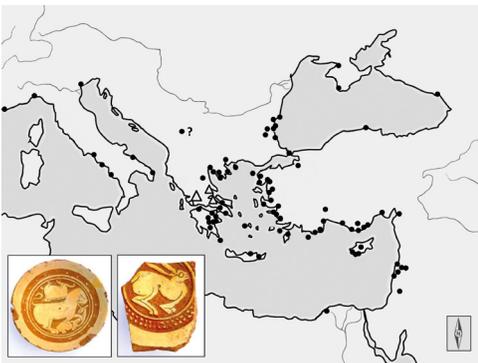

Figure 7e Distribution map of Champlevé Ware in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea region (J. Vroom)
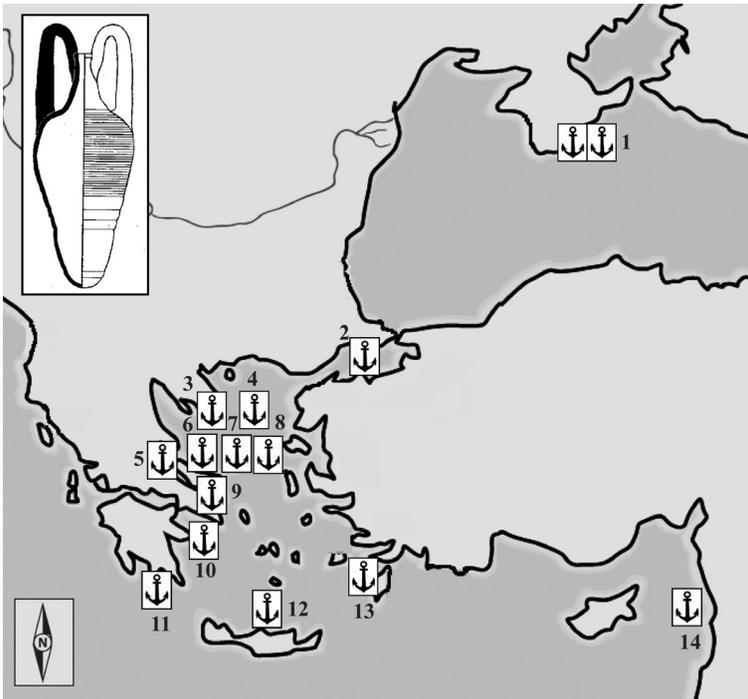
Figure 8a Distribution map of finds of the Günsenin 3 amphora on shipwrecks in the eastern Mediterranean and in the Black Sea region. Shipwrecks found at: 1. Novy Svet (2 shipwrecks); 2. Çamaltı Burnu I; 3. Glafki; 4. Kyra Panagia/Pelagonissos (2 shipwrecks); 5. Pagasitikos Gulf (8 shipwrecks); 6. Sporades C; 7.Sporades B; 8. Skopelos; 9. Portolafia; 10. Aegina; 11. Tainaron; 12. Dhia B=C 13. Rhodes; 14. Tartus (J. Vroom)

Finally, as far as the circulation of Champlevé Ware from Chalcis on an interregional level is concerned, the map shows only a moderate amount of clusters of finds in the Black Sea and in Italy, but alternatively a substantial presence in Israel and even in Egypt **[fig. 7e]**.

These distribution maps show that Byzantine glazed tablewares with similar-looking shapes and decorative styles were mainly found in harbours and coastal urban centres. This may very well reflect not only a unified common cultural and economic demand for these products, but also shared consumption needs, tastes and aesthetics.

Multiple examples of identical-looking depictions on glazed wares have already been recognised among the workshop waste from Orionos Street. Various elements of these reoccurring motifs were often exact copies of each other (as in the case of incised designs of warriors, birds, and fishes). All this suggests that a select number of potters/artisans manufactured these vessels in mass production. The increase in demand for this decorated pottery may have been influenced by interregional contacts. Surely, pottery from the Islamic
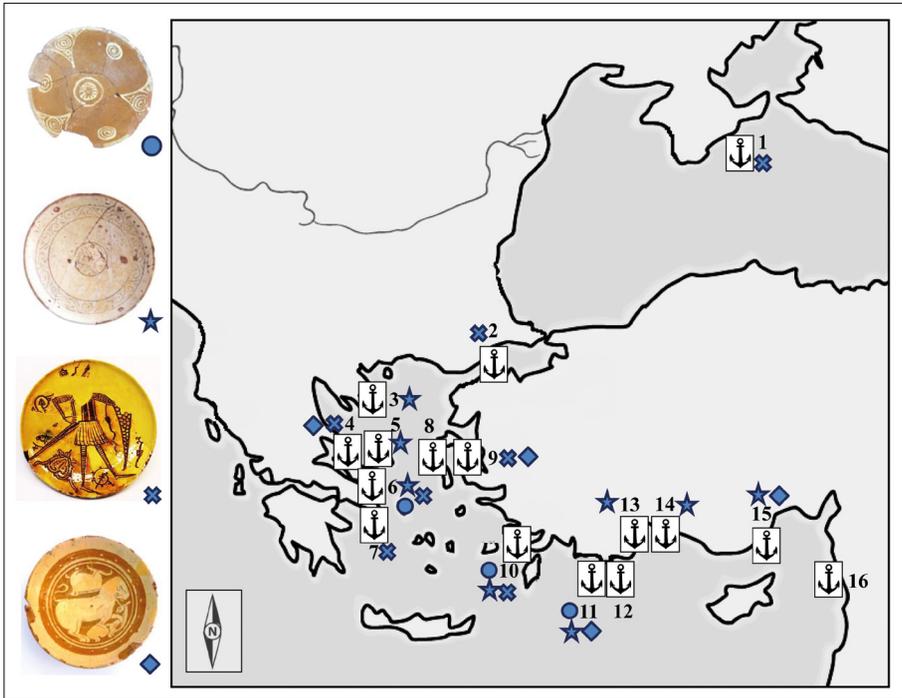
Figure 8b Distribution map of finds of four glazed tableware types on shipwrecks in the eastern Mediterranean and in the Black Sea region. Shipwrecks found at: 1. Novy Svet; 2. Çamaltı Burnu I; 3. Glafki; 4. Pelagonissos-Alonessos; 5. Skopelos; 6. Kavalliani; 7. Thorikos; 8. Beşadlar; 9. Near Izmir; 10. Tavşan adası; 11. Kastellorizo; 12. Kumluca; 13. Adrasan bay; 14. Near Antalya; 15. Silifke; 16. Near Tyre (J. Vroom)

world had influenced the designs and the production technology of these ceramics. Still, although these decorated luxury wares fan out from Chalcis in all directions, one has to keep in mind that the quantities found on most sites were often not large.

The distribution maps acquire even more meaning when we turn to finds of Günsenin 3 amphorae on various shipwrecks in the Aegean, Black Sea and the Near East **[fig. 8a]**. In fact, these ceramic containers seem to appear on nearly every shipwreck discovered in the western Aegean, with a substantial cluster in the southern Euboean channel, in the Pagasetic Gulf and around the northern Sporades. The wrecks clearly show that these Günsenin 3 amphorae were transported in considerable quantities on an interregional scale from the port of Chalcis along various maritime routes, most probably through cabotage and tramping by merchant ships of c. 15 meters in length. The finds of these amphorae thus seem to mark the main sea lanes of trade during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries which linked Chalcis to the western Aegean in general, to the cap-

ital of the Empire, Constantinople, and to the Black Sea region, as well as to the Near East.

The same phenomenon is evident in shipwrecked vessels carrying glazed ceramics as objects of interregional and intraregional trade. Several twelfth- and thirteenth-century wrecks with significant quantities of Slip-painted Ware, Fine Sgraffito Ware, Incised Sgraffito Ware and Champlevé Ware (of a more or less homogeneous character, most of which appear to come from Chalcis) were recovered in the Aegean and off the southern coast of Turkey, for instance at Pelagonissos-Alonissos, Skopelos, Kavalliani, Izmir, Kastellorizo and Adrasan **[fig. 8b]** (see in general, Vroom 2016; Waksman et al. 2018b; Koutsouflakis 2020).[34] These cargoes can be used as excellent indicators of the maritime routes used by merchant ships leaving from Chalcis to other parts in the Mediterranean. It has even been suggested that merchant ships loaded with cargo were sailing together from Chalcis following the same sea-lanes in a convoy (similar to the state-supervised *muda* system practiced by the Venetians) to Thessaloniki, Constantinople and eventually to the Black Sea (Koutsouflakis 2020, 454-6).

However, one should not forget that pottery was usually not the main product circulating on these maritime trade routes. Ceramics (particularly amphorae filled with foodstuffs) were often used on ships as supplementary cargo or even as saleable ballast; the heavy containers provided the boat with stability, while at the same time being capable of being sold for profit (Vroom 2016, 157). As additional cargo, pottery can be a guide for the circulation of more valuable commodities. Indeed, it seems possible to link the distribution of certain pottery types to trade routes of perishable goods, such as silk textiles, dyestuff, (flavoured) wine, oil, cheese or *garum*.[35]

All in all, the archaeological data clearly indicate that main centres of exchange for the wares from Chalcis were along the coasts of the western Aegean and the western Peloponnese and the Black Sea. The pottery finds show that Chalcis was a commercial hub at a central, strategic location in an organised naval network that functioned within the Byzantine Empire. Indeed, in its heyday Chalcis seems to have controlled the major sea routes leading from Italy (Venice) to Constantinople (Vroom 2021).

---

34 The so-called Novy Svet shipwreck in the Black Sea carried in general late thirteenth-century ceramics; cf. Vroom 2016, 176, tab. 2.

35 The recovery of cheese in a goat pelt is a rare find from a twelfth-century shipwreck at Rhodes; cf. Koutsouflakis 2020, 466.

5 The Chalcis Workshop and Its Wider Spheres of Distribution

When one tries to get an overall picture of the circulation of glazed tablewares from Chalcis on an interregional and long-distance scale, so micro-, intermediate- and macro-level within and beyond the boundaries of the Byzantine Empire, one is confronted with a complex mosaic of finds, zones of distribution and possible networks. In order to gain a relevant understanding of the data, I have selected five glazed pottery types and five amphora types of Byzantine date produced in the Chalcis workshop and visualised the circulation of these ceramics in the Aegean and beyond in smaller and larger 'spheres' **[figs 9a-b]**. The term 'sphere' or 'interaction sphere' (as used by some archaeologists) refers to "a complex network of interaction at different scales and periods" (Mikcic, Geok Yian 2017, 810). Consequently, spheres can depict areas of distribution as well as relationships between micro-, intermediate- and macro-levels of distribution over time.[36]

Starting with the circulation of five types of glazed tableware, which were produced in the Orionos Street workshop at Chalcis (or perhaps also at another main production centre in the western Aegean, as these wares are sometimes difficult to pinpoint to one production site), I managed to define spheres for each of the five wares **[fig. 9a]**. The first sphere is of Slip-painted Ware (c. late eleventh-twelfth century) and it is already encompassing a substantial distribution area, including its core-area (the Aegean) as well as Apulia, northern Italy, the Balkans, Cyprus and the western Black Sea region while moving north to Chersonnesos (Crimea) and Kiev. The second sphere is of Green and Brown Painted Ware (c. second half of the twelfth-begin thirteenth century) and it follows a similar pattern. The third sphere is of Fine Sgraffito Ware (c. mid twelfth-mid thirteenth century) and it looks very different, with large areas of distribution to the West (including Sicily and the Italian peninsula) and to the North (via sites situated along the Russian rivers to Lund in south-eastern Sweden). The fourth sphere is of Incised Sgraffito Ware (c. second half twelfth-mid thirteenth century) and the fifth sphere is of Champlevé Ware (c. late twelfth-mid thirteenth century). Both are remarkable, as these Chalcis wares by now totally miss the connection with the region in the far North, while they expand even more than the others in the western and eastern parts of the Mediterranean (stretching their distribution area all the way from southern France to the Near East and Egypt).

In addition, I have also selected five amphora types that were definitely produced in the Orionos Street workshop at Chalcis, and de-

---

36 As such, spheres can perhaps be understood as archaeologically more 'realistic' visualisations of layers of networks that change over time.

Figure 9a Map of interaction spheres of ceramic exchange of five glazed tableware types in the Mediterranean, the Black Sea region and beyond. Date sphere 1: ca. late 11th-12th c.; sphere 2: ca. 2nd half 12th-begin 13th c.; sphere 3: ca. mid 12th-early 13th c.; sphere 4: ca. 2nd half 12th-early 13th c.; sphere 5: ca. late 12th-mid 13th c. (J. Vroom)

lineated five interaction spheres on the basis of their distribution [fig. 9b]. The first sphere is defined by the Unglazed Incised Ware jar, and this product seems to have been made for a limited interregional distribution in the tenth-eleventh centuries. Until now, this type has been found in the Aegean area (including cities as Thessaloniki, Athens, and Ephesus) and much further in the lands of the Rus' north of the Black Sea (where it has for example been recovered at Kiev and Sarkel). These last finds clearly suggest the development of an exchange system from Chalcis to the distant North beyond the boundaries of the Byzantine Empire. The second and third spheres

Figure 9b Map of interaction spheres of ceramic exchange of five amphora types in the Mediterranean, the Black Sea region and beyond. Date sphere 1: ca. 10th-11th c.; sphere 2: ca. (late 10th) 11th-early 12th c.; sphere 3: ca. end 11th-early 12th c.; sphere 4: ca. 12th-13th c.; sphere 5: ca. mid 12th-late 13th c. (J. Vroom)

are of two other amphora types made at Chalcis, among which the so-called Günsenin 2 amphora (c. late tenth/eleventh-second half of twelfth century) and the Günsenin 1-3 amphora (c. late eleventh-early twelfth century). These spheres show a similar pattern with containers moving beyond the Aegean in distant northern directions, often along the Russian rivers, from the late tenth/eleventh into the twelfth century.

The fourth sphere is of the Günsenin 3 amphora, and it looks very different, showing some expansion towards the central Mediterranean, but a quite substantial expansion towards more northern ar-

eas far beyond the boundaries of the Byzantine Empire, including sites in Belarus', northern Russia and eastern Sweden (among which Novgorod, Lund and Sigtuna). The Günsenin 3 amphora produced in Chalcis thus appears to have been distributed over a remarkable wide area between the (mid) twelfth and thirteenth centuries.

The fifth sphere is of the small carrot-shaped Günsenin 20 amphora and it is interesting as well. This amphora type of only 33 cm height was produced in Chalcis from c. the mid twelfth to the late thirteenth centuries, and its sphere seems to indicate a retraction of distribution of Chalcidian wares from the far North, with only Kiev being its most northern destination, while the container had a markedly more substantial spread towards the western and eastern parts of the Mediterranean (ranging from Marseilles to Acre). The Günsenin 20 was the latest amphora product of the Orionos Street workshop, and its circulation seems to be related to other distribution mechanisms in the thirteenth century.

In short, the visualisation in spheres seems to indicate that some pottery types produced at Chalcis (among which Fine Sgraffito Ware and the Günsenin 3 amphora) circulated on an intraregional scale within and outside the Byzantine Empire. Both wares were recovered together as mixed cargo on shipwrecks in the western Aegean (at Glafki and Pelagonissos) and along the southern Turkish coast (in Adrasan Bay and near Antalya). Indeed, they were not only circulating in the Aegean and in the Black Sea, but were also transported to other parts in the Mediterranean, ranging from southern France and Italy in the West to Israel and Syria in the East, from Cyprus to Russia and even to Sweden in the North, showing their widespread long-distance distribution.

Consumers for these wares were particularly based in large coastal towns and ports, including those on the western Black Sea coast (especially in the eleventh and twelfth centuries), which were perhaps functioning as emporia trading with inland goods. In addition, Constantinople clearly functioned as the nodal point within this outward-going circulation of all the amphora types manufactured at Chalcis (Vroom 2016; 2017; 2021).

To understand the geographical and chronological evolution and the commercial implications of the spheres of distribution discussed here, one may link the fate of the Chalcis pottery workshop to wider political events and conditions. I will mention only a few important developments which occurred during the centuries the workshop functioned. In the case of spheres 3 (tablewares) and 4 (amphorae) the growing northern exchange of Byzantium with the Rus' in Kiev and with Viking mercenaries and traders was obviously of great importance. These northern connections appear to have suddenly stopped after the devastating invasions of the Mongols in eastern Europe between 1220 and 1240. After this abrupt ending of commer-

cial links of Chalcis with the North, sphere 5 (tablewares, amphorae) seems to show the gradual effects of the Fourth Crusade after 1204 and the creation of Crusader States in Greek lands and their contacts by Italian merchants with those in the Near East. This development, in combination with the trade agreements between the Byzantine Empire and the maritime states of Venice and Genua, resulted for Chalcis in a substantial growth of maritime traffic to Italy, to southern France, to the Crusader States and to Egypt; in short, to more western and eastern parts of the Mediterranean during the thirteenth century.

6 Conclusion

This discussion of a hitherto unknown Byzantine industrial zone outside the fortified city of Chalcis in central Greece allows us to draw several conclusions. The most important is perhaps that between the tenth and the thirteenth century the site had a remarkable diverse capacity of production and impressive growing and changing connections of local, regional, interregional, and long-distance distribution of locally made glazed tablewares as well as various types of amphorae. Shipwrecks found near Euboea and in the Pagasetic Gulf provide evidence that these ceramic containers were at least occasionally used to transport agricultural products from the rich hinterland of Chalcis. The production site was evidently situated near the southern harbour of Chalcis, where the pots and their contents could be directly loaded for maritime commerce on small merchant ships.

The importance of the Orionos Street workshop in Chalcis as a production centre is clearly illustrated by the mosaic character of its diverse networks with its various geographical and commercial interlocking and expanding layers. The primary network was local and based in the direct hinterland of the workshop, and seems to indicate that from the eleventh century onwards rural sites near Chalcis developed a demand for more luxurious but affordable glazed tablewares and two amphora types.

Nevertheless, the archaeological evidence makes it quite clear that the pottery production in Chalcis was not meant exclusively for the local market with a few outliers, not even initially. Over time, there were evidently small shifts in the local patterns of pottery distribution between the Boeotian sites, but the production of Champlevé Ware in Chalcis was from the beginning clearly for the interregional long-distance trade (*Fernhandel*), as this glazed ceramic type was hardly circulated in the local network. The archaeological evidence thus indicates that the Chalcis workshop networks functioned in complex and interrelated ways. For example, it shows the circulation of the Chalcis pottery in the Aegean and the Black Sea, with

even wider extensions to Scandinavia and the Near East. The production site at Chalcis clearly had contacts with Constantinople, with Viking mercenaries and/or traders, and eventually with the Crusader States during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.

The archaeological record also shows that the material culture followed political and economic ups and downs, whereby the fate of Byzantine products, including the pottery produced in Chalcis, can be linked to historical events. From the eleventh century onwards it is evident that the production and distribution of the Chalcis workshop increased and developed an autonomous network. This was not only based on a well-defined market for its products in prosperous urban centres and rural sites in the nearby countryside, but also on earlier connections with the Black Sea region. The degree of mobility of the Chalcis pottery is once more an indication of the cohesion of the Byzantine Empire.

It is clear that there occurred major shifts in these distribution networks in the early thirteenth century, with the arrival of the Crusaders in Greek lands in 1204 as the crucial turning point. After 1204, Chalcis became part of the Italian sphere of influence and its products became part of the Venetian maritime networks in the Mediterranean. This had a huge impact on the distribution network of the Chalcis pottery, which then became essentially Mediterranean-based, with a larger spread towards sites in the eastern and western parts of this commercial region. In fact, all evidence suggests that the Crusaders brought their own networks and placed these on top and over the existing networks of Chalcis. However, this change meant by no means an impoverishment of the hinterland of Chalcis, the Boeotian countryside, during the Crusader period. In fact, it seems that for the production site in Chalcis and its wider region the observation made by Angeliki Laiou holds true, namely that

> while local, regional and interregional trade have unique characteristics and respond to different kinds and levels of demand, they meet at several points, and the existence of one exerts varying multidimensional and multidirectional influences on the other. (Laiou 2012, 146)

When we shift our perspective from the archaeological record to archaeological theory, and try to use the rich data of the Chalcis pottery workshop for a production place network analysis, unfortunately there seems to be no crystal-clear answers to be found. Digital network analysis by means of grouping materials on the basis of similarity appears quite appealing, but it raises as many questions as it seemingly provides answers. In essence, every computer can make awe-inspiring visual networks, but never provides answers to our questions on what the stripes between pottery types and find-spots

on maps actually mean in an archaeological, historical, economic and sociocultural sense.

All theoretical caveats notwithstanding, digital network analysis does suggest a reciprocal relationship between the dots on the map; at least it suggests that there is more to the line between the dots than is dreamt of in our imagination. The computer is obviously a wonderful tool, and it has tremendously helped the advancement of archaeology, but it cannot provide argumentative structures. To put it bluntly, digital lines do not make a network, but broken pieces of pottery do. So networks do not speak for themselves, they must be spoken for. The basis for any archaeological network analysis remains well-dated and well-quantified material, or in this case: pottery, and mostly fragments of pottery. These can be ceramic finds in well stratified layers, or small pieces found on the surface in surveyed settlements. And here is the rub: the data for any theory or network are dependent on solid dating, diagnosis and quantification, and also on solid survey methods – and to formulate it mildly, in archaeology the understanding of 'solid' is a matter of permanent debate.

In short, the fascinating data of the Chalcis production centre convince me that the use of 'spheres' to visualise the distribution patterns of pottery over regions and over time is perhaps more adequate for archaeological research than the use of rigid networks. To my archaeological mind, spheres seem to capture in more convincing and fluid ways the realities of the development and extension of exchange systems and the flow of material resources in different varieties, various densities and ever-changing zones within and beyond the Byzantine world.

Acknowledgements

Bibliography

Armstrong, P. (1989). "Some Byzantine and Later Settlements in Eastern Phokis". *Annual of the British School at Athens*, 84, 1-47.

Armstrong, P. (1993). "Byzantine Thebes. Excavation on the Kadmeia, 1980". *Annual of the British School at Athens*, 88, 295-335.

Armstrong, P. (1996). "The Byzantine and Later Pottery". Felsch, R.C.S. (Hrsg.), *Kalapodi. Ergebnisse der Ausgrabungen im Heiligtum der Artemis und des Apollon von Hyampolis in der antiken Phokis*. Mainz: Verlag Philipp von Zabern, 336-71.

Arthur, P.; Imperiale, M.L.; Muci, G. (2018). "Amphoras, Networks, and Byzantine Trade". Leidwanger, J.; Knappett, C. (eds), *Maritime Networks in the Ancient Mediterranean World*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 219-37.

Bakirtzis, Ch. (2007). "Imports, Exports and Autarky in Byzantine Thessalonike from the Seventh to the Tenth Century". Henning, J. et al. (eds), *Post-Roman Towns, Trade and Settlement in Europe and Byzantium*. Vol. 2, *Byzantium, Pliska, and the Balkans*. Berlin; New York: De Gruyter, 89-118. Millenium-Studien; Millenium Studies 5/2.

Bintliff, J. et al. (2007). *Testing the Hinterland. The Work of the Boeotia Survey (1989-1991) in the Southern Approaches to the City of Thespiai*. Cambridge: McDonald Institute of Archaeological Research.

Blackler, A. (2020). *The Medieval Landscape of Euboea (Negroponte). A Framework for Interpreting the Byzantine and Frankish Towers of Greece* [PhD dissertation]. Birmingham: University of Birmingham.

Dunn, A. (2006). "The Rise and Fall of Towns, Loci of Maritime Traffic, and Silk-Production. The Problem of Thisvi-Kastorion". Jeffreys, E. (ed.), *Byzantine Style, Religion and Civilization. In Honour of Sir Steven Runciman*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 38-71.

François, V. (1997). "Sur la circulation des céramiques byzantines en Méditerranée orientale et occidentale". Démians d'Archimbaud, G. (éd.), *La céramique médiévale en Méditerranée = Actes du VIᵉ congrès de l'Association Internationale pour l'Étude des Céramiques Médiévales en Méditerranée AIECM2* (Aix-en-Provence, 13-18 novembre 1995). Aix-en-Provence: Narration Éditions, 231-6.

François, V. (2012). "Représenter le commerce de la poterie à Byzance." Malamut, E.; Ouerfelli, M. (éds), *Les échanges en Méditerranée médiévale. Marqueurs, réseaux, circulations, contacts*. Aix-en-Provence: Presses Universitaires de Provence, 33-55.

François, V. (2017). *La vaisselle de terre à Byzance. Catalogue des collections du musée du Louvre*. Paris : Musée du Louvre; Somogy Éditions d'Art.

François, V. (2018). "Aegean Ware. How a Typology Became Inoperative". *XIth Congress AIECM3 on Medieval and Modern Period Mediterranean Ceramics = Proceedings of the International Congress on Medieval and Modern Period Mediterranean Ceramics AIECM3* (Antalya, 19-24 October 2015), Vol. 1. Ankara: Koç University VEKAM, 197-202.

Gregory, T. (1984). "Diporto. An Early Byzantine Maritime Settlement in the Gulf of Korinth". *Deltion CHAE*, 12, 287-304.

Gregory, T. (1986). "A Desert Island Survey in the Gulf of Corinth". *Archaeology*, 39, 18-21.

Günsenin, N. (1990). *Les amphores byzantines (Xe-XIIIe siècles). Typologie, production, circulation d'après les collections turques* [PhD dissertation]. Paris : Université Paris I Panthéon-Sorbonne.

Günsenin, N. (2018). "La typologie des amphores Günsenin. Une mise au point nouvelle". *Anatolia Antiqua*, 26, 89-124. `https://doi.org/10.4000/anatoliaantiqua.589`.

Hayes, J.W. (1992). *Excavations at Saraçhane in Istanbul*. Vol. 2, *The Pottery*. Princeton: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection.

Jones, R.E. (1986). *Greek and Cypriot Pottery. A Review of Scientific Studies*. Athens: British School at Athens. Fitch Laboratory Occasional Papers 1.

Koder, J. (1973). *Negroponte. Untersuchungen und Siedlungsgeschichte der Insel Euboia während der Zeit der Venezianerherrschaft*. Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften.

Koder, J.; Hild, F. (1976). *Hellas und Thessalia*. Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften. Tabula Imperii Byzantini 1.

Kondyli, F.; Craft, S. (2020). "The Making of a Byzantine Monastic Landscape. A Case Study from the Mazi Plain in Northwestern Attica, Greece". *Journal of Mediterranean Archaeology*, 33(2), 135-59.

Konecny, A. (1998). "Der Plataiai-Survey 1996-1997". *Jahresheften des Österreichischen Archäologischen Institutes*, 67, 54-62.

Kontogiannis, N. (2012). "Euripos-Negroponte-Eğriboz. Material Culture and Historical Topography of Chalcis from Byzantium to the End of the Ottoman Rule". *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik*, 62, 29-56.

Kontogiannis, N.D. et al. (2020). "Ceramic Vessels and Food Consumption. Chalcis as Major Production and Distribution Center in the Byzantine and Frankish Periods". Waksman 2020, 239-54.

Koutsouflakis, G. (2020). "The Transportation of Amphorae, Tableware and Foodstuffs in the Middle and Late Byzantine Period. The Evidence from Aegean Shipwrecks". Waksman 2020, 447-81.

Laiou, A.E. (2012). "Regional Networks in the Balkans in the Middle and Late Byzantine Periods". Morrisson 2012, 125-46.

Leidwanger, J.; Knappett, C. (eds) (2018). *Maritime Networks in the Ancient Mediterranean World*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Liard, F.; Kondyli, F.; Kiriatzi, E. (2019). "Exploring Diversity in Household Pottery Traditions in Crusader Greece. A Case Study from the City of Thebes, Boeotia". *Archaeometry*, 61(5), 1011-38. `https://doi.org/10.1111/arcm.12468`.

McCormick, M. (2002). "Byzantium on the Move. Imagining Communications History". Macrides, R. (ed.), *Travel in the Byzantine World*. Aldershot (UK); Burlington (VT): Ashgate, 3-29. Society for the Promotion of Byzantine Studies Publications 10.

Matson, F. (1972). "The Potters of Chalkis". Borza, E.N.; Carrubba, R.W. (eds), *Classics and the Classical Tradition*. University Park (PA): The Pennsylvania State University, 117-42.

Megaw, A.H.S. (1975). "An Early Thirteenth Century Aegean Glazed Ware". Robertson, G.; Henderson, G. (eds), *Studies in Memory of David Talbot Rice*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 34-45.

Mikcic, J.N.; Geok Yian, G. (2017). "Spheres of Ceramic Exchange in Southeast Asia, Ninth to Sixteenth Centuries CE". Hodos, T. (ed.), *The Routledge Handbook of Archaeology and Globalization*. London; New York: Routledge, 808-31.

Morozova, Y.; Waksman, S.Y.; Zelenko, S. (2020). "Byzantine Amphorae of the 10th-13th Centuries from the Novy Svet Shipwrecks, Crimea, the Black Sea. Preliminary Typology and Archaeometric Studies". Waksman 2020, 429-45.

Morrisson, C. (ed.) (2012). *Trade and Markets in Byzantium*. Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection.

Munn, M.H.; Zimmerman Munn, M. (1990). "On the Frontiers of Attica and Boiotia. The Results of the Stanford Skourta Plain Project". Schachter, A. (ed.), *Essays in the Topography History and Culture of Boiotia*. Montreal: McGill University; Department of Classics, 32-40. Teiresias Supplement 3.

Ober, J. (1987). "Pottery and Miscellaneous Artifacts from Fortified Sites in Northern and Western Attica". *Hesperia*, 56(2), 197-227.

Panagopoulou, A.; Vroom, J.; Hein, A.; Kilikoglou, V. (2021). "Production Technology of Glazed Pottery in Chalcis, Euboea, During the Middle Byzantine Period". *Heritage*, 4, 4473-94.

Papanikola-Bakirtzi, D. (2012). "Byzantine Glazed Ceramics on the Market. An Approach". Morrisson 2012, 193-216.

Pecci, A.; Garnier, N.; Waksman, S.Y. (2020). "Residue Analysis of Medieval Amphorae from the Eastern Mediterranean". Waksman 2020, 417-28.

Talbot Rice, D. (1930). *Byzantine Glazed Pottery*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Todorova, E. (2018). "'Dark Age' Amphorae from Present-day Bulgaria. State of Research, Typologies, Problems and Future Perspectives". *Archeologia Medievale*, 65, 65-76.

Vionis, A.K. (2008). "Current Archaeological Research on Settlement and Provincial Life in the Byzantine and Ottoman Aegean. A Case-study from Boeotia, Greece". *Medieval Settlement Research*, 23, 28-41.

Vionis, A.K. (2013). "Considering a Rural and Household Archaeology of the Byzantine Aegean. The Ceramic Spectrum". Bintliff, J.; Caroscio, M. (eds), *Pottery and Social Dynamics in the Mediterranean and Beyond in Medieval and Post-Medieval Times*. Oxford: Archaeopress, 25-40. BAR International Series 2557.

Vionis, A.K. (2017a). "The Byzantine to Early Modern Pottery from Thespiai". Bintliff, J. et al. (eds), *Boeotia Project*. Vol. 2, *The City of Thespiai. Survey at a Complex Urban Site*. Cambridge: McDonald Institute for Archaeological Research, 351-74.

Vionis, A. (2017b). "Understanding Settlements in Byzantine Greece. New Data and Approaches for Boeotia, Sixth to Thirteenth Century". *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, 71, 127-73.

Vroom, J. (2000). "Piecing together the Past. Survey Pottery and Deserted Settlements in Medieval Boeotia (Greece)". Belke, K. et al. (Hrsgg), *Byzanz als Raum. Zu Methoden und Inhalten der historischen Geographie des östlichen Mittelmeerraumes im Mittelalter*. Vienna: Verlag der Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 245-59. Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Philosophisch-Historische Klasse, Denkschriften, 283. Band.

Vroom, J. (2003). *After Antiquity. Ceramics and Society in the Aegean from the 7th to the 20th Centuries A.C. A Case Study from Boeotia, Central Greece*. Leiden: Leiden University Press. ASLU 10.

Vroom, J. (2006). "Byzantine Garbage and Ottoman Waste". Andrikou, E. et al. (eds), *Thèbes. Fouilles de la Cadmée II.2. Les tablettes en linéaire B de la 'Odos Pelopidou'. La céramique de la Odos Pelopidou et la chronologie du Linéaire B*. Pisa; Rome: Istituti Editoriali e Poligrafici Internazionali, 181-233.

Vroom, J. (2011). "The Other Dark Ages. Early Medieval Pottery Finds in the Aegean as an Archaeological Challenge". Attoui, R. (ed.), *When Did Antiquity*

End? Archaeological Case Studies in Three Continents. Oxford: Archaeopress, 137-58. BAR International Series 2268.

Vroom, J. (2014a). *Byzantine to Modern Pottery in the Aegean. An Introduction and Field Guide. Second Revised Edition*. Turnhout: Brepols.

Vroom, J. (2014b). "Turkish Rubbish in Greek Soil. Byzantine, Medieval and Post-Medieval Pottery from Thebes". Aravantinos, V.; Kountouri, E. (eds), *A Century of Archaeological Work in Thebes. Pioneers and Continuing Research*. Athens: Tameio Archaiologikon Poron, 455-71.

Vroom, J. (2016). "Byzantine Sea Trade in Ceramics. Some Case Studies in the Eastern Mediterranean (ca. Seventh-Fourteenth Centuries)". Magdalino, P.; Necipoğlu, N. (eds), *Trade in Byzantium. Papers from the Third International Sevgi Gönül Byzantine Studies Symposium*. Istanbul: Koç University's Research Center for Anatolian Civilizations (ANAMED), 157-77.

Vroom, J. (2017). "The Byzantine Web. Pottery and Connectivity between the Southern Adriatic and the Eastern Mediterranean". Gelichi, S.; Negrelli, C. (a cura di), *Adriatico altomedievale (VI-XI secolo). Scambi, porti, produzioni*. Venice: Edizioni Ca' Foscari, 285-310. Studi e Ricerche 4. `http://doi.org/10.14277/6969-115-7/SR-4-8`.

Vroom, J. (2018). "On the Trail of the Enigma Amphora. Following the Flow of Middle Byzantine Ceramic Containers". *Archeologia Medievale*, 45, 77-90

Vroom, J. (2021). "Thinking of Linking. Pottery Connections, Southern Adriatic, Butrint and beyond". Skoblar, M. (ed.), *Byzantium, Venice and the Medieval Adriatic. Spheres of Maritime Power and Influence, c. 700-1543*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 45-82.

Vroom, J.; Tzavella, E.; Vaxevanis, G. (forthcoming a). "Exploring Daily Life in the Byzantine Empire. Pottery Finds from Chalkis (Euboea, Greece), ca. 10th/11th-13th c.". Petridis, P. (ed.), *Proceedings of the 12th International Congress on Medieval and Modern Period Mediterranean Ceramics (AIECM3)* (Athens, 21-7 October 2018).

Vroom, J.; Tzavella, E.; Vaxevanis, G. (forthcoming b). "Life, work and consumption in Byzantine Chalkis: Ceramic Finds from an Industrial Hub in Central Greece, ca. 10th-13th Centuries". Vroom, J. (ed.), *Feeding the Byzantine City: The Archaeology of Consumption in the Eastern Mediterranean (ca. 500-1500)*. Turnhout: Brepols Publishers.

Waksman, S.Y. (ed.) (2020). *Multidisciplinary Approaches to Food and Foodways in the Medieval Eastern Mediterranean*. Lyon: MOM Éditions, 447-81. Archéologie(s) 4.

Waksman, S.Y. et al. (2014). "The Main 'Middle Byzantine Production' and Pottery Manufacture in Thebes and Chalkis". *Annual of the British School at Athens*, 109, 379-422. `https://doi.org/10.1017/s0068245414000148`.

Waksman, S.Y. et al. (2018a). "Investigating the Origins of Two Main Types of Middle and Late Byzantine Amphorae". *Journal of Archaeological Science. Reports*, 21, 1111-21. `https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jasrep.2016.12.008`.

Waksman, S.Y. et al. (2018b). "Archaeometric Investigations of the Tableware Cargo of the Kavalliani Shipwreck (Greece) and into the Role of the Harbour of Chalcis in the Byzantine and Frankish Periods". *Journal of Archaeological Science. Reports*, 21, 1122-9. `https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jasrep.2018.06.027`.

Yangaki, A. (2018). "Pottery of the Byzantine Period, Trade Networks, Mapping, Network Analysis. A case Study". *Journal of Archaeological Science. Reports*, 21, 1103-10. `https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jasrep.2017.06.036`.

Section 6
Byzantium and the Turks

From Byzantium to Muslim-Turkish Anatolia
Transformation, Frontiers, Diplomacy, and Interaction, Eleventh to Twelfth Centuries

Alexander Beihammer
University of Notre Dame, South Bend

Abstract   This article gives a survey of key factors and major stages of transformation which explain how the eastern provinces of the Byzantine Empire in the course of the 11th and 12th centuries developed into a highly fragmented political landscape dominated by Muslim-Turkish principalities. Apart from pointing out changing structures and political constellations during the period in question, the article focuses especially on the formation of a new frontier in Western Asia Minor, aspects of Byzantine-Turkish diplomacy, and forms of interaction between Byzantines, Anatolian Christians, and Turks.

Keywords   Byzantium. Turks. Asia Minor. Borderland/Frontier. Diplomacy. Interaction.

Summary   1 Introduction. – 2 Mechanisms and Stages of Transformation. – 3 The Byzantine-Turkish Frontier. – 4 Byzantine-Turkish Diplomacy. – 5 Interaction.

Edizioni
Ca'Foscari

1   Introduction

The penetration of Byzantium's eastern provinces by Muslim-Turkish nomads and warriors and their gradual transformation into new politico-cultural entities constituted, from the viewpoint of Byzantine Constantinople, the first stage in a centuries-long process of encirclement, shrinkage, and absorption. The standard narrative of Byzantium's relations with the Seljuk and Ottoman Turks still widely reflects this viewpoint, although international scholarship has developed a broad range of theories, heuristic categories, and explanatory models to interpret similar violence-induced transformative processes relating to conquest, state building, and identity formation in the late Roman world and Medieval Europe in a more adequate manner. When it comes to the emergence of Muslim-Turkish Anatolia, scholarly debates are still hampered to some extent by certain ideological barriers, anachronistic concepts of national history, or academic traditions compartmentalising historical developments into subdisciplines. Depending on one's angle, this transformation was presented as lamentable decay of Hellenism and Christianity, as appropriation of a new homeland through its Turkification and Islamisation, or as a struggle of swashbuckling knights fighting their way through hostile territories to save the Holy Land. Fortunately, younger historians have made great strides in revising many of the traditional opinions and perceptions articulated up to the 1970s. We have now a much better grasp of key aspects, such as the rise of the Great Seljuk empire (Peacock 2010), Byzantine-Turkish spheres of contact and exchange (Balivet 1994; Shukurov 2016), settlement patterns and urban structures (Özcan 2010; Blessing 2014), the impact of climatic and environmental conditions on Anatolian societies (Haldon 2007), the characteristics of Anatolian historiography (Küçükhüseyin 2011), and the literary representations of cross-cultural encounters in epics and hagiographical texts (Kitapçı Bayrı 2020). Nevertheless, most of this work focuses on the heyday of the Seljuk sultanate, the Mongol period, or the early Ottoman emirate. This is certainly understandable, as the bulk of the available source material, such as local chronicles, manuscripts, official documents, archaeological remains, monuments, coins, and inscriptions, date to the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. As for the formation period before 1200, archaeological remains and monuments are scarce, and narrative sources were mostly penned by external observers based in Constantinople, the Muslim heartlands, the crusader states, or the centres of Armenian and Syrian Christianity in Anatolia. Hence, despite the rich bibliography on the Komnenian dynasty and the crusader states, the developments in Asia Minor during the 170 odd years from the first arrival of Turks in the eastern borderland until the Fourth Crusade remain rather obscure. Turkish emirs and nomadic pastoralists are frequent-

ly mentioned as hostile forces populating the interior of Asia Minor, but there are only few studies scrutinising the intrinsic nature and sociopolitical structures of these entities, or their patterns of coexistence with the Byzantines and other local populations (Necipoğlu 2006; Beihammer 2017). This is in sharp contrast to the vibrant scholarly debates on the early Ottoman expansion, which in part suffer from similar clichés and preconceptions but have reached a much higher level of theorisation and analysis (Schmitt 2016). This observation applies even more to the Islamic conquests of the seventh century, which are nowadays studied under the broader conceptual umbrella of the transformation of the Roman world (Hoyland 2015).

In what follows, I will first lay out some general thoughts on the mechanisms framing sociopolitical and structural changes in Asia Minor during the transformation from Byzantine to Turkish rule. These will be discussed against the backdrop of older approaches and interpretations which still overshadow the historical debate. Thereafter, I will outline important stages and characteristics in key areas of Byzantine-Turkish relations, namely the nature of the new frontier along the western fringes of the Anatolian plateau, elite diplomacy, and forms of interaction during the period in question.

2 Mechanisms and Stages of Transformation

The notion of 'constructive interaction' constitutes the nub of the argument I developed in my recent monograph on Byzantium and the emergence of Muslim-Turkish Anatolia. It tries to make the point that the process in question should not be viewed as elimination of Byzantine culture and institutions by Turkish conquerors. Rather, it was the mutual cross-fertilisation between the two spheres which was the driving force of historical change (Beihammer 2017, 387-94). If there was a loser, it was Byzantium's power elite, the government of Constantinople with its military, administrative, and ecclesiastical institutions, as well as its mechanisms of control and exploitation. Another supra-regional power in the Eastern Mediterranean, the Fatimid caliphate of Cairo, which for almost a century between the 970s and the 1060s managed to uphold a precarious equilibrium with Byzantium regarding their spheres of influence in Syria, also entered a period of political and military decline until its ultimate downfall in 1171 (Thomson 2008). Contrarily, the new empire on the rise, the Great Seljuk sultanate founded by the brothers Ṭughril Beg and Chaghrī Beg, temporarily imposed its overlordship on the Muslim emirates in the Syrian, Mesopotamian, and Caucasian borderlands, and in the years 1087-92 Sultan Malikshāh exerted direct control over Syria through emirs appointed by him. Yet the dynastic struggles following Malikshāh's death brought the sultanate's efforts to strengthen

its hold over the Turks in Anatolia to grief (Peacock 2015, 61-80; Beihammer 2017, 244-64). As regards the internal situation of Byzantine Asia Minor, no matter what the exact nature and underlying causes of the eleventh-century crisis were, large sections of the Anatolian aristocracy and regional military units undoubtedly exhibited centrifugal tendencies and the civil wars of 1056 and 1072 were catalysts in this respect. Byzantine landowners and generals, Frankish-Norman mercenaries, Armenian chiefs, local brigands, seditious townspeople, as well as Arab and Kurdish emirs loomed large in Anatolian affairs long before the Turks arrived on the scene (Cheynet 1996, 337-57, 379-85, 392-408).

The changing constellations and dynamics of the transformative process in Asia Minor can be roughly divided into three distinct stages, which may be subsumed under the headings of 'expansion' (c. 1030-96), 'reaction' (1096-c. 1120), and 'state formation' (c. 1120-1200). The first stage stretches from the first appearance of Turkmen warriors in the Armenian borderlands to the temporary establishment of Turkish groups in fortified towns of western Asia Minor and port cities of the Aegean coastland, such as Nicaea, Smyrna, Ephesus, and Miletus in the 1080s (Öngül 2016, 25-8; Turan [1971] 2004, 117-25). As regards the military causes for the Byzantine debacles in the east, one may point out that due to overextension, lack of coordination, and the challenges posed by nomadic warfare and raiding practices the Byzantine army failed to debar the Turks from entering the eastern access routes leading into the interior of Asia Minor and to uphold the alliances with the Muslim emirates along the frontier. This became especially evident after the abortive campaigns of Romanos IV Diogenes and his defeat in the battle of Manzikert in 1071 (Beihammer 2017, 92-168). Although this battle is usually presented as the point of no return in the fate of Asia Minor, it needs to be stressed that the Great Seljuk sultans played but a minor role in the military operations on Byzantine soil. The battle was actually not meant to happen. Rather, it resulted from the fortuitous coincidence that Romanos IV's operations in the Arsanias valley north of Lake Van intersected with Sultan Alp Arslan's route of retreat from northern Syria (Beihammer 2017, 155-61; for the battle in general cf. Hillenbrand 2007; Öngül 2016, 75-89). However, by strengthening its position in Syria, the Seljuk sultanate decisively undercut Byzantium's links with the borderland emirates (Turan [1971] 2004, 62-73; Öngül 2016, 69-72, 102-8). Moreover, the ensuing civil war in Byzantium turned Turkish warriors into esteemed allies of the warring factions (Turan [1971] 2004, 75-98; Öngül 2016, 110-15). In this way, Turkish chiefs not only gained access to well-defended provincial towns but also intensified their contacts with Byzantine elites, thus making their first acquaintance with Byzantine concepts of authority and political institutions.

The Turks in western Asia Minor underwent a process of cultural and ideological assimilation to their Byzantine environment, as becomes evident in the case of Tzachas/Çaka of Smyrna and other Turkish lords in the Aegean coastland. The notion of a Turkish threat to Constantinople, which culminated in the coalition with the Pechenegs in 1092, obfuscates the fact that Tzachas acted more like a seditious Byzantine warlord harbouring ambitions towards the ruling dynasty than a foreign conqueror. Contrarily, the Seljuk scion and founder of the emirate of Nicaea, Sulaymān b. Qutlumush, and his successors Abū l-Qāsim (1086-92) and Qilij Arslān I (1092-1107) developed a twofold outlook combining relations with Constantinople based on treaties, honorifics, and personal links (Anna Komnene, *Alexias* 3.11.1-5; 6.10.1-11 [ed. Reinsch, Kambylis 2001]) with a strategic orientation towards the old borderland, as the temporary conquests of Cilicia (1082-3) and Antioch (1084) illustrate (Turan [1971] 2004, 98-111, 113-17, 125-8). The Seljuk civil war after 1092 (Öngül 2016, 184-208) marked the definitive breakdown of any bipolar system of imperial control over the triangular landmass between the Aegean littoral, the Caucasus, and Upper Mesopotamia. Large parts of Anatolia and the entire former borderland came to be littered with rudimentary petty lordships held by Byzantine, Armenian, Turkmen, and Seljuk chiefs.

The second stage begins with the arrival of the First Crusade in Asia Minor (1096-97) and results in the crystallisation of new Christian-Muslim frontier zones along the western fringes of the Anatolian plateau, on the one hand, and in Cilicia, the Ceyhan valley, and the upper Euphrates region, on the other. The crossing of Asia Minor by the crusading hosts enabled Emperor Alexios I to restore Byzantine rule from Bithynia as far as the Gulf of Attaleia and Seleukeia while using the island of Cyprus as an advanced naval base granting access to the Syrian littoral (Roche 2009). Farther east, the nascent crusader principalities of Antioch and Edessa and adjacent Armenian lordships which drew their authority and legitimacy from a mixture of Byzantine court titles, feudal relations, and political alliances, drove a deep wedge into the Muslim-held territories (Asbridge 2000; Pryor, Jeffreys 2012). From the outset, their position was highly precarious, as they were encircled by a whole cluster of Turkish emirates and local clans based in Aleppo, Mosul, the Diyār Bakr province, the Armenian highlands, and Cappadocia. It was in this entangled contact zone that emirs of the Artuqid clan, who in the course of the Seljuk dynastic struggles had gained hold of key points, such as Mārdīn and Ḥiṣn Kayfā/Hasankeyf, actively engaged in conflicts with the Christian lords in their vicinity, thus reinvigorating a jihad ideology against the crusaders (Beihammer 2017, 332-4). Simultaneously, both Christian and Muslim rulers in the region elaborated mechanisms of communication, treaty making, and temporary alliances

to secure their interests and political survival or to form a common front against outside threats.

As for the situation in central Anatolia following the crossing of the First Crusade and Alexios I's 1097-98 campaign, the Turks who chose not to surrender to the Byzantine troops and to assimilate to the social environment of the western coastland retreated to the highlands east of an imaginary line running approximately from Dorylaion/Eskişehir to the central Anatolian lakes. It is impossible to reconstruct the details of this process, yet the successful repulsion of newly arriving crusader hosts in 1101 in the Pontus region and southern Cappadocia clearly shows that the Turks rapidly consolidated their hold over the Anatolian plateau and were able to defend it against major invading forces (Turan [1971] 2004, 128-35). This development resulted in the emergence of two predominant regional powers, namely the Anatolian Seljuks descending from Sulaymān b. Qutlumush, who established their base in the southwestern part of the Anatolian plateau between Konya and Aksaray, and the Dānishmendids descending from Gümüshtekīn Aḥmad b. Dānishmend, who from the 1080s onwards expanded their rule in Cappadocia from Sebasteia/Sıvas over strongholds in the Halys/Kızılırmak and Iris/Yeşilırmak valleys, such as Dokeia/Tokat, Amaseia/Amasya, Neokaisareia/Niksar, and Kaisareia/Kayseri (Turan 2004, 133-5; Kesik 2017, 48-80). For all their kinship relations and temporary coalitions, the two clans quickly began competing over influence and territories, especially as both sides were intent on extending their sway over the Ceyhan and Upper Euphrates region, in particular the city of Melitene/Malatya, which the Dānishmendids for the first time seized from an Armenian local lord in September 1102 (Kesik 2017, 75-7). Qilij Arslān I thus entered an alliance with the Byzantine emperor whereas Dānishmend Ghāzī released Bohemund of Antioch from prison, allying with him and other Frankish lords (Kesik 2017, 77-80). For a short time, the Seljuks outstripped their opponents with the conquests of Ablastayn (1103), Malatya (1105), and Mosul (1107), but Qilij Arslān I's death in battle at the Khābūr River once again tipped the balance of power in favour of the Dānishmendids (Turan [1971] 2004, 135-8). This pattern of incessant rivalries and frequently changing power constellations became a characteristic feature in the political culture of the fragmented landscape of post-Byzantine Anatolia.

In the third stage between the 1120s and 1200, central Anatolia developed into a separate politico-cultural sphere dominated by Muslim-Turkish elites ruling with the aid of Islamic authority concepts, administrative structures, institutions, and monuments (Tekinalp 2009; Pancaroğlu 2013). Politically, the region continued to be a conglomerate of semi-independent emirates centred around a few towns with their pertinent territories. These lordships were partially connected through dynastic ideas, kinship links, and intermar-

riages, and branches or individual representatives of the Seljuk and Dānishmendid families interacted with each other to pursue common goals. Yet the principles on which these coalitions were based were never explicit and had in each case to be renegotiated. Frequently, the relations between members of the same family or the two dynasties were strained or lapsed into open conflict: "Henceforth, hatred and intractable enmity spread among the families" (Michael the Syrian, *Chronicle* [transl. Chabot 1905, 192]; transl. by the Author from the French).[1] As there were no well-defined hierarchies or mechanisms of conflict resolution, these rivalries were often decided by violent means. In this atmosphere of incessant feuding, power constellations were short-lived and volatile and became even more blurred by the fact that the Anatolian emirs frequently forged alliances with outside forces, be it the imperial government of Constantinople, Byzantine lords in the Pontus region, Turkish clans in the Armenian highlands and Diyār Bakr, or Frankish and Armenian lords in Cilicia, the Ceyhan region, or the Euphrates valley (Michael the Syrian, *Chronicle* [transl. Chabot 1905, 223, 227, 230, 290, 293-4]).

The crystallisation of a kind of supreme authority in Anatolia was long in the making and never gained general acceptance. Although there are sources projecting the bestowal of the title of sultan by the Abbasid caliph and the Great Seljuk sultan back to Sulaymān b. Qutlumush (Michael the Syrian, *Chronicle* [transl. Chabot 1905, 172]), it seems that the earliest ambitions towards this direction actually date to the time of Qilij Arslān I's eastward expansion 1105-07 (Beihammer 2017, 346-7) and that it was not before the reigns of Mas'ūd I (1116-55) and Qilij Arslān II (1155-92) that the Seljuks of Konya assumed the title of sultan in a formal investiture ceremony. It is noteworthy, however, that only Eastern Christian authors provide specific information about this matter (Michael the Syrian, *Chronicle* [transl. Chabot 1905, 312]; Matthew of Edessa, *Chronicle* [transl. Dostourian 1993, 265-6]). Byzantine sources are elusive in this respect while Arabic sources never refer to the twelfth-century lords of Konya as sultans. There is one inscription dated to 551/1156, in which Qilij Arslān II presented himself as sultan in the Great Seljuk tradition (Korobeinikov 2013, 73-4), but does this claim reflect any broader acceptance? Be it as it may, both the Seljuks of Konya and their Dānishmendid counterparts in Cappadocia laid claims to precedence among the emirs of Anatolia and were temporarily successful in imposing their will, but this could hardly be translated into generally acknowledged authority concepts, as the incessant rivalries vividly illustrate. In terms of political clout, the Dānishmendid rul-

---

1 See also Michael the Syrian, *Chronicle* (transl. Chabot 1905, 194-5, 204, 219-20, 223-4, 238, 246, 253-4, 258-9, 304-5, 319, 320-1, 326, 332, 345-7, 349-50, 357).

er Gümüshtekīn Ghāzī (1105-34) outstripped the Seljuk lord Masʿūd (Turan [1971] 2004, 194-9; Kesik 2017, 103-14). It was only after the death of Gümüshtekīn Ghāzī's son Malik Muḥammad (1134-43) that the Dānishmendid principality split up in three rivalling branches based in Sıvas, Malatya, and Kayseri and the Seljuks of Konya regained their freedom of action (Turan [1971] 2004, 204-6; Kesik 2017, 117-19). It took three more decades that Qilij Arslān II eventually succeeded in subduing all Dānishmendid emirs by seizing Malatya on 25 October 1178 (Turan [1971] 2004, 226-31; Kesik 2017, 117-46), but as soon as Konya was about to become the uncontested centre of gravity in Anatolia, the recently unified territories once again in about 1187 split up into numerous separate dominions ruled by Qilij Arslān II's sons (Turan [1971] 2004, 250-4, 261-75).

Turkish scholars coined the term "Turkish feudalism" to describe the peculiar situation of twelfth-century Anatolia and to link it to long-established Seljuk or even old-Turkish practices (Turan [1971] 2004, 47-8, 242-5). They also emphasise the historical role of Seljuk and Dānishmendid rulers in the creation of a politically and culturally unified Anatolian sphere, which they consider the Turkish homeland in its embryonic state (Turan [1971] 2004, 254-60; Kesik 2017, 48-51). While it is certainly true that there was a new cultural and political landscape in the making, it seems more appropriate to view the principles, behavioural patterns, and strategies of the new ruling elites as a result of the preceding disintegration of imperial structures and the ensuing political regionalisation, which has many parallels in Byzantine and Frankish-held regions, as well as in Muslim territories of Syria and Upper Mesopotamia. In the Byzantine provinces of Western Asia Minor following the breakdown of Komnenian rule after 1180, for instance, disaffected aristocrats carved out short-lived local lordships defying the authority of Constantinople (Hoffmann 1974).

While the outcome of internal power struggles remained ambiguous, the Turks of Anatolia were mostly successful in fending off external threats. Apart from incessant skirmishes in the frontier zone, Byzantine emperors launched some large-scale campaigns against important strongholds, such as Sozopolis/Uluborlu at the headwaters of the Maeander River (1119), the cities of Kastamona/Kastamonu and Gangra/Çankırı (1130s), Neokaisareia/Niksar in the Pontus region (1140-41), and Dorylaion/Eskişehir in Phyrgia (1160), as well as two abortive invasions targeting the capital of Konya itself in 1146 and 1176 (Turan [1971] 2004, 187-8, 199-203, 206-8; Stouraitis 2016, 22-36). The Turks repelled all these attacks and dealt the Byzantine army a major blow at Myriokephalon (Turan [1971] 2004, 231-6, 239-41). As the universal chronicler Ibn al-Athīr (*Chronicon* [ed. Tornberg 1851, 11: 271]), a native from Mosul, accurately put it:

> In this year [569/1173-4] the king of the Romans [*malik al-Rūm*] crossed the straits of Constantinople to invade the land of Qilij Arslān. There was a battle between them in which the Muslims prevailed, and when the king of the Romans noticed his incapacity, he returned to his city after a great number of his soldiers were killed and taken captive.

During the crossing of the Second and Third Crusade, the Turks in 1147 seriously harassed the armies of the German emperor Conrad III and the French king Louis VII and in 1190 were still able to avert major setbacks while facing the army of Emperor Frederick I Barbarossa despite the internal divisions of the Seljuk forces at that time (Eickhoff 1977; Turan [1971] 2004, 208-12, 245-49). Moreover, Qilij Arslān II successfully handled all challenges posed by the new strong men in the Muslim heartlands, Nūr al-Dīn Zengī (1146-74) and Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-Ayyūbī (1174-93), who allied with both the Byzantine emperor and internal opponents in Anatolia and claimed places in the Ceyhan and Euphrates region (Turan [1971] 2004, 225-6, 229-31, 236-9). Again, Ibn al-Athīr (*Chronicon* [ed. Tornberg 1853, 12: 62]) aptly epitomises the situation in words which were purportedly exchanged between Sultan Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn and his son al-Afḍal shortly after Qilij Arslān's death in 589/1193:

> And his son al-Afḍal hinted at invading the land of Rūm which was in the hand of the sons of Qilij Arslān and he said: "It is a land with a great many soldiers and huge wealth and it can quickly be seized. It also forms the route of the Franks when they go on campaign by land, so if we take hold of it, we will prevent them from crossing through it".

Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn, the report continues, was actually ready to attack while his brother al-ʿĀdil was to take Khilāṭ on the northern shores of Lake Van.

Hence, the Ayyūbids' grand strategy at the time went far beyond the aims of the Great Seljuk sultans a century earlier and envisioned the incorporation of Anatolia while expanding into Azerbaijan. The land of Rūm, i.e. Anatolia, had become, in Muslim eyes, an inseparable part of the abode of Islam boasting outstanding geostrategic significance for defending the Muslim heartlands against western expansionism and a springboard for invading the Armenian highlands and western Iran. Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn's death just a few months after Qilij Arslān's put paid to Ayyūbid imperialist dreams and the planned campaigns never materialised. Be it by strategic planning, military power, or sheer luck, the Seljuk rulers of Anatolia proved their resilience against Byzantine, Muslim, and Frankish aggression. They came to be accepted as players to be reckoned with in a crossroads area linking Europe and the Middle East. By the end of the twelfth

century, the Anatolian Seljuks for all internal divisions had built up a widely ramified cluster of diplomatic relations including Constantinople, the Hohenstaufen empire, the crusader states, Armenian Cilicia, Baghdad, the Ayyūbids, and numerous petty lordships in Asia Minor.

3 The Byzantine-Turkish Frontier

For the Byzantine imperial government, the emergence of Turkish principalities in Asia Minor certainly meant a huge loss of territories, subject populations, and revenues. Moreover, the Byzantine-Muslim frontier with all its perils had shifted some 500-600 miles closer to the empire's core areas near Constantinople. Bithynia's eastern border lay within a few days march from the Propontis shores and the Byzantine army's major rallying points (e.g. Lopadion, see Foss 1982, 159-61). The imperial government had to come to grips with multiple challenges at practical, strategic, and ideological levels. It had to adjust its concepts of territorial control and defence to the new situation by limiting its radius of efficient control to the littoral, the inland towns, and the agricultural areas in the fertile riverine lands of western Asia Minor while reducing its presence along the fringes of the Anatolian plateau to some advanced outposts and occasional forays (Roche 2010, 253-4). There never was a hermetically sealed borderline but rather a soft transition zone, where spheres of influence were fluctuating according to changing constellations. Allegiances were shifting, borderland populations were wavering between obedience and defiance, and newly arriving groups and individuals had to be accommodated and integrated into Byzantine administrative and hierarchical structures. In the realm of power politics, the Byzantine elites were pivoting between accepting the status quo and conceding territorial rights in exchange for alliances, on the one hand, or seeking to regain the old territories by military means, on the other. Claims to restore Byzantine rule in the East, as had been articulated during the negotiations with the chiefs of the First Crusade, resonated strongly in the language of court rhetoricians praising the ambitions of their emperors, whose campaigns were depicted against the foil of the Roman-Persian wars of antiquity (Stone 2004).

Modern accounts of the Byzantine-Turkish wars still echo traces of these literary representations. The discussion becomes even more obfuscated because of the uncritical use of rather ill-defined borderland concepts conjuring up notions of a primitive, yet vigorous, Byzantine-Turkish frontier culture, which a century later was to become the cradle of the Ottoman state. According to older scholarly opinions, this frontier was dominated by warlike nomads, Greek border soldiers (*akritai*), and a sedentary population exposed to the rapacity of both sides. More recent scholarship counters that the border-

land was actually well-integrated into the Seljuk realm, as monuments of elite patronage and administrative structures demonstrate, and thus could hardly have been a permanent home for fractious nomads (Peacock 2014). In order to grasp the particularities of the Byzantine-Turkish frontier more accurately, it seems expedient to distinguish between distinct sections of the borderland, each of which has its own landscape characteristics, road networks, riverine systems, and settlement patterns. The degree of Byzantine presence as well as the local administrative and military structures altered from one area to another according to its strategic significance and its connectivity with the sea and the city of Constantinople.

The Bithynian section bounded by the western banks of the lower Sangarios River was closely linked with Thrace and the Propontis coastland and included all major rallying points of the Byzantine army between Nicomedia and Lopadion in the Rhyndakos valley. Accordingly, the region had a strong military presence and enjoyed a high degree of safety after the last Turkish raids during the final years of Alexios I. The central section straddling the Aegean coastland and the lower courses of the Kaikos, Hermos, and Kaystros Rivers formed the core area of Byzantine Asia Minor. In contrast to Bithynia, however, the region had no well-defended frontier. The outermost contact zone ran approximately from the old military base of Dorylaion/Eskişehir across Polybotos/Bolvadin and Philomelion/Akşehir as far as the central Anatolian lakes and highlands north of Konya. This region was highly permeable, constellations were permanently shifting, and local strongholds frequently changed hands. The Byzantine defensive structures, therefore, centred primarily along the ports of the Aegean coastland and on some slightly advanced outposts overlooking the east-west connections along the river valleys. Adramyttion, Pergamon, and Chliara, which were the main strongholds of the Neokastra theme after its establishment between 1163-72, Smyrna, Magnesia, Nymphaion, Philadelpheia, and the Kelbianon area, i.e. the Upper Kaystros valley, in the Thrakesion theme are but some of the nodal points on which the Byzantine defensive system was based (Foss 1979, 306-14; 1982, 161-81; Roche 2010, 254-7).

A chink in the armour of the Byzantine defensive system was the southernmost section of the borderland stretching from the Maeander Valley to Caria and the Lycian coastland. Due to its rugged and mountainous character, the Byzantines were unable to exert efficient control over the inland of Caria and Lycia and confined their military presence to the coastal areas with Attaleia, being the central nodal point of maritime communication on the southwestern coast of Asia Minor (Hellenkemper, Hild 2004, 300-8). Turkmen nomads thus spread widely unhindered over the mountainous hinterland (Odo, *De profectione* [ed. Berry 1948, 122-9]). The proximity of the Seljuk capital of Konya to the major east-west connections of central Ana-

tolia accounts for the fact that there was constant Turkish presence in the region between Philomelion/Akşehir and the headwaters of the Maeander River near Apameia/Dinar in southern Phrygia (Belke, Mersich 1990, 149-54, 188-9, 359-60). The Maeander valley thus constituted a major invasion route for Turkish westward advances but also one of the preferred march routes Byzantine troops used during their campaigns on Seljuk territory. In 1119-20, Emperor John II seized Laodikeia on the Lykos (near Denizli) and the advanced outpost of Sozopolis/Uluborlu from the Turks and thereafter established the theme of Mylasa and Melanoudion in the lower Maeander valley (Kinnamos, *Epitome* [ed. Meineke 1836, 5-7]; Ragia 2005). Turkish nomads and Seljuk troops, however, continued to roam about the region so that Byzantine control hardly reached beyond Laodikeia and Philadelpheia/Alaşehir, which were connected through a road running through the Kogamos valley (Belke, Mersich 1990, 150-2). Byzantine historians and the French monk Odo of Deuil illustrate the situation in the Byzantine-Turkish borderland during the 1140s with numerous noteworthy details. Strongholds in the outermost frontier zone, such as Melangeia and Dorylaion, were temporarily destroyed and deserted or formed the targets of Turkish attacks, such as Pithekas in Bithynia (Kinnamos, *Epitome* [ed. Meineke 1836, 36, 38, 81-2, 191-2, 294-5]). The imperial government made efforts to restore some of these fortifications, but these attempts never resulted in firmly entrenched defensive structures or fixed borderlines. When Manuel I in 1146 mounted an attack on Konya, he met the first Turkish resistance at Akroinon/Afyonkarahisar while Philomelion/Akşehir was held by a Turkish garrison and served as the sultan's base of operations. Upon the sultan's withdrawal, Manuel seized it and burned it down (Kinnamos, *Epitome* [ed. Meineke 1836, 40-1]).

While retreating after an abortive siege of Konya towards Beyşehir Lake, Byzantine troops engaged in combat with Turkish hosts at a site which John Kinnamos (*Epitome* [ed. Meineke 1836, 47]) designates by its Turkish toponym as *Tzibrelitzemani*. Recently, this placename has been identified with *Tzibritze* mentioned in Niketas Choniates' account on the battle of Myriokephalon and located at the pass of Bağırsak west of Kızılören (Ceylan 2016, 69-94). Regarding this location, Kinnamos (*Epitome* [ed. Meineke 1836, 58, 59-62]) puts the following words into the emperor's mouth: "we are still in the midst of enemy country, and we have wandered far from the bounds of Romania". Upon reaching the headwaters of the Maeander River, the emperor according to the same author thought that "he was already outside enemy territories", yet the Byzantine army faced new enemies headed by a certain Raman, who were conducting raids in the region. Kinnamos' report thus evokes the notion of a gradual transition from a Turkish core area with Turkish toponyms to a fluid in-between region where no clear boundary existed and both sides claimed control.

This situation goes a long way towards explaining the perils the crusading hosts of Conrad III and Louis VII were facing while marching through western Asia Minor. Numerous sources accuse the Byzantines of treacherous acts and collusion with the Seljuk Turks in a bid to destroy the Frankish armies (Niketas Choniates, *Historia* [ed. van Dieten 1975, 66-7]; Odo, *De profectione* [ed. Berry 1948, 112-17, 126-9, 132-5]). Undoubtedly, there were tensions, fears, and distrust between the Byzantine government and the crusaders. Large numbers of Frankish soldiers travelling through unknown and hostile territory fell victim to profiteering and heinous deception. However, Seljuk hostility and the lack of central control make it extremely improbable that there could have been any high-level conspiracy at work. Most likely, the Franks had to struggle with the very nature of the borderland and the challenges posed by the geography of western Asia Minor with its rugged landscape, steep mountains, and impassable rivers. While the first part of the French crusaders' advance via Adramyttion and Smyrna to Ephesus was mostly physically exhausting, it was the section from Ephesus to Laodikeia where the Turks were able to attack the crusaders by occupying the southern banks of the Maeander River and the adjacent mountain crags (Odo, *De profectione* [ed. Berry 1948, 104-15]). Even more demanding was the final section through the mountainous inland of Caria and Lycia to Attaleia, where physical exhaustion, shortage of supplies, and incessant assaults constituted a deadly mixture (Odo, *De profectione* [ed. Berry 1948, 115-29]). The permeability of the southern part of the frontier zone allowed the Turks to deeply penetrate the Maeander valley and to establish links with the local population. Odo of Deuil insists that Greeks and Turks formed a common front, which may well be true but does not prove that the emperor acted treacherously. It rather shows that the local Christians maintained much closer links with the Turks frequenting the region than the invading Franks, who must have been perceived as an outside threat.

4 Byzantine-Turkish Diplomacy

Byzantines and Turks communicated with each other from the time of their first appearance in the eastern borderland at informal local and official diplomatic levels. Early encounters were often described within the conceptual framework of a cultural clash between the Roman-Christian world and belligerent nomadic barbarians, who were identified with the aid of ideas and clichés stemming from Greek-Roman ethnography. Byzantine authors subsumed the Oghuz Turks forming the backbone of the Seljuk Empire under the ethnic category of Huns and Scythians but were also aware of their cultural assimilation to the Muslim-Persian world (Beihammer 2009). The earliest of-

ficial contacts were diplomatic exchanges with the Seljuk sultanate and the Abbasid court of Baghdad, which once again outpaced the Fatimid court of Egypt as the principal interlocutor of Constantinople in eastern affairs (Beihammer 2017, 92-102). The growing presence of Turkish groups in the interior of Asia Minor caused the imperial government and local rebels to forge relations with Turkish chieftains, something that during the civil wars of the 1070s developed into full-blown alliances (Beihammer 2017, 204-24).

The treaty Alexios I concluded with Sulaymān ibn Qutlumush shortly after his rise to power in 1081 was a watershed moment in that a ruling emperor for the first time acknowledged a Turkish lord's territorial rule and the existence of a boundary in the Gulf of Nicomedia/Izmit region (Turan [1971] 2004, 90-2). Byzantium continued its contacts with the court of Sultan Malikshāh, and there was a brief phase of Great Seljuk intervention in Asia Minor in the years 1087-92 aiming at a kind of imperial restoration based on a shared suzerainty with Constantinople (Anna Komnene, *Alexias* 6.11.1-6.12.8). Simultaneously, however, the imperial court sought to draw the Seljuks of Nicaea and other Turkish rulers in Asia Minor into its orbit by lavishing gifts and titles on them. Invitations to the imperial city further deepened these relations and made Turkish guests susceptible to the luxuries and amenities of Byzantine court life (Turan [1971] 2004, 114-15). In this respect, the Constantinopolitan elite resumed practices it had successfully applied to emirs and tribal chiefs in the eastern borderland, especially the Mirdāsids of Aleppo. The intra-dynastic and Seljuk-Dānishmendid power struggles of the twelfth century enabled the Byzantines to extend this strategy to numerous refugees who sought sanctuary and support at the imperial court. The visits of Qilij Arslān II in 1161-62 and Ghiyāth al-Dīn Kaykhusraw in 1196 are especially well-documented, but there were many other Turkish lords who found shelter in Constantinople (Turan [1971] 2004, 227-8; Korobeinikov 2007).

Likewise, the institutional consolidation of Turkish principalities generates regular diplomatic exchanges between Constantinople and the respective courts in Anatolia. While Byzantine authors continue to depict these contacts in the language of abiding Byzantine superiority, it becomes apparent from their results that the Byzantines adapted to the new realities and treated their interlocutors in Asia Minor with a great amount of respect and, if need be, even intimacy. A case in point is the meeting between Emperor Alexios I and Sultan Shāhinshāh in the plain of Akroinon in 1116 on the occasion of peace negotiations. Anna Komnene (*Alexias* 15.6.5-6) fails to relate the clauses agreed upon, but she extensively describes the ceremonial setting in which Shāhinshāh manifested his readiness to accept Byzantine superiority in exchange for being presented as the emperor's intimate being allowed to sit on horseback and wearing a cape

from Alexios' attire. In the negotiations, the Byzantines may have voiced claims to their old territories, but the final outcome was a standstill agreement asserting the existing status quo.

Over the following decades, John II pursued a two-pronged strategy combining negotiations over individual strongholds he attempted to seize militarily with alliances he forged with the Dānishmendids against the Seljuks (Dölger, Wirth 1995, 1308a-b, 1332c). In this way, he apparently hoped to take advantage of internal divisions and, on the long run, to prepare the ground for a pincer movement against the sultanate of Konya. In a letter to Sultan Masʿūd, Manuel I evokes his alliance with the Dānishmendid emir as a justification for his attack on Konya in 1146 (Dölger, Wirth 1995, 1343; Kinnamos, *Epitome* [ed. Meineke 1836, 39]). Hence, these alliances had become an important means for advancing the goals of Byzantine power politics in Asia Minor. The failure of this campaign and the defeats the crusaders suffered in the following year forced Byzantium to readjust its strategy towards the Turks. During the final years of Sultan Masʿūd and the early reign of Qilij Arslān II, the Seljuk sultanate significantly gained in prestige and power. The imperial government thus shifted from its support of the Dānishmendids towards backing the Seljuks of Konya, as the treaties Manuel concluded with both Masʿūd and later Qilij Arslān II clearly illustrate (Dölger, Wirth 1995, 1393, 1441a). This move not only bolstered the personal relationship between the emperor and the sultan, who as a result of his visit was elevated to the position of the emperor's spiritual son (Niketas Choniates, *Historia* [ed. van Dieten 1975, 123]), but also secured Seljuk military support in crucial areas of Byzantine interest in Asia Minor. A similar strategy of establishing diplomatic contacts and amicable relations was applied to Nūr al-Dīn Zengī, who in 1154 annexed Damascus to his realm in northern Syria and Iraq and thus became the most powerful ruler in the Islamic heartlands (Dölger, Wirth 1995, 1432). This relationship was vital for Byzantium's interventionist policy in Cilicia and the crusader states.

In about 1173 the imperial court realised that its alliance policy had failed to rein in Qilij Arslān's ambitions and switched to an overtly aggressive stance towards Konya, but the defeat at Myriokephalon and the ensuing peace treaty marked the irreversible end of Byzantine expansionist attempts (Niketas Choniates, *Historia* [ed. van Dieten 1975, 123-5, 175-98]). Despite Emperor Manuel's verbose claims to the opposite (Dölger, Wirth 1995, 1524b), henceforth, Constantinople negotiated with the Seljuks on an equal footing and was often forced to make concessions. The Komnenian dynasty's downfall after 1180 and the Seljuk realm's new division among Qilij Arslān II's sons ushered in a new phase of disintegration in both spheres (Savvides 2003, 96-111; Turan [1971] 2004, 261-90; Korobeinikov 2007, 96-8). Byzantium's eastern provinces saw numerous rebellions head-

ed by local aristocrats or spurious claimants to the Komnenian legacy, such as Isaak Angelos and Theodore Kantakouzenos in Nicaea, Theodore Mankaphas in Philadelpheia, Michael Doukas in Mylassa, Pseudo-Alexios of Harmala, and another Pseudo-Alexios from Cilicia. They all sought military support from Seljuk scions or Turkmen chiefs in the borderland, be it for defensive purposes or for raids on Byzantine territory. Some rebels found temporary sanctuary at Turkish courts, and Theodore Angelos, upon being blinded and chased away on an ass's back, was rescued by nomads. The Seljuk rulers took advantage of the situation by raiding places in the Kaystros and Maeander valleys, seizing towns, extorting tributes, or extraditing rebels against huge sums of money (Niketas Choniates, *Historia* [ed. van Dieten 1975, 280-5, 286-9, 367-8, 399-401, 412-16, 420-3, 461-3, 474-5, 493-6, 520-2, 528-9]). However, the infighting among Qilij Arslān's sons seriously weakened the sultanate's internal cohesion and defensive abilities, as became manifest during the advance of the German crusading host and the conquest of Konya in 1190 (Niketas Choniates, *Historia* [ed. van Dieten 1975, 412-15]). This may explain why Byzantium did not suffer significant territorial losses during this period. At the diplomatic level, the imperial government's weakness manifested itself in an increasingly erratic behaviour. It still welcomed Seljuk refugees and asked for auxiliary forces, but the balanced strategy of previous decades gave way to ill-advised acts of aggression. The results were usually unfavourable for the Byzantine side. Attacks on Muḥyī al-Dīn of Ankara, for instance, ended with even higher demands of tribute (Niketas Choniates, *Historia* [ed. van Dieten 1975, 461, 475]; Dölger, Wirth 1995, 1637a). In retaliation for intercepting horses sent from Ayyūbid Egypt, Alexios III arrested merchants from Konya and confiscated their goods, which in turn caused new attacks. The same emperor abetted acts of piracy against Seljuk merchant ships in the Black Sea. In response, Sultan Rukn al-Dīn Suleymān-shāh demanded high compensations in exchange for the impending renewal of a peace treaty (Niketas Choniates, *Historia* [ed. van Dieten 1975, 493-4]). The court of Konya even discovered a Byzantine attempt on the sultan's life (Niketas Choniates, *Historia* [ed. van Dieten 1975, 528-9]). These occurrences appear like desperate attempts of the Byzantine ruling elite to reverse an unstoppable decay of power and influence in Asia Minor. If we believe Muslim reports about a Byzantine request for help sent to Konya in the days before the crusaders' final assault in 1204, Byzantium still believed in the possibility of an efficient Byzantine-Seljuk alliance (Dölger, Wirth 1995, 1668a).

5   Interaction

Much has been said about Byzantine and Seljuk elite members who upon surrendering or being captured became part of the other side's military or court hierarchy or defected because of internal political struggles (Brand 1989, 1-25; Necipoğlu 2006, 255-8). These incidents happened frequently enough to form a constant pattern of mutual interpenetration and resulted in various types of acculturation, ranging from simple interpersonal relationships and bestowals of ranks and titles to the adoption of ideological attitudes or full cultural and religious assimilation. Interestingly, the available reports betray a collective awareness of these people's otherness and their association with their original background. Depending upon circumstances, such cultural links could be harnessed as an efficient tool of communication, as happened in the case of envoys and mediators who took on the role of cultural brokers, but they could also cause friction, as is exemplified by the Byzantine commander Alexios Axouch and his alleged allegiance to the Seljuk sultan (Necipoğlu 2006, 256-7). In his recent monograph on the Byzantine Turk, Rustam Shukurov (2016, 157-254) has shown that the Turkish element formed a substantial portion of the late Byzantine social fabric with ramifications for its demographic, cultural, and linguistic character. A glance into earlier sources suffices to see that this development was well underway in twelfth-century Asia Minor. The often-cited case of the inhabitants of Beyşehir Lake, whom John II in 1142 had troubles to force into collaboration because "by long time and usage they were united in their views with the Turks" (Kinnamos, *Epitome* [ed. Meineke 1836, 22]; see also the parallel report in Niketas Choniates, *Historia* [ed. van Dieten 1975, 37-8]) is but one of many telling incidents pointing to Byzantine-Turkish assimilation patterns dating back to the first half of the twelfth century.

This is not to say that these phenomena were the result of harmonious *convivencia* or a spirit of tolerance. To be sure, policy making in the Byzantine-Turkish contact zones was rampantly violent-driven. All parties involved were keen to use force and coercion in their efforts to achieve their goals, accumulate wealth, and resolve their rivalries. Looting, enslaving, killing, starving people out, or destroying crops and agricultural zones formed part of the harrowing day-to-day realities in Anatolia (Niketas Choniates, *Historia* [ed. van Dieten 1975, 12-13, 18-21, 33, 34-5, 37-8, 52-3, 116-18, 121-5, 150, 175-98]). Nevertheless, it is important to avoid any black-and-white painting, as both Christian and Muslim actors were ready to resort to violence if this served their interests.

At times, local church leaders voiced their preference for Muslim-Turkish rulers over the paternalism of the Church of Constantinople: "The Turks who have occupied most lands in which Christians live",

Michael the Syrian (*Chronicle* [transl. Chabot 1905, 222]; Author's translation from the French) says:

> who have no notion of the sacred mysteries and therefore consider Christianity an error, do not have the habit to inform themselves about confessions of faith nor do they persecute someone for his faith, as the dishonest and heretical Greeks do.

The same author (*Chronicle* [transl. Chabot 1905, 248-9]) talks about a raid which Turks from Malatya in October 1141 mounted against monasteries in the region. In the following spring, Franks from the adjacent crusader principalities came to take vengeance, yet they could not find any Turks and thus looted the estates of the Christians. Before long, the Turks came back and looted them again. "Thus, the Christians were pillaged by both sides". Unsurprisingly, Byzantine troops exhibited a very similar conduct, as is amply documented by the sources. For instance, John II conquered the town of Kastamonu peacefully upon the garrison's capitulation, yet he destroyed two fortresses in the vicinity which put up more adamant resistance. The Dānishmendid emir Gümüshtekīn Ghāzī set the Byzantine fortress of Albara on fire and enslaved the population. Before long, he took Kastamonu back, killing the Greek population (Michael the Syrian, *Chronicle* 233-4). Referring to the dismal situation of Asia Minor in 1200, Niketas Choniates (*Historia* [ed. van Dieten 1975, 529]) briefly relates the misdeeds of Michael Doukas, a tax collector in the theme of Mylassa, who upon taking refuge with Sultan Rukn al-Dīn Sulaymān-shāh relentlessly ravaged the towns in the Maeander Valley with the support of Seljuk troops:

> If there is a major cause for the fact that the state of the Romans fell to its knees, suffered the subjugation of provinces and cities, and eventually vanished, it is the members of the Komnenian family who rose up and vied for the imperial office. Those who stayed with foreigners who had no friendly feelings for the Romans were the ruin of their homeland. (Author's transl.)

In the light of the catastrophe of 1204, Choniates puts the blame for the devastations in Asia Minor on members of the ruling elite and their willingness to collude with the Turks for selfish reasons. He was too much steeped in traditional concepts of benevolent imperial rule to understand the regional dynamics in the eastern provinces, but his diagnosis that Byzantine rule was primarily eroded from within is certainly remarkable.

Conquests of towns and fortresses did not only result in killing and ransacking but were also opportunities to regain control over population groups or to absorb groups of newcomers. For instance, John

II while attacking Neokaisareia/Niksar in 1139 "restored to the Romans' land a crowd of men who had been enslaved to the Turks for a long time", and in 1146 Manuel I transferred people held captive in Philomelion to Bithynia, where he settled them on estates taken from a local monastery and built a fortress called Pylai (Kinnamos, *Epitome* [ed. Meineke 1836, 21, 63]). An intriguing case is the surrender of Gangra/Çankırı, where Turkish troops despite being given the choice to leave unharmed preferred to enter the emperor's service "and formed no ignoble supplement to the Romans' power" (Kinnamos, *Epitome* [ed. Meineke 1836, 15]). There is no way of knowing the background of this decision, but Turkish contingents were apparently considered a welcome and reputable reinforcement of the imperial army's fighting force.

A new pattern emerged during the post-1180 disintegration period. In 1196 the inhabitants of the Paphlagonian city of Dadibra (Belke 1996, 186-7) surrendered to the Turks and were forced to leave. Yet they preferred to stay in makeshift huts in the city's vicinity under Seljuk rule (Niketas Choniates, *Historia* [ed. van Dieten 1975, 475]) over heading to an uncertain fate on Byzantine territory. In the same period, the Seljuk sultan gave peasants from the Upper Maeander region and the Phrygian city of Lampē (Belke, Mersich 1990, 321-2) strong incentives to stay in new settlements near Turkish-held Philomelion. They were all registered, their property was restored to them, enslaved family members were released, and they were granted land including a five-year period of tax exemption (Niketas Choniates, *Historia* [ed. van Dieten 1975, 494-5]). Apparently, these measures aimed at increasing the population and economic productivity in this frontier region while strengthening the sultanate's centralising control.

Apart from the likes of John Axouch, who stood at the highest echelons of the Komnenian elite (Niketas Choniates, *Historia* [ed. van Dieten 1975, 9-10]), there was a substantial number of subaltern officers of Turkish descent, such as Isach, "a man of barbarian descent who was a particular favorite of the emperor", or Poupakes, "a Turk by birth" (Kinnamos, *Epitome* [ed. Meineke 1836, 48, 129]). These examples show that the troops in Asia Minor were ethnically mixed and the distinction between Byzantines and Turks was frequently blurred. Instances of high-ranking captives occasionally prompted witnesses to make comparisons between the two elites. For example, a certain Pharkousas, "an outstanding man among the Turks, who with his own hands offered the cup to the sultan" was equated with the Byzantine office of *pinkernes* (Kinnamos, *Epitome* [ed. Meineke 1836, 56]). However, Seljuk dignitaries of Byzantine pedigree could be especially exposed to the soldiers' urge for revenge. A member of the Gabras family, "who was related to the Romans by birth, but as he had been nurtured and reared among the Turks, held a satrapy

among them", was slain in battle, and the soldiers paraded his head in triumph (Kinnamos, *Epitome* [ed. Meineke 1836, 56]). While such outbursts did occur, there was also an unwritten code of honour between the two sides. When during the siege of Konya in 1146 Byzantine soldiers despoiled Turkish tombs outside the city, the emperor gave order to preserve the tomb of the sultan's mother undisturbed, for "wise men must rather be ashamed at distressed nobility" (Kinnamos, *Epitome* [ed. Meineke 1836, 45-6]). Even in times of war, abusing an enemy's corpse was considered an abomination.

Everyday living conditions are less documented, but incidental references show that Turkish authorities provided a framework of legal protection. A telling incident reported by Michael the Syrian (*Chronicle* 235) is that of a "Persian" in Melitene, who in 1132-33 had the audacity to snatch a cross from a Christian's hands and to place it irreverently on his belly. When the local notables presented the case to the prefect, he arrested the perpetrator and handed him over to the Christians. They punished him in a show of public humiliation, being paraded through the town on an ass's back and with his face painted black. Thereafter, Emir Gümüshtekīn Ghāzī ordered the Persian to be flogged and his estates to be confiscated. The episode illustrates not only the Muslim authorities' respect for Christian worship but also the cooperation between different levels of legal authority with the Christian representatives imposing a ritual punishment and the Muslim emir much severer corporal and monetary punishments.

Both Christians and Turkish conquerors knew that agreements based on guarantees of safety and privileges were mutually beneficial and laid the ground for a harmonious coexistence. Basil, the Syrian bishop of Edessa, purportedly told ʿImād al-Dīn Zengī after the city's conquest in 1144 that his achievement was good for both sides, as he had won a splendid victory whereas the Christians had gained his esteem. Just as they had never breached their oaths towards the Franks, they would likewise abide by their sworn obedience towards him. Zengī reportedly marvelled the bishops' bravery and appreciated his ability to speak Arabic and thus ordered him to wear his official attire and consult with him about the city's restoration. Survivors were allowed to return, and the Turks spared the lives of Greeks and Armenians, killing only the Franks. During his stay, Zengī harangued the Syrians, assuring them of his mercy and benevolence (Michael the Syrian, *Chronicle* 262).

As Turkish rule gained more stability, Christian observers made more accurate assessments of individual rulers' character and behaviour. These vignettes reflected the transformation of Turkish chiefs from conquerors to statesmen. A case in point is Michael the Syrian's (*Chronicle* [transl. Chabot 1905, 237]) characterisation of the Dānishmendid rulers Gümüshtekīn Ghāzī and his son Malik Muḥammad. Michael depicts the former as bloodthirsty, murderous,

and licentious, but also as brave, forceful, and astute. By killing "the Turkish rebels" in "the land of the Romans" (*bayt Rhōmāyē*), an expression apparently referring to his Seljuk opponents, he established profound peace in his lands. His son Muḥammad observed Islamic law, abstained from drinking wine, treated Muslims honourably, made judgments according to justice, and was prudent and vigilant. He is praised for restoring the city of Kayseri, which had been in ruins for a long time. His building programme is depicted as an ambitious attempt to turn a worn-down place into a sumptuous residence adorned with buildings built of marble stone gathered from ancient sites in the area. However, Michael did not consider him a friend of the Christians, for he destroyed churches and upon entering Melitene in October 1135 he refused to lift any of the tributes imposed by his fathers and took hostages from among the people of Melitene. Overall, both rulers had their flaws, but each of them was praised for improving the living conditions of their subjects and restoring peace and justice. Specific attitudes towards the Christians were secondary to the overall picture.

To sum up, the transformation of Asia Minor in the eleventh and twelfth centuries was only from the viewpoint of Constantinople and with respect to the impact on Byzantine power elites a struggle between two hostile spheres. Constantinople's institutional, cultural, and ideological predominance was certainly much diminished with the loss of its material and economic resources, but there was no pre-modern form of ethnic cleansing substituting Turks and Islam for indigenous populations and Christianity. This is not to say that there was no violence, but it needs to be stressed that all parties involved made equal use of it and the local population endured raids and atrocities from all sides irrespective of their ethnic or religious identity. To better understand this process, it seems expedient to distinguish between imperial centres and local forces operating in Asia Minor. Many phenomena can be aptly epitomised as regionalisation of political processes in which imperial powers retreated towards the fringes of the Anatolian Peninsula while regional forces centred around Turkish-Muslim leaders and military groups, through arrangements with local populations and alliances with their competitors, gradually crystallised into dynasties and lordships and ultimately formed a loosely knit supra-regional sultanate based in Konya, which combined Seljuk and Perso-Islamic traditions, Byzantine substrates, and numerous elements related to Anatolia/*bilād al-Rūm* with its manifold historical, cultural, and ethnic layers.

Bibliography

Asbridge, T.S. (2000). *The Creation of the Principality of Antioch, 1098-1130*. Woodbridge: Boydell Press.

Balivet, M. (1994). *Romanie byzantine et pays de Rûm turc. Histoire d'un espace d'imbrication gréco-turc*. Istanbul: Isis.

Beihammer, A. (2009). "Die Ethnogenese der seldschukischen Türken im Urteil christlicher Geschichtsschreiber des 11. und 12. Jahrhunderts". *Byzantinische Zeitschrift*, 102, 589-614. https://doi.org/10.1515/byzs.2009.012.

Beihammer, A. (2017). *Byzantium and the Emergence of Muslim-Turkish Anatolia, ca. 1040-1130*. London: Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315271033.

Belke, K.; Mersich, N. (1990). *Phrygien und Pisidien*. Wien: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften. Tabula Imperii Byzantini 7.

Belke, K. (1996). *Paphlagonien und Honōrias*. Wien: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften. Tabula Imperii Byzantini 9.

Berry, V.G. (ed.) (1948). *Odo of Deuil: De profectione Ludovici VII in orientem*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Blessing, P. (2014). *Rebuilding Anatolia after the Mongol Conquest. Islamic Architecture in the Lands of Rum, 1240-1330*. London: Routledge.

Brand, C.M. (1989). "The Turkish Element in Byzantium, Eleventh-Twelfth Centuries". *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, 43, 1-25. https://doi.org/10.2307/1291603.

Ceylan, M.A. (2016). "Coğrafi Perspektiften Myriokefalon Savaşı'nın Yeri ve Konya Bağırsak Boğazı" (The Location of the Battle of Myriokephalon from a Geographic Perspective and the Defile of Konya Bağırsak). *USAD. Selçuk Üniversitesi Selçuk Araştırmaları Dergisi*, 5, 69-94.

Chabot, J.-B. (transl.) (1905). *Chronique de Michel le Syrien*, vol. 3. Paris : Ernest Leroux.

Cheynet, J.-C. (1996). *Pouvoir et contestations à Byzance (963-1210)*. Paris : Sorbonne. https://doi.org/10.4000/books.psorbonne.3837.

Dostourian, A.E. (transl.) (1993). *Armenia and the Crusades. Tenth to Twelfth Centuries. The Chronicle of Matthew of Edessa*. Lanham (MD): University Press of America.

Dölger, F.; Wirth, P. (1995). *Regesten der Kaiserurkunden des oströmischen Reiches von 565-1453*. 2. Teil, *Regesten von 1025-1204*. München: C.H. Beck.

Eickhoff, E. (1977). *Friedrich Barbarossa im Orient. Kreuzzug und Tod Friedrichs I*. Tübingen: E. Wasmuth.

Foss, C. (1979). "Late Byzantine Fortifications in Lydia". *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik*, 28, 297-320.

Foss, C. (1982). "The Defenses of Asia Minor against the Turks". *Greek Orthodox Theological Review*, 27, 145-205.

Haldon, J. (2007). "'Cappadocia Will Be Given over to Ruin and Become a Desert'. Environmental Evidence for Historically Attested Events in the 7th to 10th Centuries". Belke, K. et al. (Hrsgg), *Byzantina Mediterranea. Festschrift für Johannes Koder zum 65. Geburtstag*. Wien: Böhlau, 216-30.

Hellenkemper, H.; Hild, F. (2004). *Lykien und Pamphylien*. 3 Bde. Wien: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften. Tabula Imperii Byzantini 8.

Hillenbrand, C. (2007). *Turkish Myth and Muslim Symbol. The Battle of Manzikert*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press. https://doi.org/10.1515/9780748631155.

Hoffmann, J. (1974). *Rudimente von Territorialstaaten im byzantinischen Reich (1071-1210)*. München: Institut für Byzantinistik und Neugriechische Philologie der Universität.

Hoyland, R.G. (2015). *In God's Path. The Arab Conquests and the Creation of an Islamic Empire*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Kesik, M. (2017). *Dânişmendliler (1085-1178). Orta Anadolu'nun Fatihleri* (The Danishmendids [1085-1178]. The Conquerors of Central Anatolia). Istanbul: Bilge Kültür Sanat.

Kitapçı Bayrı, B. (2020). *Warriors, Martyrs, and Dervishes. Moving Frontiers, Shifting Identities in the Land of Rome (13th-15th Centuries)*. Leiden: Brill. https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004415843.

Korobeinikov, D. (2007). "A Sultan in Constantinople. The Feasts of Giyāth al-Dīn Kay-Khusraw I". Brubaker, L.; Linardou, K. (eds), *Eat, Drink, and Be Merry (Luke 12:19). Food and Wine in Byzantium. Studies in Honour of A.A.M. Bryer*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 93-108.

Korobeinikov, D. (2013). "'The Kings of the East and the West'. The Seljuk Dynastic Concept and Titles in the Muslim and Christian Sources". Peacock, Yıldız 2013, 68-90.

Küçükhüseyin, Ş. (2011). *Selbst- und Fremdwahrnehmung im Prozess kultureller Transformation*. Wien: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften.

Necipoğlu, N. (2006). "Turks and Byzantines (Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries)". Cağatay, E.; Kuban, D. (eds), *The Turkic Speaking Peoples. 2,000 Years of Art and Culture from Inner Asia to the Balkans*. Istanbul: Prestel, 255-65.

Meineke, A. (ed.) (1836). *Ioannis Cinnami Epitome rerum ab Alexio et Ioanne Comnenis gestarum*. Bonn: Weber.

Öngül, A. (2016). *Büyük Selçuklular* (The Great Seljuks). Istanbul: Çamlıca.

Özcan, K. (2010). "The Anatolian Seljuk City. An Analysis on Early Turkish Urban Models in Anatolia". *Central Asiatic Journal*, 54, 273-90.

Pancaroğlu, O. (2013). "The House of Mengüjek in Divriği. Constructions of Dynastic Identity in the Late Twelfth Century". Peacock, Yıldız 2013, 25-67.

Peacock, A.C.S. (2010). *Early Seljūq History. A New Interpretation*. London: Routledge.

Peacock, A.C.S.; Yıldız, S.N. (eds) (2013). *The Seljuks of Anatolia. Court and Society in the Medieval Middle East*. London: I.B. Tauris. https://doi.org/10.5040/9780755693368.

Peacock, A.C.S. (2014). "The Seljuk Sultanate of Rūm and the Turkmen of the Byzantine Frontier, 1206-1279". *Al-Masaq*, 26(3), 267-87. https://doi.org/10.1080/09503110.2014.956476.

Peacock, A.C.S. (2015). *The Great Seljuk Empire*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press. https://doi.org/10.1515/9780748638277.

Pryor, J.H.; Jeffreys, M.J. (2012). "Alexios, Bohemond, and Byzantium's Euphrates Frontier. A Tale of the Two Cretans". *Crusades*, 11, 31-86.

Ragia, E. (2005). "Η αναδιοργάνωση των θεμάτων στη Μικρά Ασία τον δωδέκατο αιώνα και το θέμα Μυλάσσης και Μελανουδίου". *Symmeikta*, 17, 223-38. https://doi.org/10.12681/byzsym.924.

Reinsch, D.R.; Kambylis, A. (Hrsgg) (2001). *Annae Comnenae Alexias*. 2 Bde. Berlin; New York: De Gruyter. Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae 40. https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110881172.

Roche, J.T. (2009). "In the Wake of Mantzikert. The First Crusade and the Alexian Reconquest of Western Anatolia". *History*, 94(2), 135-53. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468–229x.2009.00448.x.

Roche, J.T. (2010). "Surveying the Aspect of the Medieval West Anatolian Town". *al-Masaq*, 22(3), 249-57. https://doi.org/10.1080/09503110.2010.522384.

Savvides, A.G.C. (2003). "Suleyman Shah of Rûm, Byzantium, Cilician Armenia and Georgia (A.D. 1197-1204)". *Byzantion*, 73, 96-111.

Schmitt, O.J. (2016). "Introduction. The Ottoman Conquest of the Balkans. Research Questions and Interpretations". Schmitt, O.J. (ed.), *The Ottoman Conquest of the Balkans. Interpretations and Research Debates*. Wien: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 7-45. https://doi.org/10.1177/0265691417729639ap.

Shukurov, R. (2016). *The Byzantine Turks, 1204-1461*. Leiden: Brill. https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004307759.

Stone, A.F. (2004). "Stemming the Turkish Tide. Eustathios of Thessaloniki on the Seljuk Turks". *Byzantinoslavica*, 62, 125-42.

Stouraitis, I. (2016). "Narratives of John II Komnenos' Wars. Comparing Byzantine and Modern Approaches". Bucossi, A.; Rodriguez Suarez, A. (eds), *John II Komnenos, Emperor of Byzantium. In the Shadow of Father and Son*. London: Routledge, 22-36. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315590547–13.

Tekinalp, V.M. (2009). "Palace Churches of the Anatolian Seljuks. Tolerance or Necessity?". *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies*, 33(2), 148-67. https://doi.org/10.1179/174962509x417645.

Thomson, K.E.F. (2008). "Relations between the Fatimid and Byzantine Empires during the Reign of Caliph al-Mustansir biʾllah, 1036-1094/427-487". *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies*, 32(1), 50-62. https://doi.org/10.1179/030701308x259660.

Tornberg, C.J. (ed.) (1851-53). *Ibn-el-Athiri Chronicon quod perfectissimum inscribitur*, vols 11-12. Upsala: C.A. Leffler.

Turan, O. [1971] (2004). *Selçuklular zamanında Türkiye. Siyasî Tarih Alp Arslanʾdan Osman Gaziʾye (1071-1318)* (Turkey in the Time of the Seljuks. Political History from Alp Arslan to Osman Gazi [1071-1318]). Istanbul: Ötüken.

van Dieten, I.A. (ed.) (1975). *Nicetae Choniatae Historia*. Berlin: de Gruyter. Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae 11/1-2.

Byzantium and Asia. An Attempt at Reconceptualisation

Rustam Shukurov

ABF, IMAFO, Austrian Academy of Sciences, Vienna

Abstract   Thanks to the contribution of many generations of scholars, Byzantium is now considered as one of the major pivots of Western medieval civilisation. Yet, Archaic and Classical Antiquity, as well as the Hellenistic and Roman epochs absorbed a great deal of 'Asian' traditions, which established an indissoluble bond between Byzantium and the Perso-Semitic East and Scythian North. The Byzantines accumulated in themselves much of the 'Asian' in the modern sense of the term. My aim in this paper is to outline and to reappraise those multifaceted connections that continued to link medieval Hellenism with the Persian, Arabic, and Turkic East.

Keywords   Byzantium. Asia. Byzantine identity. Persian. Arabic. Turkish.

Summary   1 A Glance at Historiography. – 2 On New Conceptualising Trends. – 3 The Byzantine Knowledge of Asia. – 4 Some Enigmatic Phenomena. – 5 Byzantine Cultural Memory. – 6 Persia in Cultural Memory. – 7 Persia in Byzantine Religiosity. – 8 The Holy Persians. – 9 Conclusion.

In memoriam Michel Balivet (1944-2020)

1 A Glance at Historiography

I would like to begin with some historiographic and even historio-sophic considerations and briefly outline how the idea of the Asian identity of Byzantine civilisation developed in Western European thought.

The beginning of the typological conceptualisation of Byzantium in the context of world history has to be sought in the Middle Ages. Basically, initially there were two aspects in the typological apprais-al of Byzantium: a confessional one with social implications, and a political one with social and cultural implications. The western reli-gious discourse regarded Byzantium as a realm of 'Eastern Christi-anity', which was different from and even hostile to the true Christi-anity of the Roman Church. This confessional typology of Byzantium is found not only in intra-Christian polemics, but also in Renaissance humanist thought as, for instance, in Francesco Petrarca's (1304-74) *Rerum senilium libri* (Petrarca, *Rerum Senilium libri* 7.1 [ed. Fracas-setti 1892, 1: 423-5]).

The second aspect of political, social and cultural otherness of Byz-antium as an Asian phenomenon was actualised by Enlightenment thinkers, whose ideas were embodied in particular in the influential studies of Edward Gibbon (1737-94) in his *History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, and especially of Marquis de Condorcet (1743-94) in his *Esquisse d'un tableau historique* (Gibbon 1776-88; de Condorcet 1794). Gibbon and de Condorcet problematised, con-ceptualised and detailed the ideas expressed in the Enlightenment tradition, first of all in Voltaire's and Montesquieu's writings. The Enlightenment, rethinking the traditional religious thesis in socio-logical terms, formulated the following important points: Byzantium represented an exceedingly religious society with a despotic politi-cal system; religiosity and despotism resulted in the formation of a theocratic Caesaropapist regime of an Asian type, which lacked civil liberties and a clear division between the spiritual and the secular. In the West, the struggle between secularism and theocracy led to the victory of secular forces, and consequently, to the flourishing of urban life and cultural and moral revival. Contrarily, in Byzantium, Oriental despotism and Caesaropapism prevented the success of sec-ular forces and challenged the ideas of freedom, equality, and social justice, thus excluding Byzantium from human progress. The quest for social progress is inherent to the West, stagnation and gradual decay are inherent to the East.

These two fundamental ideas of specific Byzantine theocracy and despotism of an Asian type were in the core of subsequent attempts

at a conceptual and typological definition of the Byzantine phenomenon throughout the nineteenth century and even later. Some scholars of the nineteenth century sought for additional arguments to substantiate the Asian identity of Byzantium. It is sufficient here to refer to probably the most notorious conception, belonging to Jacob Philipp Fallmerayer (1790-1861), who elaborated upon demographic and ethnic aspects. According to Fallmerayer, the migration and settling of the Slavs and others in the Balkans led to racial discontinuity in the former Greek lands and, therefore, Byzantium had no direct historical link with the Greco-Roman world. The traditions of Greece and Rome were preserved only in the West, while barbarised Byzantium became a part of the East, the realm of stagnation and despotism (Fallmerayer 1830; 1845). In this way, Fallmerayer tried to solve the logical paradox of the previous tradition: although formally the ethnical background of Byzantium was allegedly Greek, it was alien to the sense of freedom of the ancient Greeks.

The highest point in the evolution of the traditional typology of Byzantium was Marxism. In particular, in July 1853 Karl Marx argued that Constantinople was the Rome of the East; under the emperors of Constantinople, Western civilisation amalgamated with Eastern barbarism; the empire of Constantinople was a theocratic state and was alien to European progress; Byzantinism was opposed to Western civilisation; and finally, Byzantium was a demoniac Eastern power (Marx 1975-2004, 12: 231).

Later on, Marxism put forward the idea of the "asiatische Produktionsweise", a specific economic and social regime characterised by tributary economy, by an utterly centralised state (that is, 'Asian despotism'), by the emperor's absolute economic and political power, and the like (cf. Krader 1975). Such a mode of production was inherent to Asian societies, including Byzantium, and was alien to the European West. The evolution of the Marxist interpretation of Byzantium was quite complex, involved many authors and publications, and deserves a separate lengthy study. Here I limit myself to the reference to Alexander Kazhdan (1922-97), who was the first who formulated a holistic Marxist conception of Byzantium based on original sources, which became a standard one in Soviet Byzantine studies. Kazhdan developed it in the course of the 1950s in his two books and in a series of articles (Kazhdan 1952; 1960).

2 On New Conceptualising Trends

The traditional Western European ideas of Asian despotism, theocracy, and unfreedom as the key features of Byzantine civilisation still circulate in the public mind. However, after World War II, the dominant trend in postwar Byzantine studies was different and it was

not Marxist at all. Due to the contribution of several generations of scholars in the West and in the former Socialist East, Byzantium has gradually shifted from the marginal status of an extremely 'Oriental-ised' space to a central position as one of the major pivots in the evo-lution of Western European civilisation. Byzantine theology, science, state and church organisation and symbolism, art and material cul-ture, economic and trade techniques, standards of life and habits, in this or that measure, influenced the West and had an important role in shaping its future. One may also mention the now commonly ac-knowledged role of Byzantium as a transmitter of the pre-Christian Greek and Roman cultural legacy to the modern world (see, for in-stance Kolovou 2012). This new image of Byzantium as a major *Kul-turträger* for Europe, which has fully formed during the last decades, is commonly accepted among professional historians of Byzantium and is successfully making its way into the community of profession-al Medievalists. As a result, the thesis of the 'Asian' identity of Byz-antium withdraws into the shadows and now seems to be quite dubi-ous and even misleading and untrue.

3 The Byzantine Knowledge of Asia

However, having thus dismissed traditional Western accusations of despotism, total unfreedom and stagnation as irrelevant, if we re-flect on the relationship between the 'Byzantine' and the 'Asian' in modern scholarly contexts, the results may seem quite ambiguous and even surprising. It may seem that the Byzantines held in them-selves much of the 'Asian', although not in the sense formulated in the earlier Western European tradition, including social Marxism.

The study of Asian elements in Greco-Roman Late Antiquity has an extremely rich tradition starting at least with the seminal works of Franz Cumont (1868-1947; see, for instance, Cumont 1906; Bidez, Cumont 1938). Archaic and classical Antiquity, the Hellenistic and Roman epochs absorbed a great deal of 'Asian' traditions, which es-tablished an indissoluble bond between Greco-Roman culture and Egyptian, Persian and Semitic Orient. It is a commonplace today to talk about a Late Antique 'Orientalism'. As Rolf Michael Schneider uncompromisingly put it:

> The preoccupation of Rome with the Orient was obsessive – and as such – a powerful element in the cultural process of shaping and re-shaping Roman identity throughout imperial times. (Sch-neider 2006, 241)

However, one may wonder: What about Byzantium? Did Byzantium inherit this 'obsession' from imperial Rome? These questions are es-

pecially appropriate for post-seventh-century Byzantium, after the Muslim conquests that drastically changed the territorial and demographic configurations of the empire and triggered profound changes in all spheres of Byzantine life. What do we know about the presence of Asia in the intellectual and social life of Byzantium? I do not mean the external political and economic interrelations between Byzantium and Asian powers, but rather the presence of the Asian inside Byzantine culture and society. In fact, we know quite a lot, so much so that it is not easy to summarise it in a concise way.

Firstly, Byzantine intellectuals, since early times, knew surprisingly much about the religion of neighbouring Asians, that is Islam (cf. Shukurov 2015). An impressive corpus of Byzantine polemical literature concerning Islam developed over the centuries. Starting with John of Damascus (d. 749) or even earlier, the Byzantines expounded on the Islamic conceptions of God, the Holy Scripture, Christology, Mariology, Islamic attitudes toward the Christian doctrine of Trinity, as well as Islamic notions of prophetology and eschatology, and Muslim ritual and habits. The Byzantine knowledge about Islam, in particular, relied on the direct access to Islamic sources: a Greek translation of the Koran, for instance, circulated from the ninth century at the latest.

The Byzantines were well aware of the cultural achievements of their Asian neighbours. The most impressive contribution to Byzantine culture was made by the Asian – that is, Arabic and Persian – scientific tradition. The massive corpus of Byzantine scientific and occult works, from the tenth century onwards, made extensive use of information derived from the Orient. Byzantine treatises on mathematical astronomy, medicine, and mathematics included original compilations drawing on Islamic scientific knowledge through the intermediary of Syriac or Latin, or directly from Arabic and Persian works. Works on the occult sciences, such as dream interpretation, predictive astrology, alchemy, and geomancy likewise drew on the Arabic and Persian tradition translated into Greek. The number of translations from Arabic and Persian increased in the course of time from the tenth to the fifteenth century.

Byzantine fiction literature adopted relatively little from the Orient: solely *Stephanites and Ichnelates* was in all probability translated into Greek directly from Arabic by the famous Symeon Seth at the request of Alexios I Komnenos (1081-1118). Two other important fiction works of Oriental origin – *Barlaam and Josaphat* and *The Book of Syntipas* – were borrowed from Georgian and Syriac traditions respectively (Georgian by Euthymios Hagioreites; Syriac by Michael Andreopoulos from Melitene). Nonetheless, in both *Barlaam and Josaphat* and *The Book of Syntipas*, the Oriental flavour is consciously preserved in the key characters of the narration and in the spatial localisation.

The range of knowledge of the Byzantines about non-Christian Asian neighbours was exceptionally wide. The textual tradition (historiography, political geography, hagiography etc.) of the Byzantines accumulated profound factual information on their Muslim adversaries.

This knowledge about the Asian world is reflected in the dozens of technical terms from the social and political life of the Muslim world, such as ἀμηρᾶς (amīr) and ἀμηρεύω (to rule as amīr), μασγήδιον (masjid, mosque), σουλτάν (sulṭān), μουσούριον (manshūr, royal diploma), χαράτζιον (kharāj, land-tax), χότζιας (khʷāja/hoca, lord, teacher), χαζηνᾶς (khazīna, treasury) etc., as well as hundreds of names of Muslim historical figures: religious leaders, rulers, commanders, administrators etc.

The influx of knowledge about Asia was facilitated by some Byzantine political and social features. Traditionally, Byzantium was open and accessible for foreigners and one may speak of the 'Byzantine Arabs', 'Byzantine Syrians', 'Byzantine Armenians', 'Byzantine Turks', who migrated to the empire for different reasons throughout Byzantine history. These foreigners, being easily naturalised in Byzantium, often acted as transmitters of Asian information and information about Asia to the Byzantine cultural space.

4 Some Enigmatic Phenomena

Asian elements in the cultural history of Byzantium are many and diverse and most of them can be satisfactorily understood and interpreted from what we know about how Byzantine society and culture did function (see, for instance, Shukurov 2016). However, there are some enigmatic phenomena in Byzantine-Asian relations, which evade simple explanation and puzzle modern scholars, thus reflecting the insufficiency of our knowledge about Byzantine civilisation. I will limit myself with two instances of such enigmatic phenomena from different times and different milieus of Byzantine life.

My first example concerns the rules for hiring officials in the Byzantine administration. In the eleventh-century seal of *vestarches* Muḥammad Abū al-Naṣr al-Ṣāliḥī, the first name of its owner – Muḥammad –vis quite unprecedented, because it could only belong to a Muslim (Dumbarton Oaks, no. BZS.1955.1.4570; Jordanov 2003-09, no. 515). It is impossible to imagine that an Arabic-speaking Christian would have had the name of the Muslim prophet, and that a Muslim who converted to Christianity would have not changed the name 'Muḥammad' to any Christian name at baptism.

Consequently, Muḥammad Abū al-Naṣr al-Ṣāliḥī, while remaining Muslim, received a position in the Byzantine administration and the rank of *vestarches*. Consequently, Muḥammad became a Byzan-

tine subject, continuing to profess Islam. However, this contradicts the Byzantine legal principle, according to which only Christians could be subjects of the empire and hold any public office. This also gives rise to the following puzzling questions: What was the model of swearing allegiance to the emperor when the Muslim Muḥammad al-Ṣāliḥī took office? What were the legal models for Muḥammad's entering into 'horizontal' legal relations with others such as purchase and sale, rent, his own possible marriage and marriages of his Muslim relatives, his will, his testimony at court etc.? I do not have any definite answer to these questions, which would be substantiated by the extant Byzantine sources.

Another example concerns Byzantine religious piety and is suggested by an inexplicable tolerance of Islamic ritual practices, which were performed inside the imperial palace and in which Christians were even involved. The story is told by Nikephoros Gregoras who criticised the corruption of the Christian morality of John Kantakouzenos. The described events happened around 1352. The historian complains about the habits of the imperial court, where some barbarians (that is, Anatolian Muslims) were constantly arranging noisy processions whenever they wanted. During the palace church services,

> the barbarians sing and dance in a ring in the palace halls, shouting down the liturgy by singing and dancing intricate dances, with unintelligible yells they cried out odes and hymns to Muḥammad thus attracting more listeners than the reading of the Holy Gospel, sometimes all the Christians and sometimes only some are gathered there [at these dances].

Moreover, the barbarians did the same "at the emperor's table, often with cymbals and stage musical instruments and songs" (Nikephoros Gregoras, *Byzantina Historia* [ed. Schopen, Bekker 1829-55, 3: 202.12-203.4]).

It is almost certain that some Anatolian Sufi mystics or dervishes are implied here. The reference to "ring-dances" (χορούς) and "intricate dances" (γυμνικὴν ὄρχησιν) most likely points to the followers of the Mavlavi Sufi Order of whirling dervishes. The singing and use of musical instruments indicate the Mawlawi *samā'* (a kind of ritualistic ceremony of Muslim mystics). The presence of Mavlawi Sufis at the imperial palace may have been somehow connected with the 'pro-Hesychast' mystical preferences of John Kantakouzenos. It nevertheless remains a mystery why the dervishes were present at the Byzantine emperor's palace.

The important point is that religiously active groups of Muslims were present inside Constantinople and even inside the Palace. Christians in the Palace openly neglected the sacred liturgy preferring the dervishes' rituals, and did this without fear of one another, thus

violating generally accepted rules of Christian piety. The story also raises puzzling questions about Kantakouzenos' actual attitude towards Islam. The event described by Gregoras cannot be explained through our modern vision of the Byzantine models of everyday pious behaviour in general, and our knowledge about the personality and deeds of John Kantakouzenos in particular.

5 Byzantine Cultural Memory

The above-discussed puzzling examples may indicate that the presence of the Asian in the existential models of the Byzantines was even more extensive and deeper than we can now imagine. However, is there any possibility to trace and outline these existential models, these deep layers of mentality that predetermine people's everyday behaviour and their reaction to new events? In other words, what were the specific features of the contextual awareness of the Byzantines, and what place did Asia occupy in it? I propose to search for an answer to these questions by means of a set of ideas and analytical techniques associated with the concept of cultural memory. In the last few decades, the subject of cultural memory has become increasingly popular in all branches of the humanities. Especially relevant to the subsequent discussion are the studies of Jan Assmann, who has provided a firm theoretical basis for applying the concept of cultural memory to ancient and medieval civilisations (Assmann 1992; 1995; 2011).

The specific feature of Byzantine cultural memory consisted of its unprecedentedly vast temporal horizon, which stretched back into a very distant past and differentiated the Byzantines from all the neighbouring cultures in the medieval Mediterranean: Europeans, Muslims and Slavs. The perceived early origins of Byzantine cultural memory go back to the Homeric epics and the Biblical quasi-historical past, while the Byzantine historical past, in the modern sense of the term, starts approximately at the time of Greco-Persian Wars. Cultural memory was embodied in language, written texts, rituals, visual tradition, practical techniques, oral tradition, habits etc. Language in its classicised variant was of crucial importance as a binding agent that provided continuity and integrity of memory. It was cultural memory that predefined Byzantine contextual awareness and, therefore, self-identity patterns, that is, the Byzantine notion of who they were, their axiological patterns, their hierarchy of cultural values.

6   Persia in Cultural Memory

Even a preliminary analysis of Byzantine textual heritage from the standpoint of the cultural memory approach surprises with the presence in it of a prominent Asian layer. And what it is even more curious, this Asian layer was not Arabic or Turkic, but Persian. Information on Persia and Persians was inherited by the middle and late Byzantines from the preceding Greco-Roman tradition and was faithfully preserved and transmitted through generations and centuries. I have already discussed the topic in detail in a special study (Shukurov 2019). I will just refer here to a few key points. From the viewpoint of cultural memory, the famous *Souda*, the tenth century encyclopedia, is quite telling (cf. *Suidae Lexicon* [ed. Adler 1928-38]).

On the one hand, the *Souda* was the richest Byzantine repository of diverse information, focusing almost entirely on old information relating to cultural memory. On the other hand, as an encyclopedia and thesaurus in terms of genre, the *Souda* represented a part of the culture's mnemonic mechanism, containing the must-know information for well-educated Byzantines. The *Souda* consists of about 31,000 entries, in which Persia and Persians are mentioned more than three hundred times. The "Persian" references covered the period from the earliest history of Greco-Persian relations, all the way to the time of emperor Heraclius I. I have divided the *Souda*'s Persian information into several rubrics:

- Politics and social life;
- Everyday life;
- Names of prominent Persian figures;
- Personages of the Greco-Roman past;
- Greek terms and notions associated with Persians.

Interestingly enough, these rubrics in the *Souda* reflect the standard nomenclature of Persian elements in other Byzantine texts of different genres. Of course, the *Souda* belonged to the learned literature and was intended for intellectuals. However, it would be a mistake to suggest that the circulation of such ancient Persian notions was limited to the narrow circle of highbrow men of letters and science. I will refer to a few instances demonstrating that the Persian segment of cultural memory was in use also in the middle and low strata of the society.

This can be especially exemplified through the popularity of vernacular epical texts directly relating to Persian affairs in middle and late Byzantine times. The numerous Byzantine recensions of the *Alexander Romance* and the *Belisarios Romance* deal with the Greco-Persian wars of the past, and what is truly remarkable is that popular interest in Alexander and Belisarios apparently persisted as late as the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. The audiences of vernacular

romances were still interested in Ancient Persia and, consequently, they had access to sufficient factual information that would allow them to understand Persian references and allusions correctly (see, for instance, *Der griechische Alexanderroman* [ed. Bergson 1965]; Ἱστορία τοῦ Βελισαρίου [ed. Van Gemert, Bakker 2007]).

Most intriguing is the fact that we find Persian motifs where they appear anachronistic or even out of place. In the epic *Digenes Akritas* (cf. *Digenes Akritas* [ed. Trapp 1971]), the dowry of Digenes' bride contains the famed and marvellous sword of Chosroes, which seems to imply Chosroes II; Chosroes appears again along with his general Shahrwaraz (Σάρβαρος); further on, there is a reference to a royal tomb at Pasargadae (Πασαργάδαι and Παρασογάρδαι) in connection with the erection of Digenes' tomb; Darius III is mentioned along with Alexander the Great; finally, there are repeated mentions of Persians and Persia scattered throughout the epic. The vernacular audience in middle and late Byzantium expected and was even eager to hear about Persia in epic fiction, despite the anachronism of such references, which, of course, could have been recognised as anachronism only by a learned person.

My second example concerns the revival of the term 'Achaemenid', quite a literary and again an anachronistic word when it came to designate the Ottomans. The history of this word in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries is remarkable to understand how cultural memory works. There were two different interpretations justifying the sameness of the Achaemenids and the Ottomans, and both these conflicting interpretations were based on cultural memory. In the fourteenth century, the Ottomans were commonly called the 'Achaemenids' in all social layers of Byzantine society. The term 'Achaemenids' was used by highbrow authors such as Philotheos Kokkinos, Manuel II Palaiologos and Gregory Palamas. The name 'Achaemenids' in this sense was also current in spoken language, as is testified by low-style texts and Byzantine anthroponyms. Apparently, the fourteenth century Byzantines drew an analogy between the vigorous Ottoman push against the Greeks and Darius' and Xerxes' attack on ancient Greeks. One may note again that the contextual meaning of this analogy was more or less understandable for the majority of the Byzantines (cf. Shukurov 2019).

Another interpretation belonged to Michael Kritoboulos in post-Byzantine times. Kritoboulos revived the ancient legends about the Egyptian origin of the Greeks through Danaus, the Greek origin of the Persians through Perseus, and therefore the common ancestry of the Greeks and the Persians, that is the Byzantines and the Achaemenid Ottomans (Kritoboulos, *Historiae* 1.4.2 [ed. Reinsch 1983, 15.23-16.7]).

Both interpretations used common cultural memory as a chest from which one could retrieve whatever legend best fitted his inter-

pretation of current events. Indeed, the contents of cultural memory can be compared to a chest filled with old ideas and concepts that underlie and feed the current mindset; a Byzantine in his creative activity picked up images and models from the chest, which enabled him to comprehend and systematise the living reality.

7 Persia in Byzantine Religiosity

Most curious is the fact that Persia was well-established not only in the secular aspect of cultural memory, but also in its Christian counterpart. Since the place of the Persians in Byzantine religious mentality is a rather large subject, I will briefly outline here some of its key points.

Christianity added some important new features to the traditional Greco-Roman image of Persia. The Persians were believed to have been literally present at the cradle of Christianity, that is, at the cradle of Christ himself. I mean here the famous pericope of the Magi from Matthew's Gospel. Although Matthew did not indicate the ethnic origin of the Magi, however, major theological schools of the Greek-speaking Orthodox East – in Alexandria, Cappadocia, Antioch, Nisibis, and Edessa – all agreed that the Magi were Persians. One may refer here to the authority of Clement of Alexandria, Origen, Cyril of Alexandria, the Cappadocian fathers, John Chrysostom, and others. The Orthodox East was unanimous that the Magi were Persian wise men and astrologers. The identification of the Magi as kings, common for the Western tradition, was not commonly accepted in Byzantium. Instead, the Byzantines usually saw in the Magi Zoroastrian philosophers and righteous men or Persian priests. John of Damascus referred to them as the Persian "astronomer-kings" and "magi-kings", in the sense of 'chief' astronomers and 'chief' magi under the sway of the Persian king (John of Damascus, *Homilia in Nativitatem Domini* VI and X [ed. Kotter 1988, 332.10-11: 'Περσῶν βασιλεῖς ἀστρονόμοι'; and 338.4: 'βασιλεῖς μάγους']).

The Persian identity of the Magi was adopted both in exegetical tradition and in liturgy, which was intended also for commoners, thus becoming a basic element of the religious consciousness of both intellectuals and simple believers. It is not surprising, therefore, that the idea received an important and long-lasting elaboration in which Persian motifs were emphasised and detailed. Matthew's account of the Magi is very brief, so that later on there appeared a series of texts that detailed the events leading up to the arrival of the Magi to Jerusalem. In particular, in the Orthodox East, most likely before the time of Constantine, there appeared a story describing the prehistory of the Magi. This story was later incorporated into an extensive narration which we now call *De Gestis in Perside*, an apocryphal story providing 'missing links' for Matthew's account.

De Gestis in Perside tells about a miracle in the temple of the Persian king. One night, the idols of the temple began speaking, singing, and dancing. Further on, a star appeared over the temple. The Persian sages interpreted the miracle as an indication of the birth of the King, the Son of the Pantokrator in Judaea. The Persian king sent his Magi to Judaea with gifts, and the star showed the way. The main idea of the story was to prove that Jesus Christ had first become known for the world from Persia (Ἐκ Περσίδος ἐγνώσθη Χριστὸς ἀπ' ἀρχής). The Magi returned to Persia with the image of the Mother and Child which was placed in the Persian royal temple with the caption: "In the God-sent temple, the Imperial authority of Persia dedicated [this] to God Zeus Helios, the Great King Jesus". Accordingly, the Persians were the first who created an icon of Jesus and Mary (cf. *De gestis in Perside* [ed. Heyden 2019, XX]).

Later Byzantine tradition faithfully preserved this knowledge about the Persians' special role in spreading Christianity. The Persian Magi were the first who learned about the Nativity; moreover, they were the first who brought news about the Messiah and incarnated God and his mother Mary from Bethlehem to the gentiles, thus anticipating the subsequent Christianisation of Parthia. In the tenth century, Symeon the Logothete argues that the Magi, prostrating themselves before Christ, were the first among pagans who "glorified the name of gentiles", implying, as it seems, that the Magi embraced Christianity (Symeon Logotheta, *Chronicon* 51 [ed. Wahlgren 2006, 83.9-11*]). Symeon means here that the Magi embraced Christianity *before* the first gentile converts: Kandake, converted by the Apostle Philip, and Cornelius, converted by the Apostle Peter.

8 The Holy Persians

One further aspect of the Persian presence in Byzantine religious memory was represented by the subsequent history of Christianity in the Sasanian Empire. The Christians were persecuted by the Sasanians over almost three hundred years. The dramatic destiny of Sasanian Christianity abounded with the heroic deeds of religious piety and fidelity, as well as with the highly traumatic experience of oppression and massacres. In the context of my paper, of primary importance are the reflections of the double-edged history of Sasanian Christianity in the religious memory of the Byzantines. The most telling information for an appraisal of the significance of the Sasanian Christian experience can be found in liturgical practice. The Persian Christian martyrs were well remembered in the Byzantine Church. The *Synaxarion of the Great Church of Constantinople*, a collection of liturgical texts of different genres and dates, referred to forty-two days when believers commemorated Persian saints. At Matins (ὄρθρος), more or

less brief notices on the saints of the day were read after the sixth ode of the canon; among the saints referred to in the Byzantine church service, there was a considerable number of holy Persians (by blood or by political allegiance) and also people from other nations martyred by the Sasanians (see: *Synaxarium* [ed. Delehaye 1902]). It is important to visualise this: almost every week or fortnight throughout the liturgical year, the Byzantines in the churches commemorated and chanted odes to Persians. These could have been the Magi, or the Persian saints of Sasanian times, or the Old Testament events happened under the Persian kings.

By mentioning the Old Testament events, we approached the last but not the least point: the Byzantines inherited the idea of the pious Persian kings from the Old Testament. The Old Testament's ample evidence on Persia can be summarised in the following way. The Persian Empire succeeded the Babylonian Empire, and it was Cyrus the Great who issued his famous decree for the Jews to return to their homeland to rebuild their Temple. Under Darius I, the second Temple of Zerubbabel was completed. The well-known story of Esther, which is commemorated through the Jewish feast of Purim, took place in the reign of Xerxes. Under Artaxerxes, the Jewish state was reformed by Ezra, and the walls of Jerusalem were rebuilt by Nehemiah (cf. Yamauchi 1990). The Old Testament's history of the Persian empire is extremely important to bring together two traditions: the Ancient Greek historical tradition concerning the Achaemenids and Christian sacred history. As a result, they formed a sort of stereoscopic vision of the past in which different lines in cultural memory supplemented and enriched each other.

The Byzantine perception of Persian motifs in Christianity, to all probability, drastically differed from that of the Western Christians and Slavs. The latter perceived the above-mentioned Persian motifs of Christianity in a somewhat decontextualised way. The Persians are viewed as some aliens who appeared in the Scriptures as an additional proof of the omnipotence of God. In this sense, in the eyes of the modern Christians of the West and East, the Old and New Testament Persians are akin to the Kynokephaloi and Anthropophagi of the Christian hagiographical tradition: strange creatures from the distant margins of the universe. In contrast, the Byzantines remembered Persia and the Persians and valued them highly as an indispensable part of their past and contemporary worlds. For the Byzantine mentality, Persian motifs in the sacred tradition had solid factual background, creating rich and well-elaborated cultural contexts, which were packed with meaningful associations and indissolubly linked Persia with the Byzantine own national past.

9 Conclusion

Byzantine memory of ancient Persia, both in secular and religious traditions, was not an assemblage of antiquarian odds and ends, but part of the Byzantine historical and cultural self, a Byzantine *alter ego*. The Byzantines could hardly have imagined their present intellectual being without Ancient Persia, which was always present in the actuality of Byzantine mentality as a source of wisdom and experience, of paradigmatic and explanatory allusions; it was always somewhere nearby and at hand. Persian elements in the Byzantine mental space of course may be considered as an Asian element in the Byzantine self-identity model. Byzantines were Asian exactly to the extent to which they perceived Persia as a part of their own self.

I suggest that Persian elements in Byzantine self-identity played the role of a portal or a channel, through which the information from the Arabic and Turkic Orient reached middle and late Byzantium. The Persian elements present inside Byzantium kept the Byzantines open and sensitive to the new information coming from the Orient. Persian heritage provided the Byzantines with a common ground with their Arabian and Turkic neighbours. The Persian heritage enabled the Byzantines to place easily the phenomena coming from the Orient into their own network of associations and analogies, which was present in their cultural memory. From this standpoint, of course, Byzantium was Asian.

Bibliography

Adler, A. (Hrsg.) (1928-38). *Suidae Lexicon*. 5 vols. Leipzig: Teubner.

Assmann, J. (1992). *Das kulturelle Gedächtnis. Schrift, Erinnerung und politische Identität in den frühen Hochkulturen*. München: C.H. Beck.

Assmann, J. (1995). "Collective Memory and Cultural Identity". *New German Critique*, 65, 125-33. https://doi.org/10.2307/488538.

Assmann, J. (2011). *Cultural Memory and Early Civilization. Writing, Remembrance, and Political Imagination*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bergson, L. (Hrsg.) (1965). *Der griechische Alexanderroman Rezension β*. Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell.

Bidez, J.; Cumont, F. (1938). *Les mages hellénisés. Zoroastre, Ostanès et Hystaspe d'après la tradition grecque*. 2 vols. Paris: Les Belles Lettres.

Cumont, F. (1906). *Les Religions orientales dans le paganisme romain. Conférences faites au Collège de France en 1905*. Paris: E. Leroux.

de Condorcet, N. (1794). *Esquisse d'un tableau historique des progrès de l'esprit humain*. Paris: Agasse.

Delehaye, H. (éd.) (1902). *Synaxarium ecclesiae Constantinopolitanae (e codice Sirmondiano nunc Berolinensi)*. Bruxelles: Socios Bollandianos.

Fallmerayer, J.Ph. (1830). *Geschichte der Halbinsel Morea während des Mittelalters.* Teil 1, *Untergang der peloponnesischen Hellenen und Wiederbevölke-*

rung des leeren Bodens durch slavische Volksstämme. Stuttgart; Tübingen: In der J.G. Cotta'schen Buchhandlung.

Fallmerayer, J.Ph. (1845). *Fragmente aus dem Orient*. 2 Teile. Stuttgart; Tübingen: Cotta.

Fracassetti, G. (1892). *Francesco Petrarca: Lettere Senili*. 2 vols. Firenze: Le Monnier.

Gibbon, E. (1776-88). *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*. London; Basel: W. Strahan & T. Cadell; J.J. Tourneisen.

Heyden, K. (Hrsg.) (2019). *De gestis in Perside. Eine Religionskonferenz in Persien*. Freiburg; Basel; Wien: Herder.

Kotter, B. (Hrsg.) (1988). *Die Schriften des Johannes von Damaskos*. Teil 5, *Opera homiletica. Homilia in Nativitatem Domini*. Berlin; Boston; New York: De Gruyter.

Jordanov, I. (2003-09). *Corpus of Byzantine Seals from Bulgaria*. 3 vols. Sofia: Agato Publishers.

Kazhdan, A. (1952). *Аграрные отношения в Византии XIII-XIV вв* (Agrarian relations in Byzantium in the 13th-14th centuries). Moscow: Наука.

Kazhdan, A. (1960). *Деревня и город в Византии IX–X вв. (Очерки по истории византийского феодализма)* (Village and city in Byzantium in the 9th-10th centuries. [Essays on the history of Byzantine feudalism]). Moscow: Наука.

Kolovou, F. (Hrsg.) (2012). *Byzanzrezeption in Europa. Spurensuche über das Mittelalter und die Renaissance bis in die Gegenwart*. Berlin; Boston: De Gruyter.

Krader, L. (1975). *The Asiatic Mode of Production. Sources, Development and Critique in the Writings of Karl Marx*. Assen: Van Gorcum.

Marx, K. (1975-2004). "Financial Failure of Government. Cabs. Ireland. The Russian Question". Marx, K.; Engels, F., *Collected Works*. 50 vols. Moscow; London; New York: Progress Publishers; Lawrence & Wishart; International Publishers, 12: 223-32.

Reinsch, D. (Hrsg.) (1983). *Critobuli Imbriotae historiae*. Berlin: De Gruyter.

Schneider, R.M. (2006). "Orientalism in Late Antiquity". Wiesehöfer, J.; Huyse, P.; Binder, C. (Hrsgg), *Eran und Aneran. Studien zu den Beziehungen zwischen dem Sasanidenreich und der Mittelmeerwelt*. Stuttgart: Steiner, 241-63.

Schopen, L.; Bekker, I. (Hrsgg) (1829-55). *Nicephori Gregorae byzantina historia*. 3 Bde. Bonn: Weber.

Shukurov, R. (2015). "Byzantine Appropriation of the Orient. Notes on Its Principles and Patterns". Peacock, A.C.S.; De Nicola, B.; Yıldız, S.N. (eds), *Islam and Christianity in Medieval Anatolia*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 167-82.

Shukurov, R. (2016). *The Byzantine Turks, 1204-1461*. Leiden; Boston: Brill.

Shukurov, R. (2019). "The Byzantine Concepts of Iran. Cultural Memory and Its Reactualization". Durak, K.; Jevtić, I. (eds), *Identity and the Other in Byzantium = Papers from the Fourth International Sevgi Gonul Byzantine Studies Symposium*. Istanbul: Vehbi Koc Foundation Istanbul, 143-67.

Trapp, E. (Hrsg.) (1971). *Digenes Akrites: Synoptische Ausgabe der ältesten Versionen*. Wien: Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften.

Van Gemert, A.; Bakker, W. (eds) (2007). *Ἱστορία τοῦ Βελισαρίου*. Athens: Morphotiko Idrima Ethnikis.

Wahlgren, S. (Hrsg.) (2006). *Symeonis magistri et logothetae chronicon*. Berlin; New York: De Gruyter.

Yamauchi, E.M. (1990). *Persia and the Bible*. Grand Rapids (MI): Baker.

Two Tales of a City
Adrianople/Edirne

Buket Kitapçı Bayrı
Independent Scholar

Abstract   The paper is a diachronic analysis of place-making stories involving the foundation narratives of the same physical space: imperial Roman and Byzantine Adrianople and Ottoman Edirne. It draws attention on the varying ways different cultural groups from the same city construe the meaning of a place in contesting it and on the social and political processes whereby a relationship to a place is established, reproduced and transformed. It attempts to explore the production of difference within common, shared, and connected spaces. Numerous studies have considered the urban transformation of Byzantine Adrianople into Ottoman Edirne, but the examination here is the first to analyse perceptions of the city as told through the founding stories by cultural groups that have shared the space.

Keywords   Imperial Roman period. Byzantium. Ottomans. Cities. Foundation stories. Adrianople. Edirne. Space. Placemaking. Healthscape.

Summary   1 Introduction. – 2 Adrianople/Edirne. – 3 The Imperial Roman and Byzantine Foundation Stories of Adrianople. – 3.1 Orestes and Adrianople. The Greek Backdrop. – 3.2 The Imperial Roman Foundation Story. – 3.3 The Byzantine Foundation Story. – 4 Edirne. The Ottoman Foundation Stories. – 4.1 The Foundation Story of Edirne in the *Saltukname*. – 4.2 Hadrian in the Ottoman Foundation Stories. – 4.3 Noah and His Descendants in the Ottoman Foundation Stories. – 4.4 Edirne Heals. Air, Water, Humours, and Astrology. The Account of the Physician Beşir Çelebi. – 5 Conclusion.

1   Introduction

Through the act of "place making", a given space can come to hold different meanings for varied social and cultural groups, each appropriating the same space (Cassidy-Welch 2010, 3-5). Indeed, it is possible for individuals or groups of people to share the same space and perceive, experience, define, and describe it in ways so varied that the singular space might appear to be different places due to its significance to each of them. Thus space is not only a territorial reality or bounded place, but a cultural artefact imagined through words and images and text and practices. Place making and the meaning of a space can be defended and challenged through the use of language in the telling and writing of stories about the physical space. Since antiquity, stories constituting rhetorical contests of place making have stood as reflections of politicised struggles to control territory, to obtain autonomy and to manipulate the authority associated with it by shaping meanings and memories (Shepardson 2014, 241). Such stories were influential in creating perceptions of space and understandings of the past and consequently expectations of the future.

This paper is a diachronic analysis of place-making stories involving the foundation narratives of the same physical space – that of imperial Roman and Byzantine Adrianople and that of Ottoman Edirne. The imperial Roman foundation story of Adrianople originated no later than the third century AD. Adrianople, variously Hadrianopolis, had been founded in 124 AD by the Roman emperor Hadrian (r. 117-38) (Nollé 2009, 146).[1] The story of it is recorded, in Latin, in the *vita* of Elagabalus (r. 218-22) in *Historia Augusta* (or *Scriptores Historiae Augustae*), a late Roman collection of biographies of the Roman emperors, designated heirs and usurpers from 117 to 284 AD (*Historia Augusta*, Antoninus Elagabalus 7 [ed. Magie 2000]; Nollé 2009, 108). The story was later retold in three tenth-century Byzantine chronicles: *Theophanes Continuatus*, the *Chronicle of Symeon Magistros-Pseudo* (ed. Bekker 1838, 387, 686-7), and the *History of Leo the Deacon* (ed. Hase 1828, 130,5-14; Talbot, Sullivan 2005, 177). There is also a brief mention in a fourteenth-century Byzantine martyrdom narrative on Theodore the Younger (d. c. 1347-61/69), who was originally from Adrianople and was martyred in Ottoman Melagina (Theodore the Younger [BHG 2431] [ed. Oikonomides 1955; Kitapçı Bayrı 2020, 115-23]).

The Ottoman foundation story on Edirne is recorded in three major texts: the *Saltukname*, a Turkish Muslim epic romance composed

---

1 Nollé (2009) has thoroughly investigated the imperial Roman foundation story of Adrianople, and I mainly follow his assertions about it. I would like to thank Mustafa Sayar for bringing this lengthy article to my attention and for kindly providing a copy of it at a time when library access was severely restricted due to the COVID-19 pandemic. I would also like to thank Tamer İlbuga, who translated it into Turkish.

between 1473 and 1480 at the request of the Ottoman prince Cem (d. 1495) that recounts the life and deeds of the legendary *ghazi* (frontier warrior) and dervish Sarı Saltuk, who is believed to have followed the Seljuk sultan Izzeddin Keykavus II (r. 1245-62) into exile and to have become the leader of the first Turkish Muslim settlers in the Balkans (ed. İz, Alpay Tekin 1974-84; ed. Akalın 1987-90); the *Account of the Physician Beşir Çelebi and the Story of the Old Mosque of Edirne, the New Palace and the Citadelle of Edirne*, a sixteenth-century text compiled from orally transmitted stories and legends and attributed to an unidentified author, Beşir Çelebi, who in the account is said to be a physician from Konya (ed. Erdoğru 2006);[2] and the *Seyahatname* (*Book of Travels*), by the Ottoman scholar and traveller Evliya Çelebi (1611-84) (ed. Dağlı, Kahraman 2006, 3.2: 549-52).[3]

The founding stories of Adrianople/Edirne draw attention to the varying ways different cultural groups from the same city construe the meaning of a place in contesting it and to the social and political processes whereby a relationship to a place is established, reproduced and transformed. The examination attempts to move beyond "naturalized conceptions of spatialized 'cultures' and to explore instead the production of difference within common, shared, and connected spaces" (Gupta, Ferguson 1992, 16). Numerous studies have considered the urban transformation of Byzantine Adrianople into Ottoman Edirne (Kuran 1996; Boykov 2011; Kontolaimos 2016), but the examination here is the first to analyse perceptions of the city as told through the founding stories by cultural groups that have shared the space.

2 Adrianople/Edirne

Adrianople/Edirne lies 230 kilometres northwest of Constantinople/Istanbul. It is fed by three rivers – the Tundzha (Arzos/Tonzos/Tunca), the Maritsa (Hebros/Meriç/Evros), and the Arda (Artakes). The city stretches across a fertile plain surrounded by a vast area of hills. In addition to Hadrianopolis/Adrianople, the Byzantine sources also refer to the city by its ancient names, Orestias and Odrysoi. According to ancient sources, in the Thracian language the city was called Uscuduma. Located at the intersection of important strategic routes – in

---

2 Many Turkish historians of medicine believe Beşir Çelebi to be a fifteenth-century physician, but it remains difficult to establish him as a historical figure. No contemporary chronicle mentions him. For instance, Gökbilgin (1965, 79) dates the *Account of Physician Beşir Çelebi* to the late sixteenth century, arguing that the Üç Şerefeli Camii, mentioned in the text, was only called that after the erection of the Selimiye mosque in Edirne, which was completed in 1575.

3 For Evliya Çelebi, see Kreiser 2007.

particular, Belgrade-Sofia-Constantinople – Adrianople was often at the centre of military activity and played a key role as a stronghold protecting Constantinople from invasion from the north (Asdracha 1976, 137-48; Soustal 1991; Külzer 2008).

Philip II of Macedon (r. 359-336 BC) conquered Odrys in Thrace during 342-340 BC. He built a castle and a small town in the area, populated by Thracian and Macedonian people called Orestai. When the Roman Macedonian proconsul Marcus Terentius Varro Lucullus (d. 56 BC) conquered the town in 73 BC, it was controlled by a Thracian tribe, called Uscudama (Nollé 2009, 107, 122). By the mid-fifth century AD, Thrace had fallen into the hands of Germanic tribal rulers. In the seventh century, the northern half of the region was incorporated into the First Bulgarian Empire (681-1018), and the Byzantine Empire regained control over the southern parts and reorganised it as the Thracian theme.

In the ninth and tenth centuries, Adrianople emerged as a strategic location in the Byzantine wars against the Bulgarian Empire. In the aftermath of the Fourth Crusade in 1204 and the establishment of the Latin Empire of Constantinople, Adrianople and the neighbouring city of Didymoteichon became a relatively short-lived feudal principality within the crusader state from 1204-06 to circa 1227-28, with the local Byzantine elite granted some autonomy (Van Tricht 2014). During the first Byzantine civil war, from 1321 to 1328 between the Byzantine emperor Andronikos II Palaiologos (r. 1282-1328) and his grandson Andronikos III (r. 1328-41) for control of the empire, Andronikos III Palaiologos stayed in Adrianople. During the second Byzantine civil war, from 1341 to 1347, John VI Kantakouzenos (r. 1347-54) designated Didymoteichon, 50 kilometres from Adrianople, his capital, leaving Adrianople to serve as the residence of some members of the imperial family.

In 1361 or 1369, the Ottomans conquered Adrianople, after which they moved their capital from Bursa to Adrianople, or Edirne as they called it (İnalcık 1965; Beldiceanu-Steinherr 1965; Zachariadou 1970). Following the Battle of Ankara in 1402 between the Ottoman sultan Bayezid I (r. 1389-1402) and Timur (r. 1370-1405), leader of the Timurid Empire, Edirne acquired a special place for the Rumeli begs (or *ghazis*), who became more autonomous, and for the sons of Bayezid I. The son who succeeded him and ascended the throne in Edirne was considered the Ottoman sultan (Kastritis 2007). Edirne served as the Ottoman capital until 1453, and thereafter remained an imperial residence, a site for the gathering of the Ottoman armies before military campaign seasons and a place of symbolic importance for *ghazi* groups in the society. Although Sultan Ahmed I (1603-17) designated Edirne his place of residence, the Ottoman court began to neglect the city from the seventeenth century onwards.[4]

---

[4] For the note on the Ottoman court's neglect of Edirne in the seventeenth century, see Kreiser 2007.

3 The Imperial Roman and Byzantine Foundation Stories of Adrianople

A fourteenth-century Byzantine martyrdom narrative of Theodore the Younger (Theodore the Younger [BHG 2431] [ed. Oikonomides 1955]) is helpful in presenting the overarching narrative of the origin story of Adrianople. In that telling, Theodore was born and raised by pious parents in Adrianople until being captured as a child during raids. The text briefly mentions the origins of his hometown, stating that Theodore hailed from the city of Adrianos, formerly called Orestias, after Orestes, who had constructed and populated the city. Generations later, Adrianos came upon the abandoned Orestias, rebuilt it and resided there.[5] Of particular interest here, the Roman emperor Hadrian's founding of the city is a historical fact, but Orestes is a Greek mythological character. How then did Orestes become associated with Adrianople?

3.1 Orestes and Adrianople. The Greek Backdrop

As the son of Klytaimnestra and Agamemnon, king of Argos, Orestes is also the brother of Menelaos, whose wife Helen was taken to Troy by Paris. Agamemnon commanded the united Greek forces in the ensuing Trojan War, and after returning home, Aigisthos, Klytaimnestra's lover, kills him. In the *Odyssey*, Orestes avenges his father's murder by slaying Aigisthos (Hom. *Od.* 3.300-10 [ed. and transl. Murray 1998]). In Aischylos' *Libation Bearers*, Orestes also murders Klytaimnestra, and while being pursued by the Erinyes (the Furies) – the winged goddesses who track down and punish those who violate the ties of family piety – he goes mad (Aesch. *Cho.* [ed. Sommerstein 2008, 838-934]).

In Euripides' *Iphigenia among the Taurians*, Orestes, with his cousin Pylades, bring his sister Iphigenia from Tauris to the Greek land, and upon an order from Apollo seizes the holy cult figure of Artemis Tauropolos from the barbarians and carries it from place to place, establishing Artemis Tauropolos cults around the Greek world and thereby seeding Greek *poleis* (Eur. *IT* [ed. Kovacs 1999, 393-4, 422-6, 435-8]).[6] Through his travels, Orestes would be cleansed of the

---

5 "Οὗτος ὁ τοῦ θεοῦ νέος μάρτυς, Θεόδωρος, ἐκ τῆς πόλεως τὸ γένος εἷλκεν Ἀδριανοῦ, ἥτις τὸ παλαιὸν Ὀρεστιὰς ἐλέγετο, Ὀρέστου ταύτην ἐκ βάθρων ἀνεγείραντός τε καὶ οἰκήσαντος. υἱὸς δὲ οὗτος τοῦ τῶν κατὰ τῆς Τροίας στρατηγησάντων Ἑλλήνων βασιλέως. Μετὰ πολλὰς δὲ γενεὰς Ἀδριανός νενοσηκυῖαν εὑρὼν καὶ ἐκλελοιπυῖαν ὥσπερ ἀνακαινίσας αὖθις ᾤκησεν" (Oikonomides 1955, 216).

6 Artemis is a female deity of pre-Hellenic origin whose cult survived into the late Roman Empire, until the fourth and fifth centuries AD. Tauropolos is an epithet for the goddess.

crime of matricide and punishment by the Furies. The myths locate him cleansing himself in different places, including Delphi, Peloponnesos, Rhodes and the Amanos Mountains (Bilde 2003).

3.2 The Imperial Roman Foundation Story

An early Roman Orestes-Hadrian connection in the foundation of Adrianople is found in the *vita* of Antoninus Elagabalus in *Historia Augusta*. In citing cities related to Orestes, the author mentions Adrianople in Thrace. In following the order of a prophecy, Orestes cleanses himself of the crime of matricide at a place near the Maritsa River and founds a city there called Oresta. The *vita*'s author then notes that centuries later, the Roman emperor Hadrian would change the city's name to Adrianople because a soothsayer/oracle ordered him to seize a place of a mad man in order to rid himself of his own madness (*Historia Augusta*, Antoninus Elagabalus 7).[7] As the act of cleansing is dependent upon the existence of an abundance of water in an area, Nollé (2009, 124) argues that Orestes/Adrianople, with its three rivers, fits the criteria for the site of Orestes's ritual cleansing, leading to his physical and mental healing.

One can see Greco-Roman traditions in the evolution of the foundation story of Adrianople. During the Archaic, Classical and Hellenistic periods, cities developed a discourse on their origin to help build civic identity or 'pride'. Origin stories always contained mythical stories. During the Roman imperial period, the philhellene Roman emperors showed particular interest in Classical Greece, including in its language, its literary models and in the antiquity (*archaiotes*) and noble origins (*eugeneia*) of the cities, which often involved claims of affiliation with Ancient Greece. Such claims received Roman imperial acknowledgment through the creation of the Panhellenion, an institutional league of Greek city-states formed by Hadrian during his trip to Greece in 131-32 AD. A city could gain admission upon proving its Hellenic descent. Proclaiming a god or a hero from Greek mythology as the founder of a city was one way to assert a claim of ancient, noble or Hellenic origins (Heller 2006). In addition to such claims during the Roman imperial period, the emperors themselves – especially from Augustus (r. 27-14 BC) until the Severan dynasty (193-235 AD) – were declared the founder (*ktistes*) of cities, thus bestowing cities honour and

---

[7] The madness of Hadrian may be related to him being accused of killing four senators at the start of his reign in 117 AD. In fact, Publius Acilius Attianus, as prefect of the Praetorian Guard, directed affairs in Rome in 117 AD when Hadrian was on his way to Rome from Syria, and ordered the executions of four senators of consular rank all seemingly threats to the security of Hadrian. Hadrian affirmed it was contrary to his will and laid the blame on Attianus.

certain privileges. More generally in the East, the policies of Augustus and Hadrian aimed at instituting local rights and privileges accounted for their frequently being designated city founders (Pont 2007).

The myth behind an imperial foundation story such as Adrianople's helped the Romans dominate local cultural and religious traditions. In short, a city claimed an ancient and noble origin through a Greek mythological connection and obtained privilege in the Roman system through its association with the Roman emperor. The introduction of Hadrian, as the founder of Adrianople, into foundation stories mythologised both the city and the emperor.

3.3 The Byzantine Foundation Story

The tenth-century *Chronicle of Symeon Magistros-Pseudo, History of Leo the Deacon* and *Theophanes Continuatus* relay the imperial Roman foundation story of Adrianople in their narratives.[8] *Symeon Magistros-Pseudo* and *Leo the Deacon* state that the city was built by Orestes, son of Agamemnon, while he was reduced to wandering the Earth after he killed his own mother, Klytaimnestra. The city was originally called Orestias. Later, the emperor Hadrian, recognising the strategic location of the city, fortified it with walls and called it the City of Hadrian (*Chronicle* of Pseudo-Symeon Magistros, 686-7; *History* of Leo the Deacon, 5-14).

Theophanes Continuatus includes in his account the healing of Orestes, stating that in the month of September, the third indiction, the Armenian Pankratoukas had handed the city of Hadrianopolis to Symeon, meaning Symeon I of Bulgaria (r. 893-927). This place was called Orestias, after the son of Agamemnon, Orestes, who rightfully killed Klytaimnestra and Aigisthos and then went mad. He would then bath where the Tundzha, Maritsa and Arda intersected and be cured of his madness. He later founded a city there and gave it his name. Emperor Hadrian then added fine buildings and changed its name to the City of Hadrian.[9]

Why was Adrianople mentioned in these chronicles, and why was the late Roman imperial foundation story of it integrated into the nar-

---

[8] On the tenth-century Byzantine chronicles, see Markopoulos 2003; Treadgold 2013, 39-88, 217-70; Manafis 2020, 43-109.

[9] "Σεπτεμβρίῳ δὲ μηνί, ἰνδικτιῶνος τρίτης, Παγκρατούκας ὁ Ἀρμένης τὴν Ἀδριανούπολιν τῷ Συμεὼν προδέδωκεν, ἥτις τὸ πρὶν μὲν Ὀρεστιὰς ἐκαλεῖτο, ἔξ Ὀρέστου υἱοῦ Ἀγαμέμνονος, ὃς ζήλῳ δικαίῳ διὰ τὴν πρὸς τὸν πατέρα Κλυταιμνήστρας δολοφονίαν ταύτην σὺν Αἰγίσθῳ ἀποκτείνας λίαν ἐκμέμηνεν καὶ ἐν τῇ συνελεύσει Ἕβρου Ἄρζου τε καὶ Ἀρτάκου τῶν τριῶν ποταμῶν γε λουσάμενος τῆς νόσου ἀπήλλακτο. ἔνθα ταύτην οἰκοδομήσας ἐπὶ τῷ ἰδίῳ ὀνόματι κέκληκεν. Ἀδριανὸς δὲ Καῖσαρ εὐκτίστοις οἰκήμασιν αὐτὴν μεγαλύνας πόλιν Ἀδριανοῦ μετακέκληκεν" (Bekker 1838, 387).

ratives? Adrianople was frequently mentioned in the tenth-century histories most probably because Bulgaria was the Byzantines' primary concern on the northern frontier in the Balkans. Symeon I had launched an expedition against Constantinople in 913, and Byzantium and Bulgaria had for more than a decade been engaged in war, until 927 (Fine 1991, 143-4). Adrianople, a frontier city between Bulgarian and Byzantine territories, was under Byzantine rule during this period, but Symeon twice captured it, in 914 and 922. The reference in *Theophanes Continuatus* relates to 914, when Adrianople had been betrayed by its commander, Pankratoukas.

In 927 during the reign of Symeon's son Peter I (r. 927-69), the Byzantines signed a peace treaty that obligated them to pay tribute. The Byzantine emperor Nikephoros II Phokas (r. 963-69) refused to pay tribute and went on the offensive in 965. He used diplomacy to persuade the Rus to invade Bulgaria, and they ultimately did, during 968-71. This led to the temporary collapse of the Bulgarian state and to a fifty-year war between Byzantium and Bulgaria, until 1018. The reference in the *History of Leo the Deacon* relates to the beginning of the campaign against the Rus by the Byzantine emperor John I Tzimiskes (r. 969-76), who left Constantinople and arrived in Adrianople in 971. The wars against Bulgaria and the Rus and the strategic position of Adrianople as a frontier city at the intersection of military routes thus account for its mention in the tenth-century chronicles.

The inclusion of the imperial Roman foundation story of the city also relates to a cultural revival of the time – the First Humanism (Lemerle 1971; Flusin, Cheynet 2017) or the Macedonian Renaissance (Treadgold 1984a), an intense period of activity driven by a confluence of Christian and classical elements that increased interest in antiquity and archaic ethnography and learned etymologies of people and places (Treadgold 2013, 137, 191 fn. 136, 216). The abovementioned histories, products of imperial circles during the reign of the Byzantine emperor Constantine Porphyrogenetos (r. 944-59), all exhibit affinities in methodology, content and sources in terms of references to the past, mythological figures and geographical allusions, suggesting the existence of a common repository of historical-geographical material (Markopoulos 2009, 137-50; Manafis 2020, 70-5, 82; Diller 1938; 1950). The brief repetition of the imperial Roman foundation story of Adrianople in a fourteenth-century Byzantine hagiographical text by an anonymous author dates to the Palaiologan Renaissance (1261-c. 1360), another period of cultural revival, centred on philology and antiquarianism (Ševčenko 1984; Fryde 2000). During this period, scholars eagerly pursued ancient texts still accessible and produced editions of ancient Greek writers (Fryde 2000, 226-67, 268-92).

4   Edirne. The Ottoman Foundation Stories

In the Ottoman foundation stories of Edirne, Orestes and *Oresteia* are absent, but Hadrian, the importance of the city's three rivers and waters and the theme of healing are very much present. The accounts mention Hadrian and the derivatives of his name – Adrin, Edrin, Adranos, and İdrivne – and they acknowledge him as one of the founders of the city, but most often not as a Roman emperor.

4.1   The Foundation Story of Edirne in the *Saltukname*

The first foundation story of Edirne appeared in the *Saltukname*, whose hero Sarı Saltuk is depicted as a nomad warrior-dervish, filled with religious fervour, on a mission to bring the land of Rome, and the entire world, into the Abode of Islam. Saltuk's military and spiritual activities extend from northwestern Asia Minor and the Balkans to the Crimean coast. It takes him to every region around the Mediterranean basin, to the Horn of Africa, the Arabian Peninsula and South and Central Asia. He passes into Spain to help Andalusian Muslims oppressed by the infidels (*Saltukname* [ed. Akalın 1987-90, 3: 81]). He goes to Portugal, Milan and Venice, and in Genoa he converts the Genoese but allows them to remain crypto-Muslims (*Saltukname*, 3: 73).

Sarı Saltuk also travels to mystical subterranean and extraterrestrial places, such as Mount Qaf, where he comes across images of Alexander the Great (İskender-i Rumi) and of his viziers engraved in stone (*Saltukname*, 1: 119-20). The episodes involving northwestern Asia Minor, the Balkans and the Crimean coastal regions of the Black Sea include historical references, but when Sarı Saltuk travels to faraway lands, the stories take on more of a fairy-tale character, for instance involving encounters with genies, giants, witches, dragons, fairies, winged monsters and a phoenix, which are all identified as Muslims or infidels (*Saltukname*, 1: 101-38, 299-303, 360; Kitapçı Bayrı 2020, 170). In describing these locations, the author borrows from Muslim *mirabilia – Ajaib* (Wonders of Creation) and *Gharaib* (Oddities of Existence) – medieval Islamic cosmographical works translated and revived in the early Ottoman period, to depict a world based on an Aristotelian-Ptoleamic model (Coşkun 2011; 2019; Aydoğan 2020). Edirne stands at the centre of this borderless world in the story.

In the *Saltukname*, comparisons are made between Edirne and Bursa, the previous Ottoman capital, and especially with Istanbul, the later capital, in terms of their qualities of well-being. The most obvious comparison for establishing Edirne's superiority involves Istanbul. In fact in the *Saltukname*, the glorification of Edirne's past and its air and water is the antithesis of the way Istanbul is de-

scribed. The author also warns the audience about the fate awaiting Kostantiniyye/Istanbul after its conquest by the Ottomans. According to Şemun, a priest descendant of Jesus, not only is the air of Istanbul heavy, but as mischief, adultery, sodomy, oppression and violence reign throughout the city, it will be destroyed by earthquakes and struck by plagues. Only the church of Hagia Sophia will survive (*Saltukname*, 2: 243-4; 3: 364-5). The same priest, when asked about the fate of Edirne, says that nothing bad will happen to the city as it is watched over and protected by God. The author informs readers and listeners that he has compiled the stories of Sarı Saltuk at the request of Prince Cem, whose wish, should he become sultan one day, is to make Edirne his residence (*Saltukname*, 3: 366).

These maledictions and warnings resemble those voiced in the anti-imperial and anti-Istanbul sentiments of other late fifteenth-century Ottoman sources, such as the anonymous *Tevarih-i Al-i Osman* (ed. Ertaylan 1946) and the legendary foundation stories of Istanbul (Yerasimos 1990), which borrow from the Byzantine *Patria of Constantinople* (ed. Berger 2013).[10] Stephanos Yerasimos (1990) argued that Edirne and intellectuals from the city were involved in the emergence of the fifteenth-century anti-imperial Ottoman foundation stories of Istanbul, dissident texts giving voice to alienated opposition groups – such as the frontier lords/*ghazis*, religious scholars and the urban classes – who had lost influence to the rise in power of the central administrative and military structures of Mehmed II (r. 1444-46, 1451-81), who moved the Ottoman capital from Edirne to Istanbul (Yerasimos 1990, 2-3, 64-142, 206-10). The *Saltukname*'s emphasis on Edirne as the house of *ghazis* also reflects the fierce succession struggle between Mehmed II's sons Cem, the patron of the *Saltukname*, and Bayezid II (r. 1481-1512), during which the former depended on the frontier lords/*ghazis* and the latter on the devshirme system of administrators (Isom-Verhaaren 2014, 111-28).

4.2 Hadrian in the Ottoman Foundation Stories

In the *Saltukname*, the *Account of the Physician Beşir Çelebi* and the *Seyahatname*, Hadrian is identified as one of the founders of the city of Edirne. According to the *Saltukname*,

> There was an ancient castle four days from Istanbul. It was built by Adrin, the son of Islam, who was the son of Adam. His son Andriyye

---

[10] The *Patria* contain information compiled on nations, regions and cities, natural and celestial phenomena, dreams, portents and statues inhabited by miraculous powers. As a genre, *Ajaib* and *Gharaib* resemble the tenth-century *Parastaseis Anonymoi Chronikai*, which is part of the *Patria*. For *Parastaseis Anonymoi Chronikai* and *Patria*, see Manafis 2020, 53-4).

built moats around the castle, and it was surrounded by a swamp. On one side of it, there was a flowing river; it was steep, and there were pull bridges over it. In the castle, there was a great church made out of glass that was built by Cevher Şah-ı Rumi. Jesus stayed in this church while performing *arba'ein* [a religious observance that lasts forty days]. All the non-believers, who came to this church, performed *arba'ein*, circumambulated the church and gave alms. This city was called Andriyye. (*Saltukname*, 1: 30; Author's transl.)

In a section recounting Sarı Saltuk's conquest of the city, Saltuk calls on a priest to learn the history of the city. The priest, reading the history from a book written in Assyrian, says that during the time of the prophet İdris [Enoch], Edrin, the son of Ercem, who is the son of Adam, came to this place. He liked the air and the waters and asked his vizier, Erkiyanos, to build a castle (*Saltukname*, 2: 54).

In the *Account of the Physician Beşir Çelebi*, the castle of Edirne was built by Adranos, who had a vizier named Arfas, who was also a physician and very advanced in the use of the astrolabe. Arfas advises Adranos to build a castle over the Tundzha because the river's water is potable. He adds that the place might agitate the humours, but the humours help people move, and humoral imbalance can be cured with a syrup to stop diarrhea (*şerbet-i müshil*). Arfas with his astrolabe predicted that any ruler building a city or castle on that spot would have a long life and conquer many places. He also prophesied that in the future, people embracing Islam as their religion would conquer the city, fighting the non-believers, and remain there until the end of time. The castle was built according to the measurements of the vizier Arfas, who also calculated the number of towers to be built on each side of the castle and round observation posts at the top of the tower so that the rise of the sun and the spring equinox (*nevruz*) could be easily observed and the southern towers of the castle faced the sun for six months. Based on Arfas's calculations, they also built eight gates to the fortification that opened onto the city. As this city is the Paradise of Rum, four churches were erected there (*The Account of the Physician Beşir Çelebi* [ed. Erdoğru 2006, 195-6]).

Evliya Çelebi only briefly mentions Hadrian (*The Travels of Evliya Çelebi* [ed. Dağlı, Kahraman 2006, 3.2: 550]):

And during the time of Jesus, the Roman king İdrivne built a big castle, which became a beautiful castle named after this king. The name Edirne was a corrupted form of the name İdrivne.[11]

---

[11] "Ondan Hazreti İsa zamanında Rum krallarından İdrivne adında bir kral büyük bir kale yaptı. Bu, onun ismiyle isimlenen güzel bir kale oldu. İdirven'den bozma Edirne adıyla meşhur olup".

This is the only reference to Hadrian in Ottoman foundation stories on Edirne that identifies him as a Roman emperor, rather than an eponymous fictive figure who supposedly gave the city his name. The departure point for mentioning Hadrian in the Ottoman foundation stories is the city's name during the time of the Ottoman creation of the story. Creating foundation stories based on an eponymous fictive figure whose name is retrospectively derived from the city's name follows the pattern of city foundation stories in medieval Muslim tradition, such as that in *Mujam al-Buldan* (Dictionary of Lands), the geographical encyclopedia compiled by Yaqut al-Hamawi (d. 1229) (Zychowicz-Coghill 2022).[12]

4.3 Noah and His Descendants in the Ottoman Foundation Stories

Similar to the city foundation stories in the *Mujam al-Buldan*, the Ottoman foundation stories of Edirne do not recount the founders' epic deeds, their relation to other cities or their origins as in the Greco-Roman tradition (Zychowicz-Coghill 2022). The authors and narrators are instead more interested in genealogies that link Edirne to the descendants of Noah after the Flood. In the *Saltukname*, it is told that during the time of Noah, the city was buried under sand, where it remained until the time of Solomon, who asked the giants to excavate it. According to another tradition mentioned in the *Saltukname*, Noah's son Yafes (Yafith/Japheth) rebuilt Edirne.[13]

In *Seyahatname*, Evliya Çelebi's story also links the foundation of Edirne to Noah. After the Flood, Noah sends the physician Kalimon to Egypt, and when Kalimon dies, his sons visit Noah, at that time living in Mosul. Noah sends Sırfayil, one of Kalimon's seventy children, to Rum. Sırfayil founds Edirne, and Sırfayil's son Firav founds Sofia. Thus, until the time of Solomon, Sırfayil's descendants ruled this part of Rum. Then Makedone, daughter of Alina, the founder of Istanbul, rebuilt Edirne (*The Travels of Evliya Çelebi* 3.2: 549-50).

---

12 Yaqut al-Hamawi was born around 1179 in Byzantine territory but as a child was captured in a raid and raised as a well-educated slave in Baghdad.

13 Japheth is not mentioned by name in the Quran. Muslim exegesis of the Quran, which mostly agrees with the biblical tradition in the identification of Japheth's descendants, names all of Noah's sons, including Japheth. In the Muslim tradition, he is usually regarded as the ancestor of the Gog and Magog tribes and at times with the Turks, Khazars and Slavs (Heller, Rippin 2012).

4.4 Edirne Heals. Air, Water, Humours, and Astrology. The Account of the Physician Beşir Çelebi

While Edirne the Ottoman city is the product of imagination, mythologised through historical discourse and through legendary human heritage and lineage in the foundation stories, the physical qualities of the city – its air and especially its waters – are imbued with contemporary ideas on health and elements of 'scientific' knowledge (Dyck, Fletcher 2011, 3). Similar to the imperial Roman and Byzantine foundation stories of Adrianople, the healing aspect of the city's water is an essential part of the Ottoman narratives. In the *Saltukname*, an underground water source heals the daughter of Edirne's ruler after she becomes afflicted with leprosy. Her father, disgusted by his daughter's appearance, casts her into the wilderness outside the city so he doesn't have to look at her face. The daughter falls into a well, which, it turns out, is filled with water endowed with healing powers. She also drinks the water. The daughter gets well and returns to his father, who builds a church over the well (*Saltukname*, 2: 54).

The *Account of the Physician Beşir Çelebi* espouses the superiority of Edirne by incorporating medical, geographical, astronomical, and astrological 'scientific elements' into the legendary foundation account. The main figures in the text are primarily physicians. Thus, the physician Beşir Çelebi meets Mehmed II, and when the sultan asks him about the air of Edirne, he responds that the city's winters and summers are pleasant: the city is not built at high altitude so it is not too windy, and it is not built at low altitude, so it is not too hot. The nearby waters do not negatively affect the air because they are 'sweet' waters. He adds that seawater is not good, as it quickly ages people. Because the northern and southern parts of the city are not bordered by mountains, winds blow freely through the city. Beşir Çelebi sums up by saying that there is no better place than Edirne in the *Diyar-ı Rum* (Land of Rome) (*The Account of the Physician Beşir Çelebi*, 181-2, 191).

The account mentions other physicians as authoritative figures in praising the city's climate, geography and location in relation to health. All the well-known physicians point to Edirne, as a city in the *Diyar-ı Rum* with three sources of running water; a ruler (*padişah*) who is always just, calm and a *ghazi*; good employment and high earnings; and people kind to each other and full of love. After mentioning the Tundzha, whose water is plentiful and tasty, and the Maritsa and Arda, the physicians connect the city's weather and humoral illnesses to forecasts of military and political conditions. If the waters of Tundzha become too high, there will be too much wind and rain, leading to phlegmatic (*emrâz-ı balgamiye*) illnesses among the people and the death of non-believers. If the weather were to become extremely dry, then the fruits would be tastier, and there would be

plenty of corn, but the people would develop choleric illnesses (*safravî maraz*), and the ruler would be victorious against the Persians, Arabs, and Greeks. If the waters of Arda become high, then there could be many wars and enmity, there would not be enough fruit, and the people would suffer sanguine illnesses (*emrâz demevîye*) (*The Account of the Physician Beşir Çelebi*, 193-4).

In another instance in Beşir Çelebi's account, the Kenise Camii, originally the biggest church built in the city of Adranos, is said to have an underground water source (*pınar*) with healing powers revealed by a certain prophet while digging. Cevher Şah, a descendant of the ruler Adranos, was cured of leprosy by drinking the water and ritually washing his body (*ghusl*) with it. After being healed, Cevher Şah accepted the religion of the prophet. The healing powers of the water was so renowned that the people of the city put it in bottles and sent them to the lands of the Franks (*Frengistan*) as gifts. This story is similar to the one recounted in the *Saltukname* above, in which the daughter of a ruler has leprosy and is healed by underground water in a well (*The Account of the Physician Beşir Çelebi*, 190, 195).

Nükhet Varlık (unpublished) asserts that the *Account of the Physician Beşir Çelebi* is in line with the general paradigm of the Galenic-Avicennan model of environmental disease etiology, trying to establish a relationship between the elements of the *macrocosmos* and of those of the *microcosmos*:

> The physician attributes humoral properties to the rivers and winds of Edirne and suggests that because of its location, altitude, and humidity, the city is safe from corrupt/fetid air, which was believed to cause epidemic diseases.[14]

I add to her observations that there is also an astronomist-cum-astrologist physician element in Beşir Çelebi's account, reflected by the physician Afras, the vizier of Adranos (Hadrian) who was also an expert in the use of the astrolabe and advised Adranos to build a castle over Tundzha river. In addition to calculating the design of the castle, Afras also builds a church outside the northern gate of the castle and digs the Sığırcık Pınarı, an underground water source with healing powers similar to the water of the Zamzam (*Zemzem*), the sacred well near the Kabaa, in Mecca (*The Account of the Physician Beşir Çelebi*, 195).

The *Account of the Physician Beşir Çelebi* offers a glimpse into Ottoman astrological medicine. Although a study on the relation of as-

---

14 My sincere thanks to Nükhet Varlık for kindly sharing "Imagined Healthscapes. Places of Health and Disease in Early Modern Ottoman Cities", a talk in which she discusses Beşir Çelebi's text in relation to health and space in the Ottoman tradition.

tronomy, astrology, and medicine in the Ottoman Empire is unknown to me, the astrology and astronomy influenced by the legendary sage Hermes Trismegistos, Dorotheos of Sidon (c. first century AD), and Ptolemy (c. second century AD) and Batlamyus in Muslim literature became part and parcel of Islamic medicine. The most auspicious time for alchemy or medical treatments were decided according to calculations by astrologists because certain humours were believed to be in a state of agitation when moonlight was increasing. Each organ of the body was thought to be connected to a sign of the zodiac (Saparmin 2019, 282-96).

In terms of Ottoman astrological medical practices, the inventory of Bayezid II's library is revealing. At the end of the medical section, one finds a small number of works on geomancy, logic, mathematics, engineering, astronomy, astrology, alchemy, botany and mineralogy (Varlık 2019, 529). Considering Bayezid's personal interest in astrology/astronomy, and courtly patronage of the science of the stars reaching unprecedented levels at that time, the writings by Ottoman intellectuals, such as the *Account of the Physician Bekir Çelebi*, were probably influenced by the popularity of the subject during and after his reign (Şen 2017).

The *Account of the Physician Beşir Çelebi* is an Ottoman product of the sixteenth century, when Istanbul was firmly established as the centre of the empire. The strident opposition to Istanbul evident in the fifteenth century had by then waned. With a burst of urban development in the Ottoman Empire, literature in praise of cities emerged, such as *şehrengiz* (shahrangiz), a genre of short love poems about the young craftsmen in the local bazaar of a city, often additionally focusing on the beauty of the city's inhabitants, its natural and historical areas and its monuments. Most of *şehrengiz* works focused on the three Ottoman capitals – Bursa, Edirne, and Istanbul (Levend 1958; Stewart-Robinson 1990; Kappler 2005; de Bruijn, Halman, Rahman 2012). Beşir Çelebi's praise for the city of Edirne, however, is different. The text aims to prove the superiority of that city through scientific knowledge – that is, by connecting the geography of Edirne to medicine, astronomy and astrology.

5 Conclusion

The imperial Roman foundation story of Adrianople was crafted from Greek mythology, in remembrance of the Roman emperor Hadrian, and reference to one of the city's physical attributes, its waters. Together these elements created a space that would become an 'ancient, noble, and honourable' Romanised place offering a healing physical environment. During the tenth-century wars between Byzantium and Bulgaria, and in the cultural context of a confluence of Christian and

classical elements, the imperial Roman foundation story of Adrianople became integrated into Byzantine narratives of that time. In the fourteenth century, during a cultural revival characterised by philology and antiquarianism, the foundation story was integrated into one of the late Byzantine hagiographical texts.

The Ottoman foundation stories on Adrianople as the Islamised and Ottomanised Edirne linked the space to Noah and his descendants, celebrated prophets, mystics, and figures in the Muslim and Ottoman traditions, and the Islamic holy cities, creating a spiritual landscape for the city. Following earlier Islamic tradition, Hadrian is referenced as one of the city's founders, not as a historical figure, a Roman emperor, but as the eponymous fictive founder of Adrianople in a mythical past.

The fifteenth-century Ottoman foundation story was dragged into a competition with Istanbul, in voicing the concerns of alienated opposition groups. A century later, a different foundation narrative of Edirne appeared, with Istanbul's position as the centre of the Ottoman Empire well established, anti-Istanbouliot sentiments greatly reduced, urbanisation in progress, and literary genres in praise of cities emerging. It emphasised the physical aspects of the city, its air and especially its waters, incorporating 'scientific' knowledge of medicine, astronomy, and astrology. Adrianople's three rivers, in which Orestes cleansed himself and found mental and physical healing in the imperial Roman and Byzantine foundation stories, were presented as the central physical attributes of Ottoman Edirne, providing the city well-being and health. To these rivers, the Ottoman stories also added holy underground waters with the power to heal.

Both the fifteenth- and the sixteenth-century Ottoman foundation stories integrated the city's Greco-Roman past through historical characters, such as Alexander the Great, as well as fictive figures, such as Cevher Şah-i Rum. The Greco-Roman past indirectly infiltrated the Ottoman foundation narratives through the Byzantine *Patria* and through Muslim geographical, medical, astronomical, and astrological traditions, which in turn had been influenced by Greco-Roman heritage. The city's Christian past is acknowledged by attributing great authority to the information Assyrian and Byzantine priests provided on the history of the city. The churches, the underground water sources found within these houses of worship and the stories related to Christian figures, such as Jesus, performing rituals in churches created allegorical links with the Christian past. While acknowledging the city's Christian past, however, mentions of it were rendered in such a way that they announced the coming of Islam and the Islamisation and Ottomanisation of the place.

The imperial Roman/Byzantine and Ottoman foundation stories of Adrianople/Edirne are revealing in demonstrating how stories as cultural artefacts of different groups across time can manipulate

the meaning of the same space during social, political and identity-formation processes. In these stories, the physical environment, the waters of Adrianople/Edirne, remain a constant around which the place is defined and redefined. The process of defining and redefining a space through stories so that it becomes a place imbued with different meanings should be understood within the larger shared and connected space of the Eastern Mediterranean, for which cultural and social change should be reconsidered as difference through connection.

Bibliography

Akalın, Ş.H. (ed.) (1987-90). *Saltukname*. 3 vols. Ankara: Kültür ve Turizm Bakanlığı.

Asdracha, C. (1976). *La région de Rhodopes aux XIIIᵉ et XIVᵉ siècles. Étude de géographie historique*. Athens: Verlag der byzantinisch-neugriechischen Jahrbücher.

Aydoğan, Z. (2020). "Excerpt from the *Saltukname*. On Magic and Worship in the Four Marvelous Islands beyond the Indian Ocean". *Acaʾib. Occasional Papers on the Ottoman Perception of the Supernatural*, 1, 117-23. https://doi.org/10.26225/nxr1-mj26.

Bekker, I. (ed.) (1838). *Theophanes Continuatus; Ioannes Cameniata; Symeon Magister; Georgius Monachus*. Bonn: Weber.

Beldiceanu-Steinherr, I. (1965). "La conquête d'Adrianople par les Turcs. La pénétration turque en Thrace et la valeur des chroniques ottomanes". *Travaux et mémoire*, 1, 439-61.

Berger, A. (transl.) (2013). *Accounts of Medieval Constantinople. The Patria*. Cambridge (MA): Harvard University Press.

Bilde, P.G. (2003). "Wandering Images. From Taurian (and Chersonesean) Parthenos to (Artemis) Tauropolos and (Artemis) Persike". Guldager Bilde, P.; Højte, J.M.; Stolba, V.F (eds), *The Cauldron of Ariantas. Studies Presented to A.N. Sceglov on the Occasion of His 70th Birthday*. Aarhus: Aarhus University Press, 165-83.

Boykov, G. (2011). "Reshaping Urban Space in the Ottoman Balkans. A Study on the Architectural Development of Edirne, Plovdiv, and Skopje (14th-15th Centuries)". Harmuth, M. (ed.), *Centres and Peripheries in Ottoman Architecture. Rediscovering a Balkan Heritage = Proceedings of the International Conference* (Sarajevo, 22-24 April 2010). Sarajevo: Regional Office of Sarajevo, 32-45.

Cassidy-Welch, M. (2010). "Space and Place in Medieval Context". *Parergon*, 27(2), 1-12.

Coşkun, F. (2011). "An Ottoman Preacher's Perception of a Medieval Cosmography. Mahmud al-Hatib's Translation of Kharidat al-Ajaʾib wa Faridat al-Gharaʾib". *Al-Masaq*, 23(1), 53-65. https://doi.org/10.1080/0950311 0.2011.552948.

Coşkun, F. (2019). "Osmanlı Coğrafya Kültürü ve 'Acaibü'l-Mahlukat Janrı'" (The Ottoman Geographical Tradition and the Genre of Ajaib). *Türkiye Araştırmaları Literatür Dergisi*, 17(33), 269-86.

Dağlı, Y.; Kahraman, S.A. (eds and transl.) (2006). *Günümüz Türkçesiyle Evliya Çelebi Seyahatnamesi / Evliya Çelebi* (The Travels of Evliya Çelebi in Modern Turkish), vol. 3.2. Istanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları.

de Bruijn, J.T.P.; Halman, T.S.; Rahman, M. (2012). "S̲h̲ahrangīz". *Encyclopaedia of Islam*. 2nd ed. http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1573–3912_islam_COM_1026.

Diller, A. (1938). "The Tradition of Stephanus Byzantius". *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association*, 69, 333-48. https://doi.org/10.2307/283183.

Diller, A. (1950). "Excerpts from Strabo and Stephanus in Byzantine Chronicles". *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association*, 81, 241-53. https://doi.org/10.2307/283582.

Dyck, E.; Fletcher, C. (2011). "Introduction. Healthscapes. Health and Place among and between Disciplines". Dyck, E.; Fletcher, C. (eds), *Locating Health. Historical and Anthropological Investigations of Place and Health*. London: Routledge, 1-10.

Erdoğru, M.A. (ed.) (2006). "Hikaye-yi Tabib Beşir Çelebi ve Tarih-i Edirne İsimli Yazma Eser" (A Manuscript Titled the Story of the Physician Beşir Çelebi and the History of Edirne). Erdoğru, M.A. (ed.), *Doğumunun 65. Yılında Prof. Dr. Tuncer Baykara'ya Armağan. Tarih Yazıları* (Festschrift for Prof. Dr. Tuncer Baykara for His 65th Birthday. Articles on History). Istanbul: IQ Kültür Sanat Yayımcılık, 174-205.

Ertaylan, İ.H. (ed.) (1946). *Türk edebiyatı örnekleri IV. Tevarih-i Al-i Osman / Beşir Çelebî* (Examples from Turkish Literature IV. Chronicles of the House of Osman/ Beşir Çelebi). Istanbul: İstanbul Üniversitesi Edebiyat Fakültesi.

Fine, J. (1991). *The Early Medieval Balkans. A Critical Survey from the Sixth to the Late Twelfth Century*. Ann Arbor (MI): University of Michigan Press.

Flusin, B.; Cheynet, J.C. (éds) (2017). *Autour du "Premier humanisme byzantin" et des "Cinq études sur le XIᵉ siècle", quarante ans après Paul Lemerle*. Paris: Association des Amis du Centre d'Histoire et Civilisation de Byzance. Travaux et mémoires 21(2).

Fryde, E. (2000). *The Early Palaeologan Renaissance (1261-c. 1360)*. Leiden. Brill.

Gökbilgin, T. (1965). "Edirne Hakkında Yazılmış Tarihler ve Enis-ül Müsamirin" (Histories Written on Edirne and *Enis-ül Müsamirin*). *Edirne. Edirne'nin 600. Fetih Yıldönümü Armağan Kitabı* (Edirne. Festschrift for the 600th Anniversary of the Conquest of Edirne). Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 77-81.

Gupta, A.; Ferguson, J. (1992). "Beyond 'Culture'. Space, Identity, and the Politics of Difference". *Cultural Anthropology*, 7(1), 6-23. https://doi.org/10.1525/can.1992.7.1.02a00020.

Hase, C.B. (ed.) (1828). *Leonis Diaconi Caloënsis Historiae Libri Decem*. Bonn: Weber.

Heller, A. (2006). "Ἀρχαιότης et εὐγένεια. Le thème des origines dans les cités d'Asie Mineure à l'époque impériale". *Ktèma. Civilisations de l'Orient, de la Grèce et de Rome antiques*, 31(1), 97-108. https://doi.org/10.3406/ktema.2006.993.

Heller, B.; Rippin, A. (2012). "Yāfit̲h̲". Bearman, P. et al. (eds), *Encyclopaedia of Islam*. 2nd ed. http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1573–3912_islam_SIM_7941.

İnalcık, H. (1965). "Edirne'nin Fethi, 1361 (The Conquest of Edirne, 1361)". *Edirne. Edirne'nin 600. Fetih Yıldönümü Armağan Kitabı* (Edirne. Festschrift

for the 600th Anniversary of the Conquest of Edirne). Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 137-59.

Isom-Verhaaren, C. (2014). "Constructing Ottoman Identity in the Reigns of Mehmed II and Bayezid II". *Journal of the Ottoman and Turkish Studies Association*, 1(1-2), 111-28. https://doi.org/10.2979/jottturstu-ass.1.1-2.111.

İz, F.; Alpay Tekin, G. (eds) (1974-84). *Saltuk-name. Ebuʾl Hayr Rumiʾnin Sözlü Rivayetlerden Topladığı Sarı Saltuk Menakıbı* (*Saltuk-name*. The Legend of Sarı Saltuk Collected from Oral Tradition by Ebu'l-Hayr Rumi). 7 vols. Cambridge (MA): Harvard University Press.

Kappler, M. (2005). "The Geography of Beauty as a Metaphorical Device in Ottoman Sehr-engiz Literature". *Eurasian Studies*, 4(2), 205-14.

Kastritis, D.J. (2007). "Religious Affiliation and Political Alliances in the Ottoman Succession Wars of 1402-1413". *Medieval Encounters*, 13(2), 222-42. https://doi.org/10.1163/157006707x194977.

Kitapçı Bayrı, B. (2020). *Warriors, Martyrs, and Dervishes. Moving Frontiers, Shifting Identities in the Land of Rome (13th-15th Centuries)*. Leiden: Brill.

Kontolaimos, P. (2016). "The Transformation of Late Byzantine Adrianople to Early Ottoman Edirne". *Journal of the Ottoman and Turkish Studies Association*, 3(1), 7-27. https://doi.org/10.2979/jottturstuass.3.1.03.

Kovacs, D. (ed. and transl.) (1999). *Euripides: Trojan Women; Iphigenia among the Taurians; Ion*. Cambridge (MA): Harvard University Press.

Kreiser, K. (2007). "Abdurrahman Hıbrî". Kafadar, C.; Karateke, H.; Fleischer, C. (eds), *Historians of the Ottoman Empire*. https://ottomanhistorians.uchicago.edu/sites/ottomanhistorians.uchicago.edu/files/hibri_en.pdf.

Külzer, A. (2008). *Ostthrakien (Europe)*. Wien: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften. Tabula Imperii Byzantini 12.

Kuran, A. (1996). "A Spatial Study of Three Ottoman Capitals. Bursa, Edirne, and Istanbul". *Muqarnas*, 13, 114-31. https://doi.org/10.2307/1523255.

Lemerle, P. (1971). *Le premier humanisme byzantin. Notes et remarques sur enseignement et culture à Byzance des origines au Xᵉ siècle*. Paris : Presses Universitaires de France.

Levend, A.G. (1958). *Türk Edebiyatında Şehr-engizler ve Şehr-engizlerde İstanbul* (Şehrengiz in Turkish Literature and Istanbul in the Şehrengiz). Istanbul: İstanbul Fetih Derneği.

Magie, D. (ed. and transl.) (2000). *Historia Augusta*, vol. 2. Cambridge (MA): Harvard University Press.

Manafis, P. (2020). *(Re)Writing History in Byzantium. A Critical Study of Collections of Historical Excerpts*. Oxford: Routledge.

Markopoulos, A. (2003). "Byzantine History Writing at the End of the First Millennium". Magdalino, P. (ed.), *Byzantium in the Year 1000*. Leiden: Brill, 183-97. https://doi.org/10.1163/9789047404095_011.

Markopoulos, A. (2009). "Genesius. A Study". Kotzabassi, S.; Mavromatis, G. (eds), *Realia Byzantina*. Berlin: de Gruyter, 137-150. Byzantinisches Archiv 22.

Murray, A.T. (ed. and transl.) (1998). *The Odyssey*, vol. 1. Rev. by G.E. Dimock. Cambridge (MA): Harvard University Press.

Nollé, J. (2009). "Zu den Gründungstraditionen des thrakischen Hadrianopolis (Edirne)". *Chiron*, 39, 101-61.

Oikonomides, N. (ed.) (1955). "Ἀκολουθία τοῦ ἁγίου Θεοδώρου τοῦ Νέου". *Neon Athenaion*, 1(2), 205-21.

Pont, A.V. (2007). "L'empereur 'fondateur'. Enquête sur les motifs de la reconnaissance civique". *Revue des études grecques*, 120(2), 526-52. `https://doi.org/10.3406/reg.2007.7875`.

Saparmin, N.B. (2019). "History of Astrology and Astronomy in Islamic Medicine". *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, 9(9), 282-96. `https://doi.org/10.6007/ijarbss/v9–i9/6293`.

Şen, A.T. (2017). "Reading the Stars at the Ottoman Court. Bayezid II (r. 886/1481-918/1512) and His Celestial Interests". *Arabica*, 64(3-4), 557-608. `https://doi.org/10.1163/15700585–12341461`.

Ševčenko, I. (1984). "Palaeologan Renaissance". Treadgold 1984b, 144-71.

Shepardson, C. (2014). *Controlling Contested Places. Late Antique Antioch and the Spatial Politics of Religious Controversy*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Sommerstein, A.H. (ed. and transl.) (2008). *Aeschylus: Oresteia; Agamemnon; Libation-Bearers; Eumenides*. Cambridge (MA): Harvard University Press.

Soustal, P. (1991). *Thrakien (Thrake, Rodope und Haimimontos)*. Wien: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften. Tabula Imperii Byzantini 6.

Stewart-Robinson, J. (1990). "A Neglected Ottoman Poem. The Şehrengiz". Bellamy, J.A. (ed.), *Studies in Near Eastern Culture and History. In Memory of Ernst T. Abdel Massih*. Ann Arbor (MI): Center for Near Eastern and North African Studies, University of Michigan, 201-12.

Talbot, A.M.; Sullivan, D.F. (eds and transl.) (2005). *The History of Leo the Deacon. Byzantine Military Expansion in the Tenth Century*. Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library.

Treadgold, W. (1984a). "Macedonian Renaissance". Treadgold 1984b, 75-98.

Treadgold, W. (ed.) (1984b). *Renaissances Before the Renaissance. Cultural Revivals of Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Treadgold, W. (2013). *The Middle Byzantine Historians*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Van Tricht, F. (2014). "The Byzantino-Latin Principality of Adrianople and the Challenge of Feudalism (1204/6-ca. 1227/28). Empire, Venice, and Local Autonomy". *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, 68, 325-42.

Varlık, N. (2019). "Books on Medicine. Medical Knowledge at Work". Necipoğlu, G.; Kafadar, C.; Fleischer, C.H. (eds), *Treasures of Knowledge. An Inventory of the Ottoman Palace Library (1502/3-1503/4)*. Leiden: Brill, 527-56. `https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004402508_016`.

Varlık, N. (unpublished). "Imagined Healthscapes. Places of Health and Disease in Early Modern Ottoman Cities". *Ottomans and Health. A Comparative Perspective* (The Skilliter Centre for Ottoman Studies, Newnham College, University of Cambridge, 6 July 2013).

Yerasimos, S. (transl.) (1990). *Légendes d'Empire. La fondation de Constantinople et de Saint-Sophie dans les traditions turques*. Istanbul: Institut Français d'Études Anatoliennes; Jean Maisonneuve Successeur.

Zachariadou, E. (1970). "The Conquest of Adrianople by the Turks". *Studi veneziani*, 12, 211-18.

Zychowicz-Coghill, E. (2022). "Medieval Arabic Archaeologies of the Ancient Cities of Syria". Fowden, E.K. et al. (eds), *Cities as Palimpsests? Responses to Antiquity in Eastern Mediterranean Urbanism*. Oxford: Oxbow Books, 351-70. `https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctv25wxc84.22`.