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Belgrade
22–27 August 2016

Plenary Papers

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23RD INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF BYZANTINE STUDIES
BELGRADE, 22–27 AUGUST 2016
PLENARY PAPERS

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Prizren, beginning of the 14th century, fresco.

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The Serbian National Committee of AIEB

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List of Abbreviations

<i>AASS</i>	<i>Acta Sanctorum</i>
<i>AB</i>	<i>Analecta Bollandiana: Revue critique d'hagiographie</i>
<i>ARCBH</i>	S. Efthymiadis (ed.), <i>The Ashgate Research Companion to Byzantine Hagiography</i> , vol. I: <i>Periods and Places</i> , vol. II: <i>Genres and Contexts</i> , Farnham, UK – Burlington, VT, 2011–2014
<i>AT</i>	<i>Antiquité Tardive</i>
<i>BA</i>	Byzantinisches Archiv
<i>BBOM</i>	Birmingham Byzantine and Ottoman Monographs
<i>BF</i>	<i>Byzantinische Forschungen</i>
<i>BHG</i>	<i>Bibliotheca Hagiographica Graeca</i>
<i>BMGS</i>	<i>Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies</i>
<i>BZ</i>	<i>Byzantinische Zeitschrift</i>
<i>CCM</i>	<i>Cahiers de civilisation médiévale</i>
<i>CFHB</i>	Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae
<i>CPG</i>	<i>Clavis Patrum Graecorum</i>
<i>DOP</i>	<i>Dumbarton Oaks Papers</i>
<i>GRBS</i>	<i>Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies</i>
<i>JECS</i>	<i>Journal of Early Christian Studies</i>
<i>JÖB</i>	<i>Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik</i>
<i>JRA</i>	<i>Journal of Roman Archaeology</i>
<i>JRS</i>	<i>Journal of Roman Studies</i>
<i>LAA</i>	<i>Late Antique Archaeology</i>
<i>MEFRA</i>	<i>Mélanges de l'École française de Rome. Antiquité</i>
<i>MEFRM</i>	<i>Mélanges de l'École française de Rome. Moyen Âge</i>
<i>OCP</i>	<i>Orientalia Christiana Periodica</i>
<i>PG</i>	<i>Patrologiae cursus completus, series graeca</i> , ed. J. P. Migne, Paris, 1857–1866

<i>PmbZ</i>	R.-J. Lilie et al. (ed.), <i>Prosopographie der mittelbyzantinischen Zeit. Erste Abteilung (641–867)</i> , I–VI, Berlin – New York, 1998–2002
PTS	Patristische Texte und Studien
<i>REB</i>	<i>Revue des études byzantines</i>
<i>RSBN</i>	<i>Rivista di studi bizantini e neoellenici</i>
SC	Sources chrétiennes
SH	Subsidia Hagiographica
<i>TM</i>	<i>Travaux et Mémoires</i>
<i>ZRVI</i>	<i>Zbornik radova Vizantološkog instituta</i>

Foreword

Implementing the decision of the General Assembly of the AIEB (Athens 2013), the Organizing Committee of the 23rd International Congress of Byzantine Studies (Belgrade August 2016) has introduced certain changes which seemed necessary with regard to the programme and format of the plenary sessions. The aim of these changes was to find room for discussion during the sessions themselves. Each session now includes three lectures on a common topic and is moderated by a chairperson whose main task will be to facilitate the discussion among the speakers as well as between them and the public. The chosen topics were selected as representative of certain subfields of particular interest within the present state of Byzantine studies. The last session is devoted to the future of Byzantine studies, characterized by a new dynamics in terms both of expansion and of the techniques of research.

The present volume contains twenty papers to be given at the plenary sessions, together with the respective introductions and conclusions. In the introduction to each session, the moderators offer their view of the current state of the field, thus providing the necessary scholarly background for the following lectures and the ensuing discussion. The topics selected belong to different subfields: hagiography, the archeology of early Byzantine towns, the study of religious practices and the senses, the inquiry into the political and ideological influence of the idea of *Romanitas* among the Slavs, the study of Byzantine historical writing. All the papers in this volume focus on the new developments in the field, the recent discoveries and innovative methodological trends. The hope of the Organizing Committee is that the papers reflect the sum of our present capacity to face the challenge of the new approaches, whether they mainly submit traditional ideas to a searching re-examination or, alternatively, concentrate on the opening of new areas for research.

The official motto of the 23rd International Congress of Byzantine Studies, *Byzantium – a world of changes*, acts as a sort of *fil rouge* to the present volume. By choosing the old dictum of Maximos Planoudes, we wanted to bring into focus both the ever changing nature of the scholarly inquiry into the Byzantine world and the inexhaustible interest of that world itself.

Smilja Marjanović-Dušanić

I

L'âge d'or de l'hagiographie byzantine

Modérateur: **Sergey A. Ivanov**

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|------------------------|--|
| Bernard Flusin | Entre innovation et tradition:
hagiographie nouvelle et saints anciens
(VIII ^e –X ^e s.) |
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X ^e –XI ^e siècle: contrôle et répression de
la hiérarchie |

Introduction

Sergey A. Ivanov

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At each of the previous twenty two Congresses, the function of plenary session moderators was quite modest: to introduce the speakers and make sure they keep within the time limit. At this Congress, moderator, that is myself, has been entrusted with making introductory remarks: my mission is to be the first ever talking timer. I'm not sure who then is going to watch my own time and therefore I will try to restrain myself and be as succinct as possible.

Ten years ago, speaking at one of the plenary sessions of the London Congress on 'New Developments in Hagiography', Stephanos Efthymiadis announced the preparation of a two-volume handbook of Byzantine hagiography.¹ A wonderful example of a fulfilled promise: by 2014 the scholarly world got a comprehensive two-volume manual which summarizes all the successes and developments of the field. This publication has finally accomplished what Byzantine scholars called for during many years: a switch from exploiting hagiography as a source to analyzing it as a literature. This makes my task today both easier, as compared to Efthymiadis' ten years ago, and more difficult, since I have to add something to what today can be regarded as *opinio communis*. Let me begin with the *desideratum* mentioned by Efthymiadis in the same paper of 2006: he spoke about the need "to create a web-page indexing information about new editions of hagiographical texts".² Alas, such web-page has never been created. Yet, the digitalization has recently provided many other useful tools: in 2014, *L'Institut de recherche et d'histoire des textes* in Paris in cooperation with the Bollandists launched a Website *Les manuscrits hagiographiques grecs des Bollandistes*.³ Another recent project, *Versiones Slavicae*, was initiated by the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences.⁴ It promises "to elaborate a freely accessible Internet-based electronic catalogue of medieval Slavic translations and their corresponding Byzantine sources". To give yet another example, several collections of Old Russian manuscripts, including many translated Menaeae and Synaxaria, have become easily accessible on the Website of the Holy Trinity Lavra of St. Sergius.⁵ The pandemic digitalization, while hampering paper book-publishing and precipitating the overall decline of the book in its codex form, still offers many advantages. One may wish that the process of including hagiographic texts into TLG would go faster:

¹ S. Efthymiadis, *New Developments in Hagiography: The Rediscovery of Byzantine Hagiography*, in *Proceedings of the 21st International Congress of Byzantine Studies*, I, Aldershot, 2006, p. 169–170.

² *Ibid.*, p. 171.

³ <http://www.labex-resmed.fr/les-manuscrits-hagiographiques?lang=fr>.

⁴ <http://www.versiones-slavicae.com/en/>.

⁵ <http://old.stsl.ru/manuscripts/113>.

this would facilitate the lexical analysis of hagiography and help solving different problems of genre, style and terminology.⁶

The *Ashgate Companion* is the most notable, but by no means the only source of pride of the last five years. A sub-genre of hagiography which acquired a deserved popularity is the so called ‘spiritually beneficial tales’. To the literature mentioned in the *Ashgate Companion* we can now add two brilliant books by John Wortley,⁷ the monograph by Markéta Kulhánková⁸ and several articles and publications.⁹

New monographs have appeared devoted both to well studied¹⁰ and less explored periods, such as the Palaiologan;¹¹ highly commendable is the emergence of critical editions of hagiography in places where the tradition of Byzantine studies is not deeply rooted, such as Buenos Aires;¹² good translations of hagiography have appeared;¹³ new sources are being published;¹⁴ as it happens in every field, some topics acquire larger prominence from time

⁶ Cf. on the terminological distinction between *hagios* and *hosios*: P. Halsall, *Women's bodies, men's souls: Sanctity and gender in Byzantium*, PhD Diss., Fordham University, 1999, p. 472–478.

⁷ *The Book of the Elders: Sayings of the Desert Fathers. The Systematic Collection*, trans. J. Wortley (Cistercian Studies Series, 240), Collegeville, MN, 2012; *The Anonymous Sayings of the Desert Fathers*, ed. and trans. J. Wortley, Cambridge, 2013.

⁸ M. Kulhánková, *Das gottgefällige Abenteuer. Eine narratologische Analyse der byzantinischen erbaulichen Erzählungen*, Červený Kostelec, 2015.

⁹ D. Afinogenov, *The Story of an Unworthy Priest in Cod. Parisinus gr. 1632*, in *Scrinium*, 7 (2011), p. 91–102; Д. Гетов, *Гръцкият оригинал на душеполезния разказ Птиците*, in *Старобългарска литература*, 49–50 (2014), p. 207–214; M. Detoraki, *Chronicon animae utile. La Chronique de Georges le Moine et les récits édifiants*, in Th. Antonopoulou, S. Kotzabassi, M. Loukaki (ed.), *Myriobiblos. Essays on Byzantine Literature and Culture* (BA, 29), Berlin – New York, 2015, p. 103–130; S. Ivanov, L. Gerd, *An unknown post-Byzantine journey to the other world*, in *BMGS*, 39/2 (2015), p. 227–248 etc.

¹⁰ R. Kosiński, *Constantinopolitan holy men and authority in the 5th century*, Berlin – Boston, 2016.

¹¹ S. Mergiale-Sacha, *Γράφοντας ιστορία με τους αγίους. Από την κοινωνία των αγίων στην κοινωνία των Παλαιολόγων (1261–1453)*, Athena, 2014; L. Lukhovitskiy, *Nikephoros Gregoras' Vita of St. Michael the Synkellos. Rewriting techniques and reconstruction of the iconoclast past in a 14th cent. hagiographical metaphor*, in *JÖB*, 64 (2014), p. 177–196; L. Pittos, *Sacredly praising, sacredly narrating: The hagiological imperative in the thought of St. Gregory Palamas*, PhD Diss., Chicago, 2015.

¹² Leoncio de Nápoles, *Vida de Espiridón. Edición crítica con traducción, introducción, notas y apéndices*, ed. P. A. Cavallero et al. (Colección Textos y estudios, 16), Buenos Aires, 2014.

¹³ *Storia di Barlaam e Ioasaf. La Vita bizantina del Buddha*, ed. P. Cesaretta, S. Ronchey, Torino, 2012; Niketas Stethatos, *The Life of Saint Symeon the New Theologian*, trans. R. P. H. Greenfield (Dumbarton Oaks Medieval Library, 20), Cambridge, MA – London, 2013; *Жития византийских святых эпохи иконоборчества*, I, ed. T. Senina (Seria Byzantina, 3), St. Petersburg, 2015; *Holy men of Mount Athos* (Dumbarton Oaks Medieval Library, 40), Cambridge, MA – London, 2016 etc.

¹⁴ S. A. Paschalides, *Τὸ ἀνέκδοτο βυζαντινὸ συναξάριο τῆς ὁσίας Θεοδώρας τῆς ἐν Θεσσαλονίκῃ (Nov. Auct. BHG 1741d) καὶ ἡ πηγὴ του*, in G. Tsigaras (ed.), *Σκεῶς εἰς τιμὴν. Ἀφιερωματικὸς τόμος ἐπὶ τῇ συμπληρωσῇ 25ετίας ἀπὸ τῆς εἰς Ἐπίσκοπον χειροτονίας καὶ 20ετίας ἀπὸ τῆς ἐνθρονίσεως τοῦ Μητροπολίτου Αὐστρίας καὶ Ἐξάρχου Οὐγγαρίας καὶ Μεσευρώπης κ. Μιχαήλ*, Athena, 2011, p. 669–680; V. Déroche, *Un recueil inédit de miracles de Cyr et Jean dans le Koutloumousiou 37*, in *RBSN* n. s., 49

to time: thus, gender issues loom large.¹⁵ Metaphrasis in the recent years got a deserved share of scholarly attention.¹⁶

Hagiography occupies a prominent place in the lists of the newly published Byzantinological items: for example, the issue of *BZ* for 2015 contains 135 hagiographic entries. For comparison, the issue for 1913 contained only 29 entries.

And here I come to crying lacunae remaining in our field. In 1912 Kornelij Kekelidze discovered¹⁷ an Old Georgian version of the continuation of Metaphrastes, carried out in the 11th century by John Xiphilinos the Younger. It contains nothing fewer than thirty four vitae whose Greek originals perished! I know this figure only from the archive of the Russian Academician Vasilii Latyshev to whom Kekelidze wrote about his discoveries and sent the incipita of the Lives, in Russian translation.¹⁸ We have celebrated the centennium of our waiting for its publication, and nobody is even promising to produce it in the foreseeable future, not to mention translating it into a more comprehensible language. A new updated version of *Bibliotheca Hagiographica Orientalis* is long overdue, since it's hard for a Byzantinist to follow the new developments in, say, the Arabic or Syriac hagiography. Let me give an example, so to say, *pro domo sua*. Twenty two years ago, when I was finishing the first Russian version of my book on holy fools,¹⁹ several indispensable sources

(2012 [2013]), p. 199–220; Nicetas the Paphlagonian, *The life of Patriarch Ignatius*, ed. and trans. A. Smithies; with notes by J. M. Duffy, Washington, D.C., 2013; Ph. Demetrakopoulos, *Ανέκδοτη Ακολουθία τοῦ ὁσίου Δημητρίου τοῦ Κυθρέας*, in N. Orphanides (ed.), *Άγιος Δημητρίου ἐπίσκοπος Χύτρων*, Nicosia, 2014, p. 187–198; *La conversion de Gaza au christianisme. La Vie de saint Porphyre de Gaza par Marc le Diacre*, ed. et trad. A. Lampadaridi, Paris, 2016 etc.

¹⁵ N. Mirachvili-Springer, *Prostituées repenties et femmes travesties dans l'hagiographie Géorgienne*, Paris, 2014; L. Theis et al. (ed.), *Female founders in Byzantium and beyond*, Wien – Köln – Weimar, 2014; Ch. Angelidi, *The dreams of a woman: an episode from the Life of Andrew the Fool*, in *Myriobiblos*, p. 25–38; Г. Петрински, *Женският демон във византийската агиография (VI–X в.): Някои аспекти на един стереотипен образ*, in *Realia Byzantino-Balcanica. Сборник в чест на 60 годишнината на професор Христо Матанов*, София, 2014, p. 216–239; K. Nikolau, *Γυναικῶν ἐνὸπνια σε αἰολογικά κείμενα. Μία πρώτη προσέγγιση*, in T. G. Kolias et al. (ed.), *AUREUS. Volume dedicated to Professor Evangelos K. Chrysos*, Athena, 2014, p. 617–629; S. Constantinou, *Performing gender in lay saints' Lives*, in *BMGS*, 38 (2014), p. 24–32; L. Silvano, *Uccidere Afrodite: il motivo della "tentatrice" posseduta e uccisa nella letteratura bizantina (BHG 770, BHG 979, Digenis Akritas G)*, in L. Bombardieri et al. (ed.), *Il trono variopinto. Figure e forme della Dea dell'Amore*, Alessandria, 2014, p. 143–162 etc.

¹⁶ M. Hinterberger, *Between Simplification and Elaboration: Byzantine Metaphraseis Compared*, in J. Signes Codoñer, I. Pérez Martín (ed.), *Textual Transmission in Byzantium: Between Textual Criticism and Quellenforschung*, Turnhout, 2014, p. 33–60; D. D. Resh, *Toward a Byzantine Definition of Metaphrasis*, in *GRBS*, 55 (2015), p. 754–787.

¹⁷ К. Кекелидзе, *Иоанн Ксифилин, продолжатель Симеона Метафраста*, in *Христианский Восток*, 1/3 (1912), p. 325–347.

¹⁸ Archive of the Russian Academy of Sciences, St. Petersburg Branch, fund 110, inventory 2, N21, f.19.

¹⁹ С. Иванов, *Византийское юродство*, Москва, 1994.

remained inaccessible to me, such as the Syriac Life of Simeon the Fool, an Old Georgian Life of a Mid-Byzantine saint Paul the Corinthian, and another Old Georgian Life, that of Theodore the Fool, this time Late-Byzantine, from Serres. Today, all these sources still remain unpublished! The situation with Armenian translated hagiography is slightly better: it is praiseworthy that the Armenian collections known as *Yaysmawurk*, after having appeared in *Patrologia Orientalis* with the French translation, began to be published with accompanying English version,²⁰ but it's a pity that nobody got seriously interested in this genre since 1982 when the only monograph appeared in Armenian.²¹

If we talk about cooperation of scholars working on different languages, we should admit that it leaves much to be desired. One more example: several years ago, working in the Historical Museum in Moscow with the Byzantine *Menaea* for December (Sin.156), I came across a long text, occupying the whole space of the margins of the folios 221–223 – it was written with Greek characters but in an unknown language; I made a scan and sent it to several Orientalists. Some of them supposed it is Old Armenian, others rejected the idea, but nobody even tried to decipher it or to do anything at all! I now use this podium to appeal to whoever may get interested in solving this puzzle.

I cannot but point as an example our colleagues from Slavic studies,²² who incessantly explore the vast domain of Slavonic literacy in search of Byzantine *vitae*, whose Greek originals had disappeared or which came down in translations from earlier Greek versions than those available to us; it's unfortunate that this inexhaustible source of new hagiographic material is not mentioned in the *Ashgate Companion*.

Yet, let's turn to the desiderata pertaining properly to Greek hagiographic sources. Nobody would contest that Constantine Akropolites remains the most unpublished hagiographer: at least twelve of his *encomia* are still waiting: these of Euplus of Catania (*BHG* 630p), George the Great Martyr (*BHG* 684a), Irene the Martyr (*BHG* 954d), John the Theologian (*BHG* 932c), Neophytos of Nicea (*BHG* 1326d), Nicephoros the Martyr (*BHG* 1334 d),

²⁰ *On This Day: The Armenian Church Synaxarion (Yaysmawurk')* – January, a parallel Armenian-English text, ed. E. G. Mathews Jr., Provo, UT, 2014; February, 2015.

²¹ M. Avdalbegyan, 'Yaysmawurk' zolovacunere ev nranc' patmagrakan arzek'e [Menologia Collections and their Historiographical Value], Erevan, 1982.

²² Cf. Д. Е. Афиногенов, *Новгородское переводное Четъе-минейное собрание: происхождение, состав, греческий оригинал*, in E. Maier, E. Weiher (ed.), *Abhandlungen zu den Grossen Lesemenn des Metropoliten Makarij. Kodikologische, miszellenologische und textologische Untersuchungen*, II, Freiburg i. Br., 2006 (= *Monumenta Linguae Slavicae dialecti veteris*, XLIX), p. 261–283; id., *Утраченные византийские источники в древнерусской словесности*, in *Slavica Slovaca*, 1 (2008), p. 29–44; *Славяно-русский Пролог по древнейшим спискам. Синаксарь (житийная часть Пролога краткой редакции) за сентябрь-февраль*, ed. Л. В. Прокопенко et al., I–II, Москва, 2010–2011 (with parallel Greek text); М. Петрова-Танева, *Неизвестен източник на Изборника от 1076 г.: една непозната славянска версия на Житието на св. Теодора Александрийска*, in *Старобългарска литература*, 47 (2013), p. 11–45; К. Иванова, И. Петров, *Неизследван превод на житието на една византийска императрица*, in *ibid.*, p. 121–147.

Panteleimon (*BHG* 1418b), Paraskeue the Great Martyr (*BHG* 1420x), Procopius of Caesarea (*BHG* 1582c), Sampson the Xenodochos (*BHG* 1615d), Theodotos of Ancyra (*BHG* 1783m). Especially unlucky is Epicharis the Matriona of Rome – both, her original (*BHG* 2123) martyrdom (contained in a Moscow manuscript Sin.178) and its reworking by Akropolites (*BHG* 2124) remain unpublished. Much could be expected from the unpublished fourth vita of Maximos Kausokalybites (*BHG* 1237c) or the Life of Hilarion of Dalmatas (*BHG* 2177), or the Neos Paradeisos (*BHG* 1450t), a later collection of 'spiritually beneficial tales', etc. And it is surprising that neither the charming novel about Xenophon and Maria with their two sons (*BHG* 1877u-y) nor the highly interesting Life of Onesimus Thaumaturus (*BHG* 2324), accessible to me in its Old Slavic version, have yet attracted the attention of any scholar.

Extremely praiseworthy is the long-awaited publication of the *Taktikon* by Nikon of the Black Mountain by Christian Hannick.²³ This huge collection contains a lot of hagiographic material, but another dearth remains hidden in the *Pandektae* by the same Nikon (I know it, once again, from its Slavic version), and nobody as yet dared to undertake its publication.

What also needs to be done – even more urgently – is critical editions of famous texts that are known to us only in their later recensions. The most glaring example thereof is the Life of Basil the Younger (*BHG* 263). It deserves a more thorough approach than one offered in the recent *Dumbarton Oaks* publication.²⁴ Of course, a critical edition would be a formidable task. Yet, a convincing hypothesis suggests that the oldest version is represented by the manuscript N107 of the Dionysiou monastery,²⁵ not the Moscow manuscript used in the *DO* edition. The Dionysiou version is much fuller as regards the tiny details of the everyday life or the Constantinopolitan topography. And the Slavic translation published a century ago reflects a Greek version that is very close to the Dionysiou manuscript. I will speak on this topic at the round table on translations. What Byzantine hagiography also badly needs is publication of the version M* of the Constantinopolitan Synaxarium, but we understand – taking into consideration the number of its copies – how enormous this task would be. Another desideratum would take cooperation with art historians: I mean a comparison of the representation of saints in menologia, with their correlative popularity measured by the number of manuscripts containing their Lives, and with the composition of calendar icons from Sinai and depictions of saints on numerous enamels, ivories and luxurious objects, such as the chalice of the Emperor Romanos from San Marco.²⁶ Enough of particular desiderata, let us turn to the main question I would like to pose.

²³ *Das Taktikon des Nikon vom Schwarzen Berge: griechischer Text und kirchenslavische Übersetzung des 14. Jahrhunderts*, I–II, ed. Ch. Hannick, Freiburg, 2014.

²⁴ *The Life of Saint Basil the Younger: Critical Edition and Annotated Translation of the Moscow Version*, ed. D. Sullivan, A.-M. Talbot, S. McGrath, Washington, D. C., 2014.

²⁵ Т. В. Пентковская, *Древнейший славянский перевод Жития Василия Нового и его греческий оригинал*, in *Византийский временник*, 63 [88] (2004), p. 114–128.

²⁶ D. Buckton et al. (ed.), *The Treasury of San Marco Venice*, London, 1984, p.133.

Now, when we have the *Asgate Companion* and can grasp at one glance the whole grandiose picture of Byzantine hagiography, let us ask the following question: why was this genre on decline, at least numerically, for nearly three centuries? For Stephanos Efthymiadis, it does not seem to constitute a problem: “The paucity of new saints did not encourage the writing of new biographies”.²⁷ But does the saint really precede his Life? In order to answer this question we need to look deep into the very concept of sainthood. For Efthymiadis and his collaborators, hagiography is “literature which in particular fashion celebrates the deeds and sayings of holy men and women”.²⁸ This definition, substantiated by Peter Brown’s influential concept of a ‘holy man’ as an important social figure, implies the existence of such persons as *phenomena*, not *noumena*. This is obvious when we speak of the characters which feature in ‘secular’ sources as well. But what about those about whom we only know from hagiography? Efthymiadis writes: “‘Marginal’ holy figures invited authors to try out an unconventional narrative in order to impress upon their listeners/readers a non-conventional model of holiness”.²⁹ This phrase implies that hagiographers observed the extravagant saints in real life and then habituated to them their audience. Such scheme could be applied to stylites or even repentant harlots but not to transvestites who were illegal, and even less to holy fools who were nothing but imaginative constructs. A holy fool cannot physically exist in principle because his very existence depends on the author’s assumption, unknown to other characters of the same story. He can only live inside the *vita*, since he stops being a saint if anybody around him suspects him to be one. Although holy fools constitute a pitiable minority in the host of saints, this paradox can tell us something about Byzantine saints in general. By the same token, I think, we should revise our vision of Byzantine court ceremonial, when we learn from the manual by Constantine Porphyrogenitus, that on some occasions, the highest dignitaries, ministers and generals were obliged to sing and dance around the emperor’s table.³⁰ How could they dance, mandarins as they were, adorned with bushy beards and garbed in their long heavy attires? But they did, and the whole universe of Byzantine ceremonial ceases to be so hopelessly petrified and stiff. The same with saints: if the respectable patriarchs and abbots were listed side by side with Symeon of Emesa, the very fabric of sainthood would appear to be less edificatory and didactic than it looks to us.

Sanctity is a strange institution. What comes first: a man, a cult or a text? None, I think. The initial impetus is a vague intimation, diffused in the atmosphere that sainthood somehow exists. Without this elusive feeling, hagiography cannot function. It is not by chance that the nameless nun from the Tabennisi monastery resembles Cinderella,³¹ since they both have their roots in the collective imagination where fairytales are born. Palladius

²⁷ S. Efthymiadis, *Introduction*, in *ARCBH*, I, p. 10.

²⁸ S. Efthymiadis, *Introduction*, p. 2.

²⁹ S. Efthymiadis, *Introduction*, in *ARCBH*, II, p. 10.

³⁰ Constantini Porphyrogeniti imperatoris *De cerimoniis aulae Byzantinae libri duo*, I, ed. J. J. Reiske, Bonn, 1829, p. 603.

³¹ On the performative origins of both *vita* and legend cf.: H. Powell, ‘Once upon a Time There Was a Saint...’: *Re-Evaluating Folklore in Anglo-Latin Hagiography*, in *Folklore*, 121/2 (2010), p. 171–189.

wrote down and other authors developed³² what already existed in the mental universe. Of course, a hagiographer could know his hero personally;³³ yet, to make a saint out of him, took an anagoge to something otherworldly. Of course, a hagiographic discourse has an element of story-telling,³⁴ but its performativity goes deeper than this. Even later, when there emerged Lives with lots of verifiable facts, their authors still relied on their own and their readers' 'sanctification fever'. This anticipation of sanctity, when active, was able to turn a biography of a purely historical figure into a fairytale: thus, not only the Life of the non-existent Nicholas of Myrrha was constructed with the help of fragments borrowed from the Life of Nicholas of Sion, a real bishop of the sixth century, but also vice versa – the latter was gradually endowed with the miracles worked by the former; there were no discursive or stylistic obstacles to such merging.

The anticipation of sanctity was about something larger than mere conventions of the genre. The world of Eastern Christianity, in contrast with its Western counterpart, was permeated with sanctity which was only waiting for an opportunity to be unleashed and to manifest itself, sometimes unexpectedly.³⁵ Within this framework it is possible to explain why we regard the 'spiritually beneficial tales' as part of hagiography, although in many of them there are no saintly or righteous characters at all: they, like hagiography as a whole, are about the presence of God somewhere here, not necessarily focused on a particular person. By the way, sometimes it is difficult for us to understand what is so 'beneficial' about them, and in this respect the Byzantine 'tales' are radically different from later Western 'exempla' which are overtly didactic. Yet, their detailed comparison remains a task for the future.

So, new saints were added to the cloud which existed inasmuch as people took it for granted that sainthood existed. Yet, one may wonder why the onslaught of Islam gave birth to such a minuscule number of new martyrs; this fact alone could put us on alert. The Iconoclasts were blamed for not venerating the saints, but the triumphant Iconodules were no more reverential: Patriarch Photius, for one, perceived Lives as mere sources of historical facts.³⁶ I suspect that the 'golden age' of Byzantine hagiography is in fact the period when the 'anticipation of sanctity' gradually began to wane. The slow process of loosening of the ties that linked each concrete saint to the 'root assemblage' of pristine martyrs and

³² S. A. Ivanov, *Holy Fools in Byzantium and Beyond*, Oxford, 2006, p. 51–62.

³³ Cf. M. Kaplan, *Le saint byzantin et son hagiographe, V^e–XII^e siècle. Esquisse*, in S. Kotzabassi et al. (ed.), *Myriobiblos. Essays on Byzantine Literature and Culture*, Berlin – New York, 2015, p. 169–185.

³⁴ C. Rapp, *Storytelling as Spiritual Communication in Early Greek Hagiography: The Use of Diegesis*, in *J ECS*, 6/3 (1998), p. 431; ead., 'For next to God, you are my salvation': reflections on the rise of the holy man in late antiquity, in J. Howard-Johnston, P. A. Hayward (ed.), *The cult of saints in late antiquity and the Middle Ages: essays on the contribution of Peter Brown*, Oxford – New York, 1999, p. 64–65.

³⁵ P. Brown, *Eastern and Western Christendom in Late Antiquity: A Parting of the Ways*, in id., *Society and the Holy in Late Antiquity*, Berkeley et al., 1982, p. 179–188.

³⁶ T. Hägg, *Photius as a Reader of Hagiography: Selection and Criticism*, in *DOP*, 53 (1999), p. 51.

anchorites led to a realization that hagiography is just texts as any other.³⁷ The hagiographic spell was vanishing, and new Lives could no more ‘take off’. This is why there were no saintly patriarchs between Euthymios and Arsenios, no saintly ascetics between Photios of Thessaly and Meletios the Younger, no martyrs between the Forty of Amorium and the Thirteen of Cyprus.

It is usually assumed that the arrangement of the Church calendar prevented the emergence of new saints; this theory implies that new saints did not appear because there were no more ‘space’ left for them. In my opinion, the opposite was the case: as spontaneous anticipation of sanctity was vanishing the Church sought to hold together with artificial measures the waning cultural and cult institution. The slowdown of the anticipation of sanctity had different consequences: on the one hand, the creation of new saints failed, and the authors more and more resorted to the good old ones, but on the other, hagiography becoming literature acquired new degrees of freedom, and in this respect I tend to agree with the recent assertion by Stratis Papaioannou that “[t]he supposed decline in hagiography during the 11th and 12th centuries is a fallacy”.³⁸ For example, when saintliness was regarded as a gift from birth or a matter of sudden transformation (for an example, from a harlot to a hermit), there was no point in gradual inner development. In the changed environment, hagiography could afford to be psychological, like some parts of the Lives of Leontius of Jerusalem³⁹ or Sabbas the Younger.⁴⁰ One could interweave autobiographical threads into a saint’s Life. To the already established list of such boastful hagiographers⁴¹ I would add Theophylakt, Archbishop of Ohrid who also inserts autobiographical details into his Vita of Clement of Ohrid (*BHG* 355). He ascribes to his hero, a Slav by birth, a condescending, contemptuous attitude towards his Bulgarian flock, which Theophylakt, a Constantinopolitan intellectual, definitely felt himself.⁴²

Another method to deal with the crisis of hagiographic habit was versification. Epigrams in ancient meters dedicated to saints occurred in previous centuries as well, but after the Metaphrastic reform they became much more numerous. The acknowledged champion of versified hagiography is Christophoros of Mytilene: no poetic collection on saints for every day ever reached such all-incusiveness as his; it is not by chance that he was called by

³⁷ Cf.: P. Magdalino, ‘What we heard in the Lives of the saints we have seen with our own eyes’: the Holy Man as Literary Text in Tenth-century Constantinople, in J. Howard-Johnston, P. A. Hayward (ed.), *The Cult of Saints in Christianity and Islam: Essays on the Contribution of Peter Brown*, Oxford, 1999, p. 83–112.

³⁸ S. Papaioannou, *Voice, Signature, Mask: The Byzantine Author*, in A. Pizzone (ed.), *The Author in Middle Byzantine Literature* (BA, 28), Berlin – Boston, 2014, p. 21–49, esp. 39.

³⁹ *The Life of Leontios the Patriarch of Jerusalem*, ed. D. Tsugarakis, New York – Köln, 1993, cap. 9.10–19.

⁴⁰ Φιλόθεος Κόκκινος, *Βίος Αγίου Σάββα του Νέου*, ed. Δ. Τσάμης, Θεσσαλονίκη, 1985, p. 77–82.

⁴¹ M. Hinterberger, *Autobiographische Traditionen in Byzanz*, Wien, 1999, p. 230–238.

⁴² S. Ivanov, *Pearls before swine*, Paris, 2015, p. 154–155.

Enrica Follieri “un bollandista ante litteram” (1983). The acclaim got by his hagiographic poetry also was unprecedented: Christophoros’ dodecasyllabic two-liners and hexametric monostichs were inserted into the recension M* of the Constantinopolitan Synaxarium,⁴³ and even gave the name of its Slavic version – *Стишной Пролог*⁴⁴ – which survived in two translations and no less than 700 manuscripts. I suspect that Christophoros himself would have been surprised at such a success, especially since the collection of his secular poems survived in one damaged copy. This success is due to some kind of erosion of genre boundaries, and the latter also testifies to the crisis of hagiographic habit. Literariness removed hagiography from its naive primordial roots, and it is no mere coincidence that Christophoros in his famous epigram venomously mocks a simple-hearted collector of saints’ relics. The case of Christophoros is well known, but nobody as yet paid special attention to the fact that the family M* of the Constantinopolitan Synaxarium also includes three long dodecasyllabic poems dedicated to female transvestite saints: Theodora of Alexandria (under the 11th of September), Euphrosyne (under the 25th of September) and Eugenia (under the 24th of December).⁴⁵ Probably, they were taken from an otherwise unknown special thematic collection consecrated exclusively to this type of extravagant and, in fact, uncanonical sainthood.⁴⁶ I suspect that classicizing form drained out unorthodox content – these poems became possible exactly because after Euphrosyne the Younger who died around 925 (*BHG* 627) we hear of not a single real transvestite saint in Byzantium.

So, one could compensate for the demise of hagiographic habit by compiling menologia, by composing verse, by writing autobiographical or psychological prose – but what if you wanted to be a traditional hagiographer, classical style? Then you were doomed to doubt and hesitation.

It was already established in Byzantine studies⁴⁷ that the Byzantines were not as credulous as they had been reputed to be, and that skepticism was not spread exclusively among the fastidious intellectuals but also among hagiographic characters as well. Anthony Kaldellis wrote that “the ultimate sceptic [is] the (Christian) reader himself”.⁴⁸ Yet, it seems that the *ultimate* sceptic is the Christian author. The vehement defense of saints and their veneration by such writers as Niketas Stethatos, John the Deacon or Theophylact of Ohrid has more to do with their own doubts than it seeks to persuade the elitist sceptics like John Italos.

⁴³ S. A. Paschalidis, *The Hagiography of the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries*, p. 145–146.

⁴⁴ L. R. Cresci, *Διά βραχέων ἐπέων (K83.2): Stratégies de composition dans les calendriers métriques de Christophore Mitylenaios*, in F. Bernard, K. Demoen (ed.), *Poetry and its Contexts in Eleventh-century Byzantium*, Farnham, 2012, p. 116.

⁴⁵ Cf., e.g., Cod. Mosquensis Synod., N 369, fl. 41v; 75v; N 390, f. 147r.

⁴⁶ Cf.: Michaelis Pselli *orationes forenses et acta*, ed. G. T. Dennis, Stuttgart, 1994, p. 43.

⁴⁷ G. Dagron, *L'ombre d'un doute: l'hagiographie en question, VI^e–XI^e siècles*, in *DOP*, 46 (1992), p. 59–68; A. Kaldellis, *The Hagiography of Doubt and Scepticism*, in *ARCBH*, II, p. 453–477.

⁴⁸ A. Kaldellis, *The Hagiography of Doubt and Scepticism*, p. 463.

Let's look at the already mentioned *Taktikon* compiled by Nikon of the Black Mountain at the end of the eleventh century. Since this is a freshly published hagiographic material, I take the liberty of retelling and quoting it more extensively. Throughout his huge book Nikon is constantly concerned with the criteria of sainthood. Time and again does he tell stories which could develop into full-fledged Lives were they told from a different viewpoint. For example, a fresh grave mound appears before the gates of Antioch over a night, and begins to work miracles; the stream of people with ailing relatives is growing every day, and everybody believes that this is a grave of a great saint who forbade his disciples to identify him, out of humility. But Nikon tells this story differently: the reader learns from the very beginning that this is the grave of a dissolute monk who betrayed his vow, escaped from his monastery to Antioch with his lover, died suddenly in front of the closed city gates and was dug in, hastily, without a funeral, by this woman, who, later, was herself appalled by this unexpected and undeserved flow of healings. Finally, she makes a confession to a monk who, then, secretly, under cover of the night, digs the corpse out and throws it into Orontes.⁴⁹ So, even miracles do not constitute a proof of sanctity. Nikon's example shows us that the demise of the hagiographic habit was not a solely Constantinopolitan phenomenon.

Especially painstaking for our author is the problem of holy fools. On many cases he demonstrates that what could look like an exemplary vita is in fact a story of artless debauchery.⁵⁰ Yet, even when the spiritual father of Nikon, metropolitan Lukas of Anazarbos, himself tells him the story of his own experiments with holy foolery, the would-be Vita shows its seamy side. "I decided not to leave it to oblivion, but wrote down everything in detail, to the best of my ability ... with eagerness and even more, with fear. ... I wrote down what I heard from the person who did all this, and everything that I saw myself, in all truthfulness ... for my own and others' benefit ... Having caught the attention of the eminent monks of our convent, I read all of these to each of them separately, and they ... rejected the story. ... Later I myself realized clearly ... that ... it leads to the detriment. I did not embrace the idea to conceal the truth and to write down the lie. Instead, I burnt down all my composition".⁵¹

From another letter of Nikon we learn that the attempt to create the Vita of Lukas of Anazarbos was not the only failed hagiographical project: "I wrote the Lives and Deeds of some contemporary persons who appeared in our time, some of them were of perfect virtue, in others their virtues were mixed with falls. I dedicated my work to the living generation. When I accomplished my work, I checked it – and it did not work... So, I burnt the whole book and did not pity my effort, but rather I decided to concentrate on the lives of ancient fathers, whose sanctity was tested and obvious".⁵²

⁴⁹ *Das Taktikon des Nikon vom Schwarzen Berge: griechischer Text und kirchenslavische Übersetzung des 14. Jahrhunderts*, p. 960.

⁵⁰ *Das Taktikon des Nikon*, p. 958.

⁵¹ *Das Taktikon des Nikon*, p. 796–798.

⁵² *Das Taktikon des Nikon*, p. 980–982.

Finally, Nikon began feeling nothing but irritation when young hagiographers turned to him for approval: “Some people (I do not know how) composed the vitae of persons whose life is known to me, as well as their way of thinking... But those writers did not know the circumstances, and they recklessly described all deeds as (manifestations of) virtue. And later – I do not even know how to say it, they brought these writings to me. I read, I understood, I was struck; moreover, I was frightened and I returned this vita to the author. That’s the way it is... ”.⁵³

Even when Nikon tries to tell a purely stereotyped story of an elder tempted by a lecherous woman, the narrative somehow breaks out of the tenets of genre and the hagiographic enchantment is disrupted: at the moment when a connoisseur of pious stories is already prepared to read about a burnt hand or a gouged out eye, the monk and the woman begin discussing, in some details, the problems with his erection. For the second time the cliché of genre is explodes when the woman, disappointed in the elder, instead of going to the recluse or, vice versa, vanishing in the cloud of foul smoke, simply finds a secular man and happily unites with him.⁵⁴ Unsophisticated as he is, Nikon of the Black Mountain looks in such stories like a Quentin Tarantino of Byzantine hagiography.

So, what happened to the Byzantine perception of sainthood? Why did it disappear in the Macedonian period and, even more mysteriously, reemerged under the Paleologoi? This is a problem that, in my opinion, deserves scholarly attention in the future.

⁵³ *Das Taktikon des Nikon*, p. 796.

⁵⁴ *Das Taktikon des Nikon*, p. 800.

Entre innovation et tradition: hagiographie nouvelle et saints anciens (VIII^e–X^e s.)

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Les changements profonds qui touchent le monde médiobyzantin se manifestent aussi dans l'hagiographie et les nouveautés qu'ils provoquent sont plus faciles aujourd'hui à mettre en évidence. Nous bénéficions en effet de monographies nombreuses ainsi que de premières synthèses qui aident à embrasser d'un coup d'œil la production hagiographique des époques tardo-antique et médiévale et de mesurer l'ampleur et la nature des mutations qui, depuis la fin du VII^e siècle jusqu'à celle du X^e, affectent ce domaine.¹

Dans un ensemble si vaste, on peut être tenté, dans la recherche de la nouveauté, de privilégier l'hagiographie que j'appellerai d'actualité, c'est-à-dire celle où l'hagiographe et le saint qu'il célèbre sont contemporains ou presque. La période médiévale n'en manque pas et ces Vies, nouvelles par leur objet, sont révélatrices des changements qui touchent la conception de la sainteté ou l'hagiographie elle-même, comme l'a bien montré il y a trente ans L. Rydén au congrès de Washington.² Mais si intéressantes qu'elles soient, elles ne représentent qu'une part de l'ensemble des textes hagiographiques qu'on a écrits ou lus à Byzance, en particulier pendant l'âge d'or qui s'étend du rétablissement des images à la fin du X^e siècle. Je me concentrerai ici sur les textes qui se réfèrent aux saints du passé, installés de longue date dans le Ciel byzantin: les *παλαιοὶ ἄγιοι*, que tous vénèrent, et auxquels les nouveaux saints ont quelque peine à se joindre, comme le montre Antonio Rigo. Leur étude me paraît de nature à faire mieux connaître les courants qui parcourent le champ d'une certaine hagiographie qu'on peut dire rétrospective: celle en particulier, plus officielle, qui se développe autour du Palais et de la Grande Église. Il m'a semblé important aussi d'être attentif aux conditions concrètes dans lesquelles les Byzantins avaient accès aux textes hagiographiques. On peut bien sûr privilégier l'étude d'une œuvre particulière, mais, comme nous le savons, ces textes sont très souvent transmis dans des manuscrits regroupant de nombreuses œuvres de même nature. L'existence de ces collections ne doit pas être perdue de vue. Enfin, il convient de ne pas couper les textes de leur fonction dans la société qui les produit, les lit ou les écoute, et il faut donc tenir compte, pour l'hagiographie,

¹ Voir *ARCBH*, I–II.

² L. Rydén, *New Forms of Hagiography: Heroes and Saints*, in *The 17th International Byzantine Congress. Major Papers. Dumbarton Oaks/Georgetown University Washington, D.C., August 3–8, 1986*, New York, 1986, p. 537–554.

de sa relation avec le culte des saints, même si cette relation ne doit pas être tenue pour une donnée constante mais traitée comme une variable.

Déterminer ce qui change dans une production littéraire diverse n'est pas chose aisée, et, pour le monde byzantin, ou du moins pour sa littérature, nous devons être sensibles en même temps à deux phénomènes apparemment antagonistes: d'une part, les innovations, qui, comme nous verrons, ne manquent pas; d'autre part une forme de fidélité à la tradition et de retour vers un passé qu'on idéalise. La production littéraire – et la littérature religieuse plus qu'une autre – loin de privilégier la nouveauté, semble en effet souvent la fuir et aspirer à atteindre une dimension intemporelle. C'est pourquoi, plutôt que de chercher à isoler des nouveautés, il m'a paru pertinent d'étudier la relation qui s'établit entre l'innovation et la tradition.

I. Centraliser, conserver, restaurer: l'hagiographie constantinopolitaine

1. Un sanctoral œcuménique

Si l'on considère l'histoire des textes hagiographiques, la mutation fondamentale est celle qui marque le sanctoral constantinopolitain au début des siècles obscurs. Elle a été mise en évidence par Albert Ehrhard, qui a souligné l'importance qu'avait eue, vers la fin du VII^e s., la constitution d'un calendrier visant à regrouper les saints célébrés jusque là dans des Églises locales ou dans les patriarcats autres que celui de la capitale.³ Ehrhard, à ce propos, parle de la dimension œcuménique du nouveau calendrier.⁴ Il y voit le résultat de la situation créée par l'occupation arabe, qui détache de l'Empire les trois patriarcats orientaux d'Alexandrie, Antioche et Jérusalem, et par l'éloignement progressif de Constantinople par rapport aux Églises latines. Ehrhard propose même de situer la transformation et l'expansion du calendrier qui accompagnent ainsi la naissance d'une Église proprement byzantine dans l'atmosphère du concile *In Trullo*,⁵ ce qui fournit en tout cas une approximation commode et significative.

Le calendrier, avec son sanctoral, est une chose, l'hagiographie une autre mais Ehrhard fait une autre observation importante. C'est peu après l'apparition du calendrier byzantin sous les diverses formes qu'il distingue que naissent également les collections de textes hagiographiques et homilétiques sous la forme qu'elles auront jusqu'à la fin de l'époque byzantine. Et ces collections, pour leur structure, reposent sur le nouveau calendrier.⁶ Nous voyons dès lors clairement une mutation qui oppose l'hagiographie tardo-antique et

³ Ehrhard, I, p. 28–35; voir aussi C. Hogel, *Symeon Metaphrastes. Rewriting and canonization*, Copenhagen, 2002, p. 36–51.

⁴ Ehrhard écartant l'idée que ce calendrier puisse être le développement d'un calendrier local, lui reconnaît dès l'origine « einen allgemeinkirchlichen (ökumenischen) Charakter »: Ehrhard, I, p. 28.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 33.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 152–153.

celle de l'époque médiobyzantine: l'apparition de ces collections nouvelles, en particulier ménologiques, qui réunissent, dans l'ordre du calendrier, un grand nombre de textes surtout anciens, parfois presque pour chaque jour du mois. Il est probable que, pour les composer, et pour répondre aux exigences qu'imposait le développement du sanctoral, les rédacteurs ont dû réunir une documentation dispersée et hétérogène. Et pour la fonction des textes hagiographiques, on peut reprendre la conclusion qu'inspire à Ehrhard l'adaptation des collections au calendrier: le point de vue selon lequel les collections hagiographiques ont été organisées est « klipp und klar der liturgische ». ⁷ Même si chacun des termes demanderait à être précisé, la relation entre hagiographie et liturgie est fondamentale.

Elle n'est pas exclusive. À côté des collections dans l'ordre du calendrier, Ehrhard, partant de l'analyse des témoins manuscrits les plus anciens, met en évidence l'existence de deux autres principes d'organisation, beaucoup moins bien représentés: un principe topographique, avec par exemple des textes uniquement palestiniens; et un principe thématique. ⁸ La prédominance de l'usage liturgique, qui s'impose à la fin du VII^e s., n'exclut donc pas d'autres usages possibles.

Structure nouvelle des collections, fonction liturgique de l'hagiographie. À ces deux premiers résultats, l'enquête d'Albert Ehrhard sur les premiers témoins des collections médiévales permet d'en ajouter un troisième, indicatif lui aussi d'une nouveauté. Il s'agit du statut de l'hagiographie. On peut prendre ici l'exemple d'un manuscrit qu'Ehrhard date de la fin du VIII^e siècle. Je ne reviendrai pas sur l'incertitude de telles datations, que j'accepte ici par commodité. Ce serait, d'après Ehrhard, le plus ancien témoin d'une collection ménologique, écrit sur deux colonnes de 39 lignes chacune, évidemment en onciale, sur des folios de parchemin de grand format (40x25 cm). ⁹ D'autres fragments de manuscrits hagiographiques de grandes dimensions remontent sans doute plus haut dans le VIII^e siècle, montrant que ce type de livres est antérieur au concile de Nicée. ¹⁰ Leur aspect solennel est frappant. Il s'agit de lectionnaires, conçus pour une lecture à haute voix devant une communauté, et auxquels on a souhaité conférer un aspect imposant. On pourra comparer le manuscrit de Cambridge au *Sin. gr.* 493, qui contient une collection non-ménologique, dont le principe d'organisation est topographique, puisqu'il rassemble des textes palestiniens. Le format de ce manuscrit en onciale datable du VIII^e-IX^e s. est la moitié de celui du lectionnaire de Cambridge. ¹¹

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 152.

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ Cambridge, Bibl. Univ., add. 4489; cf. Ehrhard I, p. 98-100.

¹⁰ Par ex., le *Vat. gr.* 2302, dont l'écriture inf. serait datable du VII^e-VIII^e s., a pour format 35x25 cm. (voir Ehrhard I, p. 76-77); l'*Ambr. gr.* 358 (F 106 sup.), datable du VIII^e s., 40x26 cm. (*ibid.*, p. 77).

¹¹ Ehrhard I, p. 146-148, indique pour format 24x17,3 cm.

Ces remarques montrent bien qu'avec les nouvelles collections, les textes hagiographiques ont acquis un statut élevé au moins dans certains milieux. On peut penser que cette évolution s'est affirmée au cours du VIII^e siècle. Elle se révèle pleinement avec le concile de Nicée, où certains de ces textes, comme on sait, sont invoqués pour la première fois dans un concile général pour appuyer l'orthodoxie qu'on souhaite établir ou rétablir et pour contrebalancer l'argumentaire iconoclaste.¹² Cet usage des textes hagiographiques fait date. Il est, selon nous, rendu possible par l'évolution qu'on constate durant le siècle précédant le concile, époque à laquelle la sacralité de ces textes s'affirme avec netteté.

2. *L'hagiographie liturgique*

Le respect porté aux textes hagiographiques anciens n'est pas exclusif d'une évolution ni d'une adaptation aux fonctions nouvelles qu'on leur attribue. L'accroissement du sanctoral, avec la commémoration quotidienne d'un ou de plusieurs saints, semble, dans des conditions encore mal connues, avoir provoqué la naissance de textes courts, mieux adaptés à une lecture rapide dans un office qu'il ne fallait pas allonger, sauf circonstance exceptionnelle. C'est à cet usage que peut avoir répondu la rédaction de nombreux abrégés des Passions ou des Vies des saints. C'est du moins l'hypothèse vraisemblable qu'ont énoncée indépendamment l'un de l'autre H. Delehaye et H. Usener et qu'a illustrée Enrica Follieri.¹³

Les premiers témoins sont assez précoces. Le ménologe de Cambridge dont nous avons parlé tout à l'heure, et qu'Ehrhard date de la fin du VIII^e siècle, contient encore les restes de quatorze textes hagiographiques pour les mois de mai, juin et juillet. Pour deux au moins de ces textes, nous avons affaire à des Passions abrégées:¹⁴ l'*hypothésis syntomos* en l'honneur de Justin martyr au 1^{er} juin,¹⁵ et celle qui est consacrée aux saints Théophane et Pansemnè au 5 juin.¹⁶ Mais le témoin le plus précieux de l'existence et de l'usage des abrégés est le protosynaxaire transmis par le *Patmiacus* 266, dont Andrea Luzzi a bien montré la nature.¹⁷ Ce manuscrit est un témoin important de ce qu'il est convenu d'appeler le *Typikon*

¹² P. Van den Ven, *La patristique et l'hagiographie au concile de Nicée II de 787*, in *Byzantion*, 25/27 (1955/57), p. 346–355.

¹³ H. Delehaye, *Le Synaxaire de Sirmond*, in *AB*, 14 (1895), p. 409–411; H. Usener, *Der heilige Tychon*, Leipzig – Berlin, 1907, p. 5, à propos du *Paris. gr.* 1488, qui contient plusieurs abrégés, suppose que ceux-ci sont adaptés à l'usage liturgique, alors que les Vies longues correspondent à une lecture édifiante « dans la cellule ou au réfectoire »; E. Follieri, *L'epitome della Passio greca di Sisto, Lorenzo ed Ippolito BHG 977 D. Storia di un testo dal menologio al Sinassario*, in *Byzance. Hommage à André N. Stratos*, II, Athènes, 1986, p. 399–423.

¹⁴ Ehrhard suppose aussi que la Vie de Constantin et d'Hélène qu'on lit dans ce manuscrit pour le 21 mai est un abrégé (de la Vie *BHG* 364?).

¹⁵ Il s'agit de l'épitomè *BHG* 974^e.

¹⁶ *BHG* 2448; pour la Passion développée, voir *BHG* 2447.

¹⁷ A. Luzzi, *Precisazioni sull'epoca di formazione del Sinassario di Costantinopoli*, in *RSBN* n. s., 36 (1999), p. 75–91.

de la Grande Église et son contenu est datable aux alentours de 900.¹⁸ Pour chaque jour ou presque, il consacre au saint commémoré une notice qui, très souvent, comprend l'incipit développé de ce qu'on peut identifier comme des Passions ou des Vies abrégées. Il révèle ainsi l'existence et l'usage de ces abrégés, dont on trouve par ailleurs des collections dans certains manuscrits comme l'*Athen. gr.* 2108 ou le *Vindob. hist. gr.* 45.¹⁹ On doit tenir compte de cette forme particulière de réécriture, souvent négligée,²⁰ qui a permis à l'hagiographie médiévale de s'adapter à l'usage liturgique contemporain.

Le terme de l'évolution est bien connu. À l'instigation de Constantin VII, vers 950, le diacre et *chartophylax* Évariste compose pour les saints de l'année, dans l'ordre du calendrier, une série de notices qui, très vite, sont adoptées pour l'usage liturgique comme en témoignent trois témoins de cette recension: le manuscrit Sainte-Croix 40 de Jérusalem, le *Sin. gr.* 548 et le *Paris. gr.* 1587.²¹ Nous arrivons ainsi à la forme classique du Synaxaire de Constantinople, qui connaîtra ensuite l'évolution décrite, pour ses grands traits, par H. Delehaye dans la préface de son édition classique et mieux connue aujourd'hui grâce aux travaux d'Andrea Luzzi.²² La préface qu'Évariste avait mise en tête de son grand recueil est précieuse à plus d'un titre.²³ Elle décrit son projet et la part que l'empereur Constantin VII y a prise. Elle fait de lui aussi, comme j'essaierai de le montrer plus loin, un représentant

¹⁸ A. Luzzi, *Synaxaria and the Synaxarion of Constantinople*, in *ARCBH*, II, p. 200–201.

¹⁹ Pour ces manuscrits, voir F. Halkin, *Catalogue des manuscrits hagiographiques de la Bibliothèque nationale d'Athènes* (SH, 66), Bruxelles, 1983, p. 120; H. Hunger, *Katalog der griechischen Handschriften der Österreichischen Nationalbibliothek*, I, *Codices historici, codices philosophici et philologici*, p. 50–54; le rapport entre les notices de P et les Passions abrégées a été signalée par E. Follieri, qui a identifié des modèles dans le *Vindob. hist. gr.* 45: E. Follieri, *L'epitome della Passio greca di Sisto, Lorenzo ed Ippolito BHG 977d. Storia di un testo dal Menologio al Sinassario*, in *Βυζάντιον. Αφιέρωμα στὸν Α. Ν. Στράτο*, II, Athènes, 1986, p. 399–423.

²⁰ M. Detoraki, *Un parent pauvre de la réécriture hagiographique: l'abrégé*, in S. Marjanović-Dušanić, B. Flusin (ed.), *Remanier, métaphraser. Fonctions et techniques de la réécriture dans le monde byzantin*, Belgrade, 2011, p. 71–83.

²¹ J. Noret, *Un nouveau manuscrit important pour l'histoire du Synaxaire*, in *AB*, 87 (1969), p. 90; A. Luzzi, *Note sulla recensione del Sinassario di Costantinopoli patrocinata da Costantino VII Porfirogenito*, in *RSBN* n. s., 26 (1989) p. 139–186 (= id., *Studi sul Sinassario di Costantinopoli*, p. 5–90); id., *Synaxaria and the Synaxarion of Constantinople*, in *ARCBH*, II, p. 200–201.

²² H. Delehaye, *Synaxarium Ecclesiae Constantinopolitanae e codice Sirmondiano, nunc Berolinensi adiectis synaxariis selectis*, Bruxelles, 1902 (Propylaeum ad Acta Sanctorum Novembris), en particulier col. LI–LX; A. Luzzi, *Studi sul Sinassario di Costantinopoli* (Testi e Studi Bizantino-Neellenici, 8), Roma, 1995; *Precisazioni sull'epoca di formazione del Sinassario di Costantinopoli*, in *RSBN* n. s., 36 (1999), p. 75–91; *Osservazioni sull'introduzione nel Sinassario Costantinopolitano della commemorazione degli asceti di Teodoro di Ciro*, in *RSBN*, 45 (2008), p. 179–190.

²³ *Synax. CP*, col. XIII–XIV; pour la version arabe, voir J.-M. Sauget, *Premières recherches sur l'origine et les caractéristiques des Synaxaires melkites (XI^e–XVII^e siècles)* (SH, 45), Bruxelles, 1969, p. 32.

éminent de la nouvelle hagiographie qui s'impose au milieu du X^e siècle après plus d'un siècle d'une évolution dont je voudrais maintenant décrire certains aspects.

II. L'hagiographie nouvelle: conservatisme et critique

L'hagiographie, aux IX^e et X^e siècles, évolue en effet dans son contenu. Elle le fait sous l'action de forces contraires. D'un côté, il paraît important de respecter les textes anciens, qui appartiennent à la tradition, mais dans un autre sens, les critiques qui se développent contre le culte des saints et contre certains textes hagiographiques conduisent à les retoucher parfois profondément.

Le statut nouveau des textes hagiographiques dans la vie de l'Église orthodoxe après Nicée II ne doit pas faire conclure en effet qu'un consensus ait été fermement établi. Gilbert Dagron, dans un bel article intitulé « L'ombre d'un doute », a montré que le culte des saints pouvait susciter des interrogations.²⁴ Plus récemment, Anthony Kaldellis a souligné le fait que, dans beaucoup d'œuvres hagiographiques, on trouvait le témoignage du scepticisme qui pouvait régner dans une partie de l'opinion publique à Byzance.²⁵ Nous savons par ailleurs que, lors de la première période iconoclaste, les partisans des images ont pu reprocher à leurs adversaires leur attitude vis-à-vis de ce culte ou de ses instruments: non seulement les images, mais aussi les reliques²⁶ et, d'une façon générale, chacun a présente à l'esprit telle anecdote qui reflète la répugnance réelle ou supposée des iconoclastes vis-à-vis de l'emploi de l'adjectif ἄγιος à propos d'un homme.²⁷ De telles réticences n'étaient sans doute pas limitées aux milieux iconoclastes et n'ont pas disparu après l'établissement de l'orthodoxie des images.

I. Contestation ancienne

Il s'agit là du culte des saints. Mais l'hagiographie ancienne elle-même, liée à ce culte, a fait elle aussi l'objet de critiques, attestées dès le VI^e siècle. C'est le cas par exemple du *Martyre des saints Cyrice et Julitte*, qui, sous sa forme ancienne,²⁸ est condamné en Occident comme on le voit dans le décret du Ps.-Gélase,²⁹ tandis qu'en Orient, il suscite l'indignation de

²⁴ G. Dagron, *L'ombre d'un doute: l'hagiographie en question*, in *DOP*, 46 (1992), p. 59–68.

²⁵ A. Kaldellis, *The Hagiography of Doubt and Scepticism*, in *ARCBH*, II, p. 453–478.

²⁶ Voir J. Wortley, *Iconoclasm and Leipsanoclasm: Leo III, Constantine V and the relics*, in id., *Studies on the cult of relics in Byzantium up to 1204*, Farnham, 2009, n° VII.

²⁷ Cf. *La Vie d'Étienne le Jeune par Étienne le Diacre*, ed. M.-F. Auzépy (BBOM, 3), Aldeshot, 1997, p. 144, l. 24–28.

²⁸ C'est la forme qui reste inédite en grec (BHG 313y et 313z), mais qu'on peut lire dans son ancienne traduction latine (AASS Junii III, p. 28–33).

²⁹ M. Detoraki, *Livres censurés: le cas de l'hagiographie byzantine*, in *Bulgaria Mediaevalis*, 3 (2012), p. 45–58.

l'évêque Théodore d'Iconium, qui y voit un écrit hérétique ou manichéen, et compose des Actes nouveaux.³⁰ Le concile *In Trullo*, dans son soixante-troisième canon, interdit la lecture publique dans les églises des faux actes des martyrs (συνπλασθέντα μαρτυρολόγια), sans préciser lesquels, et jette l'anathème sur ceux qui les tiennent pour vrais.³¹ Pour confectionner les nouveaux recueils, on semble avoir parfois évité certains textes: dans les témoins anciens examinés par Ehrhard, la *Passion de S. Georges*, condamnée par le Ps.-Gélase, figure souvent sous sa forme ancienne, le Volksbuch de Krumbacher,³² mais déjà, dans un manuscrit du VIII^e siècle peut-être qui contenait une collection pour l'année, on trouve la forme remaniée que ce savant appelle le Normaltext, plus facilement acceptable.³³

Le statut des textes hagiographiques, avant Nicée, fait donc l'objet de discussions. Il faut tenir compte d'une contestation, d'une critique, voire d'une censure, et d'une souplesse aussi dans l'utilisation, qui conduit à traiter assez librement les textes anciens ou certains d'entre eux.

2. Réaction et restauration

L'usage de l'hagiographie à Nicée, le fait aussi que les iconoclastes aient pu être accusés de rejeter le culte des saints provoquent, après Nicée, une réaction qui est sensible en particulier si l'on étudie, comme l'a fait Stéphanos Efthymiadis, l'action de l'organisateur du concile de Nicée, le patriarche Tarasios. Selon son biographe Ignace le Diacre, Tarasios aurait composé de nombreux éloges des saints, qu'Ignace avait lui-même pris en note et recopiés,³⁴ et c'est dans l'entourage aussi de Tarasios qu'on peut situer l'activité de Jean de Sardes, auquel nous devons deux œuvres hagiographiques sur des martyrs anciens, qui, dans les manuscrits,

³⁰ Théodore d'Iconium, *epistula BHG* 315; id., *Passio SS. Ciryçi et Iulittae BHG* 314, ed. G. Van Hooff, in *AB*, 1 (1882), p. 194–200.

³¹ Voir, avec les commentaires de Zonaras et de Balsamon, Rhalli-Potli, II, p. 452.

³² Le petit format du *Vindob. lat.* 954 (dont l'écriture inférieure, grecque, est datable des V^e–VI^e s.: cf. Ehrhard, I, p. 72) et sa surface écrite, très modeste, conduisent à penser qu'il s'agit d'un livret: il contenait la Passion de S. Georges sous sa forme ancienne (le Volksbuch de Krumbacher) et sans doute seulement ce texte. Le manuscrit d'Oxford, Bodl. MS Greek Th. Fol. 6, du VII^e s. (Ehrhard I, p. 72–73) autre témoin ancien du Volksbuch, était aussi un livret de petit format. Pour les diverses formes de la Passion de S. Georges, voir K. Krumbacher, *Der heilige Georg in der griechischen Überlieferung*, in *Abhandlungen der K. Bayerischen Akademie der Wiss.*, 25/3 (1911), p. 1–58.

³³ Martyre de S. Georges; Ehrhard a montré que le ms. Dionysiou 582, un petit fragment datable du VIII^e s. et transmettant la Passion de S. Georges sous sa forme normalisée (« Normaltext » de Krumbacher) appartenait vraisemblablement à une collection pour l'année. Dans un autre témoin d'une collection hagiographique du IX^e s., on trouve aussi le Volksbuch, mais sous une forme abrégée et assagie: voir P. Canart, *La collection hagiographique palimpseste du Palatinus graecus 205 et la Passion de S. Georges BHG 670g*.

³⁴ Ignace le Diacre, *Vie du patriarche Tarasios*, § 69 *The Life of the Patriarch Tarasios by Ignatios the Diacon*, ed. S. Efthymiadis (BBOM, 4), Aldershot, 1998, p. 168.

portent le titre de métaphore.³⁵ Cette activité met en lumière deux tendances importantes: la première est l'intérêt qu'on porte à l'hagiographie tandis que le patriarcat travaille à restaurer le culte des saints, et la seconde, qu'écrire ou réécrire des textes hagiographiques est ou peut être l'œuvre des lettrés.

Tarasios et Jean de Sardes produisent des textes nouveaux en l'honneur de saints anciens. À la même époque ou peu après, un autre défenseur de l'orthodoxie, Théodore Studite, fait de même et prend soin, dans une lettre, d'exposer à son correspondant qui se demandait quelle valeur accorder à une Passion sans nom d'auteur, comment il convient d'envisager les œuvres hagiographiques anciennes ou nouvelles: « Presque toutes les Passions (τὰ μαρτυρογράφα) sont dépourvues d'un nom d'auteur. Cependant, elles sont sûres, et c'est d'elles que partent les docteurs pour composer les éloges des martyrs ». ³⁶ Une place est faite, donc, aux compositions nouvelles, mais l'autorité des textes anciens est affirmée: ils sont « sûrs, βέβαια ».

3. Conserver et expliquer: Méthode à Rome

On peut comparer l'attitude de Théodore Studite à celle d'un contemporain plus jeune, Méthode, le futur patriarche de Constantinople. Son œuvre hagiographique est importante et il consacre à des saints de son époque, comme Théophane ou Euthyme de Sardes, des Vies nouvelles et, peut-on dire, modernes, qu'il rédige dans une langue de haut niveau, caractéristique du renouveau culturel qui marque le monde byzantin autour de l'an 800 et de la place importante qu'occupe l'hagiographie dans la littérature nouvelle qui est alors produite.³⁷ Mais ici encore, c'est à l'attitude de Méthode vis-à-vis de l'hagiographie ancienne que je voudrais m'intéresser.

Méthode nous a laissé des textes en l'honneur de saints anciens comme Nicolas de Myra ou Agathe,³⁸ mais aussi, entre 815 et 821, alors qu'il est à Rome – « près de Saint-Pierre », nous dit-il –, il avait copié toute une collection hagiographique en deux volumes qui nous est connue en particulier par un descendant de ce recueil: le manuscrit qui, maintenant divisé

³⁵ Cf. S. Efthymiadis, *John of Sardis and the Metaphrasis of the Passio of St. Nikephoros the Martyr*, in *RBSN* n.s., 28 (1991), p. 23–44.

³⁶ σχεδὸν πάντα τὰ μαρτυρογράφα ἀνεπίγραφα εἰσιν· ἀλλ' ὁμως βέβαιά εἰσιν, κάκειθεν οἱ διδάσκαλοι ἀφορμίζονται ποιεῖν τὰ τῶν μαρτυρησάντων ἐγκώμια: *Théodore Studite, ep. 386*, l. 61–67, ed. G. Fatouros, *Theodori Studitae Epistulae*, II (CFHB 31), Berlin – New York, 1992, p. 536.

³⁷ Méthode de Constantinople, *Vie de saint Théophane le Confesseur (BHG 1787z): Methodii patr. Constant. Vita S. Theophanis Confessoris*, ed. B. Latysev, in *Mémoires de l'Académie de Russie* (VIII^e série), 13/4 (1918), p. 1–40; id., *Vie de saint Euthyme de Sardes*, ed. J. Gouillard, *La vie d'Euthyme de Sardes (d. 831)*, in *TM*, 10 (1987), p. 1–101.

³⁸ Méthode de Constantinople, *Éloge de sainte Agathe BHG 38: L'encomio di S. Agata di Metodio Patriarca di Costantinopoli*, ed. E. Mioni, in *AB*, 68 (1950), p. 56–93; id., *Vie de S. Nicolas, BHG 1352z* (ed. G. Anrich I, 153–182; on notera toutefois que cet éloge est attribué aussi à Basile, év. de Lacédémone).

en deux, réunissait les *Paris. gr.* 1476 et 1470, et qui est daté de 890.³⁹ Cette activité de copiste est importante parce qu'elle montre l'intérêt du futur patriarche pour l'hagiographie ancienne et qu'elle rappelle aussi que l'histoire que nous retraçons n'est pas exclusivement constantinopolitaine: Méthode est sicilien, il travaille à Rome et peut avoir trouvé ses modèles soit dans son île d'origine, soit dans les fondations palestiniennes si importantes à Rome. Les textes qui ont conflué dans les grands lectionnaires byzantins ont des origines diverses et ne proviennent pas tous de la capitale.

Méthode ne s'est pas contenté de reproduire et de conserver ainsi des textes anciens. Il a éclairé l'un d'entre eux de scholies et, comme il était conscient des difficultés que pouvaient présenter aux yeux des fidèles telle Passion ancienne, il a eu le souci de donner des clés de lecture. On sait que les *Actes de sainte Marina* montrent la sainte en prison luttant physiquement contre les démons et cassant la tête de l'un d'entre eux avec un marteau de cuivre ou d'airain.⁴⁰ L'historicité de l'épisode pouvait provoquer des doutes. Méthode, dans une scholie, propose l'explication suivante: « Le marteau de cuivre qu'a trouvé la sainte, c'est la grâce immaculée de l'espérance divine, qu'elle a trouvée en se retournant, c'est-à-dire en faisant usage de son intellect... Elle l'a saisi avec plus d'habileté et s'est mise à frapper plus énergiquement par sa pensée celui qui lui inspirait de mauvaises pensées, Dieu donnant corps ainsi au secours qu'il accordait à Marina par sa grâce, afin de détruire ce malfaisant qui avait pris corps également. Et c'est ainsi, que toi, lecteur, tu comprendras, pour tout ce que tu trouveras par ailleurs, que... les réalités intelligibles étaient représentées par des réalités sensibles. Et ainsi, tu ne seras pas incrédule et tu ne te tromperas pas sur ce qui est écrit et véridique, ni pour cette sainte, ni pour sainte Ioulianè, ni nulle part ».⁴¹

Cette scholie de Méthode est caractéristique à nos yeux de la réaction iconophile à l'époque iconoclaste. La valeur des textes anciens, même les plus audacieux et sans doute les plus contestés, est réaffirmée,⁴² alors que les auteurs orthodoxes sont conscients des critiques qu'on peut leur adresser. Et pour faire taire les critiques, Méthode propose pour ce passage de la *Passion de Marina*, une explication qu'on peut dire allégorique, tout en remarquant qu'elle ne remet pas en cause la vérité historique de ce qui est dit. C'est l'attitude que le futur patriarche propose à son lecteur, qui ne sera incrédule ni devant les actes de Marina, ni devant ceux de sainte Ioulianè, – autre Passion avec des apparitions diaboliques⁴³ – « ni nulle part ».

³⁹ Voir P. Canart, *Le patriarche Méthode de Constantinople, copiste à Rome*, in *Palaeographica, Diplomatica et Archivistica. Studi in onore di Giulio Battelli*, Rome, 1979, p. 343–353 (= P. Canart, *Études de paléographie et de codicologie*, Reproduites avec la collaboration de M.-L. Agati et M. D'Agostino, I, Città del Vaticano, 2008, n° XVIII, p. 429–440).

⁴⁰ H. Usener, *Acta S. Marinae et S. Christophori*, Bonn, 1886, p. 29–30.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 50 (scholie V).

⁴² On peut remarquer incidemment que, dans les *Actes de Marina*, Méthode croit trouver une mention d'images représentant la sainte: cf. *ibid.*, p. 52–53 (scholie XVII). On voit ici comment hagiographie et culte des images peuvent être liés, et pourquoi les iconophiles prêtent à ces textes une attention spéciale.

⁴³ Cf. BHG 962z.

4. *Hagiographie critique: Nicétas David Paphlagon*

Une fois le danger iconoclaste éloigné, les hagiographes paraissent avoir été plus libres de critiquer les textes anciens qui leur avaient été transmis, d'autant qu'ils se présentaient sous des formes diverses. Il ne s'agit plus, à la fin du IX^e siècle et au X^e, simplement de conserver et de transmettre, ni même de conserver et d'expliquer, mais de conserver et de réformer. Cette tendance nouvelle est illustrée par un auteur dont l'œuvre couvre les premières décennies du X^e siècle, et dont l'importance a été justement mise en lumière par S. Paschalidis: Nicétas David le Paphlagonien.⁴⁴

Nicétas est actif depuis la fin du IX^e s., sous Léon VI, jusque sous le règne personnel de Constantin Porphyrogénète. La correspondance qu'il échange avec son maître Aréthas de Césarée donne l'occasion rare de connaître la formation rhétorique et philosophique qu'il a reçue dans sa jeunesse.⁴⁵ Son œuvre la plus connue est sans doute la *Vie du patriarche Ignace*, qu'il compose très tôt,⁴⁶ mais nous nous intéresserons ici à la cinquantaine de textes nouveaux, le plus souvent des éloges, qu'il a écrits sans doute après le règne de Léon VI pour célébrer des saints anciens. Ses œuvres ont connu un succès dont témoigne une riche tradition manuscrite où l'on peut les trouver dispersées, mais il faut remarquer qu'une grande partie d'entre elles sont réunies dans le *Paris. gr.* 1180, un manuscrit datable de la première moitié du X^e siècle, dont S. Paschalidis a pu supposer qu'il avait été copié à l'initiative de l'auteur lui-même.⁴⁷ Nicétas n'a pas été seulement un hagiographe fécond. Il semble avoir eu le projet de composer un ensemble, un *Panégyrikon* dont le manuscrit de Paris donne l'idée. Pour l'hagiographie du X^e s., son œuvre est majeure et nous pouvons connaître les principes qu'il entendait respecter par deux textes importants où il les expose.

Le premier est le prologue du *Martyre de S. Georges*, où Nicétas s'adresse à un correspondant qui lui a ordonné d'expurger (ἀνακαθῆραι) les actes de ce martyr et de composer un nouveau texte en exposant les choses telles qu'elles s'étaient véritablement passées et en veillant à ce qu'aucun mensonge n'y soit mêlé.⁴⁸ En effet, les actes anciens suscitaient une controverse: certains les contestaient, tandis que d'autres croyaient qu'ils

⁴⁴ S. Paschalidis, *Νικήτας Δαβίδ Παφλαγόν. Τό πρόσωπο και τὸ ἔργο του*, in *Βυζαντινὰ Κείμενα και Μελεταί*, 28, Thessalonique 1999.

⁴⁵ Nicétas David Paphlagon, *Lettres*, ed. L. G. Westerink, *Arethae archiepiscopi Caesariensis scripta minora*, II, Leipzig, 1972, p. 149–179.

⁴⁶ Nicétas David, *Vie du patriarche Ignace (BHG 817)*, ed. et trad. A. Smithies, *Nicetas David. The Life of Patriarch Ignatius* (CFHB 51 = Dumbarton Oaks Texts, 13), Washington, 2013. Sur la date à laquelle a été écrite cette Vie, voir I. Tamarkina, *The date of the Life of the patriarch Ignatius reconsidered*, in *BZ*, 99 (2006), p. 615–630.

⁴⁷ Paschalidis, *op. cit.*, p. 300–302; F. Halkin, *Manuscrits grecs de Paris. Inventaire hagiographique* (SH, 44), Paris, 1968, p. 130–131.

⁴⁸ « τὸς κρατίστους ἀγῶνας τοῦ πανενδόξου τοῦ Χριστοῦ μάρτυρος οἰονεὶ ἀνακαθῆραι και σὺν ἀληθείᾳ πάση ἀνατάξασθαι δίχα τε πάσης ἐπιπλοκῆς ψεύδους τοῦ ἀριστεῶς τὴν νίκην συγγράψασθαι »: K. Krumbacher, *Der heilige Georg*, p. 181, l. 7–9.

étaient vrais, mais inexacts.⁴⁹ Nicéas raconte comment, après avoir lu une Passion ancienne du type que Krumbacher appelle le Normaltext,⁵⁰ il a été stupéfait de ce qu'il a trouvé ensuite dans un manuscrit témoin du Volksbuch. Il s'indigne des divagations monstrueuses qu'il y trouve, du roi imaginaire Dadianos et des soixante-douze autres rois qui l'assistent et n'ont jamais existé, des supplices extraordinaires inventés par l'auteur et des trois résurrections attribuées à saint Georges.⁵¹ Une seule explication pour lui: le diable, père du mensonge, ne pouvant triompher de celui qui avait lutté pour la vérité, a semé dans ses actes le mensonge pour obtenir l'un de ces deux résultats: ou bien l'on croirait que saint Georges n'avait pas plus existé que ses persécuteurs, ou bien on douterait qu'il ait lutté comme il l'a fait réellement.⁵²

En dépit de cette tirade violente, Nicéas soutient la thèse traditionnelle: « parce que nous avons appris à nous en remettre en tout à la foi, nous proclamons bien plutôt qu'ils sont vrais », dit-il des Actes du martyr. Cependant, cela ne l'empêche pas de s'engager dans la recherche de la vérité.⁵³ Dans cette situation, Nicéas conscient des tromperies et de la malignité des serviteurs du « père du mensonge » s'est engagé dans une recherche. Informé de l'existence d'actes anciens, il est allé les consulter dans un grand monastère de Constantinople, et, fort de cette lecture, il a rédigé l'œuvre qu'il présente.⁵⁴

Le prologue de l'*Éloge de saint Procope* va dans le même sens. Nicéas pose comme principe la foi parfaite avec laquelle il faut accueillir les récits concernant les disciples et les martyrs du Christ, mais en même temps il admet qu'on peut trouver dans certains d'entre eux des supplices si extraordinaires et un tel excès de miracles que, pour beaucoup d'auditeurs, ils paraissent ridicules.⁵⁵

⁴⁹ « τῷ μαρτυρίῳ τούτου... παρά τινων μὲν ἀντιλεγόμενῳ, παρ' ἐνίων δὲ ἀληθείας ἔχουσαι πιστευομένη, μὴ κατ' ἀκρίβειαν δὲ τὰ πραχθέντα τοῖς ὑπομνήμασιν ἐμφέρεσθαι », *ibid.*, I. 19–20.

⁵⁰ « ἦνίκα τὴν ζήτησιν ἐποιούμην, μακαριώτατε, τῶν τοῦ θεοῦ μάρτυρος ὑπομνημάτων, πρότερον ἀναγνοὺς τὸ παρὰ πολλοῖς γνωσκόμενον τούτου μαρτύριον, οὗ ἡ ἀρχὴ οὕτω πως ἔχει· Ἡ μὲν τοῦ Σωτῆρος ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ προαιώνιος βασιλεία... », *ibid.*, I. 28–31.

⁵¹ « ἐνέτυχον καὶ ἐτέρῳ δῆθεν μαρτυρίῳ τοῦ αὐτοῦ ἀγίου πολλὰ τερατώδη παραληροῦντι καὶ φλυαρίας ἀνάμεσα· βασιλεῖς γὰρ δύο καὶ ἑβδομήκοντα τὸν ἀριθμὸν τοὺς μηδέποτε γενομένους ἐπλάττετο· τὸν τε ἡγούμενον τούτων Δαδιανὸν ἐπωνόμαζε καὶ ξένας τινὰς τιμωρίας ἐπενόει κατὰ τὸ μάρτυρος καὶ τρεῖς ἐκ νεκρῶν ἀναστήναι τοῦτον ὑπεμνημάτιζε », *ibid.*, I. 31–35.

⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 181, I. 37–182, I. 4.

⁵³ « διὸ δὴ καὶ μᾶλλον ἀληθεύειν ταῦτα κηρύττομεν, εἰ καὶ περιεργότερον πως ἐκζητοῦμεν τὴν σφίζουσαν πάντας ἀλήθειαν », *ibid.*, p. 182, I. 7–8.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 182, I. 11–16.

⁵⁵ Nicéas David, *Éloge de saint Procope*, BHG 1580, ed. F. Halkin, *Martyrs grecs*, VIII, p. 178: « καὶ γὰρ πανταχοῦ μὲν τελείας χρειαί τῷ ἐν ἔργοις θεοῦ μελετᾶν ἐφιεμένῳ – πάντα γάρ, φησί, τὰ ἔργα αὐτοῦ ἐν πίστει –, οὐχ ἥκιστα δὲ ἐν τοῖς περὶ τῶν μεγάλων Χριστοῦ μαθητῶν καὶ μαρτύρων διηγήμασιν· οἷς τηλικαύτη παρέπεται θαυμάτων ὑπερβολὴ ὥστε καὶ ἐν γέλῳ πολλοῖς δοκεῖν ὑπέρογκά τε παθήματα καὶ δράματα πέρα φύσεως διακοῦουσιν ἀναγραφόμενα. Καὶ ἐπειδὴ νενοθεῦσθαι τινα ὑπείληπται, ἔστι δὲ ἃ καὶ ἀπιθάνως δι' ἀμαθίας τῶν πρώτως γραψάντων ἀνατέτακται, προφάσεως ἢ πονηρίας λαβομένη καὶ τοῖς ἀληθεστάτοις μῶμον προστρίβεται καὶ ὡς ὑπὲρ φύσιν λαλουμένοις οὐ βούλεται προσέχειν τὸν νοῦν. Ἀλλ' ἡμεῖς μὴ τῷ μεγέθει τῶν θαυμασιῶν ἀπιστῶμεν μηδὲ πρὸς τὴν

La même position sera adoptée plus tard par le rédacteur du premier Synaxaire de Constantinople, le diacre Évariste, qui s'exprime ainsi: « j'ai supprimé et coupé ce qui paraissait avoir été ajouté au récit, quand bien même... rien n'est impossible aux spirituels, puisqu'ils ne sont pas asservis aux lois de la nature. J'ai voulu éviter de choquer le grand nombre des auditeurs, qui croient que les choses divines sont soumises aux mêmes règles que les choses humaines ».⁵⁶ Et pour ses notices, Évariste se fixe un programme: « j'ai relevé qui avait été chacun d'eux, quels avaient été leurs adversaires, quand et comment ils avaient combattu et vaincu, et je l'ai consigné dans l'ouvrage que voici, renvoyant pour les preuves de ce que je disais aux premiers auteurs qui ont écrit sur ces saints ».⁵⁷

Nous voyons ainsi les principes d'après lesquels s'élabore, au X^e siècle, ce qu'on me permettra d'appeler une hagiographie critique. L'attitude fondamentale, par rapport aux actes anciens, est la foi qu'on doit avoir, et cette foi est double. Les Passions anciennes sont dignes de confiance pour leur fonds historique, et l'on peut y recueillir comme le fait Évariste l'essentiel de ce qu'on doit savoir sur le saint: son identité, l'époque à laquelle il a vécu, les noms des persécuteurs quand on commémore des martyrs, la façon dont chacun a glorieusement combattu pour le Christ. La foi est invoquée aussi pour le récit des miracles: une attitude rationaliste, qui refuserait certains récits relatant des faits qui dépassent la nature, est rejetée. Tout est possible aux spirituels, et les choses divines ne doivent pas être jugées à l'aune des choses humaines. On ne s'empressera donc pas de conclure qu'il y a chez les hagiographes du X^e siècle une réticence vis-à-vis du miracle. Mais, chez les deux auteurs que nous avons cités, on voit, pour Évariste, une prudence qu'il explique par l'état d'esprit de son auditoire, chez Nicétas, plus nettement, la possibilité de critiquer les textes anciens, qui peuvent avoir été falsifiés (νενοθεῦσθαι), parce que le père du mensonge y a mêlé l'ivraie au bon grain, et parce qu'il faut tenir compte de l'ignorance (ἀμαθία) dont ont parfois fait preuve les premiers auteurs des Actes des martyrs. La tâche de l'hagiographe est de séparer le vrai du faux, afin qu'il ne reste plus de trace du mensonge ou de l'erreur. Pour cela, il dispose de plusieurs moyens: il recherche et compare divers textes anciens; il se sert de ses connaissances, en particulier historiques, pour choisir et rétablir la vérité. Dadianos n'existe pas, et l'on préférera situer le martyr de S. Georges sous Dioclétien, avec l'auteur du Normaltext. Au terme de cette restauration, de cette ἀνακάθαρσις, on rétablira ainsi une vraisemblance que les auteurs anciens, du fait de leur inculture, n'ont su préserver, et qui n'est pas un respect des lois de la nature humaine, mais de celles, bien différentes, qui régissent les Actes des saints.

ὑπερβολὴν τῶν ἀθλοφόρων παθημάτων ἀποκναιώμεθα τὴν ἀκοήν, εἰδότες ὡς οὐ δυνάμει φύσεως ἀλλὰ πνεύματος, οὐδὲ σώματος εὐτονία ἀλλ' ἐνεργεία θεοῦ χάριτος ἐνήργηται. »

⁵⁶ *Synax. CP*, col. XIII.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

III. Nouveaux auteurs, nouvelles fonctions

Le reproche que Nicéas adresse à certains auteurs anciens est intéressant: leur récit n'est pas vraisemblable parce qu'ils étaient incultes. Pour que la nouvelle hagiographie rétablisse le vrai, ou le vraisemblable, il faut de nouveaux hagiographes abrités de l'ignorance, de l'ἄμαθία qui frappait certains de leurs prédécesseurs. C'est l'une des caractéristiques en effet de l'hagiographie dont nous parlons que d'être l'œuvre de lettrés.

1. L'hagiographie des lettrés

Les exemple de Tarasios déjà, ou de Jean de Sardes et de Méthode le montrent bien mais ici encore, le dossier le plus éclairant et le mieux documenté est celui de Nicéas le Paphlagonien. La correspondance qu'il entretient avec Aréthas de Césarée nous fait assister à ses débuts dans la carrière hagiographique où il devait s'illustrer. Il avait proposé à son maître un long éloge de saint Grégoire de Nazianze, et Aréthas, dans une lettre que nous avons conservée, critique vertement cet essai.⁵⁸ Ce que nous voyons, avant l'an 900, c'est un jeune homme qui se forme à la rhétorique et qui, prenant pour sujet un thème hagiographique, le soumet à la critique comme on le fait de toute œuvre littéraire. Nous sommes ainsi dans l'atmosphère savante où s'élabore au moins en partie l'hagiographie d'époque macédonienne.

Aréthas est diacre, mais Nicéas, au moins à ses débuts, n'est ni clerc, ni moine, et l'une des particularités de l'hagiographie des IX^e et X^e siècles est la présence d'auteurs laïcs. On peut mentionner ici Anastase le Questeur, auteur d'une *Vie d'André de Crète*, qu'on a proposé de situer sous Léon III mais qui peut être plus récent,⁵⁹ ou encore Cosmas le Vestiteur, auquel nous devons plusieurs textes sur la translation des reliques de Jean Chrysostome,⁶⁰ et qui est antérieur au règne de Léon VI. On songera aussi à Théodore Daphnopatès, ou, bien sûr, plus tard, à Syméon le Logothète, sur qui nous reviendrons. Anastase et d'autres laïcs ont composé aussi des stichères ou même des canons,⁶¹ et leur activité est révélatrice à la fois du

⁵⁸ Cf. *Arethae scripta minora*, I, ed. L. G. Westerink, Leipzig, 1968, p. 267–270.

⁵⁹ La datation de la *Vie d'André de Crète* par Anastase le Questeur a été proposée par M.-F. Auzépy, *La carrière d'André de Crète*, in *BZ*, 88 (1995), p. 1–12. Le Professeur S. Froyshov, que je remercie ici, me signale que plusieurs canons sont transmis sous le nom d'Anastase dans les manuscrits liturgiques. Il l'identifie avec Anastase « le Bègue », actif à la fin du IX^e et au début du Xe s.; voir aussi Th. Antonopoulou, *Homiletic activity in Constantinople around 900*, in M. B. Cunningham, P. Allen (ed.), *Preacher and Audience. Studies in Early Christian and Byzantine Homiletics*, Leiden – Boston – Köln, 1998, p. 317–348, en particulier p. 341; D. Krausmüller, *An Encomium of Catherine of Alexandria (BHG 32b) by the Protasecretis Ansastasius, a work of Anastasius the 'Stammerer'*, in *AB*, 127 (2009), p. 309–312.

⁶⁰ *BHG* 877v–878b.

⁶¹ Le Professeur S. Froyshov me signale le cas d'un Serge le Logothète, qu'il situe au IX^e s., et auquel une strophe est attribuée dans un manuscrit de Milan, et m'informe que, dans les manuscrits liturgiques, plusieurs canons sont attribués à Anastase le Questeur.

désir, pour de hauts dignitaires, de faire preuve de leur piété, et du fait que l'hagiographie en prose ou en vers est devenue, même pour des laïcs, un champ dans lequel on peut démontrer son habileté de lettré.

L'un des cas les plus instructifs est sans doute celui d'un autre Nicétas, contemporain du Paphlagonien: Nicétas le Magistre. On sait que, dans sa jeunesse très probablement, avant d'accéder aux plus hautes charges sous Romain Lécapène, il avait composé et lu publiquement la *Vie de sainte Théoctiste* de Lesbos.⁶² Westerink, avec beaucoup de vraisemblance, a proposé de dater cette œuvre après la mort de l'empereur Alexandre en 913 et avant le début du règne de Romain Ier en 919, pendant la régence de Zoé.⁶³

Nous avons là un nouveau cas d'hagiographe laïc et nous pouvons mieux voir à quoi peut servir d'écrire une Vie de saint. Peut-être la piété est-elle, comme il le dit, le moteur principal qui pousse Nicétas à composer son œuvre mais on peut être sensible aussi au fait que, dans son prologue, de façon inhabituelle, il affirme une position politique. On se rappelle la phrase célèbre où Nicétas affirme que la bonne fortune des Romains a été ensevelie en même temps que Léon VI;⁶⁴ il faut prêter attention aussi à l'éloge marqué dont fait l'objet le patrice Himérios,⁶⁵ pourtant tombé en disgrâce après la défaite de la flotte qu'il commandait en 911. Ces indices ont conduit Westerink à voir en Nicétas un partisan de Zoé et une fonction au moins secondaire de la *Vie de Théoctiste* apparaît alors: il s'agit, pour son auteur, peut-être moins de meubler ses loisirs que d'essayer d'en sortir, en faisant la preuve de sa piété et de son orthodoxie, mais surtout de ses capacités rhétoriques. Et c'est en effet la qualité purement littéraire de cette œuvre qui frappe d'abord le lecteur. Ici encore, on peut citer le jugement de Westerink qui relève que Nicétas « modela sa composition et son style sur le roman d'aventures grec » et « décrit un pieux ermite en des termes qui avaient originellement servi à faire le portrait du cyclope Polyphème ». ⁶⁶ Avec de tels auteurs, le texte hagiographique peut changer parfois de nature.

2. Un patronage nouveau: l'empereur

L'hagiographie passe ainsi pour partie entre les mains des laïcs et l'on notera que l'exemple vient de haut. Sur les quarante-deux homélies de l'empereur Léon VI, presque la moitié

⁶² Nicétas le Magistre, *Vie de sainte Théoctiste de Lesbos* (BHG 1723–1724), ed. H. Delehay, *AASS* Nov. IV (1925), p. 224–233.

⁶³ « Dans la *Vie de Théoctiste*, il se fait prédire... une période de prospérité personnelle et de loisir où, sans être encombré par des obligations d'état..., il aura l'occasion de mettre sur le papier, pour la plus grande gloire de Dieu et pour l'édification des hommes, la vie de sainte Théoctiste que Syméon vient de lui raconter. En termes plus réalistes, au cours de ces années d'oisiveté, Nicétas s'amusa à présenter à la vénération des croyants une sainte toute nouvelle, produit de sa propre fantaisie. Le succès fut complet. », L. G. Westerink, *Nicétas Magistros. Lettres d'un exilé (928–946)*, Paris, 1973, p. 27.

⁶⁴ Nikètas Magistros, *Vie de sainte Théoctiste*, § 2, ed. H. Delehay, p. 225.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶⁶ L. G. Westerink, *Nicétas Magistros*, p. 27.

sont liées au culte de la Vierge ou des saints. Dans le prologue de l'homélie 38, qui est un long éloge de S. Jean Chrysostome, Léon précise qu'il a composé son œuvre à la suite d'un ordre de son père⁶⁷ et il en est de même pour l'homélie 41, sur la translation des reliques du même saint.⁶⁸ Tout comme Nicétas le Paphlagonien, Léon VI, avant son règne personnel, s'est donc exercé à l'hagiographie, sous la direction sans doute de Photius, et certainement sur l'ordre de Basile Ier.

Léon VI, dans ce cas, apparaît comme un jeune aristocrate dont l'éducation rhétorique, soignée, peut comprendre la composition de textes hagiographiques. Mais sa dignité impériale donne à cette activité une autre dimension. L'intérêt que montrent les premiers Macédoniens pour le culte des saints et pour les textes qui les célèbrent est d'une importance majeure pour comprendre l'atmosphère nouvelle dans laquelle est composée, au moins en partie, l'hagiographie de l'époque. Et nous voyons qu'il se manifeste très tôt, dès le règne de Basile, même si cet empereur illettré ne compose rien par lui-même, laissant ce soin à son fils, alors sans doute coempereur avec lui. On retrouve sans peine, dans les œuvres de Léon, les composantes principales du sanctoral propre à sa dynastie. Les textes sont en harmonie avec les dévotions que font connaître les constructions impériales ou les sanctuaires du palais: ils sont composés en l'honneur de Nicolas, l'un des titulaires de la Néa, d'Élie et de Clément d'Ancyre, qui ont chacun sa chapelle au Pharos, de Lazare, dont Léon VI s'est procuré les reliques, ou de Dèmètrios, dont il fait construire la chapelle au Pharos aussi pour le remercier de l'avoir secouru alors qu'il était en disgrâce. Mieux qu'ailleurs dans ce cas apparaît le lien intime entre hagiographie et culte des saints ou dévotion personnelle.

Avec Léon VI et plus encore avec son fils Constantin VII se révèle au plein jour le rôle qu'assume l'empereur comme hagiographe et comme promoteur et patron du culte des saints, pour lesquels il organise de grandes cérémonies, dont le prestige rejaillit sur la dignité impériale, et pour lesquels il fait écrire nombre de textes importants. La translation des reliques de saint Lazare, organisée par Léon, et pour lequel il s'apprêtait à prononcer, à Sainte-Sophie, une homélie qui n'a pas été conservée si même elle a été écrite, et pour laquelle nous possédons deux textes d'Aréthas,⁶⁹ est un bon exemple de ces cérémonies où l'empereur apparaît comme l'ordonnateur du culte des saints et les exemples, sous Constantin VII, sont bien connus. On pourrait, avec les cas de S. Jean Chrysostome⁷⁰ ou de Grégoire de Nazianze,⁷¹ montrer comment certains cultes sont choisis: il s'agit d'honorer de grands

⁶⁷ « τῆς δὲ πατρῶας κελεύσεως φροντιστέον », ed. Th. Antonopoulou, p. 482, l. 26–27.

⁶⁸ « Πάλιν ἐπ' ἐμὲ δόγμα καὶ πρόσταγμα », ed. Th. Antonopoulou, p. 573.

⁶⁹ Cf. *Arethae scripta minora*, II, ed. L. G. Westerink, Leipzig, p. 7–10 (n° 58), 11–16 (n° 59).

⁷⁰ Constantin Porphyrogénète, *Discours pour la translation des reliques de S. Jean Chrysostome* (BHG 878d): *Κωνσταντίνου Πορφυρογεννήτου Λόγος ἀνέκδοτος εἰς τὴν ἀνακομιδὴν τοῦ λειψάνου Ἰωάννου τοῦ Χρυσοστόμου*, ed. K. I. Duobouniotès, in *Ἐπιστημονικὴ Ἐπετηρὶς Θεολογικῆς Σχολῆς*, 1 (1925), p. 306–319.

⁷¹ Voir B. Flusin, *Constantin Porphyrogénète. Discours sur la translation des reliques de saint Grégoire de Nazianze* (BHG 728), in *REB*, 57 (1999), p. 5–97.

saints, des patriarches de Constantinople, mais aussi des patriarches lettrés, modèles de l'éloquence sacrée. Le rôle de l'empereur ne se limite pas à promouvoir des saints particuliers. L'exemple du Synaxaire, que Constantin fait composer, révèle que c'est l'ensemble du culte des saints sur lequel l'empereur a veillé.

3. *Nouvelles fonctions*

Sous Léon VI et Constantin VII, l'hagiographie se trouve ainsi investie d'une nouvelle fonction. Les panégyriques prononcés lors des translations de reliques mises en scène par les empereurs macédoniens ont en effet un double objet. Il s'agit de célébrer le saint dont on transfère les reliques, mais aussi la piété, la légitimité et la grandeur du souverain qui organise et célèbre la cérémonie. Aux limites de l'hagiographie, puisqu'il s'agit ici du Christ lui-même, le transfert du mandylion d'Édesse montre bien l'importance de ces grands spectacles.⁷² Ce transfert, comme on sait, est négocié par Romain Lécapène, qui, par traité, se procure à grand prix l'image précieuse et la fait venir à Constantinople. Mais il est récupéré par Constantin VII qui, peu après, écrit et fait écrire le récit que nous possédons de cet événement et des cérémonies qui l'accompagnent, y faisant inscrire une prophétie qui légitime le renversement de Romain et sa propre prise du pouvoir: « Reçois, Constantinople, ce qui fait ta gloire et ta joie, et toi, Constantin, reprends ton empire ».⁷³ Peu après, la translation du corps de Grégoire de Nazianze, conçue sur le modèle de la translation du corps de Jean Chrysostome qu'il va rejoindre dans le sanctuaire des Saints-Apôtres, a la même fonction, et les textes hagiographiques qui l'accompagnent, qu'il s'agisse de la lettre écrite par Daphnopatès ou du panégyrique prononcé par Constantin lui-même, ont le même sens. On voit qu'outre l'empereur, les lettrés de son entourage sont impliqués dans la rédaction des textes qui accompagnent ces cérémonies et en perpétuent le souvenir. L'hagiographie se trouve investie d'une fonction politique et son importance va de pair avec la grandeur de l'enjeu. Culte des saints, hagiographie et *basileia* sont associés plus étroitement que jamais, même si les empereurs macédoniens ont conscience, en organisant ces grandes cérémonies, de reproduire ce qu'avaient fait autrefois Théodose II ou Justinien.

Cette utilisation politique n'est pas la seule fonction nouvelle qu'assume l'hagiographie à l'époque des premiers Macédoniens. Il faut revenir maintenant au fait que sa production est désormais pour partie entre les mains des lettrés. Elle est devenue pour eux un objet important et un moyen de faire valoir leur habileté. Elle peut dès lors se détacher de sa fonction proprement liturgique, ou ne plus entretenir avec elle qu'un lien ténu. C'est ce que

⁷² Voir B. Flusin, *L'image d'Édesse, Romain et Constantin*, in A. Monaci Castagno, *Sacre impronte e oggetti "non fatti da mano d'uomo" nelle religioni. Atti del Convegno Internazionale – Torino, 18–20 maggio 2010*, Alessandria, 2011, p. 253–277.

⁷³ E. von Dobschütz, *Christusbilder. Untersuchungen zur christlichen Legende*, II (Texte und Untersuchungen N. F., 3) Leipzig, 1899, p. 79**.

montre bien l'exemple de la *Vie de Théoctiste* et de Nicétas le Magistre. Comme elle pouvait l'être d'ailleurs à l'époque protobyzantine, l'œuvre hagiographique peut devenir une simple lecture édifiante. On pensera, pour l'Antiquité tardive, aux *Narrationes* de Nil, mais aussi à d'autres petits récits ou romans hagiographiques comme la *Vie de Marie l'Égyptienne*.⁷⁴ À l'époque médiobyzantine, cet aspect proprement littéraire de l'hagiographie resurgit sous une forme nouvelle, témoin de son évolution. La *Vie de Théoctiste* en est un premier exemple, mais, à la fin du X^e siècle, on voit apparaître de grands romans hagiographiques comme la *Vie d'André Salos*, celle de Basile le Jeune ou de Théodore d'Édesse.⁷⁵ Les lignes d'évolution que nous décrivons ici ne suffisent pas à expliquer l'apparition de ces œuvres, mais la façon dont l'hagiographie peut se détacher de sa fonction liturgique et devenir une œuvre littéraire profitant du prestige qui entoure les Vies des saints peut être notée et c'est au terme de ce mouvement qu'on peut situer le grand roman qu'est l'*Histoire édifiante racontant la vie de Barlaam et de Joasaph*, mieux connue maintenant grâce aux magnifiques études de Robert Volk.⁷⁶ Le texte, composé en grec par un grand seigneur géorgien, Euthyme l'Hagiorite, est une lecture édifiante qui contient un exposé général sur la doctrine et la vie chrétiennes. Elle a aussi pour but plus particulier de proposer le modèle d'une sainteté royale, celle du prince Joasaph, même si cet aspect est plus pertinent peut-être pour le Caucase que pour l'empire byzantin à proprement parler. Œuvre aristocratique, royale, où l'hagiographie traitée librement devient le véhicule de l'enseignement chrétien, le roman de Barlaam et de Joasaph est un point d'aboutissement de l'évolution de l'hagiographie peu après l'An Mil.

IV. Syméon et le classicisme

Il faut évoquer une autre œuvre majeure, dans laquelle on peut voir le couronnement de l'hagiographie au X^e siècle et l'aboutissement de la tendance que nous avons relevée en particulier chez Nicétas David. Il s'agit du ménologe métaphrastique, pour lequel nous disposons maintenant, grâce à des travaux récents sur Syméon lui-même et sur son ménologe, de renseignements plus sûrs que par le passé.⁷⁷ Composé sous le règne de Basile II, dans les années 980, le ménologe de Syméon se diffuse aux XI^e et XII^e siècles tant dans l'usage

⁷⁴ CPG 6044 (*Narrationes* de Nil); CPG 7675 = BHG 1042 (*Vie de Marie l'Égyptienne*).

⁷⁵ *Vie d'André Salos: The Life of St Andrew the Fool*, ed. L. Rydén, Uppsala, 1995; Basile d'Émèse, *Vie de Théodore d'Édesse* (BHG 1744), ed. I. Pomjalovskij, *Zitie ize vo sv. otca nasego Theodora arhiep. Edeskogo*, Saint-Petersbourg, 1892; *Vie de Basile le Jeune: The life of Saint Basil the Younger*, ed. and trans. D. F. Sullivan, A.-M. Talbot, St. McGrath, Washington, D.C., 2014.

⁷⁶ R. Volk, *Historia animae utilis de Barlaam et Ioasaph* (spuria), I–II, *Die Schriften des Johannes von Damaskos*, VI. 1–2 (PTS, 60–61), Berlin – New York, 2006–2009.

⁷⁷ Sur Syméon lui-même, on consultera maintenant la notice de la *PmbZ*. Pour le ménologe métaphrastique, la monographie de C. Hogel, *Symeon Metaphrastes. Rewriting and canonization*, Copenhague, 2002 est précieuse. On trouvera dans sa bibliographie les travaux essentiels, en particulier ceux de W. Lackner et E. Peyr.

privé que dans celui des églises et des monastères au point de supplanter les textes anciens. Avec sa double fonction, à la fois de livre liturgique et de lecture édifiante, il représente la forme classique de l'hagiographie byzantine et c'est à ce titre qu'il doit retenir l'attention. Je le considérerai ici comme une œuvre unitaire et chercherai à caractériser la relation qu'il entretient avec l'hagiographie nouvelle à laquelle il appartient.

1. Un hagiographe critique et lettré

Le ménologe métaphrastique se comprend mieux en effet si on le situe au terme de l'évolution que nous avons retracée. Syméon partage les vues critiques de ses contemporains sur les hagiographes anciens, qu'il juge victimes de leur ἀμαθία tout comme l'avait fait Nicéas le Paphlagonien.⁷⁸ Il leur fait deux reproches, le premier sur le fond, le second sur la forme. Pour le fond, Syméon juge que ses prédécesseurs n'ont pas fait preuve d'exactitude (ἀκρίβεια) et qu'ils n'ont pas su tout dire de façon détaillée en respectant l'ordre des choses.⁷⁹ Il rejoint ainsi le souci d'exactitude et de véacité historique que nous avons observé chez Nicéas, qu'on trouve, sur un mode mineur, chez Évariste⁸⁰ et qu'on peut observer aussi dans certaines œuvres hagiographiques de Constantin VII et de ses collaborateurs.⁸¹ C'est ce souci d'être exact et complet qui pousse Syméon à faire appel à des sources secondaires, ou même à produire des compositions nouvelles où il utilise, par exemple pour la Vie de Syméon stylite, jusqu'à cinq sources différentes.⁸²

Mais le reproche d'ἀμαθία porte surtout, comme on l'a observé depuis longtemps, sur la forme. On le trouve exprimé dans le prologue du Martyre de saint Autonomos, ou, parlant de l'auteur des Actes anciens, Syméon dit ceci: « il a eu une bonne idée, mais n'a disposé nullement d'une langue qui fût adaptée à ce qu'il voulait faire et, du fait de son inculture (ἀμαθία), il mélange et voile (συγχέοντος και συγκαλύπτοντος) la plupart des choses ». ⁸³ Il s'agit ici de la langue, du style, de la composition et c'est là bien sûr ce qui justifie, plus que les compositions nouvelles, les métaphrases à proprement parler qui forment l'essentiel de l'œuvre de Syméon.

C'est par opposition au style de ces auteurs incultes que le Métaphraste développe son propre style hagiographique. Il ne le caractérise nulle part, mais on peut du moins relever les modèles qui l'ont inspiré d'après les textes qu'il a insérés, sans les modifier ou presque, dans

⁷⁸ Voir par ex. la préface de la *Passion de S. Autonomos*, PG 115, 692A (cité par C. Hogel, *op. cit.*, p. 103).

⁷⁹ Voir *Vie de S. Syméon Stylite*, PG 114, 336B (cité par C. Hogel, *op. cit.*, p. 103).

⁸⁰ Évariste regrette de ne pas avoir été lui-même le témoin de ce qu'il rapporte et de n'avoir pas disposé de sources différentes, qui lui auraient permis de distinguer ce qui est vrai: *Synax. CP*, col. XIII.

⁸¹ Le récit sur le mandylion d'Édesse a été composé, d'après son titre, à partir de différentes sources: ἀπὸ διαφορῶν ἀθροισθεῖσα ἱστοριῶν (E. von Dobschütz, *Christusbilder*, II, p. 39**, l. 2–3).

⁸² Voir C. Hogel, *op. cit.*, p. 107.

⁸³ PG 114, 336B (cf. C. Hogel, *op. cit.*, p. 103).

son ménologe: Astérius d'Amasée,⁸⁴ par exemple, ou le Nil des *Narrationes*,⁸⁵ ou encore la *Vie d'Antoine* par Athanase.⁸⁶ Ce dernier exemple montre quelle est la langue que Syméon privilégie et le style narratif simple dont il s'est inspiré. Quant au fait même qu'il intègre à son ménologe des textes de l'Antiquité tardive, il est révélateur à la fois de la couleur qu'il entendait donner à sa collection, et de son attitude vis-à-vis d'un passé qu'avec son époque il admire et imite.

Le choix qu'il opère chez les hagiographes d'époque macédonienne vient compléter ces premières observations. Il trouve chez eux des textes suffisamment conformes à ses exigences et à son goût pour les intégrer tels quels à son ménologe: ainsi, la *Vie de sainte Théoctiste* par Nicétas le Magistre,⁸⁷ si proche du style métaphrastique qu'un bon juge comme Psellos pourra voir en elle une œuvre du Métaphraste lui-même.⁸⁸ Le fait qu'il ait repris, nommément, le texte de Constantin Porphyrogénète sur le transfert du mandylion d'Édesse montre aussi le niveau que Syméon veut atteindre: il est en harmonie avec l'hagiographie qui s'est développée dans le milieu des lettrés à la cour des Macédoniens et l'on se rappellera bien sûr que l'œuvre du Métaphraste a été composée, dit-on, à l'incitation d'un empereur.⁸⁹

2. La recherche d'un équilibre

Pour apprécier le ménologe métaphrastique dans son ensemble, la relation la plus intéressante à étudier est cependant celle qui s'établit entre Syméon et Nicétas le Paphlagonien. Syméon connaît bien l'œuvre de ce prédécesseur et l'utilise pour neuf de ses compositions.⁹⁰ Pour sept d'entre elles, il s'agit d'une insertion du texte de Nicétas, parfois enrichi d'une source

⁸⁴ Syméon insère dans son ménologe l'homélie d'Astérius sur saint Phôkas BHG 1540 (CPG 3260, hom. IX); il conserve le nom de l'auteur et opère certaines retouches (prologue, et épilogue) comme on peut le voir dans l'édition de C. Datéma, où le texte métaphrastique et le texte original sont édités face à face (C. Datema, *Asterius of Amasea, Homilies I–XIV*, Leiden, 1970). Syméon reprend aussi une homélie qu'il croit sans doute être du même auteur: Ps.-Asterius, *Laudatio Basilii episcopi Amaseae* BHG 240 (CPG 3265). Le fait qu'Asterius d'Amasée ait été cité au concile de Nicée II peut avoir attiré l'intérêt de Syméon.

⁸⁵ Pour la *Passion des moines du Sinaï et de Raïthou* BHG 1307b, Syméon reprend une partie des *Narrationes* du Ps.-Nil BHG 1307.

⁸⁶ G. J. M. Bartelink, dans son édition (Athanase d'Alexandrie, *Vie d'Antoine*, Paris, 1994, SC 400) a pu utiliser des manuscrits métaphrastiques.

⁸⁷ L'œuvre de Nicétas est reprise dans le ménologe métaphrastique au 10 novembre: voir C. Hogel, *op. cit.*, p. 185 (où l'on corrigera Nicetas David Paphlago en Nicetas Magistros)

⁸⁸ Dans la 6^e ode du canon qu'il compose en l'honneur du Métaphraste, Psellos dit que son premier écrit a été la *Vie de Théoctiste de Lesbos*: cf. E. Kurtz, F. Drexler, *Michaelis Pselli scripta minora*, I, Milan, 1936, p. 113–114.

⁸⁹ Le récit, sous le nom de Constantin Porphyrogénète, figure dans le ménologe métaphrastique pour le 16 août: voir C. Hogel, *op. cit.*, p. 204.

⁹⁰ Voir C. Hogel, *op. cit.*, p. 173–204: Eustathe et Théopiste (20 sept.); Jean l'Évangéliste (26 sept.); Anastasie (28 octobre); Philippe l'Apôtre (14 nov.); Matthieu (16 nov.); Grégoire d'Agrigente (24 nov.); André l'Apôtre (30 nov.); Daniel et les Trois Enfants (17 déc.); Georges (23 avril).

secondaire. Ces sept textes concernent Daniel avec les Trois enfants, et quatre apôtres, auxquels Nicéas s'était spécialement attaché. Les deux autres textes sont le Martyre de S. Georges et la Vie de S. Grégoire d'Agriente.⁹¹ On voit que Syméon a été sélectif et qu'il a, dans ces deux cas, choisi des textes qui, chez Nicéas déjà, sont purement narratifs.

La distance entre les deux hagiographes est sensible et claire. Nicéas privilégie la forme de l'éloge et s'éloigne souvent de ses modèles anciens. Syméon revient à des formes narratives classiques, et, dans la plupart des cas, moule son texte sur le récit ancien qu'il utilise. Son œuvre apparaît ainsi comme une réaction vis-à-vis de l'hagiographie ancienne, mais aussi contre certaines tendances de l'hagiographie moderne, dont il a intégré les apports tout en en gommant les excès. Il propose à son public, sous un vêtement nouveau qui les rend acceptables, des saints aisément reconnaissables parce que rien, en substance, n'est changé à leur histoire telle que chacun l'a en mémoire. Mais les irrégularités des textes anciens s'estompent. La langue que Syméon écrit, classicisante, la vraisemblance et le bon ton du récit correspondent aux goûts d'un public exigeant que Syméon trouve dans une cour en partie au moins cultivée et lettrée. Il y a chez lui, pour reprendre les mots que Balsamon emploie à son propos, un souci d'embellir les récits (*κατακαλλύναντι*), qui l'anime quand il compose des textes assurant «la gloire éternelle des saints martyrs».⁹²

3. *Diversité et unité du ménologe métaphrastique*

Le dernier point que je veux souligner est l'uniformité du ménologe métaphrastique. Ehrhard, comme je l'ai rappelé, a bien montré la nouveauté qui caractérise l'hagiographie médiobyzantine: l'apparition de collections, en particulier ménologiques, qui célèbrent l'ensemble des saints de l'année dans l'ordre du calendrier. Le ménologe métaphrastique dans son ensemble doit être considéré comme la suite de cette grande innovation. Comme les ménologes anciens, il raconte et célèbre des saintetés individuelles, mais par rapport aux collections anciennes, il présente un progrès important: le style uniforme des diverses métaphrases assure l'unité du ménologe. La diversité et l'inégalité des textes anciens qu'on avait réunis font place à un ensemble homogène.

Psellos, dans son éloge du Métaphraste, montre bien l'équilibre qui est ainsi atteint entre ce qui est particulier à chaque saint et l'uniformité que Syméon a su donner à son ménologe: « La couleur du discours est partout la même et la qualité de l'expression est une, mais les variations, pour l'*èthos*, sont diverses et, pourrait-on dire, conformes à l'art oratoire. Cependant, les réalités ne sont pas modifiées à cause de l'art, les variations servant à exposer ce qui est propre aux réalités et aux personnes qui se présentent (à l'auteur⁹³) ».

⁹¹ Pour le Martyre de S. Georges, au 27 avril, voir C. Hogel, *op. cit.*, p. 201; pour Grégoire d'Agriente, le 24 novembre, *ibid.*, p. 188.

⁹² Rhalli-Potli, II, p. 453.

⁹³ Καὶ τὸ μὲν χρῶμα τοῦ λόγου τὸ αὐτὸ πᾶσι καὶ ἡ ποιότης μία τῆς φράσεως, ἡ δὲ γε τοῦ ἥθους μεταβολὴ ποικίλη καὶ, ὡς ἂν εἴποι τις, τεχνικὴ, οὐ διὰ τὴν τέχνην τὰ πράγματα μεταβάλλουσα, ἀλλὰ

Ce que Psellos analyse d'un point de vue rhétorique peut être traduit dans les termes d'une histoire de la sainteté: le Métaphraste a su conserver l'identité et l'histoire propre à chaque saint, représenter les diverses voies conduisant à la sainteté, tout en assurant à l'assemblée des saints une apparence uniforme qu'elle n'avait pas dans les ménologes plus anciens.

L'hagiographie médiévale ne se réduit pas à une œuvre, mais le ménologe métaphrastique apparaît bien comme le résultat du grand mouvement qu'on peut observer dans les siècles qui le précèdent. Il s'agit de la remise en ordre ou, pour parler comme Nicétas David, de l'ἀνακάθαρσις de l'hagiographie ancienne dont les auteurs médiévaux ont hérité et qu'ils revisitent. Fidèles à la tradition, ils respectent l'ἥθος de chacun des saints du passé mais s'adaptent aussi au goût nouveau des fidèles en composant des textes plus polis et moins choquants pour le sens commun. Chaque image individuelle est ainsi rénovée et il faut prêter attention à l'ensemble nouveau du tableau où chacune vient prendre sa place. C'est en effet toute l'assemblée des saints qui apparaît désormais sous les couleurs plus uniformes d'une cour céleste certes encore diverse, mais plus brillante, plus ordonnée, et célébrée par des œuvres digne de son éclat. L'évolution de l'hagiographie transforme ainsi de façon décisive l'image de la sainteté.

L'âge d'or de l'hagiographie: nouvelles formes et nouvelles tendances

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Il est bien connu que l'hagiographie byzantine connaît un nouvel essor après l'iconoclasme, avec un nombre relativement important de nouveaux saints, mais aussi de nouveaux textes sur des saints déjà connus. Nous laisserons de côté la floraison de textes immédiatement postérieurs à l'iconoclasme et relatifs à cette période, magistralement traités par E. von Dobschutz:¹ malgré leurs qualités littéraires certaines, ces textes correspondent bien à la définition classique de l'hagiographie par H. Delehaye, autrement dit visent principalement à soutenir et à diffuser le culte de certains saints; les luttes de pouvoir au sein de l'Église qui structurent aussi ces textes n'empêchent pas cette définition fonctionnelle de rester pertinente. Ainsi, un texte comme la Vie de Nicéas de Médikion reste d'abord une apologie pour la sainteté d'un higoumène contesté après 843 par les iconodoules les plus intransigeants: défendre cette sainteté, c'est bien entendu défendre aussi le culte et le monastère. Si nous portons notre attention sur les textes du X^e et XI^e siècle, en gros le corpus présenté par L. Rydén en 1986,² le paysage change rapidement: on peut dire que la définition de l'hagiographie par H. Delehaye doit pour cette époque être non pas abandonnée, mais fortement relativisée; l'hagiographie devient en effet souvent le vecteur de finalités autres que le culte des saints, tantôt didactiques et édifiantes, tantôt proprement littéraires.

1) Essor et autonomisation de la littérature

Le caractère littéraire du texte hagiographique – qui a toujours existé³ – devient pour plusieurs auteurs un but en soi, de plus en plus autonome de la fonction proprement culturelle et religieuse habituelle de l'hagiographie.

¹ *Methodius und die Studiten. Strömungen und Gegenströmungen in der Hagiographie des 9. Jahrhunderts*, in *BZ*, 18 (1909), p. 41–105.

² L. Rydén, *New Forms of Hagiography: Heroes and Saints*, in *The 17th International Byzantine Congress. Major Papers*, New York, 1986, p. 537–554.

³ L. Rydén, *Literariness in Byzantine saints' lives*, in *Les Vies des saints à Byzance: Genre littéraire ou biographie historique?*, Paris, 2004, p. 49–58. Voir aussi id., *Byzantine hagiography in the ninth and tenth centuries: literary aspects*, in *Kungl. Humanistiska Vetenskaps-Samfundet: Uppsala, Årsbok*, 1986, p. 69–79.

On notera l'abondance des réécritures et des métaphrases: en style moyen ou haut, en vers, en enkômion, etc. Ce phénomène ne se réduit pas à ce qu'on appelle couramment la métaphore, qui en est plutôt la forme la plus spectaculaire avec Syméon le Métaphraste: le projet de ce dernier, homogénéiser l'essentiel des textes hagiographiques et les rendre à la fois conformes aux normes (de son temps) de la sainteté et accessibles à un public certes lettré, mais assez large grâce à l'usage d'un style moyen au sens de I. Ševčenko,⁴ est loin de représenter toute la gamme des solutions. Des réécritures comme celle de la Vie de Syméon Stylite le Jeune par Nicéphore Ouranos visent au contraire à élever considérablement le niveau de langue par rapport à leur modèle, sans apporter de nouvelle substance – en théorie, car en parallèle on rectifie aussi l'image du saint en fonction des normes du temps; des saints militaires comme Ménas montent en grade dans les réécritures de l'époque, comme l'a montré A. Kazhdan;⁵ le parallélisme entre élévation du style et élévation du rang social des saints héros n'est sûrement pas un hasard. Par son principe même, la réécriture implique un vif intérêt pour la forme littéraire des textes et leur niveau de langue. Le mouvement va globalement dans le sens d'une élévation du niveau de langue, surtout par comparaison avec les textes hagiographiques de la haute époque. Or, ce phénomène implique que l'on vise un autre public ou une autre forme de relation au public: la plupart des textes de la haute époque étaient susceptibles d'une lecture publique pour la fête annuelle du saint, en restant à un niveau de langue accessible pour la majorité des fidèles, tandis que bien des textes du X^e et XI^e siècle sont d'une langue trop difficile pour ce but et impliquent donc soit une lecture privée, soit une lecture publique purement protocolaire à laquelle la plupart des auditeurs ne comprennent sans doute pas grand chose. On peut risquer le parallèle avec les nombreux discours d'apparat de l'époque comnène, réellement prononcés, mais sans doute vraiment compris seulement par une minorité d'auditeurs éclairés. Une bonne part de la littérature hagiographique de l'époque dégage un parfum d'entre soi et correspond à un milieu social moins large; on peut le rapprocher de l'espace social plus resserré que E. Patlagean voyait autour du saint méso-byzantin.⁶

On note un essor de ce qu'on peut appeler le roman hagiographique, une fiction délibérée. Ces textes sont habituellement sans continuité avec le roman hellénistique, contrairement à des textes de la haute époque comme les Récits du Pseudo-Nil d'Ancyre,⁷ et ils ont souvent des fonctions édifiantes, idéologiques et didactiques plus que culturelles; outre le cas particulier du roman de Barlaam et Joasaph bâti sur l'histoire du Bouddha, notons la Vie d'André Salos, un bon exemple de narration comprenant des sermons moraux, des développements dignes des recueils de questions et réponses à propos des phénomènes naturels, ainsi qu'une énorme apocalypse; le cycle construit autour de la fiction de Grégentios

⁴ *Level of style in Byzantine prose*, in *JÖB*, 31 (1981), p. 289–312.

⁵ *The Noble Origin of Saint Menas*, in *Byzantina*, 13 (1985), p. 669–671.

⁶ *Sainteté et Pouvoir*, in S. Hackel (éd.), *The Byzantine Saint*, Oxford, 1981, p. 88–105.

⁷ M. Link, *Die Erzählung des Pseudo-Neilos – ein spätantiker Märtyrerroman*, Munich, 2005.

intègre de même des éléments didactiques et moralisateurs (Lois des Homérites) et de polémique anti-judaïque;⁸ la Vie de Basile le Jeune présente bien une figure de saint un peu plus consistante, mais aussi une vision du Jugement Dernier et encore de la polémique anti-judaïque.⁹ On constate en effet une interpénétration avec les écrits d'apocalypses et de révélations qui fleurissent à l'époque, comme la Vision du moine Cosmas ou celle de la moniale Anastasie.¹⁰ L'hagiographie s'aligne ainsi partiellement sur la littérature édifiante: elle reste bien chrétienne par ses visées pastorales, mais utilise la figure du saint plus qu'elle ne la sert. D'un autre côté de la gamme des possibles, au moins un texte qui s'inscrit explicitement dans les traces de la littérature hagiographique traditionnelle, la Vie de Théoktiste de Lesbos par Nicéas Magistros,¹¹ pourrait bien être un pur exercice littéraire sans véritable visée édifiante, en s'inspirant du roman antique comme l'a montré L. Westerink¹² – et il se pourrait bien que ce ne soit pas le seul texte de l'époque pratiquement « gratuit » du point de vue des buts traditionnels de l'hagiographie, la Vie d'Auxence de Psellos étant un autre candidat plausible. Cela n'empêche pas ces œuvres littéraires de créer, presque par accident, un culte qui n'était sans doute pas leur vrai objectif.

De grands types hagiographiques anciens sont repris dans de nouvelles Vies, mais avec de fortes modifications (*saloi* comme André et en un sens Basile le Jeune, stylites avec Luc puis Lazare du Galésion); à côté de la motivation habituellement soulignée par les commentateurs moderne, la quête de légitimation par le recours au modèle ancien, on soulignera l'infusion de nuances nouvelles dans les parcours des saints et surtout dans leur comportement avec autrui. Moins thaumaturge et moins virtuose de l'ascèse, moins en rupture avec sa famille, plus porté sur la prédiction, le discernement spirituel et la direction spirituelle, voire sur la psychologie, le saint paraît plus humanisé et accessible, en un sens mieux inséré dans une société qu'il ne fait plus mine de rejeter – c'est du moins le sens des nouvelles constructions hagiographiques.

⁸ A. Berger, *Life and Works of Saint Gregentios, Archbishop of Taphar: Introduction, Critical Edition and Translation* (Millennium Studies in The Culture and History of the First Millennium CE, 7), Berlin – New York, 2006.

⁹ Voir le beau traitement de ce passage dans G. Dagron, *Judaïser*, in *TM*, 11 (1991), p. 359–380.

¹⁰ J. Baun, *Tales from another Byzantium: celestial journey and local community in the Medieval Greek apocrypha*, Cambridge, 2007; cf. Ch. Angelidi, G. Kalofonos (ed.), *Dreaming in Byzantium and Beyond*, Londres – New York, 2014.

¹¹ Nicéas le Magistre, *Vie de sainte Théoctiste de Lesbos* (BHG 1723–1724), ed. H. Delehay, in *AASS*, Nov. IV (1925), p. 224–233.

¹² *Lettres d'un exilé: (928–946). Nicéas Magistros*, Paris, 1973.

2) Evolution du rapport avec la société: des héros différents

On peut tenter de résumer le rapport de ces textes avec la société par un mot: aristocratisation – qu’il s’agisse du style des nouveaux textes, de leurs auteurs, de leurs commanditaires, de leurs héros, et peut-être même de leurs lecteurs puisque le nombre de manuscrits porteurs de ces textes est souvent faible. Corollaire: le nombre de laïcs auteurs hagiographiques augmente sensiblement, avec Syméon Métaphraste, Nicéphore Ouranos, Nicétas Magistros et d’autres; il est difficile de ne pas rapprocher ce desserrement relatif de l’emprise des clercs et moines sur l’hagiographie et l’ouverture que nous avons constatée dans les finalités littéraires et sociales des productions hagiographiques. Cet effet est plus sensible à Constantinople qu’en province où apparaissent des textes plus conformes aux modèles antérieurs, peut-être aussi moins contrôlés par les autorités politiques et religieuses – par exemple la Vie de Paul du Latros. La pointe de cette évolution est l’esquisse (jamais achevée) d’une sainteté proprement aristocratique qu’a étudiée récemment S. Métivier dans un mémoire encore inédit sur aristocratie et sainteté.¹³ A la limite, l’essentiel de la production nouvelle est écrit par et pour l’aristocratie, qui se met en scène directement ou indirectement dans l’hagiographie. Même une Vie comme celle de Syméon le Nouveau Théologien où Nicétas Stéthatos voudrait présenter un Syméon quasi étranger aux préoccupations de ce bas-monde laisse percer bien souvent le caractère essentiellement aristocratique de son réseau social.

Les nouveaux saints offrent un profil différent: on notera un certain nombre de laïcs (hors du petit groupe des néo-martyrs), hommes ou surtout femmes; le thaumaturge le cède au directeur de conscience, au visionnaire, au fondateur de monastère; l’intercession se passe souvent du miracle, qui est même parfois explicitement rejeté.¹⁴ La présence des moines reste constante, mais leur insertion dans le monde se modifie: l’interlocuteur normal du moine est désormais l’aristocrate et parfois l’empereur, une quasi-symbiose dans un espace social plus restreint où le reste de la société n’est plus qu’un arrière-fond – le plus bel exemple étant le roman de Barlaam et Joasaph, maintenant clairement situé dans cette période par les études de R. Volk;¹⁵ bien que l’auteur, Euthyme l’Hagiorite, soit géorgien, il s’intègre manifestement dans cette évolution de l’hagiographie proprement byzantine, et son large succès ultérieur à Byzance et dans le monde orthodoxe prouve qu’il répond à un

¹³ En attendant cette publication, voir pour le cas le plus typique S. Métivier, *Aristocrate et saint: le cas d’Eudokimos*, in B. Caseau (ed.), *Les réseaux familiaux: Antiquité tardive et Moyen Âge: in memoriam A. Laiou et E. Patlagean*, Paris, 2012, p. 95–112.

¹⁴ B. Flusin, *L’hagiographie monastique à Byzance au IX^e et au X^e siècle: modèles anciens et tendances contemporaines*, in *Revue bénédictine*, 103 (1993), p. 31–50; M. Kaplan, *Le miracle est-il nécessaire au saint byzantin?*, in id., *Pouvoirs, Église et sainteté: essais sur la société byzantine: recueil d’articles publiés de 1990 à 2010*, Paris, 2011, p. 97–126.

¹⁵ *Die Schriften des Johannes von Damaskos VI./2. Historia animae utilis de Barlaam et Ioasaph (spuria)*, Berlin – New York, 2006.

mouvement de société. L'empereur en revanche n'est présent que comme hagiographe¹⁶ et comme commanditaire, et non comme figure susceptible de sainteté;¹⁷ les patriarches et évêques ne le sont guère plus, à l'exception de textes très particuliers comme la Vie d'Ignace et la Vie d'Euthyme, liés à des conflits très marqués dans l'Église – structurellement une période assez comparable à celle de l'iconoclasme.

Comme l'a montré P. Magdalino,¹⁸ le XII^e siècle marque un net recul de la production hagiographique et surtout pour les nouveaux saints; il est intéressant de noter que la floraison ultérieure de l'hagiographie prendra des traits bien différents: nette baisse de la proportion d'auteurs laïcs, retour à une hagiographie profondément déterminée par les nécessités du culte, où la littérarité est de nouveau un instrument au service d'une finalité; seule la tendance à un niveau de langue élevé reste continue et s'accroît même peut-être. Tout se passe comme si au X^e et XI^e siècle l'hagiographie avait connu comme dans une parenthèse un élargissement du milieu des auteurs et une polyvalence accrue dans les visées des textes, le plus souvent du fait du rôle des laïcs et spécialement des aristocrates à la fois comme auteurs, comme héros et comme lecteurs.

¹⁶ Voir B. Flusin, *L'empereur hagiographe: Remarques sur le rôle des premiers empereurs macédoniens dans le culte des saints*, in P. Guran, B. Flusin (ed.), *L'empereur hagiographe: culte des saints et monarchie byzantine et post-byzantine*, Bucarest, 2001, p. 29–54.

¹⁷ L'exception d'un embryon de culte pour Nicéphore Phocas après son assassinat avait permis à E. Patlagean de proposer l'idée d'une sainteté impériale: *Le Basileus assassiné et la sainteté impériale*, in *Media in Francia: recueil de mélanges offert à Karl Ferdinand Werner à l'occasion de son 65^e anniversaire par ses amis et collègues français*, Paris, 1989, p. 345–361. L'hypothèse se heurte néanmoins à deux difficultés: la très faible diffusion de ce culte attesté seulement par un texte liturgique et non hagiographique, et le fait que Nicéphore est compris comme un martyr plutôt que comme un saint. Même dans le roman de Barlaam et Joasaph, le personnage royal Joasaph est compris plutôt comme un degré supplémentaire de l'aristocrate.

¹⁸ *The Byzantine Holy man in the Twelfth Century*, in S. Hackel (ed.), *The Byzantine Saint*, Oxford, 1981, p. 51–66; réimpr. in id., *Tradition and transformation in medieval Byzantium*, Aldershot – Brookfield, VT, 1991.

Le cas de deux nouveaux saints aux X^e–XI^e siècle: contrôle et répression de la hiérarchie

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Notre intervention est moins dédiée à l'hagiographie au X^e et XI^e siècle¹ qu'aux cultes des nouveaux saints de la période, aux réactions et aux attitudes de la hiérarchie et aux idées sur la sainteté, à partir de deux cas de provenance monastique, assurément différents par la physionomie et le *curriculum* des protagonistes, la consistance et l'importance de leur postérité spirituelle et aussi par la documentation respective en notre possession. Venons-en donc à l'étude de ces deux nouveaux cultes, ou par certains aspects, de ces deux échecs, dans l'ordre chronologique.

1. Le culte d'Eleuthérios de Paphlagonie

Le premier cas examiné, l'affaire d'Eleuthérios de Paphlagonie² est relativement peu connu, parce que documenté par une source unique, le jugement synodal émis sous le patriarcat d'Alexis Studite (1025–1043),³ que l'on peut dater de 1027–30;⁴ il concerne des faits qui

¹ Sur le sujet cf. S. A. Paschalidis, *The Hagiography of the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries*, in *ARCBH*, I, p. 143–171; v. aussi du même, *Ὁ ἀνέκδοτος Λόγος τοῦ Νικήτα Στηθάτου κατὰ ἀγιοκατηγόρων καὶ ἡ ἀμφισβήτηση τῆς ἀγιότητος στοῦ Βυζάντιο κατὰ τὸν 11^ο αἰώνα*, in E. Kontoura-Galaki (ed.), *Οἱ ἥρωες τῆς Ορθόδοξης Εκκλησίας: οἱ νέοι ἅγιοι, 8^ο–16^ο αἰώνας*, Athènes, 2004, p. 493–518.

² Cf. J. Gouillard, *Quatre procès de mystiques à Byzance (vers 960–1143). Inspiration et autorité*, in *REB*, 36 (1978), p. 8–19; G. Dagron, *Le christianisme byzantin du VII^e au milieu du XI^e siècle*, in *Histoire du Christianisme des origines à nos jours*, IV, *Évêques, moines et empereurs*, Paris, 1993, p. 327–328; K. Fitschen, *Messalianismus und Antimesalianismus. Ein Beispiel ostkirchlicher Ketzergeschichte* (Forschungen zur Kirchen- und Dogmengeschichte, 71), Göttingen, 1998, p. 321–323; *PmbZ* #21638.

³ *Ἰσον κρίσεως συνοδικῆς ἐπὶ τοῦ κυροῦ Ἀλεξίου τοῦ πατριάρχου περὶ τῆς αἰρέσεως Ἐλευθερίου τοῦ ἀπὸ Παφλαγονίας*, El Escorial Real Biblioteca R I 15, f. 124^v–128^r, édité une première fois par G. Ficker, *Der Häretiker Eleutherius*, in *Theologische Studien und Kritiken*, 79 (1906), p. 592–599, et une deuxième par J. Gouillard, *Quatre procès*, p. 44–52.

⁴ J. Gouillard, *Quatre procès*, p. 14 n. 36, 18 proposait une date « vers 1030 », tandis que V. Grumel, J. Darrouzès, *Les registes des actes du Patriarcat de Constantinople*, I/2–3, Paris, 1989, n° 850, donnaient l'indication: « Sans date ». Le manuscrit, El Escorial Real Biblioteca R I 15, qui contient de nombreux actes du patriarcat d'Alexis Studite – cf. A. Revilla, *Catálogo de los Códices Griegos de la Biblioteca de*

se sont produits pendant un siècle à peu près. Les actes relatifs aux événements les plus anciens sont perdus. L'analyse du document indique qu'au-delà des doctrines et des pratiques incriminées, de la lecture hérésiologique lourde et forcée (à souligner en particulier le prologue avec la mention de Simon le Magicien, Marcion, Valentin, Ebion, les Manichéens, etc.) dans le but évident d'une *reductio ad Messalianismum*,⁵ la question centrale est le culte voué à Eleuthérios par les moines de sa fondation religieuse et par les paysans de la région. Un examen attentif montre que les étapes et la chronologie proposées jusqu'ici sur l'affaire⁶ doivent être modifiées.

a. Eleuthérios était originaire de la Paphlagonie et « il vint s'établir (...) dans l'éparchie des Lycaoniens (...). Il fonda là un monastère dit Mòrokampos (...). Il y accueillit des disciples qu'il poussa au gouffre de perdition ».⁷ Au-delà des termes malveillants de l'acte (même le nom du monastère est déformé intentionnellement par malveillance), on peut voir que, pendant la première moitié du X^e siècle, Eleuthérios, originaire d'une région qui, à l'époque, a donné naissance à bien des personnalités du monachisme, était le fondateur d'un monastère situé dans une localité inconnue de la Paphlagonie⁸ où il vivait, aussitôt accompagné de disciples et environné d'une réputation de sainteté auprès des paysans locaux.

L'acte poursuit en rappelant qu'il « resta longtemps ignoré, mais n'échappa pas jusqu'au bout. Il fut jugé par les gardiens de l'Église (τοῖς τῆς ἐκκλησίας προβόλοις) et retranché de la communion, parce que, convoqué devant le synode, il prit la fuite (διότι πρὸς τὴν σύνοδον μετακλήθεις φυγὰς ὄχρητο) ».⁹ Vraisemblablement sur un signalement de l'Église locale, Eleuthérios fut convoqué à Constantinople. Il n'obéit pas et fut ainsi condamné *in*

El Escorial, I, Madrid, 1936, p. 49–64; G. Ficker, *Erlasse des Patriarchen von Konstantinopel Alexios Studites*, Kiel, 1911, p. 33–48 –, ne donne pas d'indications utiles à cet égard. Les listes de présence nous fournissent des indications précieuses pour la datation du jugement. Le métropolitain Constantin de Sidè, qui a un rôle actif dans l'affaire, J. Gouillard, *Quatre procès*, p. 48, l. 66–68, est attesté aussi dans les actes de novembre 1027, *PG* 119, col. 844c, janvier 1028, *PG* 119, col. 837b, mai 1030, G. Ficker, *Erlasse*, p. 19. L'acte de condamnation d'Eleuthérios et de ses disciples témoigne de la présence au synode de sénateurs et archontes, J. Gouillard, *Quatre procès*, p. 50, l. 111–112, mentionnée aussi dans les autres documents de la période. Le Sergios protospathaire et éparque, qui avait été juge dans le thème des Anatoliques – J. Gouillard, *Quatre procès*, p. 48, l. 81–83 –, prend aussi partie au synode de mai 1030 – G. Ficker, *Erlasse*, p. 20, l. 24–25.

⁵ Qui a fait parler de « Néomessalianisme », cf. à ce propos nos remarques, A. Rigo, *Teodoro diacono della Madre di Dio delle Blacherne. La condanna (1094/1095) e le dottrine*, in *RSBN* n. s., 47 (2010), p. 316 et n. 67, 68.

⁶ Par J. Gouillard, *Quatre procès*, p. 8, suivi par G. Dagron, *Le christianisme*, p. 327, qui distinguait « une première procédure, sous le patriarcat de Polyeucte », qui vise Eleuthérios et une deuxième sous Alexis Studite, qui condamne les disciples.

⁷ J. Gouillard, *Quatre procès*, p. 46, l. 36–43.

⁸ Cf. K. Belke, M. Restle, *Galatien und Lykaonien* (Tabula Imperii Byzantini, 4), Wien, 1984, p. 208. Une localisation approximative du monastère est possible à la lumière des interventions des métropolitains d'Iconium et de Sidè.

⁹ J. Gouillard, *Quatre procès*, p. 46, l. 44–46.

absentia. Comme il ressort de la suite des événements, Eleuthérios, dans cette occasion, ne « prit » pas « la fuite », comme le dit l'acte, mais refusa seulement de se présenter au synode de Constantinople et resta dans son monastère. La seule accusation alors adressée à Eleuthérios et mentionnée dans le jugement d'Alexis Studite, qui la rapproche des erreurs messaliennes, évoque une conception extrémiste de l'impassibilité (*apatheia*),¹⁰ tandis que les autres accusations (confuses) visent ses disciples. La condamnation d'Eleuthérios a dû advenir avant que des mesures soient prises contre ses disciples, pendant le patriarcat du même Polyeucte (956–970), ou celui d'un de ses prédécesseurs (Théophylacte, 933–956?). Quoi qu'il en soit, il mourut tranquillement quelque temps après, dans son monastère (χωρεῖ πρὸς τὰ ἐκεῖθεν δικαιοτήρια).¹¹

b. Après la mort d'Eleuthérios, ses disciples – poursuit l'acte du jugement synodal – « ont feint de changer de conduite sous le bienheureux patriarche Polyeucte et Phocas le très saint métropolite d'Iconium, en déposant un libelle d'orthodoxie et en feignant d'abjurer leur erreur, comme en font foi les termes de l'acte (Ἵπόμνημα) délivré à cette occasion et ceux du libelle ». ¹² Malheureusement l'acte est perdu¹³ et le métropolite Phocas d'Iconium n'est pas attesté dans d'autres sources.¹⁴

c. Les disciples d'Eleuthérios, en premier lieu les moines de son monastère, après sa disparition et aussi après l'acte de Polyeucte, avaient donné vie à un culte en l'honneur du fondateur de Môrokampos. L'acte du patriarche Alexis Studite rappelle qu'ils « ont entouré l'individu d'égards; à sa mort, ils l'ont enterré dans l'église, ont composé des hymnes pour les chanter en son honneur, ils ont vénéré ses images, et ils ont amené une masse de gens à lui rendre un culte ». ¹⁵ Ces lignes tirées du document évoquent, fût-ce sur un mode synthétique, l'émergence et le développement du culte d'Eleuthérios dans le monastère qu'il a fondé, avec la naissance d'une tradition iconographique, la composition d'une acolouthie en son honneur, la célébration de la fête anniversaire, avec le concours d'une grande foule, composée pour l'essentiel des habitants de la région, dans le monastère où avait été inhumé le corps du fondateur, dans le *katholikon*.

Les choses continuèrent ainsi pendant quelques décennies, et même, très probablement, le culte d'Eleuthérios était toujours plus populaire sur place, jusqu'à ce que, vers 1027–30,

¹⁰ « Il donna pour règle au moine de partager sa couche avec deux femmes, à celui qui avait été initié à ses principes de vivre dans la continence pendant une année, après quoi il pouvait librement user des plaisirs sexuels, sans distinguer entre parents et étrangers, c'était là chose indifférente et nullement prohibée par la nature », ici, p. 46, l. 47–48, l. 51. Il nous paraît significatif que Constantin Harménopoulos, *De haeresibus*: PG 150, col. 25d rappelait seulement cette accusation à propos d'Eleuthérios.

¹¹ J. Gouillard, *Quatre procès*, p. 48, l. 52–54.

¹² Ici, p. 48, l. 54–59.

¹³ Cf. V. Grumel, J. Darrouzès, *Les registes*, n° 797.

¹⁴ Cf. *PmbZ* #26657.

¹⁵ J. Gouillard, *Quatre procès*, p. 48, l. 63–65; cf. aussi l. 77–80.

intervînt la hiérarchie ecclésiastique locale, d'abord avec l'évêque de Tzizougra,¹⁶ puis avec Constantin métropolite de Sidè. L'évêque était en relation avec un des successeurs d'Eleuthérios, l'higoumène de Môrokampos Grégoire. Il l'invita à « expulser de l'église le fauteur de cette doctrine mal famée, abandonne-le dans un coin désert, livre au feu les écrits composés en son honneur et gratte ses images ».¹⁷ En d'autres termes, l'évêque ordonnait de supprimer le culte d'Eleuthérios en effaçant ses éléments constitutifs (iconographie, acolouthie, sépulture dans le *katholikon* du monastère). La raison invoquée de façon plus ou moins tacite par l'évêque était la condamnation d'Eleuthérios par le synode de Constantinople: évidemment un "hérétique" ne pouvait pas être un saint. L'higoumène Grégoire et les moines de Môrokampos « consentirent à transporter les restes d'Eleuthérios dans une autre église, située dans la montagne (ἐν ἐτέρῳ τινὶ ναῶ μεταθεῖναι ἐν ὄρει τυγχάνοντι), à livrer les écrits au feu, à gratter ses images ».¹⁸ Les disciples et fidèles d'Eleuthérios acceptèrent donc d'effacer les éléments centraux du culte, icônes et hymnes en son honneur, et aussi logiquement de supprimer sa célébration, et transportèrent son corps dans un oratoire (comme on l'apprend dans la suite du document) sur la montagne. Il est intéressant d'observer qu'ils faisaient ainsi, parce qu'ils suivaient sûrement une prescription de l'évêque de Tzizougra qui, sur la base des canons, rappelait que l'enterrement est interdit dans une église pourvue de reliques des saints, mais admis dans les oratoires (εὐκτήρια).¹⁹

L'affaire n'en resta pas au niveau local. Le métropolite Constantin de Sidé qui avait suivi l'enquête et le jugement par l'évêque de Tzizougra (avec l'assistance du juge du thème des Anatoliques, le protospathaire Sergios) porta la question à Constantinople, où le synode la conclut définitivement en 1027–30. Les mesures prises à cette date contre Grégoire et les autres disciples d'Eleuthérios ne nous intéressent pas directement ici. Il reste à observer que l'acte ne revient pas sur le culte d'Eleuthérios qui avait été déjà supprimé par l'Eglise locale avec la destruction des textes et des images, mais sur le destin de son corps. Le respect de la part des fidèles d'Eleuthérios des dispositions prises par l'évêque de Tzizougra et des canons relatifs aux sépultures, n'était évidemment pas suffisant pour le synode de Constantinople qui prit alors la décision d'« expulser son corps de l'oratoire (τοῦ εὐκτηρίου) pour l'enterrer conformément aux lois (καθὰ νενομισμένον) ».²⁰ Cette attention aux restes d'Eleuthérios n'est pas seulement une décision de plus de la hiérarchie ecclésiastique désireuse d'effacer toute trace visible de ce culte, mais s'explique peut-être aussi comme la tentative suprême d'éliminer le dernier signe (ou du moins considéré comme tel) de la sainteté d'Eleuthérios. La suite du document synodal est en fait très éloquente à cet égard, lorsqu'elle semble

¹⁶ «ἐπίσκοπος Τζιζιούργρων», J. Gouillard, *Quatre procès*, p. 48, l. 83–84. Évêché inconnu, cf. ici, p. 14 n. 38; G. Ficker, *Der Häretiker*, p. 597 n. 2; K. Belke, M. Restle, *Galatien und Lykaonien*, p. 271 s. v.

¹⁷ J. Gouillard, *Quatre procès*, p. 50, l. 100–102.

¹⁸ Ici, l. 106–108.

¹⁹ Cf. Théodore Balsamon, *Responsa ad interrogationes Marci*, 41, qui cite les *Basiliques*: G. A. Rhallis, M. Potlis, *Σύνταγμα τῶν θείων καὶ ἱερῶν κανόνων*, IV, Athènes 1854, p. 479.

²⁰ J. Gouillard, *Quatre procès*, p. 50, l. 117–118.

vouloir donner une explication de la nécessité de donner une sépulture banale à Eleuthérios: « (...) qu'ils rendraient à la terre les morts momifiés, tenus par eux comme saints du fait de leur incorruption (τοὺς τεταριχευμένους καὶ ἀγίους νομισθέντας διὰ τὸ διαμεῖναι τὰ σώματα ἀδιάλυτα [...] τῇ γῆ παραδοῦναι καὶ μηκέτι τοιοῦτό τι τολμᾶν), au risque d'égarer les simples ».²¹ L'incorruptibilité du corps d'Eleuthérios était évidemment aux yeux de ses fidèles un des signes, sinon la preuve majeure, de sa sainteté. Le synode intervient sur ce point, d'un côté en prenant la décision d'abandonner à la terre et à la dissolution les restes du personnage, et de l'autre en exprimant de façon nuancée des doutes sur l'incorruptibilité du corps comme signe incontestable de sainteté.

L'affaire d'Eleuthérios de Paphlagonie nous a mis en présence du culte d'un fondateur de monastère qui est né et s'est développé dans un milieu provincial, parmi les moines de la fondation religieuse et les paysans de la région. Le culte, avec ses éléments caractéristiques (iconographie, tradition hagiographique/hymnographique, célébration de la fête anniversaire) se diffusa rapidement et suscita l'intervention de la hiérarchie ecclésiastique locale, désireuse de supprimer le culte en honneur d'un personnage à la réputation douteuse, sinon dangereuse. La volonté de suppression du culte s'exprime par les efforts pour effacer ou neutraliser concrètement ses éléments constitutifs, icônes, textes hymnographiques, sépulture dans l'église du monastère. Mis à part les « précédents » d'Eleuthérios, il faut ajouter que le développement d'un nouveau culte provincial provoque presque immédiatement l'intervention de l'Église locale. Le fait que, dans ce cas, la question a été par la suite débattue aussi à Constantinople est sûrement dû à la précédente condamnation d'Eleuthérios.

2. Le culte de Syméon le Studite

Le deuxième cas que nous allons présenter est au contraire de provenance constantino-politaine et, au moins théoriquement, bien connu en raison des personnages impliqués. Je vais traiter en effet du culte de Syméon le Studite,²² promu par son fils spirituel, Syméon le Nouveau Théologien. En réalité, il n'existe pas d'étude spécifique consacrée au sujet,²³ et très souvent dans la riche bibliographie sur le Nouveau Théologien on se limite à résumer brièvement les chapitres relatifs de la *Vie* de Syméon ou à reprendre, plus ou moins tacitement, les

²¹ Ici, p. 52, l. 130–132.

²² Sur lui, cf. en dernier lieu H. Alfeyev, *St Symeon the New Theologian and Orthodox Tradition*, Oxford, 2000, p. 19–27; id., *Syméon le Studite, Discours ascétique* (SC, 460), Paris, 2001; *PmbZ* #27479.

²³ À part une section de l'article de N. Oikonomidis, *How to become a saint in Eleventh Century Byzantium*, in *Οι ήρωες της Ορθόδοξης Εκκλησίας: οι νέοι άγιοι, 8^{ος}–16^{ος} αιώνας*, p. 476–485, il faut rappeler aussi les pages qu'avait jadis dédiées à la question L. H. De Grondijs, *L'iconographie byzantine du Crucifié mort sur la croix* (Bibliotheca Byzantina Bruxellensis, 1), Bruxelles, 1941, p. 104–110.

remarques faites par Irénée Hausherr.²⁴

Notre point de départ chronologique est logiquement l'année de la mort de Syméon le Studite (986-987),²⁵ et concrètement une analyse détaillée des chapitres de la *Vie* de Syméon écrite par Nicéas Stéthatos,²⁶ la source principale (et presque la seule) à traiter de la question. Je vais pourtant présenter les passages les plus importantes de ce dernier texte.²⁷

Après la mort de son père spirituel, Syméon le Studite, le Nouveau Théologien « composa en son honneur, d'après une révélation divine, des hymnes et des éloges et sa *Vie* complète » (ὕμνους εἰς αὐτὸν καὶ ἐγκώμια ἐκ θείας ἀποκαλύψεως συνεγράψατο, καὶ ὅλον τὸν βίον αὐτοῦ). En plus, pour susciter les zélés opérateurs des vertus à l'imitation du héros de ces hymnes, tous les ans, conformément à la tradition apostolique, il fêtait magnifiquement sa mémoire avec celle de tous les saints et il avait fait peindre, comme un monument où on peut lire sa vertu, son image (τὴν μνήμην αὐτοῦ κατὰ τὴν τῶν ἀποστόλων παράδοσιν ἐτησίως μετὰ πάντων λαμπρῶς ἐώρταζε τῶν ἀγίων, στήλην ἀρετῆς γεγραμμένην τὴν ἱστορίαν ἀναζωγραφήσας τῆς εἰκόνας αὐτοῦ) (72) ».

« Le patriarche Sergios l'apprit et il convoqua le saint et demanda des explications à propos des choses qu'il avait entendu dire. Le bienheureux lui communiqua tout, lui dit comment par révélation divine et céleste il avait composé les hymnes pour son père et écrit sa *Vie*. Le patriarche lui demanda de pouvoir examiner les textes et de prendre connaissance de ses écrits (ζητεῖ ταῦτα διελθεῖν καὶ αὐτοῖς ἐντυχεῖν τοῖς ὑπ'αὐτοῦ γεγραμμένοις). Le patriarche, ayant reçu les livres, parcourut attentivement toute la composition (λαβὼν οὖν ἐπὶ χεῖρας τὰς βίβλους ὁ πατριάρχης καὶ ἅπασαν τὴν πραγματείαν φιλοπόνως διελθὼν),

²⁴ Cf. en particulier I. Hausherr, G. Horn, *Un grand mystique byzantin. Vie de Syméon le Nouveau Théologien (949–1022) par Nicéas Stéthatos* (Orientalia Christiana, 12), Roma, 1928, p. LV, LXIX, où il parle du patriarche et du rôle de d'Étienne de Nicomédie, « un des auteurs du Ménologe de Basile » qui « travailla à centraliser les affaires de canonisation entre les mains de l'autorité patriarcale » (il faut remarquer que ces affirmations sont seulement des suppositions de I. H.).

²⁵ Pour la chronologie, j'ai suivi les indications fournies par I. Hausherr dans I. Hausherr, G. Horn, *Un grand mystique byzantin*, p. XC; la chronologie alternative proposée par P. K. Chrestou, *Νικήτα Στηθάτου μυστικά συγγράμματα*, Thessaloniki, 1957, p. 9–11, et reprise récemment par H. Alfeyev, *St Symeon the New Theologian*, p. 12 n. 1 (et cf. aussi A. Kazhdan, *Predvaritel'nye zamecanija o mirovozzrenii vizantijskogo mistika X–XI vv. Simeona*, in *Byzantinoslavica*, 28 (1967), p. 1–38) n'est pas fondée, v. V. Grumel, *Nicolas II Chrysobergès et la chronologie de la vie de Syméon le Nouveau Théologien*, in *REB*, 22 (1964), p. 253–254, et aussi J. Darrouzès, *La chronologie du patriarche Antoine III Studite*, in *REB*, 46 (1988), p. 56–60.

²⁶ Éditée une première fois par I. Hausherr, G. Horn, *Un grand mystique byzantin*, p. 1–230; et après par S. P. Koutsas, *Νικήτα του Στηθάτου, Βίος καὶ πολιτεία τοῦ ἐν ἀγίοις πατρός ἡμῶν Συμεῶν τοῦ Νέου Θεολόγου* (Αγιολογικὴ Βιβλιοθήκη, 6), Athènes, 1994, p. 46–390; cf. aussi la récente traduction anglaise de R. P. H. Greenfield, *The Life of Saint Symeon the New Theologian – Niketas Stethatos*, Cambridge, MA – London, 2013.

²⁷ Je renvoie au numéro des chapitres 72–108: I. Hausherr, G. Horn, *Un grand mystique byzantin*, p. 98–150; S. P. Koutsas, *Νικήτα του Στηθάτου, Βίος καὶ πολιτεία*, p. 194–272.

et en était admiratif ». Sergios fit l'éloge de Syméon et lui recommanda « de le prévenir au moment de la fête du père, pour qu'il pût lui aussi envoyer des cierges et des myrons et rendre honneur au saint. Dieu était glorifié par la fête de son serviteur, les peuples se réjouissaient des éloges décernés au juste (cf. Prov. 29, 2), les pauvres étaient nourris, les temples illuminés, et beaucoup de gens stimulés à l'imitation » (73).

Les choses se passèrent de cette manière pendant seize ans et la fête de Symeon le Studite continua à être célébrée de façon splendide et avec un grand concours de foule. L'hagiographe évoque alors l'envie (φθόνος) qui s'excita contre Syméon chez Étienne métropolitain de Nicomédie (74–78). Nicéas Stéthatos parle des différends et des conflits entre ce personnage et le Nouveau Théologien, sujet qui n'intéresse pas directement notre exposé, et aussi des critiques d'Étienne sur le culte de Syméon le Studite, et sur la personnalité même du saint. En premier lieu, selon Nicéas, le métropolitain « affectait de se moquer de la réputation du saint, critiquait ceux qui parlaient de sa science, appelait le saint un ignorant complet et un rustre (ἀμαθῆ τὸν ἅγιον ἀποκαλῶν καὶ πάντη ἄγροικόν τε καὶ ἄναυδον) qui resterait muet et ne saurait dire un mot en présence d'hommes sages » (74).

Il réussit aussi à convaincre des moines du monastère du Nouveau Théologien « de déblatérer contre lui à cause du culte et de la fête de son père » (78). Le bruit du différend parvint aux oreilles du patriarche et du synode. Selon l'hagiographe, pendant deux ans le patriarche Sergios II et les métropolitains ne prêtèrent pas attention aux accusations d'Étienne contre Syméon le Nouveau Théologien et le culte de son père spirituel, aussi parce qu'« ils auraient eu honte de s'infliger un blâme à eux-mêmes, puisque l'un avait avec les myrons et les cierges rendu annuellement hommage au saint, et les autres, pour la plupart, étaient venus spontanément assister à la fête du père » (79). En même temps, Syméon poursuivait les célébrations annuelles de son père spirituel. Étienne, continue Nicéas, en prenant prétexte de la doctrine de l'*apatheia* soutenue par le Studite et du fait qu'« il simulait la susceptibilité aux passions » (ὕπεκρίνετο τὴν ἐμπάθειαν), l'accusa devant le synode: « Il élève des hymnes à son père spirituel avec les saints, tandis qu'il est un pécheur, et il a fait peindre son image et il la vénère (ὡς ἀμαρτωλὸν ὄντα τὸν αὐτοῦ πνευματικὸν πάτερα μετὰ τῶν ἁγίων οἷάπερ ἅγιον ἀνυμνεῖ καὶ τὴν εἰκόνα αὐτοῦ ἀνιστορήσας προσκυνεῖ) » (81).

Le Nouveau Théologien est convoqué au synode, et le patriarche lui adresse les mots suivants, en cherchant, selon Nicéas, à mettre fin au différend: « Que signifie, seigneur Syméon, ce grand zèle pour l'honneur de ton père au point que toute la ville prend part à ces cérémonies et que l'excès de ces honneurs l'étonne surtout parce que, comme tu vois, c'est à l'égard d'un homme accusé amèrement par le syncelle très-aimé par Dieu (...)? Comme le syncelle a importuné plusieurs fois nous-même et le synode et crie contre le défunt, je veux que tu renonces à ces prétentions excessives, et célèbres la fête de ton père avec tes seuls moines ». Le Nouveau Théologien annonça alors son intention de répondre aux accusations, lorsque le patriarche lui posa une question tout à fait capitale aussi pour la suite de notre analyse: « Mais peux-tu maintenant démontrer que tu agis en conformité avec la doctrine des Pères et des Apôtres, en fêtant la mémoire de ton

père à l'égal de celle des saints anciens, pour établir selon la rigueur des lois sacrées que ta conduite est légitime? » (ἀλλ' ἔχεις τό γε νῦν ἀποδείξει σύ, ὡς δεδογμένον τοῖς πατράσι καὶ ἀποστόλοις ποιεῖς οὕτω τὴν τοῦ σοῦ πατρὸς μνήμην ἴσα καὶ τῶν παλαιῶν ἁγίων ἐορτάζων, ἵνα καὶ σεαυτὸν ἀπὸ τῆς ἀκριβείας τῶν ἱερῶν νόμων νομίμως ποιοῦντα συστήσης) (82).

La suite (83–86) est la longue réponse apologétique de Syméon, basée sur de longues citations de l'Écriture et des Pères: Mt, 10, 40, 41, *Constitutiones Apostolicae*,²⁸ Jean Chrysostome,²⁹ Basile de Césarée,³⁰ Grégoire de Nazianze.³¹

Après cette première séance, l'affaire continua pendant six ans. Étienne réussit à la fin à convaincre le patriarche et le synode, ainsi qu'une partie des moines du monastère du Nouveau Théologien. Ces derniers, selon Nicéas, « enlèvent l'image de leur saint père Syméon, occasion de toute cette guerre suscitée par le *synkellos* (τὴν τοῦ ἁγίου πατρὸς αὐτοῦ Συμεῶν εἰκόνα, δι' ὃν καὶ ὁ πολὺς πόλεμος τοῦ συγκέλλου), et la transportent au patriarcat » (87). Ensuite, « l'image du saint est présentée par l'accusateur au synode » (ὁ χαρακτήρ τῆς εἰκόνας τοῦ ἁγίου εἰσάγεται παρὰ τοῦ κατηγοροῦ ἐπὶ συνόδου) (88). Après une courte apologie, dans laquelle il citait Basile de Césarée, *De Spiritu Sancto*,³² Jean Damascène, *De fide orthodoxa*,³³ et *Orationes de Imaginibus*,³⁴ le Nouveau Théologien adressa une prière à l'image (89–90). Nicéas Stéthatos rappelle qu'alors son adversaire, le métropolite de Nicomédie, « marche contre l'image et qu'il persuade le patriarche et les métropolite du saint synode de faire au moins gratter l'inscription de la sainte image qui disait 'Le saint' (τὸν πατριάρχην ἀναπεῖθαι καὶ τοὺς ἀρχιερεῖς τῆς ἁγίας συνόδου ξέσαι κἂν τὴν ἐπιγραφὴν τῆς ἁγίας εἰκόνας τὴν ἔχουσιν· ὁ ἅγιος). C'est ce qu'il firent pour donner quelque répit à sa colère. Ainsi la séance est levée de nouveau et l'image rendue à Syméon » (91). Dans la suite, poursuit Nicéas, « le patriarche (...) se laisse persuader, contre son devoir, de faire enlever toutes les saintes images du grand père, de tous les endroits où elles se trouvaient peintes » (92). Une partie des icones fut détruite – ils les « frappent tantôt à la poitrine, tantôt à la tête, (...) d'autres fois au ventre, parfois aux jambes. Ils n'arrêtèrent de frapper qu'ils ne les eussent réduites en poussière » – tandis que « les autres, ils les enduisirent de suie et de plâtre (ἀσβόλη καὶ τιτάνω) pour les faire disparaître » (93).

²⁸ 7. 9: B. M. Metzger, *Les constitutions apostoliques*, III (SC, 336), Paris, 1987, p. 38; 2. 33: id., I (SC, 320), Paris, 1985, p. 252–254.

²⁹ *In beatum Philogonium*: PG 48, col. 747–749; *Encomium in sanctum apostolum Paulum* (Hom. 36): PG 63, col. 839.

³⁰ *In Gordium martyrem* (Hom. 18): PG 31, col. 492ab, 493a.

³¹ *In laudem S. Athanasii* (Orat. 5): PG 35, col. 1088a.

³² 18. 45: B. Pruche, *Basile de Cesarée, Sur le Saint-Esprit* (SC, 17), Paris, 1968, p. 406, l. 19–20.

³³ IV. 15: B. Kotter, *Die Schriften des Johannes von Damaskos. Expositio fidei*, II (PTS, 12), Berlin – New York, 1973, p. 202–203.

³⁴ II, 1–30: B. Kotter, *Die Schriften des Johannes von Damaskos*, III (PTS, 17), Berlin – New York, 1975, p. 101–102.

L'affaire se conclut avec une nouvelle séance du synode pendant laquelle le Nouveau Théologien prononça son apologie. Le synode prit la décision que Siméon devait mettre « fin entièrement aux éloges du saint et aux brillantes panégyries (παύσασθαι πάντη τῶν τοῦ πατρὸς ἐγκωμίων καὶ τῶν φαιδρῶν πανηγύρεων), ou qu'il disparût non seulement du monastère fondé par lui, mais de toute cette grande et illustre ville » (94). Syméon partit pour l'exil et s'installa à Sainte Marine (95–100). Quelques années après, grâce à l'intervention du patrice Génésios et d'autres personnages qui étaient fils spirituels de Syméon, l'affaire fut rouverte. Ils présentèrent au synode des écrits apologétiques du Nouveau Théologien (102). Le patriarche Sergios, après les avoir lus, affirma: « Je n'ai jamais eu la moindre position défavorable envers kyr Syméon. J'ai même lu dès l'origine ses écrits en l'honneur de son père et j'en ai été satisfait parce que je connaissais la vie du héros. J'ai donc donné ordre de chanter ces hymnes dans les églises (ἀναγνοὺς καταρχὰς τὰ εἰς πατέρα τούτου ὑπ' αὐτοῦ γεγραμμένα, ἦσθην ἐπ' αὐτοῖς τὸν ἐκείνου βίον εἰδώς, καὶ ψάλλειν ἐπέτρεψα ἐπ' ἐκκλησίας αὐτά), et j'ai loué sans mesure sa foi ». Il rappelait ensuite le différend entre Syméon et Étienne de Nicomédie et l'obstination du Nouveau Théologien, qu'il « ne cessait d'honorer son père avec des fêtes éclatantes, et que, d'autre part, ses accusateurs s'agitaient et venaient tous les jours nous harceler, pour ce motif je l'ai éloigné de son monastère et de la ville » (103). Le patriarche Sergios pensait à une solution d'économie, en proposant à Syméon de faire retour à son monastère et « pour ce qui est de fêter l'anniversaire de ton père, ce n'est pas nous qui t'en empêcherons. Nous t'engageons seulement à modérer un peu l'éclat et la durée de ces solennités de plusieurs jours, à n'y admettre que tes moines et les amis venus d'ailleurs, jusqu'à ce que tes envieux s'apaisent ou quittent ce monde, alors tu feras comme bon te semblera, à toi et à Dieu » (104). L'affaire se conclut avec le refus de Syméon et avec les paroles suivantes du patriarche: « Tu te cramponnes au contraire à l'honneur et à la confiance envers ton père spirituel. La chose me paraît, et à tous les autres, louable et légitime. Tu t'es montré absolument rebelle à toutes mes invitations. Désormais donc, va où tu voudras: habite avec tes disciples et fais selon ton bon plaisir. Ce n'est pas nous qui t'en empêcherons, que ce soit en dehors ou au-dedans de la ville que tu fasses ces fêtes et te livres à la joie avec tes amis » (108).

Venons-en maintenant à une reconstruction de l'histoire, à partir de la naissance et du développement du culte de Syméon le Studite, en examinant ensuite l'intervention de la hiérarchie, l'examen et la décision synodale.

2.1. Les débuts du culte de Syméon le Studite

La *Vie* du Nouveau Théologien, en traitant les événements suivant la mort du Studite, rappelle la composition d'écrits en honneur du saint, la confection d'images et la célébration de la fête anniversaire.

Les hymnes et la Vie de Syméon le Studite

Maints passages de la *Vie* de Syméon le Nouveau Théologien témoignent de ce qu'il composa en l'honneur de son père spirituel des hymnes et qu'il écrivit sa *Vie* (72, 73, 81, 103). La *Catéchèse X* du Nouveau Théologien, *Sur la participation à l'Esprit-Saint*, fut prononcée le jour de la fête de Syméon Studite, comme on l'apprend d'une note marginale au titre conservée dans un manuscrit (Ἐλέχθη εἰς τὴν μνήμην τοῦ ὁσίου πατρὸς ἡμῶν Συμεῶν τοῦ Στουδιώτου).³⁵ Un passage de la catéchèse parle de la lecture de la *Vie* du Studite: « notre bienheureux Père lui-même, Syméon Studite, dont nous célébrons aujourd'hui la mémoire (οὗ καὶ τὴν μνήμην ἄγομεν σήμερον) (...). Cet homme, en effet, notre très religieux Père Syméon, dont nous avons lu la vie et la conduite agréable à Dieu (οὗ καὶ τὸν βίον καὶ τὴν θεάρεστον αὐτοῦ πολιτείαν ἀνέγνωμεν) (...) ».³⁶ Dans un autre ouvrage, Syméon le Nouveau Théologien paraît faire référence à la récitation des hymnes en l'honneur de son père spirituel.³⁷ La *Vie* du Studite et les hymnes ne sont pas conservés.³⁸ Leur disparition n'est pas liée à la querelle à propos du culte de Syméon Studite et à la condamnation synodale du Nouveau Théologien. En effet, au moment de l'édition des œuvres de Syméon par Nicétas Stéthatos, la *Vie* du Studite était encore disponible comme nous l'apprenons de la référence contenue dans une scholie à l'*Hymne XVIII* du Nouveau Théologien.³⁹

³⁵ B. Krivochéine, *Syméon le Nouveau Théologien, Catéchèses 6–22*, II (SC, 104), Paris, 1964, p. 138 app. Le manuscrit est le Paris BnF gr. 895 (XI^e siècle), le plus ancien témoin des *Catéchèses* qui représente l'édition de Nicétas Stéthatos. – Je voudrais rappeler ici le début de la *Catéchèse IV*, « Puisque, Pères et Frères, vous lisez, de notre Père saint Syméon Studite, les écrits divinement inspirés qui reflètent ses actions sublimes – écrits que ce saint pour le profit d'un grand nombre, a mis au jour sous l'impulsion de l'Esprit divin (Ἐπειδήπερ, πατέρες καὶ ἀδελφοί, τοῦ ἁγίου πατρὸς ἡμῶν Συμεῶν τοῦ Στουδιώτου τὰ θεόπνευστα τῶν ὑψηλῶν αὐτοῦ πράξεων ἀναγινώσκετε συγγράμματα, ἅπερ ἐκεῖνος εἰς πολλῶν ὠφέλειαν ἐξέθετο θειῷ κινούμενος Πνεύματι) », I. 5–8: B. Krivochéine, *Syméon le Nouveau Théologien, Catéchèses 1–5*, I (SC, 96), Paris, 1963, p. 312–314. Le traducteur (Joseph Paramelle) suppose, mais sans trop de conviction, que cette catéchèse aussi avait été « prononcée le jour de la fête » et paraît évoquer une lecture de la *Vie* (ici, p. 312 n. 3). En tout cas on ne peut pas identifier « les écrits » avec la *Vie* du Studite (ainsi N. Oikonomidis, *How to become a saint*, p. 478 n. 16). La suite et la citation suivante montrent en effet que le Nouveau Théologien parlait ici du *Discours* de Syméon le Studite, cf. H. Alfeyev, *Syméon le Studite*, p. 59.

³⁶ I. 34–47: B. Krivochéine, *Syméon le Nouveau Théologien, Catéchèses 6–22*, II, p. 140–142.

³⁷ Dans l'*Hymne VII* il prie Dieu, en évoquant Syméon le Studite, et il dit: « apprends-moi dans l'esprit à lui chanter les hymnes », vv. 7–8: J. Koder, J. Paramelle, *Syméon le Nouveau Théologien, Hymnes 1–15*, I (SC, 156), Paris, 1969, p. 208.

³⁸ Je me demande si Nicétas Stéthatos n'utilisait pas en quelque manière ces hymnes dans la première partie de la prière du Nouveau Théologien adressée à l'image du Studite (inc.: Ἄγιε Συμεῶν), contenue dans la *Vie* (90): I. Hausherr, G. Horn, *Un grand mystique byzantin*, p. 124; S. P. Koutsas, *Νικήτα του Στηθάτου, Βίος καὶ πολιτεία*, p. 232–234.

³⁹ En marge à un passage dans lequel Syméon rappelle sa rencontre avec Syméon le Studite: « Il avait quatorze ans lorsqu'il se sépara de tout cela grâce à Syméon le Studite, son saint père spirituel, qui, en feignant les passions, avait foulé aux pieds les pouvoirs du diable, comme cela est écrit dans sa *Vie*

Les images de Syméon le Studite

Grâce à la *Vie* du Nouveau Théologien, nous savons qu'il avait fait peindre l'image de son père spirituel (72, 81, 87, 88, 91), qu'on présenta au synode au moment de l'enquête sur Syméon. Sur la base de cette icône, vraisemblablement liée à la sépulture du Studite et conservée dans le monastère de Saint Mamas (87), on avait par la suite exécuté des copies,⁴⁰ les icônes et les fresques qui se trouvaient dans d'autres endroits (ἐνθα καὶ ὅπου, 92) de Constantinople.⁴¹ Un passage de la *Vie*, dans lequel l'hagiographie mentionne la tête, la poitrine, le ventre et les jambes du saint (93), permet de comprendre que l'image du Studite était semblable à celles des autres saints moines de la période (Luc Steiriotès, Nicon Metanoëite, Athanase l'Athonite):⁴² le moine était représenté debout, de pied en cap.⁴³ L'image, au point de vue iconographique, reproduisait les modèles existants. Les informations sur l'inscription posent problème. Nicéas écrit: « l'inscription de la sainte image qui disait: 'Le saint' (τὴν ἐπιγραφὴν τῆς ἁγίας εἰκόνοσ τὴν ἔχουσάν· ὁ ἅγιος) », ou bien signifie simplement que l'icône portait le nom de « Saint Syméon », ou bien, si l'on préfère une lecture différente, qu'elle se distinguait par une particularité tout à fait évidente, parce qu'elle indiquait seulement « Le Saint » (Ὁ ἅγιος). Dans ce dernier cas, l'inscription de cette icône serait un *unicum* sans parallèles à Byzance. Un des fondements de l'iconographie était – c'est une chose bien connue – que le nom identifie le représenté: une image dépourvue de nom n'est pas lisible et surtout elle n'est pas une icône.⁴⁴ Il n'est possible de retrouver quelque chose de semblable à l'époque

(ὡς ἐν τῷ βίῳ ἐκείνου γέγραπται). (...) »: J. Koder, L. Neyrand, *Syméon le Nouveau Théologien, Hymnes 16–40*, II (SC, 174), Paris, 1971, p. 84.

⁴⁰ Procédé bien commun cf. D. Mouriki, *The portraits of Theodoros Studites in Byzantine Art*, in *JÖB*, 20 (1971), p. 250.

⁴¹ La scène de la destruction des images nous permet de comprendre qu'il s'agit d'un côté d'icônes en bois et de l'autre de fresques. Il est impossible de suivre N. Oikonomidis, *How to become a saint*, p. 478, 480b et n. 29 qui parlait seulement de fresques dans « his own monastery », c'est à dire Saint-Mamas.

⁴² Sur lesquels cf. au moins M.-S. Théocharis, *Les icônes-portraits des saints en Grèce aux X^e–XI^e siècles*, in *Actes du XV^e Congrès International d'Études Byzantines*, II, *Art et archéologie. Communications*, Athènes, 1976, p. 795–806; G. Galavaris, *The Portraits of St. Athanasios of Athos*, in *Byzantine Studies/Études byzantines*, 5 (1978), p. 96–124; N. Patterson Ševčenko, *Three Saints at Hosios Loukas*, in *Oi ἥρωες τῆς Ορθόδοξης Εκκλησίας: οἱ νέοι ἅγιοι, 8^{ος}–16^{ος} αἰώνας*, p. 459–472; en général v. aussi T. Steppan, *Mönche und Nonnen*, in *Reallexikon zur byzantinischen Kunst*, VI, col. 518–589.

⁴³ L'indication de la *Vie*, selon laquelle l'image du Studite « est représentée parmi beaucoup d'autres saints et avec le Christ » (ἦν [...] μετὰ πολλῶν ἁγίων συνεικονισμένην καὶ αὐτοῦ τοῦ Χριστοῦ) (87) ne doit pas être interprétée à la lettre. Au contraire N. Oikonomidis, *How to become a saint*, p. 480 (et aussi 478) faisait la supposition qu'il s'agissait d'une image « with a central figure, Eulabes, and with a small icon depicting Christ, maybe with other saints, at the top ».

⁴⁴ Pour une époque postérieure v. les mots du confesseur Grégoire quand les Latins offrent une église aux Byzantins pour y célébrer la liturgie: Ἐγὼ ὅτε εἰς ναὸν εἰσέλθω Λατίνων, οὐ προσκυνῶ τινα τῶν ἐκεῖσε ἁγίων, ἐπεὶ οὐδὲ γνωρίζω τινά· τὸν Χριστὸν ἴσως μόνον γνωρίζω, ἀλλ' οὐδ' ἐκεῖνον προσκυνῶ· διότι οὐκ οἶδα πῶς ἐπιγράφεται, V. Laurent, *Les "Mémoires" du Grand Ecclésiarque de*

postbyzantine et moderne que dans des contextes locaux pour le patron du lieu.⁴⁵ La légende de l'icône de Syméon le Studite « Ὁ ἅγιος » dans son caractère exceptionnel pourrait signifier que le commanditaire (Syméon le Nouveau Théologien) voulait exprimer par ce mot que le Studite était le saint par antonomase qui se distinguait de tous les autres saints du présent et du passé, ou qu'il était le saint propre du monastère et de l'« école » du Nouveau Théologien.

La célébration de la fête anniversaire

Plusieurs passages de la *Vie* du Nouveau Théologien attestent la célébration annuelle de la mémoire de Syméon le Studite sans aucune indication précise du jour de la fête.⁴⁶ Je rappelle ici les informations les plus intéressantes: pendant seize ans Syméon fêta magnifiquement (λαμπρῶς) tous les ans (72), avec un grand concours de gens (74). Presque toute la ville (82) prenait part aux cérémonies qui duraient plusieurs jours (94, 104). La fête qui avait pour centre le monastère de Syméon avait rapidement pris de l'importance et était devenue une véritable *panēgyris*,⁴⁷ avec la présence de foules toujours plus importantes. Une allusion présente dans la *Vie* (« les pauvres étaient nourris », 73) nous permet de savoir qu'à cette occasion, au portail du monastère, on faisait une distribution générale aux pauvres, pratique que nous connaissons bien grâce aux *typika* monastiques.⁴⁸ Les témoignages fragmentaires mais significatifs sur la célébration de la fête anniversaire de Syméon le Studite sont la preuve la plus évidente de la croissance rapide de la popularité du nouveau culte dans les quinze ans suivant sa mort.

l'Église de Constantinople Sylvestre Syropoulos sur le Concile de Florence (1438–1439) (Concilium Florentinum Documenta et Scriptores, Series B, IX), Roma 1971, p. 250 (§ 46.24–27).

⁴⁵ Aujourd'hui encore on dit simplement « Le saint » quand on parle du patron du village, de la ville ou de l'île (ainsi à Corfou pour Spyridon, à Céphalonie pour Gerasimos, à Zakynthos pour Dionysios, etc.). Dans quelques villages on retrouve des fresques de l'époque moderne, où le saint patron est indiqué avec l'inscription « Le saint » (ainsi pour Saint Georges à Aétochori, près de Ioannina). Je remercie pour leur remarques et la discussion à ce propos les amis et collègues Andrea Babuin, Giorgos Phousteris et Grigoris Manopoulos.

⁴⁶ N. Oikonomidis, *How to become a saint*, p. 477 affirmait que la célébration avait lieu « on All Saints' Day », le neuvième dimanche après Pâques, une semaine après Pentecôte, sur la base du passage de la *Vie*, dans lequel on lit que Syméon fêtait le Studite avec tous les autres saints (μετὰ πάντων λαμπρῶς ἐώρταζε τῶν ἁγίων, 72). À mon avis, il n'est pas possible d'interpréter à la lettre cette expression de Nicéas.

⁴⁷ À ce propos cf. Sp. Vryonis, Jr., *The Panēgyris of the Byzantine Saint: a study in the nature of a medieval institution, its origins and fate*, in S. Hackel (ed.), *The Byzantine Saint*, London, 1981, p. 196–226.

⁴⁸ Sur ces distributions, cf. en premier lieu J. Thomas, A. Constantinides Hero, *Byzantine Monastic Foundation Documents. A Complete Translation of the Surviving Founder' Typika and Testaments*, I (Dumbarton Oaks Studies, 35), Washington, D. C., 2000, p. 29 n. 30, v, p. 1874 s. v. Ainsi dans le typikon de la Théotokos Évergétis on parle de la distribution quotidienne au portail et d'une « distribution générale » (καθολικὴ διὰδοσις) le jour de la Dormition de la Théotokos et à l'occasion des commémoraisons des défunts. Cf. P. Gautier, *Le typikon de la Théotokos Évergétis*, in *REB*, 40 (1982), p. 45 (l. 532–534), 77 (l. 1080–1082), 81 (l. 1162), 83 (l. 1184–1190).

2.2. De la première intervention de la hiérarchie (vers 1001) au procès synodal et à l'exil de Syméon le Nouveau Théologien (1009)

Le culte du Studite se développa de cette manière à partir des dernières années du patriarcat de Nicolas II Chrysobergès (980–992). Les tensions et les incidents entre Syméon le Nouveau Théologien et ses moines (*Vie*, 38–40)⁴⁹ sous Sisinnius II (996–998) ne semblent pas liés au culte de Syméon le Studite. Mais Sergios II (1001–1019) déjà au début de son mandat (simple coïncidence?) promut une enquête sur le nouveau culte. À cette occasion on examina les hymnes et la *Vie* écrits en l'honneur du Studite par le Nouveau Théologien. L'examen eut un résultat positif et le patriarche et les autres membres du synode voulurent exprimer leur dévotion, en faisant des offrandes le jour de la fête du saint (73, 79). Mais, à part la faveur personnelle des membres de la hiérarchie ecclésiastique, sur laquelle revient avec insistance l'hagiographe, il faut souligner (c'est un fait qui est passé inaperçu des chercheurs) qu'à cette occasion le patriarche et le synode promulguèrent un document sur la question. Quelques années plus tard, au moment de la réhabilitation du Nouveau Théologien (1010–1011), le patriarche Sergios rappela l'examen des textes hagiographiques et sa première enquête sur le culte et il affirmait qu'alors, il avait ordonné de chanter ces hymnes dans les églises (ψάλλει ἐπέτρεψα ἐπ'ἐκκλησίας, 103). Le mot employé (ἐπιτρέπω)⁵⁰ montre qu'il s'agissait d'une décision officielle du patriarche et du synode.⁵¹ La signification de ce premier jugement est évidente: le patriarche et le synode, après avoir pris en examen le nouveau culte sur la base des textes hagiographiques, disposaient que la fête du saint en question, célébrée d'une manière particulière dans le monastère de Saint Mamas, pouvait être célébrée universellement dans toutes les églises. L'intervention du patriarcat semble donc marquer le passage d'un culte particulier à un culte universel.

Deux ans après, vers 1003, la question prit une nouvelle dimension, quand Étienne de Nicomédie,⁵² après avoir entamé une discussion théologique avec Syméon le Nouveau Théologien,⁵³ élargit sa polémique, en attaquant le culte de Syméon le Studite promu par son fils spirituel. Les protagonistes de l'affaire étaient les deux personnages mentionnés, Syméon et Étienne, le patriarche Sergios, les autres membres du synode évoqués de façon

⁴⁹ Cf. V. Grumel, J. Darrouzès, *Les registes*, n° 810–811.

⁵⁰ Cf. e. g. J. Darrouzès, *Les registes des actes du Patriarcat de Constantinople*, I/7, Paris, 1991, p. 171 s. v.

⁵¹ Mention à ajouter aux *Regestes des actes du Patriarcat*.

⁵² Sur Étienne cf. en dernier lieu A. Rigo, *Le père spirituel de l'empereur Cosmas Tzintziloukès et son opusculé sur les parties de l'âme, les passions et les pensées (XI^e siècle)*, in T. Antonopoulou, S. Kotzabassi, M. Loukaki (ed.), *Myriobiblos. Essays on Byzantine Literature and Culture* (BA, 29), Boston – Berlin – München, 2015, p. 299–300; *PmbZ* #27315.

⁵³ Sur les relations entre les personnes de la Trinité, cf. la réponse polémique de Syméon dans l'*Hymne XXI*, tit.: *Ἐπιστολή πρὸς μοναχὸν ἐρωτήσαντα: Πῶς χωρίζεις τὸν Υἱὸν ἀπὸ τοῦ Πατρός, ἐπινοία ἢ πράγματι; (...)*: J. Koder, L. Neyrand, *Syméon le Nouveau Théologien, Hymnes 16–40*, II, p. 130–168.

anonyme par l'hagiographe et surtout, selon Nicétas Stéthatos, l'envie (φθόνος).⁵⁴ Les différentes attitudes dans le synode nous donnent une première explication de la raison pour laquelle la discussion synodale sur la question traîna pendant six ans.⁵⁵ La position d'Étienne de Nicomédie nous paraît claire. Après avoir dénigré la rusticité du Studite (74), il affirmait que Syméon n'était pas digne d'un culte, c'est-à-dire qu'il n'était pas un saint. Selon Nicétas, Étienne prenait prétexte de la doctrine de l'*apatheia* soutenue par le Studite et du fait qu'« il simulait la susceptibilité aux passions » (ὕπεκρίνετο τὴν ἐμπάθειαν), et l'accusa devant le synode d'être un pécheur (81). La folie simulée par le Studite et certains aspects de sa conduite, liés à sa conception de l'impassibilité,⁵⁶ étaient la preuve selon l'accusateur qu'il ne possédait pas les qualités morales et spirituelles nécessaires pour être un saint. Sur la base de cette première affirmation, il s'attaquait au culte qui lui était rendu par le Nouveau Théologien, aux hymnes et surtout à l'image (81 et, en particulier, 87). La position du patriarche Sergios était différente. Il pensait sans doute résoudre la question par l'*oikonomia*, pour des raisons variées. En premier lieu, il se trouvait dans une position difficile entre un personnage puissant comme Étienne et le Nouveau Théologien, dont les importants protecteurs auront un rôle dans la suite. Il était de plus lié en quelque manière à son jugement de deux ans auparavant. Pour ces raisons, il apparaît sensible aux pressions d'Étienne, mais en même temps, il en souligne en quelque manière l'âge avancé de ce dernier (104),⁵⁷ qui pourrait fournir une solution commode... À la fin, Sergios proposa une solution qui dans les faits était en premier lieu un démenti du jugement précédent. Il demanda en effet au Nouveau Théologien: « Mais peux-tu maintenant démontrer que tu agis en conformité avec la doctrine des Pères et des Apôtres, en fêtant la mémoire de ton père à l'égal de celle des saints anciens, pour établir selon la rigueur des lois sacrées que ta conduite est légitime? » (82). Les mots du patriarche montrent qu'il affirmait ici la différence entre les « saints nouveaux » et les « saints anciens », idée bien diffusée à l'époque, comme nous le savons grâce aux textes hagiographiques (*Vies* de Nikon, de Loukas et de Clément

⁵⁴ Dont Nicétas Stéthatos parle aussi dans ses *Chapitres*, III, 54, 57–59, 62–66: *Φιλοκαλία τῶν ἱερῶν νηπτικῶν*, III, Athènes, 1976³, p. 340–344. Sur l'envie cf. le beau livre de M. Hinterberger, *Phthonos* (Serta Graeca. Beiträge zur Erforschung griechischer Texte, 29), Wiesbaden, 2013, en particulier p. 361–370 pour Syméon le Nouveau Théologien et Nicétas Stéthatos.

⁵⁵ Tandis que pour J. A. McGuckin, *Symeon the New Theologian and Byzantine monasticism*, in A. Bryer, M. Cunningham (ed.), *Mount Athos and Byzantine Monasticism. Papers from the Twenty-eighth Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies, Birmingham, March 1994* (Society for the Promotion of Byzantine Studies. Publications, 4), Aldershot, 1996, p. 29, Étienne « was none other than the *synkellos* of the Patriarch. It is inconceivable that he acted in any other role than as the spokesman and agent of the court ».

⁵⁶ Cf. à ce propos en dernier lieu Alfeyev, *Syméon le Studite, Discours ascétique*, p. 29–35; S. A. Ivanov, *Holy Fools in Byzantium and Beyond*, Oxford – New York, 2006, p. 174–190.

⁵⁷ Il faut rappeler qu'il avait démissionné de sa métropole et qu'il était un simple moine. Une scholie à l'*Hymne XXI* de Syméon souligne qu'Étienne était alors un vieillard (v. 340: J. Koder, L. Neyrand, *Syméon le Nouveau Théologien, Hymnes 16–40*, II, p. 156).

d'Ohrid)⁵⁸ et aux pages du même Syméon le Nouveau Théologien, pas nécessairement liées à la polémique avec Étienne de Nicomédie.⁵⁹ Il est évident que de cette manière Sergios reniait implicitement le jugement de 1001 qui avait promu le culte du Studite de particulier à universel, en cherchant à faire retour à la situation précédente, à une fête célébrée seulement à Saint Mamas par le Nouveau Théologien et ses moines. Cette solution de compromis ne fut pas acceptée du fait de l'intransigeance d'Étienne et de Syméon. De cette manière, la discussion sur le culte du Studite continua et à la fin l'ex-métropolitain de Nicomédie eut le dessus (tout de même de façon provisoire). Le synode examina l'image de Syméon le Studite, qu'on avait apportée tout exprès, sur laquelle s'étaient concentrées les critiques d'Étienne (διδὼν καὶ ὁ πολὺς πόλεμος τοῦ συγκέλλου, 87). La discussion sur le nouveau saint devient ainsi la discussion sur son icône, présentée au synode. On pourrait penser que la discussion ne portait pas sur l'iconographie, qui devait être tout à fait traditionnelle, mais sur l'inscription, qui était en effet singulière. En tout cas, comme Nicétas Stéthatos nous en informe, on finit par prendre la décision de gratter la légende de l'icône. De cette manière l'image était dégradée au niveau de simple portrait. L'opération signifiait aussi que le synode effaçait alors de façon concrète et, selon les intentions du moment, définitive, le culte de Syméon le Studite.

La suppression du culte du Studite et la condamnation à l'exil du Nouveau Théologien (3 janvier 1009)⁶⁰ furent suivies seulement deux ans après par la révision du procès et la réhabilitation de Syméon. À ce moment-là, le patriarche aborda de nouveau la question. Le culte du Studite était de nouveau admis après la suppression synodale, mais Sergios proposa au Nouveau Théologien de faire retour à la situation antérieure à 1001, c'est-à-dire à une fête particulière à Saint-Mamas, et il donna la recommandation de limiter l'éclat et la durée des célébrations.

Les faits et les étapes de l'affaire sont maintenant clairs, mais il nous reste à faire quelques observations sur les lectures des événements proposées par Syméon le Nouveau Théologien et Nicétas Stéthatos et à souligner aussi quelques éléments significatifs pour une vision plus générale des questions en jeu.

Nous avons vu que le patriarche Sergios, en difficulté, se réclamait de la tradition, en invoquant une distinction entre les saints du passé et les saints modernes. La question, qui n'était pas centrale dans la discussion synodale sur le culte du Studite, provoquée par les censures d'Étienne de Nicomédie qui visaient à la suppression du culte en raison du fait que Syméon ne possédait pas les qualités requises pour être reconnu saint, était pourtant d'actualité à l'époque. Un témoignage éloquent à ce propos est constitué par les œuvres du même Syméon le Nouveau Théologien dans lesquelles on parlait très souvent des contemporains de l'auteur qui affirmaient l'impossibilité qu'il existe autant de saints au présent que par le

⁵⁸ Cf. S. A. Paschalidis, *Ὁ ἀνέκδοτος Λόγος*, p. 499–500 et n. 23.

⁵⁹ Cf. plus bas.

⁶⁰ Cf. V. Grumel, J. Darrouzès, *Les registes*, n° 817.

passé.⁶¹ Nous ne devons pas croire que cette polémique du Nouveau Théologien était liée à la querelle sur la sainteté du Studite. En effet, on retrouve des constatations analogues dans le récit autobiographique de sa jeunesse, lorsqu'il était à la recherche d'un saint père spirituel et que tout le monde lui disait qu'il était impossible de le trouver à l'époque présente: « Quand j'entendais tout le monde dire unanimement (ὁμοθυμαδὸν ἅπαντας) qu'il n'existait pas actuellement (ἄρτι) sur la terre un tel saint, je tombais dans un chagrin pire ». ⁶² Le texte central du Nouveau Théologien sur cette thématique est bien connu, la *Catéchèse XIX*,⁶³ dont la première partie du titre aborde la question qui nous intéresse: « Sur une chose à ne pas dire: qu'il est impossible actuellement, à qui le veut, d'atteindre la cime de la vertu et de rivaliser avec les saints d'autrefois » (Περὶ τοῦ μὴ δεῖν λέγειν, ὅτι ἀδύνατον νῦν εἰς ἄκρον ἐλθεῖν ἀρετῆς τὸν βουλούμενον καὶ τοῖς πάλαι ἀμιλληθῆναι ἀγίοις). Après avoir mentionné les saints anciens, Euthyme, Antoine, Sabas, Étienne le Jeune, Basile le Grand, Jean Chrysostome et les hérésies du passé, Syméon parle de l'époque présente: « Mais voici ceux dont je parle et à qui je donne le nom d'hérétiques: ceux qui disent qu'il n'y a personne, à notre époque, au milieu de nous, qui puisse observer les commandements évangéliques et se rendre conforme aux saints Pères ». ⁶⁴ Et il continuait: « Ceux qui parlent ainsi ferment le ciel que le Christ nous a ouvert et interrompent le chemin qu'il nous a lui-même frayé pour y remonter. Alors en effet que, là-haut, lui, Dieu, au-dessus de tout, debout comme à la porte du ciel, se penche et que, par le saint Évangile, aux fidèles qui le voient, il crie ces mots: 'Venez à moi vous tous qui êtes fatigués et accablés et je vous soulagerai' (Mt. 11, 28), ces ennemis de Dieu ou pour mieux dire ces antichrists affirment: 'C'est impossible, impossible' ». ⁶⁵ En marge de ce dernier passage, on retrouve une scholie qui remonte à l'édition des ouvrages de Syméon faite par Nicétas Stéthatos: « Les prélats de l'époque, le patriarche Sergios, Étienne d'Alexinè et d'autres qui pensaient d'une façon semblable disaient ces mots au saint » (Ταῦτα ἔλεγον πρὸς τὸν ἅγιον οἱ τηνικαῦτα ἀρχιερεῖς, Σέργιος ὁ πατριάρχης, Στέφανος ὁ τῆς Ἀλεξίνης καὶ τινες τῶν ὁμοφρόνων αὐτῶν). La relecture effectuée par l'éditeur Nicétas Stéthatos nous paraît évidente: il liait les affirmations générales de Syméon le Nouveau Théologien sur la sainteté à la querelle sur le culte du Studite, tandis que la discussion synodale pendant les

⁶¹ Cf. *Catéchèses*, V, l. 755: B. Krivochéine, *Syméon le Nouveau Théologien, Catéchèses 1–5*, I, p. 442, VI, l. 8–9, 163–164, 248–249, 259–262; B. Krivochéine, *Syméon le Nouveau Théologien, Catéchèses 6–22*, II, p. 12, 28, 36; X, l. 34–47: ici, p. 140–142; XVI, l. 8–9: ici, p. 236; XXXII, l. 51–54: B. Krivochéine, *Syméon le Nouveau Théologien, Catéchèses 23–34. Actions de grâces I–II*, III (SC, 113), Paris, 1965, p. 242; *Lettres*, III, l. 683; H. J. M. Turner, *The Epistles of St Symeon the New Theologian*, Oxford – New York, 2009, p. 132, IV, l. 301–304: ici, p. 162; *Traité éthiques*, 5, l. 183–187; J. Darrouzès, *Syméon le Nouveau Théologien, Traité théologiques et éthiques*, II (SC, 129), Paris, 1967, p. 92

⁶² *Actions de grâces*, I, l. 78–80; B. Krivochéine, *Syméon le Nouveau Théologien, Catéchèses 23–34. Actions de grâces I–II*, III, p. 310.

⁶³ Ici, p. 164–192.

⁶⁴ Ici, l. 137–140: p. 176.

⁶⁵ Ici, l. 159–167: p. 178.

années 1003–1009 portait essentiellement sur d'autres aspects et d'autres questions. Il reste à ajouter en passant qu'en cette manière Stéthatos uniformisait les positions de Sergios II, d'Étienne de Nicomédie et d'autres prélats, tandis qu'en réalité le synode n'avait pas d'avis commun et que c'est pour cette raison que la discussion avait continué pendant six ans. Le même Nicéas synthétisait la thèse de Syméon sur l'existence de saints à l'époque présente en nombre égal ou même supérieur à ceux des temps passés dans la phrase centrale de son opuscule contre les accusateurs des saints (κατὰ ἀγιοκατηγόρων).⁶⁶ Ce dernier ouvrage, déjà par le titre, représente un stade ultérieur de la relecture effectuée par Nicéas. Il parle en effet des « accusateurs des saints » (ἀγιοκατήγοροι), utilisant un mot qui remontait à la polémique des défenseurs des icônes contre les iconoclastes.⁶⁷ Sur la même ligne se trouve évidemment aussi le récit de Nicéas sur la querelle à propos de la sainteté du Studite dans la *Vie* du Nouveau Théologien: les scènes de la destruction des images et le grattage de l'inscription rappellent en effet les récits sur les persécutions des icônes à l'époque iconoclaste et nous semblent invraisemblables sous cette forme à une époque ultérieure, en particulier au XI^e siècle. Il faut aussi souligner que le discours de Syméon le Nouveau Théologien et son apologie sont tissés de citations patristiques que l'on retrouve dans les textes et les documents des défenseurs des images. Les différents niveaux de relecture de l'affaire Syméon le Studite effectués par Nicéas Stéthatos ont une évidente intention polémique et à la fois apologétique, et il est nécessaire de les reconnaître et de les isoler des données en quelque manière plus proches de la réalité effective des événements.

* * *

Les deux cas de cultes de nouveaux saints présentés ici se sont avérés être deux échecs. Tous les deux, de provenance monastique, diffèrent certainement par leur contexte, leur provenance et la vie de leurs protagonistes. Avec Eleuthérios, nous sommes en province, avec un personnage condamné (peut-être pour hérésie), mais vénéré comme un saint après sa mort par les moines de sa fondation religieuse et par les paysans de la région. De son côté, Syméon le Studite avait été actif à Constantinople, dans des centres monastiques importants (Studios), et son influence ne s'était pas limitée aux milieux monastiques, mais s'était étendue à des cercles (haut placés) de la capitale. Dans les deux cas, nous assistons néanmoins à la naissance et au développement rapide d'un culte qui s'affirme en quelques décennies, et donne naissance à une tradition iconographique et hagiographique, outre la célébration de la fête anniversaire.

⁶⁶ « Φασί μὴ δύνασθαι τινὰ τοῦ λοιποῦ πρὸς ὕψος ἀναδραμεῖν ἀγιότητος κατὰ τοὺς πάλαι ἀγίους ἐν τῇ παρουσίᾳ γενεᾷ τῶν ἀνθρώπων καὶ τὸ μὲν παρὰ Θεοῦ ἀγαθὸν πάλαι τὸ ἐξωθεν παθῶν καὶ τῆς κατ'αἴσθησιν γενέσθαι ζωῆς καὶ τὸ νέον ἀγαθὸν κτήσασθαι σοφίαν τὴν ἀδίδακτον μὲν αἰσθησεῖ, νῦν δὲ εἰλικρινεστάτῳ καταλαμβανομένην »: S. A. Paschalidis, *Ὁ ἀνέκδοτος Λόγος*, p. 516.

⁶⁷ Cf. G. Dagron, *L'ombre d'un doute: l'hagiographie en question, VI^e–XI^e siècle*, in *DOP*, 46 (1992), p. 66, et aussi S. A. Paschalidis, *Ὁ ἀνέκδοτος Λόγος*, p. 500–501.

L'étude de deux dossiers nous a montré tout de même le contrôle strict et l'intervention de la hiérarchie locale ou constantinopolitaine aux X^e-XI^e siècle sur les nouveaux cultes des saints. Si l'église intervenait pour vérifier, et le cas échéant pour interdire et supprimer un culte, d'autre part, il semble possible d'entrevoir aussi une action du patriarcat de Constantinople, en vue d'avoir le droit de sanctionner un culte particulier et d'en affirmer l'universalité (il faut considérer en ce sens la mesure de Sergios en 1001), avec une sorte de canonisation *ante litteram*.⁶⁸ L'examen et la discussion sur la sainteté consistaient surtout dans l'examen concret des images et des textes hymnographiques et hagiographiques consacrés au nouveau saint, et dans l'éventualité d'un jugement défavorable, dans leur destruction ou leur dégradation.

Le saint était identifié en premier lieu avec l'image et l'hagiographie qui lui était dédiée. Il faut rappeler une fois de plus le poids et le rôle tout à fait central des reliques et des corps saints, signes et preuves réelles de la sainteté du personnage concerné.⁶⁹

⁶⁸ Pour la canonisation à Byzance cf. nos remarques, A. Rigo, *La canonizzazione di Gregorio Palamas (1968) ed alcune altre questioni*, in *RSBN* n. s., 30 (1993), p. 177-186.

⁶⁹ Pour des raisons bien différentes à la fin du XI^e siècle Jean *maïstôr* affirme encore que les reliques sont la preuve capitale de l'efficacité et du pouvoir des saints, cf. J. Gouillard, *Léthargie des âmes et culte des saints: un plaidoyer inédit de Jean diacre et maïstôr*, in *TM*, 8 (1981), p. 175.

Conclusion

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I think it would be appropriate to begin with commemorating the unforgettable master in Byzantine hagiography and many other areas of Byzantine studies, Gilbert Dagron, who quitted us nearly exactly a year ago but whose writings will influence our work for years to come.

Commenting on the profound paper by Bernard Flusin, I cannot but remember his another paper, “Le serviteur caché ou le saint sans existence”.¹ There he spoke of the incipient stage of hagiography and defined its hero as “figure saisissante et simple d’un être intermédiaire entre Dieu et nous”,² and its goal as “à faire apparaître la sainteté dans le monde, à dégager... le personnage appelé à devenir un saint homme”.³ In this article he expressed very eloquently the idea that I was trying to convey in my introduction. In his today’s paper, he followed the evolution of hagiography in the post-iconoclastic period, and the only reproach I have to his brilliant work is that this development is depicted as unproblematic, so to say. Did the transformation of hagiography into an established and respectable genre of literature lead to a complete rupture with the spontaneous cultural movements which, at the incipient stage of development, called hagiography into being? When speaking of the golden age, we should think more often of what happened soon afterwards. The period of inventory, of cataloguing is the time of the demise of the initial unity of legend, text and veneration. Metaphrasis is an attempt to pour old wine into new bottles, if we use the metaphor applied by Alice-Mary Talbot to a much later period.⁴ Flusin’s words on “aboutissement de l’évolution de l’hagiographie peu après l’An Mil” are, in my perception both correct and incorrect: on the one hand, hagiography as the reflection of the search for sanctity got calcified earlier, on the other hand, hagiography as literature only diversified. Finally, speaking of the development of literariness in hagiography, Bernard Flusin admits: “Les lignes d’évolution que nous décrivons ici ne suffisent pas à expliquer l’apparition de ces œuvres”, so, to explain their very emergence we should resort to some other factors.

¹ B. Flusin, *Le serviteur caché ou le saint sans existence*, in P. Agapitos, P. Odorico (ed.), *Les Vies de saints: genre littéraire ou biographie historique?* (Dossiers byzantins, 4), Paris, 2004, p. 59–71.

² *Ibid.*, p. 64.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 69. In his early work, Bernard Flusin brilliantly proved that initially the miracle stood in the center of hagiography (B. Flusin, *Miracle et histoire dans l’œuvre de Cyrille de Scythopolis*, Paris, 1983).

⁴ A.-M. Talbot, *Old Wine in New Bottles: The Rewriting of Saints’ Lives in the Palaeologan Period*, in S. Čurčić, D. Mouriki (ed.), *The Twilight of Byzantium*, Princeton, N.J., 1991, p. 15–26.

Turning to Antonio Rigo's paper, I would like to draw attention to the relative irrelevance of hagiography per se for the heated debates evolving around such dubious saints as Eleutherios of Paphlagonia and Symeon the Pious. True, we hear that the followers of the former "composed and sang the hymns in his honor", and the persecutors demand to "burn down all the books composed in his honour",⁵ but the word 'bios' is not even mentioned and the key point of the discussion are the Eleutherios' mortal remains. Symeon the New Theologian composed in his spiritual mentor's honor numerous hymns and among other writings, his *vita* (ῥυμνος εἰς αὐτὸν καὶ ἐγκώμια ... καὶ ὄλον τὸν βίον αὐτοῦ). Yet, the focal point of the controversy is the icons which are looked for, stolen, maimed and defaced by the authorities. It is the question of icons which is debated throughout the second part of the *Life*. Rigo underlines that "il s'attaquait au culte qui lui était rendu par le Nouveau Théologien, aux hymnes et surtout à l'image" – no mention of the *Life*. Rigo's assertion that "au moment de l'édition des œuvres de Syméon par Nicétas Stéthatos, la *Vie* du Studite était encore disponible" proves that this text did not constitute such an acute problem for the church authorities. So, the riot of followers of both saints against the establishment pertained more to cult practice than to the realm of literature. And indeed, the cult practice can have a life of its own, absolutely independent from hagiography. For example, Antony the Younger of Berroia is depicted in the metropolitan church as a fool for Christ's sake, whereas his *Vita* does not give a single hint at his extravagance.⁶

The case of mystics is interesting: they themselves regarded any external activity, even asceticism, as something auxiliary to the inexplicable essence of their experience. Symeon the New Theologian underlines that hagiography in general is insufficient, since it can reveal only the superficial part of a saint's life. In his admonitions he warns a disciple: "Read [the saints'] Lives and learn first about their bodily feats, and later I will announce to you their spiritual endeavor. Those who compiled the Lives of the saints described their outward conduct ... but they hardly described their spiritual activity ... the others are not found worthy even to hear of such things... How is it not recorded [in the *Life* of St. Arsenius] that he too saw the Lord [like Antony]? ... He likewise was granted to see God, even though the narrator did not make this clear".⁷ Although the mystics protested against this very routinization of religion that led to the crisis in hagiography which stands in my focus today, they also, paradoxically, undermined hagiography, if in a different way.

Commenting on the paper by Vincent Déroche, I would say that he correctly singles out two different trends in the hagiography of the tenth century, but explains only the

⁵ J. Gouillard, *Quatre procès de mystiques à Byzance (vers 960–1143). Inspiration et autorité*, in *REB*, 36 (1978), p. 50.100–101.

⁶ S. Ivanov, *Holy fools in Byzantium and beyond*, Oxford, 2006, p. 219, n. 54.

⁷ *Syméon le Nouveau Théologien, Catéchèses*, ed. B. Krivochéine, J. Paramelle (SC, 104), Paris, 1964, VI.1–3.

first of them, that is Metaphrastic fashion of smoothing and standardization; but what about the second group, texts such as the Lives of Andrew the Fool, Basil the Younger or St. Gregentios? I am far from a naïve belief that they reflect a grass-roots sincerity and democratic simplicity – to the contrary, they are complicated literary constructions⁸ – but we cannot deny that such creations go against the grain of the Simeon Metaphrastes' reform; their authors try to reinvigorate sanctity as such,⁹ to go back to the roots of inspiration, to remind of what it used to be all about. In this sense they are opponents of the levelling, routinizing tendency of the reform which was contemporaneous with their creation but somehow existed beyond it. So far so good, but we still do not have an answer to the questions who and for what audience wrote these Lives. What did authorities think about them? What would Metaphrastes say about them?

Vincent Déroche rightly underlines the aristocratization of hagiography. This means, among other things, that elitist authors chose to write their texts with no regard to the level of the grass-roots popularity of this or that saint. If we judge by the number of venerated relics, the most venerated saint was St. Charalambos because he helped against cattle diseases: 'his' body (whatever this means) had been dismembered into 226 pieces, while John Chrysostom, the first real person on this list, comes only as number nine, with just 66 pieces.¹⁰ Yet, Charalambos is not mentioned in Simeon Metaphrastes' collection. One may ask: what could be the reaction of the broad audience of the devotees to hagiographic snobbery of the élite? I would suggest that they probably were outraged, and their indignation can be traced in a miracle by St. Nicholas of Myrrha which survived only in its Slavic version. The legend tells us that the patriarch mocks Nicholas calling him "a plebeian" (we do not know what stood in the Greek original, but the translator used a very colorful word *смердовичь*). The saint takes his revenge when the patriarch's ship begins to sink in the storm, and he implores Nicholas to rescue him. The saint appears walking on the turbulent waters and asks with sarcasm: "Are you calling out to a plebeian?"¹¹

I enthusiastically agree with Vincent Déroche's point on the rise of psychologism in these Lives, but his thesis would be stronger if he cited the text which is commonly forgotten in the discussions of this kind, that is the Life of Niphon of Constantia. Niphon is the most underestimated saint. He falls into sins, reaches the lowest point and begins his long

⁸ P. Magdalino, 'What we heard in the Lives of the saints we have seen with our own eyes': the Holy Man as Literary Text in Tenth-century Constantinople, in J. Howard-Johnston, P. A. Hayward (ed.), *The Cult of Saints in Christianity and Islam: Essays on the Contribution of Peter Brown*, Oxford, 1999, p. 83–112, esp. 105.

⁹ In this sense it would be appropriate to apply to them the term "retro hagiography", cf.: S. Efthymiadis, *Introduction*, in *ARCBH*, II, p. 11–12.

¹⁰ O. Meinardus, *A Study of the Relics of Saints of the Greek Orthodox Church*, in *Oriens Christianus*, 54 (1971), p. 130–178.

¹¹ М. С. Крутова, *Святитель Николай Чудотворец в древнерусской письменности*, Москва, 1997, p. 67, 69.

and extremely painful journey back to a pious life. On this path he constantly stumbles and resumes his previous habits; Niphon is anything but a benign Byzantine saint haloed ever since his day of birth – he muddles through doubts, to the extent of doubting God's existence, and his dialogues with the Devil on this behalf¹² are the most heart-breaking piece of Byzantine literature, which proves to anyone who had any doubts that hagiography is anything but dull.

¹² *Матеріали з історії візантійсько-слов'янської літератури та мови*, ed. А. Ристенко, Одеса, 1928, p. 31–33.

II

The Byzantine City and the Archaeology of the Third Millennium

Moderator: **James Crow**

- Jorge López Quiroga** Early Byzantine Urban Landscapes
in the Southwest and Southeast
Mediterranean
- Vujadin Ivanišević** Caričin Grad (Justiniana Prima): A
New-Discovered City for a ‘New’
Society
- Enrico Zanini** Coming to the End: Early Byzantine
Cities after the mid-6th Century

Introduction

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The recent publication of the account of the stratigraphic excavations within the Byzantine town of Amorium are welcome not simply because for the first time in Asia Minor we are presented with properly documented excavations of a Byzantine urban settlement, explicitly initiated to uncover the Byzantine period.¹ For once in Turkey a Byzantine period dig was started not just to remove the inconvenient medieval levels to reveal the splendours of the classical past. But it is not just Eric Ivison's clear exposition of the stratigraphic record and the measured description of the chronology and character of the destruction levels relating to the Arab siege of 838 that are striking.² No, it is quite simply the opportunity this gives to create a reconstruction drawing of the Byzantine town based on known archaeological remains. While it may lack the gloss of Tayfun Öner's ambitious realisation of Byzantine Constantinople in *Byzantium 1200*,³ the simple reconstruction painting of 8th-century Amorium allows one to envisage for the first time a major Byzantine town in Anatolia in the post-Classical age. Compared to the total area defined by the 5th-century walls the excavated area remains quite small and there has been scope for imaginative and 'informed recreation', but the bath building and the network of the streets and house forms are all derived from the excavated archaeological traces. In the distance is the newly-walled hüyük or mound of an earlier settlement. Below is a bustling, crowded town, an economic centre as Chris Lightfoot has shown in the recent volume on *Trade and Markets in Byzantium*.⁴ In this instance excavation has shown that it had not simply become a reduced, defended urban centre for the administration of church and state, but was a place of production and exchange; from such projects we can begin to investigate communities in an era formerly known as 'the Dark Ages'.

While Amorium was not unique, a problem facing archaeologists and historians is the absence of the 'typical' in the early Byzantine age. For the Roman city in the east there seems to have been an almost predetermined typology of monumental forms. A classic account of such a check-list of civic amenities, made more apparent through their absence, derives

¹ C. S. Lightfoot, E. A. Ivison, *Amorium Reports 3: The Lower City Enclosure, Finds, Reports and Technical Studies*, Istanbul, 2012.

² E. A. Ivison, *Excavations at the Lower City Enclosure, 1996–2008*, in C. S. Lightfoot, E. A. Ivison, *op. cit.*, p. 5–151.

³ <http://www.byzantium1200.com/>.

⁴ C. Lightfoot, *Business as Usual? Archaeological Evidence for Byzantine Commercial Enterprise at Amorium in the Seventh to Eleventh Centuries*, in C. Morrisson (ed.), *Trade and Markets in Byzantium* (Dumbarton Oaks Byzantine symposia and colloquia), Washington, D. C., 2012, p. 177–192.

from Pausanias' often quoted account of the city of Panopeus in Boeotia. He describes a city bereft of the conventional array of civic monuments, hardly justifying its urban status. But as has been noted by Susan Alcock and others, although the urban formula is stripped of the most of its structural attributes, in Pausanias' eyes Panopeus still retained the status of a *polis* with the essential elements of: a walled circuit, a defined territory, a mythic founder and as a place of cult veneration and pilgrimage.⁵ While they hardly contribute to the broken ruins appreciated and celebrated by generations of enlightenment scholars and modern tourism, these were to become crucial *urban* attributes which as we will see were to remain as enduring elements throughout later times.⁶ In assessing this later time we should never forget that one of the largest and ultimately most successful cities of antiquity was Constantine's new foundation at Constantinople which achieved its greatest population size probably after AD 500, exceeding with the exception of Rome, all the major urban centres of Hellenistic or Roman times. Indeed, its new hydraulic infrastructure and colossal defensive walls, as well as its now lost but extensive colonnaded streets exceeded those of Old Rome.⁷ But there were other new cities, the ambition to create new foundations had not passed,⁸ although the momentum for change in the across the entire urban landscapes had increased. And I mean this in a positive as well as a negative way.

A British landscape archaeologist recently used the phrase 'Roller-coaster demographics', to define the marked variations in settlement and material evidence apparent from the long-term settlement history of the marginal and tiny Aegean island of Antikythera.⁹ The statement assumes peaks as well as troughs in long-term settlement and occupation, and we need to be alert to the successes and failures of urban settlements before and during the early Byzantine period. Urban failure and decline was not unique the late Roman and early Byzantine worlds,

⁵ S. Alcock, *Pausanias and the Polis: Use and Abuse*, in M. H. Hansen (ed.), *Sources for the Greek City State, Symposium August 24–27, 1994* (Acts of the Copenhagen Polis Centre), Copenhagen, 1995, p. 326–334.

⁶ For the cities of late antique Asia Minor see now the important reinterpretation in I. Jacobs, *Aesthetic Maintenance of Urban Space, The Classical City from the 4th to the 7th century*, Leuven, 2013; a diversity previously defined in G. Dagron, *Entre village et cité: la bourgade rurale des IV^e–VII^e siècles en Orient*, in *Koinonia*, 3 (1979), p. 29–52. Reprinted in G. Dagron, *La Romanité chrétienne en Orient. Héritages et mutations*, London, 1984.

⁷ For the land walls see most recently, N. Asutay-Effenberger, *Die Landmauer von Konstantinopel–Istanbul, Historisch-topographische und baugeschichtliche Untersuchungen*, Berlin, 2007; for recent studies and bibliography see J. Crow, *Water and the Creation of a New Capital*, in P. Magdalino, N. Ergin, *Istanbul and Water* (Ancient Near Eastern Studies Supplement Series, 47), Leuven, 2015, p. 115–128; for a recent review of the streets and passage see, V. Manolopoulou, *Processing Emotion: Litanies in Byzantine Constantinople*, in C. Nesbitt, M. Jackson (ed.), *Experiencing Byzantium* (Society for the Promotion of Byzantine Studies, 18), Farnham, 2013, p. 153–74.

⁸ See the forthcoming publication on late-antique new towns, E. Rizos, A. Ricci (ed.), *New Cities in Late Antiquity, Documents and Archaeology* (Brepols, in press).

⁹ A. Bevan, J. Conolly, A. Tsaravopoulos, *The fragile communities of Antikythera*, in *Archaeology International*, 10 (2008), p. 32–36.

and had always been a feature of classical urbanism. My colleagues' discussions which follow reflect the great diversity of the archaeological evidence for urban life apparent around the Mediterranean littoral up to AD 800. As these papers describe and as is also redefined in Ine Jacobs' study for Asia Minor noted before, what is significant throughout the period we are considering are the differing reactions from the urban communities responding to what we come to recognise as a multiplicity of differing challenges in differing circumstances.¹⁰ We have come a long way since the single-cause interpretations of earlier scholarship such as Clive Foss who was able to persuade almost a whole generation of scholars that the end of classical urbanism could be attributed to the Persian invasions of the early 7th century.¹¹ The view presented in these essays is more extended, more nuanced and especially aware of both long-term trends and specific agents, human and natural.

¹⁰ In addition to the comments in the three main essays of Ivanišević, López Quiroga and Zanini, see now the forthcoming study on early Byzantine hydraulic systems by Jordan Pickett, *Water and Empire in the de Aedificiis of Procopius*, in *DOP*, 70 (2017), in press.

¹¹ C. Foss, *The Persians in Asia Minor and the end of Antiquity*, in *English Historical Review*, 90 (1974), p. 721–747.

Early Byzantine Urban Landscapes in the Southwest and Southeast Mediterranean

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From a conceptual and methodological point of view, the image of post-Roman urbanism has been radically altered, owing mostly to certain new approaches in historiography:¹ a simple narrative of decline and collapse has been replaced by a much more chronologically and geographically nuanced picture.² In this sense, the importance of regional, indeed local, specificity is fundamental,³ with a great diversity and complexity of the early Byzantine

¹ L. Lavan, *What killed the ancient city? Chronology, causation and trace of continuity*, in *JRA*, 22 (2009), p. 803–812; F. Marazzi, *Città, territorio ed economia nella tarda antichità*, in G. Traina (ed.), *Storia d'Europa e del Mediterraneo, VII. L'impero tardoantico*, Rome, 2010, p. 651–696; P. Garmy, *Villes, réseaux et systèmes de villes, contribution de l'archéologie*, Paris, 2012. For the Iberian Peninsula: J. López Quiroga, *L'urbanisme post-romain en Hispania pendant l'Antiquité Tardive*, in V. Ivanišević (ed.), *Early Byzantine City and Society, Conference dedicated to the centenary of archaeological research in Caričin Grad, Leskovac, 3rd–7th October 2012* (Caričin Grad IV, Collections de l'Ecole Française de Rome), Roma (forthcoming).

² The bibliography about the Late Antiquity and Byzantine city has exponentially increased in recent years and the urban world, both East and West, has been no exception. Some important works of synthesis, without being exhaustive, are: J. H. W. G. Liebeschuetz, *The Decline and Fall of the Roman City*, Oxford, 2001; L. Lavan (ed.), *Recent Research in Late-Antique Urbanism*, Portsmouth, 2001; A. Augenti (ed.), *Palatia. Palazzi Imperiali tra Ravenna e Bisanzio*, Ferrara, 2002; I. Baldini-Lippolis, *L'architettura residenziale nelle città tardoantiche*, Roma, 2005; J. U. Krause, C. Witschel (ed.), *Die Stadt in der Spätantike: Niedergang oder Wandel?*, Stuttgart, 2006; H. Saradi, *The Byzantine City in the Sixth Century. Literary Images and Historical Reality*, Athens, 2006; J. Henning (ed.), *Post-roman towns. Trade and Settlement in Europe and Byzantium*, Berlin, 2007; E. Jeffreys, J. Haldon, R. Cormack (ed.), *Oxford Handbook of Byzantine Studies*, Oxford, 2008; L. Zavagno, *Cities in transition, urbanism in Byzantium between late antiquity and the early Middle Ages (500–900 A. D.)*, Oxford, 2009; L. James (ed.), *A Companion to Byzantium*, Oxford, 2010; D. Vaquerizo (ed.), *Las áreas suburbanas en la ciudad histórica. Topografía, usos, función* (Monografías de Arqueología cordobesa, 10), Córdoba, 2010; A. García et al. (ed.), *Espacios urbanos en el occidente mediterráneo (siglos VI–VIII)*, Tolède, 2010; G. P. Brogiolo, *L'origini della città medievale*, Mantova, 2011; A. Leone, *The End of the Pagan City. Religion, Economy, and Urbanism in Late Antiquity North Africa*, Oxford, 2013; O. Brandt, S. Cresci, J. López Quiroga, C. Pappalardo (ed.), *Episcopus, ciuitas, territorium (Acta XV Congressus Internationalis Archaeologicae Christianiae, Toledo 8–12. 09. 2008, Studi di Antichità Cristiana LXV)*, City of Vatican, 2013; H. W. Dey, *The Afterlife of the Roman City: Architecture and Ceremony in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages*, New York, 2014.

³ M. M. Mango (ed.), *Byzantine trade, 4th–12th centuries. The Archaeology of local, regional and international exchanges*, Ashgate, 2009; D. Parrish (ed.), *Urbanism in Western Asia Minor*, Portsmouth,

occupation forms and some really exceptional new urban foundations in this period.⁴ We analyse in this synoptic survey some urban landscapes of the southwest and southeast regions of the Mediterranean: the Byzantine province of *Spania* (Fig. 1), the Near East (Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, Palestine and Israel) and North Africa (Libya, Tunisia and Alger) (Fig. 2 and 3).

A vast region with numerous and important regional and local differences but, at the same time, the urban landscapes in the early Byzantine southwest and southeast Mediterranean certainly show common transformation parameters such as: the Christianisation of the urban topography; the dismantling process of the Roman classical city; the reduction, restoration or new construction of the city walls, particularly, but not exclusively, in border areas, as in the case of the Byzantine province of *Spania* (Fig. 1) and large sectors of the Near East.⁵ The ‘border’ situation of many urban enclaves of this vast region is a key element in analysing the characteristics of the settlement and the urban landscapes in early Byzantine times (Fig. 2, 3).⁶

Recent research, and not only for urban areas, has made still incipient developments regarding citizen daily life (diet, health conditions, diseases, etc.) through bio-archaeological studies from isotopic and ancient DNA analysis essential, including archaeozoological and palynological investigations.

The Near Eastern Archaeological Heritage in danger

Before analysing, in a necessarily brief and synthetic form, the urban landscapes in the early Byzantine southwest and southeast Mediterranean we are obliged to refer to the consequences of the current political situation in the Near East on the extraordinary archaeological heritage of the area. The current geopolitical situation in the Middle East is catastrophic for the whole

2001; A. Brown, *The City of Corinth and Urbanism in Late Antique Greece*, Berkeley, 2008; R. Alston, *The City in Roman and Byzantine Egypt*, London – New York, 2002; A. Augenti (ed.), *Le città italiane tra la tarda antichità e l'alto medioevo*, Firenze, 2006; E. Cirelli, *Ravenna. Archeologia di una città*, Firenze, 2008; G. Otranto, *Per una storia dell'Italia tardoantica cristiana*, Bari, 2009; G. Volpe, R. Giuiliani (ed.), *Paesaggi e insediamenti urbani in Italia Meridionali fra tardoantico e altomedioevo*, Bari, 2010; K. Tabata, *Città dell'Italia nel VI secolo D. C.*, Roma, 2013; G. Avni, *The Byzantine-Islamic transition in Palestine. An Archaeological Approach*, Oxford, 2014; J. F. Baratte, *Tunisia e Libia. L'Africa settentrionale in epoca romana*, Milano, 2014.

⁴ *Justiniana Prima* in Serbia and *Recópolis* in the Iberian Peninsula are the most outstanding examples, and also probably singular exceptions.

⁵ C. Kirilov, *The reduction of the fortified city area in Late Antiquity: some reflections on the end of the 'antique city' in the lands of the Eastern Roman Empire*, in J. Henning, (ed.), *Post-roman towns...*, *op. cit.*, p. 3–24.

⁶ M. Decker, *Frontier Settlement and the Economy of the Byzantine East*, in *DOP*, 61 (2007), p. 217–267.

archaeological heritage in the region, and not only in Syria⁷ because looting, pillaging and destruction are also systematic in Egypt, Libya, Lebanon, Iraq and, although to a much lesser extent, in Jordan,⁸ Tunisia and Palestine. In the words of Jesse Casana: “there is no historic parallel to the severity and geographic scope of the cultural heritage crisis, now impacting entire countries from North Africa to Central Asia”.⁹

Probably the looting and destruction of the Syrian heritage is that the most recurrently appears in the media. And, certainly, the Syrian war (which begun in 2011) and the expansion of ISIS¹⁰ in the region caused destruction in numerous archaeological sites,¹¹ most of them between the famous ‘forgotten cities’: the 700 abandoned settlements in northwest Syria between Aleppo and *Idlib* that were abandoned between the 8th and 10th centuries. But not only ISIS¹² is responsible for the destruction of many archaeological complexes in Syria, also the Russian which army bombed systematically UN World Heritage Sites as *Kafranbel* and *Shanshrah*.

The archaeological heritage of the Byzantine period is directly affected. Indeed, during the Syrian civil war, refugees that fled the regime’s bombings found shelter in the Byzantine ruins.¹³ Many of the most famous ancient sites in Syria are now held by the fundamentalist

⁷ The activity of Polish archaeologists in Syria has increased in recent years, until the beginning of the war in this region, and the city of Palmyra has been one of the central points of the Polish archaeological mission in this country, centred essentially on the Christianization of the urban topography and the Christian architecture.

⁸ Archaeological sites in Jordan have suffered very badly from illegal digging in the 1990s and 2000s, though outside the academic literature very little was said about it internationally in respect to Syria and Iraq, because the country generally was not considered by the international community to pose any kind of challenge to global security or stability. Between 2002 and 2013 an important Danish-Jordanian archaeological mission in Gerasa was developed, focusing principally on the recovery of the early Islamic city, with the excavation of a monumental mosque in the centre of the city north of the oval square. Also to study the early Islamic material evidence it is necessary to mention the *Islamic Aqaba Project* developed from 2008 with an international team from Belgium, Spain, France, Canada, Denmark and Jordan.

⁹ J. Casana, *The Cultural Heritage Crisis in the Middle East*, in *Near Eastern Archaeology*, 78/3, Special Issue: The Cultural Heritage Crisis in the Middle East (September 2015), p. 129–131.

¹⁰ Islamic fundamentalists in Syria have started to destroy archaeological treasures such a sixth-century Byzantine mosaic near the city of Raqqa, on the Euphrates, discovered in 2007. The extreme Islamic

¹¹ Since late 2014 there have been a growing number of intentional demolitions of historic and archaeological monuments, most notoriously by members of the so-called Islamic State (ISIS/ISIL).

¹² And no-state *Jihadi-Salafi* groups such as ISIL, *Al-Qaeda* affiliates such as *Jabhat al-Nusra* and other Islamist extremists.

¹³ Local people built houses on the ruins and rebuilt rooms with broken walls and simply lived there. They also lived in the ancient caves that once served as cemeteries. A squatter phenomenon that is very similar to what happened in many urban centres during the Late Antiquity.

Islamic opposition and are thereby in danger.¹⁴ As Ömür Harmanşah pointed out, “this destruction can be seen as a form of place-based violence that aims to annihilate the local sense of belonging, and the collective sense of memory among local communities to whom the heritage belongs”.¹⁵

The civil war has inflicted heavy damage, notably in *Aleppo* and *Homs*, which have suffered serious damage.¹⁶ The most devastating and irreversible losses to Syria’s rich heritage in particular, and throughout the Middle East in general, of ancient cities and buildings are the result of looting.¹⁷ From 2013 the looting has become large scale, there is a veritable mafia of trade in illicit antiquities from Turkey, Iraq and Lebanon hiring hundreds of people to strip sites.¹⁸ The situation at *Dura-Europos* is dramatic: illegal excavations have led to the destruction of 80% of the site as perpetrators are digging holes that can reach three metres in depth!¹⁹

The chaotic political situation after the fall of some regimes, as in Libya, is also an obvious risk due to the decontrol and apathy by political authorities concerning the archaeological and cultural heritage. While the focus of the media has been on Syria, Libya’s case is also dramatic.²⁰ During the Gaddafi regime, Libya’s cultural heritage from the pre-Arab period was seen as a reminder of Libya’s colonial past and therefore neglected for political reasons. Currently with two de facto governments claiming authority in the country, and despite the efforts of the Libyan Department of Antiquities, the future of the cultural heritage in Libya remains unclear.²¹

¹⁴ The ISIS program of cultural heritage destruction in Syria (and Iraq) took the form of smashing artefacts in archaeological museums, iconoclastic breaking and bulldozing of archaeological sites, dynamiting of shrines, tombs, and other holy sites of local communities, and burning of libraries and archives.

¹⁵ Ö. Harmanşah, *ISIS, Heritage, and the Spectacles of Destruction in the Global Media*, in *Near Eastern Archaeology*, 78/3 (September 2015), p. 170–177. See also his extraordinary book: id., *Cities and the Shaping of Memory in the Ancient Near East*, Cambridge, 2013.

¹⁶ The immense Crusader fortress of ‘Krak des Chevaliers’ has been battered by government air strikes. Rebels have turned the great church at St Simeon into a military training area and artillery range.

¹⁷ Much of this is local people looking for treasure, though in many cases they are obliterating the archaeological record by using bulldozers.

¹⁸ For instance, in *Idlib* (one of the famous ‘Dead Cities’, in northern Syria), there are signs that thieves have brought in antiquities experts to advise them about the best places to dig, going by the orderly nature of the excavations. In the far east of Syria at *Mari* an armed gang numbering 500 has taken over the site focusing on the Royal Palace, the southern gate, the public baths, Temple of Ishtar, the Temple of Dagan and the temple of the Goddess of Spring.

¹⁹ Through analysis of high-resolution satellite imagery in *Dura Europos* is possible to see that in 2013–2014 it was severely damaged by looting, with thousands of new holes visible across the entire site. J. Casana, *Satellite Imagery-Based Analysis of Archaeological Looting in Syria*, in *Near Eastern Archaeology*, 78/3 (September 2015), p. 142–152 (147, Fig. 2).

²⁰ S. Di Lernia, *Save Libyan Archaeology*, in *Nature*, 517 (January 29, 2015), p. 547–549.

²¹ S. Kane, *Archaeology and Cultural Heritage in Post-Revolution Libya*, in *Near Eastern Archaeology*, 78/3 (September 2015), p. 204–211.

The contribution of cutting-edge technology is essential in controlling risks, damage and prevention in this cultural heritage crisis unparalleled in the recent history of humanity. For instance, analysis in real time of high-resolution satellite imagery of more than 1 200 places in Syria²² shows that more than 25% of archaeological sites have been impacted by looting since the war began.²³ In Egypt the analysis of high-resolution satellite imagery between 2009 and 2013 has shown an increase of 500% in the looting at archaeological sites following the Egyptian revolution in January 2011.²⁴

One course of action that is currently proving effective in this heritage emergency context is the Project *Safeguarding the Heritage of Syria Initiative*, also known as SHOSI²⁵ (active since spring 2013) which develops, among others, three main actions: *Emergency Training Activities* (training programs for country's heritage professionals), *Emergency Preservation Projects* for at-risk cultural heritage sites and *Tacking Actions* through collaborative involvement of local population to implement emergency projects.

The Early Byzantine City: 'Christian city' or 'Christianized city'?

Traditionally the gradual introduction of Christianity has been seen as both the cause of the end of the Roman city and the factor responsible for the changes visible in the urban topography of Late Antiquity.²⁶ This transformation of the urban topography is visible through a construction activity (related to a new form of urban evergetism) resulting from the initiative of the old *curiae municipalis*, at the head of which was the Bishop, in fact the new *defensor ciuitatis*.²⁷ Indeed, the bishop has civil and religious functions, becoming the

²² As part of a NASA-funded research project focusing on northern Syria and surrounding regions, leading by J. Casana, which had already mapped all archaeological sites reported by 40 regional surveys and several atlas projects, producing a dataset of around 4 500 previously published sites and close to 12 000 sites and probable sites that are as-yet unpublished. J. Casana, *Satellite Imagery-Based Analysis of Archaeological Looting in Syria...*, *op. cit.*

²³ J. Casana, *Satellite Imagery-Based Analysis of Archaeological Looting in Syria...*, *op. cit.*

²⁴ S. Parcak, *Archaeological Looting in Egypt: A Geospatial View (Case Studies from Saqqara, Lisht, and el Hibeh)*, in *Near Eastern Archaeology*, 78/3 (September 2015), p. 196–203.

²⁵ SHOSI began with the Penn Cultural Heritage Centre at the University of Pennsylvania Museum; the Office of the Under Secretary for History, Art, and Culture at the Smithsonian Institution; the Geospatial Technologies Project at the American Association for the Advancement of Science; the US Institute of Peace; and The Day After Association (a Syrian NGO) as its core partners. S. Al Quntar, K. Hanson, B. I. Daniels, C. Wegener, *Responding to a Cultural Heritage Crisis: The Example of the Safeguarding the Heritage of Syria and Iraq Project*, in *Near Eastern Archaeology*, 78/3 (September 2015), p. 154–160.

²⁶ B. Brenk (ed.), *Architettura e immagini del sacro nella Tarda Antichità*, Spoleto, 2005.

²⁷ G. A. Cecconi, *Honorati, possessores, curiales: competenze istituzionali e gerarchie di rango nella città tardoantica*, in R. Lizzi Testa (ed.), *Le trasformazioni delle élites in età tardoantica (Atti del Convegno Internazionale, Perugia 15–16 marzo 2004)*, Rome, 2006, p. 41–64; A. Laniado, *Le*

main sponsor of the transformation of an urban landscape in which the cathedral (with the intramural ‘episcopal area’) turns out to be the ‘new forum’ of the elites who manage and govern the early Byzantine city. So the urban topography has been defined as ‘Christian’, and is spoken of a ‘Christianization of the topography’ or even a ‘Christian city’ or significantly ‘Christianized’. In this sense, it is possible to speak of an inflation of the term and concept of Christianization applied to the study of the early Byzantine urbanism. An interpretation probably due to the gradual process of accepting Christianity and also to a reading typically made from a purely ideological perspective.²⁸

In this way, we confront, and often oppose, a ‘classical pagan city’ (with the existence of a hypothetical freedom of religion) to a ‘Christian post-Roman city’ (where there is a theoretical prohibition and exclusion of the ‘non-Christian’ devotion, although it is possible to attest the persistence of some pagan temples throughout the fifth and sixth centuries) both in the West and in the East. Therefore, we are facing a valuation of the idea and concept of the classical city as an area of ‘freedom’ opposed to the post-Roman city as a space under the control of the bishop, in the context of a strict religious orthodoxy. This dichotomy, certainly Manichean, between ‘freedom’ and ‘non-freedom’ has influenced and conditioned the study of the early Byzantine city. In this sense, and as it usually happens when we deal with extreme ideological counterparts, we tend to minimize and underestimate the impact of Christianization in the transformation of the post-Roman city, and in general in Late Antique and early medieval societies.

It is also noteworthy that the ‘visibility’ of the major changes in the ‘monumental landscape’ (that represents the construction activity operated by urban elites, mostly bishops, and related to the construction of buildings and/or Christian complexes with their dependencies²⁹) has long promoted the ‘invisibility’ of other buildings and structures representing the daily activities of the inhabitants of the early Byzantine cities. The role of the bishops in this process, as we have already pointed out, becomes fundamental in

christianisme et l'évolution des institutions municipales du Bas-Empire: l'exemple du 'defensor civitatis', in J.-U. Krause, C. Witschel (ed.), *Die Stadt in der Spätantike. Niedergang oder Wandel?*, Stuttgart, 2006, p. 319–334.

²⁸ Ph. Pergola, *Dalla civitas classica alla città sedi di diocesi cristiana: teoria e metodi della topografia cristiana*, in V. Ruggieri, L. Pieralli (ed.), *Eykonomia. Studi Micellanei per il 75 di Vincenzo Poggi*, Roma, 2003, p. 341–375; N. Gauthier, *La Topographie chrétienne entre idéologie et pragmatisme*, in G. P. Brogiolo, B. Ward Perkins (ed.), *The Idea and Ideal of the Town between Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages* (The Transformation of the Roman World, 4), Leiden – Boston – Köln, 1999, p. 195–210.

²⁹ G. Cantino Wataghin, *Urbanistica tardo-antica e topografia cristiana: termini di un problema*, in G. Sena Chiesa, E. A. Arslan (ed.), *Felix temporis reparatio. Milano capitale dell'Impero (Atti del Convegno Archeologico Internazionale, Milano 8–11 marzo 1990)*, Milan, 1992, p. 171–192; id., *Christian topography in the Late Antiquity town: recent results and open questions*, in L. Lavan, W. Bowden (ed.), *Theory and Practice in Late Antique Archaeology*, Leiden, 2003, p. 224–256.

transforming the intramural classical city but also the extramural area, that is to say, the *suburbia* and *territoria*.³⁰

Before analysing the more visible urban constructions in relation to the Christianization of the urban topography (cathedrals and intramural/extramural churches), and precisely as regards questions of visibility and invisibility of these building structures linked to Christianity, it is necessary to refer to the well-known *Dura-Europos* house-church (Syria). A house-church that was first built around AD 130 and converted to house-church circa AD 230 by the demolition of a wall to open up space for the assembly hall and the addition of a baptismal pool with several later internal transformations. What seems important to point out to us, and as has been demonstrated in a recent study, the *Dura-Europos* house-church was not a marker space for the population, as the spatial analysis has shown clearly, defining its topographical intramural position in a peripheral part of the city. The poor interior architectural renovation and the rudimentary decorative program of the edifice confirm this.³¹

The configuration of the so-called ‘episcopal districts or neighbourhoods’ is also apparent in the Byzantine Province of *Spania*³² (Fig. 1) and other Iberian Mediterranean cities such as *Valentia* (Valencia)³³ (Fig. 4) and *Barcino* (Barcelona)³⁴ (Fig. 5) or in *Egara* (Tarrasa),³⁵ all dated to the 6th century. The topographic position of the cathedral and the

³⁰ D. Vaquerizo (ed.), *Las áreas suburbanas en la ciudad histórica. Topografía, usos, función* (Monografías de Arqueología cordobesa, 10), Córdoba, 2010; A. García et al. (ed.), *Espacios urbanos en el occidente mediterráneo (siglos VI–VIII)*, Tolède, 2010; R. Farioli et al. (ed.), *Ideologia e cultura artistica tra Adriatico e Mediterraneo Orientale (IV–X secolo): Il ruolo dell’ autorità ecclesiastica alla luce di nuovi scavi e ricerche*, Bologna, 2009; O. Brandt, S. Cresci, J. López Quiroga, C. Pappalardo (ed.), *Episcopus, ciuitas, territorium (Acta XV Congressus Internationalis Archaeologicae Christianiae, Toledo 8–12.09.2008, Studi di Antichità Cristiana LXXV)*, City of Vatican, 2013.

³¹ A. Ö. Güney, *Investigating the house-church of Dura-Europos: Production of Social Space* (Department of History of Architecture, Middle East Technical University), 2012.

³² The Byzantine province of *Spania*, which incorporated the southern parts of the old Roman provinces of *Baetica* and *Carthaginiensis*, was established in the 550s and was overrun by the Visigoths in the 620s. For bibliography see: S. Ramallo Asensio, J. Vizcaíno Sánchez, *Bizantinos en Hispania. Un problema recurrente en la arqueología Española*, in *Archivo Español de Arqueología*, 75 (2002), p. 313–332; M. Vallejo Girvés, *Bizancio y la España tardo-antigua (Ss. V–VIII): Un capítulo de historia mediterránea*, Alcalá de Henares, 1993; F. J. Presedo Velo, *La España Bizantina*, Seville, 2003; D. Bernal Casasola, *Bizancio en España desde una perspectiva arqueológica: Balance de una década de investigaciones*, in I. Pérez Martín, P. Bádenas de la Peña (ed.), *Bizancio y la Península Ibérica. De la Antigüedad Tardía a la Edad Moderna*, Madrid, 2004, p. 61–101; J. Vizcaino Sánchez, *La presencia bizantina en Hispania (siglos VI–VII): la documentación arqueológica* (Antigüedad y Cristianismo, 24), Murcia, 2007.

³³ A. Ribera, *Obispo y arquitectura en la Valencia tardo-antigua*, in O. Brandt, S. Cresci, J. López Quiroga, C. Pappalardo (ed.), *Episcopus, ciuitas, territorium...*, *op. cit.*, p. 675–697.

³⁴ J. Beltrán, *Topografía de los grupos episcopales urbanos: Barcelona*, in O. Brandt, S. Cresci, J. López Quiroga, C. Pappalardo (ed.), *Episcopus, ciuitas, territorium...*, *op. cit.*, p. 649–665.

³⁵ M. G. García, A. Moro, F. Tusset, *La seu episcopal d’Egara. Arqueologia d’un conjunt cristià del segle IV al IX*, Tarragona, 2009; M.-G. García i Llinares, A. Moro García, F. Tussets Bertrán, *La*

adjoining buildings is not always consistent, whilst it is quite clear that their location is systematically intramural³⁶ close to the Roman walls, as in the case of *Barcino* (Fig. 5) (and probably in *Myrtilis*, Mértola, Portugal³⁷) or close to the *forum* as in *Valentia*³⁸ (Fig. 4) (and presumably in *Tarraco*:³⁹ Fig. 6). The ecclesiastical complex excavated at ‘El Tolmo de Minateda’ (Hellín, Albacete)⁴⁰ (Fig. 7), dated to the 6th–7th centuries and placed against the city walls, should also be interpreted as an ‘episcopal district’. Nevertheless, and regarding the episcopal groups in the Byzantine province of *Spania* in particular, and in the Iberian Peninsula in general,⁴¹ it must be emphasized that our knowledge from the archaeological record is fragmentary and limited⁴² with the exception of *Valentia* (Fig. 4) *Barcino* (Fig. 5) *Myrtilis*, *Egara* (Tarrasa) and ‘El Tolmo de Minateda’ (Fig. 7). Undoubtedly, the construction of the cathedral and the adjoining buildings introduced changes in the topography and especially in the urban space inherited from the ancient city. Indeed, the Episcopal group becomes the new polarizer axis around which the city of Late Antiquity is organized and structured.

sede episcopal de Ègara. Siglos IV al IX, in O. Brandt, S. Cresci, J. López Quiroga, C. Pappalardo (ed.), *Episcopus, ciuitas, territorium...*, *op. cit.*, p. 187–205.

³⁶ Assuming the existence of an extramural *episcopium* in *Corduba* is very doubtful, since it would be the single case throughout the *orbes christianorum*. J. Sánchez Velasco, Hoc fundauit ipse. *La actividad edilicia de los obispos en Córdoba. El episcopium de Cercadilla*, in O. Brandt, S. Cresci, J. López Quiroga, C. Pappalardo (ed.), *Episcopus, ciuitas, territorium...*, *op. cit.*, p. 295–308; A. Chavarría Arnau, *Suburbio, iglesias y obispos. Sobre la errónea ubicación de algunos complejos episcopales en la Hispania tardo-antigua*, in D. Vaquerizo (ed.), *Las áreas suburbanas en la ciudad histórica...*, *op. cit.*, p. 435–453.

³⁷ V. Lopes, *Mértola na Antiguidade Tardia. A topografia histórca da cidade e do seu território nos avores do Cristianismo*, Mértola, 2003.

³⁸ G. Pascual, A. Ribera, M. Roselló, *La catedral de Valentia (Hispania) en época visigoda*, in *Hortus Atrium Medievalium*, 9 (2003), p. 127–142.

³⁹ In the case of *Tarraco* it is assumed through the archaeological evidence a situation of the cathedral in the far north of the Flavian period *temenos*: J. M. Macias Solé, *La medievalización de la ciudad romana*, in J. M. Macias Solé, A. Muñoz Melgar (ed.), *Tarraco Christiana Ciuitas*, Tarragona, 2013, p. 123–149.

⁴⁰ Which is identified with the episcopal site of *Elo* mentioned in the texts. L. Abad Casal, B. Gamó Parras, P. Cánovas Guillén, *Una ciudad en el camino: pasado y futuro de El Tolmo de Minateda (Hellín, Albacete)*, in L. Olmo (ed.), *Recópolis y la ciudad en la época visigoda* (Zona Arqueológica, 9), Alcalá de Henares, 2008, p. 322–338; S. Gutiérrez Lloret, J. Sarabia Bautista, *The episcopal complex of Eio-El Tolmo de Minateda (Hellín, Albacete, Spain). Architecture and spatial organization. 7th to 8th centuries AD*, in *Hortus Atrium Medievalium*, 19 (2013), p. 267–300.

⁴¹ A. Ribera, *Obispo y Arquitectura en Occidente. Conclusiones*, in O. Brandt, S. Cresci, J. López Quiroga, C. Pappalardo (ed.), *Episcopus, ciuitas, territorium...*, *op. cit.*, p. 697–707.

⁴² We don’t have indisputable archaeological evidence for the cathedrals of *Emerita Augusta* (Mérida) or *Toletum* (Toledo), two of the most important cities in Late Antiquity *Hispania*. P. Mateos, *Augusta Emerita, de capital de la diocesis Hispaniarum a sede imperial visigoda*, in *Sedes Regiae (ann. 400–800)*, Barcelona, 2000, p. 491–520; J. Carrobles, R. Barroso, J. Morín, F. Valdés, *Regia Sedes Toletana. La topografía de la ciudad de Toledo en la Antigüedad Tardía y Alta Edad Media*, Toledo, 2007.

A paradigmatic, and well-known, example of these 'episcopal districts' is the one configured from the 4th century in *Hippo Regius* (Annaba, Algeria) (Fig. 8). The extraordinary richness of this neighbourhood around the episcopal complex resonates, not without reason, with the presence of St. Augustine.⁴³

In the frame of the French Archaeological Mission in South Syria, the intensive research developed in *Bosra* in the last years (Fig. 9)⁴⁴ has shown the possible existence of a large Christian complex (as well as other churches disseminated throughout the city: Fig. 10) which is interpreted as an episcopal district, considering also that the city acquired in the 6th century the Metropolitan bishopric range. In this sense, the large centrally planned church (with baptistry, *martyrium* and annexes) is considered the probable cathedral (Fig. 11)⁴⁵ and the so-called 'Trajan's palace', built in the last 5th and the early 6th centuries,⁴⁶ the possible episcopal residence⁴⁷ (Fig. 12).

Not only the cathedrals, and the 'episcopal districts', represent the unique intramural Christian spaces in the early Byzantine urban landscapes. Many ancient public buildings and monuments were also transformed into churches in the frame of the progressive Christianisation of the urban landscape and topography in Byzantine times. It is a process that essentially takes place, at least in North Africa, between the end of the 5th and early 6th century because of the centrality of these public buildings in the classical city. Civil basilicas and baths are among the most common structures transformed into churches.⁴⁸ The building known as 'Church 4' at *Tipasa* (Algeria) was built as a Christian complex in the 5th or 6th century on the site of a Roman temple of the 1st or 2nd century. A similar process is observed in the 'Basilica I' of *Sabratha*; in the Severian basilica of *Lepcis Magna*, where was constructed a monumental church (Libya); the Judicial basilica at *Cartago* (Tunisia), restored and converted into a church during the Byzantine occupation, and after a phase of abandonment during the Vandal period;⁴⁹ the temple of Saturn in *Mactaris* (also in Tunisia)

⁴³ T. W. Potter, *Towns in Late Antiquity: Iol Caesarea and its context*, Sheffield, 1995.

⁴⁴ J. M. Dentzer, P. M. Blanc, T. Fournet, *Le développement urbain de Bosra de l'époque nabatéenne à l'époque byzantine: bilan des recherches françaises 1981–2002*, in *Syria*, 79 (2002), p. 75–154.

⁴⁵ J. M. Dentzer, P. M. Blanc, T. Fournet, *Le développement urbain de Bosra...*, *op. cit.*

⁴⁶ P. P. Fournet, *Les fouilles du « Palais de Trajan » à Bosra (2007–2009). Rapport préliminaire et perspectives de recherche*, in *Syria*, 87 (2010), p. 281–300.

⁴⁷ P. P. Fournet, *Un palais épiscopal à Bosra*, in M. Al-Maqdissi, F. Braemer, J. M. Dentzer, *Hauran V. La Syrie du Sud du Néolithique à l'Antiquité Tardive. Recherches récentes*, I, Beyrouth, 2010, p. 289–302.

⁴⁸ About the survival of the pagan places in the post-Roman city and the Late Antique paganism: L. Lavan, M. Mulryan (ed.), *The Archaeology of Late Antique Paganism (= LAA, 7/1)*, Leiden, 2011. For *Hispania*: J. López Quiroga, A. Martínez Tejera, *El destino de los templos paganos en Hispania durante la Antigüedad Tardía*, in *Archivo Español de Arqueología*, 79 (2006), p. 125–155.

⁴⁹ L. Ennabli, *Cartago cristiana*, in *Catalogue de l'exposition, Tunisie: du christianisme à l'Islam. IV–XIV siècle*, Lattes, 2001, p. 95–100 and 133.

was transformed into the so-called 'Basilica I',⁵⁰ and in *Sbeitla* (*Sufetula*, Tunisia), with the so-called church of *Servus* and the 'Basilica IV'.⁵¹ In *Caesarea* (Israel) (Fig. 13), a monumental octagonal church was built by the first half of the 6th century over the former pagan temple at the elevated platform facing the harbour.⁵² Certainly, the courtyards of temples are areas most commonly transformed into Christian spaces, and frequently the *cella* turned into a baptistery in a later phase after the construction of the church.

In *Bosra* (Syria), the 'Bahira' and 'Bahira North' basilicas are subject to structural changes and transformed into churches with modifications to the facade, presence of cancels and creation of the presbyteral area between the 4th and 8th centuries,⁵³ as well as the so-called 'Trajan's palace'.⁵⁴ Also in Syria, it is still unclear if the great building on which a large church (the so-called 'Basilica IV': Fig. 14) was built in the 6th century in the centre of the city of *Palmyra* was a public monumental construction. What recent excavations have now confirmed is that this great church (the biggest and tallest building in the city, and one of the largest in Syria: 12,60 m in length and 22 m in height) located 70–80 m of the episcopal complex was built *ex novo* on a ruined and dismantled building⁵⁵ (Fig. 14). In the case of *Palmyra* it can also be said that in the 5th century there were two, and perhaps three, Christian churches built around one of the main streets of the city.⁵⁶

The proliferation of intramural church buildings is an undoubted material manifestation of the character of the elites who ruled the Byzantine city, and the number of churches erected, particularly in the Near East, is significant: around twenty churches were constructed in *Gerasa* (the main city of Jordan during the Roman and Byzantine periods with an area of c. 85 hectares) from the 4th century (when the city got its first bishop) to the 7th century⁵⁷

⁵⁰ There are other examples in *Mactaris*: the Temple of Saturn, that was transformed into the church of *Rutilius*, but the chronology, usually established in the first half of the 4th century, is uncertain; and the Temple of *Hoter Miskar*, transformed into a church in the second half of the 4th century. A. Leone, *The End of the Pagan City...*, *op. cit.*, p. 65–80.

⁵¹ A. Leone, *The End of the Pagan City...*, *op. cit.*, p. 65–80.

⁵² K. G. Holum, *Caesarea's Temple Hill-The archaeology of Sacred Space in an Ancient Mediterranean city*, in *Near Eastern Archaeology*, 67 (2004), p. 184–199; *Caesarea – The combined Caesarea Expeditions Excavations*, *NEAEHL*, 5 (2008), p. 1665–1668.

⁵³ G. Bucci, *Bosra (Siria), quartiere nordest. Apparati presbiteriali di Basiliche cristianizzate: Bahira et Bahira nord*, in *Hortus Artium Medievalium*, 15/1 (2009), p. 31–38.

⁵⁴ P. P. Fournet, *Un palais épiscopal à Bosra*, in M. Maqdissi, F. Braemer, J. M. Dentzer (ed.), *Hauran V. La Syrie du sud du néolithique à l'Antiquité Tardive. Recherches Récentes*, I, Beyrouth, 2010, p. 289–302.

⁵⁵ G. Majcherek, *Polish Archaeological Mission to Palmyra. Seasons 2008 and 2009*, in *Polish Archaeology in the Mediterranean*, 21 (2012), p. 459–479.

⁵⁶ E. Jastrzębowska, *Christianisation of Palmyra: Early Byzantine Church in the temple of Bel*, in *Studia Palmyreńskie*, 12 (2013) (Fifty Years of Polish Excavations in Palmyra 1959–2009, International Conference, Warsaw, 6–8 December 2010), p. 177–191.

⁵⁷ For the Christian churches of *Gerasa* the work of Crowfoot is still a fundamental reference: J. W. Crowfoot, *Gerasa, city of the Decapolis: the Christian Churches* (American Schools of Oriental Research), 1938.

(Fig. 15); and about fifteen churches in smaller centres as Umm al-Jimjal or Umm er-Rasas (both in Jordan).

Also in the extramural areas, in the *suburbia*, new foci were created that generated suburban neighbourhoods, usually derived from a martyrial funerary area of the late-Roman period, and they ended up becoming major suburban church complexes. This is the case, for the Iberian Peninsula, of the St. Eulália *Mausoleum* (in *Emerita Augusta*) which became an important pilgrimage centre, or ‘El Francolí’ (in *Tarraco*) (Fig. 6). All of these were important suburbs throughout Late Antiquity and the early Middle Ages. The extramural expansion created suburban neighbourhoods, in this case not exclusively linked with Christian buildings and funeral areas. This is particularly visible in *Caesarea* (Israel), where in the 6th century the city further expanded beyond its walls, forming extra-mural quarters with large residences.⁵⁸

Beyond the monumental city: complexity and diversity in the occupation forms of the early Byzantine city

The introduction of a more rigorous methodology in recording archaeological documentation allowed us to observe and analyse a wide variety of urban occupation forms: houses built of perishable materials, mixed architecture of wood and stone, intramural and extramural productive and craft areas, etc.⁵⁹

The early Byzantine city is no longer an abandoned city, but a different structuring of the ancient urban structure marked by a ‘dispersed multifunctional polarity’.⁶⁰ For many authors this process has been defined as a *città ruralizzata*.⁶¹ Indeed, from a uniform urban configuration, defined by the orthogonality of the *insulae*, *cardo* and *decumanus*, with the *forum* as structuring central pole of all citizens’ activities, we move in Late Antiquity to a

⁵⁸ In fact *Caesarea* is the largest city of Palestine with an estimated population for the city and their hinterland between 35 000 and 100 000 habitants. J. Patrich, *Urban Space in Caesarea Maritima, Israel*, in T. S. Burns, J. W. Eadie (ed.), *Urban Centres and Rural Contexts in Late Antiquity*, East Lansing, 2001, p. 77–110.

⁵⁹ I. Baldini Lippolis, *La domus tardoantica. Forme e rappresentazioni dello spazio domestico nelle città del Mediterraneo*, Bologne, 2001; L. Lavan, L. Özgenel, A. Sarantis (ed.), *Housing in Late Antiquity: From Palace to Shops* (= *LAA*, 3/2), Leiden, 2007; R. Santangeli Valenzani, *Edilizia Residenziale in Italia nell'Alto Medioevo*, Rome, 2010.

⁶⁰ J. López Quiroga, *De Conimbriga a Condeixa: Evolución y transformación de una ciuitas romana en una ‘aldea’ medieval*, in J. López Quiroga (ed.), *Conimbriga tardo-antigua y medieval. Excavaciones Arqueológicas en la ‘domus tancinus’ (2004–2008) (Condeixa-a-Velha, Portugal)*, Oxford, 2014, p. 319–314.

⁶¹ G. P. Brogiolo, *L’origine della città medievale...*, *op. cit.*; J. L. Bintliff, *Catastrophe, chaos and complexity: the death, decay and rebirth of towns from Antiquity to today*, in *Journal of European Archaeology*, 5/2 (1997), p. 67–90.

different urban area much more heterogeneous, dispersed and changing.⁶² We do not think that this development can be described as a 'ruralisation process'.⁶³ In this new post-Roman urban skeleton, as we have already pointed out, the cathedral⁶⁴ serves as the main polarizing centre of most of the intramural urban activity, normally associated with a multipolar dispersion, well visible for the Iberian Peninsula in *Valentia* (Fig. 4) and *Barcino* (Fig. 5), as in many urban centres in the Near East and North Africa (*vid. supra*).

We must not relate all the transformations in the early Byzantine city to construction activity as a consequence of the gradual introduction of Christianity during Late Antiquity. In *Valentia*, on the ancient Roman circus, after the abandonment of this sector throughout the 5th and the first half of the 6th century, a craft and military district has been created by the middle of the 6th century, and lasted until the 8th century, which is linked with the Gothic occupation of the city.⁶⁵ In *Carthago Spartaria* (Cartagena, Murcia, Spain) on the tiers of the Roman theatre were constructed a series of houses that conform to the so-called 'Byzantine neighbourhood' during the 6th and 7th centuries⁶⁶ (Fig. 16, 17 and 18), and is substantial evidence of Late Antique domestic architecture.⁶⁷

The process of de-monumentalization, beside the private reuse of the old Roman public buildings, next to the structural and functional transformation of the ancient *domus*,⁶⁸ was another well-established process that characterizes the post-Roman and early Byzantine city in the Iberian Peninsula and in the most part of the urban centres in the Near East⁶⁹ and

⁶² G. P. Brogiolo, S. Gelichi, *La città nell'alto Medioevo italiano*, Roma, 1998; G. P. Brogiolo, *L'origine della città medievale...*, *op. cit.*; A. Augenti, (ed.), *Le città italiane tra la tarda Antichità e l'alto Medioevo (Atti del convegno de Ravenna, 26–28 febbraio 2004)*, Florence, 2006; L. Lavan, *What killed the ancient city? Chronology, causation and trace of continuity*, in *JRA*, 22 (2009), p. 803–812.

⁶³ M. Alba Calzado, P. Mateos Cruz, *El paisaje urbano de Emerita en época visigoda*, in L. Olmo (ed.), *Recópolis y la ciudad en la época visigoda...*, *op. cit.*, p. 260–274 (269–270).

⁶⁴ The topographical position of the cathedral is very varied and not always their intramural location is central but much more frequently it occupies a peripheral position next to the walls: A. Chavarría Arnau, *Suburbio, iglesias y obispos. Sobre la errónea ubicación de algunos complejos episcopales en la Hispania tardo-antigua*, in D. Vaquerizo (ed.), *Las áreas suburbanas en la ciudad histórica. Topografía, usos, función* (Monografías de Arqueología cordobesa, 10), Córdoba, 2010, p. 435–453.

⁶⁵ A. Ribera, M. Roselló, *La ocupación tardo-antigua del circo romano de Valentia*, in O. Brandt, S. Cresci, J. López Quiroga, C. Pappalardo (ed.), *Episcopus, ciuitas, territorium...*, *op. cit.*, p. 47–62.

⁶⁶ J. Vizcaíno Sánchez, *Carthago Spartaria, una ciudad hispana bajo el dominio de los milites romani*, in L. Olmo (ed.), *Recópolis y la ciudad en la época visigoda...*, *op. cit.*, p. 338–362.

⁶⁷ About the Late antique domestic architecture: K. Galor, T. Waliszewski (eds), *From Antioch to Alexandria. Recent Studies in Domestic Architecture*, Warsaw, 2007; L. Lavan, L. Özgenel, A. Sarantis (ed.), *Housing in Late Antiquity: From Palaces to Shops (= LAA, 3/2)*, Leiden, 2007.

⁶⁸ Regarding the spaces dedicated to representation and entertainment and focusing principally on Late Antique Italy: B. Polci, *Some aspects of the transformation of the roman domus between Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages*, in *LAA*, 1/1 (2003), p. 79–109.

⁶⁹ See for *Pella* (Jordan): A. Walmsley, *The excavation of an Umayyad period house at Pella in Jordan*, in L. Lavan, L. Özgenel, A. Sarantis (ed.), *Housing in Late Antiquity: From Palaces to Shops...*,

North Africa.⁷⁰ In *Hispania*, the example of *Emerita Augusta* is paradigmatic due to the quality of the archaeological evidence, in particular in the area of the Diana temple;⁷¹ we can also see this phenomenon in the circus of *Valentia*, the theatre of *Carthago Spartaria*⁷² (Fig. 17 and 18), or in the public baths of the *Tarraco* port area (Fig. 6).⁷³ In the case of Mérida occurred the transformation of the ancient *domus*, belonging to one family, into a collective housing unit, around a common central courtyard, in the course of the 6th and 7th centuries in the form of a mixed type occupation, combining residential and productive spaces. We can see this processes in the intramural district of ‘Morería’, where it is evidenced the transformation of a Roman house in seven different living spaces (around the *peristyle*) during the 6th and 7th centuries (Fig. 19).

The presence of large productive spaces in intramural areas from the 5th century is a common characteristic of the early Byzantine urban landscape. In *Thuburbo Maius* (Tunisia) there is evidence of a significant number of olive presses in the centre of the town in the 5th century;⁷⁴ also in Tunisia, in *Sbeitla*, an olive press astride is built on a former main street of the city.

In Jiyeh⁷⁵ (ancient *Porphyreon*, in Phoenicia), situated between Beirut and Sidon (Lebanon), we found an exceptional example of private domestic architecture in early Byzantine times.⁷⁶ The archaeological excavations carried out in 2008 and 2009 were focused on the street network and the domestic architecture in the ‘residential neighbourhood’, uncovering 77 rooms or other units forming a residential complex east of the Byzantine

op. cit., p. 515–521; and currently for the transition to the early Byzantine city to the Islamic city in the Near East: G. Avni, *The Byzantine–Islamic Transition in Palestine: An Archaeological Approach* (Oxford Studies in Byzantium), Oxford, 2014.

⁷⁰ See: F. Ghedini, S. Bullo, *Late Antique domus of Africa Proconsularis: structural and decorative aspects*, in L. Lavan, L. Özgenel, A. Sarantis (ed.), *Housing in Late Antiquity: From Palace to Shops* (= LAA, 3/2), Leiden, 2007, p. 337–336; J. J. Rossiter, *Domus and Villa: Late Antique housing in Carthage and its territory*, in L. Lavan, L. Özgenel, A. Sarantis (ed.), *Housing in Late Antiquity: From Palace to Shops...*, *op. cit.*, p. 367–392.

⁷¹ M. Alba Calzado, P. Mateos Cruz, *El paisaje urbano de Emerita en época visigoda...*, *op. cit.*, p. 260–274.

⁷² J. Vizcaíno Sánchez, *Carthago Spartaria, una ciudad hispana bajo el dominio de los milites romani...*, *op. cit.*, p. 338–362.

⁷³ J. M. Macías Solé, *La medievalización de la ciudad romana...*, *op. cit.*, p. 128–129.

⁷⁴ A. Ben Abed, N. Duval, *Carthage, la capitale du royaume et les villes de Tunisie à l'époque vandale*, in G. Ripoll, J. M. Gurt (ed.), *Sedes Regiae*, Barcelona, 2000, p. 163–218.

⁷⁵ This city has been subject to extensive illicit digging, looting and illegal market of objects between the first archaeological excavations in 1975 and the Polish archaeological mission that began in 2008.

⁷⁶ T. Waliszewski, K. Juchniewicz, M. Gwiazda, *Preliminary report on the 2008 and 2009 excavation seasons at Jiyeh (Porphyreon)*, in *Polish Archaeology in the Mediterranean*, 21 (Research 2009), 2012, p. 423–445.

basilica (Fig. 20 and 22).⁷⁷ Probably the presence of the church complex is the reason for the domestic reoccupation of this sector in late Roman and Byzantine times. A unique aspect in relation to domestic architecture is the presence of pots sunk in the floor in several of the late Roman and Byzantine houses (Fig. 21). The interpretation of these containers is unclear, because they were completely emptied in the Lebanese excavations of the seventies, and the archaeologists relate these vessels to traps for scorpions and vipers, or interpret them as a form of air humidifier, as garbage cans, as spittoons, basins for washing feet, pots to hold potted plants, or such as wormwood to frighten off reptiles.⁷⁸

In the case of Umm al-Jimal (Jordan),⁷⁹ obviously on a smaller scale compared to the big urban centres such as *Caesarea*, *Cartago*, *Gerasa* (Fig. 15), *Petra* or *Palmyra*, in the 6th–7th centuries there is evidence of the transformation of the *insulae* into clusters of houses attached to each other with rectangular courtyard at the core; dividing lines between such clusters form the streets and alleys of irregular width which twist and turn and sometimes open onto small open areas between houses giving the appearance of ‘small villages within the city’ and similar to modern Jordan villages in the area. Also at this moment, in Byzantine times, the *Praetorium* is privatized and incorporated into a newly constructed domestic complex, as well as the so-called Nabataean temple (constructed in the 4th century). The transformation of the urban structure was also modified due to the construction of fifteen churches, including an Episcopal core.

The multiplicity and multi-polarity that characterized the post-Roman cities is mainly an echo of a profound change regarding the places where power was exercised and manifested. So we should be extremely careful to analyse and understand the evolution process from the ‘centrality’ that characterized the Roman city to the ‘plurality’ that characterized the medieval city. What is crucial in this process is the change operated by the elites who exercised and held power in the post-roman cities.⁸⁰ Disappearance, on the one hand, in the urban landscape of much of the old elites; and appearance, moreover, of ‘new’ elites linked to the establishment of Christianity as the official religion of the Empire. These ‘new’ elites were those that generated the new constructive activity of monumental character transforming the

⁷⁷ T. Waliszewski, K. Juchniewicz, M. Gwiazda, *Preliminary report on the 2008 and 2009 excavation seasons at Jiyeh (Porphyreon)...*, *op. cit.*, p. 423–445.

⁷⁸ T. Waliszewski, K. Juchniewicz, M. Gwiazda, *Preliminary report on the 2008 and 2009 excavation seasons at Jiyeh (Porphyreon)...*, *op. cit.*, p. 439–440.

⁷⁹ B. De Vries, *Continuity and change in the urban character of the southern hauran from the 5th to the 9th century: the archaeological evidence at Umm Al-Jimal*, in *Mediterranean Archaeology*, 13 (2000), p. 39–45. See also: B. Hamarneh, *Topografia Cristiana e insediamenti rurali nel territorio dell’odierna Giordania nelle epoche bizantina ed islamica (V–IX secolo)* (Studi di Antichità Cristiana, 57), City of Vatican, 2003.

⁸⁰ About the questions concerning the relationship between architecture and power, the control of public urban spaces (*fora*, *agora*, temples, baths, theatres, etc.) by post-roman elites, and the social and political transformations of the Late Antique city: W. Bowden, C. Machado, A. Gutteridge (ed.), *Social and Political Life in Late Antiquity* (= LAA, 3/1), Leiden, 2008.

urban landscapes, maintained the urban public infrastructure necessary for their interests and stimulated the economic activity (increasingly limited on a regional or even local scale⁸¹) essential to their survival.

The early Byzantine urban landscapes: The dismantling of the Roman city?

During Late Antiquity almost all the ancient Roman cities were subject to a process similar both in the West and in the East of the Roman Empire. There has not been a radical disappearance and collapse of the Roman cities from the 5th century. In this sense, and as we pointed out, archaeology shows an urban landscape that we cannot qualify as ruin and decay. It is a slow and complex process of transformation; and we think that it would be excessive to imagine it as a radical ‘ruralisation’ of the city. Indeed, we are still in the presence of a city or, better said, ‘cities in the city’, that we’re still trying to identify.

We can summarize this process in several fundamental aspects, and we intentionally leave for the end the one that has traditionally marked the interpretations on the evolution of the city during Late Antiquity: Christianity.

* The process of urban dismantling apparent in the 6th century through: the reduction of the urban area and the abandonment of some intramural spaces (observed in *Carthago Spartaria*: Fig. 16 and *Tarraco*: Fig. 6; late Byzantine *Gerasa*: Fig. 15 and *Bosra*: Fig. 9); the gradual private occupation of the public urban road network (visible in *Emerita*, *Barcino*: Fig. 5 and *Valentia*: Fig. 4; late Byzantine *Gerasa*: Fig. 15 and *Bosra*: Fig. 9); the increased height of the urban road network (perceptible in *Emerita*, *Valentia*, and *Barcino*); and the general abandonment of the sewer network (detected in *Emerita*, *Barcino*: Fig. 5 and *Tarraco*: Fig. 6).

* The maintenance of the water supply systems during the 5th and 6th centuries through the preservation and (re)construction of the extramural aqueducts and the intramural public water structures as baths, latrines, fountains and cisterns.⁸²

In Syria, the north-eastern area of *Apamea* has been the subject of a recent systematic study of the water supply system of the city in the 6th century showing the complexity and efficiency.⁸³ In regions such as the Near East the management of water supply is crucial and until recently has not been studied systematically in Roman and especially Byzantine times.

⁸¹ Recent surveys about these questions in: M. M. Mango (ed.), *Byzantine trade, 4th–12th centuries...*, *op. cit.*; L. Lavan (ed.), *Local Economies? Production and Exchange of Inland Regions in Late Antiquity* (= *LAA*, 10/1), Leiden, 2013.

⁸² For Constantinople see: J. Crow, J. Bardill, R. A. Bayliss, *The Water Supply of Byzantine Constantinople*, London, 2008; for *Gortyna*: E. Giorgi, *Water technology at Gortyn in the 4th–7th C. A. D.: Transport, Storage and distribution*, in L. Lavan, E. Zanini, A. Sarantis, (ed.), *Technology in Transition A. D. 300–650* (= *LAA*, 4/1), Leiden, 2008, p. 287–320.

⁸³ B. Haut, D. Viviers, *Analysis of the water supply system of the city of Apamea, using Computational Fluid Dynamics. Hydraulic system in the north-eastern area of the city, in the Byzantine period*, in *Journal of Archaeological Science*, 34/3 (March 2007), p. 415–427.

This was mainly due to the lack of archaeological information that relates the aqueducts outside the cities to the pipelines and channels inside the cities. Distribution systems were re-organized after the frequent earthquakes, and also as a result of the construction of new aqueducts, as was the case in *Apamea*, which offers evidence for up to four periods of (re) construction of the water supply system. The fourth water supply system in *Apamea* was built at the end of the 5th century and was used until the 7th century. It is important to underline that the inhabitants of *Apamea* in Byzantine times were not only using the aqueduct built in the Roman period but they were also able to rebuild a new water supply system at the end of the 5th century.⁸⁴

Also in Syria, the water supply system of *Palmyra* was object of research since 2010 by the ‘Polish Archaeological Mission’ showing its maintenance from Roman times to the Islamic period.⁸⁵ In *Bosra* the repairs and cleaning of water supply systems continued in Byzantine times. New pipes were constructed, such as the one running through the cathedral of *Bosra* that would be abandoned in the late Umayyad period⁸⁶ (Fig. 11).

In Jordan,⁸⁷ the current research developed by the ‘Danish-German Archaeological Mission’ since 2011 in *Gerasa* (Fig. 15 and 23) has shown several phases of use in a large intramural cistern cut into the bedrock and located in the northwest quarter of the city.⁸⁸ C14 AMS dating of 25 samples of mortar have provided a broad chronology for the use of the cistern and the construction of the water pressure pipe system. Between the 3rd and the 6th century (2nd phase) there was a repair to the cistern, used as a water tank; at an undetermined time of this 2nd phase (phase 2b: between the 5th and the 6th centuries) the last repair of the cistern as water reservoir took place; sometime in the 6th century (3rd phase), in Byzantine times, the cistern area was used for habitation or productive use after the ceiling of the natural cave had collapsed and the cave was used as a natural cistern in this period; and

⁸⁴ B. Haut, D. Viviers, *Water supply in the Middle East during Roman and Byzantine periods*, in A. N. Angelakis et al. (ed.), *Evolution of the Water supply through the Millennia*, London, 2012, p. 319–350.

⁸⁵ H. Juchniewicz, M. Żuchowska, *Remarks on water supply in Palmyra. Results of a survey in 2010*, in *Polish Archaeology in the Mediterranean*, 22 (2013), p. 341–350.

⁸⁶ J. M. Dentzer, *Le développement urbain de Bosra de l’époque Nabatéenne à l’époque byzantine: bilan des recherches françaises 1981–2002*, in *Syria*, 79 (2002), p. 75–154 (92).

⁸⁷ A recent survey in the Jordan valley (in Tel Mar Elyas, Bethany) has allowed discovering a complex water system including pools, cisterns, wells and aqueducts built during the Byzantine period. The research team uncovered a 1st-century AD settlement with plastered pools and water systems that were almost certainly used for baptism, and a late Byzantine settlement (5th–6th century AD) with churches, a monastery and other structures that probably catered to pilgrims. M. Waheeb, R. Al Ghazawi, *Ancient Water System in Tel Mar Elyas during the Byzantine Period: A Study*, in *Journal of Human Ecology*, 49/3 (2015), p. 327–333.

⁸⁸ A. Lichtenberger et al., *Radiocarbon analysis of mortar from Roman and Byzantine water management installations in the Northwest Quarter of Jerash, Jordan*, in *Journal of Archaeological Science: Reports*, 2 (2015), p. 114–127.

finally, between the end of the 6th and the 7th centuries (4th phase), the residential use of the old cistern came to an end.⁸⁹

In the Iberian Peninsula *Recópolis* (Fig. 24), a new urban foundation in the late 6th century, an aqueduct was built *ex novo* in Roman technique and it has been recently analysed and interpreted as an act of propaganda of the Gothic monarchy in addition, of course, to its functional purpose.⁹⁰ Also in *Recópolis*, at the south of the main street, a cistern for the public water supply has been found and excavated. The cistern had two rooms: one was the cistern itself (a pit excavated to the geological level) and the other room was supposed to provide access to the cistern. Also in the Iberian Peninsula, and in the territories under Byzantine rule, the case of *Valentia* shows archaeological continuity of the water supply system. The Roman aqueduct (and important water consuming structures) continued to be in use until the 11th century and it was repaired in the Umayyad period.⁹¹

* The emergence of new forms of urban occupation is a phenomenon observable through the dismantling and compartmentalisation of the large intramural private *domus* and the emergence of a new domestic architecture well evidenced in *Emerita* (Fig. 19), *Valentia* and *Carthago Spartaria* (Fig. 17 and 18) (Iberian Peninsula), but also in Umm al-Jimal (Jordan). In Jiyeh (Lebanon), for example, to divide the houses into smaller complexes the doors between the different units were blocked⁹² (Fig. 22). For the Near East, and regarding private domestic architecture in Byzantine times, we have very detailed juridical descriptions of the regulations concerning construction, renovation and maintenance of the houses and their appurtenances through the Imperial constitutions and from local laws as the *Liber Syro-Romanus* and, above all, in *Julian of Ascalon's Treatise*.⁹³ Archaeology confirms in many cases the house descriptions of the local laws.

* The private reoccupation of the public spaces, buildings and complexes. There are three elements that characterize this fundamental process of dismantling the post-Roman city: the construction of domestic spaces on levels of *spolia* of public buildings and complexes, archaeologically visible in the Iberian Peninsula (in cities as *Emerita*: Fig. 19 and *Carthago Spartaria*: Fig. 17 and 18) and in the Middle East (as in Jiyeh, Lebanon: Fig. 20 and 22);⁹⁴

⁸⁹ A. Lichtenberger et al., *Radiocarbon analysis of mortar...*, *op. cit.*, p. 125–126.

⁹⁰ J. Martínez Jiménez, *A Preliminary Study of the Aqueduct of Recópolis*, in *Oxford Journal of Archaeology*, 34/3 (August 2015), p. 301–320.

⁹¹ J. Martínez Jiménez, *The continuity of Roman water supply systems in Post-Roman Spain: the case of Valentia, a reliable example?*, in *Arkeogazte*, 1 (2011), p. 125–144.

⁹² T. Waliszewski, M. Gwiazda, *Preliminary report on the 2010 excavation season at Jiyeh (Porphyreon)*, in *Polish Archaeology in the Mediterranean*, 22 (2013) (Research 2010), p. 321–333.

⁹³ The *Julian of Ascalon's Treatise* is the longest and the most complex collection of rules concentrated exclusively on private buildings and their parts characteristic of the Near Eastern constructions. A. Skalec, *Private buildings and their juridical context in the Byzantine Near East*, in *Revista da Faculdade de Direito da Universidade de São Paulo*, 106–107 (2011/2012), p. 67–83.

⁹⁴ Where is frequent the reuse of *spolia*, often with pierced holes sealed with lime mortar, in the walls of the late antique houses. T. Waliszewski, M. Gwiazda, *Preliminary report on the 2010 excavation*

the configuration of productive areas, evidenced in *Carthago Spartaria*, *Tarraco* (Iberian Peninsula), *Thuburbo Maius* (Tunisia) or in *Beath Shean* (Israel), by the mid-6th century, when the major colonnaded streets⁹⁵ were encroached, and private shops were introduced into the spacious colonnaded walkways; processes that continued in the late 6th century and overall in the 7th century, following the 659/660 earthquake, when the Byzantine agora, *Palladius* Street and the Sigma were abandoned,⁹⁶ resulting in a radically different urban pattern and the introduction of small industries and commerce into the former public areas with many pottery production workshops constructed in the agora, at the edge of the theatre and the Eastern Bath, on top of *Palladius* street and in the arena of the amphitheatre;⁹⁷ and the presence of large intramural dumpsters (as we can see again in *Valentia* and *Tarraco*).

* The Christianization process of the urban topography is visible through a quadruple and almost simultaneous process:

- the creation and development of the episcopal districts and neighbourhoods. *Barcino* (Fig. 5), *Valentia* (Fig. 4) and 'El Tolmo de Minateda' (Fig. 7) are the best and most clearly archaeological examples in the Iberian Peninsula; as well as *Hippo Regius* (Tunisia) (Fig. 8), *Gerasa* (Jordan) (Fig. 15), *Bosra* (Fig. 10) and *Palmyra* (Syria), among many others, in the Near East.
- the construction of Christian cult buildings, frequently using ancient public structures as: amphitheatres, as in two of the most representative examples of martyrdom churches built in amphitheatres such is the late 5th/early 6th-century church erected over the arena of the *Tarraco* amphitheatre (in the Iberian Peninsula) (Fig. 6), and the 4th/6th-century church constructed in the amphitheatre of *Caesarea Maritima* (in today's Israel);⁹⁸ or hippodrome complexes, as in *Gerasa* (Jordan) (Fig. 15), where a church was built in later 6th century when the northern half of the hippodrome was probably still in use, the church was built almost entirely of *spolia*, both from the circus itself and even from some of the 4th- and 5th-century buildings; or residential complexes as the so-called 'Trajan's palace' in *Bosra*, where a church in the south sector was constructed (Fig. 12).

season at Jiyeh (Porphyreon)..., *op. cit.*, p. 321–333; id., *Porphyreon through the Ages: The Fading Archaeological Heritage of the Lebanese Coast*, in *Journal of Eastern Mediterranean Archaeology & Heritage Studies*, 3/4 (2015), p. 330–348.

⁹⁵ Regarding the evolution of the colonnade streets in Byzantine and Early Islamic times see now the excellent work of: V. Cabiale, *La lunga durata delle vie colonnate nella regione sirio-palestinese. Dai Bizantine agli Omayyade*, in *Archeologia Medievale*, 40 (2013), p. 321–336.

⁹⁶ This space was used in the second half of the 7th century as a large cemetery with c. 350 simple cist graves. G. Mazor, *Beth Shean – the Hellenistic to Early Islamic Periods: the Israel Antiquities Authority Excavations*, *NEAEHL* 5 (2008), p. 1623–1635.

⁹⁷ G. Avni, 'From Polis to Madina' Revisited – Urban Change in Byzantine and early Islamic Palestine, in *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, Series 3, 21/3 (2011), p. 301–329.

⁹⁸ K. Bowes, *Christians in the amphitheater? The 'Christianization' of spectacle buildings and martyrial memory*, in *MEFRM*, 126/1 (2014), p. 1–34.

- the disappearance of the ancient *pomerium* and the systematic presence of intramural burial areas is a general phenomenon, but probably the existence of graves inside the walls (not connected with Christian buildings) is attested earlier in the West than in the East, taking into account, of course, that there are always exceptional situations.
- and the formation of extramural suburbs in the *suburbia* around burial areas and Christian complexes (the paradigmatic examples in the Iberian Peninsula are the neighbourhood of ‘Santa Eulália’ in *Emerita* and ‘El Francolí’ in *Tarraco*: Fig. 6).

The new early Byzantine cities: Exceptional paradigms?

Although most sites that draw the post-Roman cityscape are included in the network of the ancient Roman cities, we have new urban centres created in Byzantine times, such as *Justiniana Prima* (Sebia) and *Recópolis* (Iberian Peninsula).⁹⁹ Are we really in the presence, in the case of *Recópolis*, of the ideal model of the post-Roman city?¹⁰⁰ How the city founded by the king Liuvigild in 578 AD¹⁰¹ can be an archetype of the urban topographical transformations in Late Antiquity?¹⁰²

Leaving aside the interpretation of the structures excavated at ‘El Cerro de la Oliva’ as belonging to a Palatine complex¹⁰³ (Fig. 24: A1, A2, A3), or to an *horrea*,¹⁰⁴ the fact is

⁹⁹ L. Olmo (ed.), *Recópolis y la ciudad en la época visigoda...*, *op. cit.*

¹⁰⁰ J. P. Sodini, *La création de villes à l'époque byzantine*, in J. L. Hout (ed.), *La ville Neuve, une idée de l'Antiquité?*, Paris, 1988, p. 233–242; J. Arce, *La fundación de nuevas ciudades en el Imperio romano tardío: de Diocleciano a Justiniano (s. IV–VI)*, in G. Ripoll, J. M. Gurt (ed.), *Sedes Regiae*, Barcelona, 2000, p. 31–62; C. Wickham, *Framing the Early Middle Ages. Europe and the Mediterranean, 400–800 A. D.*, Oxford, 2005; H. Buckwald, *Byzantine Town planning – does it exist?*, in M. Grünbart, E. Kislinger, A. Muthesius, D. Stathakopoulos (ed.), *Material Culture and Well-Being in Byzantium (400–1453)*, Vienna, 2007, p. 57–74.

¹⁰¹ Foundation documented by John Biclare (circa 589) in *Chronica: Leovigildus rex, extinctis undique tyrannis et pervasoribus Hispaniae superatis, sortitus requiem propiam cum plebe resedit. Civitatem in Celtiberia ex nomine filii condidit, quae Recópolis nuncupatur: quam miro opere et moenibus et suburbanis adornans privilegia populo novae urbis instituit*. John Biclare, *Chr. ad ann. 578*, 4.

¹⁰² E. Zanini, *The Urban Ideal and Urban Planning in Byzantine New Cities of the Sixth Century A.D.*, in L. Lavan, W. Bowden (ed.), *Theory and Practice in Late Antique Archaeology*, Leiden – Boston, 2003, p. 196–223.

¹⁰³ L. Olmo, *Recópolis: una ciudad en una época de transformaciones*, in L. Olmo (ed.), *Recópolis y la ciudad en la época visigoda...*, *op. cit.*, p. 41–62.

¹⁰⁴ J. Arce, *Esperando a los árabes. Los visigodos en Hispania (507–711)*, Madrid, 2011, p. 227; R. Barroso Cabrera, et al., *La evolución del suburbio y territorio ercavicense desde la tardía-antigüedad hasta la época hispano-visigoda. El monasterio Servitano y Recópolis*, in J. López Quiroga, A. M. Martínez Tejera (ed.), *In concavis petrarum habitaverunt. El fenómeno rupestre en el mediterráneo medieval. De la investigación a la puesta en valor* (BAR International Series, 2591), Oxford, 2014, p. 257–295 (272).

that the identification of the remains with the royal town foundation and its identification with *Recópolis* mentioned by John Biclare still pose problems.¹⁰⁵ We believe, in agreement with other authors,¹⁰⁶ that to understand the structures unearthed at 'El Cerro de la Oliva' we must look beyond and overall to study and analyse the *territorium*. Otherwise, we risk falling into an absolute myopia that prevents us to see clearly.

At *Recópolis* we observe an internal organization and similar transformations to those we know for other urban centres in *Hispania* and in the Near East during Late Antiquity. In *Recópolis* it is possible to differentiate two phases in the so-called 'Visigothic period': a first phase, between the end of the 6th century to the first half of the 8th century; and a second phase, from the 8th to the 9th century (Fig. 24).

In the first, and foundational, phase the so-called palatine complex in the upper area of the city was built: a series of buildings placed around a big square (Fig. 24). The main edifice of this complex had two floors and the upper floor had a pavement with *opus signinum*. In the east side of the complex there was the church, a building with a cruciform floor inscribed in a rectangle, constituted by a central nave and a transversal one, and a semi-circular apse to the inside and a rectangular one to the outside. There is a rectangular room that was interpreted as a baptistery and in the foundations of this room a *tremisses* was to be found (Fig. 24). In *Recópolis* the houses feature rectangular rooms with different functions and were positioned around courtyards. Indeed, areas with buildings dedicated to commercial activity in the second half of the 7th century (Fig. 24) were transformed into residential areas in the 8th century (Fig. 24), which were sealed by sets of silos in the 9th century.¹⁰⁷ A wall (of two meters in width), flanked by square towers in which the entrance gates open to the city, surrounded the city.

The early Byzantine urban daily life the challenge of bio-archaeological approaches

The bio-archaeological research, first conducted by Jane E. Buikstra in the 1970s,¹⁰⁸ who coined and defining the term bio-archaeology,¹⁰⁹ has stimulated human skeletal studies in a

¹⁰⁵ The similarities with 'The Tolman Minateda' are evident and can not exclude that also in the case of *Recópolis* there is an important religious complex: J. López Quiroga, A. M. Martínez Tejera, *Edilicia cristiana no episcopal en Hispania (400–700 A.D.). Significado y función, Antigüedad y Cristianismo* (forthcoming). *Vid.* also: J. Arce, *Esperando a los árabes...*, *op. cit.*

¹⁰⁶ R. Barroso Cabrera et al., *La evolución del suburbio y territorio ercavicense...*, *op. cit.*, p. 266–274.

¹⁰⁷ L. Olmo, *Recópolis: una ciudad en una época de transformaciones...*, *op. cit.*, p. 41–62.

¹⁰⁸ J. E. Buikstra, *Biocultural dimensions of archaeological study: A regional perspective*, in R. L. Blakely (ed.), *Biocultural adaptation in prehistoric America*, University of Georgia Press, 1977, p. 67–84. Bio-archaeology can be defined as the biological anthropological method to study archaeological issues as mortuary practices, paleopathology, paleodemography, paleogenetics, etc.

¹⁰⁹ Although the first to use the term was the British archaeologist Grahame Clark in 1973: J. G. Clark, *Bioarchaeology: Some extracts on a theme*, in *Current Anthropology*, 14/4 (1973), p. 464–470.

completely new form, in North America. The reception of these methodological approaches in Europe, and particularly in the Near East, has been much later and its development is therefore relatively recent.¹¹⁰ In this sense, and concerning the Near Eastern bio-archaeological research¹¹¹ we can say that the increasingly scientific nature of archaeology and changes in physical anthropology during the later 20th century have not had a strong impact on human skeletal studies of Byzantine times in this region. Consequently we are presented with purely descriptive studies regarding ancient populations leaving aside many fundamental aspects of daily life. However, bio-archaeological studies remain in an embryonic but enormously promising stage due to increased research in this field.¹¹²

Certainly, there are exceptions across the vast territory of the Byzantine Empire, and we have currently outstanding studies for Greece in respect to diet and health conditions in early Byzantine times.¹¹³ Particularly suggestive is the research of Chryssi Bourbou on the everyday diet through stable isotope analysis of archaeological skeletal remains,¹¹⁴ which shows that, in Greece, there were significant amounts of animal protein included in the Byzantine diet, and that in coastal sites this protein was acquired from maritime resources. It will be hugely interesting to verify the results for Greece in the urban contexts of the Near East (much of them located in the coastal regions) and to compare with contemporary environments in the West. Particularly stimulating would be to study the importance of the

With this article, Clark defined bioarchaeology both as “the archaeology concerned first and foremost with life”, and as “the archaeology of how men occupied territories and maintained life”.

¹¹⁰ J. E. Buikstra (ed.), *Bioarchaeology: The Contextual Analysis of Human Remains*, Academic Press, 2011.

¹¹¹ And particularly in countries like Lebanon, Libya, Tunisia, Syria and Jordan, because in Egypt or Israel (as in Turkey and Cyprus) the situation is something different due to the close contacts with the evolution of research in the West.

¹¹² For instance a research about the diet in ancient Sidon (Lebanon); the Byzantine cemetery in Samra (Jordan): A. Nabulsi, *The Byzantine cemetery in Samra*, in J. B. Humbert, A. Desreumaux (ed.), *Fouilles de Khirbet es-Samra en Jordanie*, Tournhout, 1998, p. 271–279; or for Roman times in Egypt: T. L. Dupras, H. P. Schwarcz, S. I. Fairgrieve, *Infant Feeding and Weaning Practices in Roman Egypt*, in *American Journal of Physical Anthropology*, 115 (2001), p. 204–212.

¹¹³ Much more developed, if we can say, for the middle and late Byzantine times.

¹¹⁴ C. Bourbou, *The People of Early Byzantine Eleutherna and Messene (6th–7th centuries A.D.): A Bioarchaeological Approach*, Athens, 2004; id., *Health and Disease in Byzantine Crete (7th–12th centuries A.D.)*, 2010; id., *To Live and Die in a Turbulent Era: Bioarchaeological Analysis of the early-Byzantine (6th–7th centuries AD). Population from Sourtara Galaniou Kozanis (North Greece)*, in *DOP*, 63 (2011), p. 221–234; id., *Bread, Oil, Wine, and Milk: Feeding Infants and Adults in Byzantine Greece*, in A. Papatthaniou, M. P. Richards, S. C. Fox (ed.), *Archaeodiet in the Greek world. Dietary Reconstruction from Stable Isotope Analysis* (Hesperia Supplement, 49), 2015, p. 171–194; C. Bourbou, M. P. Richards, *The Middle-Byzantine Menu: Stable Carbon and Nitrogen Isotope Values from the Greek Site of Kastella, Crete*, in *International Journal of Osteoarchaeology*, 17 (2007), p. 63–72; C. Bourbou, A. Tsilipakou, *Investigating the Human Past of Greece During the 6th–7th centuries A.D. Patterns of Life and Death at the Site of Sourtara Galaniou Kozanis in Northern Greece*, in L. Schepartz, S. Fox, C. Bourbou (ed.), *New Directions in the Skeletal Biology of Greece* (OWLS volume 1, Hesperia Supplement, 43), Princeton, 2009, p. 121–136.

legumes in the Byzantine diet (confirmed in several sites in Greece¹¹⁵) and particularly the differences in diet between the places linked to the urban and rural monastic areas (monastic rules were extremely strict and encouraged the consumption of legumes) in inland and coastal Byzantine populations.

In respect to health conditions in early Byzantine Greece, through paleopathological and osteological analysis, the most frequently attested pathological situations are hematopoietic (*cribra orbitalia*, *porotic hyperostosis*), metabolic (*scurvy*) and infectious (non-specific *periostitis*) conditions.¹¹⁶ In respect to health conditions it would be fascinating to know the pathologies of the early Byzantine urban populations. One would have to be extremely rigorous in detecting regional and local differences due not only to the geographical position but also to a complex of living conditions of the inhabitants in intramural and extramural areas.

Without a doubt the ancient DNA analyses of several skeletal remains of plague victims in Bavaria from the 6th-century *Yersinia pestis* ('Plague of Justinian') is one of the more exciting discoveries in the field of bio-archaeology in recent years.¹¹⁷ According to Procopius the epidemic started from the city of *Pelusium*, but recently archaeological and epidemiological data the port of *Chysma* in the Red Sea may have been a possible entrance gate for the *Yersinia pestis*.¹¹⁸ The trajectory of the epidemic is well known: from the Near East in AD 541 (*Pelusium* or *Chysma*) to Constantinople in AD 542 and North Africa, Italy, Spain and the German-French border by winter AD 543. In less than three years it spread from one end of the Mediterranean to another, and it still persisted in the territory of the former Roman Empire until the middle of the 8th century. Urban enclaves, especially coastal, suffered violently from the plague. The research has shown that the disease crossed the Alps to affect local populations. It would be particularly exciting to verify the causes of death for individuals buried in multiple simultaneous inhumations (including graves containing only two or three individuals) in Near Eastern Byzantine urban contexts.

Bio-archaeological studies include not only the analysis of human skeletal remains, since the palynological analyses also form an essential aspect to inform the variations in climatic conditions that affected decisively the daily life of ancient populations. A very recent study examines the evidence for climatic changes in the Eastern Mediterranean (in Anatolia and the Levant) for the period AD 200–800, and shows clearly the influence of climatic fluctuations

¹¹⁵ C. Bourbou, *Bread, Oil, Wine, and Milk...*, *op. cit.*

¹¹⁶ C. Bourbou, *Health and Disease in Byzantine Crete...*, *op. cit.*; *id.*, *To Live and Die in a Turbulent Era...*, *op. cit.*

¹¹⁷ M. Harbeck, L. Seifert, S. Hänsch, D. M. Wagner, D. Birdsell et al., *Yersinia pestis DNA from Skeletal Remains from the 6th Century AD Reveals Insights into Justinianic Plague*, in *PLOS Pathogens*, 9 (5): e1003349. doi:10.1371/journal.ppat.1003349.

¹¹⁸ C. Tsiamis, E. Poulakou-Rebelakou, G. Androustos, *The Role of the Egyptian Sea and Land Routes in the Justinian Plague: the case of Pelusium*, in D. Michaelidis (ed.), *Medicine and Healing in the Ancient Mediterranean World*, Oxford, 2014, p. 334–338.

in the social development of this region during Late Antiquity.¹¹⁹ This research highlights how palinological data combined with historical and archaeological record can provide crucial information for understanding the evolution of urban and rural population in this period. The authors underline the existence of three periods of substantially different climatic conditions: a late Roman drought AD 350–470; followed by a dramatic shift to much wetter climatic conditions; increasing dryness after AD 730 in Anatolia and AD 670 in the Levant. The first phase of late Roman drought appears to have contributed to a change in patterns of water use in the cities, and this it should be taken into account when analysing changes in the water supply systems in east and south Mediterranean post-Roman cities. The second phase of better climatic conditions after AD 470 does appear to have contributed to the expansion of rural settlements and agriculture into the environmentally marginal terrain, and in this way climate probably contributed to the general economic prosperity of the late Roman Empire in the east of the Mediterranean basin. A recent investigation into the hinterland of Petra (at the site of Bir Madhkur), on the basis of archaeobotanical evidence for the Late Roman and Byzantine period (AD 284–500), seems to confirm this hypothesis.¹²⁰ Analysis of the archaeobotanical remains recovered from 62 soil samples address questions related to how and when plants were grown and what role they played in the local and regional economy. This archaeobotanical data provide in this case direct evidence of increase in agricultural production in the region during Late Antiquity.

Framing the post-roman cityscapes in the southwest and southeast Mediterranean: Byzantine cities or cities in Byzantine times?

The post-Roman urban landscapes are complex and diverse, both in the West and the East. The multiplicity of particular situations, which may be applied to each of the urban areas, should always be taken into consideration when making overviews with a generalizing desire, as is the case with the present paper. However, we have tried to present certain common characteristics, or transformation patterns, of the post-Roman urban landscapes in the southwest and southeast Mediterranean in early Byzantine times.

From a chronological point of view, it was necessary to start, in many cases, with the image of the late-Roman city in the 4th century and take into account the transition between the Byzantine city and the early Islamic city from the 7th to the 8th centuries.

¹¹⁹ A. Izdebski, J. Pickett, N. Roberts, T. Waliszewski, *The environmental, archaeological and historical evidence for regional climatic changes and their societal impacts in the Eastern Mediterranean in Late Antiquity*, in *Quaternary Science Reviews*, 136, Special Issue: Mediterranean Holocene Climate, Environment and Human Societies (2016), p. 189–208.

¹²⁰ J. Ramsay, A. M. Smith, *Desert agriculture at Bir Madhkur: The first archaeobotanical evidence to support the timing and scale of agriculture during the Late Roman/Byzantine period in the hinterland of Petra*, in *Journal of Arid Environments*, 99 (2013), p. 51–63.

The first element visible in the urban landscape are without doubt the walls, and the reconstructions or reforms in the 5th century and even new construction along the 6th century of these imposing walled enclosures represent a crucial element of the early Byzantine city. The civil authorities, commonly the religious elites, managed and maintained the urban walled enclosures. The construction of new walls in the 6th century is evidenced from the West to the East Mediterranean, in the new cities such as *Recópolis* or semi-urban complexes such as 'El Tolmo de Minateda' (both in the Iberian Peninsula), or the walls of *Pelusium* (near *Tell el-Farama*, south Egypt), a 20-acre fortress with 36 towers, three gates, and seven-foot-thick wall dated in the late 6th century.¹²¹

The city of the 4th century in the Near East, as in the Byzantine province of *Spania*, is not substantially different in comparison to the 5th century. Although the weight of Christianization began to be visible in the urban landscape as early as the 4th century in the Near East, the structural and morphological characteristics of the classical Roman city (around the *forum* or the *agora*) were still present in the 5th century: temples, theatres, amphitheatres, baths, wide and long avenues with columns, rich *domus*, imposing walls... and initially in peripheral areas of the city, but always intramural, we find the first churches and Christian complexes.¹²² It is in the 6th century that major changes take place, and in many cases we observe at this moment radical alterations of the classic urban landscape. The elements that define and highlight these transformations do not substantially differ in the West and in the East. The scenarios of change, particularly regarding their prior use or function, public or private, are essentially the same: the dismantling of the ancient urban *domus* and its transformation into areas of diversified use (residential, individual or collective, commercial and productive); the private occupation of previously public spaces (colonnades streets, theatres, amphitheatres, baths...) and their transformation into habitation or productive (small industries, commerce or varied workshops) areas; the *spolia* activity, mainly on ancient monuments and public buildings on which the new urban landscape was founded; the abandonment of large intramural urban areas; these are all processes that we find across the Mediterranean, from East to West, as well as from North to South, that is to say in the whole post-Roman urban world.

Another common parameter is the disappearance of much of the old urban elites (*curiales*, *honorati* and *possessores*) and, consequentially, the appearance of new elites, most of them veritable 'religious leaders': the bishops. In most cases the bishops are (as well as the archbishops, clerics...) those who maintain and stimulate building activity (of restoration, transformation or creation) which can be considered to be monumental, both public, including religious spaces for the Christian liturgy, the maintenance and repair of the ancient walled enclosures, water supply systems, the urban road network that allowed access and connected

¹²¹ The Egyptian-German research team has evidenced the traces of destruction by fire still visible and may be caused during the Persian invasion of AD 619. We do not forget that *Pelusium* was the focus of expansion of the so-called 'Plague of Justinian' in AD 541.

¹²² The 'house-church' of *Dura Europos* remains in its 'invisibility' a stimulating exception.

the different religious buildings, accommodations for pilgrims, hospitals, etc., as well as private reception spaces, such as residences and private bathrooms. The so-called episcopal districts are probably the best example of this construction activity that has been even qualified as evergetic. In this sense, we can speak of a significantly Christianized urban landscape because of the profusion and visibility of its more emblematic buildings: the churches. In the Near East (but also in the Mediterranean West¹²³) a crucial element in this proliferation of churches in urban areas (in addition to the many urban and rural monastic complexes) is the fact that in many cases they were important pilgrimage centres. This character of pilgrimage centres, in direct relation to the cult of relics and holy places, is a key parameter to understanding the transformation of the urban landscapes both intra- and extramural, since it required a whole series of infrastructures and facilities in order to manage and maintain that function.

Luxury was certainly a defining characteristic of the large urban centres of the Near East, and in general of the territories under Byzantine rule. The opulence visible in the urban landscape through monumental architecture and lavish decoration in the 5th and 6th centuries, predominantly connected with the spaces dedicated to the Christian liturgy, features the same sumptuousness that distinguishes the classical Roman city in these frontier territories. We don't find the same splendour in Western urban landscapes, obviously with the exception of Rome. In the borderlands¹²⁴ this luxuriousness and magnificence was probably an indispensable condition to demonstrate the power and grandeur of the Empire: Roman first, Byzantine later. But probably, in our opinion, this sumptuousness and opulence is mainly a legacy of the weight and influence of the Hellenistic world in the whole Near East.

The 'end of the Byzantine city' in the regions under consideration, between the 7th and the 8th centuries, may be viewed within the paradigm of the creation of the 'early Islamic city'. It is a process that has been subject to profound, profuse and stimulating research in the last years showing already, and with solid results, that the change of power in the management of the urban landscapes did not represent a radical break. The construction of new religious buildings, the mosques, did not result in destruction or disappearance of the ancient Christian buildings, and the examples are numerous in the most of the late antique and Byzantine cities. Like the souk, and the palatial residences, the headquarters of the new urban authorities, set an urban landscape adapting and transforming the prior buildings to the new socio-political and ideological context. Certainly, the archaeological research shows clearly the gradual disappearance of the old colonnaded streets, which were practically invaded by the businesses and shops of the souk. This transformation process from the

¹²³ As is the case of the 'Santa Eulalia' district in *Emerita Augusta* and probably the St. Vincent *martyrium* of *Valentia* or the *Fructuosus* Christian complex in *Tarraco*.

¹²⁴ Border cities evidence frequently a particular opulence in the whole Roman Empire.

Byzantine cityscape to the early Islamic city in the late 7th and during the 8th centuries is visible in an exemplary way in *Gerasa* (Fig. 23).¹²⁵

Therefore, we observe a gradual transformation between the late-Roman city and the late antique/early Byzantine city (from the 4th to the 6th centuries), and between this and the early Islamic city (from the 7th to the 8th centuries). It is not possible, nevertheless, from the archaeological record, to talk of a radical break or of a drastic abandonment of the ancient urban areas.

Another question, and it is our personal impression, analysing the changes and transformations attested in many post-Roman urban landscapes, is whether we can speak specifically of a Byzantine city. We think this is only a terminological or semantic problem that is not derived directly from the data provided by the archaeological record. Indeed, the changes and transformations visible at *Gerasa* or *Bosra* (in Jordan and Syria respectively) in the 6th century are comparable to those that we find in *Valentia* and *Carthago Spartaria* (in the southeast of the Iberian Peninsula) in the same period. In the case of *Gerasa*, *Bosra*, *Valentia* and *Carthago Spartaria* we can speak about ‘Byzantine cities’ because they were part of the territory under Byzantine rule. But if we talk about *Emerita Augusta* or *Recópolis* (in the Iberian Peninsula) still watching the same patterns of change and transformation in the 6th century, we must refer to those cities as ‘Visigothic cities’, since they were under Visigothic rule. This is not because there is a specifically Byzantine or Visigothic architecture, or a Byzantine or Visigothic city different one from the other; that terminology is only due to the change of the political contexts which qualify the material evidence in one way or another. Therefore, it is the political domain which gives a logical semantics to the terms Byzantine or Visigothic, then we should speak about post-roman cities in Byzantine times (early or late Byzantine) or Visigothic times, and subsequently, in addition, we are giving a chronological content to such terms, probably much more accurate than when we refer generally to Late Antique cities. In fact, the transformation processes of the urban landscapes from the 5th century, and overall in the 6th century, in the East as well as in the West, anticipate the characteristics that define the ‘early medieval city’, where it finds its origins.

¹²⁵ In the frame of the so-called ‘Islamic Jarash Project’ coordinated by the Danish-Jordanian Archaeological Mission. L. Blanke, P. Lorien, R. Rattenborg, *Changing Cityscapes in Central Jarash – Between Late Antiquity and the Abbasid Period*, in *Annual of the Department of Antiquities of Jordan*, 54 (2010), p. 311–327. For an excellent and documented overview about the Byzantine-early Islamic transition in the Near East (particularly in Palestine and Jordan) see: I. Taxel, *The Byzantine-early Islamic transition on the Palestinian coastal plain: a re-evaluation of the archaeological evidence in Semitica et Classica*, 6 (2013), p. 73–106; G. Avni, ‘From Polis to Madina’ revisited..., *op. cit.*; id., *The Byzantine-Islamic Transition in Palestine...*, *op. cit.*

Figures



Fig. 1: Byzantine and Visigothic southeast Spain in the 6th and 7th centuries



Fig. 2: Cities of the eastern Roman Empire in the 5th century (J. Haldon, *The Palgrave Atlas of Byzantine History*, Palgrave and Macmillan ed., 2010, p. 38, map 3.2)

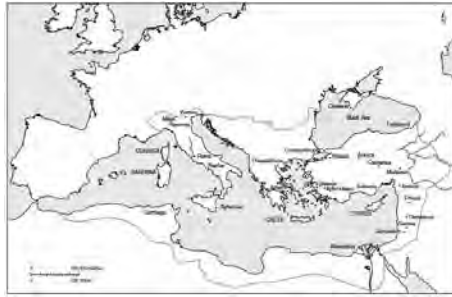


Fig. 3: Major cities of the 6th century in the Eastern Roman Empire (J. Haldon, *The Palgrave Atlas of Byzantine History*, Palgrave and Macmillan ed., 2010, p. 42, map 3.4)

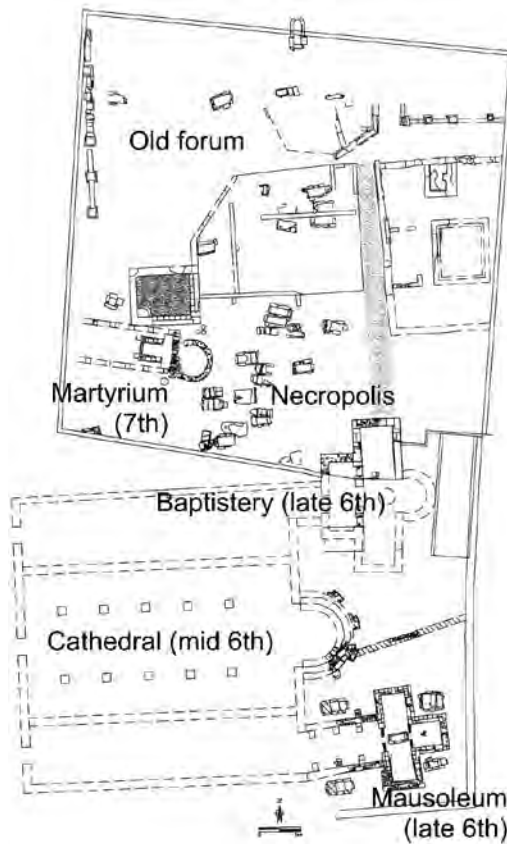


Fig. 4: Plan of the episcopal complex of *Valentia* in the early 7th century (Ribera, 2008, Fig. 8)

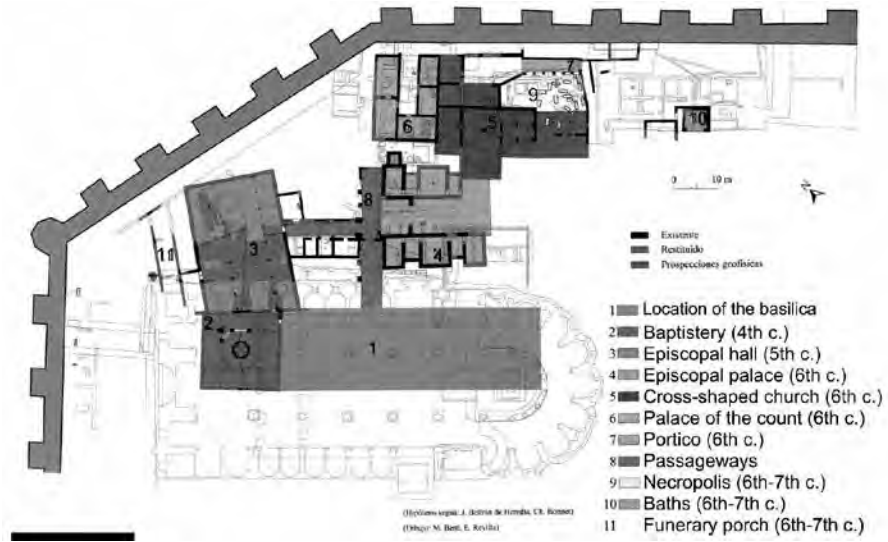


Fig. 5: Plan of the episcopal complex of *Barcino* in the late 6th century (Gurt-Sánchez Ramos, 2008, Fig. 8)



Fig. 6: Plan of *Tarraco* in the Visigothic period (J. M. Macias et al., *Planimetria arqueològica de Tàrraco*, Tarragona, 2007, phase V)

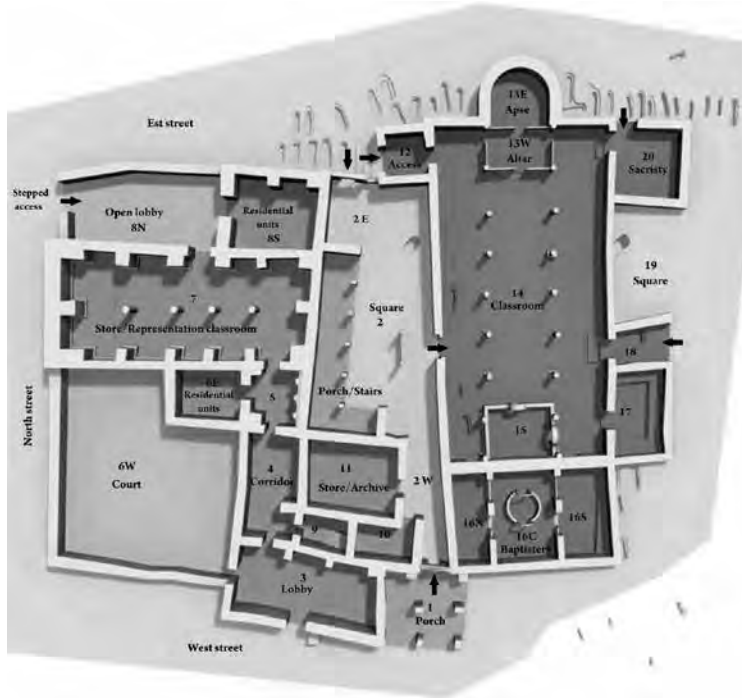


Fig. 7: The so-called episcopal complex of 'El Tolmo de Minateda' (Hellín, Albacete), built in the late 6th/early 7th centuries (Gutiérrez Lloret-Sarabia Bautista, 2013)



Fig. 8: Basilica and Christian quarter of *Hippo Regius* (Algeria) in the mid-4th century

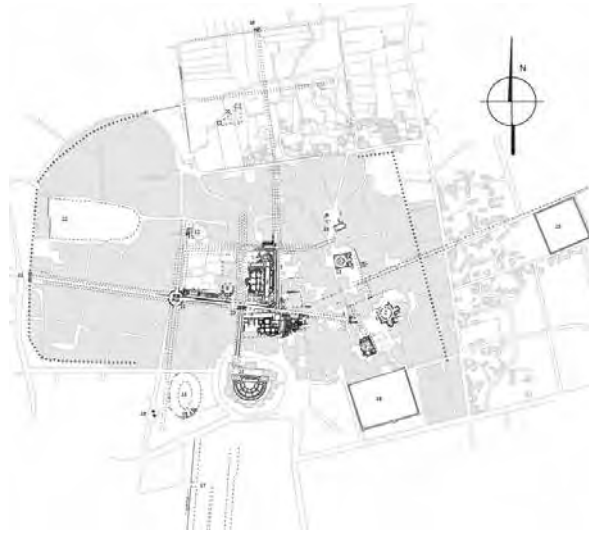


Fig. 9: *Bosra*: General plan of the city, with outstanding monuments and the restoration of the main road network by the French archaeological mission in southern Syria. (2) Central plan church; (3) the so-called ‘Trajan’s palace’; (4) southern thermal baths; (6) central core: with exedra, church and temple; (8) *Praetorium*; (9) *Macellum*; (12) St. Elias mausoleum; (13) church of St. Sergio, *Leoncius* and *Bacus*; (14) Bahira basilica; (15) amphitheatre; (17) hippodrome; (24) theatre and citadel (Dentzer-Blanc-Fournet 2002, 88, plan 1)

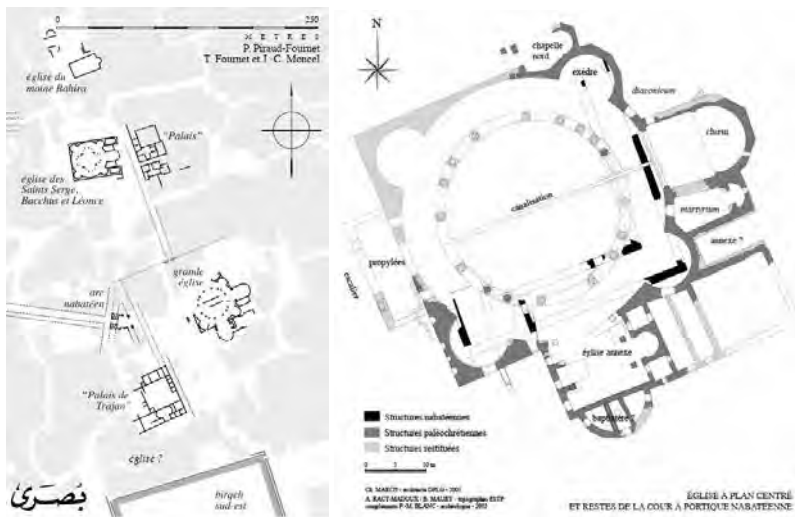


Fig. 10 (left): Christian topography of *Bosra* (Fournet, 2010, 299, Fig. 16)

Fig. 11 (right): Plane of the great Christian complex of central plan (with baptistery, *martyrium* and annexes) in *Bosra*, with the Nabatean and late antique phases and the large pipeline that crosses the church (Dentzer-Blanc-Fournet 2002, 90, Plan 5)

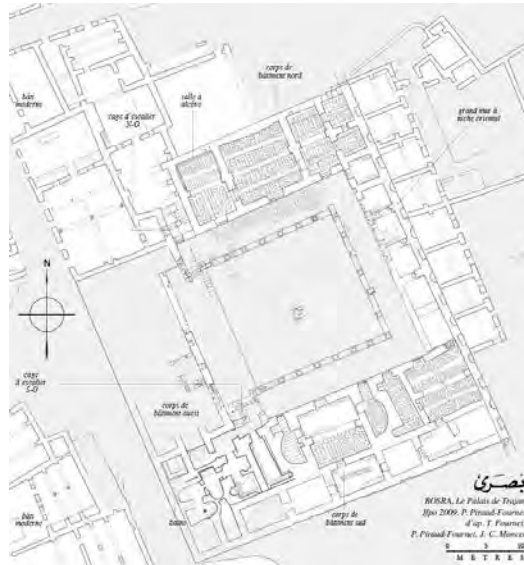


Fig. 12: The so-called 'Trajan's Palace' in *Bosra* (situated to the west of the great Christian complex of central plan) interpreted as a possible episcopal residence (or at least the residence of a rich Christian) and built in the late 5th and early 6th centuries (Fournet, 2010, 291, Fig. 2)

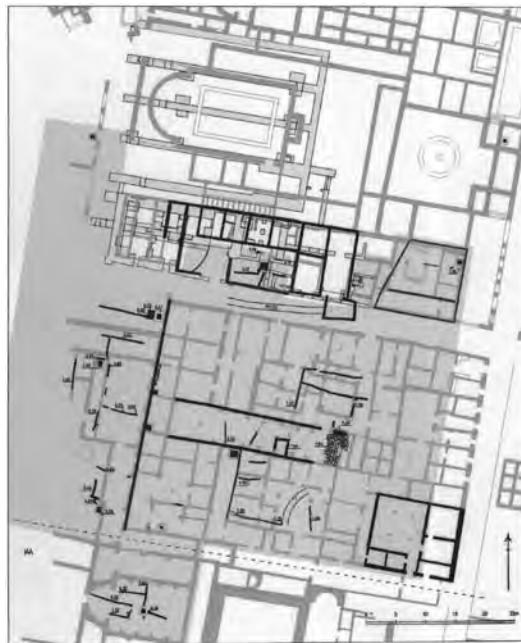


Fig. 13: *Caesarea* (Israel): general plan of the mid-7th century irrigated garden above the Byzantine structures in the southwestern zone (J. Patrich, *Caesarea in transition*, Fig. 12)



Fig. 14: The northern Basilica of Palmyra (Basilica IV). General view looking from the east (Majcherek, 2012, p. 462, Fig. 1)

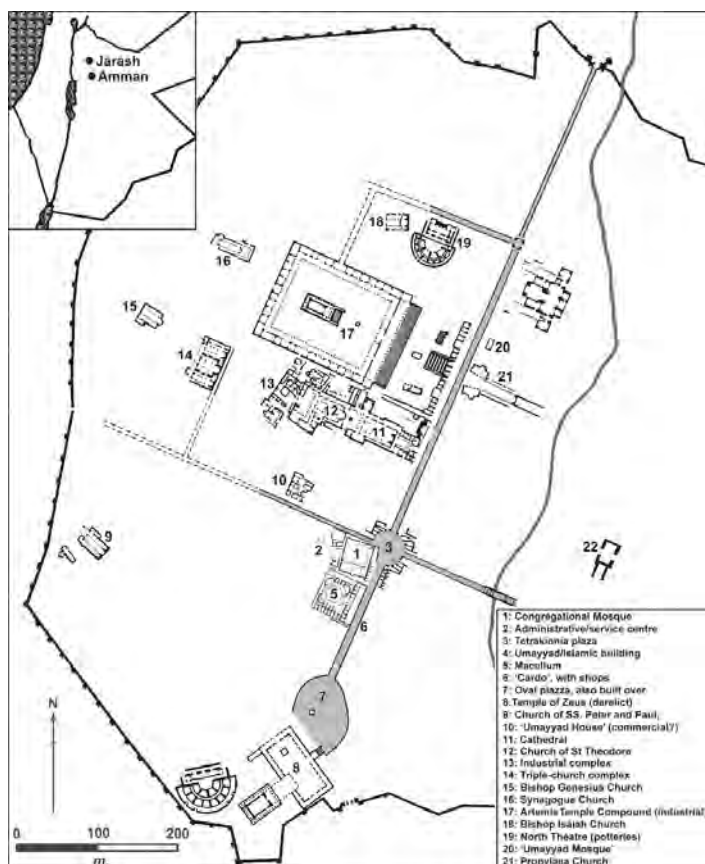


Fig. 15: Topographic map of *Gerasa* (Jordan) in Byzantine and early Islamic times, with the principal Christian buildings (Avni, 2011, p. 313, Fig. 3)

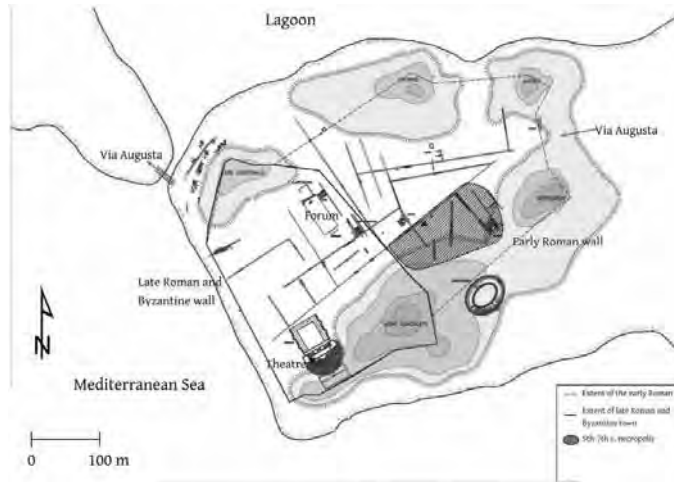


Fig. 16: Plan of Cartagena, showing the early and late Roman wall enclosures (S. Ramallo, A. Murcia, J. Vizcaíno, *Carthago Nova y su espacio suburbano. Dinámicas de ocupación en la periferia de la urbs*, in D. Vaquerizo (ed.), *Las áreas suburbanas en la ciudad histórica*, Córdoba, 2010, p. 211–254, Fig. 14)



Fig. 17: Reoccupation of the Roman theatre at Cartagena in the Byzantine period (S. Ramallo, E. Ruiz, *Cartagena en la arqueología bizantina en Hispania: estado de la cuestión*, in J. M. Gurt, A. Ribera (ed.), *VI Reunió d'arqueologia cristiana hispànica*, Barcelona, 2005, pp. 305–322, Fig. 2)



Fig. 18: Byzantine-era housing unit built on the western *ima cavea* of the Roman theatre of *Carthago Spartaria* (Vizcaino Sánchez, 2007, p. 389, Lámina 29)

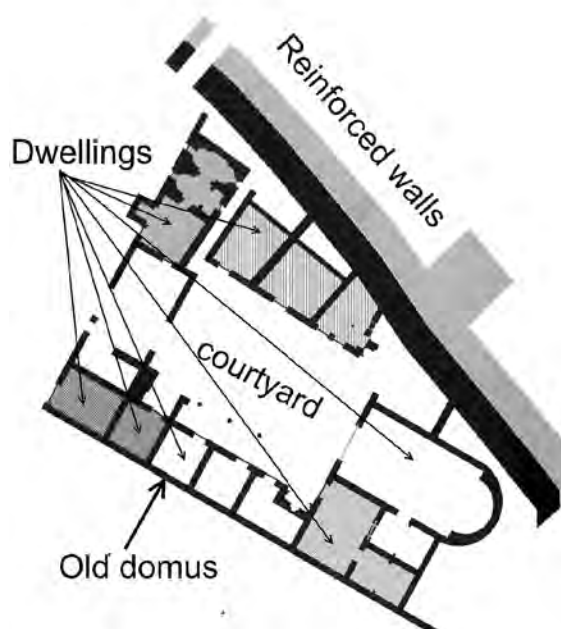


Fig. 19: From Roman *domus* to neighbourhood house at *Emerita Augusta* (Mérida, Spain) (Albamateos, 2008, Fig. 9)

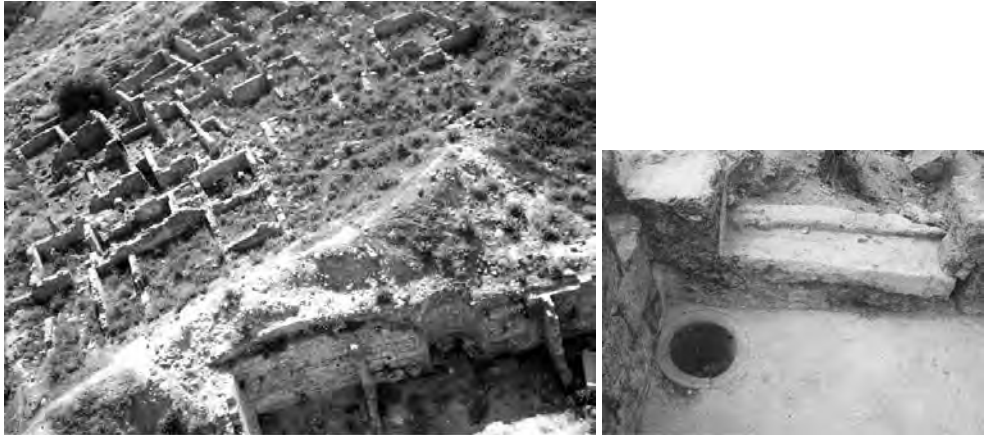


Fig. 20 (left): Residential district and east wall of the Byzantine basilica in Jiyeh (Porphyreon) (Waliszewski-Juchniewicz-Gwiazda, 2012, 425, Fig. 1)

Fig. 21 (right): Sunken vessel in room D47 in the Residential district of Jiyeh (Porphyreon) (Waliszewski- Juchniewicz-Gwiazda, 2012, p. 440, Fig. 14)



Fig. 22: Plan and aerial view of the Jiyeh quarter in 2010 (Waliszewski-Juchniewicz-Gwiazda, 2012, p. 426, Fig. 2)

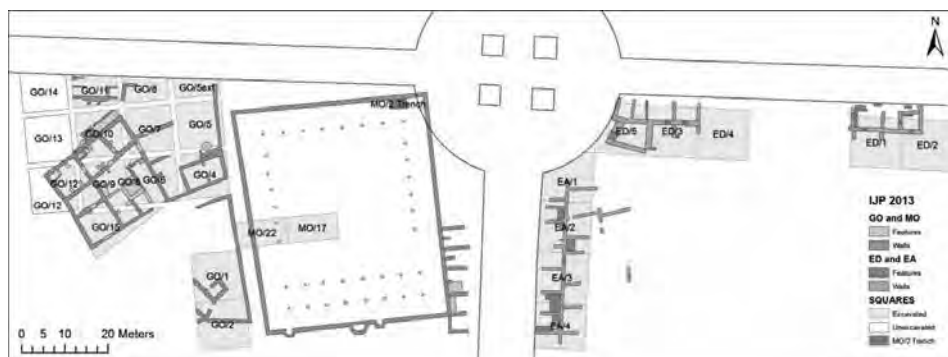


Fig. 23: Overview of *Islamic Jerasha Project* (IJP) excavation areas (state of 2013) (Rattenborg-Walmsley, 2013, p. 96, Fig. 61)

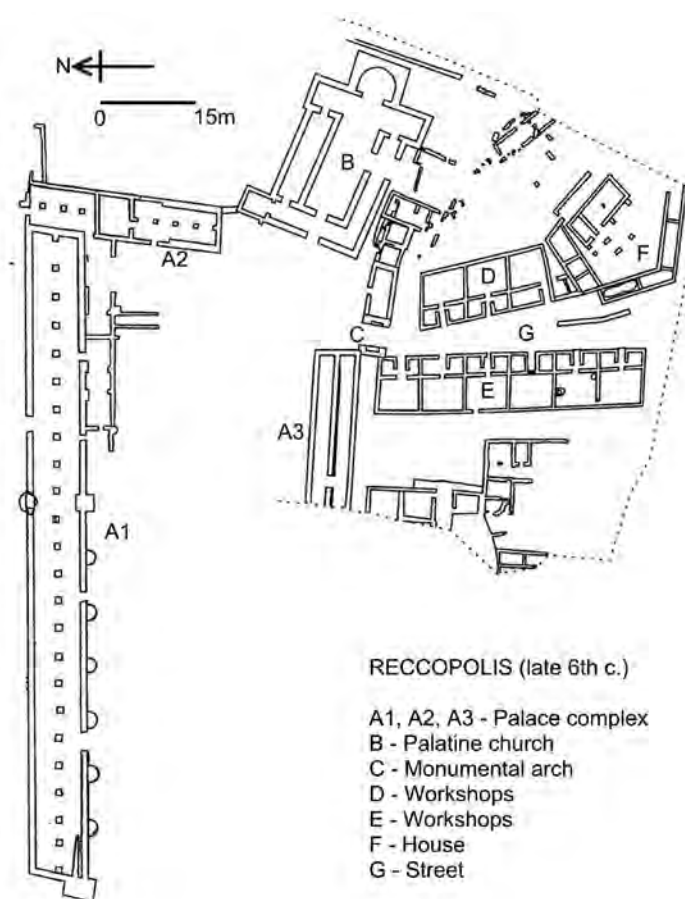


Fig. 24: Plan of *Recópolis* in the late 6th century (1st phase) (Olmo, 2008, Fig. 2)

Caričin Grad (Justiniana Prima): A New-Discovered City for a ‘New’ Society

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The area of northern Illyricum was one of the least urbanized parts of the Late Roman Empire. The main developed territory was that along the Danube Limes, where there were several cities, from Sirmium and Viminacium to Ratiaria. The cities in the hinterland of the Balkan provinces were mostly situated in broad valleys, at intersections of major roads, such as Naissus and Ulpiana, or in the vicinity of mining districts, as Municipium Dardanorum. In addition, a number of cities, for instance Municipium Malvesatium and Municipium Celegerorum, owed their existence to powerful native communities scattered around the wide Balkan mountain ranges, away from main road communications.¹

Common to all of Late Antique cities of northern Illyricum is shrinkage of their territories at the end of the fourth and particularly during the fifth century AD.² The incursions of the Huns in 441 and 443 contributed to the decline of the urban life. The decline should by no means be understood, as is often the case, as a total cessation of life. That cities were inhabited in the second half of the fifth century is attested by numerous cemeteries in cities along the Danube Limes, such as Sirmium, Singidunum and Viminacium.³ Life in them continued within a reduced territory, which is indicated by the presence of cemeteries within city boundaries and the desertion of whole quarters.⁴

The renovation of cities began for certain already during the reign of Anastasius I and ended in the reign of Justinian I. It is not known to what extent the poleis of the northern

¹ M. Vasić, *Cities and imperial villae in Roman provinces in the territory of present day Serbia*, in I. Popović, B. Borić-Brešković (ed.), *Constantine the Great and the Edict of Milan*, Beograd, 2013, p. 76–101; V. Ivanišević, *Kasnoantički grad u Iliriku i njegova transformacija*, in Lj. Maksimović (ed.), *Konstantin Veliki u vizantijskoj i srpskoj tradiciji*, Beograd, 2014, p. 49–62.

² B. Dumanov, *Thrace in Late Antiquity*, in J. Valeva, E. Nankov, D. Graninger (ed.), *A Companion to Ancient Thrace*, Malden, 2015, p. 96–100.

³ V. Ivanišević, M. Kazanski, *Illyricum du Nord et les Barbares à l'époque des Grandes Migrations*, in *Starinar*, 64 (2014), p. 131–160.

⁴ V. Popović, *A Survey of the Urban Organization and Topography of Sirmium in the Late Empire*, in V. Popović (ed.), *Sirmium*, I, Beograd, 1971, p. 119–148; V. Popović, *Desintegration und Ruralisation der Stadt im Ost-Illyricum von 5. bis 7. Jahrhundert n. Chr.*, in D. Papenfuß, V. M. Strocka (ed.), *Palast und Hütte*, Mainz, 1982, p. 545–566; M. Jeremić, *L'hippodrome de Sirmium à la lumière de nouvelles recherches*, in C. Balmelle, P. Chevalier, G. Ripoll (ed.), *Studiola in honorem Noël Duval* (Mélanges d'Antiquité Tardive, 5), Turnhout, 2004, p. 11–15.

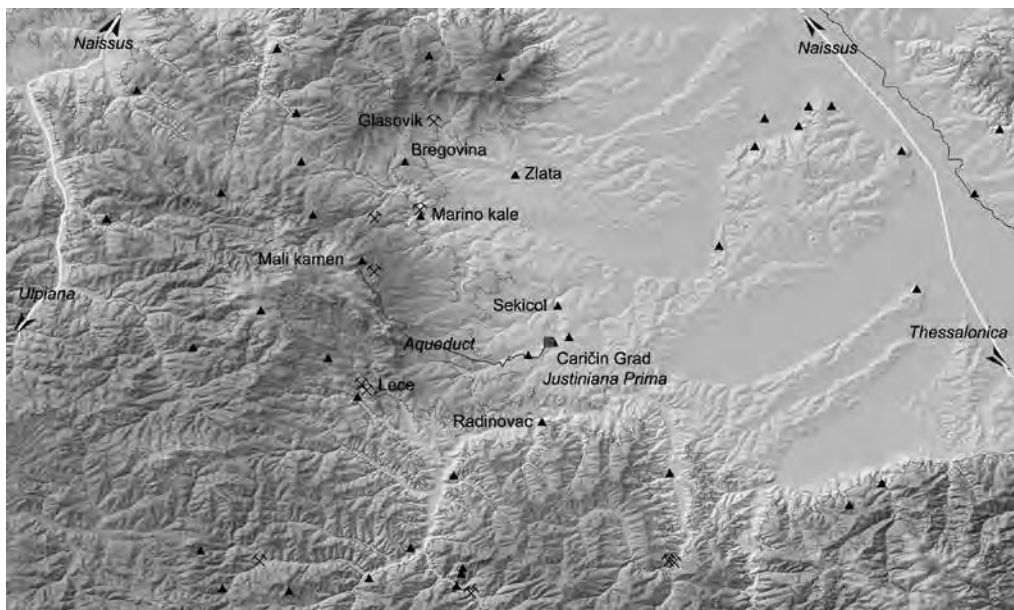


Fig. 1: The territory of Caričin Grad: late antique fortresses and mining sites

Illyricum were renovated. Also unknown is the size of the Early Byzantine Sirmium, Singidunum and Viminacium. Naissus likewise underwent substantial restoration, which is evident from the presence of Early Byzantine ramparts there, as well as from the buildings and porticos erected in the central urban core of the city.⁵ The fate of the other cities, particularly those in the hinterland, is not known. Thus it may be said without any hesitation whatsoever that the history of the Early Byzantine poleis in northern Illyricum, succeeding old Roman urban centers, represents a big unknown.⁶

Another phenomenon, also present in other parts of the Empire, is the erection of a large number of fortifications on elevations, above river valleys and behind mountain ranges, in the interior of the diocese, two or three days' walk away from the Danube Limes, on whose borders the Heruli, Gepids and other small groups of Barbarian tribes had settled.⁷ Late Antique forts, mostly *phouria*, were built along the main waterways, such as the Great,

⁵ P. Petrović, *Inscriptions de la Mésie Supérieure, IV (Naissus–Remesiana–Horreum Margi)*, Belgrade, 1979, p. 45–47.

⁶ G. Dagron, *Les villes dans l'Illyricum protobyzantin*, in *Villes et peuplement dans l'Illyricum protobyzantin, Actes du colloque de Rome (12–14 mai 1982)*, Rome, 1984, p. 1–20; B. Bavant, *La ville dans le nord de l'Illyricum (Pannonie, Mésie I, Dacie et Dardanie)*, in *Villes et peuplement dans l'Illyricum protobyzantin, Actes du colloque de Rome (12–14 mai 1982)*, Rome, 1984, p. 245–288.

⁷ V. Ivanišević, *The Danubian Limes of the Diocese of Dacia in the 5th Century*, in T. Vida (ed.), *Romania Gothica II: The Frontier World Romans, Barbarians and Military Culture*, Budapest, 2015, p. 653–665.

West and South Morava, Ibar and Timok Rivers, as well as around valleys. Judging by these fortresses, the whole area had a significant population. This is particularly true of the territory of Naissus.

Of special interest for our discussion is the southern part of this territory the Leskovac Basin, which comprises 2 250 km². Judging by the traces of Early Byzantine fortress, the basin was substantially populated. (Fig. 1) A significant number of villages and villas should by all means be added to this. Their existence, among other records, is indicated by Early Byzantine rural churches.⁸

Caričin Grad (Justiniana Prima)

Caričin Grad was built in this environment in the first half of the sixth century. As demonstrated by investigations that have lasted several decades, it was a new urban center, which, with a high degree of certainty, may be identified as Justiniana Prima, the polis that, according to *Novella* 11, Justinian I built to be the seat of an archbishopric and of the Praetorian prefect of Illyricum.⁹

The emergence of the new polis in the poorly urbanized interior of the central Balkans, in the western part of Dacia Mediterranea bordering on Dardania, far from the main road communications, represents a particular phenomenon.¹⁰ The building of the city can only be explained by the Emperor's wish to commemorate his place of birth, as well as by his need to strengthen the interior of the diocese by building a new urban center. Caričin Grad was built in the hinterland of the Leskovac Basin, from which it was easy to control the roads that linked Naissus and Ulpiana, Thessaloniki, Serdica and other cities along the northern border.

The concept of polis is reflected in this new city of Justinian's epoch, built in a strategic location, with well-developed fortifications and water supply systems, a large number of churches, administrative and public buildings, broad porticos and plazas. The unearthed remains of the city match Procopius's description of the buildings erected in Justiniana Prima: "In that place also he constructed an aqueduct and so caused the city to be abundantly supplied with ever-running water. And many other enterprises were carried out by the

⁸ S. Stamenković, *Rimsko nasleđe u Leskovačkoj kotlini*, Beograd, 2013, p. 44–59; V. Ivanišević, S. Stamenković, *Late Roman Fortifications in the Leskovac Basin in Relation to Urban Centers*, in *Starinar*, 64 (2014), p. 219–230.

⁹ *Novellae*, ed. R. Schoell, G. Kroll, *Corpus Iuris Civilis*, 3, Berlin, 1895, p. 94.

¹⁰ V. Kondić, V. Popović, *Caričin Grad, utvrđeni grad u vizantijskom Iliriku*, Beograd, 1977, p. 367–371; B. Bavant, *Caričin Grad and the Changes in the Nature of Urbanism in the Central Balkans in the Sixth Century*, in A. Poulter (ed.), *The Transition to Late Antiquity, on the Danube and Beyond*, Oxford, 2007, p. 337–374; E. Zanini, *The Urban Ideal and Urban Planning in Byzantine New Cities of the Sixth Century AD*, in L. Lavan, W. Bowden (ed.), *Theory and Practice in Late Antique Archaeology*, Leiden, 2003, p. 196–223.

founder of this city-works of great size and worthy of especial note. For to enumerate the churches is not easy, and it is impossible to tell in words of the lodgings for magistrates, the great stoas, the fine market-places, the fountains, the streets, the baths, the shops. In brief, the city is both great and populous and blessed in every way – a city worthy to be the metropolis of the whole region, for it has attained this rank. It has also been allotted to the Archbishop of Illyricum as his seat, the other cities conceding this honour to it, as being first in point of size”.¹¹ The panegyric tone of the chronicler’s depiction of the new polis is predominantly reflected in the exaggerated information about the size and population of the city, which certainly did not exceed those of the older urban centers of northern Illyricum.¹²

Special attention was paid to defending possible access routes to the city by building fortresses in its vicinity. According to new research, the program of building the new city also included additional strengthening of fortifications in the surrounding area a considerable distance away from the polis.

The concept and structure of the city

Unlike Roman cities, this new city was built on an elevation that, in addition to being spacious, also provided strategic advantages defense-wise. The orthogonal plan of the Antique city – *urbs quadrata* – was replaced by an irregular one, adjusted to the terrain configuration. Besides, the selection of the location for the city involved finding a place to which it was possible to convey water from distant abundant springs to an area that is known for shortages of it during the summer months. In the case of Caričin Grad, the decisive role in the selection of a broad plateau that rises between two rivers encompassing it on three sides was played by its strategic location at the expense of space that might be utilized. Thus, the western, northern and eastern parts of the city were built on slopes descending to the rivers, whereas the easily accessible southern plateau was additionally fortified by two lines of defense, strengthened by *fossae*. (Fig. 2)

Fortifications

Fortifications represented a key feature of the Early Byzantine city. In the case of Caričin Grad, they comprised several rings of ramparts. The main ramparts, in *opus mixtum*, were 2,8 to 2,2 m wide and further strengthened at intervals of between 30 to 40 m by sizeable towers, which defended each of the three main parts of the city, that is the Acropolis, the Upper City and the Lower City. A separate part of the city comprised broad suburbs protected by different defensive walls. The northern and southern suburbs were protected by a defensive wall constructed also in *opus mixtum*, but of a much smaller width (1,8 m)

¹¹ Procopius, *De Aedificiis* IV.i.21–25, ed. H. B. Dewing, London, 1971.

¹² A. Cameron, *Procopius and the Sixth Century*, London, 1985, p. 222; D. Roques, *Les Constructions de Justinien de Procope de Césarée*, in *AT*, 8 (2000), p. 31–43.

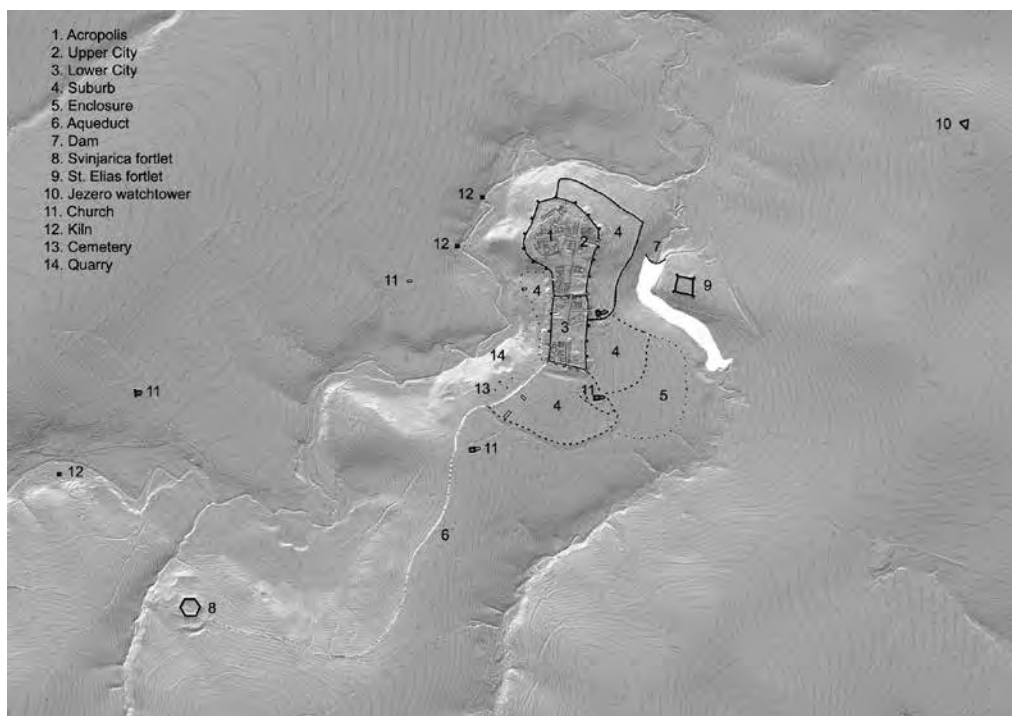


Fig. 2: Caričin Grad and neighboring sites

than the main city ramparts and with no towers. This wall enclosed only a small number of public buildings, as the majority of the structures were houses of different sizes and with yards. There were suburbs also in the south and southeast, surrounded by a protective earthwork palisade with a broad ditch, all totaling 25 m in width. An artificial lake with a dam below the city constituted the eastern line of defense, most notably of the eastern suburb. City defenses were further reinforced by a large number of towers (c. 40) erected on the outer and inner ramparts. Special attention was paid to the protection of the gates and the southeastern corner of the Lower City, with a watchtower for observing the most vulnerable eastern and southern access routes to the city.¹³ The city's southern rampart and part of the one on the eastern side were protected by a broad *fossa*.

¹³ V. Ivanišević, *Caričin Grad – The fortifications and the intramural housing in the Lower town*, in F. Daim, J. Drauschke (ed.), *Byzanz – das Römerreich im Mittelalter*, II/2, Mainz, 2010, p. 757–759.

Water supply

Major interest in the building of the new polis was paid to the city water supply system, which included an aqueduct, vast cistern, a water tower, pool, wells, a water distribution network and a large arch dam below the city. Caričin Grad represents a remarkable example of hydrologic engineering in the Early Byzantine period.

The greatest achievement was the construction of the aqueduct of around 20 km in length, which conveyed water from the richest springs on Mount Radan, known today as Dobra Voda (Good Water). The entire undertaking was carried out in an uninhabited area, with the canal dug into the eastern edge of the mountain. The scale of this undertaking is attested by the bridges (5) that were recently discovered in the vicinity of the city. The biggest of them, now in the village of Bačevina, was around 80 m long and around 20 m high.¹⁴ The entire aqueduct, with the exception of the bridges, was dug into the ground, with only the part closest to the city, inside the southern suburb, running above the ground in order to maintain the elevation necessary to fill the tank of the water tower, situated at the junction of the ramparts of the Upper and Lower Cities. The elevation was calculated with a view to the need of conveying water to the higher parts of the Upper City through a system of lead pipes. That the system was designed in this manner was confirmed in 2015, when sections of lead pipes and fountain foundations were unearthed inside the southwestern portico of the central circular plaza in the Upper City. The Acropolis complex could also have been supplied with running water, if we have in mind the potential level of the water tower on 397 m above sea level, and the lower level on the Acropolis at 395 m. However, in the atrium of the Episcopal basilica in this part of the city, a pool 9,5 m long, 7 m wide and 2 m deep was cut into rock and used to collect rainwater.

One of the most important water supply facilities in the city was a vast underground cistern in the Lower City, which was around 40 m long and wide and around 4 m deep and with the volume ranging from 5 000 to 6 000 m³.¹⁵ Besides the inhabitants, the cistern also supplied water for a nearby small *thermae* and a large *thermae* in the eastern suburb.¹⁶ A separate hydrologic facility was the already mentioned water tower. From it, water under pressure was conveyed to the Upper City. As indicated by the finds of two structures, one in the basilica with 'transept' and the other in the large *thermae*, water was also drawn from wells. The city also had a highly developed sewage system, with access eyes and central channels under the main streets which conveyed wastewater out of the city.

¹⁴ N. Petrović, *O vodovodu Caričinog grada*, in *Starinar*, 20 (1970), p. 289–298; V. Ivanišević, *Akvedukt Caričinog grada – Justiniana Prima*, in *Saopštenja*, 44 (2012), p. 13–31.

¹⁵ Đ. Mano-Zisi, *Iskopavanja na Caričinom Gradu 1955 i 1956 godine*, in *Starinar*, 7–8 (1957), p. 311–328.

¹⁶ N. Petrović, *Terme u Caričinom Gradu*, in *Starinar*, 12 (1961), p. 11–20; Đ. Mano-Zisi, *Terme kod srednje kapije u suburbiumu*, in *Starinar*, 20 (1970), p. 205–212.

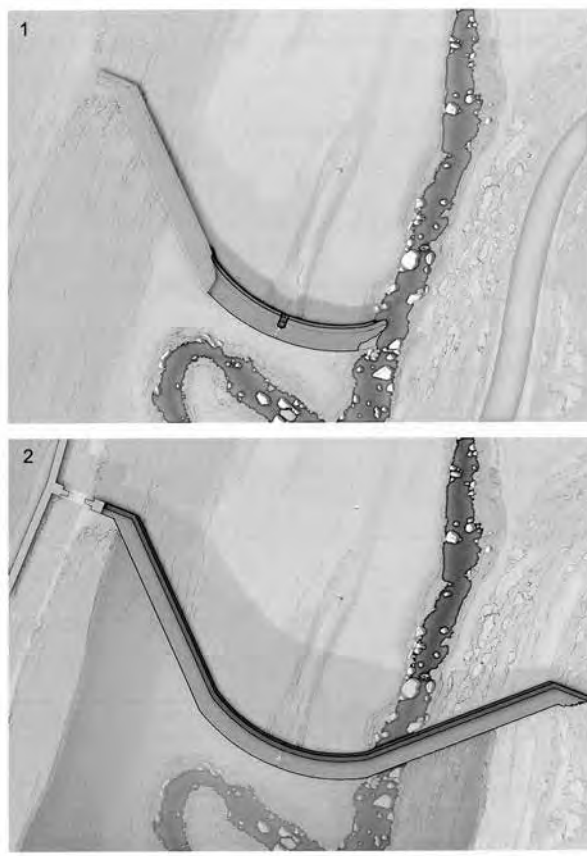


Fig. 3: Caričin Grad arch dam: 1. Visible remains; 2: Reconstruction (Drawings: Vladan Zdravković)

A separate water management facility was a large arch dam, built on the Caričinska River below the city on one side and the fortress on St. Elias hill on the other.¹⁷ (Fig. 3) This brick dam, long around 75 m, with a radius of 25 m and 6 m high, was embedded into rock on its western and eastern sides. The possibility that the dam was also used as a bridge should not be dismissed, as it connected the eastern suburb with the fortress on St. Elias hill. In addition to storing water, the dam also supplied it to smelters and, probably, mills. The dam at Caričin Grad represents an excellent example of Early Byzantine engineering. It is one of only a few surviving arch dams and,¹⁸ according to Procopius's description, seems to

¹⁷ V. Kondić, V. Popović, *Caričin Grad*, p. 357.

¹⁸ B. Croke, J. Crow, *Procopius and Dara*, in *JRS*, 73 (1983), p. 158; M. Whitby, *Procopius' Description of Dara (Buildings II.1–3)*, in Ph. Freeman, D. Kennedy (ed.), *The Defence of the Roman and Byzantine East*, Oxford, 1986, p. 767–768; G. Günther, *Procopius und die Wasserbauten von Dara*,

be similar to the one Justinian built at Dara in Mesopotamia: "... he constructed a barrier of proper thickness and height. The ends of this he so mortised into each of the two cliffs, that the water of the river could not possibly get by that point, even if it should come down very violently. This structure is called by those skilled in such matters a dam or flood-gate, or whatever else they please. This barrier was not built in a straight line, but was bent into the shape of a crescent, so that the curve, by lying against the current of the river, might be able to offer still more resistance to the force of the stream".¹⁹

The structure of the city

Owing to excavations and geophysical surveys conducted over several decades, we are able to discern to a large extent the internal structure of the city. The central part of the city comprised the Acropolis, the Upper City and the Lower City, which spread over an area of 7,4 hectares and included numerous administrative, public, and ecclesiastical buildings and also a substantial number of housing quarters. We are of the opinion that the Lower City was part of the initial project rather than of a later one, as surmised by V. Kondić and V. Popović.²⁰ A special part of the polis comprised the northern and eastern suburbs, of 4,5 hectares in area, mostly containing remains of settlements, whereas, according to geophysics results, the 10,7 hectare southeastern, southern and northern suburbs were only sporadically inhabited. It is a complex of structures surrounding a triconch, several larger buildings in the southern suburb and the remains of structures in the western suburb. (Fig. 4)

Based on the latest investigations, we may conclude that the polis was never completed as its planners had conceived it. Some sections, such as the southwestern part of the Lower City, remained unfinished and a settlement was built there already at the time of Justinian I. Only one structure, whose foundations have survived, was part of the original design of the city.²¹

The same is true of the northern slope of the city, where the latest investigations are being conducted. Only one structure – a *horreum* – was erected there as part of the initial building program. The rest of the area was occupied by houses aligned in rows that were radially arranged over the slope. On account of this organization of space, we should not rule out the possibility that the houses were part of the original plan to erect a settlement in this area, with storage space in the bottom story of each house. However, large portions of suburbs remained unurbanized.

in O. Christoph (ed.), *Wasserbauten im Königreich Urartu und weitere Beiträge zur Hydrotechnik in der Antike* (Schriften der Deutschen Wasserhistorischen Gesellschaft, 5), Norderstedt, 2004, p. 114–121: points to a poetical allusion of Procopius to the crescent-shaped design of the dam.

¹⁹ Procopius, *De Aedificiis* II.xi.16–20.

²⁰ V. Kondić, V. Popović, *Caričin Grad*, p. 371–374; B. Bavant, *Caričin Grad and the Changes*, p. 353–361; V. Ivanišević, *Caričin Grad – The fortifications*, p. 751–752.

²¹ V. Ivanišević, *Caričin Grad – The fortifications*, p. 761–762.

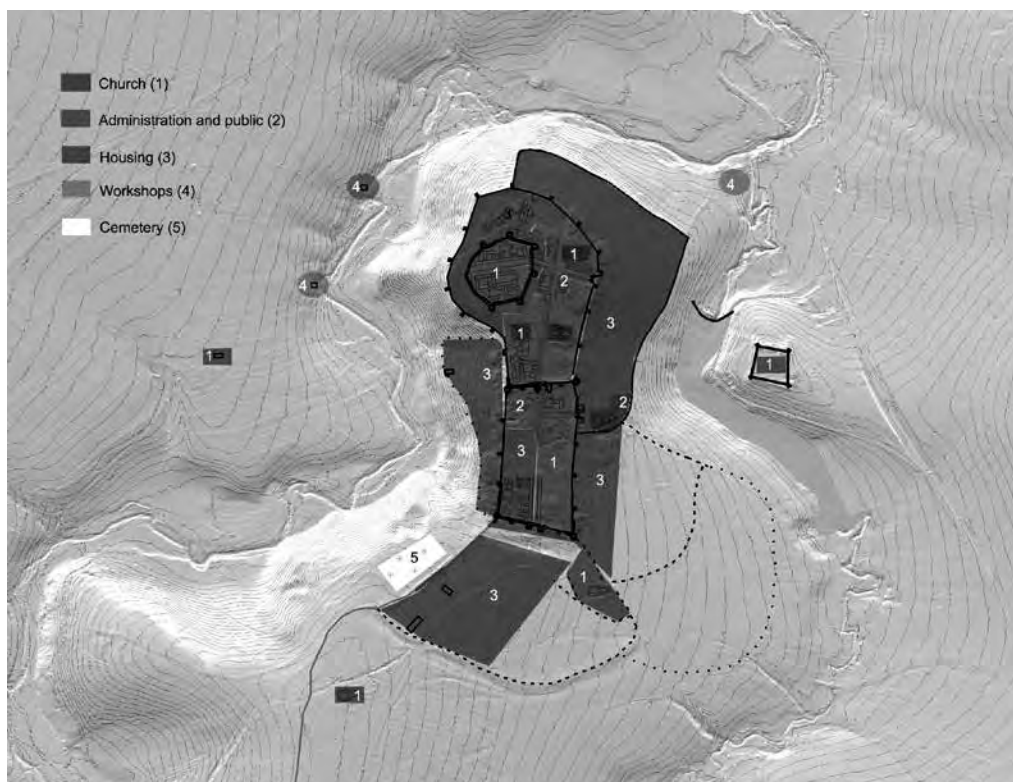


Fig. 4: Caričin Grad: Spatial organization

Streets and porticos

The main arteries of the city were broad, paved streets with covered porticos, 15 m wide, which intersected the city.²² The axis of the city was the central, south-north oriented street, which was 480 m long and linked the Lower City with the Upper City and Acropolis. Two plazas were erected on the main street. The first, circular plaza – the forum – was located in the Upper city at the intersection of the central street and the other important one, which ran from the east gate to the Acropolis.²³ Recently discovered in the central part of the Lower City is a semicircular porticoed area, with a small rectangular structure in the middle, most likely a fountain supplied with water from a nearby cistern. The sigma-shaped portico served to connect the central street with a tetraconch church recently discovered as well. (Fig. 5)

²² V. Kondić, V. Popović, *Caričin Grad*, p. 54–60, 98–99.

²³ Đ. Mano-Zisi, *Iskopavanja na Caričinom Gradu 1953 i 1954 godine*, in *Starinar*, 5–6 (1956), p. 155–180.



Fig. 5: Caričin Grad: Acropolis and *circular plaza* – forum

A related plan, but on a rather vastly differing sizes, is that of Constantinople, with its central street with porticoes in the south-north direction – the *Mese* – dividing the city in two, and the cross streets with porticoes.²⁴ At the junction of the main streets in Caričin Grad is the circular plaza, inspired by the Forum of Constantine. The sigma-shaped portico has its precedents in similar plazas in Constantinople, and other cities.²⁵

The Acropolis

The central part of the polis was the Acropolis, which enclosed the unique complex of the archbishopric of Justiniana Prima, with a basilica, baptistery and associated buildings.²⁶ (Fig.

²⁴ M. Mundell Mango, *The Porticoed Street at Constantinople*, in N. Necipoğlu (ed.), *Byzantine Constantinople. Monuments, Topography and Everyday Life*, Leiden, 2001, p. 35–37.

²⁵ A. Berger, *Streets and Public Spaces in Constantinople*, in *DOP*, 54 (2000), p. 168; H. Saradi, *The Byzantine City in the Sixth Century*, Athens, 2006, p. 233, 268.

²⁶ N. Duval, V. Popović, *Caričin Grad III: L'acropole et ses monuments (cathédrale, baptistère et bâtiments annexes)*, Rome – Belgrade, 2010.

5) The entire quarter was a clearly defined entity that had been planned as such from the very beginning rather than being built and enclosed at a later date, as some authors surmise.²⁷

The Upper City

The spatial plan of the Upper City is substantially different from that of the Acropolis, as the focus there was on administrative and public buildings, arranged alongside the central streets and the circular plaza – the forum. The Upper City had been conceived as the administrative area of the city. Standing out in the southeastern part of the Upper City is a complex identified as the *Principia – praetorium* or military headquarters, which comprised administrative offices, private apartments, and a church.²⁸ It could be possible that the first building phase of the Principia was planned for the Praetorian prefect of Illyricum.²⁹ According to Alexander Sarantis, as yet alone in this supposition, one should not exclude the possibility that in the 530s Justinina Prima was actually the Prefecture, as stated in Justinian's *Novella* 11.³⁰ This could have lasted until the year 540, when, according to *Novella* 131, the Prefect was in Thessalonica.³¹

Structures next to the circular plaza, such as a house with arcades, occupied a particular location. In the northern part, next to the western portico of the northern street, we find two large structures built in *opus mixtum*. One of these was a *horreum* and the other one a *macellum* (?), situated in the immediate vicinity of the circular plaza, opposite a basilica with crypt.³² The commercial section of the city was concentrated around the circular plaza and along the neighboring streets and porticos and included a large number of small buildings that served as shops. The longest row of shops, around 125 m long, has been identified next to the western portico of the southern street.³³ Next to the eastern portico are a basilica and three large uninvestigated structures, which, judging by their outlines and the area they occupy may have been administrative, otherwise public buildings.

²⁷ Č. Vasić, *La plan d'urbanisme de la Ville haute*, in B. Bavant, V. Kondić, J.-M. Spieser (ed.), *Le Quartier Sud-Ouest de la Ville Haute, Caričin Grad II*, Rome – Belgrade, 1990, p. 305–311.

²⁸ B. Bavant, *Identification et fonction des bâtiments*, in B. Bavant, V. Kondić, J.-M. Spieser (ed.), *Caričin Grad II: Le quartier sud-ouest de la Ville Haute*, Rome – Belgrade, 1990, p. 123–160.

²⁹ L. Lavan, *The Residence of Late Antique Governors: A Gazetteer*, in *AT*, 7 (1999), p. 143–144.

³⁰ *Novellae*, p. 94.

³¹ *Novellae*, p. 655–656; A. Sarantis, *War and Diplomacy in Pannonia and the Northwest Balkans during the Reign of Justinian: The Gepid Threat and Imperial Responses*, in *DOP*, 63 (2009), p. 24.

³² Đ. Mano-Zisi, *Iskopavanja na Caričinom Gradu 1953 i 1954*, p. 155–180.

³³ V. Petković, *Iskopavanja Caričina Grada kod Lebana 1938. godine*, in *Starinar*, 14 (1939), p. 141–152, fig. 2.

Ecclesiastical buildings, three of them in all, were erected in the central part of the southwestern, southeastern and northeastern quarters of the Upper City and, judging by their location, have most probably been district churches.³⁴

A substantial portion of the Upper City was intended for housing purposes. This included a slope in the northern section of the city and free zones next to the outer ramparts of the Acropolis. We have identified around 60 houses arranged in fan-like rows on the northern slope.³⁵ The bottom story of the houses was used for storage, if we are to judge from the evidence provided by investigations of two such structures. Approximately 50 houses were built next to the outer ramparts of the Acropolis.³⁶ The total number of houses was by all means greater, if we add to it those built in the free areas between the administrative, public and ecclesiastical buildings and next to the ramparts of the Upper City.

The Lower City

Three clearly distinct zones have been identified in the Lower City. In the first zone, which covers an area of one hectare in the eastern part of the Lower City, there is a unique complex of five churches in a row. Until recently, only two churches had been excavated – a double basilica and a basilica with ‘transept’, both in the northeastern part of the Lower City.³⁷ (Fig. 6) The location of a third basilica was assumed on the basis of an aerial photograph from 1947,³⁸ whilst the other two were discovered by geophysical surveys conducted in 2015. They are a one-nave church and a tetraconch located in the center of this complex. The huge cistern described before and the small *thermae* were built in the second public zone, in the northwestern part of the city. The third zone, in the remaining, western part of the Lower City, comprised a settlement, whose southwestern part, containing eight houses with atria, annexes and yards, has been investigated. According to geophysical surveys, the uninvestigated northern part contains around a dozen houses. This settlement, unlike the other ones in the city, was laid out in two rows of houses, with the first row facing the western portico of the southern street of the Lower City, whereas the other row was lined up

³⁴ Đ. Mano-Zisi, *Nova Bazilika u Caričinom Gradu*, in *Starinar*, 9–10 (1959), p. 295–305; N. Petrović, *Bazilika sa kriptom u Caričinom Gradu*, in *Starinar*, 3–4 (1955), p. 169–180; J. Guyon, G. Cardì, *L'église B, dite « basilique cruciforme »*, in N. Duval, V. Popović (ed.), *Caričin Grad I : Les basiliques B et J de Caričin Grad, quatre objets remarquables de Caričin Grad, le trésor de Hajdučka Vodenica*, Rome – Belgrade, 1984, p. 1–90.

³⁵ V. Ivanišević, I. Bugarski, A. Stamenković, *Nova saznanja o urbanizmu Caričinog grada: Primena savremenih metoda prospekcije i detekcije*, in *Starinar*, 66 (2016), forthcoming.

³⁶ V. Ivanišević, S. Stamenković, *Razgradnja fortifikacije Akropolja Caričinog grada*, in *Leskovački zbornik*, 53 (2013), p. 22–31.

³⁷ Đ. Mano-Zisi, *Iskopavanje na Caričinu Gradu 1949–1952 godine*, in *Starinar* 3–4 (1955), p. 127–168; Đ. Mano-Zisi, *Iskopavanja na Caričinom gradu*, in *Starinar*, 17 (1967), p. 163–166.

³⁸ A. Deroko, S. Radojčić, *Otkopavanje Caričina grada 1947 godine*, in *Starinar*, 1 (1950), p. 119–142, fig. 4.

next to the western rampart.³⁹ In the second half of the sixth century, the settlement spread to the free spaces between the public and ecclesiastical buildings, along the ramparts and into the porticos, thus encompassing a larger area.



Fig. 6: Basilica with 'transept': Capital with the Monogram of Justinian I

The suburbs

A rather different picture is that presented by the northern and eastern suburbs, protected by a separate defensive wall. Based on geophysical surveys, it may be concluded that the area was not as densely populated as the areas inside the city. It seems that under one half of this area was urbanized. The only public facilities – large *thermae* and hospices – were located in the farthest, southern part of the suburb, below the east gate of the Upper City. The rest of the area was occupied by a settlement, with houses grouped in small wholes separated by bigger or smaller yards. Some of the yards had walls and served as enclosures for livestock or as gardens. In the southern suburb only three larger structures of unknown purpose have been identified so far. The cemetery, surrounded by a particular wall, was located within the suburbs, west of the aqueduct.⁴⁰

The immediate vicinity of the city was also settled, if we are to judge by the churches erected west of the city, in the Caričina and Svinjarica.⁴¹ We believe that the hamlets were related to the workshops built on the banks of the Caričinska and Svinarička Rivers. Three kilns for firing bricks and tiles, and probably ceramics, have been unearthed on the banks of the Svinjarička River.

³⁹ V. Ivanišević, *Caričin Grad – The fortifications*, p. 747–775.

⁴⁰ M. Jeremić, *The Caričin Grad Necropolis*, in *Starinar*, 45–46 (1995), p. 181–195.

⁴¹ V. Kondić, V. Popović, *Caričin Grad*, p. 150–151.

Monasteries and hospices

A new element of importance for the interpretation of the city is the existence of monasteries and hospices. Analyses and interpretations of the floor plans of some of the structures allow us to assume the existence of monasteries and hospices. Emperor Justinian, as stated in his *Novellae* 120 and 131, promoted the construction of hospitals, orphanages and poorhouses.⁴² Also, according to Procopius' work *De Aedificiis*, he restored numerous hospices in Constantinople,⁴³ Antioch,⁴⁴ Jericho, Bostra, Apamea, Korykos, etc.⁴⁵

Apart from the triconch in the southern suburb, geophysical surveys also led to the discovery of two large structures and a fence that enclosed all of this area. A two-part structure inside this enclosure made of light materials has been interpreted as part of a monastery complex, and a large structure outside the enclosure as a hospice (?). Hospices, as indicated by numerous examples from Jerusalem and Palestine, were linked with monasteries.⁴⁶

Another hospice was located in the eastern suburb. North of the large *thermae* are the remains of a large rectangular structure, roughly 40 by 20 m in surface area. The structure comprises a series of larger and smaller rooms arranged around an internal court, i.e. a peristyle. The base of the building with peristyle and its location in the suburbs and next to the *thermae* supports our hospice hypothesis. Charitable institutions were often built outside the city core. It has been recorded that in the early 370s, St. Basil built a number of foundations for the sick, paralyzed, leprous and foreigners outside the walls of Caesarea.⁴⁷ We should also mention the hospices in Jerusalem, some of which were built near *thermae*.⁴⁸

It is worth mentioning the existence of other monasteries in the vicinity of Caričin Grad. A one-nave basilica on the southern plateau outside the city could be part of a monastery complex, as previously posited by Svetlana Popović. She based this view on the position of the basilica *extra murros*.⁴⁹ A third monastery complex could be identified in the fortress on St. Elias, where a large three-nave basilica was located centrally. The remains of a church at Rujkovac, with a complex of Late Antique buildings next to it, may be indicative of the

⁴² *Novellae*, p. 579–591, 658–664.

⁴³ Procopius, *De Aedificiis* I.ii.17.

⁴⁴ Procopius, *De Aedificiis* II.x.24–25.

⁴⁵ Procopius, *De Aedificiis* V.ix.4–36.

⁴⁶ M. Voltaggio, *Xenodochia and Hospitia in Sixth-Century Jerusalem. Indicators for the Byzantine Pilgrimage to the Holy Places*, in *Zeitschrift des Deutschen Palästina-Vereins*, 127/2 (2011), p. 200–201.

⁴⁷ P. Horden, *The Earliest Hospitals in Byzantium, Western Europe, and Islam*, in *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, 35/3: *Poverty and Charity: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam* (2005), p. 364.

⁴⁸ M. Voltaggio, *Xenodochia and Hospitia*, p. 206.

⁴⁹ S. Popović, *Prologomena to Early Monasticism in the Balkans as Documented in Architecture*, in *Starinar*, 49 (1998), p. 140–141; N. Duval, M. Jeremić, *L'église J au sud de la ville, dite basilique – une nef*, in N. Duval, V. Popović (ed.), *Caričin Grad I: Les basiliques B et J de Caričin Grad, quatre objets remarquables de Caričin Grad, le trésor de Hajdučka Vodenica*, Rome – Belgrade, 1984, p. 91–146.

existence of a monastery further away from the city. This monastery complex should be related to the fortress at Radinovac.

Fortifications in the close and distant vicinity of the city

In addition to building the city and suburbs, the program of erecting the new polis included the construction of a special ring of defense. Fortifications were erected in the immediate vicinity of the city, on the nearby St. Elias hill, which at one point was the center of a monastery complex, and at Gradište near Svinjarica, whilst a watchtower was built on the site Jezero at Prekopčelica.⁵⁰ These fortresses of different floor plans, from rectangular and hexagonal to triangular, were built in *opus mixtum* and had strong ramparts. The fortress at Svinjarica had the special role of keeping watch on the aqueduct, more specifically the bridges that conveyed water to the city. We should add that a fortress was recently discovered at Mali kamen in the immediate vicinity of the aqueduct's catchment, which, we believe, partly served to protect the springs and the aqueduct. A small triangular watchtower at Jezero east of the city guarded the main access route to the city and the road to Naissus. We should also add to this fortifications the fortress at Sekicol, which guarded the access route to the city through the Svinjarička River valley.

Renovated and constructed in this period were other fortresses in the greater area of the city, that is, at Rujkovac, Bregovina, Marino Kale (?), and Zlata, which follow the same program of fortifications, construction of churches and hydrologic works. A large, 100 m long and 6 m high gravity dam was built at Zlata, an important center, most likely in the rank of a *polihnton*.⁵¹

The Role of the Church

The administration of the city was under the jurisdiction of an archbishop, a fact not only attested in the sources, but also by the prominent position of the *ecclesiastical* complex on the Acropolis and the large number of churches, in total fifteen, inside the city and in its immediate vicinity.⁵²

In view of the complex of churches in the Lower City, the city was probably also conceived as a place of pilgrimage. Numerous basilicas in the city and outside of it represent the embodiment of divine protection of the new polis and guarantee its safety and prosperity.

⁵⁰ V. Kondić, V. Popović, *Caričin Grad*, p. 148–152.

⁵¹ V. Ivanišević, S. Stamenković, *Late Roman Fortifications*, p. 223–224.

⁵² V. Popović, *La signification historique de l'architecture religieuse de Tsaritchin Grad*, in *XXVI Corso di cultura sull'arte ravennate e bizantina*, Ravenna, 1979, p. 249–311; N. Duval, *L'architecture religieuse de Tsaritchin Grad dans le cadre de l'Illyricum oriental au VI^e siècle*, in *Villes et peuplement dans l'Illyricum protobyzantin. Actes du colloque de Rome (12–14 mai 1982)*, Rome, 1984, p. 399–481.

One of the objectives related to the construction of this new polis in the unurbanized part of Dacia Mediterranea was to impart to it the role of the Christianization of rural areas. This is supported by the fact that the majority of the basilicas in the interior provinces were built in the sixth century. Early churches have so far been identified only in cities or their immediate vicinity.

The new finds of seals further point to the increasing significance of ecclesiastical administration at Caričin Grad. In that regard, most telling are the seals of Archbishop John, and bullae of Bishops John and Theodor as well, corroborating the identification of Caričin Grad as Justiniana Prima, and shedding light on its role in the ecclesiastical organization in the northern provinces of the Diocese of Dacia. (Fig. 7) On the other hand, the absence of seals belonging to the state's, provincial or military officials in Caričin Grad, as was the case in other dioceses, i.e. Thrace,⁵³ reflects the significant concentration of power within the Church. This is quite understandable, as Caričin Grad – Justiniana Prima – was a new town, organized on new principles, in which the civilian institutions drawing from earlier traditions were most likely rare.

Another, by all means important factor was the army, a fact attested by the large *Principia* complex. Military presence in the city is best illustrated by the numerous finds of military equipment, particularly of officers' helmets of the Baldenheim type.⁵⁴ Some military equipment was produced in the city itself, as attested by the finds of moulds used in the manufacture of parts of military belts.



Fig. 7: Caričin Grad: Seal of Archbishop John of Justiniana Prima

Economic Resources

One of the important issues related to the construction of Caričin Grad were the economic resources of the Leskovac Basin, on whose eastern edges the city was built. (Fig. 1) Agriculture

⁵³ I. Jordanov, *The Diocese of Thrace (5th–7th c.) according to the Sigillographic Data*, in *Archaeologia Bulgarica*, 16/3 (2012), p. 57–76.

⁵⁴ B. Bavant, *Fragments de casques de type Baldenheim trouvés à Caričin Grad*, in *MEFRM*, 120/2 (2008), p. 327–353.

was developed in the central parts of the basin intersected by the South Morava, Jablanica and Pusta Reka Rivers. This is attested by a large number of identified Roman settlements and villas on the river terraces, particularly along the South Morava. Standing out among these places is the settlement at Mala Kopašnica, which was an important regional center, where craftsmen produced metal, ceramic and glass objects.⁵⁵ The slopes of the surrounding hills and mountains were suitable for animal husbandry and hunting.

A particular feature of this territory in Roman times was mining,⁵⁶ whose traces have been found in the western and northwestern parts of the basin, most notably in the area of Lece, known for its deposits of native gold, lead, copper and silver sulfides, and semiprecious stones (amethyst, opal and agate).⁵⁷ Traces of mining have been attested at Ravna Banja and Marovac, where the remains of a smelting complex and a slag heap have been unearthed. Of particular importance for our discussion is the complex near Lece, which is only 12 km away from Caričin Grad. The exploitation of semiprecious stone deposits is attested by the *tesserae* of the mosaics in the city that originated in this mining district. The stone that was used in the production of architectural sculpture for the numerous churches and other public buildings came from the area of Mount Radan. It may be assumed that, when the city was being built in the sixth century, the exploitation of metal ore and metalwork resumed, particularly at Lece, but also at other mines, such as the important iron ore mines at Glasovik, 18 km north of Caričin Grad.

The basic construction materials – stone, clay and wood – were exploited in the immediate vicinity of the city. The remains of the quarries are visible on the western slopes of the city, bellow the southern suburb. Bricks were fired in the craft centers erected on the banks of the Svinjarička River.⁵⁸ According to the reports on the first excavations in the city, metal was also worked in smelting furnaces built along the Caričinska River.⁵⁹

The following production of craftsmen has been attested in the city itself: stonework, woodwork, pottery and technical ceramics, metalwork, glasswork, bone processing and manufacture of textiles.⁶⁰ Traces of workshops, which are certainly from a later stage in the life of the city, have been found throughout it. A large quantity of iron objects is indicative of

⁵⁵ S. Stamenković, *Rimsko nasleđe*, p. 53–69.

⁵⁶ S. Dušanić, *Organizacija rimskog rudarstva u Noriku, Panoniji, Dalmaciji i Gornjoj Meziji*, in *Istorijski glasnik*, 1–2 (1980), p. 7–55; S. Dušanić, *Roman mining in Illyricum: historical aspects*, in G. Urso (ed.), *Dall'Adriatico al Danubio: L'Ilirico nell'età greca e romana*, Pisa, 2003, p. 259–260; S. Stamenković, *Rimsko nasleđe*, p. 86–96.

⁵⁷ D. Pešut, *Geološki sastav, tektonska struktura i metalogenija leckog andezitskog masiva*, in *Rasprave Zavoda za geološka i geofizička istraživanja*, 14 (1976), p. 33.

⁵⁸ M. Jeremić, *Briques et tuiles*, in N. Duval, V. Popović (ed.), *Caričin Grad. III: L'acropole et ses monuments (cathédrale, baptistère et bâtiments annexes)*, Rome – Belgrade, 2010, p. 75–98.

⁵⁹ V. Petković, *Iskopavanje Caričina Grada kod Lebana*, in *Starinar*, 12 (1937), p. 83.

⁶⁰ V. Ivanišević, S. Stamenković, S. Greiff, „Glass“ *Workshop from Caričin Grad (Iustiniana Prima)*, in B. Zorn, A. Hilgner (ed.), *Glass along the Silk Road from 200 BC to AD 1000*, Mainz, 2010, p. 39–52.

the importance of this metal. Particularly important is the information about the production of bronze objects, from military equipment to utilitarian articles to jewelry. The finds of semi-finished products made from amethyst and unworked coral testify to the production of jewelry. Analyses of melting pots have indicated that silver and gold were worked as well. Of particular significance is the recent discovery of a workshop that specialized in the production and repair of objects made from bone, which included articles of high-quality workmanship. Found among them were fragments of a diptych made of ivory. (Fig. 8)



Fig. 8: Caričin Grad: Ivory plaque

The Decline of the City

In the second half of the sixth century, the city underwent major changes that were initially reflected in the structure of the city and in the settling of the free zones between the fortifications and the administrative, public and ecclesiastical buildings, as well as inside the porticos. (Fig. 9) Vladislav Popović clearly defines this phenomenon as a ‘ruralization’ of the city, linking it with the massive inflow of settlers towards the end of the reign of Justin II.⁶¹ We may link this period with individual instances when the city fortifications were repaired, such as the maintenance done to the southeastern corner tower of the Lower City and the filling of the *fossa* that was posing a threat to the tower’s stability.⁶² We do not know of any construction of public facilities in this period, nor of any major makeovers of buildings, such as that of the *Principia* complex in the preceding period. Major construction undertakings in this period, such as the demolition of one of the towers of the Acropolis in

⁶¹ V. Kondić, V. Popović, *Caričin Grad*, p. 372–374; V. Popović, *Desintegration und Ruralisation*, p. 545–566.

⁶² V. Ivanišević, *Caričin Grad – The fortifications*, p. 757–759.

order to build a house in its place, can be ascribed to the local inhabitants.⁶³ The process of deterioration of the urban structure of the polis that started during the reign of Justin II continued under Maurice and accelerated under Phocas and Heraclius.



Fig. 9: Caričin Grad: house built on the foundation of a tower on the south rampart of the Acropolis

Towards the end of the sixth and in the early seventh century, the phenomenon of settling the city was replaced by another process, reflected in a gradual reduction in population numbers and a decline of urban life, even though, judging from a letter of Pope Gregory the Great of 602, the city was still the seat of the archbishop of Justiniana Prima.⁶⁴ The best examples of the city's decline, in addition to a drastic drop in the circulation of the coins minted by Phocas and Heraclius compared to those of their predecessors Justinian I and Justin II, are the two houses that were destroyed in a fire around the year 602, judging by the numerous finds of coins in the demolition layer, but were not rebuilt later.⁶⁵ This period

⁶³ V. Ivanišević, S. Stamenković, *Razgradnja fortifikacije*, p. 22–31.

⁶⁴ Ch. Pietri, *La géographie de l'Illyricum ecclésiastique et ses relations avec l'Église de Rome (V^e–VI^e siècles)*, in *Villes et peuplement dans l'Illyricum protobyzantin. Actes du colloque de Rome (12–14 mai 1982)*, Rome, 1984, p. 55.

⁶⁵ V. Ivanišević, *La monnaie paléobyzantine dans l'Illyricum du nord*, in *Mélanges Cecile Morrisson (= TM, 16)*, Paris, 2010, p. 441–454.

is characterized by extensions of buildings for which purpose a large number of *spolia* were used, including parts of architectural elements, which is unambiguously indicative of the degradation of administrative, public and ecclesiastical buildings. At the same time, some of the latter buildings were repurposed, which is evident from extensions constructed inside them. The atria and narthexes of some of the churches lost their original function and were used for profane purpose. There also appeared huts made from light materials, mostly adobe. This horizon, which is most evident in the area of the *Principia*, can be dated to the first half of the seventh century. It contained a distinct group of hand-made pottery that imitates Early Byzantine ceramic forms and therefore cannot be linked to a Slavic population. The rare finds of the so-called Slavic fibulae are indicative of the presence of the new population, which, it should be stressed, had no decisive role in the demise of the city.⁶⁶

The decline and downfall of the city, which are the object of new investigations in Caričin Grad, were the result of a series of factors and a decades-long process that had begun in the mid-sixth century. The core of the problem lay in the depopulation of northern Illyricum that occurred not only because of Barbarian incursions into the territory of the Empire, but also for the reason of the epidemics of the bubonic plague,⁶⁷ climate change and,⁶⁸ particularly, because of the declining economy and weakened authority.⁶⁹ The second half of the sixth century saw the demise of the settlements in the valleys. This inevitably led to a reduction in agricultural activity, which was then concentrated in the immediate vicinity of the remaining cities and major fortifications. The fortresses erected in elevated places above valleys and behind mountain ranges were deserted in the last decades of the sixth century. This is clearly evident from the finds of coins of Maurice and especially of those of Phocas and Heraclius, unearthed only in cities and their immediate vicinity. A similar process of population withdrawal may be observed inside Caričin Grad itself, where the population withdrew to the higher and better protected zones, such as the Upper City and the Acropolis.⁷⁰ The remaining sparse population soon left the city, which marked the beginning of a centuries-long period of deurbanized organization of settlements in Central Balkans.

⁶⁶ V. Ivanišević, *Barbarian Settlements in the Interior of Illyricum: The Case of Caričin Grad*, in V. Ivanišević, M. Kazanski (ed.), *The Pontic-Danubian Realm in the Period of the Great Migration*, Paris – Beograd, 2012, p. 57–69.

⁶⁷ D. Stathakopoulos, *Crime and Punishment: The Plague in the Byzantine Empire, 541–749*, in L. Little (ed.), *Plague and the End of Antiquity, The Pandemic of 541–750*, Cambridge, 2006, p. 99–118; V. Ivanišević, S. Stamenković, *Late Roman Fortifications*, p. 225.

⁶⁸ M. McCormick, U. Büntgen, M. A. Cane, E. R. Cook, K. Harper, P. Huybers, T. Litt, S. W. Manning, P. A. Mayewski, A. F. M. More, K. Nicolussi, W. Tegel, *Climate Change during and after the Roman Empire: Reconstructing the Past from Scientific and Historical Evidence*, in *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, 43/2 (2012), p. 191–199.

⁶⁹ V. Popović, *Les témoins archéologiques des invasions avaro-slaves dans l'Illyricum byzantin*, in *MEFRA*, 87 (1975), p. 445–504; V. Popović, *La descente des Koutrigours, des Slaves et des Avars vers la mer Egée: le témoignage de l'archéologie*, in *Comptes rendus des séances de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres*, 122/3 (1978), p. 596–648.

⁷⁰ V. Ivanišević, *La monnaie paléobyzantine*, p. 441–454.

Coming to the End: Early Byzantine Cities after the mid-6th Century

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1. A methodological premise: Early Byzantine cities facing current archaeology

The contemporary idea of Early Byzantine city is the product of the interaction between three different elements:

- a) a base of ‘objective’ knowledge, composed from the gradual stratification of information derived from archaeological investigations in the field;
- b) the general context this new knowledge is part of, composed of the information derived from other systems of non-archaeological sources;
- c) the development of the contemporary critical thinking about a) and b) and, above all, the interaction between them.

It is therefore a highly dynamic concept, because it is linked also to the wider transformation of general cognitive approaches in archaeology, such as those triggered, for example, by new technologies or by the development of theoretical and methodological reflections about the excavation and the study of finds or, more generally, the development of new and more sophisticated theories of knowledge in archaeology.

To make this picture even more fluid and nuanced, we have to consider the inevitable time lag between the theorizing about the ‘nature’ of Early Byzantine city and the archaeological verification of the new images produced by that theory. This asynchrony is determined both by the inevitable slowness of the process of construction of archaeological knowledge, related to the physical timing of fieldwork,¹ and by the intrinsic speed in creating new images of the city itself that is typical of the theoretical reflection in the postmodern world.

This asynchrony is more clearly detectable when we try to insert the ‘new’ knowledge derived from new excavations or from the continuation of long established projects into a general theoretical framework such as that which has emerged concerning the detailed

¹ D. Parrish (ed.), *Urbanism in Western Asia Minor: new studies on Aphrodisias, Ephesos, Hierapolis, Pergamon, Perge and Xanthos*, Portsmouth, 2001; O. Dally, C. J. Ratté (ed.), *Archaeology and the cities of Asia Minor in Late Antiquity*, Ann Arbor, MI, 2011.

critical debate about continuity/discontinuity between ancient *polis* and late antique/early Byzantine city.²

Nonetheless, at least five elements may be considered:

1. Several new urban archaeology projects in many of the major cities of Byzantine world; associated with major new infrastructure programmes (Thessaloniki subway or Theodosian harbour at Istanbul)³ or extensive protection programmes as in the case of Constantinople archaeological survey.⁴
2. The widespread adoption of stratigraphic method in excavations, even in those geographical areas that are objectively complicated in terms of research logistics. This has already produced – and will produce even more in the future, with the extensive publication of the the excavations conducted over the last fifteen years – a truly impressive amount of new information. In the next years our common goal will be to systematize this information and make extensive use of new forms of publication and dissemination of data through the global network.
3. The impact of new digital technologies, in four key areas at least: remote sensing and the so-called ‘archaeology without excavation’;⁵ the application to urban contexts of complex spatial analyses, through extensive GIS; the management and dissemination of information (<http://www.tayproject.org/veritabeng.html>); the virtual reconstruction of urban architectural complexes, both in terms of dissemination of knowledge (<http://www.byzantium1200.com/>; <http://www.ed.ac.uk/history-classics-archaeology/archaeology/research/research-projects/constantinople-aqueducts>), and as a tool to drive new targeted research.
4. The application to Early Byzantine urban archaeological contexts of archaeometric and palaeobiological research tools (archaeobotany, archaeozoology, Stable Isotope Analysis),

² W. Brandes, *Byzantine cities in the seventh and eight centuries: different sources, different histories?*, in G. P. Brogiolo, B. Ward Perkins (ed.), *The Idea and Ideal of the Town between Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages*. Leiden – Boston – Köln, 1999, p. 25–57; J. H. W. Liebeschuetz, *Decline and Fall of Roman City*, Oxford, 2001; Ch. Bouras, *Aspects of the Byzantine City, Eighth–Fifteenth Centuries*, in A. Laiou (ed.), *The Economic History of Byzantium*, Washington, 2002, p. 497–528; E. Zanini, *The Urban Ideal and Urban Planning in Byzantine New Cities of the Sixth Century A.D.*, in L. Lavan, W. Bowden (ed.), *Theory and Practice in Late Antique Archaeology*, Leiden – Boston, 2003, p. 196–223; H. Saradi, *The Byzantine City in the Sixth Century. Literary Images and Historical Reality*, Athens, 2006; L. Zavagno, *Cities in Transition, Urbanism in Byzantium between Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages (500–900 A.D.)*, Oxford, 2009.

³ U. Kokabas (ed.), *Yenikapi shipwrecks, 1, The “old ships” of the “new gate”*, Istanbul, 2012.

⁴ K. R. Dark, F. Özgümüş, *Constantinople: archaeology of a Byzantine megapolis. Final report on the Istanbul rescue archaeology project 1998–2004*, Oxford, 2012.

⁵ G. Sears, V. Gaffney, R. Cuttler, H. Goodchild, S. Kane, *Deciphering “Lost” Urban Landscapes at Cyrene*, in A. Augenti, N. Christie (ed.), *Urbes Extinctae. Archaeologies of Abandoned Classical Towns*, Farnham – Burlington, 2012, p. 177–205.

which allow us to develop new general understandings of the relationship between men and environment (palaeoclimatology, palaeodemography, palaeonutritional research). These approaches are now deemed to be essential for the study of the large scale variations in the Mediterranean population and their effect on economic systems and the long-term sustainability of the social structure. In this same 'landscape' it will be worth to take into account the studies on the socio-economic effects of great pandemics⁶ and major natural disasters such as earthquakes.⁷

5. The impact of new cognitive approaches, in particular post-processualism, which is particularly relevant to the study of urban contexts, now mainly conceived as the place for an archaeology of people and their everyday life instead of an archaeology of monuments.⁸

In this way it has become possible to question older and newer archaeological data produced over the last fifteen years and to create a richer and more articulated image of the cities in the Mediterranean and surrounding regions in Early Byzantine times.⁹

This new image reflects a greater diversity on a regional basis: Early Byzantine cities in different regions are markedly different in their monumental scenery and everyday life places. The very idea of Early Byzantine city needs to be declined in a plural form, underlying the elements of difference and regional specificity. This consciousness will allow us to understand better the structural and superstructural elements that qualify all the cities as part of a wider ensemble that we can define as the Early Byzantine city: for instance, the seats of power, the urban role of religious architecture, the attention to building and maintenance of infrastructural system such as streets, aqueducts, baths etc.¹⁰

Moreover, the same contemporary image is characterized by an increased focus on material culture, made possible by modern excavations, with the systematic recording of pottery and the other archaeological finds. These materials are today intended as markers of the quality of everyday life in the cities, with a specific reference to the identification

⁶ D. C. Stathakopoulos, *Famine and Pestilence in the Late Roman and Early Byzantine Empire. A Systematic Survey of Subsistence Crises and Epidemics*, Aldershot – Burlington, 2004; A. K. Little (ed.), *Plague and the End of Antiquity: the Pandemic of 541–750*, Cambridge, 2007.

⁷ S. C. Stiros, *The AD 365 Crete earthquake and possible seismic clustering during the fourth to sixth centuries AD in the Eastern Mediterranean: a review of the historical and archaeological data*, in *Journal of Structural Geology*, 23 (2001), p. 545–562.

⁸ P. Horden, N. Purcell, *The Corrupting Sea. A Study on Mediterranean History*, Oxford, 2000, p. 88–122.

⁹ S. T. Loseby, *Mediterranean Cities*, in Ph. Rousseau (ed.), *A companion to Late Antiquity*, Malden, MA – Oxford, 2009, p. 139–155.

¹⁰ P. Arthur, *Alcune considerazioni sulla natura delle città bizantine*, in A. Augenti (ed.), *Città italiane tra la tarda antichità e l'alto Medioevo: atti del convegno (Ravenna, 26–28 febbraio 2004)*, Firenze, 2006; J.-U. Krause, C. Witschel (ed.), *Die Stadt in der Spätantike. Niedergang oder Wandel?*, Stuttgart, 2006; J. Henning, *Post-Roman Towns, Trade and Settlement in Europe and Byzantium*, Berlin, 2007.

of spaces of life and work and the study of transformation of urban fabric following the changing socio-economic conditions both at local and general scale.¹¹ In this context, mention should be made of the very important pioneering research on physical anthropology and palaeopathology, which is opening new windows on the real quality of life in Early Byzantine Mediterranean cities.¹²

The new image is also made of a more articulated chronology, with an increased focus on the urban life just after the mid-6th century and in the subsequent centuries. As it is known, until a very recent past, the focus of knowledge was mainly centred on the age of Justinian, due to its greater visibility in monumental archaeology and literary sources: most evident case studies being Caričin Grad and Amorium.¹³ Mainly thanks to the development of studies on pottery, glass and coinage, our knowledge barrier is moving towards the 7th and, above all, the 8th–9th centuries, that have been really obscure until recently.¹⁴

The last point of this brief list of innovations should be seen in a new approach to the study of city/countryside dynamics. The traditional image of an Early Byzantine Empire seen essentially as a sum of cities seems to be nowadays superseded by a more articulated imaging of the human settlements into a specific territory. The city is no longer perceived as a separate unit within a territory, but as a part of a dynamic population, where the people could gravitate on a series of minor settlements of different kinds and move between the nodes of this network, concentrating from time to time on the cities, or privileging instead sparse settlement or villages.

2. Early Byzantine cities between change and decline

One of the most interesting contributions to the historical-archaeological debate on Early Byzantine city in the last fifteen years is represented by a clearer perception of the chronological depth and articulation of the complex phenomenon of Byzantine urbanism.

In our current perception, the Early Byzantine city is no longer just the big *floruit* during the first half of the 6th century, followed by a progressive and relentless decline that led, on

¹¹ P. Arthur, *Byzantine and Turkish Hierapolis (Pamukkale): an Archaeological Guide*, Istanbul, 2006.

¹² Ch. Bourbou, *The People of Early Byzantine Eleutherna and Messene (6th–7th Centuries A.D.): Bioarchaeological Approach*, Athens, 2004.

¹³ See chapter by Vujadin Ivanišević in this volume.

¹⁴ E. A. Ivison, Ch. S. Lightfoot (ed.), *Amorium Reports 3: The Lower City Enclosure*, Istanbul, 2012; F. Krinzinger (ed.), *Spätantike und mittelalterliche Keramik aus Ephesos*, Wien, 2005; J. Vroom, *Limyra in Lycia: Byzantine/Umayyad pottery finds from excavations in the eastern part of the city*, in S. Lemaître (ed.), *Céramiques Antiques en Lycie (VII^e s. a. C. – VI^e s. p. C.). Le Produits et Les Marchés*, Bordeaux, 2005, p. 261–292; J. Vroom, *The other Dark Ages: Early Medieval pottery finds in the Aegean as an archaeological challenge*, in R. Attoui (ed.), *When Did Antiquity End? Archaeological Case Studies in Three Continents*, Oxford, 2011, p. 137–158.

the one hand, to the demise of the concept of classical city – and then the extinction of a more or less great number more of ancient cities – and, on the other hand, to the emergence of a new form of the ‘proper’ Byzantine city of later centuries.¹⁵

A wider adoption of the methods and practices of stratigraphic archaeology has inevitably led to a more accurate excavation of the later phases and a better assessment of the information potential of features and artefacts associated with them.¹⁶

In parallel, the dense critical debate on the dichotomy continuity/discontinuity that characterized since the early 1980s the historical and archaeological thinking about the late antique and early medieval cities in Europe created the conditions for a more articulated perception of the complexity of the changes that the Mediterranean cities underwent during the great transformation of the socio-economic system between the 6th and the 8th century.¹⁷

The image of a progressive decay of the urban architectural ‘carapace’ since the end of Justinian’s age cannot certainly be denied. But today we perceive much more clearly than before how this phenomenon should be studied using more complex conceptual categories, including: regional differences, possible asynchrony between similar phenomena, if viewed in different geographic areas; close relationship between the transformation of the urban fabric and the parallel development of the human, social, economic and cultural fabric of the same cities.

Some of these phenomena had been identified long ago as a characteristic of this phase: for example the intensification of the Christianisation of urban spaces, or the greater role of the defensive needs in urban planning, or again the progressive alteration of a clear distinction between public and private spaces. But now they appear to us, more clearly than in the past, as the product of an interaction between the shape of the ancient city and the new needs of the men who now live, work and exercise different forms of power in that space; transforming it, enriching it with new buildings or even abandoning or eliminating parts of that space which are now perceived as unnecessary.

2.1. *Christianisation of urban space*

The intensive and extensive Christianisation of urban spaces is probably the phenomenon of urban transformation currently most visible in the archaeological record of the Early Byzantine cities. This occurs from the dependence of two distinct elements: 1) the objective significance of the phenomenon itself and 2) the specific attention that archaeological research had traditionally reserved for it.

¹⁵ H. Saradi, *The Byzantine City in the Sixth Century. Literary Images and Historical Reality*, Athens, 2006.

¹⁶ H. W. Dey, *The Afterlife of the Roman City*, New York, 2015.

¹⁷ L. Zavagno, *Cities in Transition, Urbanism in Byzantium between Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages (500–900 A.D.)*, Oxford, 2009.

One would say that the most recent acquisitions in this field may relate essentially to two aspects of a phenomenon that is extremely complex by its very nature: the 'chronological depth' and the multiplicity of forms.

The chronological depth is visible in the progressive enhancement and saturation of urban space with religious buildings. The basic idea that Christianisation of ancient cities was a slow-pace process is now widely accepted and the great 'explosion' of physical Christianisation of urban space in the first half of the 6th century is a universally recognized proof of this. However, this process does not seem to stop with the age of Justinian: it goes on with new churches and, mainly, with other types of religious buildings, such as those related to charitable institutions or the urban monasteries.

The multiplicity of forms in Christianisation is essentially connected with the complex relationship between society and urban space.¹⁸ The need to provide the actual physical spaces for the community's cult was already virtually satisfied with the large foundations of the 5th and the first half of the 6th century. The new religious foundations (or even restoration, reconstruction and maintenance too) now respond primarily to communication needs: those of central and provincial administration that have to concretely demonstrate its presence; those of local elites in transformation that look for means to represent and self-represent themselves;¹⁹ those of the new emerging classes, especially the monks, who claim for a more visible social role.²⁰

The completion of physical Christianisation of urban space and the definition of Christian social space in Early Byzantine city go in parallel with the deepening and the articulation of individual's Christianisation. The latter leaves an interesting archaeological trace in two spheres at least: urban burials and the relationship with the urban furniture inherited from pagan times.

The phenomenon of urban burials appears today, in light of recent excavations, as a very characteristic marker in the landscape of Early Byzantine cities from the second half of the 6th century onward. Although the practice of burying the dead within the city perimeter already appears to have started in the late 4th and in the first half of the 5th century, the mid-6th century seems to be a watershed; after that time urban burials became usual and the contiguity between spaces of the living and spaces of the dead was a constant in Mediterranean urban sceneries. This witnessed the final overcoming of the traditional

¹⁸ A. Busine, *Religious practices and Christianization of the Late Antique City: 4th–7th centuries*, Leiden – Boston, 2015.

¹⁹ W. Bowden, *Church builders and church building in late-antique Epirus*, in L. Lavan (ed.), *Recent research in late-antique urbanism*, Portsmouth, RI, 2001, p. 57–68; R. Coates-Stephens, *La committenza edilizia bizantina a Roma dopo la riconquista*, in A. Augenti (ed.), *Le città italiane tra la tarda Antichità e l'alto Medioevo*, Firenze, 2006, p. 299–316.

²⁰ A. H. S. Megaw (ed.), *Kourion. Excavations in the Episcopal Precinct*, Washington, D. C., 2007.

Roman law, which expressly forbade burials *in Urbe*, and recognizing the new dimension that Christianity assigns to the afterlife.²¹

The second item, that of the relationship with the traces of city's pagan past, is a new field of research, that has been explored with some orderliness in recent years and in a few case studies. But the late survival of pagan statuary in the landscape of Christian cities, and then the practice of concealing pagan statues to protect them from destruction with a view to re-use them in some form, is very important evidence of the complex relationship between the inhabitants of Early Byzantine cities and the historical manifestation of paganism in those same cities.

2.2. Militarization of urban space

The second phenomenon that is glaringly visible in Early Byzantine cities of the 6th–8th centuries could be defined as an intensive militarization of urban spaces and features. In this case again, it can be read as a response to two distinct needs: the enhancement of defensive resources against external increasingly aggressive enemies and the constantly growing role of military elites in the administration of cities.

The most obvious sign of the great importance attached to defence needs is made by the incessant activity of maintenance and restoration of the city walls, most of them inherited from previous ages. At the same time, there is an explicit enhancement of their primary functional value – the defence against external attacks – in place of a more ‘communicative’ complexity that characterized the construction of new defensive devices in the first half of the 6th century and mainly in the time of Justinian.

Thanks to Procopius of Caesarea's encomiastic works, we can perceive how the construction or extensive renovation of a city wall in the first half of the 6th century was associated with the obvious defensive needs as well as with a conceptual definition of a city. Into the narrative cliché of Procopius the presence of strong walls is almost always quoted together with aqueducts, baths, porticoed streets, churches and residences of power holders, as part of a precisely defined aesthetic and functional canon that specifically connotes a city worthy of the name.²²

In this combination of functionality and communication, the fortified acropolises had certainly a specific role; they became a sort of hallmark both of the new towns (the emblematic case of *Prima Iustiniana*) and the urban re-design of long tradition cities. An extensive survey recently conducted on large and medium urban centres in Crete showed, for example, that the presence of a fortified acropolis had been a very common item in urban

²¹ A. Samellas, *Death in the Eastern Mediterranean (50–600)*, Tübingen, 2002; E. Tzavella, *Burial and urbanism in Athens (4th–9th c. A.D.)*, in *JRA*, 21 (2008), p. 352–376.

²² R. Webb, *Ekphrasis, Amplification and Persuasion in Procopius' Buildings*, in *AT*, 8 (2000), p. 67–71.

reorganization in Early Byzantine times.²³ Over a long period, the acropolises of Cretan cities came to play a central role in ensuring the continuity of those nuclei of population during the centuries and decades immediately preceding the Arab conquest of Crete, in the third decade of the 9th century.

The establishment of new defensive needs and the parallel rise of the importance of the military classes in the social structure of Early Byzantine cities, is well represented also by some other ‘minor’ indicators, that become recently well visible thanks to the updating of stratigraphic excavation techniques. The presence of people belonging to military class is well testified by the elements of personal ornament (buckles, brooches, belts, spurs etc.) that are frequently discovered in archaeological assemblages connected with everyday consumption and/or refuse waste (domestic contexts, garbage dumps, etc.) or in those contexts attributable to the manufacturing of the same objects. The well-known assemblage of a workshop refuse in the area of *Crypta Balbi* in Rome²⁴ looks to be emblematic in this respect, and recent excavations in some nearby areas certify it was not at all isolated. These kinds of find, often ethnically connoted, could in some cases also emphasize the role played in the defence and control of Early Byzantine cities by barbarian troops that joined, more or less organically, the imperial army.

2.3. Topography of power

The question about the topography of power within cities in deep social transformation is evidently a complex one, because one of the basic characteristic of the ‘cities of men’ in Early Byzantine world was the structuring of the system of powers, with the increasing number of places where these powers became manifest.

Basically, we can say that just the maintenance and the renovation of cities’ urban fabric can be read as an indicator of the continuity of imperial power, that was the first engine of evergetism, both through new foundations and urban reassessment after natural catastrophes or military disasters. Although the archaeological evidence is patchy, if not occasional, we could say that the landscape of Early Byzantine cities of the 7th and 8th centuries was still marked by the traditional places of the central and peripheral power. The acropolises continued to exist, as we have just seen,²⁵ associating as always the seat of power with

²³ K. Armstrong, Ch. Tsigonaki, A. Sarris, N. Coutsinas, *Site Location Modelling and Prediction on Early Byzantine Crete: Methods employed, challenges encountered*, in S. Campana, R. Scopigno, G. Carpentiero, M. Cirillo (ed.) *Keep the Revolution Going* (43rd Computer Applications and Quantitative Methods in Archaeology Conference), Oxford, 2016, p. 659–668.

²⁴ M. Ricci, *Produzioni di lusso a Roma da Giustiniano I (527–565) a Giustiniano II (685–695): l’atelier della Crypta Balbi e i materiali delle collezioni storiche*, in M. S. Arena, P. Delogu, L. Paroli, M. Ricci, L. Sagui, L. Vendittelli (ed.), *Roma dall’antichità al medioevo. Archeologia e storia nel Museo Nazionale Romano – Crypta Balbi*, Milano, 2001, p. 331–432.

²⁵ E. Triolo, *L’acropoli nelle città protobizantine*, in *Annali della Facoltà di Lettere e Filosofia dell’Università degli Studi di Siena*, 30 (2009), p. 45–71.

defensive needs; in the same manner, the continuity of seats of urban magistrates has to be assumed, at least on the basis of literary sources.

The same applies to other urban spaces, like, for instance, the colonnaded streets, that acted also as settings for public representation of power, with the building – or major restoration – of public monuments; some of which hosted acclamations or celebrating inscriptions.²⁶ And the same continuity of use and function applies to places connected with the everyday maintenance of power, such as, for instance, the *praetoria* or the courtrooms.²⁷

In the Early Byzantine cities of the second half of 6th and the 7th centuries, the Church and in particular the bishops continued to act as the connecting line with imperial power; they received an increasing mandate to administer large sectors of civil life, from the maintenance of aqueducts to the management of defensive systems.

Having rapidly sketched the picture of continuity of traditional powers, it is now decidedly more complicated, but highly intriguing, to pose the question about the archaeological visibility of the places of the multiform power of new urban élites. In this sense it is necessary to interpret a series of phenomena that start to emerge into the archaeological recording, still awaiting a more consistent explication.

The proliferation of new urban religious foundations (large and small churches, oratories, monasteries, hospitals) is indirectly, but evidently, connected with the power of new élites of *possessores et potentiores* and their need for public affirmation and self-representation on the urban social scene. If seen from this point of view, such a diffuse presence of small scale evergetism generated by emerging urban élites should represent a major point of reflection on the mechanism of accumulation and re-distribution of wealth, and the management of power relationships within a society in such a deep transformation.

Even more challenging is the possibility of reading the manifestation of those ‘diffuse’ urban powers through the residences of the people that exercised power. The presence of residences that qualify for being above the average level in terms of size, functional quality and decoration clearly testifies to the presence of members of an urban elite, especially when a phenomenon of privatization of formerly public spaces and their organic insertion into new residences of prestige is well detectable.²⁸

2.4. Maintenance and transformation of infrastructures

The issue of the maintenance of essential urban infrastructure is in many ways closely linked to the topography of power, but it is of great interest also for the study of the transformations of the socio-economic fabric of Early Byzantine cities after the mid-6th century.

²⁶ H. W. Dey, *The Afterlife of the Roman City*, New York, 2015, p. 194–199.

²⁷ Gortyn in Crete: A. Di Vita, *Gortina di Creta quindici secoli di vita urbana*, Roma, 2010.

²⁸ H. Thür, E. Rathmayr, E. Kanitz, *Hanghaus 2 in Ephesos: die Wohneinheit 6* (Baubefund, Ausstattung, Funde, Forschungen in Ephesos), Wien, 2014.

Urban road systems and, mainly, water supply systems represent in fact the two main indicators for studying a city from the point of view of the people who lived there, being the topographical location of their living and working space, strictly dependent on themselves.

On the one hand, the maintenance of main roads running across the cities and the urban water systems ensured an urban life standard in many ways comparable with that of previous centuries. On the other hand, the often profound changes operated into both systems (opening of new streets intended to reach the new focal points of the cities, mainly the new churches; the reorganization of intra-urban water distribution) constitute a very clear testimony of a deep transformation of urban landscapes.²⁹

From this point of view, the case of the so-called Early Byzantine district near the Pythion shrine in Gortyn (Crete) seems to be a case in point: a new street created in the second half of the 4th century, within a major urban reorganization following a devastating earthquake, saw a progressive stabilization during the 5th and the 6th centuries. At the beginning of the 7th century, the situation changed radically: parts of the street encroached by additions to existing houses and it was changed, most likely, into a sort of oblong private courtyard, serving a rich residence erected in the same time just beside the street itself.

Roughly around the same time the urban water distribution system was also reorganized. In the mid-6th century, the existing Roman aqueduct was restored and improved, and the distribution of drinking water inside the city was re-organized with the building of an impressive network of more than fifty tanks/fountains that spread across much of the urban area. The irregular distribution of tanks/fountains, apparently not strictly related with the street system, can be assumed to be an archaeological indicator of the distribution of the main nuclei of population within the extension of the ancient city. In the 7th century, probably in response to a progressive reduction of water flow caused by difficulties in maintenance of the oversized Roman aqueduct, we can detect a progressive concentration of people and related small craft activities around single tanks/fountains, creating a very interesting archaeological evidence of the theoretical image of a city fragmented into many isolated small nuclei of settlement.

In parallel, in the large mansion we have just discussed, a private water system was organized, fed by rainwater or perhaps even by a direct connection to the public water supply. This image clearly argues for the presence of a member of an urban élite: an individual who had the ability to divert for private use a structure (the street) and a primary resource (water) originally intended for public use, albeit regulated by an urban central authority. This is an archaeological picture that is entirely compatible with the image of the urban society of Early Byzantine cities in the 7th and 8th centuries, as outlined in recent years by historians on the basis of non-archaeological sources.

²⁹ Some different case studies in P. Ballet, N. Dieudonné-Glad, C. Saliou, M. Evina, *La rue dans l'Antiquité: définition, aménagement et devenir de l'Orient méditerranéen à la Gaule*, Rennes, 2008.

3. The transformation of urban space

The processes we have described so far provide a more concrete historical-archaeological dimension to phenomena that have been recognized for a long time in the archaeological record, even though they were roughly labelled as general trends. Of course, the general downsizing of the cities, the infilling of urban spaces and the gradual encroachment of roads are long-term phenomena that we can register, at the same time or in different times, in all regions of the Mediterranean, from East to West and from the 4th to the 7th–8th centuries. After the long period in which these phenomena were generally explained by a multifaceted ‘decay of urban civilization’, we are now entering the stage of recognition of their concrete historical reality, related with social and economic changes occurring in different times and places in compliance of various causes and contributing factors.³⁰

Concerning Early Byzantine cities, research into causes can get particularly complicated, because it is related, on the one hand, to the presence and agency of the members of the new urban élites, but on the other hand it is evidently connected with different social phenomena, such as new forms of mobility of people within cities and a new permeability of the boundaries that separated traditionally the ancient city from the surrounding countryside.

From this point of view, the extremely frequent transformation of abandoned spaces and buildings into areas of life and work can be read as a response to the needs of new social groups. A myriad of more or less precarious walls, that blocked porches, segmented monuments and closed public spaces,³¹ designed the places of survival for increasingly larger groups of people who moved from the countryside to the cities or within the cities themselves.

The moving of people from the countryside to the cities has traditionally been explained as driven by the overall increase of insecurity and the need to seek shelter offered by city walls. This image remains of course largely true, but it is worth noting that the phenomenon of ‘escape’ toward cities seems to have also affected the regions that should have been theoretically far from insecure. In those cases, the archaeologically well recorded movement of people from the countryside to cities could be better framed perhaps in the perspective of new forms of interplay between different levels of density of human settlement within a territory. In this image, the city can be perceived as the place where farmers and artisans found new economic resources and services otherwise unavailable, because the cities had

³⁰ Ch. Kirilov, *The Reduction of the Fortified City Area in Late Antiquity: Some Reflections on the End of the “Antique City” in the Lands of the Eastern Roman Empire*, in J. Henning (ed.), *Post-Roman Towns, Trade and Settlement in Europe and Byzantium*, Berlin, 2007, p. 3–24; M. Greenhalgh, *Constantinople to Córdoba: Dismantling Ancient Architecture in the East, North Africa and Islamic Spain*, Leiden – Boston, 2012.

³¹ Available data are summarized in H. Saradi, *The Byzantine City in the Sixth Century. Literary Images and Historical Reality*, Athens, 2006, p. 186–208.

become the only point of contact between the microcosm of local economy and the largest network of economic and administrative system of the Early Byzantine empire.³²

Within this image, I believe we can find a new – and perhaps more convincing – interpretation of the archaeological markers that are frequently classified into the somewhat generic category of ‘ruralization’ of the Early Byzantine cities in the last stage of their life. More than ruralization of space (read: the entering of the countryside into the urban space), we should discuss in terms of ruralization of people, in the sense that the cities are now populated also by men working permanently or seasonally in the surrounding countryside farming and/or in related craft activities, such as the production and maintenance of the farming tools or the pottery needed for storage and treatment of crops. In this light, I presume, we could explain the increasing evidence of artisanal activities in the cities, more and more strictly inserted into the urban fabric.

In this sense, we might think even better in terms of ruralization of production processes and socio-economic relationships. Within a deeply changed social framework, it is reasonable to assume that the whole socio-economic urban system was more directly tied to land possession and exploitation. Landed property was of course the basis of wealth and power of *possessores/potentiores*; while agricultural and related craft activities were largely the activities of the men and the women who lived and worked in the small and fragmented urban housing units. Finally, local production largely relied upon the supply system, as testified by the sharp drop in amphorae and fine tableware imports from other Mediterranean regions.

3.1. A new ‘Mediterranean’ chronology?

The last, but very important, item that emerges from recent archaeological fieldwork is a clearer articulation of the ‘internal’ chronology of Early Byzantine times. This seems to overtake the traditional dichotomy between a *floruit* in the first half of 6th century and a dramatic ‘rupture’ of the Mediterranean equilibrium during the 7th century, which is suggested mainly by the quantity and quality of non-archaeological sources, pertaining approximately to the age of Justinian.

Recent archaeological research proved that already by the second half and, mainly, the final decades of the 6th century there was major change at a macro-regional scale: a change that sounds even more important as it concerns both large and small cities, central and peripheral cities, ‘connected’ and isolated cities, frontier cities exposed to warfare and more protected cities on the interior. This change is marked by the transformation of the urban fabric we have discussed just above, with the activation of medium-long processes

³² E. Zanini, *Città, microterritorio e macroterritorio (e mobilità degli uomini) nel Mediterraneo proto-bizantino: il caso di Gortina di Creta*, in G. Macchi Janica (ed.), *Geografie del Popolamento: casi di studio, metodi, teorie*, Siena, 2009, p. 111–122.

that will lead, on the one hand to the birth of new urban forms and, on the other hand to the irreversible crisis of long-established urban centres.³³

This 'new' line of discontinuity in the Mediterranean chronology seems to be related to the overall transformation of socio-economic landscape of the Early Byzantine empire, in turn connected to a series of complex other items: the deep demographic and productive crisis started with the great plague; the ending of the expansive push of Justinian's *renovatio imperii*; the problems encountered by imperial armies in contesting concentric attacks by Avaro-Slavs and Lombards in the West and Persians in the East; the re-organization of the whole system of circulation of goods inside the Empire, with the progressive prevailing of regional and sub-regional dimension over the Mediterranean one.

The second important contribution of stratigraphic archaeology to urban contexts is a new attention progressively focused on the later and very final stages of the trajectory: the availability of many newly excavated materials, the development of typological and archaeometric studies for dating, and a methodological approach that is surely more sophisticated than the one used in recent studies on the problem of the extended circulation of many materials. Results of these new insights have led to an extended chronology from the mid/end of 7th century until the 8th century, giving us a far more complex picture than the traditional one, that depicted the crisis of population as being fast and irreversible.

In Early Byzantine cities of the 7th–8th century, people carried on their lives much longer and better than we could imagine just fifteen years ago. The scenery is if anything more articulated: some urban centres survived better than other cities, who paid a heavier tribute to the crisis. Within the cities, some social classes preserved their status of recognised urban élites and they invested much of their money in self-representation, with evergetism and consumption of high-quality goods; in this way, they preserved some form of economic circulation within the cities and between them and the major directive centres of the empire.

3.2. *The crisis of urban aristocracies and the end of Early Byzantine city*

The range of topics discussed above requires a brief final inquiry about the 'engines' that drove such a deep transformation in Early Byzantine urbanism and the reasons for the ultimate crisis of a model of city that Early Byzantine world had inherited from Greek-Roman civilization and Late Antiquity.

Answering such a question is obviously complex, and a first assumption is that the fate of each city was largely determined by very differing contributing factors, which vary on a case to case basis.

³³ On the case of Sagalassos, M. Waelkens, *The Late Antique to Early Byzantine city in Southwest Anatolia. Sagalassos and its territory: a case study*, in J.-U. Krause, C. Witschel (ed.), *Die Stadt in der Spätantike. Niedergang oder Wandel?*, Stuttgart, 2006, p. 199–256.

A first common element could be identified in the progressive weakening in the ties that connected the single cities to that complex set of issues we call 'Byzantine empire'. The latter being a highly problematic term used to designate a number of very different regions, which based its unity mainly on three points: a) the role played by central and peripheral administration in organizing the circulation and re-distribution of economic wealth within the empire itself, mainly using a few fundamental instruments, such as tax-collecting and evergetism seen as a way to redistribute a part of incoming resources; b) the existence of a common system of defence on a large, imperial, scale; c) the Church, with its role in administration and politics.

In other words, those were the three major sections in which the social system of urban élites was organized to be the key contact point between the local micro-ecology of each urban centre (the way in which each city depended essentially on its *chora* for its everyday life) and the macro-economy on a Mediterranean scale (the way in which each city was inserted into the life of the empire). A three faceted élite (administrative, religious, military) that was composed by *possessores* who based their economic power on the local agrarian property, but also by *potentiores* who exercised their local power rightly because they were in close contact with the three main strands of the central government.

When these élites started to loose their touch with the central government, their power survived, but became more and more locally based. This could be, in my opinion, the point of no return for the transformation of Early Byzantine cities. The urban centre became less and less attractive for the members of these élites, until they decided to abandon the cities, probably to fly away to the imperial capital city or to disperse themselves in smaller, maybe fortified, settlements.³⁴ After the abandonment by the élites, there was even less reason for other people to remain in the cities. In this sense a number of long term urban trajectories came to an end, and the overall image of the city was transformed into something completely different – the middle Byzantine city.

I would argue that much of the archaeological evidence acquired with the development of a proper, modern urban archaeology of Early Byzantine cities points in that direction. It will be up to further research to either validate this hypothesis or replace it by an even more complex pattern.

³⁴ M. Veikou, *Urban or Rural? Theoretical remarks on the settlement patterns in Byzantine Epirus (7th–11th centuries)*, in *BZ*, 103/1 (2010), p. 171–193.

Conclusion

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In their published papers our three contributors to this plenary session on the early Byzantine city were able to offer both synoptic and detailed perspectives of current research across much of the Byzantine world of the western and eastern Mediterranean basin, enriched with detailed and informative bibliographies. Jorge López Quiroga described an arc of early Byzantine urbanism from the Iberian peninsula in the west, the limit of Justinian's Reconquista, across the coastlands of the Maghreb as far as the Levant. He addresses a broad range of current concerns and issues, from the improving contemporary practices and new methodologies of urban archaeology, to the critical challenges to the archaeological heritage posed by the grave political crises affecting many Arab lands, especially Syria. Just as science and other disciplines are capable of asking new questions of our ancient evidence which can inform the contemporary world,¹ the very fabric of past cultures has become the target for violent eradication.

In the papers presented here notions of decline are generally set aside, rather it is the diversity of responses to societal and economic changes together with new religious practices which are our speakers concerns. For Enrico Zanini in particular, this is seen as responses to the Christianization of the urban centres and their increasing militarization. Certainly from our literary sources such as Procopius of Caesarea these come dominate imperial preoccupation and substitute for earlier local patronage. Zanini also identifies the changing topographies of power, as evidenced from those structures identified as *praetoria*, as well as urban transformations which can be understood as the ruralisation of the city space. One further change which can be observed across many urban centres which may also be mentioned is the recycling of monuments and the proliferation of workshops often in former public spaces. In some instances, this involved the re-use of the past for new creative embellishment of the city's public spaces.² But even at such important cities as Ephesus which continued to flourish and benefit from imperial patronage in to the sixth century there is surprising evidence on the site of previous elite housing, Hanghaus 2, for the construction of

¹ See for example: J. Haldon, *Cooling and Societal Change*, in *Nature Geoscience*, 9 (2016), p. 191–192, doi:10.1038/ngeo2659; A. Izdebski et al., *Realising consilience: How better communication between archaeologists, historians and natural scientists can transform the study of past climate change in the Mediterranean*, in *Quaternary Science Reviews*, 136 (2016), p. 5–22.

² See especially I. Jacobs, *Aesthetic Maintenance of Urban Space, The Classical City from the 4th to the 7th century*, Leuven, 2013; note also the continuing decoration of city gates such as the Gate of Persecutions of Ayasoluk at Ephesus.

a sophisticated water-powered stone-cutting mill. This phenomenon was not isolated, and can be paralleled at Messene in the south-west Peloponnese,³ where a watermill was constructed on the monumental fountain of Arsinoë, and should be considered amid other infrastructural changes notably the increased provision of water noted by all three authors. However in this instance another facet of early Byzantine urbanism which we need to consider was the emergence in some centres of what can be termed ‘the Utilitarian City’, where industrial activities entered the heart of urban spaces (this may be set beside Quiroga’s discussion of ‘productive spaces’).⁴ Apparent dereliction set side-by-side with new technically complex innovations, often associated with water.

Here it is worth stressing that if we take a ‘long-view’, the Greco-Roman city of antiquity was not immutable, neither up to the time of Constantine or beyond. Even if in periods of early imperial power in the first and second centuries AD regions such as Asia Minor and north Africa witnessed the extension of the architectural attributes of the Roman city (as noted in my introduction). It should be observed that this was not universal around the Mediterranean and that other regions such Sicily and mainland Greece already witnessed urban failure, dereliction as well as consolidation at the beginning of the First Millennium AD.⁵ Consequently, it is important that we situate urban settlement changes, like landscape histories, into narratives of long-term change over millennia, not simply contrasting the late antique with the high empire of the Caesars.⁶ Indeed the third contribution, highly appropriate for a International Congress in Serbia, concerns one of the most exceptional urban centres of the early Byzantine period, Justiniana Prima. Not that early Byzantine new cities were unique, indeed Vegetius in his *Epitoma rei militaris*, a work probably addressed to either Theodosius I or II, observed that, “there was no greater glory than the foundation of new cities or the transfer of those founded by others to their own name under some expansion”.⁷ But Justiniana Prima was not a re-foundation, but a new city; ‘small but perfectly formed’, to use an English commonplace, insofar that it encapsulates the core elements of the early Byzantine

³ S. Weffers, F. Mangartz, *Die Byzantinische Werkstätten von Ephesos*, in F. Daim, S. Ladstätter, *Ephesos in Byzantinischer Zeit*, Mainz, 2011, p. 223–239; N. Tsvikis, *Πού πάνε οι πόλεις, όταν εξαφανίζονται; Ο οικισμός της πρώιμης και μέσης βυζαντινής μεσσήνης*, in T. Kiousopoulou (ed.), *Οι βυζαντινές πόλεις, 8^{ος}–15^{ος} αιώνας, Προοπτικές της έρευνας και νέες ερμηνευτικές προσεγγίσεις*, Rethymno, 2012, p. 47–72.

⁴ His view may challenge a recent analysis of Umayyad economic expansion, F. Bessard, *The urban economy in southern inland Greater Syria from the seventh century the end of the Umayyads*, in L. Lavan (ed.), *Local Economies? Production and Exchange of Inland Regions in Late Antiquity* (= LAA, 10), 2013, Leiden, p. 377–421.

⁵ Strabo, *Geography*, 7,7,6 for the cities of the Ambracian Gulf and Augustus’ foundation of Nicopolis.

⁶ See for example J. Bintliff, *The Complete Archaeology of Greece, from Hunter Gathers to the 20th century*, Chichester, 2013, esp. p. 349–353.

⁷ See J. Crow, *New cities of late antiquity: Theodosiopolis in Armenia*, in E. Rizos, A. Ricci (ed.), *New Cities in Late Antiquity, Documents and Archaeology* (Brepols, in press).

city: administration, imposing defences and gates, expensively decorated churches, and a street layout which mimics the capital with its colonnaded streets and circular piazza. The typology was already established in the new military cities of the Roman east such as Dara and Amida, but in Serbia we have a city whose study has benefitted from decades of research. Unlike the eastern cities where detailed study remains, and is likely to remain restricted,⁸ Vujadin Ivanišević was able to describe not only how the city, its infrastructures and suburbs developed and changed over time but also the hinterland of settlements and small forts. At Caričin Grad the excavations have been sufficiently extensive and detailed to reveal how urban life ended, although here it is worth recalling that not all new cities were destined to fail and that Diyarbakir and Erzerum (Amida and Theodosiopolis in Armenia) remain the major cities of eastern Turkey.

The end of the city is a common theme in all three papers, here the question is not just how cities might be considered to have failed, or else transformed into a quite different entity, but also when the period under discussion came to end. For the Maghreb and Levant the changes are less pronounced, at least until the Abbasid revolution. However, for the core Byzantine world, Aegean and Black Sea coastlands, Greece, Turkey, Sicily and Southern Balkans, the problems are far greater to define and resolve.⁹ Hence my brief introduction commenced with Amorium, a city where we can begin to see the transition from an early to middle Byzantine *polis* in a way that is simply not apparent archaeologically elsewhere in the regions ruled from Constantinople. As a significant Anatolian theme capital it can be argued that the city did not reflect wider trends in urban ‘transition’ or ‘transformation’. Certainly I’d be the first to accept that the way we represented the *polis* of Amorium in a comparative plan of ‘Anatolian theme castles’, note the term, in our 1995 article on Amastris (Amasra), showed only the raised mound of the hüyük as the occupied area.¹⁰ Chris Lightfoot’s excavations have demonstrated quite convincingly that the *polis* to *kastron* model we reflected, cannot be applied in this instance, and I’d question its relevance for the transitional period from the early to the middle Byzantine periods the seventh to the ninth centuries in either Greece or Anatolia. Cities changed as communities changed, some responded to the new conditions of the transitional period, others failed or left few traces in the material record. What contingencies determined these responses still challenge archaeologists and historians; that we have a clearer idea for the early Byzantine city is a testament for our achievements of our colleagues represented here and the works they have reported to this Congress.

⁸ See papers in the forthcoming: *New Cities* volume (n.7), especially Sack on Resafa.

⁹ See the difficulties faced by H. Saradi, *The Byzantine Cities (8th–15th Centuries): Old Approaches and New Directions*, in T. Kioussopoulou (ed.), *Οι βυζαντινές πόλεις, 8^{ος}–15^{ος} αιώνας, Προοπτικές της έρευνας και νέες ερμηνευτικές προσεγγίσεις*, Rethymno, 2012, p. 25–46.

¹⁰ J. Crow, S. Hill, *The Byzantine Fortifications of Amastris in Paphlagonia*, in *Anatolian Studies*, 45 (1995), p. 251–266, fig. 3.

III

Byzantine Religious Practices and the Senses

Moderator: **Charles Barber**

Béatrice Caseau

Rituels chrétiens et sensorialité

Glenn Peers

Senses' Other Sides

Eric Palazzo

Sensory Activation in Liturgy and Art in
the Early Middle Ages: The Initials 'O'
in the Sacramentary of Gellone

Notes Towards a Plenary Paper on the Senses, Perception, and the Work of Art¹

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The topics that could be encompassed by this essay are extensive and reach far beyond the competence of this author.² In these few preliminary words, I will not attempt to capture that impossible creature, namely *the* Byzantine discourse on the senses. I am not sure that such a thing can be said to exist. Nor will I stray far from my own area of expertise, the history of art and the ideas that may inform that art and its reception. What I shall do is to introduce some highly selective aspects of the existing discussion of the correlation of works of art and the senses before then introducing a few primary sources that may help us to raise further questions regarding our terminology and our assumptions. There will be much that I do not touch upon and, given the constraints of time and pre-publication demands, much that will be excluded by the choices I have made about what to include in these opening remarks.

For the art historian, and my essay is written from that perspective, the senses have become an increasingly important presence in our conversation about images, their activities, and their reception. Attention paid to the senses challenges our ‘natural’ privileging of vision over the other members of the classic, that is Aristotelian, enumeration of the five senses: sight, hearing, touch, taste, smell. As such, the acoustics and smell of the architectural space have become important aspects of the discussion of buildings, while the haptic potentials of vision have been brought into the conversation.³ If we add in the miraculous possibilities inherent in the image, then all of the senses can be brought into play thanks to the miraculous

¹ My participation in this session came late, hence the somewhat provisional nature of this contribution, which should be read as an expression of first thoughts, rather than as a definitive overview.

² Some indication of the range of topics can be suggested from the papers given at the 2014 Dumbarton Oaks Symposium: *Knowing Bodies, Passionate Souls: Sense Perceptions in Byzantium*, <http://www.doaks.org/research/byzantine/scholarly-activities/past/knowning-bodies-passionate-souls-sense-perceptions-in-byzantium/sense-symposium-abstracts> (consulted 5/7/16).

³ For acoustics in relation to architecture one might note the work of Bissera Pentcheva at Hagia Sophia (*Hagia Sophia and Multisensory Aesthetics*, in *Gesta*, 50/2 [2011], p. 51–69) and the UCLA team at work on the churches of Thessaloniki: *Abstracts, Byzantine Studies Conference 2015: New York, October 22–25*, p. 72 and 103. For scent: S. Ashbrook Harvey, *Scenting Salvation: Ancient Christianity and the Olfactory Imagination*, Berkeley, 2006 and B. Caseau, *Euodia: The Use and Meaning of Fragrances in the Ancient World and their Christianization (100–900)*, PhD. diss., Princeton University, 1994. For the correlation of vision and the haptic: R. S. Nelson, *To Say and to See: Ekphrasis and Vision in Byzantium*, in R. S. Nelson (ed.), *Visuality Before and Beyond the Renaissance*, Chicago, 2000, p. 143–168.

sight of the living vision of the one depicted, the conversations to be had with them, the touch by kissing, handling, rubbing the image, the taste of the image scraped down and ingested for healing purposes, or exuding pungent healing perfumes.⁴ These activities break the frame that distances the viewer from the viewed, opening the image to an intimate relationship that implicates the whole body in the promise of a shared presence.

Liz James's work provides an important reference point for this discussion. In an explicit effort to work beyond the purely visual attention paid to images, she has invited us to consider monumental art as "an installation designed to appeal to all the senses".⁵ This model implies a strong awareness of the space in which the composite installation is displayed. It proposes a contingent and varied relationship with spectators, or perhaps participants, and the potential to disrupt or condition the experience of a particular site. The purpose of this rich sensual experience was to "reveal spiritual truths that might otherwise be hidden".⁶ The path towards this revelation was opened by the different means of knowing that the different senses offered. Working together, they "broke the world apart in a way that looking alone could not".⁷ Fundamental to this process of spiritual elevation was the sensing body of the one experiencing a given image. This was the complex sensible ground from which to ascend to an intelligible and then spiritual form of knowing. This offers a strongly Neoplatonic reading of the role of the senses that moves us from the multiplicity of human perception to a higher and more unified knowledge.⁸

The point is extended in James's more recent essay on touch.⁹ Here the body remains central as, following Aristotle, she argues that touch was the most fundamental sense. The basis for this argument lies in *De Anima* III, xiii, 435a, lines 13–14: "For without a sense of touch it is impossible to have any other sensation".¹⁰ The point is developed at lines 17–20: "But touch occurs by direct contact with its objects, and that is why it has its name. The other sense organs perceive by contact too, but through a medium; touch alone seems to perceive immediately".¹¹ As such, all the senses may be said to touch, but it is only touch itself that offers an unmediated touch. It is the immediacy of such touching that then opens

⁴ A few examples can be found at C. Barber, *Icons, Prayer, and Vision in the Eleventh Century*, in D. Krueger (ed.), *Byzantine Christianity*, Minneapolis, 2006, p. 149–150.

⁵ L. James, *Sense and Sensibility*, in *Art History*, 27 (2004), p. 524.

⁶ L. James, *Sense and Sensibility*, p. 532.

⁷ L. James, *Sense and Sensibility*, p. 532.

⁸ I have focused on sensible perception in this essay. Intelligible and spiritual perception were very important in Byzantium, conditioning the value placed upon sensible perception.

⁹ L. James, "Seeing's believing, but feeling's the truth": *Touch and the Meaning of Byzantine Art*, in A. Lymberopoulou (ed.), *Images of the Byzantine World: Visions, Messages and Meanings. Studies Presented to Leslie Brubaker*, Farnham, 2011, p. 1–14.

¹⁰ ἄνευ μὲν γὰρ ἀφῆς οὐδεμίαν ἐνδέχεται ἄλλην αἴσθησιν ἔχειν. The text and translation are from Aristotle, *On the Soul, Parva Naturalia, On Breath*, trans. W. S. Hett, Cambridge, 1957, p. 198–199.

¹¹ ἡ δ' ἀφή τῶ αὐτῶν ἄπτεσθαί ἐστιν, διὸ καὶ τοῦνομα τοῦτο ἔχει. καίτοι καὶ τὰ ἄλλα αἰσθητήρια ἀφή αἰσθάνεται, ἀλλὰ δι' ἑτέρου. αὕτη δὲ δοκεῖ μόνη δι' αὐτῆς... Aristotle, *On the Soul*, p. 200–201.

the path to a shared presence mediated through the body. In bringing us once more towards the body, we are led to consider an aesthetics that is defined by materiality and corporeality before it is considered in purely intelligible terms.

Another important intervention in the relationship of art and the senses is found in the continuing work of Bissera Pentcheva.¹² Her phenomenological address to the art of Byzantium, richly informed by anthropological concerns, has shaped a performative and materialistic agency for Byzantine works of art that, like James, has challenged an exclusively visual approach to art and architecture. For example, in her *The Sensual Icon: Space, Ritual, and the Senses in Byzantium* we find a strong argument for a synaesthetic experience in which “sight [was] also experienced as touch, hearing, smell, and taste”.¹³ In this expanded account of the experience of things, the perception of the work of art becomes a multisensory and embodied interaction. As such, vision and touch need not be distinguished, while hearing and vision can be shown to provide intertwined paths to knowledge, and the transformational smell of incense may be deemed akin to the shifting and varied perception of the icon itself. Once again, the composite complexity of the body becomes central to cognitive processes that derive from the varieties of sensation. A varied and changing relationship between viewers and objects produces an animated presence in the things perceived.¹⁴

The sensual potency of Byzantine images has also been extensively examined by Glenn Peers in numerous essays that have highlighted the material grounds of Byzantine works of art.¹⁵ Like Pentcheva, the conversation with anthropological conceptions of materialism and agency are important tools in his studies. For example, in his Menil Collection exhibition *Byzantine Things in the World* he put Byzantine artefacts into conversation with a range of objects and art works from different places and periods. Forms, shapes, textures, scale and materiality drew these works together into a common conversation, drawing our eyes first and foremost to the sensible properties that allowed these works to speak to one another across time and space.¹⁶

¹² Among her more recent essays I would like to signal: *The Power of Glittering Materiality: Mirror Reflections Between Poetry and Architecture in Greek and Arabic Medieval Culture*, in *Ancient Near Eastern Studies. Supplementa*, 47 (2014), p. 223–268; *Performing the Sacred in Byzantium: Image, Breath, and Sound*, in *Performance Research International*, 19/3 (2014), p. 120–128; *Hagia Sophia and Multisensory Aesthetics*, in *Gesta*, 50/2 (2011), p. 51–69.

¹³ B. Pentcheva, *The Sensual Icon: Space, Ritual, and the Senses in Byzantium*, University Park, 2010, p. 2.

¹⁴ B. Pentcheva, *Sensual Icon*, p. 183–208.

¹⁵ For example: *Transfiguring Materialities: Relational Abstraction in Byzantium and its Exhibition*, in *Convivium: Exchanges and Interactions in the Arts of Medieval Europe, Byzantium, and the Mediterranean (Seminarium Kondakovianum Series Nova)*, 2/2 (2015), p. 116–137 and *Real Living Painting: Quasi-Objects and Dividuation in the Byzantine World*, in *Religion and the Arts*, 16 (2012), p. 433–460.

¹⁶ G. Peers (ed.), *Byzantine Things in the World*, Houston, 2013.

In highlighting these contributions I have wanted to emphasize that what these essays lead us towards is a complex relation with things that have normally been described in primarily visual and intelligible terms. This ‘normal’ model may be traced back to the long tradition of reading Byzantine aesthetics from Plotinian and Neo-Platonic grounds.¹⁷ This was undoubtedly an important influence, repeated and re-worked in numerous influential writings on Byzantine aesthetics.¹⁸ But, we need also to attend to the re-framing of these Late Antique accounts of sense and perception during the long centuries of Byzantium. Here one might note the recent work of George Arabatzis, who has drawn attention to some of the ways in which Byzantine aesthetics distinguishes itself from this Late Antique legacy.¹⁹

In this regard, heed should also be paid to developments in related fields, in which the senses, materiality, and corporeality have opened fresh perspectives on art and aesthetics. Given the deep roots of Byzantine aesthetic thought, I would like to signal the work of James I. Porter, who has emphasized the material, sensational, and experiential aspects of the discussion of aesthetics in Ancient Greek thought.²⁰ The recent extensive discussion of the senses and materialism in the study of western Medieval art is notable.²¹ Similarly, the materialist turn in religious studies should inform our thinking.²² A renewed discussion among Byzantinists of the senses, perception, and aesthetics among is therefore a timely conversation to be had.

With these preliminary remarks in mind, let me now turn to some primary texts and to ask how our return to these might condition our contemplation of the senses in Byzantium. One commonplace and influential resource for thinking through the conceptualization of the senses is found in John of Damaskos’s *Source of Knowledge*,²³ which, as Kotter’s

¹⁷ For example the essays gathered in A. Grabar, *Les origines de l’esthétique médiévale*, Paris, 1992.

¹⁸ A Christian Neo-Platonism and a stress upon the formation of Byzantine aesthetics in Late Antiquity is found in: G. Ladner, *The Concept of the Image in the Greek Fathers and the Byzantine Iconoclastic Controversy*, in *DOP*, 7 (1953), p. 1–34; G. Mathew, *Byzantine Aesthetics*, London, 1963; V. Byckov, *L’Estetica Bizantina: Problemi teorici*, Bari, 1983.

¹⁹ G. Arabatzis, *Byzantine Philosophia kai Eikonologia*, Athens, 2012; G. Arabatzis, *Pensée byzantine et iconologie*, in *BF*, 31 (2013), p. 63–93. Note should also be made of the essays in S. Mariev, W.-M. Stock (ed.), *Aesthetics and Theurgy in Byzantium*, Berlin, 2013.

²⁰ J. I. Porter, *The Origins of Aesthetic Thought in Ancient Greece: Matter, Sensation, and Experience*, Cambridge, 2010.

²¹ For example: A. Kumler, Ch. R. Lakey, Res et significatio: *The Material Sense of Things in the Middle Ages*, in *Gesta*, 51/1 (2012), p. 1–17; H. L. Kessler, *Seeing Medieval Art*, Peterborough, ON, 2004, p. 19–42.

²² S. M. Promey (ed.), *Sensational Religion: Sensory Cultures in Material Practice*, New Haven, 2014; P. Cox-Miller, *The Corporeal Imagination: Signifying the Holy in Late Ancient Christianity*, Philadelphia, 2009.

²³ B. Kotter, *Die Shriften des Johannes von Damaskos*, II, *Expositio Fidei*, Berlin – New York, 1973; A. Louth, *The Πηγὴ Γνώσεως of St. John Damascene: Its Date and Development*, in C. Dendrinos

edition shows, draws directly on, but adapts, the relevant section of Nemesius of Emesa's later fourth-century *Treatise on the Nature of Man*.²⁴

In his account of the senses John defines them as “a faculty of the soul by which material things are apprehended or discerned”.²⁵ He presents the classic list of five senses in the following order: sight, hearing, smell, taste, and touch. In sight one sees in terms of color and one is also able to discern the colored body of the thing seen; namely its size, shape, location, number, motion, roughness, smoothness, evenness, unevenness, sharpness, bluntness and whether it is a solid or liquid.²⁶ In hearing one discerns voices and sounds and whether these are high or low-pitched. One will also note their degree of smoothness.²⁷ The sense of smell discerns odors on a range from sweet to foul.²⁸ Taste is mediated by the tongue and the palate and distinguishes flavors by terms such as sweetness, bitterness, acidity, sourness, tartness, pungency, saltiness, greasiness, and stickiness.²⁹ Touch is the fifth sense and implicates the entire body and not just a single sense organ. As touch encompasses the whole body, then the other sense organs must also possess the sense of touch (Διὸ καὶ ὅλον τὸ σῶμα, ἀλλὰ καὶ τὰ ἄλλα αἰσθητήρια τὴν τῆς ἀφῆς ἔχουσιν αἰσθησιν).³⁰ Touch alone senses heat and cold, softness and hardness, stickiness and friability, heaviness and lightness.³¹ Touch and sight can both sense roughness and smoothness; dryness and wetness; thickness and thinness; up and down; place and size; density; shape.³² They can also both discern motion and number, but sight does this better than touch (Τούτων δὲ μᾶλλον τῆς ἀφῆς ἢ ὄρασις ἀντιλαμβάνεται).³³ Finally, while sight sees in straight lines, smell and hearing perceive in all directions, and taste and touch perceive “only when their proper organs are in contact with their objects”.³⁴

This brief summation of John's account of the senses makes a number of points. Touch is understood to be fundamental as it pertains to the whole body rather than a single part, and so must embrace the other senses. The order in which John has presented the senses

et al. (ed.), *Porphyrogenita: Essays on the History and Literature of Byzantium and the Latin East in Honour of Julian Chrysostomides*, Aldershot, 2003, p. 335–340. L. James, *Seeing's believing*, p. 14 has discussed the definitions of the senses found in the *Suida Lexicon*, which draws upon Philoponus's commentary on Aristotle's *De Anima*: <http://www.stoa.org/sol-entries/alphaiota/326>.

²⁴ Nemesius of Emesa, *De Natura Hominis*, ed. M. Morani, Leipzig, 1989.

²⁵ B. Kotter, II, p. 83, l. 32.2–3. Translation from Saint John of Damascus, *Writings*, trans. F. H. Chase, jr., Washington, D. C., 1958, p. 242.

²⁶ B. Kotter, II, p. 83–84, l. 32.7–13.

²⁷ B. Kotter, II, p. 84, l. 32.14–18.

²⁸ B. Kotter, II, p. 84, l. 32.19–25.

²⁹ B. Kotter, II, p. 84–85, l. 32.26–35.

³⁰ B. Kotter, II, p. 85, 32.38–39.

³¹ B. Kotter, II, p. 85, l. 32.36–41.

³² B. Kotter, II, p. 85, l. 32.41–48.

³³ B. Kotter, II, p. 85, l. 32.48–49.

³⁴ B. Kotter, II, p. 86, l. 32.59–60.

differs from that of Nemesius. For Nemesius, touch held second place after sight, while for John of Damaskos, touch was relegated to the fifth position in the list. Of particular note is that the different sense organs can perceive similar qualities in their distinct sense objects. For example, smoothness (πραχῖ) is a quality that can be discerned by the senses of sight, hearing, and touch. But then, we might need to ask whether visible smoothness is the same as tactile or aural smoothness? That difference may underlie apparent similarity can be suggested by the proposal that sight is better than touch at perceiving motion or number or that the manner of perceiving varies, such that while sight operates in straight lines, smell and hearing are omni-directional, and taste and touch require contact. Ultimately, John's text reiterates the distinctiveness of the sense objects, the sense organs and the operations of the senses themselves.

Aristotle's writings on the senses and perception, mediated by later commentators, were fundamental for Byzantine thought on the senses. If we simply take Michael Psellos as an example – the excellent editions of his work help in this regard – one can find: Alexander of Aphrodisias's commentary on Aristotle's *On Perception and Perceptibles* was the direct source for Psellos's exposition of Aristotle's text;³⁵ the first two chapters of Simplicius's commentary on the *De Anima* as his source for several of his chapters on the soul in the *De Omnifaria Doctrina*;³⁶ and the numerous texts published in the second volume of the *Philosophica Minora* indicate that Philoponus's commentary on the *De Anima* was also extensively used.³⁷ These debts are an indication of the degree to which Byzantine conceptions of the senses draw upon the Late Antique commentators, further distilling these works for their medieval audience.

Let me focus upon what Michael Psellos conveyed to his audience from his 'reading' of two important commentaries: Alexander of Aphrodisias's *On Perception and Perceptibles* and John Philoponos on *De Anima*. The first of these is paraphrased in Psellos's *On Perception and Perceptibles*.³⁸ The second is paraphrased in Psellos's *Different and Various Propositions*.³⁹

Psellos's *On Perception and Perceptibles* offers a somewhat fragmentary series of reflections upon the senses that largely derive from Alexander of Aphrodisias's commentary on Aristotle's *De Sensu*.⁴⁰ Psellos's text only contains material drawn from Book 1 of Alexander's commentary, specifically the section that discusses chapters 2 to 4 of Aristotle's

³⁵ Michael Psellus, *Philosophica Minora*, II, ed. D. J. O'Meara, Leipzig, 1989, p. 14–17.

³⁶ Michael Psellus, *De Omnifaria Doctrina: Critical Text and Introduction*, ed. L. G. Westerink, Utrecht, 1948, p. 32–36.

³⁷ Psellus, *Philosophica Minora*, II, p. 2, 30–72, 75, 95–96, 107–108.

³⁸ Psellus, *Philosophica Minora*, II, p. 14–17.

³⁹ Psellus, *Philosophica Minora*, II, p. 30–72.

⁴⁰ *Alexandri in Librum De Sensu Commentarium*, ed. P. Wendland (Commentaria in Aristotelem Graeca, 3/1), Berlin, 1901.

study. He is thus concerned with the relations between the senses themselves, between the senses and the elements, and with the objects of sight and taste. In the course of his text Psellos reiterates Aristotle's rejection of Plato's understanding of the origins of the senses and in so doing he ascribes them to different elements. Sight was understood to be from water, hearing from the air, smell from fire and both taste and touch to be derived from the earth. Taste and touch are then further distinguished from the other senses by being linked directly to the heart. Sight, hearing and smell were believed to pass first through the brain.

It is the sense of sight that dominates Psellos's discussion.⁴¹ He begins by introducing Aristotle's rejection of Plato's belief that a fire emitted from the eye causes vision. Aristotle argued that the shiny surface of the eye offered the illusion of fire, but that it did not in fact consist of fire. Psellos then turns to two other theories of vision that Aristotle repudiated.⁴² The first of these extends the rejection of Plato's teaching by further addressing the extramission theory found there. Here Psellos follows the Aristotelian tradition in conflating and to a certain extent misrepresenting the theories of vision espoused by Empedocles (fifth century) and Plato. Accordingly, sight is defined as an emission of a ray of light whose origin is the fire within our eyes. When this ray of fire-produced light is emitted it fuses with daylight in the air and so enables us to see. Then, when this ray touches upon an object, the ray itself is affected and transmits this affect back to the eyes and thence to the soul. Sight is thus presented as something that originates in the eye of the beholder. The sense-data that returns to this eye is borne by the ray that the beholder had emitted and that has now been changed by the sense-object. The second theory of vision rejected in the passage in discussion is one in which the eye is affected by admitting something that has flowed from the things perceived. This notion is associated with the Atomists. This school of thought is represented in our essay by Democritus (fifth century BC). What concerns Aristotle and therefore Psellos is that this theory treated the eye as a form of mirror in which the sense-object is reflected, rather than as a transparent path to the soul.

In proposing an alternative to these theories Aristotle, followed by his commentators, re-focused our attention away from the sense-organ and the sense-object and toward the space between them. This space is brought into play as a medium that both separates and links the one seeing and the thing seen. This medium is called the transparent and is understood to be a material, such as water or air, which has the potential to convey the visible.⁴³ Aristotle's insistence upon sight's foundation in water rather than fire is linked to this notion of the transparent.

⁴¹ The following paragraphs are taken from my *Contesting the Logic of Painting: Art and Understanding in Eleventh-Century Byzantium*, Leiden, 2007, p. 93–96.

⁴² For broad introductions to the terms extramission and intromission and their interplay in ancient and medieval accounts of vision see D. C. Lindberg, *Theories of Vision from Al-Kindi to Kepler*, Chicago, 1976.

⁴³ For the transparent see A. Vasiliu, *Du diaphane: image, milieu, lumière dans la pensée antique et médiévale*, Paris, 1997.

This mediatory space was crucial for the Aristotelian theory of vision. One of the foundations of Aristotle's understanding of vision was the notion that contact blinded. By which he meant that if the thing being looked at were to be in touch with the eye, it would be impossible to see it. Aristotle required a gap between subject and object through which vision might take place. Hence, seeing could not be equated with touching.⁴⁴

Having affirmed this opening for vision, Psellos, following Aristotle, was then able to define the process of seeing. This process is marked by a movement or change that is perceived by the one looking and that has originated in the sense-object. This sense-object becomes known to us through its color. For Aristotle, and hence Psellos, color was the visible as such.⁴⁵ It is the objective condition that permits a thing to be seen. But in order for this to happen, we need a medium that can convey the color of the thing seen. The medium proposed is light, which is defined as the actuality of the transparent (*διαφανής*). What brings actuality (light) to this material (air) is the color of the thing seen. It is this color that changes or moves the transparent into becoming light and that thus allows it to convey the sense-data, the material form or shape of the thing seen, from the sense-object to the sense-organ. This transparent medium has a complex role to play in Aristotle's account of vision. Although it is moved or changed by color and conveys this color, it does not become colored. In a similar manner, the eye also remains unchanged or unmoved. The pupil is understood to be a continuity of the transparent medium. As such, the eye itself does not see. Rather the sense-organ is also a medium through which one senses, by which is meant that sense-data is delivered to the heart, the primary organ of sense by means of the passages (*πόροι*) that link the heart and the various sense organs. Vision thus originates in the object and ends in the heart. These two are not in contact. Rather the perception of the object, visible in its color, is mediated by the actualized transparent that is the air and the water of the eye.

Although this text does not always read easily, it does present a strong reiteration of Aristotle's understanding of some of the senses and vision in particular. Whether discussing taste, smell, or sight Psellos presents perception as being caused by the affect of the perceptible upon the perceiving organ. It is the thing seen or tasted or smelled that entirely conditions our perception of that thing, turning our potential for perception into actual perception.

Michael Psellos's paraphrase of Philoponus's commentary on the *De Anima* betrays a close reading of the text in his re-writing of the passages selected for his version. I will focus on the commentary on *De Anima* 2:7–12 in which the senses and perception are most closely

⁴⁴ Cf. R. S. Nelson, *To Say and to See: Ekphrasis and Vision in Byzantium*, in R. S. Nelson (ed.), *Visuality Before and Beyond the Renaissance*, Cambridge, 2000, p. 143–168. For a further discussion of this point note the forthcoming essay by R. Betancourt, *Why Sight is Not Touch: Reconsidering the Tactility of Sight in Byzantium*, in *DOP*, 70 (2016).

⁴⁵ For a broad introduction to color in Byzantium refer to L. James, *Light and Colour in Byzantine Art*, Oxford, 1996.

analyzed.⁴⁶ Here, Psellos begins with sight and introduces the transparent (διαφανές) as the medium that connects the eye and the subject seen.⁴⁷ The objects of sight are all considered to be shining (τὰ λαμπρὰ), which is manifest by means of color and other things.⁴⁸ This transparent is frequently air and water, but can be other than these.⁴⁹ We are told that light, which is the actuality of the transparent, should not be considered a body. Furthermore, light, being a form alone, must be incorporeal, as bodies are defined by their possessing both form and matter.⁵⁰ Nonetheless, light can be reflected and passed on by the bodies it touches.⁵¹ The transparent is dark when it is potential, rather than actual. Darkness, being potential, has no form.⁵² Color passes through the transparent but does not affect it. Such activity immediately fills the entire transparent.⁵³ For sight to occur, the sense-objects must be directly in front of the eyes.⁵⁴ He reiterates that sight is not conveyed by the emission of sight-streams from the eyes (extramission), rather the activities of the objects seen travel to the eyes (intromission). If the eye is affected by any discoloration it will alter the perception of the thing seen.⁵⁵

When he turns to sound he reiterates the model built upon potentiality and actuality.⁵⁶ For hearing to occur, the sound must become actual. Vibration, caused by the striking that creates sound, moves the air (the primary medium for sound), and makes hearing possible.⁵⁷ The air in the eardrum is equivalent to the liquid in the pupil of the eye. They are separated from but reiterate the external media within the physical composition of the sense organ.⁵⁸ These different media mean that it is not the body as a whole that hears or sees, rather it is the specific sense organ that fulfills these activities.⁵⁹ Our voices, identified with rhythm and harmony and phrasing are the products of our being animate beings and our desire to signify something (διάλεκτος) by means of sound.⁶⁰

⁴⁶ Psellos's version of this section is notable for his skipping over 2:9, the section that deals with odor and the sense of smell. Given that the discussion of taste begins some way into 2:10, it can be suggested that our one manuscript witness copied a faulty original that had lost this portion of the text.

⁴⁷ *Philosophica Minora*, II, p. 49.30–32; p. 50.4.

⁴⁸ *Philosophica Minora*, II, p. 53.10–13.

⁴⁹ *Philosophica Minora*, II, p. 50.5–7.

⁵⁰ *Philosophica Minora*, II, p. 50.10–20.

⁵¹ *Philosophica Minora*, II, p. 51.19–20, 26–32.

⁵² *Philosophica Minora*, II, p. 52.29–53.2, p. 53.3–6.

⁵³ *Philosophica Minora*, II, p. 50.21–32.

⁵⁴ *Philosophica Minora*, II, p. 51.1–5.

⁵⁵ *Philosophica Minora*, II, p. 52.9–15.

⁵⁶ *Philosophica Minora*, II, p. 53.25–26.

⁵⁷ *Philosophica Minora*, II, p. 53.27–54.4, p. 54.5–8, p. 54.9–12.

⁵⁸ *Philosophica Minora*, II, p. 54.22–29, p. 54.30–55.2.

⁵⁹ *Philosophica Minora*, II, p. 55.5–9, p. 55.16–19.

⁶⁰ *Philosophica Minora*, II, p. 56.1–11, p. 57.7–9, p. 57.15–16.

The text that has come down to us does not summarize Philoponus's discussion of odor and smell, but passes directly on to taste. Given that the discussion of taste begins well into that chapter, it may be possible that a section of Psellos's summation has been lost.⁶¹ The discussion of taste begins abruptly with the degree of moisture needed on the tongue in order for it to properly discern flavor.⁶² He then turns to the manifestation of the sense-objects of taste along a range that runs from sweet to bitter flavors.⁶³

When Psellos turns to touch he begins by noting that this sense differs from the others in the number of oppositions that define the sense experience. While sight ranges from black to white, taste from bitter to sweet, hearing from high to low, and smell from pleasant to unpleasant, touch encompasses ranges from hot to cold, dry to moist, soft to hard, heavy to light, rough to smooth and so on. Because of this, it becomes possible to argue that touch is not a single sense, but several.⁶⁴ He then argues that flesh is the medium of touch, not the sense organ itself. This has several important implications. First, touch, unlike taste, encompasses the whole body.⁶⁵ Second, the multiplicity in touch, such that it is one sense and many and such that flesh is both medium and sense organ, opens the possibility that the other senses may also be more complicated.⁶⁶ Because the medium and sense-organ of taste and touch are bound together, they apprehend the sense-object simultaneously.⁶⁷

Turning to perception, Psellos, following Philoponus, notes that this concerns the affect of the form, rather than the underlying materiality of the sense-object. We perceive the appearance of white when we see this color, not the white lead that produces this color.⁶⁸

Psellos's reading of Philoponus's commentary has made several points in regard to the senses. In the first place, only touch involves an immediate contact between the sense organ and its object, the other sense organs are not in direct contact with the thing perceived. This point then opens the way to an hierarchically organized distinction of the senses defined by degrees of distance between the sense organ and the sense object. Sight and sound are superior because they are more distant from their sense objects; smell occupies a middle ground; while taste and touch are inferior as their sense organs have nothing but thin flesh

⁶¹ The first reference to the Philoponus discussion of taste is to a passage on page 404 of the Hayduck edition of Philoponus's commentary (*Joannes Philoponus [olim Ammonius] In De anima libros commentaria*, ed. M. Hayduck [Commentaria in Aristotelem Graeca, 16], Berlin, 1897). The discussion of taste began on page 397 of that edition. The previous reference in Psellos's text is to page 382 of the edition. Our manuscript witness to this text is Oxford, Bodleianus Baroccianus 131, fol. 426r–432v.

⁶² *Philosophica Minora*, II, p. 57.25–29, p. 58.1–13.

⁶³ *Philosophica Minora*, II, p. 58.14–31.

⁶⁴ *Philosophica Minora*, II, p. 58.32–59.8.

⁶⁵ *Philosophica Minora*, II, p. 60.2–5.

⁶⁶ *Philosophica Minora*, II, p. 59.21–26.

⁶⁷ *Philosophica Minora*, II, p. 60.7–12.

⁶⁸ *Philosophica Minora*, II, p. 60.27–61.6.

to mediate between the sense organ and its object. Furthermore, he proposes that perception is formal. This is an argument that can be traced back to Alexander of Aphrodisias: "Sensation has already been defined as the power which receives and discriminates the forms of sensible objects without their substrate matter; its judgments are usually true, at least with regard to the proper sensibles".⁶⁹ It is the form in matter that allows us to perceive particular things and to apprehend them by means of any combination of the data processed by the sense organs.⁷⁰

In opening our conversation in this session, I hope to have touched upon a few issues that may merit further discussion. First, attention paid to the senses other than vision greatly expands our perception of the work of art and architecture. In particular, the whole body of the one perceiving can become party to the experience of this work, attending to its material presence, variety, and immediacy. This can help to draw us away from an understanding of these works that privileges the distanced gaze of a visually-determined modernism. That said, the texts I have brought forward, suggest that we need to be careful about how we bring the senses into relationship with one another. Vision remains the more privileged of the senses. It is always the first to be discussed and is discussed at the greatest length. Touch may be more fundamental, immediate, and intriguingly open, but its status is generally low. The senses are consistently and firmly distinguished from one another. This ought to lead us to distinguish the mediated 'touch' of vision from the actual touch of a hand. They differ; as Aristotle and his commentators stringently argued. This allows us to maintain a complexity of comprehension, such that synaesthesia may be understood as the bringing together, but not conflating, of a variety of sense data to shape our perception. As such, when 'roughness' or 'smoothness' is perceived by sight or hearing or touch it is experienced differently. Byzantine aesthetics become more varied, more immediate, more corporeal, more material when we expand our own remit in regard to them. At the same time, this all too human horizon did not exhaust the Byzantine expectations for perception. Intelligible and spiritual modes of perception remained in play. But discussion of these belongs to another paper.

⁶⁹ A. P. Fotinis, *The De Anima of Alexander of Aphrodisias: A Translation and Commentary*, Washington, D.C., 1979, p. 80–81.

⁷⁰ A. P. Fotinis, *The De Anima*, p. 227–236.

Rituels chrétiens et sensorialité

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Depuis les livres d'Alain Corbin *Le miasme et la jonquille, l'odorat et l'imaginaire social, XVIII^e–XIX^e siècle*, publié en 1982, et *Les cloches de la terre. Paysage sonore et culture sensible dans les campagnes au XIX^e siècle*, paru en 1994, de nombreux savants ont revisité des sources familières pour reconstituer autant que possible l'environnement visuel, olfactif et sonore des sociétés du passé.¹ L'histoire des sens est un champ d'étude assez récent et très dynamique, qui s'inspire des travaux de l'anthropologie.² Une série de livres vient de paraître dans les dernières années sur chacun des sens ou sur l'histoire des cinq sens.³ D'autres sont annoncés pour les prochaines années.⁴ En lançant des collections sur la question de l'histoire des sens à travers les siècles, les éditeurs ont créé une concentration de publications parues ou à paraître, qui ont poussé historiens et anthropologues à réexaminer les sources avec un regard différent.⁵ Des recherches ont été menées sur ce que voyaient, entendaient, sentaient et pouvaient goûter ou toucher les gens des sociétés antiques et médiévales. Reconstituer l'environnement sensoriel des Byzantins n'est pas une tâche facile car elle suppose non seulement de se pencher sur les témoignages littéraires mais aussi de s'appuyer sur l'iconographie et l'archéologie. Il serait fascinant de tenter de reconstituer les bruits de Constantinople comme on a pu le faire pour les *Cris de Paris* ou le paysage sonore du monde médiéval occidental,⁶ mais il s'agit d'une recherche de longue haleine.

¹ C. Classen, *Worlds of Sense: exploring the senses in history and across cultures*, London, 1993; D. Howes (ed.), *Empire of the Senses: The Sensual Culture Reader*, Oxford, 2005; M. Smith, *Sensing the Past: Seeing, Hearing, Smelling, Tasting, and Touching in History*, Berkeley, 2007; D. Howes, C. Classen, *Ways of Sensing: Understanding Senses in Society*, London, 2014; C. Classen, *The Deepest Sense. A Cultural History of Touch*, Urbana, 2012; C. Classen, *A Cultural History of the Senses*, London, 2014; E. Palazzo (ed.), *Les cinq sens au Moyen âge*, Paris, 2016.

² D. Howes (ed.), *The Varieties of Sensory Experience. A Sourcebook in the Anthropology of the Senses*, Toronto, 1991; id. (ed.), *Empire of the Senses*; C. Classen, *The Deepest Sense*; D. Howes, C. Classen, *Ways of Sensing*.

³ M. Roch, *L'intelligence d'un sens. Odeurs miraculeuses et odorat dans l'Occident du haut Moyen Âge (I^e–VIII^e siècles)*, Turnhout, 2009; C. M. Woolgar, *The Senses in Late Medieval England*, New Haven, 2006; C. Classen, *The Deepest Sense*; E. Palazzo, *L'invention chrétienne des cinq sens dans la liturgie et l'art au Moyen âge*, Paris, 2015.

⁴ K. Rudolph (ed.), *Taste and the ancient senses*, Routledge (à paraître).

⁵ Routledge, Bloomsbury, Acumen pour mentionner quelques éditeurs qui ont commissionné des ouvrages sur les sens à travers les siècles.

⁶ Colloque Cris, jurons et chansons, Entendre les "paysages sonores" du Moyen Âge et de la Renaissance (XII^e–XVI^e siècles), Université de Poitiers, CESCUM (24–25 mai 2012), compte-rendu: <http://>

Dans l'historiographie, tous les sens n'ont pas reçu la même attention. Les études sur le paysage sonore urbain sont encore balbutiantes pour l'Orient, alors que celles sur le visuel ont déjà des lettres de noblesse grâce aux travaux des historiens d'art.⁷ D'autres domaines, comme l'histoire du goût, se développent grâce à une attention accrue aux sources textuelles et archéologiques en matière culinaire.⁸ Si les études sur la sensorialité et sur les cinq sens sont d'abord nées en histoire moderne et contemporaine, elles ont désormais gagné aussi l'histoire du monde antique et médiéval. Il était logique que ce thème soit donc présenté au congrès des études byzantines. Il faut en remercier ici les organisateurs et en particulier madame Dušanić.

Comme pour d'autres données biologiques, les sens appartiennent au corps et il a fallu du temps pour que ce domaine de recherche émerge dans une dimension diachronique qui souligne non pas les constantes physiologiques mais les différences dans la manière de comprendre le fonctionnement des cinq sens et les inflexions du discours autour de la sensorialité. Les œuvres des philosophes ou celles des médecins révèlent la manière dont les Byzantins comprenaient le fonctionnement des cinq sens et la hiérarchie entre les sens les plus nobles et les autres.⁹ L'héritage antique y est prévalent, et montre une fois de plus les continuités intellectuelles entre antiquité et moyen âge. Ces recherches permettent de mesurer aussi la distance entre la vision antique et médiévale du corps humain et la nôtre. Ainsi la vue est-elle considérée alors comme une forme de toucher, ce qui ne correspond plus à notre conception du fonctionnement du nerf optique.¹⁰ Le changement religieux qui se produit avec l'adoption du christianisme modifie aussi le discours sur les sens, qui sont analysés comme des portes vers l'âme qu'il convient de garder avec vigilance: le lien entre sensorialité et sexualité est scruté par les Pères de l'Eglise et par les milieux monastiques qui souhaitent faire vivre les moines et même l'ensemble des chrétiens dans une ambiance

musiconis.blogspot.gr/2012/06/compte-rendu-du-colloque-cris-et-jurons.html; voir aussi L. Vissière, *Cris de Paris, naissance d'un genre*, in O. Halévy, I. His, J. Vignes (ed.), *Clément Janequin, un musicien au milieu des poètes*, Paris, 2013, p. 87–116.

⁷ L. James, *Sense and Sensibility in Byzantium*, in *Art history*, 27/4 (2004), p. 522–537; H. Belting, *Likeness and Presence. A History of the Image before the Era of Art*, Chicago, 1994; A. Lidov, *Hierotopia: the Creation of Sacred Space in Byzantium and Medieval Russia*, Moscow, 2006; E. Neri, *Tessellata vitrea in età tardoantica e altomedievale: produzione dei materiali e loro messa in opera. Considerazioni generali e studio dei casi milanesi* (Bibliothèque d'Antiquité Tardive), Turnhout, 2016.

⁸ B. Caseau, *Nourritures terrestres, nourritures célestes: la culture alimentaire à Byzance*, Paris, 2015; K. Rudolph, *On the Tip of the Tongue: Making Sense of Ancient Taste*, in id. (ed.), *Taste and the ancient senses* (à paraître).

⁹ W. F. Bynum, R. Porter, *Medicine and the Five Senses*, Cambridge, 1993; G. E. R. Lloyd, G. E. L. Owen (ed.), *Aristotle on Mind and the Senses. Proceedings of the Seventh Symposium Aristotelicum*, Cambridge, 1978; A. Vasiliu, *Du Diaphane. Image, milieu, lumière dans la pensée antique et médiévale*, Paris, 1997.

¹⁰ A. Vasiliu, *Toucher par la vue. Plotin en dialogue avec Aristote sur la sensorialité de l'incorporel*, in *Les études philosophiques*, 154 (2015), p. 555–580.

de privation sensorielle pour éviter ou contrôler les stimulations sexuelles que la vision, le toucher ou l'odorat peuvent engendrer.¹¹ Les sens sont accusés d'être les portes par lesquelles les plaisirs du monde atteignent l'âme et la poussent au péché. Grégoire de Naziance propose donc aux chrétiens non seulement un contrôle du regard, mais aussi d'éviter la musique, les parfums, de ne pas rechercher le plaisir du goût ou la douceur du toucher.¹² Dans son traité *Sur la vaine gloire et l'éducation des enfants*, Jean Chrysostome compare l'âme de l'enfant à une cité dont les sens sont les portes.¹³ Il faut donc que les parents contrôlent ce que l'enfant voit et entend.¹⁴ Il convient de l'éduquer dans une ambiance ascétique, de ne pas l'exposer aux parfums, aux poses lascives et aux tissus trop doux. De son côté Basile de Césarée s'inquiète des plaisirs du goût et propose de ne servir à table qu'une alimentation simple et sans saveur, car la recherche du plaisir gustatif et une alimentation abondante alimentent les pulsions sexuelles et empêchent de vivre dans une chasteté sereine.¹⁵ Le jeûne et la privation alimentaire sont donc un instrument de contrôle du corps très prisé des ascètes chrétiens mais étendu aussi au reste de la société par l'instauration de périodes de jeûnes collectifs au cours de l'année liturgique.¹⁶

Cette attitude assez négative à l'égard des sens ne résume cependant pas tous les discours sur les sens. Ces derniers sont aussi une porte vers les réalités spirituelles et servent à la connaissance de Dieu.¹⁷ Comme les sens font partie du corps humain, les Pères de l'Eglise ne pouvaient pas les condamner, mais seulement pousser à les détourner du péché pour les tourner vers Dieu. Les sens se trouvent valorisés dès lors qu'ils servent à appréhender la vie divine. Il faut souligner que, pour l'époque médiévale, l'étude des sens ne se concentre pas seulement autour des sens physiques mais aussi autour des sens spirituels, doublons des premiers qui permettent d'exprimer un rapport personnel aux réalités spirituelles. Il est difficile d'exprimer en mots, un ressenti mystique. Le vocabulaire de la sensorialité permet de communiquer ce ressenti en utilisant des expériences connues et donc communicables. Les perceptions des sens physiques créent un imaginaire sensoriel qui fournit le cadre pour exprimer l'expérience mystique. **Il est intéressant de noter que le discours sur la nécessité de la privation sensorielle pour vivre en bon chrétien et en moine heureux apparaît précisément au moment où se met en place une richesse de décor dans les églises, un développement des usages du parfum et de l'encens dans les liturgies, de la mise en place des chœurs pour**

¹¹ B. Caseau, *Christian Bodies, the Senses and early Byzantine Christianity*, in L. James (ed.), *Desire and Denial in Byzantium*, Aldershot, 1999, p. 101–109.

¹² Grégoire de Naziance, *Oratio XXXVIII*, 5 et XXXX, 38, ed. C. Moreschini, p. 110 et 286.

¹³ Jean Chrysostome, *Sur la vaine gloire et l'éducation des enfants*, 23, p. 108.

¹⁴ V. Vuolanto, *Children and Asceticism in Late Antiquity: Continuity, Family, Dynamics and the Rise of Christianity*, Ashgate, 2015.

¹⁵ Basile de Césarée, *Grandes Règles*, question 20, 3, PG 31, c. 973.

¹⁶ B. Caseau, *Nourritures terrestres, nourritures célestes*, p. 171–191.

¹⁷ S. Ashbrook Harvey, *Scenting Salvation. Ancient Christianity and the Olfactory Imagination*, Berkeley, 2006.

le chant liturgique, et d'une piété tactile en lien avec le culte des saints et les pratiques des pèlerinages.

Les études sur la sensorialité se sont d'abord concentrées sur le visuel. Les historiens de l'art byzantin ont pu étudier, décrire et analyser la structure des bâtiments, les décors intérieurs et ils ont évalué l'effet qu'ils pouvaient avoir sur le visiteur. Ils ont discuté par exemple du scintillement des mosaïques à fond d'or avec la lumière mobile des lampes à huile, de la brillance des marbres inondés de lumière naturelle. Les liturgistes et les historiens de l'art ont pu discuter de l'impact de l'iconostase, à différents niveaux de hauteur selon les époques sur la vue de ce qui se passait dans le sanctuaire. Toute une culture de contrôle du regard, pour ne pas voir le sacré se met en place durant le moyen âge byzantin.

Dans ces recherches sur le visuel, il convient de distinguer ce qui est étude archéologique sur l'espace ecclésial, description du décor pariétal, du mobilier et des objets liturgiques, dans le but d'en étudier l'effet sur les visiteurs, et d'autre part l'étude des perceptions de l'espace ecclésial tel qu'il nous est décrit par les œuvres littéraires médiévales.¹⁸ L'attention aux mots qui expriment la vue, l'odorat, l'audition, le toucher ou le goût permet de révéler une manière de percevoir l'espace et d'y être sensible. Cette approche de la sensorialité par les sources littéraires doit tenir compte des traditions littéraires, de l'héritage biblique ou homérique, des images ou métaphores qui viennent sous la plume des lettrés et qui n'ont pas nécessairement de rapport avec l'espace qu'ils décrivent, mais qui révèlent cependant un ressenti et permettent donc de faire une anthropologie historique de la sensorialité. C'est à travers ces images que l'on peut constituer une histoire culturelle des sens et comprendre dans des études comparatistes l'insistance particulière pour tel sens plutôt que pour tel autre.¹⁹ L'étude de la perception sensorielle des gens du passé repose en partie sur l'école philosophique de la phénoménologie qui de Husserl à Merleau-Ponty est soucieux de comprendre « l'être au monde » de chaque individu.²⁰ Dans le domaine des études religieuses, l'analyse de la sensation prend une dimension spirituelle, quand la sensation de l'espace ou du rituel religieux s'imprime dans l'âme et y laisse une trace mémorielle.²¹ Bien que le champ d'étude des émotions soit séparé de celui de la sensorialité, il en est proche.²²

¹⁸ L. James (ed.), *Art and Text in Byzantium*, Cambridge, 2007; B. V. Pentcheva, *The Sensual Icon. Space, Ritual, and the Senses in Byzantium*, University Park, 2010.

¹⁹ B. Caseau, *Cultural History of the Senses: Religion and the Senses*, in R. G. Newhauser (ed.), *Cultural History of the Senses in the Middle Ages*, Oxford, 2014, p. 96–98; C. Classen, *A Cultural History of the Senses*.

²⁰ M. Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception*, Paris, 1945; id., *Le visible et l'invisible*, Paris, 1964.

²¹ M. Carruthers, *Intention, sensation et mémoire dans l'esthétique médiévale*, in *CCM*, 55 (2012), p. 367–378, réimprimé dans E. Palazzo (ed.), *Les cinq sens au Moyen Âge*, Paris, 2016, p. 59–77; G. Frank, *The Memory of the Eyes: Pilgrims to Living Saints in Christian Late Antiquity*, Berkeley, 2000.

²² Y. Hamilakis, *Archaeology and the Senses. Human Experience, Memory, and Affect*, Cambridge, 2013; M. Hinterberger, *Emotions in Byzantium*, in L. James (ed.), *A Companion to Byzantium*, Oxford, 2010, p. 123–134.

Car les sensations créent une mémoire qui peut engendrer une émotion religieuse dont les mystiques sont friands.

La phénoménologie invite à porter son attention sur le particulier dans l'expérience sensorielle, qui est modifiée par différents facteurs. L'expérience consistant à entrer dans une église et à participer à un rituel religieux n'est nullement uniforme, à travers le temps et même de manière synchronique. Il faut tenir compte de la familiarité avec le lieu et avec le rituel: un visiteur étranger ne réagit pas de la même manière qu'un fidèle qui entre dans l'église une ou plusieurs fois par jour ou par semaine. Nous avons le témoignage de voyageurs et de pèlerins impressionnés par Sainte-Sophie, car la cathédrale de Constantinople a une architecture et une taille propre à engendrer l'émerveillement. Toutefois la familiarité avec le lieu tout en créant un attachement, émousse quelque peu l'effet de surprise que ressent le visiteur qui y pénètre pour la première fois. La taille de l'espace tout comme la richesse du décor jouent un rôle dans l'expérience sensorielle, ainsi que la profusion ou l'absence de lumières, l'odeur d'encens et la qualité du chant. L'expérience n'est pas la même dans une petite chapelle privée et dans une cathédrale comme Sainte-Sophie, dans une modeste église de village et dans l'une des grandes abbayes. Enfin l'expérience est différente dans le temps, pour un même bâtiment en raison des transformations du lieu: le visuel est impacté par la modification des barrières de chancel en iconostases par exemple.²³ Somme toute, évoquer l'expérience sensorielle des visiteurs dans une église, ou l'expérience du sacré pour les Byzantins, revient à brosser à grands traits ce qui est en fait une expérience particulière que les narrations nous transmettent. S'il est cependant possible de le faire, c'est en raison des traits communs aux bâtiments religieux, et aux témoignages qui nous permettent de dépasser le particulier pour reconstituer l'impression produite par les églises sur les visiteurs. Quelle est cependant la validité d'une synthèse élaborée à partir de réactions individuelles, transmises sous des formes littéraires tributaires de la tradition?

L'expérience sensorielle est particulière à chaque individu et certainement différente selon l'accès de chaque personne à l'espace intérieur de l'église, qui dépend du sexe et de l'âge, du statut de laïc ou de clerc. Lors des rituels liturgiques, si l'on en croit les sources normatives, il y avait un emplacement particulier pour chaque catégorie dans l'église et l'accès à différentes zones de l'espace ecclésial était différent pour un homme ou pour une femme, pour un enfant ou un adulte. L'accès et donc la perception de l'espace n'était pas le même pour les laïcs et les clercs, et dans le clergé il dépendait du rang, puisque seuls les rangs les plus élevés avaient accès au sanctuaire. Selon les sources canonico-liturgiques des III^e-VI^e siècles, la séparation des sexes était souhaitable dans les églises, on plaçait les femmes d'un côté et les hommes de l'autre, parfois les femmes dans les galeries et les

²³ E. S. Bolman, *Veiling Sanctity in Christian Egypt: Visual and Spatial Solutions*, in Sh. E. J. Gerstel (ed.), *Thresholds of the Sacred*, Washington, 2006, p. 73-104; Ch. Walter, *The Origins of the Iconostasis*, in *Eastern Church Review*, 3 (1971), p. 251-267; id., *A New Look at the Byzantine Sanctuary Barrier*, in *REB*, 51 (1993), p. 203-228.

hommes dans la nef, ou encore les femmes au fond de l'église avec les enfants en bas âge et les hommes plus en avant dans la nef.²⁴ Cette localisation avait comme conséquence que chaque groupe avait une vue différente de l'espace intérieur, et un rapport différent à ce qui se passait autour de l'autel ou sur l'ambon. A travers les sources écrites, nous avons très largement le point de vue des hommes. Que ce soit des Byzantins, des visiteurs ou des étrangers, la majorité des écrivains sont des hommes, et quand on a le témoignage d'une femme comme c'est le cas pour Egérie, il est trop rare pour qu'on puisse le comparer à d'autres et établir s'il y a une perception particulière de l'espace par les femmes.²⁵ Il faut donc faire un effort particulier pour se représenter le point de vue des femmes byzantines ou étrangères qui visitaient les églises ou participaient aux liturgies. Quand ces dernières étaient placées au fond de l'église ou dans les galeries, elles ne voyaient pas ou peu ce qui se passait dans le sanctuaire.²⁶ Leur rapport à la liturgie était nécessairement différent de celui des clercs, ou même des hommes. Ce qui est vrai des femmes l'est encore plus des enfants quand ils étaient avec leur mère. Ce que l'enfant voit du décor ecclésial et du rituel, quand il se trouve au fond de l'église derrière une foule n'est pas ce que perçoit l'adulte placé en avant de la nef, non loin du sanctuaire. Il ne suffit donc pas de reconstituer le décor intérieur des églises, ou le mobilier liturgique pour avoir une idée de l'expérience sensorielle vécue par les participants. Elle reste conditionnée par l'âge, le sexe, le statut dans l'église tout autant que par le décor.

La même question se pose pour l'audition que pour la perception du décor et des actions liturgiques dans le sanctuaire. Qu'entendaient réellement les participants à la liturgie? La réponse dépend des églises et de l'écho ou de la réverbération du son que de nouvelles études cherchent à mesurer en étudiant les qualités acoustiques des églises.²⁷ Il semble que dans les vastes espaces des églises tardo-antiques de Thessalonique ou à Sainte-Sophie à Constantinople, l'audibilité et la compréhensibilité des paroles étaient faibles. Les fidèles qui participaient à la liturgie entendaient donc une forme de musique sonore mêlant les voix sans pour autant être en mesure de distinguer clairement les paroles et sans donc avoir accès au sens. Si cette hypothèse confirmée par les mesures acoustiques est exacte, alors

²⁴ B. Caseau, *Experiencing the Sacred*, in Cl. Nesbitt, M. Jackson (ed.), *Experiencing Byzantium: Papers from the 44th Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies, Newcastle and Durham, April 2011*, Farnham, 2013, p. 59–77.

²⁵ Egérie, *Journal de voyage (Itinéraire)*, ed. P. Maraval, Paris, 2002.

²⁶ R. Taft, *Women at Church in Byzantium: Where, When – and Why?*, in *DOP*, 52 (1998), p. 27–87.

²⁷ B. V. Pentcheva, *Icons of sound. Aesthetics and Acoustics of Hagia Sophia*, Istanbul, <http://iconsofsound.stanford.edu/aesthetics.html>; A. Lingas, *Medieval Byzantine Chant and the Sound of Orthodoxy*, in A. Louth, A. Casiday (ed.), *Byzantine Orthodoxies*, Aldershot, 2006, p. 131–150; Sh. E. J. Gerstel, *Monastic Soundspaces in Late Byzantium: The Art and Act of Chanting*, in S. Boynton, D. J. Reilly (ed.), *Resounding Images. Medieval Intersections of Art, Music, and Sound*, Turnhout, 2015, p. 135–152; ead., *Measuring the sound of angels singing*, <http://newsroom.ucla.edu/stories/measuring-the-sound-of-angels-singing> (septembre 2015); Ch. Kyriakakis, *Of Bodies and Spirits: Soundscapes of Byzantium*, <https://vimeo.com/109266058> (2014).

toute notre conception du rapport à la parole et au sens théologique qu'elle comporte est à revoir. Le rapport à la liturgie aurait été moins intellectuel que certains auteurs veulent nous le faire croire. C'est la notion même de participation à la liturgie qui en est modifiée. Cela signifie aussi que les sermons avaient peut-être plus d'influence dans leur forme écrite que dans leur forme orale. Cela ôte de la pertinence aux études sur les niveaux de langue et la compréhension par les masses analphabètes des concepts complexes de la théologie ou de l'exégèse. La participation à la liturgie serait donc davantage une immersion sensorielle, dans un cadre sonore, olfactif, visuel et tactile, porteur de sacralité, plutôt qu'une aventure intellectuelle.

Il devient d'autant plus important de se concentrer sur les méthodes par lesquelles le clergé créait une ambiance particulière stimulant les organes des sens. Il faut donc porter notre attention sur les jeux de lumière, ainsi que sur l'ambiance olfactive,²⁸ sur la présence de textiles, et les instruments de la piété tactile.

Lumière et luminosité

Les études qui portent sur la lumière insistent sur les effets de lumière naturelle ou artificielle, qui aidaient les Byzantins à penser le monde physique ou spirituel en terme de luminosité. Quand ils évoquent Sainte-Sophie, les visiteurs mentionnent la disposition des fenêtres autour de la coupole, tout comme celle des luminaires.²⁹ Les savants qui se sont penchés sur ces sources ont relevé les mentions de la réflexion de la lumière sur les objets ou les impressions de luminosité qu'ont ressenties des visiteurs. La lumière naturelle était assurée par les baies vitrées, tandis que la lumière artificielle des églises provenait des lampes à huile, en particulier des *polykandela* aux abondantes coupelles à huile ou plus tard des bougies. Si la première était déterminée par la météorologie, la seconde pouvait être manipulée pour créer des effets particuliers. N. Reveyron parle d'une dramaturgie de la lumière à propos de Paray le Monial³⁰ et cette expression pourrait tout à fait s'appliquer aux églises du monde byzantin. Certaines parties des églises, certains objets étaient plus éclairés que d'autres, et cette mise en scène permettait donc de hiérarchiser l'espace et d'attirer l'attention des visiteurs sur certaines zones de l'église ou vers certaines images jugées plus importantes. Les rituels autour des lumières artificielles, les jeux d'ombre et de lumière, l'attention attirée

²⁸ B. Caseau, *Le parfum de Dieu*, in A. Paravicini Bagliani (ed.), *Parfums et odeurs au Moyen Âge. Science, usage, symboles*, Florence, 2015, p. 3–22; ead., *Encens et sacralisation de l'espace dans le christianisme byzantin*, in Y. Lafont, V. Michel (ed.), *Espaces sacrés dans la Méditerranée antique*, Rennes, 2015, p. 253–270.

²⁹ N. Schibille, *Hagia Sophia and the Byzantine Aesthetic Experience*, Dorchester, 2014; M. L. Fobelli, *Un tempio per Giustiniano: Santa Sofia di Costantinopoli e la descrizione di Paolo Silenziario*, Rome, 2005.

³⁰ N. Reveyron, *Esthétique et symbolique de la lumière dans l'aménagement du sanctuaire médiéval*, in *Hortus artium medievalium*, 15/2 (2009), p. 241–255.

vers les points lumineux, par exemple en éclairant les icônes, en plaçant des lumières au dessus de l'autel ou des reliquaires, la mobilité de la lumière portée par les clercs ou les fidèles sont autant de sujets qui méritent davantage de travaux. Les études sur la lumière ne s'arrêtent pas à cette visualisation de la dramaturgie de la lumière, qui s'appuie sur l'archéologie, l'iconographie et les sources écrites. Les images sensorielles sont largement utilisées pour souligner la dimension morale de la vie: lumière et ténèbres, bonne odeur et puanteur servent à exprimer le bien et mal. Les études sur la sensorialité ne s'arrêtent donc ni avec une analyse des réalités archéologiques ni avec les descriptions des visiteurs, qui ont noté leurs impressions et raconté leur expérience. Elles se poursuivent avec la prise en compte dans la littérature byzantine des images sensorielles métaphoriques ou celles qui utilisent le monde physique, matériel pour parler des réalités spirituelles, et du monde divin. Ainsi la conception de dieu comme un être de lumière et celle du Paradis comme un espace inondé de lumière engendre une multitude de références à la lumière divine qui associe profondément cet élément à la sphère spirituelle. De même qu'il existe des sens physiques et des sens spirituels, de même il existe une sensorialité physique faite de sensations et une sensorialité spirituelle ou mystique. Cette dernière est largement faite de transposition s'inspirant des sensations physiques pour rendre compte de sensations spirituelles. Toutefois, il faut admettre que, selon ceux qui en font l'expérience, la sensation mystique peut créer un éblouissement ou une chaleur dans le corps, donc un effet physique.

Le toucher et la piété tactile

Parmi les sens dont l'étude a été délaissée, il faut citer le toucher. Ce sens n'est pas au sommet de la hiérarchie sensorielle, il n'en demeure pas moins fondamental dans les pratiques religieuses. Quand les fidèles entraient dans une église, le toucher était le sens le plus immédiatement sollicité.³¹ Pousser la porte, écarter de la main le rideau encadrant les portes, ou toucher le sol en geste d'humilité devant la sacralité du lieu étaient autant de gestes courants, répétés chaque fois en entrant dans une église. J'ai déjà souligné l'importance des textiles dont la présence modifie l'acoustique et atténue l'impression froide des marbres et autres surfaces lisses.³² On trouve encore à Sainte-Sophie les crochets en forme de doigt replié qui permettaient d'accrocher les tentures encadrant les portes,³³ mais même une église de village possédait ses rideaux, comme le montre le papyrus Grenfell, qui fournit l'inventaire de l'église d'Ibion en Egypte au V^e ou VI^e siècle.³⁴ Ecarter le rideau fournissait

³¹ B. Caseau, *Experiencing the Sacred*; ead., *Byzantine Christianity and Tactile Piety*, in S. Ashbrook Harvey, M. Mullett (ed.), *Sense Perceptions in Byzantium*, Washington, D.C. (à paraître).

³² B. Caseau, *Experiencing the Sacred*.

³³ B. Caseau, *Experiencing the Sacred*, p. 66–68.

³⁴ P. Grenf., II, 111, ed. and trans. A. S. Hunt, C. C. Edgar, *Select Papyri*, I, *Non-Literary (Private Affairs)*, London, 1970, p. 423–234; B. Caseau, *Objects in Churches: the Testimony of Inventories*, in L. Lavan, E. Swift, T. Putzeys (ed.), *Objects in Context, Objects in Use. Material Spatiality in Late*

donc un premier contact tactile avec l'église, et une fois entré, ce geste était suivi d'autres comme le fait de tracer le signe de la croix sur son corps, d'aller embrasser les icônes, de toucher les reliquaires, d'allumer des lampes. Cette piété tactile semble avoir été largement pratiquée, et servait à établir le contact entre la personne et l'espace sacré. La piété tactile est particulièrement intéressante à étudier car dans le domaine des dévotions, les Byzantins disposaient d'un espace de liberté qu'ils n'avaient pas dans le déroulement des rituels liturgiques établis par le clergé. Aller toucher l'icône ou la peinture de tel ou tel saint ou sainte, aller prendre de l'eau ou de l'huile proche d'une tombe sainte ou d'un reliquaire, simplement effleurer de la main un objet cultuel comme ces croix ou d'autres objets votifs enchâssés dans des colonnes à Sainte-Sophie relevait d'un choix personnel, à travers lequel le fidèle exprimait une préférence et une intention. Cet espace de liberté dans les dévotions permettait aux fidèles, hommes et femmes, jeunes et anciens, d'exprimer leur religiosité par l'établissement d'un contact tactile et de manifester leur attachement particulier pour tel ou tel saint. Ces gestes, comme celui d'embrasser une icône, pouvaient se suffire en eux-mêmes mais ils étaient cependant souvent accompagnés de prières mentales ou orales. Toutefois, il importe de comprendre que le geste lui-même est une forme de prière. Ces gestes de piété tactile pouvaient se faire dans le cadre des rituels liturgiques ou de manière indépendante. Il suffisait d'entrer dans une église pour pouvoir les mettre en œuvre. Dans le cas des icônes, le piété tactile pouvait aussi se manifester hors du cadre ecclésial, tout simplement chez soi. Explorer cette partie de la religiosité des Byzantins permet de mettre en relief la dimension personnelle des dévotions et l'importance de la sensorialité et de la physicalité dans la démarche religieuse des Byzantins.

La physicalité de la participation religieuse se manifestait aussi par la fatigue et la douleur, par les longues stations debout lors des offices religieux ou encore par les métanies du clergé, des moines ou des fidèles. Les petites métanies, de profondes inclinaisons du corps pour toucher le sol de la main droite formaient une gestuelle courante durant les liturgies, tant pour les clercs que pour les fidèles, ou simplement en présence d'une icône, ou encore en entrant dans une église. Elles expriment l'humilité devant le divin ou devant les saints, et peuvent aussi se produire devant un supérieur. Les grandes métanies, consistant à se mettre à genoux et à toucher le sol du front puis à se relever étaient un exercice physique plus intense. Certains saints s'imposaient de toucher le sol de cette manière, un très grand nombre de fois, de jour comme de nuit. La littérature spirituelle recommande les métanies et les gémissements pour combattre la tentation ou exprimer le repentir. Dans les milieux monastiques, on comptait en centaines les métanies quotidiennes. Les temps liturgiques étaient pris en considération et les moines ou moniales dispensés de grandes métanies pénitentielles pendant la période suivant Pâques ou Noël. Comme elles pouvaient être douloureuses, les métanies étaient utilisées dans le cadre des pénitences imposées aux pécheurs. Elles servaient aussi à humilier les moines fautifs auxquels on imposait de faire des métanies au réfectoire pendant le repas

Antiquity (= *LAA*, 5), Leiden, 2008, p. 551–579; E. Wipszycka, *Church Treasures in Byzantine Egypt*, in *The Journal of Juristic Papyrology*, 34 (2004), p. 127–139.

des autres moines. Les métanies illustrent donc bien le côté physique de la piété byzantine, et l'importance du toucher. Dans ce cas, le toucher ne sert pas à communiquer avec le divin ou les saints mais à pratiquer une ascèse douloureuse qui met le fidèle en contact avec le sol et lui rappelle sa petitesse face au divin ou face à un supérieur. On peut parler d'une comptabilité de la piété, fondée sur la répétition des gestes et des prières dont le grand nombre seul assure le salut. Parmi les gestes de piété fondés sur le toucher, il convient sans doute de mentionner l'habitude d'associer une prière courte et répétée au toucher de nœuds sur une cordelette de laine ou de soie, ou à des perles de bois réunies en chapelet. Une prière étant associée à un nœud, la cordelette défilait sous la main et le toucher permettait de savoir combien de prières avaient été dites, ou combien de psaumes avaient été récités. Aide-mémoire, la cordelette sert aussi à se concentrer sur la prière en l'associant à un geste et au toucher d'un objet. Il est difficile de savoir à quand remontent réellement ces pratiques qui sont traditionnellement associées aux milieux monastiques égyptiens du IV^e siècle.

Ce contact physique avec les éléments matériels permettait de ne pas rester simplement dans la passivité mais de participer activement aux rituels. On peut parler aussi d'expression de l'affectivité par le contact physique. Le baiser, qui occupait déjà une place importante lors de l'échange du baiser de paix, ou pour manifester la concorde entre le patriarche et l'empereur, est étendu aux objets. A partir de 787 et encore plus de 843, embrasser les icônes devient une manifestation de la culture religieuse byzantine, qui la distingue de celle des Latins. Offrir aux saints des gestes d'affection, mais aussi des lumières et de l'encens permettait d'honorer les saints d'une manière très sensorielle, en combinant la vue, l'odorat et le toucher. Le baiser ne concernait pas seulement les icônes mais aussi les reliquaires ou les tissus comportant des images religieuses; c'était bien le saint qui était visé par le baiser. Toutefois, si l'on peut parler d'une culture du baiser dans la sphère byzantine, il convient de souligner qu'elle est bien antérieure à la période de l'iconoclasme.³⁵ Elle trouve ses racines dans le souhait de toucher le sacré, d'entrer en contact avec le divin. Ce phénomène se manifeste déjà lors de la recherche d'objets que le Christ a touchés. L'idée sous-jacente est qu'il a transmis un peu de son pouvoir salvifique par ce contact de sa main ou de son corps divin avec ces objets. L'attraction pour les reliques de la Passion repose tout autant sur cette perméabilité présumée des objets à la sainteté et à la divinité de la personne de Jésus, que sur l'importance religieuse des événements de ces quelques jours déterminants dans la vie du Christ. Aucun autre objet n'a peut-être plus attiré la piété tactile que le bois de la Croix.³⁶ Quand Arculf décrit à Adomnan la cérémonie de la vénération de la relique de la Croix à Sainte-Sophie dans les années 680, il parle de ces foules qui

³⁵ F. Dölger, *Der Kuss der Kirchenschwelle*, in *Antike und Christentum*, 2 (1930), p. 191–221 (repr. Münster, Verlag Achendorff, 1974–1976), 156–158; L. Gougaud, *Baiser*, in *Dictionnaire de spiritualité, ascétique et mystique*, I, Paris, 1937, p. 1203–1204.

³⁶ J. Durand, B. Flusin (ed.), *Byzance et les reliques du Christ*, Paris, 2004.

viennent embrasser la sainte Croix.³⁷ Lors de la semaine sainte, chacun peut toucher et embrasser cette relique de la Croix, conservée au Palais hors des regards et hors de portée des mains le reste du temps. L'empereur conduit les hommes vers la Croix, l'impératrice mène les femmes, le patriarche les membres du clergé. Tous ont un but commun qui est de toucher et d'embrasser la relique, dans l'espoir de tirer un bénéfice personnel de ce contact et de manifester leur piété. Adomnan décrit l'état d'esprit qui doit présider à cette rencontre entre le fidèle et l'objet: la crainte, la révérence, la vénération, le tremblement, mais le geste lui-même exprime aussi l'affection. Les lèvres sont pleines de terminaisons nerveuses et forment donc une partie particulièrement sensible du corps humain. C'est sans doute pour cela que le baiser sert à exprimer l'intimité et l'affection dans la majorité des cultures. Pour les Byzantins, la recherche d'un contact personnel avec la personne du Christ est devenue un pilier de la vie religieuse. A l'époque proto-byzantine, elle s'exprime dans le rapport au pain consacré, devenu Corps du Christ, porté au creux de la main avant d'être consommé. Cyrille de Jérusalem suggère dans ses *Catéchèses mystagogiques* de l'embrasser avant de le manger, pour maximiser le contact et exprimer une pieuse affection devant le miracle sans cesse renouvelé de cette transformation des éléments qui permet aux fidèles d'entrer en contact avec le Christ.³⁸ Dieu porté dans le creux de la main, goûté au calice du vin consacré sur l'autel. La communion est l'occasion d'un contact très personnel avec le Christ. On peut considérer que les pratiques autour de l'eucharistie, et en premier lieu la communion, ont permis d'élaborer un imaginaire de la proximité et du contact avec le divin, qui a permis l'épanouissement de la piété tactile à Byzance.³⁹ Car une fois que la communion s'est faite plus rare, et sans l'intermédiaire de la main, d'autres formes de contact sont venues la remplacer: toucher les reliquaires, embrasser les icônes, et les tables d'autel. Le contact physique entre les lèvres et les objets est devenu une manifestation de la religiosité byzantine, qui s'est étendue aux autres cultures orthodoxes. Quand les voyageurs russes racontent les églises qu'ils ont visitées, à l'époque Paléologue, il commentent surtout ce qu'ils ont embrassé.⁴⁰ L'Église byzantine, comme les autres églises orthodoxes, a souhaité encourager cette expression de la piété à travers l'affectivité et le contact. Si les reliques majeures ou la réserve eucharistique sont restées sous contrôle assez strict, il était permis à tout visiteur de trouver une icône ou un reliquaire dont il était possible de s'approcher pour exprimer sa dévotion. De plus, la représentation de l'affection par le baiser n'est pas une

³⁷ Adomnan, *The Holy Places*, in J. Wilkinson, *Jerusalem Pilgrims Before the Crusades*, Warminster, 1977.

³⁸ Cyrille de Jérusalem, *Catéchèses mystagogiques*, ed. A. Piédagnel, Paris, 2004, V. 21, p. 170–172.

³⁹ B. Caseau, *L'abandon de la communion dans la main (IV^e–XII^e s.)*, in *Mélanges Gilbert Dagron* (= *TM*, 14), Paris, 2002, p. 79–94; ead., N. Bériou, D. Rigaux (ed.), *Pratiques de l'eucharistie dans les Églises d'Orient et d'Occident (Antiquité et Moyen Âge)* (Collection des Études Augustiniennes, série Moyen Âge et Temps Modernes, 45–46), Paris, 2009.

⁴⁰ G. P. Majeska, *Russian Travelers to Constantinople in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries*, Washington, D.C., 1984.

scène rare dans l'art byzantin. La rencontre de Marie et d'Elisabeth est ainsi représentée comme un contact physique chaleureux. La transmission des bénédictions se fait par le toucher et l'imposition des mains, un geste qui reste celui utilisé pour transmettre le charisme sacerdotal ou épiscopal.⁴¹

On peut donc conclure que l'utilisation des sens dans le cadre des dévotions religieuses à Byzance s'inscrit dans la logique de l'Incarnation. Si Dieu s'est incarné et a vécu en douce amitié avec ses disciples, alors les chrétiens peuvent se placer à la suite des disciples et chercher à embrasser le Christ. Certes ce baiser ne doit pas être celui de la trahison comme Judas mais exprimer la vénération et la piété. Dans le cadre liturgique et plus encore dévotionnel, les sens servent donc à toucher, sentir, voir et goûter le divin, avec la bénédiction des autorités ecclésiastiques qui comprennent cette physicalité comme une conséquence naturelle et historique de l'Incarnation. S'il n'est plus possible de toucher et d'embrasser le Christ, de la même manière que ses disciples ont pu le faire lors de son passage sur terre, il reste licite de souhaiter ce contact et de le rechercher en touchant son image, ou sa présence physique dans l'eucharistie ou encore en embrassant les objets que lui-même a touchés comme le bois de la Croix.

Finalement, l'originalité des études sur le sensoriel et la sensorialité est de créer des ponts entre les disciplines pour reconstituer un imaginaire des sens mais aussi les composantes de la réalité concrète des décors, des odeurs et des sons tout en envisageant sous un autre angle les pratiques religieuses impliquant les sens, en particulier le toucher, le goût et l'ouïe. Cette approche transversale sort les études liturgiques de leur isolement et les met en contact avec les recherches en histoire de l'art en histoire des religions ou en philosophie. Les études sur la sensorialité créent un pont entre les disciplines de l'archéologie ou de l'histoire de l'art d'un côté et les études littéraires et religieuses de l'autre.

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⁴¹ B. Caseau, *Byzantine Christianity and Tactile Piety* (à paraître).

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Senses' Other Sides¹

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An initial pair of propositions: senses work in language, but are not original, dependent or servile to it; and on account of that non-linguistic basis of senses, many entities, maybe all, but at least far beyond language's reach, sense their worlds.² Such propositions are simply that, possibly, or even just intuition or inference; that is to say, they engage philosophical and ethical questions, at best, and become intellectual *passatempo*, at worst. Naturally, I want to argue for the former, because on the one hand, our own positions in this period are so incomplete and inarticulate that engagement with how we relate to and judge our worlds is crucial. Patchwork, piecemeal, puzzling is our approach to the consistency of sense lives across living things, both in beings we easily assume have feelings (ourselves, animals) and those we assume do not (inert materials like metals, for example). And so, on the other hand, confronting our assumptions about life and our responsibilities can arise from historical investigations and determine both our attitudes to the past and to our common present. For these reasons, a highly provisional exercise that stretches the historical imagination and accords sense lives to others can be mutually beneficial, in my opinion.³

My specific attention in this paper is directed at the viscous in Byzantium. By that I mean (mostly, but not only) the molten: the state wax, metal, glass, stone, etc. can achieve when heat is applied to it; that state can bridge the liquid and heated, and it can also be the process in which fusion of otherwise separate materials can take place. That state between solid and liquid is always process; almost no substance stays viscous. Something is always on the way to something else when in a state of viscosity. In that mobile passage among states,

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² Sensing ought not to be confused with thinking, though the tension between the two is longstanding. For a rich treatment of such issues, see R. Shiff, *Watch Out for Thinking (Even Fuzzy Thinking): Concept and Percept in Modern Art*, in *Common Knowledge*, 19/1 (2013), p. 65–87. Thought, mind, brain can extend into the world, but that position only informs this essay indirectly.

³ I invoke Michel Serres, *Genesis*, trans. G. James, J. Nielson, Ann Arbor, 1995, p. 30 and p. 34, “Can I think without thinking something? To be sure. But when I think this object, that subject, there is doubt that I am this subject, that object, if I truly think them...”; and “Inventive thinking is unstable, it is undetermined, it is un-differentiated, it is as little singular in its function as our hand”. See, perhaps, G. Peers, *Sense Lives of Byzantine Things*, forthcoming in M. Mullett, S. Ashbrook Harvey (ed.), *Knowing Bodies, Passionate Souls: Sense Perceptions in Byzantium*.

essences are declared, like in alchemy's belief in the process of purification toward gold when some materials are melted and fused with others.⁴ One could take a lead on viscosity from a Christology of matter, as all matter can, for Christ's own blood, flowing and turning to gore, is the most significant precedent of all for Christian thinking on matter's sliding states and their holy mimesis.⁵ Mimesis is a deep need for humans and for all other entities.⁶

But what can be discovered from thinking of how materials feel when viscous or molten? In the first place, some of that question has to be approached from our isolationist sensorium: how does it feel *to us* when a material state is changed, when states are bridged, when new forms and meanings arise from observing those states? But in the second, the more challenging question is: can we know how it feels, however inadequately or approximately, to be in something else's molten or viscous passage from one state to another? Is language up to the task?⁷ Is our sense of empathy sufficiently developed for such a leap of imagination? An historical imagination is one extra leap, and we enter a different event now, the triple jump: an absent situation and even perhaps thing, analogical thinking, and an expansive ontology.⁸

Let us start with wax, to try this argument and to feel how it fits and suits representation in this world we perceive and answer to.⁹ In the hands of some important scholars (Herbert L. Kessler, Bissera Pentcheva, and Charles Barber, in varying degrees), wax has been a significant (if secondary) material for the demonstration of Byzantine explanations of and attitudes toward matter and representation.¹⁰ It has stood for a common-sense demonstration

⁴ See G. Peers, *Transfiguring Materialities: Relational Abstraction in Byzantium and its Exhibition*, in *Convivium: Exchanges and Interactions in the Arts of Medieval Europe, Byzantium, and the Mediterranean (Seminarium Kondakovianum Series Nova)*, 2 (2015), p. 116–137.

⁵ See B. Fricke, *A Liquid History: Blood and Animation in Late Medieval Art*, in *Res*, 63–64 (2013), p. 53–69.

⁶ See M. T. Taussig, *Mimesis and Alterity: A Particular History of the Senses*, New York – London, 1993.

⁷ Maybe not. See Michel Serres, “We have lost hopelessly the memory of a world heard, seen, perceived, experienced joyfully by a body naked of language. This forgotten, unknown animal has become speaking man, and the word has petrified his flesh, not merely his collective flesh of exchange, perception, custom, and power, but also and above all his corporeal flesh: thighs, feet, chest, and throat vibrate, dense with words” (trans. in S. Connor, *Michel Serres's Les cinq sens*, in N. Abbas [ed.], *Mapping Michel Serres*, Ann Arbor, 2005, p. 153–169, here 164).

⁸ *OED*, imagination, 1a, “The power or capacity to form internal images or ideas of objects and situations not actually present to the senses, including remembered objects and situations, and those constructed by mentally combining or projecting images of previously experienced qualities, objects, and situations. Also (esp. in modern philosophy): the power or capacity by which the mind integrates sensory data in the process of perception”.

⁹ A useful reminder: P. Stoller, *Sensuous Scholarship*, Philadelphia, 1997, p. 23, “To put the matter bluntly, we often avoid acknowledging the contingent nature of situated experience, which distances us from the ambiguous, from the tangential, from the external textures and sensuous processes of our bodies”.

¹⁰ See, for example, H. L. Kessler, *Spiritual Seeing: Picturing God's Invisibility*, Philadelphia, 2000.

of the distinction between form and matter that is necessary for seemingly Christian worship. Those scholars have opened up a revealing aspect of theological rationalizations, but in doing so, they have also neglected implications of the work of wax, and other viscous materials, in a lived economy – as opposed to the theoretical, linguistic world of theologians.

Such scholars have often accepted theologians' metaphor concerning the relationship between an image and its model in terms of the analogy of seals pressing into wax (as well as other materials). According to this longstanding assertion, an image is left behind in matter without any essential (that is, sharing essence) relation between image and model. This explanation of image making has all kinds of shortcomings: mind or spirit making the world with almost incidental participation of matter, for one thing. It implies a hierarchy of ontologies, too, in which a sentient, invisible agent (the hand holding seal here) controls process and outcome. The 'world', however, operates a little differently, and the analogy of the molten, quickened material poured onto a surface or into a shaped form by a conscious, thinking hand – which is always resistant to analogy – simply and directly recapitulates every process of image making. But that image making is not what those theologians imagined it was. It is not so easily instrumentalized. It *is*, rather, participation among relational agents that works with and against each other to bring something new and necessary into this world.

Bissera Pentcheva, for example, has built a large part of her arguments around ideas of seals and impressions. For her, these practices fundamentally informed the making and meaning of images in Byzantium, and they led her to propose repoussé icons, with gems, gold and enamel, as the paradigmatic iconic form in Byzantium after Iconoclasm. The process begins for her with Late Antique tokens of the elder Symeon the Stylite (ca. 388–459). She described these small objects as miraculously potent impressions in matter that had taken on powers of the saint, and such processes also paralleled processes in divinized and divinizing materials like the Eucharistic bread.¹¹ Ensouling, or *empsychosis*, is an important transmission mode in this model for the ways imprinting or sealing showed the movement of the divine through the world. “The Spirit sealed the saint; his *pneuma* in turn sealed the column, the soil around it, and the *eulogiai* (tokens) made from this earth... This serial imprinting ensured continual access to the miraculous”.¹² The movement of soul throughout matter is a compelling way of seeing chains of operation in Byzantine materiality, but it still stops short of according self-regulating agency to matter and leaves very often a hylomorphic bias in place.

¹¹ See B. Caseau, *Les marqueurs de pain: Objets rituels dans le christianisme antique et byzantine*, in *Revue de l'Histoire des Religions*, 231 (2014), p. 599–617.

¹² B. Pentcheva, *The Sensual Icon: Space, Ritual and the Senses in Byzantium*, University Park, 2010, p. 34.

Moreover, magic appears as an unproblematic term, in her model, and seems to stand straightforwardly for the way sacred power enters matter.¹³ Sealing matter is a way the divine enters it, so matter becomes a passive field for the divine to spread its special potency in the world. Perhaps a(n impossible) parallel would be opening a circuit for electrical current that does not depend on the physical transfer of electrons for the passage of electric charge; in other words, disembodied electricity passes through matter without affecting or depending on it. This quasi-material magic also seems to stand for an animism, a belief in which allows for a harnessing of nature, aka spirits, in inanimate objects.¹⁴

Both these usages, of magic and animism, are strikingly reminiscent of nineteenth-century precedents for a history of religion. As sympathetic as Pentcheva is to her subject, she also works to create distance *to* it and *within* it. If this world was animist, however, distance was not part of it. Many animisms exist and have existed, but they all posit (to generalize) a relational system among agents, which can potentially encompass human and non-humans entities, as well as place and natural phenomena.¹⁵ And such a system also depends on “serious, lively, socially relevant intellectual traditions and knowledges, that would support an expression of animism”; without those features, we lapse into romanticizing views of exotic and mystifying otherness.¹⁶ So, dialogue among participants, ontological flexibility, deeply and thoughtfully lived – these are prepositions for animisms.¹⁷ To plant spirit on

¹³ B. Pentcheva, *The Sensual Icon*, p. 30–31, “The potency of the ring stems both from the precious stone and the seal carved in it. It is this seal that controls the evil spirit: the *sphragis* of the master imprinted on all. Again the seal introduces the master-slave relationship”. Similarly to my mind (pace) B. Caseau, *Magical Protection and Stamps in Byzantium*, in I. Regulski, K. Duistermaat, P. Verkinderen (ed.), *Seals and Sealing Practices in the Near East: Developments in Administration and Magic from Prehistory to the Islamic Period*, Louvain, 2012, p. 115–132, See, for example, V.-P. Herva, *Spirituality and the Material World in Post-Medieval Europe*, in K. Rountree, C. Morris, A. A. D. Peatfield (ed.), *Archaeology of Spirituality*, New York, 2012, p. 71–85, here 74–75, on S. Greenwood, *The Anthropology of Magic*, Oxford, 2009, who has “stressed that magic is not about belief or the supernatural but a form of knowledge. Magical practices, in her view, manipulate perception and consciousness which in turn restructure one’s relationship with the world... [and] artefacts can facilitate ‘magical’ connections with reality”. Somehow, the ‘scare marks’ do a lot of work.

¹⁴ B. Pentcheva, *The Sensual Icon*, p. 34.

¹⁵ P. Curry, *Neo-Shamanism*, in *Journal of Contemporary Religion*, 21 (2006), p. 99–101.

¹⁶ See, for example, C. Rooney, *African Literature, Animism and Politics*, London – New York, 2006.

¹⁷ N. Bird-David, *Animistic Epistemology: Why Do Some Hunter-Gatherers Not Depict Animals?*, in *Ethnos*, 71 (2006), p. 33–50, here 48, “In the animistic cosmos, beings are invoked as participants and members of a single community of sharing. They cannot be depicted and looked at as objects. They have to be invoked and engaged with as co-subjects. They cannot be looked at; rather one has to look *with* them sharing a perspective”. And see also her *Tribal Metaphorization of Human-Nature Relatedness: A Comparative Analysis*, in K. Milton (ed.), *Environmentalism: The View from Anthropology*, London – New York, 1993, p. 112–125, and ‘Animism’ Revisited: *Personhood, Environment, and Relational Epistemology*, in *Current Anthropology, Supplement*, 40 (1999), p. S67–79.

matter and discuss it as manipulation is another system from animism altogether, one closer to that imagined by previous generations of historians of religions for their own purposes, which are now subject to historical analysis more than their erstwhile ‘animist’ subjects.¹⁸

That preceding paragraph probably unfairly judges Pentcheva’s argument (and lets others off the hook), but the lack of precision in basic definitions – and the dangerous assumptions behind those definitions that are offered – is strongly at odds with the clear competency in her mastery of sources and their historical settings. That discrepancy is difficult to assimilate. And yet the presentation of seals and stamps is forthright. To take the most important source for her argument, here is a passage from the great iconophile champion, St. Theodore of Studios (759–826),

A seal is one thing, and its imprint is another. Nevertheless, even before the impression is made, the imprint is in the seal. There could not be an effective seal that was not impressed on some material. Therefore, Christ also, unless he appears in an artificial image, is in this respect ideal and ineffective.¹⁹

This formulation reveals “a perfect objective reciprocity between intaglio and imprint”, for Pentcheva, and so we come to see in this way how the seal and its imprint in matter take on a theoretical symmetry – each relates to other in natural and obvious ways, each receives shared veneration, and each possesses mutually supportive identity for and with the other.

But wax has had almost no voice in this series of analyses (here both Pentcheva and Theodore are guilty), because it is an empty receiver, a passive field for signification, an invisible viscosity. Yet wax – matter – does not limit; it arrives us; or, to put it bluntly: it has to be the *whole world*.²⁰ The miniature, the mere, stands for the mighty, as metaphor allows it to do. Wax is not empty, passive, invisible, however much text seeks to disappear it. Simply, dripped or poured molten onto a surface, wax pools, oozes, spreads – depending on the surface, angle, temperature, all contingencies’ matter – and then it buckles, waves, sighs, when pressed and penetrated by the metal seal, and then it holds that memory of shape and form, but with imperfect recall since it is in that viscous passage from solid to viscous and back to solid, and then it sits, lies legible and witnessing to a moment of intimate enveloping of itself on hard metal, and like memory – smoothed of some detail and intensified in others, unpredictable import and pathos of one detail over another, but still able to support and contain that ineradicable contact.

¹⁸ See, for example, M. Engelke, *Material Religion*, in R. A. Orsi (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Religious Studies*, Cambridge, 2012, p. 209–229.

¹⁹ See B. Pentcheva, *The Sensual Icon*, p. 83–88, here 86; trans. from C. P. Roth, *St. Theodore the Studite: On the Holy Icons*, Crestwood, NY, 1981, p. 112.

²⁰ And M. Taussig, *What Color Is the Sacred?*, Chicago – London, 2009, p. 14, “To thus consciously see ourselves in the midst of the world is to enter into ourselves as image, to exchange standing above the fray, the God position, for some other position that is not really a position at all but something more like swimming, more like nomads adrift in the sea, mother of all metaphor, that sea I call *the bodily unconscious*”.

How does it feel to traverse those states and senses? And what is at stake to ask that question? I'll argue the second question should wait until the first is attempted. On the one hand, the imagining necessary for the first question means looking at texts, an imperfect way in and perhaps only useful as negative exemplar (not because it's wrong as such, but because its basic premise is off); and on the other, that waxy ontology is not our own, and not only will we have to think *wax*, but we will also have to think *past wax* (both in the senses of old wax and of distant wax, in each process done, passed, and aging, aged).²¹ Seals often declare identity, and identity with the person sealing (I am the seal of... I validate the letter of...) or servitude to saint portrayed (Saint..., help thy servant... watch over me [owner, wax and document, presumably]...). Theodore also gives intentionality to the seal, which "shows its desire for honor when it makes itself available for impression in many different materials"; the seal is manifestly Christ himself here and takes upon itself to press pliant wax to that extra body.²² Theodore also gives necessity – an effective seal is pressed into matter, and otherwise it is ineffective (and to carry the implications forward, Christ needs our resemblance more than we need his).

Identity is transferred in this way and now legible in a new medium, but legible always as the medium allows and is able. These small lead (the majority by far of seals surviving; very little wax is extant) objects are so much more numerous than their intimate partners, the wax seal that did the work the seal promised. The primacy or exclusivity of seal over wax is always too easily accepted. The wax is fragile, flakeable and fragmentable, and it seldom survives. The linguistic content of so many seals, too, gives them authority over seemingly blank fields for representation. Words speak and represent and fix, and their hegemonic strength is expressed into the softened, yielding wax ground. But it is only when the seal withdraws, and wax or lead shows, that the incoherence of the seal clarifies. Illegible, reversed characters come to take on a new, fuller identity in matter. If theologians neglected that weakness of the seal (the incoherence of the divine) before matter arrives it, they had their reasons. We have less of an excuse for overlooking that gap in a confused self-expression (of God) and its real expression only on emergence in matter (in wax). This gap does rather turn the tables in matter's favor.

Moreover, this language is lazily gendered: the wax is feminine (accepting, pliant, furrowed, fertile) and the seal is masculine (demanding, pressing, imprinting, withdrawing). It may reduce to an easy gender binary that was enforced by uniformly male theologians in the past. It also belongs to a long tradition in western thought describing a binary-

²¹ Most important precedent for this attempt is G. Didi-Huberman, *Viscosities and Survivals: Art History Put to the Test by the Material*, in R. Panzanelli (ed.), *Ephemeral Bodies: Wax Sculpture and the Human Figure*, Los Angeles, 2008, p. 154–169 (*Viscosités et survivances: L'histoire de l'art à l'épreuve du matériau*, in *Critique*, 54, 611 [1998], p. 138–162).

²² Trans. C. P. Roth, *St. Theodore the Studite*, p. 112.

based cosmology of human thought and action on/in the world.²³ That is to say, human agency, primarily mind generated, imposes its will on the environment, any environment, in which humans live. Here is another real danger of this metaphor so often deployed by theologians and accepted by art historians, and it is a trap laid by the great Aristotle himself – a productive mistake but a wrong turn just the same. In the simplest formulation (and without the playfulness of Georges Didi-Huberman’s description), being derives from matter and form, and body works with soul in this way to create a living, animate being. In that way, too, wax and the seal are a metaphor Aristotle could prefer: like wax takes its form from its seal or impress, so form and matter create a unity of body and soul.²⁴ This metaphor opened up a whole line of other metaphors that made making or action in the world a process of imposing form on matter, a matter of mind projecting its will into the world.

Here is where mind, brain, will, come to seem dominant. But really how can any such system survive experience of the world we live in, which is after all a world of sense and matter independent of our desires? Theologians had an agenda, to be sure, and they were countering specific arguments about the essential relations of things to God. One side said images refer to a model by resemblance, custom, and human frailty even; while the other said such weak resemblance makes images beside the point, but in themselves images are too compelling, insistent, urgent, to be permitted. Both sides had only a few avenues open to counter those arguments, which are essentially right – everything *is* in relation to God, who filled the world with his grace and presence – but it was a matter of submerging that relational position in other terms (for example, idolatry and decorousness, excessive and respectful veneration, correct and incorrect interpretations of the past). That’s to say, the question is fairly simple, but also simplistic, because matter is either innocent or guilty in this debate. (As has been pointed out before, iconoclasts are far more invested in the independent power of made things than the so-called iconophiles; the former were aware but afraid, the latter disingenuously found neutralizing language, always language, that ploughs once again in the ancient plots of Plato and Aristotle.²⁵)

And this statement can bring us back to wax’s feelings, that is, to try to take matter’s side again – and not to judge, just empathize. A hand presses seal (metal, stone, hard) into warm (even room temperature, let’s say) wax. Hand and seal withdraw. Their work is brief. Look at (imagine) the wax field, its luscious, viscous spillage, pressed and peaked, and left to cool and harden, over against (but really under and around) the imprint, which pushes out the wax into that frozen lava-ooze. The first (only) thing you see, experience, is the

²³ G. Didi-Huberman, *Viscosities and Survivals*, p. 155, “Such are the strange powers of the material [that is, wax]: its plasticity cannot be reduced to the canonical passivity of Madame Matter subjected to the blows – and the striking of seals – that Monsieur Form eternally imposes on her”.

²⁴ *On the Soul*, 412b5–6.

²⁵ See the recent essay by M. Warner, *Falling Idols: Public monuments, Islamic State, and Contesting the Story of the Past*, in *Frieze*, 174 (October 2015), p. 224–230.

wax, that uneven and splayed edging, and searching, an eye finds as image, verbal and/or figural, that coalesces on secondary inspection. That field is a little unsettling: it has shape and form insisted on by the seal, and yet it has other (its own) direction and dimensions in ruffing wax. It escapes a little its category (impression, but then it is not a real mirror of its seal; but it is also not independent, as it exists in this form because of the seal); it is both still molten or viscous (it never quite loses that quality, even when cooled and dried) and yet compliant with the seal, too. No wonder theologians took the side of the seal. The wax is in fact defiant: it absorbs the seal's form, but submerges it, and (quasi-selflessly) wax lets the seal subside and withdraw into a specter of itself.²⁶

A position in this brief essay is to favor the particular ways matter constitutes itself, behaves, acts, and searches for its own meaning. In other words, it assumes we can observe how matter, the basic stuff of the world, plays a role in the unfolding of its own history. So, a horizontal playing field that resists a vertical ordering or stratigraphic description or temporal precedence is *for* matter. And one might also claim that rather than showing how wax participated in its own negligence, the position taken here can also show how wax undermined that estimation of its passivity. That is, by reversing the order of the seal-wax hierarchy we can see better how matter is the playing field through which the game is played, rather than upon.

Viscous can behave in a variety of ways. It can enfold and seep, withdraw and spread, as well as engulf and consume. Thinking through some implications of two Late Antique stone molds in Jerusalem (at the museum of the Studium Biblicum Franciscanum) can also open up, I believe, some other ways viscous is really how making works, as well as ways that molten materials can show relations and transformations. These molds generally were used to make small souvenir tokens, or flasks or ampullae, for storing and carrying sacred substances, like oil, water, or soil.²⁷ This first mold is two-sided, with scenes in both side's carved cavity. Presumably, the other, aniconic mold could have provided a nearly plain reverse that could have been fitted or soldered to the molded obverse. The two figural sides could also have been cast and soldered to make a double-sided ampulla with two scenes heads-and-tails. One side shows the sacrifice of Isaac (labeled "evlogia tou avraam"), and the other has Daniel in the lions' den (labeled "o agios Daniel", "evlogia tou Daniel"). The two sides may have been connected with specific pilgrimage sites attached to the prophets, but

²⁶ G. Didi-Huberman, *Viscosities and Survivals*, p. 155, "The reality of the material turns out to be more troubling because it possesses a viscosity, a sort of activity and intrinsic force, which is a force of metamorphism, polymorphism, imperviousness to contradiction (especially the abstract contradiction between form and formlessness). Concerning the viscous, Sartre articulates very well how that activity, that 'sort of life', can be symbolized or socialized only as an antivalue".

²⁷ M. Piccirillo, *Uno stampo per eulogia trovato a Gerusalemme*, in *Liber Annuus*, 44 (1994), p. 585–590, pls. 47–50.

the molds were both found in different locations near Jerusalem and had some involvement in pilgrimage trade.

The valve or opening at the bottom of the intact mold is highly evocative, and it represents a kind of punctum, a passage of the object that emerges forcefully after the apparently necessary work of identifying and describing the figural portions is done, like above. In contrast to the cool, pale mold – carved out of limestone – the valve represents a passage for change and othering. Bound together with a non-figural backing, like the other example, the mold would be set upside-down so that the molten liquid, either lead or wax, could be poured into the receptacle created.²⁸ Cooled, the molds would be separated, and an object with raised elements, figural and textual, would remain. Unlike wax or lead, impressed by a seal, the viscous here stays elevated from the ground, lead or wax, after passing to a settled state.

So, how does molten *feel* in these different contexts in which it finds itself?²⁹ Warmed to its new liquid-near consistency, wax pools against itself and drops, leaving the wick's light, to fall on the rough surface, that catches the fall and stops the rush, as the cooling air had already begun to. How does that feel to metamorphose and stay oneself? To travel across a state, return to oneself, but find oneself in a different form and place. Because then the hard form does descend and push, penetrate, and attempts to leave a seed of its own form in wax's forgiving, pulsed mound. Wax gets its own back by taking the other. The wax coats and blurs and swallows that form's insistence. The form or imprint is never absolutely, entirely itself again; the seal is the most that imprint ever was. The seal's hand also stands back now and watches its work duck the intracting, hardening pool. Not what hand intended, but it never is.

And does lead (or wax, too) feel differently, if it is forming in the other direction? Not impressing, but impressed? Bright and silverish in its usual state, but lead is also prone to tarnish and corrosion on exposure to air for any period of time. It has a relatively low melting point for a metal. And it responds to other metals and bonds easily with some. Lead's appearance changes to an even more intensely chrome-silver luster as it forms a liquid state, and so as it readies to pour, it also intensifies its qualities. As the increasingly lustrous metal reaches its most attractive, affecting state, the stone mold's throat is also open to swallow the hot, shiny liquid. Now the process reverses from wax's course. The lead fills, and the shallow indents in the stone are coated with this pooling metal, subsiding from its

²⁸ M. Piccirillo, *Uno stampo per eulogia trovato a Gerusalemme*.

²⁹ Symmetrical archaeology provides one model, to my mind, for this kind of writing, its worthwhile aspects and its solipsistic dangers. See B. Olsen, *Symmetrical Archaeology*, in I. Hodder (ed.), *Archaeological Theory Today*, 2nd ed., Cambridge, UK – Malden, MA, 2012, p. 208–228, here 220, “To extend ethical concerns and notions of care to also embrace things is not a question about anthropomorphizing them, turning things into human, but rather to respect their otherness and integrity”. And *ibid.*, as corrective, “Processes of embodiment may well have charged things with sociality and personality, but simultaneously silenced their own utterances. And if they speak, it is most likely our own voices that are heard”.

viscous state quickly and entering its condition of diminishing shine and increasing heft. Able to breathe once again with the removal of the forms, it is a new less-silvery thing, and it emerges as base, eldest of all (like Saturn, according to alchemists), hoary, heavy, hard, like that ancient god.

Aristotle talked about a sixth sense, a kind of *metasensum*, that mediated and articulated the working of the first five senses. Michel Serres treats that sixth sense as the skin, and perhaps this feeling surface is what we might take as the great, common sense we all share. And in this case, the 'we' includes wax and molten lead, the self-surfacing, viscous muck heat makes, the substances whose inside and outsides only became evident vicariously as they wait for the next move to melt. Serres talks also about the discovery of the soul on skin, when skin touches skin, in those converging, excursive and recursive accidents of self-touch. Maybe most significantly for Serres, the skin is the place where all entities meet and mingle, "No-one has ever witnessed the great battle of simple entities. We only ever experience mixtures, we encounter only meetings".³⁰ And here we are born, each time, to the world.

But so are objects, things, however we call entities we consign to non-feeling. Images in the Byzantine world, and into the present in Orthodox churches, received intense sensual attention: kissing, fondling, stroking, leaning, embracing and so on. They are the concentrated focus still of compelling tactile piety.³¹ These things are not passive and are not without feeling, and they moreover create our place and time. Without them, we would spin mindlessly, but they give mind and slower space for us to have mind.³² Without their contingencies, ours are very difficult to recognize, or even have.

³⁰ M. Serres, *The Five Senses: A Philosophy of Mingled Bodies*, I, trans. M. Sankey, P. Cowley, London – New York, 2008, p. 28, and also p. 80, "The skin is a variety of contingency; in, through it, with it, the world and my body touch each other, the feeling and the felt, it defines their common edge... I do not wish to call the place in which I live a medium, I prefer to say that things mingle with each other and that I am no exception to that, I mix the world which mixes with me". And from Virginia Burrus: J.-L. Chrétien, *The Call and the Response*, trans. A. A. Davenport, New York, 2004, p. 85–86, "The most fundamental and universal of all the senses is the sense of touch. Coextensive for Aristotle with animal life, it appears and disappears with it... Every animated body is tactile... The first evidence of soul is the sense of touch... Touch is not primarily and perhaps not even ultimately one of the five senses: for Aristotle, touch is the necessary and sufficient condition for the emergence of an animated body, the perpetual basis for the possibility of human life and therefore eventually also of additional senses, which will always belong as such to a tactile body. Moreover the sense of touch, far from making the living organism into a mere spectator, pledges it to the world through and through, exposes it to the world and protects it from it. Touch bears life to its fateful, or felicitous, day".

³¹ See B. Caseau, *Byzantine Christianity and Tactile Piety (Fourth–Fifteenth Century)*, forthcoming.

³² M. Serres, *Genesis*, p. 87, "The only assignable difference between animal societies and our own resides, as I have often said, in the emergence of the object. Our relationships, social bonds, would be as airy as clouds were there only contracts between subjects. In fact, the object, specific Hominidae, stabilizes our relationships, it slows down the time of our revolutions. For an unstable band of baboons,

Viscous is a difficult state. Thus, wax has long been a particularly threatening substance. It is unstable, too contingent, perhaps reminding us too much of flesh or too little of the metaphoric.³³ According to Georges Didi-Huberman, that quality is what Jean-Paul Sartre must also have meant when he described the uncanniness of the viscous, that is, the ways it threatens and undermines,

Toucher du visqueux, c'est risquer de se diluer en viscosité... L'horreur du visqueux c'est l'horreur que le temps devienne visqueux, que la facticité ne progresse continûment et insensiblement et n'aspire le Pour-soi qui 'l'existe'... [L]a viscosité se révèle soudain comme symbole d'une antivalence, c'est-à-dire d'un type d'être non réalisé, mais menaçant, qui va hanter perpétuellement la conscience comme le danger constant qu'elle fuit et, de ce fait, transforme soudain le projet d'appropriation en projet de fuite.³⁴

Perhaps it is the antivalence of the viscous, wax and lead, that allows it to disappear not only from theological writings, like Theodore of Stoudios, but also from art-historical writings on sense and representation. Perhaps viscous undermines safe categories of representation, and it also threatens the authority of the seal, the metal or stone impress that tries to make wax the world in its own image (even if he really is Christ).

That threat was felt from the beginning of this line of metaphoric manipulation of wax, and in conclusion, two texts – one from the fourth and another from the fourteenth – can show the resilience of it, but from different directions. In the first place, Gregory Nazianzenus initiated a line of theological approach that denigrated the material and its effects, at the expense of the noetic form of the divine. The menace of the wax is strongly felt in this rhetoric, but this expression is disingenuous too,

Let us take two seal rings, one is gold, the other iron, which bears the same engraved imperial image... Let us then impress these in the wax. What difference is there between the two seals? None. Look at the wax, and even if you are wise, can you tell me which form has been impressed with iron and which with gold? How then have these become the same? It is because the difference derives from the material and not the portrait.³⁵

Can it really be the case (to answer one hypothetical with another) that iron and gold hold form in the same way and thus transmit it equally well? Gold is a much finer, ductile material

social changes are flaring up every minute. One could characterize their history as unbound, insanely so. The object, for us, makes our history slow”.

³³ See E. H. Gombrich, *Art and Illusion: A Study in the Psychology of Pictorial Representation*, Princeton, 1960, p. 60, “Such a bust may even look to them unpleasantly lifelike, transcending, as it were, the symbolic sphere in which it was expected to dwell, although objectively it may still be very remote indeed from the proverbial wax image, which often causes us uneasiness because it oversteps the boundary of symbolism”.

³⁴ J.-P. Sartre, *L'être et le néant: Essai d'ontologie phénoménologique*, Paris, 1943, p. 702–703. See G. Didi-Huberman, *Viscosities and Survivals*, p. 154.

³⁵ PG 36: 396C; trans. Ch. Barber, *Contesting the Logic of Painting: Art and Understanding in Eleventh-Century Byzantium*, Leiden, 2007, p. 137–138.

that takes detail more easily than iron can. One might not be able to tell absolutely that a seal was gold or iron from its impression in wax, but the clues would be there in most cases, even for the not-wise. The impression became the same because it suited Gregory's point. The textual quality of the metaphor gained the upper hand, and the wax continues to escape. And yet the final sentence: the portrait or form does not differ from prototype to image, but differences do enter from choices in materials, that is, wax or something else changes form? So the material matrix is given due indirectly. Here is the place, then, of metamorphosis, where form does change, and the Gregory's portrait takes shape and qualities that only the viscous can sense.

Antivalues can comprise wax and lead, but also pitch, or resin, or petroleum, or mud, because all can be unrealized being and all can participate in processes of making and feeling. So, in the second place and at the other end of the period, the fourteenth-century theologian Neophytus Prodromenus, a continuator of iconophile theology, used the seal as a metaphor for the innocence of matter yet again. The chain of models extends here from emperor, his hand, wax and so on, and participant matter strikingly expands to include several types of viscous,

Consider the example of an image of the emperor engraved on a seal ring. This might now be impressed in wax, in pitch, or in mud. For while the seal [image] is one and invariable in them, the materials are different; hence the seal [image] also remains in the ring, separated from the [materials] in thought. It is the same for the likeness of Christ, since no matter which medium presents this, it has nothing to do with these materials, but remains in the person of Christ.³⁶

The language has not clarified since the fourth century, but the use of pitch and mud as another kind of semi-liquid/solid for sensing and showing relation with the divine reveals the ongoing usefulness of viscous for these theologians. Theologians believed it was doing one thing, but really it was doing the other. It looked like it was passively receiving and like it could be tamed by this metaphor, but naturally, matter outside of text behaves like itself. Because it feels like it. In this way, perhaps, viscous approaches too a place of antivalue, from which consciousness flees and is haunted by it still, becoming a kind of uncanny wax, lead, mud, pitch. How each might feel about this accusation is another subject from what the theologians are relating, but the seal needs to suppress such apparent gains of the liquid over the solid (to paraphrase Sartre again). Nevertheless, viscous here can feel its way to escape those confines, and breathe and act, beyond text and seal.

In the end, sight is a very unreliable way into the world.³⁷ But art historians use it so often to think sense. At issue is perhaps the resistance to the viscous and messy that making

³⁶ Ch. Barber, *Neophytus Prodromenus on Epigraphy*, in *Legitimation des Bildes: Festschrift Martin Büchsel*, Berlin, 2015, p. 195–209, passage at p. 200, with trans. at p. 206.

³⁷ And again M. Serres, *The Five Senses*, p. 67, "Sight is pained by the sight of mixture. It prefers to distinguish, separate, judge distances; the eye would feel pain if it were touched. It protects itself and shies away. Our flexible skin adapts by remaining stable. It must be thought of as variety, like the vair

partly serves; the wax, mud, pitch and lead travelled that making path only to be made into something clean and clear for the eye to apprehend and master. If we allow ourselves to step back and see a common skin (or flesh) or the world, maybe the mutual materiality emerges in ways that allow self-knowing likewise to enter passages of solidity and melting.³⁸ This claim to speak for those things is presumptuous, and it only serves us. But to locate our mutual, overlapping skins (and Serres's souls) is a kind of victory, provisional, fragile, and forever too bound in speaking about it.

slipper. It apprehends and comprehends, implicates and explicates, it tends towards the liquid and the fluid, and approximates mixture”.

³⁸ S. Connor, *Michel Serres's Les cinq sens*, p. 168, “This intolerance of the exteriority represented by death and degradation makes for a certain paradoxical claustration in Serres's work, makes it a monism of the manifold. There is nothing Serres can do with it, because there is nothing anyone can do with it, this slow going, this ungraspable, unknowable, unignorable squandering of energy that in the end is what we will have amounted to. There is nothing we can do with it, though it has everything to do with us”.

Sensory Activation in Liturgy and Art in the Early Middle Ages: The Initials ‘O’ in the Sacramentary of Gellone

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In recent years medievalists from all horizons have taken a keen interest in the place of the five senses in medieval Christian culture. It has been relatively neglected despite some pioneering work on the five senses by medieval historians, philosophers, literary scholars and most recently, by medieval art historians. Few publications in medieval liturgy studies refer to the sensory aspects of the ritual. In summary, there is no comprehensive study on the role played by the five senses in the Christian liturgy of Antiquity and the Middle Ages. To fill this gap, I undertook extensive research on art, liturgy and the five senses in the Middle Ages which led to a book published in 2014.¹ I consider that art is an essential element of the definition of the liturgy, whose ‘function’ is to be activated by the senses during the performance of the ritual in order to ‘produce’ the effect required by the theological context of the liturgical ceremony. This new approach regarding the function of art in medieval liturgy does not diminish the role or the ritualistic importance of objects and their political and historical dimensions conveyed by their iconography. Indeed, liturgical objects are essential elements of the ritual; their primary purpose is to be activated by the five senses during the liturgical performance so that their various theological meanings can be put into practice. This approach moves away from a strictly ‘functionalist’ conception of art in liturgy. One can escape the boundaries of a strictly ‘utilitarian’ or ‘functional’ conception of art within liturgy, and embrace a philosophical and theological perception where liturgy is placed within the realm of sensory experience, presented and expressed by the ‘activation’ of the ritual and its effective performance via all the elements which compose it – and especially art. This liturgical approach to the sensory world presents certain similarities with the phenomenology of perception. That is, one must recognise the ‘sensory space’ *par excellence* of Christian liturgy. The ‘sensory space’ of the liturgy is above all composed of elements which make particular appeal to the senses (such as visual decorations and representations), brought into proximity with the ritual sequences of a ceremony, and leading to an ‘inter-sensoriality’ or a ‘crossing’ of sensory perceptions. This important interactive

¹ E. Palazzo, *L'invention chrétienne des cinq sens dans la liturgie et l'art au Moyen Age*, Paris, 2014.

dimension between the different elements of the liturgy manifests itself by the ‘activation’ (*mise en action*) of a common faith, and particularly of elements which create and enable the presence of the Invisible contained within the Visible to be made present, by activating the sensory dimension of ritual. In this ‘activation’ of the different elements of the liturgy, the experience of sensory perception plays a major and determining role in giving access to the knowledge and essence of these sensory elements. To put it another way, one can argue that one of the major issues of liturgy consists in the lived, phenomenological experience of the sensory world, because it and it alone – by means of the effective performance of the liturgy within its ‘sensory space’ – permits the ‘activation’ of the sensory reality, which must reveal the Invisible within the sacramental *signum* and make it possible ‘*in presentia*’.

The theological background

As has often been noted regarding the culture of Antiquity and the Middle Ages, we must turn to the Bible to understand the place of the senses within theology and liturgy.² Firstly, it must be noted that numerous Christian authors associate the symbolism of the number ‘five’ and its multiple occurrences within the Bible, with the five senses. Secondly, many passages from the Old Testament and the New emphasize that the Revelation of God is passed on through sensory perception, in order to be intelligible to human beings. Finally, in biblical texts the activation of certain senses is fundamental to access some knowledge of God.³ Thus, in the Bible, sight and hearing appear to be central in conversions, and in the contemplation of God. The Song of Songs and the Psalter also place great emphasis on the senses of touch and taste, in a discourse on the perception of God by parts of the body.⁴ In Antiquity, and subsequently throughout the Middle Ages, the perception of the senses in Christian culture also depended on the reception of the works of Patristic authors and theologians of Platonic philosophy – where primacy is accorded to that which is not intelligible – and to the writings of Aristotle, where the body and the senses are revalorized, in order to obtain some knowledge of God. In addition, it is the importance of the Incarnation that ensures that the body and the senses are at the heart of the debate over the reconciliation of Man and God, following Original Sin and the Fall of Mankind. The study of the senses in Christian thought in late antiquity and the Middle Ages therefore concerns the world’s harmony, where ‘Man-as-a-microcosm’ reflects the world via his body and the five senses.

² *Ibid.*, p. 31–57.

³ C. Viricillo Franklin, *Words as Foods: Signifying the Bible in the Early Middle Ages*, in *Communicare e significare nell’alto medioevo*, LII settimane di studio della fondazione centro italiano di studi sull’alto medioevo, Spolete, 2004, II, Spolete, 2005, p. 735–760.

⁴ R. Fulton, “Taste and see that the Lord is sweet” (Ps. 33,9): *The Flavor of God in the Monastic West*, in *The Journal of Religion*, 86/2 (2006), p. 169–204; E. A. Matter, *The Voice of my Beloved. The Song of Songs in Western Medieval Christianity*, University of Pennsylvania Press, 1990 and *Il cantico dei cantici nel Medioevo*, *Actes du colloque de Gargano sul Garda, 22–24 mai 2006*, Florence, 2008.

Thus the essential element in Christian theology and liturgy – and particularly the mass – with regard to the five senses consists in Man’s possibility of recovering the original harmony which was put in disarray, disorganized by the senses at the moment of the Fall.⁵ In the third century, the doctrine privileged the intellectual over the material and the sensory – one could say, the Invisible over the Visible – especially in the writings of Origen who invented the concept of the ‘spiritual senses’ in opposition to the five corporeal senses. The general idea developed by Origen and various theologians that followed is that in order to receive the divine, the corporeal senses are ancillary to the spiritual senses which are encased in the believer’s heart and soul. Despite this, the dominant tendency in the early Middle Ages and later in the twelfth century was for theology and liturgy to grant a significant role to the senses, by reconciling the material and the spiritual, the intellectual and the bodily, and beyond this, to prove that the five senses played an essential part in giving access to the intellect and the divine. For example, John Scotus Eriugena, in the ninth century, in his commentary on the prologue to the Gospel of St John, states that the bodily senses witness the shape and the beauty of sensory objects because the intellect recognises in them the Word of God. Similarly, in the eleventh century, Bruno of Segni attributes to the senses the essential virtues of Christian theology. Thus sight is associated with intelligence, taste to wisdom, touch to the knowledge by experience of Christ, and indeed the good smell which distinguishes Christians from heretics.⁶

Since Saint Augustine, sight takes precedence over the other senses.⁷ The same author developed a clear internal hierarchy, at the top of which one finds ‘sight’, and thereafter ‘hearing’. Saint Augustine was also however the first to have developed the concept of synaesthesia, in which all the senses gain their importance through the interaction with one another. Augustine’s synaesthesia was very well received in the medieval conception of liturgy and particularly in the mass rites. Nevertheless, the dominant tendency among medieval theologians – with Peter the Venerable and Rupert of Deutz for example – was to allow ‘sight’ to dominate all other senses, as one of the ‘five gates of the citadel’ which represented the human body, following the metaphor presented by Gregory the Great and repeated many times after him, notably by Peter Damian in the eleventh century. In addition, ‘sight’ took the major role in directing ritual actions, notably in the liturgical gestures carried out during the celebration of the Eucharist – principally those of the consecrating priest – which carried particular theological significance in the controversy over the Real Presence of Christ’s body in the consecrated host. In a certain fashion, one might say that for medieval theologians, to admit to the sensory dimension of man – in particular the

⁵ F. Cassingena-Trévédy, *Les Pères de l’Eglise et la liturgie*, Paris, 2009.

⁶ E. Palazzo, *op. cit.* in n. 1, p. 59–90.

⁷ M. Carruthers, *Intention, sensation et mémoire dans l’esthétique médiévale*, in *CCM*, 55 (2012), p. 367–378. M. Carruthers, *The Experience of Beauty in the Middle Ages*, Oxford, 2013.

corporeal senses – was to recognise the Incarnation, as one of the modalities of visibility produced by the ‘visible host’ within the liturgy of the mass.

The initials ‘O’ in the sacramentary of Gellone and their sensory activation

In this brief contribution, I explore some initials ‘O’ contained in the famous sacramentary of Gellone. My contention is that some of these initials and their iconography reflect aspects of the exegesis developed on the antiphons ‘O’ given by Amalarius of Metz in the ninth century. I argue that the significance of the antiphons ‘O’ was anticipated by the visual exegesis on some initials ‘O’ in the sacramentary of Gellone. In this manuscript, the initials ‘O’ form the beginning of orationes, in a book, the sacramentary, made for a different liturgical performance than the one for which the antiphonary was used.

There is a group of very special antiphons in the repertoire of medieval liturgical songs, designated by the letter ‘O’ at the beginning of each song.⁸ Several texts of the Carolingian era attest their use in the liturgy of that time. These include in particular the story of the death of Alcuin in 804 and the list of maiores antiphons contained in folio 36r in the Compiègne antiphonary produced ca. 860–880 (Paris, BNF, lat. 17436). Over a hundred manuscripts containing the Gregorian, Roman and Ambrosian repertoires have identified a list of twenty-three antiphons ‘O’ sung during the liturgical period of Advent. The common list of this series of antiphons is already in the Compiègne manuscript. This list appears in most liturgical traditions after the ninth century. Other manuscripts in St. Gallen for example, have made additions to the lists of antiphons ‘O’ reserved for the period preceding Advent or used for the celebrations of saints like St. Ambrose and St. Lucia. In the liturgical exegesis of the Carolingian era, the emphasis is placed on the symbolic meaning of these antiphons ‘O’. On several occasions, Amalarius of Metz gives the theological meaning of these antiphons, focusing on themes like the Incarnation of the Word, the vision of God or the relationship between the opening and closing of the heavens and the Kingdom of God.⁹ For the Carolingian commentator, the antiphon ‘O’ introduces vision and the power of the eye rather than a Biblical narrative. They activate the eye and, at the same time, produce the harmonious sound of liturgical singing, the expression of divine praise. Intersensory relationship between sight and hearing leads man to contemplate Christ in glory, to witness *Maiestas Domini*. The circular form of the letter in the antiphons ‘O’ can also refer to

⁸ S. Gasser, *Les antiennes O*, in *Etudes Grégoriennes*, 24 (1992), p. 53–84.

⁹ “*In illud ‘O’ voluit cantor intimare verba sequentia pertinere ad aliquam mirabilem visionem, quae plus pertinet ad mentis ruminacionem quam ad concionaris narrationem... Secunda antiphona mirabilem ostiarium demonstrat Christum; quod ipse claudit non est qui aperiat, et quod aperit, non est qui claudit... Quinta nempe miratur inauditum orientem, qui non more. Vicissitudinum temporum mutatur de die in diem, sed est aeternus, cuius sol non solum corporis oculus inluminat, sed etiam mentis*”, Amalarius of Metz, *Liber de ordine antiphonari*, in *Opera liturgica omnia*, III, p. 44–46.

the theme of eternity which is at the heart of the exegesis on the VD Monogram of the Canon of the Mass. In his exploration of the circular shape found in several manuscripts of the Carolingian era to illustrate various topics, Herbert Kessler rightly emphasized different aspects of the theological significance of the roundness of certain letters of the alphabet applied in particular to the initials of the monogram 'VD' in some carolingian sacramentaries.¹⁰ The specific study of Gianluca Millesoli on the symbolism of the monogram of the preface to the Canon of the Mass has helped to understand the diversity of forms taken by the graphic sign created by the imbrication of the 'V' and the 'D'.¹¹ In the liturgical exegesis, Sicard of Cremona was one of those who, in the twelfth century, explained in great detail the form of the 'V' and the 'D' at the beginning of the preface illustration. For the commentator of the liturgy, inspired probably by the Carolingian tradition, the 'V' stands for the humanity of Christ while 'D' is the sign of his divinity. The open shape of the 'V' expresses Christ's humanity and his visibility while the closed shape of the 'D' stands for his invisibility. The circular form of the letter 'D' expresses the eternal nature of the divinity, with no beginning and no end. In the same passage of his commentary, Sicard further explains that the circular shape of 'D' with its closed form emphasizes the eternal nature of divinity that has no beginning or end (*Ista vero littera D circuloso orbe concluditur, quia Divinitas est eterna et sine principio et fine*).¹²

The Sacramentary of Gellone in the Bibliothèque nationale de France (ms. Latin 12048) was certainly produced in the second half of the eighth century in a scriptorium in the Paris area, perhaps in Meaux, before being used at the monastery of Gellone, now Saint-Guilhem-le-Désert.¹³ Its liturgical content is a sacramentary for a priest arranged for the ritual use of a Benedictine abbey in the years 790–800 CE. More precisely, it is the main representative of what scholars call the Gelasian Sacramentary of the eighth century of Frankish origin. The text of that type of sacramentary combines an old version of a similar book used in Rome in the fifth-sixth centuries with rituals and Gallican masses introduced in the Roman text in Gaul in the course of the eighth century. When it surfaced in Gellone, it was probably used in the reform of the monastic liturgy by St. Benedict of Aniane in the early years of the ninth century. This is a complete liturgical book for a Benedictine monastic community and made for the celebration of the daily Mass and others rituals like baptism. In that manuscript, the text of the canon of the mass and its illustration are not located at the beginning of the codex, as is usual, but included in the series of Easter masses. Apart

¹⁰ H. Kessler, *De una essentia innectuntur sibi duo circuli. Dynamic Signs and Trinitarian Designs*, in *DOP*, in press. I am grateful to my friend Herbert Kessler for sending me his article prior to its publication.

¹¹ G. Millesoli, *I Vere Dignum tra simbolo grafico e simbolo concettuale*, in *Dal libro manoscritto al libro stampato*, Spoleto, 2010, p. 133–151.

¹² Cf. E. Palazzo, n. 1, p. 460.

¹³ *Liber sacramentorum gellonensis*, ed. A. Dumas, J. Deshusses (Corpus christianorum – series latina, 159), Turnhout, 1981.

from the very well-known (among scholars) illustration at the end of the preface and the beginning of the canon in folio 143v, the Sacramentary of Gellone contains a large number of decorated initials that singles out this manuscript as one of the richest painted liturgical codices of the Carolingian era. The modest style of these painted initials does not affect their rich iconography. Their typology includes geometric motifs, zoomorphic figures as well as some other very interesting iconographic features. There is, for example, in folio 60v, a representation of a bust of Christ depicted in an initial 'O' accompanied by the dove of the Holy Spirit because the image is included in the text of the baptismal ritual. On the same folio, we also note the presence, always in a historiated initial of what seems to be a representation of the Lamb. The painting of folio 1v shows a monumental image of the Virgin Mary holding in her right hand a censer, and a cross in her left. This monumental figure forms the initial letter 'I' of the title of the sacramentary: "*In nomine...*". It suggests that we are dealing with the representation of the Virgin Church, celebrating the liturgy and offering the sacrifice of her son because of the censer and cross she is holding. There are references to the theme of the sacrificial cross in other illustrations of the Sacramentary of Gellone, for example in the illustration of the Canon of the Mass but also in the historiated initial of folio 76v located at the beginning of the first prayer for the feast of the Invention of the Holy Cross on September 14. We see a figure discovering three crosses represented in the circle made by the letter 'O' and which refer to Christ's cross at the centre with the alpha and omega, and those of the two thieves. In the Sacramentary of Gellone, other historiated initials are associated with the baptismal liturgy or, more precisely, with the preparation for that ritual as the rite of the 'opening of the ears' of the catechumens, in folios 41r–43r. The initials of the ritual of the *apertio aurium* embody some major aspects of the content of the text and the theological significance of this rite. I have tried to show in my recent book that the addition of the painted initials to the text of this ritual of the *apertio aurium* helped to 'incarnate' the theology of the ritual based on sensory activation in the course of the celebration.¹⁴ In many ways, these initials complement the theological significance of the one accompanying the text of the Canon of the Mass and its role in the activation of the senses during the consecration of the Eucharist. In a very suggestive article, John Paul Deremble and, more recently, Cynthia Hahn, defended the idea that the painting program of the Sacramentary of Gellone, composed exclusively of very rich ornamental paintings and decorated initials, put forward the capacity of the letter to be performative, that is to say, to activate during the performance of the ritual the theological significance contained by the iconography of the letters.¹⁵ The case of historiated initials contained in the ritual of the opening of the ears in the sacramentary of Gellone exemplifies in a remarkable fashion

¹⁴ E. Palazzo, n. 1, p. 285–294 and 395–407.

¹⁵ J.-P. Deremble, *Lettres performatives. Le sacramentaire de Gellone*, in *Chroniques d'art sacré*, 48 (1996), p. 12–15; C. Hahn, *The Performative Letter in the Carolingian Sacramentary of Gellone*, in press (I'm grateful to Cynthia Hahn for sending me her article before its publication).

the capacity of the letter to ‘really’ embody the theological discourse it supports and to be activated by the senses during the course of the ritual by the use of the liturgical manuscript.¹⁶ This is I think one of the main functions of the historiated initials whose main purpose is to embody the theological significance of the ritual so that it may be activated by the celebrants’ five senses and its presence felt within the celebration. The origin of the close relationship established in the Christian tradition between the letter and the incarnation or the body, is mainly based on the exegesis in the first part of chapter three of the second epistle to the Corinthians, which states that every man is a letter of Christ (II Cor., III, 1–6). In this text, the main issue is the epistolary meaning of the letter but there is also a wider significance to the theme of the letter made up of words, both of which are part of Christ’s body, just like Christians.

I now explore the iconography of some initials ‘O’ contained in the Sacramentary of Gellone, placed at the beginning of some prayers: the exegesis of the antiphons ‘O’ developed by Amalarius of Metz may well apply to these initial letters. The latter belong indeed to a different liturgical context than that of the antiphons in the antiphonary, even if they were produced shortly before the time of the Carolingian liturgist. In this exploration, I want to show that the graphicacy of the letter ‘O’ as the initial of a text, like the first prayer in the celebration of the mass, contains all the aspects of the exegetical meaning developed by Amalarius about the antiphons ‘O’. It also incorporates the theological readings of liturgy commentators from the twelfth century, like Sicard of Cremona, on the circular form and applied in the text of the Italian theologian to the VD monogram of the preface to the canon of the Mass. One of the reasons for choosing the form ‘O’ for a letter, whether it is for an antiphon or for a prayer, is because it expresses the same theological meaning as the nature of the letter itself because the graphic ornament ‘contains’ in itself the theological meaning whatever its liturgical context. I have selected three painted initials of the Sacramentary of Gellone among many other richly decorated letters in that codex. They all are the first letter of the prayer that opens a mass. As I mentioned earlier in the general presentation of the painted decoration of the Sacramentary of Gellone, this manuscript is dominated by the presence of decorated or historiated initials in which there is a substantial group of ‘O’. In general, the illustration of this codex enhances the decorated or historiated initials, which reflects the strong interest of the painters for the ‘performative’ and ‘incarnating’ letters made to be activated by the senses during the performance of the liturgy.

The first initial ‘O’ that caught my attention was the one opening the Mass of the fifth Sunday after Easter, folio 18r of the Sacramentary of Gellone. The text of the prayer is: “Omnipotens sempiternus Deus, fac nos tibi semper et devotam gerere voluntatem, et maiestati

¹⁶ L. Kendrick, *Animating Letter. The Figuration Embodiment of Writing from Late Antiquity to the Renaissance*, Ohio State University Press, 1999; C. Hahn, *Letter and Spirit. The Power of the Letter, the Enlivenment of the Word in Medieval Art*, in *Visible Writings. Cultures, Forms, Readings*, Rutgers University Press, 2011, p. 55–76.

tuae sincero corde servire. Per” (Almighty and everlasting God, grant us that we should at all times, meekly subject to Thy will, serve Thy majesty with a sincere heart).¹⁷ The initial ‘O’ in the opening word *Omnipotens* is formed by the representation of a tonsured and bearded human head, which can be interpreted as that of a monk. His facial features are very distinctive. Cheekbones and lips are enhanced by the use of red paint. His eyes are wide open. Their outline is accentuated by a black line and outshine same coloured eyebrows. This monk’s eyes are facing upwards and slightly to the right as if he were observing the top of the text of the prayer with which he is ‘at one with’ and as if he were about to activate his sight and his inner sense of sight.¹⁸ The monk’s facial expression seems to express sadness. Other tangible aspects related to the monk and his body are presented in this initial. The painter represented his neck ‘sprouting’ out of an orange circular collar that echoes the circularity of the hood around the monk’s head in black and yellow. The monk’s left hand emerges from a circular green sleeve holding on tightly to an orange and green circle which is the initial distorted letter ‘D’ of the next prayer. The initial ‘O’ and the letter ‘D’ belong to the same body. They evoke both parts of a single body, that of the monk who activates three senses when he pronounces these prayers: sight, hearing and touch. The monk’s open eyes evoke his concentration when reading. This concentration allows the monk to activate his internal visual sense and enable him to admire the majesty of Christ referred to in the text of the prayer. The activation of the visual sense is coupled with hearing when the monk pronounces the texts written in the manuscript and the sense of touch is also present, symbolised by the monk’s hand clutching the initial ‘D’ and activated in the ritual by the monk when he takes the sacramentary and touches the paintings and the folios of the codex. The two letters ‘O’ and ‘D’ in the representations of folio 18r of the Gellone Sacramentary clearly have an ‘incarnating’ value because they are ‘real’ parts of the monk’s body and, at the same time, a part of the body of the sacred text read by the monk during the ritual.

My second example echoes the one we have just examined. It is the initial letter ‘O’ painted for the prayer used for the ritual of ‘making a catechumen’, in folio 173v: “Omnipotens sempiternus Deus, Pater Domini nostri Iesu Christi, respicere dignare super hos famulos tuos, quos ad rudimenta fidei vocare dignatus es. Omnem caecitatem cordis ab eis expelle: disrumpe omnes laqueos Satanae, quibus fuerant colligati: aperi eis, Domini, ianuam pietatis tuae; et signum sapientiae tuae imbuti, omnium cupiditatum foetoribus careant, et suavi

¹⁷ A. Chavasse, *Textes liturgiques de l’Eglise de Rome. Le cycle romain annuel selon le sacramentaire du Vaticanus Reginensis 316* (Sources liturgiques, 2), Paris, 1997, p. 143–144.

¹⁸ Many parallels can be established between the representation and the expression of the sense of sight in the faces painted in the Gellone sacramentary and some others in the book of Kells, K. Ambrose, *The Sense of Sight in the Book of Kells*, in *Source. Notes in the History of Art*, 27 (2007), p. 1–9. See also some parallels with the initials of the Corbie Psalter, H. Pulliam, *Exaltation and Humiliation: The Decorated Initials of the Corbie Psalter (Amiens, Bibliothèque municipale, ms. 18)*, in *Gesta*, 49 (2010), p. 97–115 and *The Eyes of the Handmaid: The Corbie Psalter and the Ruthwell Cross*, in *Listen, O Isles, unto Me. Studies in Medieval Word and Image in Honour of Jennifer O’Reilly*, in press (I thank the author for sending me the proofs of her contribution).

odore praeceptorum tuorum laeti tibi in ecclesia deserviant; et proficiant de die in diem, ut idonei efficiantur accedere ad gratiam baptismi tui, percepta medicina. Per Dominum nostrum” (Almighty and everlasting God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, look graciously down upon Thy servants, whom Thou hast graciously called unto the beginnings of faith. Rid them of all blindness of heart, Sunder all the snares of Satan, which had bound them: open to them, O Lord, the door of Thy loving kindness; marked by the sign of Thy wisdom, may they be exempt of the stench of desire, rejoice in the sweet odour of Thy precepts, may they joyfully serve you in the church; may they advance in holiness day after day, so that they become able to come to the grace of Thy Baptism, your prescribed medicine. Through our Lord).¹⁹

As discussed above for the previous initial, we can once again observe the expression of the consubstantiality between the initial letter ‘O’ of *Omnipotens* and the round face of the monk whose nascent neck is visible. The facial features are detailed and it can be assumed that he is wearing a monk’s hood. The strongly emphasized traits of the nose, eyes and mouth focus the spectator on the activation of three senses: sight, smell and hearing through the word that comes from the monk’s mouth- unless the insistence on the mouth is related to the sense of taste. Again, one is struck by the monk’s vivid and steady gaze, whose eyes are facing down and not looking toward the liturgical text, although his head is part of the text. In the text of the prayer, the Lord is beseeched to hunt the blindness in the heart of each of his servants. The monk’s eyes are open, as if the painter wished to render this theme. The eye’s circular or oval shape echoes the monk’s face and the shape of the letter ‘O’. The sensory dimension linked to the expression of smell, highlighted by the very nose in the monk’s face is mentioned twice in the prayer focusing on the contrast between the sweet aroma of Christ and the stench of evil desires.

The third example I want to explore is located in the manuscript’s folio 208v. It forms the letter ‘O’ in the initial word of the prayer for the ritual of the ordinations: “Oremus, dilectissimi, dominum nostrum Iesum Christum pro hoc famulo suo ill qui ad deponendam comam capitis sui pro eius amore festinat, ut donet ei spiritum sanctum, qui habitum religionis in eo perpetuum conservet et a mundi impedimento vel seculari desiderio cor eius defendat, ut sicut immutatur vultu, ita manus dextera eius ei virtutis tribuat incrementa et ab omni cecitate spirituali vel humana oculos eius aperiat et lumen ei eterne gratie concedat. Per dominum” (Let us pray, dearest brothers, to our Lord Jesus Christ that he should grant his Holy Spirit to his present servant, who for love of him looks forward to lay down his hair: that he may retain within him forevermore the sacred garment of religion and protect his heart against the troubles of the world and lay desires; that, just as he transforms his external appearance, the divine hand may also strengthen his virtue, open his eyes by removing all blindness of spirit and flesh, and grant him the light of eternal grace, through our Lord).²⁰

¹⁹ A. Chavasse, *ibid.*, p. 154–155.

²⁰ *Le pontifical de la curie romaine au XIII^e siècle*, ed. et trad. M. Gouillet, G. Lobrichon, E. Palazzo, Paris, 2004, p. 34–35.

Once again, the painter chose to merge a monk's face and his tonsure with the 'O' of the word *Oremus* at the beginning of the prayer for the ordination of a cleric. The monk's head is slightly turned to the right this time. We also see his left ear and at the same time, we notice that his eyes are opened and clearly oriented towards the text of the prayer as if he were reading the sacred text embodying his transformation from man to monk. The left ear close to the text may suggest the activation of the sense of hearing by listening to the prayer and enabling the monk to appropriate for himself the deeper meaning of the theological rite of ordination. The text of the prayer centres once again on the divine action that activates the sense of sight through the eyes of the consecrated man, to protect him against blindness and grant him access to its inner meaning. All its elements seem 'really incarnated' in the initial 'O' which once again is a part of the monk's body, at least his head, which is after all the seat of man's sensorial power.

Conclusion

In this brief contribution, I hope to have shown the value of the initial 'O' in some prayers contained in the Sacramentary of Gellone and how the theological meaning of the form of these painted initial letters is related to the theme of the sensory activation of men in a liturgical context. In a number of ways, the parallel I have made between the shape's meaning and theological antiphons 'O' developed by the liturgists from the Carolingian period is grounded in a strong similarity with the iconographic discourse established for the initial 'O' in some prayers of the Sacramentary of Gellone. Much of this discourse was based on the theme of man considered as a 'letter of Christ' expressed in a passage of the Second Epistle to the Corinthians and on the activation of the visual sense to allow man to witness the incarnation as indicated by Amalarius in his commentary on the antiphons 'O'. Finally it also rests on the anticipation of the discourse on the circular form and its theological significance in relation to the theme of eternity developed by commentators on the liturgy in the twelfth century and with the general idea of the *oculus* and its connection with the host in the context of the performance of the mass.²¹ The activation of the initials 'O' painted in the sacramentary of Gellone has also to do with the activation of the body of the celebrant who pronounced the prayers beginning with the 'O'. In a way, the shape of the 'O' initials resembles a mirror in which the celebrant can see himself and where he can follow the model that his body must imitate by activating himself during the liturgical performance.

²¹ R. E. Reynolds, *Eucharistic Adoration in the Carolingian Era? Exposition of Christ in the Host, in Peregrinations: Journal of Medieval Art and Architecture*, 4 (2013), p. 70–153. On the meaning of the Oculus, C. Malone, *Les implications sensorielles de l'architecture et de la liturgie au Moyen Age*, in *CCM*, 55 (2012), p. 497–520, here 501–503.

IV

Romanitas and Slavia: Political and Ideological Relationships between the Slavs and Old and New Rome (6th–16th Century)

Moderator: **Paul Stephenson**

Ivan Biliarsky

L'héritage romain et constantinopolitain en Bulgarie et l'idée de la sauvegarde de l'empire et du peuple

Srđan Pirivatrić

The Serbs and the Overlapping Authorities of Rome and Constantinople (7th to 16th Century). An Overview of the Political and Ideological Relationships

Kirill A. Maksimovič

Medieval Russia between Two Romes: Challenges and Responses (10th–16th Centuries)

Opening statement

Paul Stephenson

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It is now forty-five years since Dimitri Obolensky offered us a vision of ‘The Byzantine Commonwealth (500–1453)’: a multi-ethnic, linguistically-diverse medieval world drawn together by a common culture that emanated from Constantinople, the greatest city in the western hemisphere, and centre for the empire’s cultural production, where flourished art and architecture, literature and learning, bureaucracy and ceremonial.¹ Obolensky restricted the core idea of ‘Commonwealth’ to Romanía, the realm ruled from Constantinople where Greek was the dominant language, and to the Slavic lands of Eastern Europe and Russia that embraced Orthodox Christianity. Since Obolensky wrote, Byzantine Studies have grown and matured. His thesis has been, in turn, criticised, embraced, ignored, dismissed, and rehabilitated.² It is now even clearer that Byzantium has left a profound and diverse legacy in Russia, East-Central Europe, and South-eastern Europe (‘the Balkans’), as Obolensky demonstrated, but also throughout the Eastern Mediterranean, from southern Italy and Sicily, across Greece and Turkey to the Caucasus. More exactly, Byzantium has left disputed legacies in many countries, a number of which are now integrated into, or have applied for admission to, the European Union (EU).

The connections between Romanía and Slavia Orthodoxa cannot be studied in isolation, but typically they have been researched in greatest detail in those countries which today occupy the heart of Obolensky’s Commonwealth, notably Bulgaria and Serbia, Russia and Greece. This brief opening statement cannot hope to present an overview of these national literatures, nor could it steer a path between them. It seems wise, therefore, to let the scholars from those places offer their own views, as they will shortly, and instead to present a short review of some key works in English since Obolensky wrote, which address his premise. First, however, let us contextualize very briefly Obolensky’s work.

Written in English in Oxford during the 1960s, Obolensky’s great work was both a reaction to many advocates of difference and division and a provocation to reflection for a new generation of scholars. Obolensky’s idea of ‘Commonwealth’ was deeply influenced by the developments he witnessed as a resident of Britain in the years after the Second World War. Earlier visions of Byzantium and its cultural legacy were similarly influenced by contemporary politics, when from the mid-nineteenth century Byzantium became a subject

¹ D. Obolensky, *The Byzantine Commonwealth. Eastern Europe, 500–1453*, London, 1971.

² C. Raffensperger, *Revisiting the idea of the Byzantine Commonwealth*, in *BF*, 28 (2004), p. 159–174; J. Shepard, *The Byzantine Commonwealth, 1000–1550*, in M. Angold (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Christianity*, Cambridge, 2006, p. 3–52.

of interest to antiquarians and historians, travellers and essayists across Europe. Eminent students of other times and places set aside some time to study the ‘medieval Greeks’, notably in Britain, France, Germany and Russia. Such researches were not always perceived to be in tune with prevailing national interests of the ‘Great Powers’. In response, those within ‘Turkey in Europe’ constructed national narratives which embraced or rejected Byzantium. A contemporary research theme, Byzantine receptions, now addresses modern revisions to these national narratives, as borders within the ‘Commonwealth’ have been redrawn. The EU has integrated lands which embraced their Byzantine past (Greece, Cyprus), those which rejected it (Romania, Hungary), and those in between (Bulgaria, Italy). Other areas with a profound Byzantine legacy, both within (various republics of the former Yugoslavia) and beyond (Turkey, the Caucasus) Obolensky’s Commonwealth, are seeking membership of the EU.

Obolensky, in considering ‘the bonds of Commonwealth’, placed greatest emphasis on the emergence of a shared religious culture. The impetus for its emergence was a series of proselytizing missions despatched from Byzantium from the ninth century CE, and the regular maintenance of those connections thereafter relied on embassies bearing gifts: relics and icons, ecclesiastical and liturgical books, all of which bore messages of ideological significance. Thus, the donor society transmitted its religious culture, through its art, architecture and literature, to willing recipients. The main strands of Byzantine culture have been heavily researched, but generalist statements on its contribution to European art, architecture and literature have not changed profoundly since Obolensky wrote. It is still held that Byzantium’s most important contribution to art was the portrait icon. Hieratic images of Christ and the saints became essential devotional tools, mediators of the sacred, in the home and particularly within churches. The life of Christ was succinctly rehearsed in a cycle of liturgical festival icons emphasizing the Incarnation, Passion and Easter. Painted icons of the same subjects gradually came to take fixed positions on the icon screen, separating the sanctuary from the nave.³ Complementing a centralized liturgy, early Byzantine architects developed a centralized, light-filled space surmounted by a dome. A pattern for the display and use of icons in mosaic and fresco was established, arranged in a descending hierarchy of portrait images from Christ the Pantokrator at the apex of the central dome to the ordered ranks of the saints in the vaults of the aisles and narthex.⁴ This was regarded, in turn, as a model for earthly order, *taxis*, where the emperor would act as vicegerent for Christ, and subordinate Christian kings would enjoy his grace.⁵ Byzantine iconography, fixed according to conventions, that guaranteed its efficacy, was transmitted to these neighbors, who adapted it to local political and religious circumstances. Long after the fall of Constantinople to the

³ H. Belting, *Bild und Kult. Eine Geschichte des Bildes vor dem Zeitalter der Kunst*, Munich, 1990.

⁴ O. Demus, *Byzantine Mosaic Decoration*, 2nd edn, London, 1953.

⁵ G. Ostrogorsky, *The Byzantine emperor and the hierarchical world order*, in *Slavonic and East European Review*, 35 (1956), p. 1–14.

Ottomans, these satellites of Orthodox culture perpetuated the precepts of Byzantine art and architecture and propagated its ideological underpinnings.

Early Byzantine literature, written in Greek in the first few centuries after the founding of Constantinople, was enriched and transformed by contact with Slavic, Semitic, and Caucasian peoples and others within the sphere of influence of the East Roman Empire. From the sixth century Greek was the language of literature and government (secular and ecclesiastical), but other tongues were heard throughout the empire and were recognised as vehicles for the transmission of the sacred. A famous Byzantine missionary and linguist, Constantine, is better known as St Cyril, apostle to the Slavs. His efforts to devise an alphabet based on Greek characters to represent the sounds of the Slavic tongue reflect its official recognition of an alternative language for Christian worship. The Slavonic liturgy was roundly condemned by the papacy, but acknowledged by the patriarchate of Constantinople. The Slavonic letters, later adapted by a second Constantine, of Preslav, were renamed in honor of Cyril, and are still in daily use by hundreds of millions from Siberia to the Adriatic. This should come as no surprise, for scripture and liturgy had long been written and celebrated in the Caucasian languages. Although not without controversy, the Christian churches of Armenia and Georgia, of equal antiquity to that of Constantinople, were generally accorded autocephalous status. The Caucasian lands, like those of southern Italy, were largely ignored by Obolensky; their role in his Commonwealth was peripheral. Their significance to the survival and re-orientation of the Middle Byzantine empire been fully established.⁶ Armenians and Georgians, not Slavs nor Greeks, formed the core of an aristocracy that transformed the empire between 800 and 1100.⁷ Their integration into the Greek core saw the reconfiguration of the kingdoms and churches of Armenia and Georgia,⁸ but also prefigured the rise of autonomous shadow empires in Bulgaria and Serbia. These parallels over centuries demand closer investigation.

Byzantium and the Caucasian lands were, moreover, in constant contact with Muslim neighbours, from the beginnings of Islam in the seventh century,⁹ to the fall of the empire to the Ottoman Turks in the fifteenth. In this period Islamic empires rose and fell: the Umayyads, the Abbasids, the Fatimids, and others interacted with Byzantines, and through them with the rest of Europe. These contacts took many forms, but both trade and war were most often to the fore. Diplomatic exchanges were frequent, and gifts were commonly exchanged. These transmitted ideas as surely as did the debates between Christian and Muslim scholars and

⁶ P. Charanis, *The Armenians in the Byzantine Empire*, Lisbon; A. Kazhdan, *The Armenians in the Byzantine ruling class*, in T. Samuelian, M. Stone (ed.), *Medieval Armenian Culture*, Chico, CA, 1983, p. 439–451.

⁷ P. Stephenson, *Byzantium Transformed, c. 950–1200*, in J. Arnason, B. Wittrock (ed.), *Eurasian Transformations, Tenth to Thirteenth Centuries: Crystallizations, Divergences, Renaissances*, Leiden, 2004, p. 185–210.

⁸ A. Eastmond, *Royal Imagery in Medieval Georgia*, University Park, PA, 1998.

⁹ W. Kaegi, *Byzantium and the Early Islamic Conquests*, Cambridge, 1992.

theologians, rulers and clerics, that are recorded throughout the Byzantine millennium.¹⁰ Different attitudes to religious art and religious violence are two key themes that have been addressed very frequently in modern scholarship.

Most recently, two approaches to the Byzantines and their polity have been advanced, neither of which is compatible with the notion of a 'Commonwealth'. The first, by Averil Cameron, posits that 'empire' is inadequate properly to express the nature of Byzantine power, and it is not a term that Byzantines themselves used. The same is said of 'Commonwealth', although Cameron has some praise for the restated case offered by Jonathan Shepard.¹¹ However, 'state' is clearly a term the Byzantines both used and understood, and it was the achievement of the Byzantine state always to have maintained a legal framework, an ability to extract a surplus through taxation, and to sustain an army, that made it a true heir to Rome. These institutional factors were less easily transmitted, and therefore not readily adopted, by those who might be regarded as Constantinople's ideological and political heirs in Slavia Orthodoxa. Anthony Kaldellis takes this analysis further, provocatively arguing that the political system in the Byzantine period of Roman history maintained the classical notion of the (Latin) *res publica*, in Greek the *politeia*.¹² A meta-narrative of diminishing freedom identified in the successive periods scholars have called the Roman principate, dominate, late antiquity and Byzantium, is a fiction. If the Roman republican political system was to some suspended during late antiquity, which Kaldellis restricts to a very brief period from the mid-third to late fourth century, it was restored in full by the turbulent reign of Anastasios, and thereafter defined politics in the capital, Constantinople, and by extension throughout the empire. The *res publica/politeia* has fascinated scholars of earlier periods of Roman history, whose works Kaldellis has read carefully. In contrast, the same body politic in the medieval period has been neglected by scholars of Byzantium who have always been far more exercised by the rhetorical, God-given authority of the *basileus*. Kaldellis denies that a Byzantine Commonwealth ever existed, and even questions the validity of the term 'empire'. For him, Romanía was not an empire in the way we today understand that term, being the political domination of several and diverse peoples and lands by one ethnic or religious group. By Kaldellis' estimation, the Roman Empire of Constantine I was certainly religiously, linguistically and ethnically diverse, whereas that of Constantine VII was almost universally Orthodox Christian, Greek-speaking, and self-consciously 'Roman'. Apart from a brief period from the end of the tenth century to the middle of the eleventh, the Romans of Constantinople did not attempt to conquer, subdue and rule other peoples, but instead strove to influence and arrange satellites.

While it is incompatible with Obolensky's understanding of the Byzantine Commonwealth, Kaldellis' approach has much that gels with Jonathan Shepard's adopted and expanded

¹⁰ N. M. El-Cheikh, *Byzantium viewed by the Arabs*, Cambridge, MA, 2004.

¹¹ J. Shepard, *The Byzantine Commonwealth, 1000–1550*.

¹² A. Kaldellis, *The Byzantine Republic*, Cambridge, MA, 2015.

notion of ‘The Byzantine Commonwealth, 1000–1550’, his contribution to *The Cambridge History of Christianity*.¹³ Shepard, Obolensky’s pupil, explores how and why rulers of Russia, Bulgaria and Serbia accepted so much from Constantinople, both before and after its fall, with the events of 1204 hardly denting the city’s prestige. Adopting the anthropological notion of the ‘superordinate centre’, Shepard sees Constantinople as a “geographically distant setting” for Slavic rulers, which is deemed to be “a particularly charged point or direction of cosmological contact ... where ritual can bring the gods into contact with humans”.¹⁴ Mount Athos provided a second channel, and also an opportunity for Slavic (and Caucasian) Orthodox communities to share sacred space with Romans. Rulers of Orthodox peoples could draw from both streams, adapting ritual and art, law and creed, institutions and offices, to support their claims to legitimate authority. Interwoven with these vertical connections were many more horizontal strands – eschatological expectations, hesychasm, holy fools and living icons, translation, sharing and adaptation of texts and art – “which served to create a kind of ‘force field’, replete with positive and negative charges”.¹⁵ This, then, is Orthodox state formation, but also the formation of a broader community bound by word and practice, Orthodoxy and Orthopraxy.¹⁶

¹³ J. Shepard, *The Byzantine Commonwealth, 1000–1550*.

¹⁴ J. Shepard, *The Byzantine Commonwealth, 1000–1550*, p. 12.

¹⁵ J. Shepard, *The Byzantine Commonwealth, 1000–1550*, p. 46.

¹⁶ A. Cameron, *Byzantine Matters*, Princeton, 2014.

L'héritage romain et constantinopolitain en Bulgarie et l'idée de la sauvegarde de l'empire et du peuple

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Bien qu'à partir du XVI^e siècle, Moscou eut le privilège de porter souvent le nom de Troisième Rome, due probablement à la place particulière que Russie occupait dans le monde orthodoxe à partir de cette époque, il me semble que l'héritage de la Romanité dans les pays appartenant à la Chrétienté orientale ne commence et ne se termine pas avec Moscou. En effet, l'idée de la translation de la Ville Eternelle à l'Est, comprise dans le sens institutionnel, idéologique, urbain et même démographique et sa réduplication est étroitement liée à la conception de la Nouvelle Rome, donc à Constantinople: une ville créée par Constantin et une notion confirmée par le Second concile œcuménique (381). Dorénavant, et jusqu'en 1453, cette doctrine sera retenue par les empereurs, et par le Patriarcat œcuménique jusqu'à nos jours. En outre, Constantinople est devenue un centre particulier et indépendant et son image s'est répandue dans l'Europe de l'Est et du Sud-Est ainsi que dans la Méditerranée orientale. Cette influence singulière de la Ville ne la fractionne point de l'héritage de Rome mais crée un ensemble « romain » qui domine l'idéologie politique des pays orthodoxes durant plus d'un millénaire.

Dans cet article, je n'essayerai pas à résoudre, ni même de toucher à l'ensemble des problèmes liés à Constantinople ou à l'empereur, son fondateur, encore moins à son image dans le Monde byzantin. Je voudrais aborder seulement l'un d'eux, puisqu'il me semble primordial dans ce contexte: c'est la tradition romaino-byzantine de la protection et la défense de Constantinople et sa translation chez les autres peuples orthodoxes, et surtout en Bulgarie et ses capitales. Cette protection devrait être comprise dans le sens universel car en défendant la Ville on sauvegarde l'Empire et son peuple, le peuple des fidèles, donc les Chrétiens. Ces questions ne sont point limitées aux relations politiques mais touchent l'anthropologie chrétienne car la protection de la Ville impériale est conçue comme protection des êtres humains sur leur voie vers le Salut constituant l'essence de l'existence du monde et de l'histoire. Voilà pourquoi, nous allons rassembler différents témoignages concernant les idées de détournement du Mal, qu'il soit des ennemis attaquant ou des forces suprahumaines qui pourraient être liées à l'idéologie de la capitale ou de l'Etat. On va mentionner ici certains d'entre eux dont on retrouve le reflet dans la Bulgarie médiévale et post-byzantine. Sans doute,

forment-ils une partie intégrale et importante de l'héritage de la Romanité dans les pays orthodoxes. C'est un héritage dont le foyer s'organise autour de l'image du saint empereur Constantin, une figure qui domine, certes, l'imagerie politique de l'Orient chrétien durant des siècles et qui est à juste titre défini comme donnant « The Rhythm of Imperial Renewal in Byzantium ».¹ Il possède la même signification et a la même importance en Bulgarie que dans les autres pays slaves orthodoxes.²

1. La sauvegarde de la Ville: AB URBE CONDITA, la naissance de la Nouvelle Rome et les rites apotropaïques dans la tradition bulgare aussi bien la populaire que l'officielle.

La fondation d'une ville et sa construction est toujours une action créative et sacrée. Elle rappelle d'autres actions institutionnelles et d'édification, et de cette manière, nous donne l'opportunité de les comparer pour arriver à certaines conclusions qui me semblent importantes. J'ai déjà consacré quelques études à cette question et ici je ne vais que mentionner rapidement son intérêt pour l'exposé qui suit.³ Le caractère sacré de la fondation définit les caractéristiques de l'objet créé, la ville dans notre cas. La ville devient sacrée et sa sauvegarde devient d'une importance particulière. Certains éléments de caractère apotropaïque sont évidents et essentiels pour l'instauration d'une ville nouvelle. Ils occupent leur place dans la pratique officielle et dans certaines coutumes de la foi populaire, parfois semi-païenne. Il

¹ P. Magdalino (ed.), *New Constantines. The Rhythm of Imperial Renewal in Byzantium, 4th–13th Centuries*, Aldershot, Variorum, 1994. L'intérêt sur le saint empereur Constantin est très grand ces dernières années à cause aussi du 1700^e anniversaire de l'Edit de Milan. Ainsi, quelques livres importants pour ma recherche ont apparu: P. Stephenson, *Constantine. Unconquered Emperor, Christian Victor*, London, 2009; J. Bardill, *Constantine, Divine Emperor of the Christian Golden Age*, Cambridge, 2012; P. Радић, *Константин Велики. Надмоћ хришћанства*, Београд, 2010. Les auteurs mettent l'accent sur différents sujets: soit sur la victoire et ses allégations divines, soit sur la sainteté du pouvoir dans le contexte chrétien vue à travers les cultes païens hellénistique ou le culte solaire romain. On doit mentionner aussi l'apparition d'une œuvre imposante: A. Melloni, P. Brown, J. Helmrath, E. Prinzivalli, S. Ronchey, N. Tanner (ed.), *Costantino I. Enciclopedia costantiniana sulla figura e l'immagine dell'imperatore del cosiddetto editto di Milano, 313–2013*, I–III, Roma, 2013.

² Il existe une historiographie importante sur ces problèmes. Je me limiterai ici à citer les articles généraux de l'Encyclopédie constantinienne: K. Stantchev, V. Velinova, *Tradizioni, culto e dottrine nel mondo bulgaro*, in *Enciclopedia costantiniana*, II, p. 471–486; C. Alzati, *Idea imperial et continuità romana. Aspetti del culto di san Costantino in ambito romano*, in *Enciclopedia costantiniana*, II, p. 501–512; M. Garzaniti, *Costantino il Grande a Mosca dai Rjurikidi alla dinastia dei Romanov*, in *Enciclopedia costantiniana*, III, p. 133–144; N. Ozimić, *Tradizione, culto e teologie serbe*, in *Enciclopedia costantiniana*, II, p. 463–470.

³ Iv. Biliarsky, *La demeure et la corne de l'Empire*, in *OCP*, 69/1 (2003), p. 179–197; id., *The Tale of the Prophet Isaiah. The Destiny and Meanings of an Apocryphal Text*, Leiden – Boston, 2013, p. 269–278; Ив. Билярски, *Сказание Исаево и формирание на политическата идеология на ранносредновековна България*, София, 2011, p. 232–242.

serait probablement utile pour notre recherche d'établir les parallèles et peut-être même la dépendance des récits sur la fondation de la ville et de certains rites de sauvegarde des lieux habités avec l'histoire mythologique de la fondation de Rome et de la tradition qui s'en suit.

La ville de Rome était relativement bien connue en Bulgarie médiévale. L'histoire de sa fondation par les deux jumeaux, élevés par une louve, est fort présente dans les chroniques.⁴ En ce qui concerne notre sujet, il faut signaler surtout deux éléments qui apparaissent dans ces récits qui lui sont clairement liés: l'histoire de *pomoerium* (Tite-Live I, 7, 2; Plutarque, *Romulus*, 10) et l'instauration de l'*asylum* sur la Colline du Capitole (Tite-Live I, 8, 4–7; Plutarque, *Romulus*, 9).

Les lieux d'asile, donc des lieux de refuge bien protégés habituellement pour des raisons religieuses, sont par définition des zones sauvegardées. Ces lieux sont toujours sous protection divine d'où l'existence de leur protection légale, créée par le pouvoir pour se limiter soi-même mais aussi pour limiter chaque persécution contre le fugitif. Tite-Live nous donne une autre explication concernant la création de l'asile au Capitole qui a ses raisons rationnelles et pratiques: Romulus instaura celui-ci pour attirer d'habitants dans la ville toute jeune, visant l'accroissement de sa population (Tite-Live, *Ab Urbe condita*, I, 8, 4–7). Il me semble important de noter que dès le début de l'existence de la ville de Rome on y avait instauré un lieu qui fut protégé et gardé par des forces suprahumaines, comprises dans le sens païen. C'était un lieu sacré où les gens persécutés pouvaient trouver la protection divine. Cette idée était au cœur de la création de la communauté civique romaine dès ses origines.

Le cas de *pomoerium* est plus complexe et offre l'opportunité de faire des conclusions particulièrement intéressantes. Il s'agit, à l'origine, d'un sillon charrué autour de la ville par Romulus, qui circonscrit ses lisières. Evidemment, ce n'était pas une simple démarcation de l'agglomération mais un acte qui délimite l'espace sacré, protégé et gardé par les divinités. Les murs qui suivaient le sillon n'étaient pas des remparts simples, des fortifications, produits seulement de la technique militaire mais délimitations liminales de type apotropaïque. Cela se confirme par l'histoire fratricide de l'assassinat de Rémus qui rappelle le sacrifice visant l'acte de sacralisation de l'espace urbain. Si l'on écarte les divers détails, provenant des sources différentes, il reste le récit que l'instauration de la ville était strictement liée à la délimitation sacrée de l'espace urbain. Le franchissement illicite de cette lisière était sévèrement puni. Suite à des problèmes et des conflits entre les frères concernant l'instauration de la ville et le pouvoir sur elle, Rémus sauta à travers le *pomoerium* et par conséquent fut occis (Tite-Live I, 7, 2; Plutarque, *Romulus*, 10). Plutarque (*Romulus*, 11) confirme que le labourage, en commençant par le *mundus*, d'un sillon fermé autour de l'espace urbain, fait avec une charrue de cuivre, attelant un taureau et une vache, était un rite italique lié à la fondation des villes. Le caractère apotropaïque du rite est témoigné par le fait qu'aux lieux de passage

⁴ Iv. Biliarsky, *La ville, les héros et l'Univers*, in *Forma formans. Studi in onore di Boris Uspenskij*, I, Napoli, 2010, p. 63–76; id., *The Tale of the Prophet Isaiah. The Destiny and Meanings of an Apocryphal Text*, p. 261–268.

(les huis de la ville), le soc de la charrue était soulevé hors de la terre pour ne pas faire de sillon.⁵ Ainsi, le sillon était sacré et l'on ne pouvait pas et ne devait pas violer la lisière car c'est elle qui protégeait l'espace urbain consacré. Ce sont les confins qui délimitaient la ville en la séparant et l'*ager*, autrement dit ce qui était considéré comme étant « le nôtre » de ce qui appartenait à « l'étranger », l'*en-deçà* de l'*au-delà*. L'étymologie du mot *pomoerium* provient de *post* et *moerium/murum* mais le sens est focalisé surtout sur la limite et ce qui est intérieurement de l'espace protégé. Tite-Live lui-même nous offre ses observations sur le caractère de *pomoerium* c'est-à-dire d'un espace solennellement consacré et bien marqué où les activités profanes étaient strictement interdites (Tite-Live, *Ab Urbe condita*, I, 44, 4–5).

Bien évidemment, l'espace gardé et sacré des villes n'est pas forcément attaché à la ville de Rome. Ces idées la précèdent et la suivent dans le temps mais il nous semble significatif qu'on les retrouve souvent rattachées à la fondation de villes dont la tradition romaine est évidente. Evidemment, on pense tout d'abord à Constantinople, la Nouvelle Rome créée ou au moins renouvelée par le saint empereur Constantin. Dans un des fragments de son *Histoire ecclésiastique*, Philostorge raconte⁶ que, lors de la naissance de la Nouvelle Rome, Constantin voulant désigner son périmètre est parti de la place où, postérieurement serait érigée la colonne de porphyre avec sa statue, et se dirigea vers l'Occident à pieds, portant une lance à la main. Il était mené par un ange, visible que par lui-même, qui lui désigna les lisières de la ville. L'empereur planta sa lance dans la terre et fixa la fin de la trajectoire à l'endroit où l'ange s'est arrêté et disparut de ses yeux. Ainsi, l'intervention divine dans la fondation de la ville était assurée. Les similitudes entre l'Ancienne Rome et la Nouvelle, appelée *Alma Roma*, un nom erronément expliqué par l'auteur hellénophone comme « Rome Glorieuse », ne font que se confirmer par cette histoire. Le rapprochement n'est pas seulement urbanistique mais aussi institutionnel, un fait, accentué par la mention du Sénat et d'autres institutions, comme aussi du corps de la vie civique.⁷ On retrouve également un récit similaire (mais sans mentions sur la lance) dans les *Patria Constantinoupoleos*.⁸

⁵ V. *Sancti Isidori Hispalensis episcopi Opera Omnia*, III–IV, ed. F. Arevalo (= PL 82), Parisiis 1850, col. 527 sq. (l. XV: *De aedificiis et agris*, cap. I: *De civitatibus*); В. Венедикова, *Български паралели на античния обичай заораване при основаване на селище*, in *Изследвания в чест на акад. Д. Дечев по случай 80-годишнината му*, София, 1958, p. 783.

⁶ Philostorgius, *Church History*, trans. with introduction and notes P. R. Amidon, S. J. (Society of Biblical Literature, 23), Atlanta, 2007, p. 24–26 (Book 2, 9–9a); Philostorgius, *Kirchengeschichte mit Leben des Lucian von Antiochien und des Fragmenten eines arianischen Historiographen*, ed. J. Bidez, F. Winkelmann (Die griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten Jahrhunderte), Berlin, 1972, p. 20–22; E. Follieri, *La fondazione di Costantinopoli: riti pagani e cristiani*, in *Roma Costantinopoli, Mosca*, Roma – Napoli, 1973, p. 221–222.

⁷ P. Stephenson, *Constantine. Unconquered Emperor, Christian Victor*, p. 203–206; P. Радиф, *Константин Велики. Надмоћ хришћанства*, p. 118 suiv.

⁸ *Accounts Medieval of Constantinople. Ta PATRIA*, trans. A. Berger, Cambridge, MS – London, 2013, p. 145 (l. III.10).

Les histoires de la fondation de Constantinople ont fait objet de plusieurs recherches qui ont posé beaucoup de problèmes y compris ceux de son caractère religieux – païen ou chrétien.⁹ On ne s'en occupera pas ici. Il est évident que pendant l'époque de transition les restes de l'ancienne foi païenne ne pouvaient pas être complètement écartées. De plus que Byzance n'a jamais rejeté ni méprisé son héritage romain, le païen y compris, ce qui ne veut pas dire que l'on pouvait mettre en doute le caractère chrétien de la culture de l'Empire d'Orient. Je ne voudrais que noter l'interprétation possible de la délimitation de la ville par la terre en tant que réplique du labourage du sillon du *pomoerium* par Romulus lors de la naissance de l'Ancienne Rome. Je crois que la similitude est évidente mais il faut toujours tenir compte que les deux récits sont de type mythologique et de ce fait n'obéissent ni à la raison, ni à la recherche de vérité. On ne peut donc pas s'attendre d'y trouver des formules bien claires et d'explications bien énoncées. Il est évident, dans ce cas que dans l'histoire de Romulus et Remus, le caractère apotropaïque du rite et l'élément liminal ne sont pas clairement exprimés. En ce qui concerne la fondation de Constantinople, nous ne pouvons pas être certains si le tracé de la lisière avait la fonction de protéger la ville ou ne représentait qu'un simple délimitation de son territoire qui en même temps démontrait l'intervention divine lors de la naissance de la nouvelle capitale. Ou bien les deux? On pourrait se poser bien plus de questions sophistiquées sur l'interprétation des sources, bien confuses, mais il me semble qu'il est impossible d'exclure, malgré tout, aussi bien les ressemblances dans les récits de la fondation des deux capitales que l'existence d'une idée apotropaïque. Je voudrais attirer l'attention sur la lance, mentionnée dans le fragment de Philostorge: il me semble qu'elle n'est pas là uniquement pour être plantée dans la terre en marquant la fin de la trajectoire. Est-ce qu'il vaut la peine d'attirer l'attention du lecteur du texte sur un objet dont l'existence a une signification aussi réduite? Est-ce que la lance n'avait pas une autre fonction également? On peut imaginer une fonction hypothétique en supposant qu'en marchant derrière l'ange, Constantin traçait avec sa lance un petit sillon sur la terre pour marquer les confins de la ville.¹⁰ Toujours est-il qu'il m'est difficile d'affirmer quoi que ce soit d'autant plus que le texte n'attribue pas à cet objet une importance précise, mais on pourrait en discuter.

En revanche, il me semble possible d'affirmer le caractère liminal et apotropaïque des rituels accomplis lors de la création de Constantinople et décrits dans les textes. En parlant de la tradition bulgare, il faut dire que l'on ne retrouve pas de mentions de tels rituels concernant l'instauration d'une capitale ou d'une grande ville. Néanmoins, dans la culture populaire il existe des témoignages d'une pratique de protection en Bulgarie perpétuée jusqu'au XX^e siècle, proche me semble-t-il de celle raconté par la légende de la fondation de Rome. Il

⁹ E. Folieri, *La fondazione di Costantinopoli: riti pagani e cristiani*, p. 217–231 et la littérature y citée; P. Радић, *Константин Велики. Надмоћ хришћанства*, p. 117 suiv.

¹⁰ Il me semble que Jonathan Bardill partage cette opinion: J. Bardill, *Constantine, Divine Emperor of the Christian Golden Age*, p. 28.

s'agit du labourage autour d'un village qui est étudié par Vera Vénédikova.¹¹ Le rituel est le suivant:¹² deux frères jumeaux, nus, labourent avec deux bœufs jumeaux un sillon autour de la ville ou du village; ainsi, les maladies, et surtout la peste, ne peuvent pas entrer dans les lieux délimités par le sillon ni en sortir dans le cas où elles étaient déjà entrées. Ce rituel s'accomplissait, surtout, au moment du changement de la place d'une localité hantée par la peste. Il faudrait noter ici que cette maladie n'était pas considérée comme une maladie banale. A cause la mortalité importante qui pouvait en résulter, elle fut représentée dans la mythologie populaire comme un des désastres les plus graves. On personnalisait la peste par une image sinistre, on la figurait dans les églises avec l'espoir que le Très-Haut viendrait à l'aide aux gens.¹³ Ainsi, on aurait pu croire que la pratique de détournement de la peste et la sauvegarde du village, mentionnée plus haut, avait un caractère religieux. En réalité, on essayait de contrebalancer les forces hostiles par les forces divines.

Le rite de sillage d'un terrain lors la création d'une ville n'est pas connu par les autres peuples slaves, excepté les Bulgares. On connaît des pratiques similaires en Russie où la coutume veut que de jeunes filles et de jeunes femmes creusent un sillon autour d'un village pour chasser une maladie.¹⁴ B. A. Uspensky a attiré l'attention sur cette pratique russe et la définit comme rituel d'anti-comportement (ou bien de comportement contraire), qui est lié au culte des morts et garde certains gestes sans savoir leur signification et leur logique primitive.¹⁵ Finalement, il s'agissait des pratiques magiques fruits de la culture populaire semblables en apparence à celle qui nous intéresse sans être identiques avec elle. Il n'y a pas de points communs hormis le sillon tracé autour d'un village mais sans mention de la présence des deux frères et sans d'autres correspondances avec le mythe de la naissance de Rome. En tout cas, dans les deux récits, il ne s'agissait pas d'actions apotropaiques habituelles. Il s'agit d'une vision très particulière de ce qu'est une ville, et plus précisément, de ce qui est défini par le tracé d'un sillon. Il est évident qu'étant un moyen de détournement des maladies, le sillon sépare la partie interne de la partie externe, et défend cette première des dangers venant de l'extérieur. Ainsi, on peut qualifier l'« intérieur » comme « propre », « sacré » ou « connu », c'est-à-dire un espace protégé par le sillon, où il n'y a pas de peste ou de mal quelconque.

¹¹ В. Венедикова, *Български паралели*, р. 779–785.

¹² *Сборник за народни умотворения, наука и книжнина*, 28, р. 557; В. Венедикова, *Български паралели*, р. 779.

¹³ И. Георгиева, *Българска народна митология*, София, 1983, р. 145–147; Н. Манолова, *Чумавите времена, 1700–1850*, София, 2004.

¹⁴ А. И. Иванов, *Верования крестьян Орловской губернии*, in *Этнографическое обозрение*, 40/4 (1900), р. 113–114; А. Н. Афанасьев, *Поэтическое воззрение славян на природу*, I, Москва, 1865, р. 567.

¹⁵ Б. А. Успенский, *Анти-поведение в культуре Древней Руси*, in Б. А. Успенский, *Избранные труды*, I, Москва, 1996, р. 465.

2. Les gardiens de la Ville et la protection céleste de l'Empire.

La tradition bulgare se référait, certes, bien plus à la ville de Constantinople qu'à la Ville Eternelle aux bords de Tibre. Dans ce sens on peut dire que le « sillonnage » présente une exception en se référant de préférence plutôt à l'Ancienne qu'à la Nouvelle Rome. Cette dernière – *Roma Soror*¹⁶ – servait comme modèle permanent durant le millénaire médiéval pour les pays de la Communauté byzantine. Conçue en tant que réplique de Rome Ancienne, Constantinople gardait cette image durant des siècles mais elle créait parallèlement ses propres caractéristiques déjà purement chrétiennes qui incluait aussi ses protecteurs divins. Ce changement avait eu lieu à l'époque post-constantinienne pour aboutir, finalement, au culte de la Vierge Gardienne-de-la-Ville et de sa protection céleste de la capitale.¹⁷ C'est un des éléments les plus caractéristiques de l'influence de la Polis sur ses répliques dans les autres pays orthodoxes. Le culte de la Vierge protectrice s'est formé au cours du VI^e siècle, et sa manifestation la plus connue fut au moment du siège de Constantinople par les Perses et les Avars en 626. L'expression la plus célèbre de la piété mariale fut la création de l'*Hymne Acathiste de la Mère de Dieu*. Il a été traduit en slavon relativement tôt, ce qui était en unisson avec les idées mentionnées. Le premier témoignage sur le culte de la Vierge en tant que protectrice de l'Empire bulgare vient de la vénération particulière vouée à une icône de la Mère de Dieu. Les textes concernant ce témoignage racontent les événements lors de la conquête de la ville de Preslav par les armées de Jean Tsimiskès.¹⁸ La Vierge est mentionnée aussi en tant que gardienne de la ville dans l'inscription du tsar Jean Vladislav de la ville de Bitolja (début de XI^e siècle).¹⁹ Durant toute la période médiévale, ce culte demeure un des traits caractéristiques de l'idéologie de la capitale, disons de la ville en général chez les Orthodoxes. La vénération particulière de sainte Paraskeva-Petka, autrement dit le culte impérial du Second Empire bulgare qui est passé plus tard en Serbie et en Roumanie, pourrait être considéré comme une réplique et dans un certain sens comme substitution du culte marial hors de l'Empire.²⁰

¹⁶ C'était Enrica Folieri (*La fondazione di Costantinopoli: riti pagani e cristiani*, p. 230) qui attire l'attention sur cette expression de Publilius Optatianus Porphyrius (*Carmen XVIII*, 34).

¹⁷ A. Cameron, *The Theotokos in Sixth-Century Constantinople*, in *Journal of Theological Studies* n. s., 29/1 (April 1978), passim; Д. Польшанский, *Средновековният български град през XIII–XIV век*, София, 1989, p. 158–160; id., *Мястото на Девин град и неговата роля*, in *Исторически преглед*, 10 (1984), 2, p. 81–85. Sur la tradition russe et spécialement sur le culte du *Pokrov* de la Vierge nous renvoyons à l'article d'Alexandre Naumow (А. Наумов, *Богородичне иконе и ритуализација одбране града*, in *Црквене студије/Church Studies*, 3/3, p. 187–197).

¹⁸ В. Ив. Божилов, *Византийският свят (Le monde byzantin)*, София, 2008, p. 181–183; Iv. Biliarsky, *The Tale of the Prophet Isaiah. The Destiny and Meanings of an Apocryphal Text*, p. 112.

¹⁹ Ъ. Заимов, В. Тъпкова-Заимова, *Българин родом. Битолският надпис на Иван-Владислав, самодържец български*, София, 1981, p. 9.

²⁰ А ce sujet j'ai consacré un livre particulier: Ив. Билярски, *Покровители на Царството (Св. цар Петър и св. Параскева-Петка)*, София, 2004, p. 43 suiv.

La vénération de la Vierge en tant que protectrice de la Ville et de l'Empire est directement liée à la conception chrétienne du monde et de celle de l'histoire que l'on trouve dans l'eschatologie byzantine. La Mère de Dieu est l'intercesseur non pas de la construction politique de la Nouvelle Rome et de son Etat mais de l'Humanité toute entière. La ville de Constantinople représente « l'œil de l'Univers chrétien »²¹ et la sauvegarder c'est sauvegarder le monde. La protection de la Vierge sur la capitale (Rome/Constantinople), l'Empire et finalement sur l'Humanité trouve sa continuation dans le culte marial à Mont Athos. La légende de la visite de la Mère de Dieu à la péninsule Athonite et le fait qu'à la suite de cette visite l'endroit devint son domaine terrestre est à la base de ce culte.²² La Vierge détruisit les idoles locales et son Fils lui offrit la Montagne (qui est devenue « Sainte » à ce moment). C'est la raison pour laquelle on instaura plus tard la république monacale où on trouve des représentants de presque chaque peuple orthodoxe. Elle représente en soi un petit Univers chrétien, un microcosme qui figure le Monde orthodoxe et la protection de ce microcosme prend ainsi le sens de protection de l'Œcumène. Ainsi, l'expression « l'œil de l'Univers chrétien » trouvait sa justification pour le Mont Athos, et la conception de « *Kipos tès Theotokou* » d'une réplique de la Ville impériale.²³ Ce mélange de vénération constantinopolitaines et de vénération hagiogites s'avère important pour notre recherche car le culte de saint Constantin s'y trouve rattaché aussi. Bien qu'elle y fleurisse tardivement, au temps de la Turcocratie, la vénération de saint Constantin (liée surtout à la légende de la création du monastère de Kastamonitou) démontre avant tout la corrélation entre le

²¹ L'expression provient de l'Homélie de Théodore Syncelle sur la défense de Constantinople en 626 mais on la retrouve employée pour Mont Athos aussi dans un acte hagiogite du prince Jean Vladislav de l'an 1369 – P. Lemerle (ed.), *Archives de l'Athos*, II (2nd éd.), *Actes de Kutlumas*, Paris, 1988, No. 26, p. 1038-11.

²² La légende de la visite de la Vierge à Mont Athos qui devint son jardin provient de la tradition orale très ancienne (encore dans la *Vie de Saint Pierre l'Athonite*) mais fut développée en variante écrite dans les *Patria Agiou Orous* – une création du XV^e siècle et du début du temps de la domination ottomane (Sp. Lampros, in *Neos Hellenomnemon*, 9 [1912], p. 123–126). Elle fut incluse dans le livre imprimé russe du XVII^e siècle *Рай мысленный* (certains éléments on découvre dans un livre imprimé de Jacob Kraykov du XVI^e siècle) et devenait très populaire pendant l'époque de la domination ottomane: M. Цибранска, *Легендарната история на Света гора в един печатен апокриф от Венеция (1571–1572)*, in *Palaebulgarica*, 3 (2012), p. 104–124; M. Tsibranska-Kostova, *Mount Athos and Venetian Cyrillic Printing in the 16th Century. The first Bulgarian printer Jacob Kraykov Interprets the Athonite Legendary History*, in *ОСР*, 80 (2014), p. 143–164; Ив. Билярски, *Света Гора като свещено място за Православието (Богородичния култ и имперската идеология)*, in *Љубав према образовању и вера у Бога у православним манастирима/Love of Learning and Devotion to God in Orthodox Monasteries*, I, Beograd – Columbus, 2006, p. 215 sq.

²³ Ив. Biliarsky, *Saint Constantin, Mont Athos et l'idée de la sainteté de l'Empire durant la Turcocratie*, in *Diritto @ storia*, 2 (2003), <http://www.dirittoestoria.it/memorie2/Testi%20delle%20Comunicazioni/Biliarski-Saint-Constantin.htm>; Ив. Билярски, *Света Гора като свещено място за Православието (Богородичния култ и имперската идеология)*, p. 211–219.

culte marial de protection de la Ville et celui du premier empereur chrétien, fondateur et rénovateur de la Ville capitale.²⁴

La Mère de Dieu, en tant qu'intercesseur auprès de son Fils, remplace définitivement au cours des VI^e-VII^e siècles la fonction des anciennes divinités protectrices de la ville. On pense avant tout à Tyché, Victoria, le héros-fondateur. Certains saints avaient aussi ces fonctions, et parmi eux le patron de Thessalonique saint Démétrius, par exemple. Comparée aux autres saints protecteurs, la figure de Constantin est différente et plus complexe car elle réunit les cultes de l'époque de la transition de l'Antiquité au Moyen âge et les pratiques de l'héritage préchrétien avec le Christianisme orthodoxe. Dans la quête de la protection divine, on arrivait à lui associer plusieurs lieux de la topographie sacrée de la Nouvelle Rome dont la colonne surmontée par sa statue qui se trouvait sur son forum représentait le point central.²⁵ Ce n'était pas uniquement un « lieu de mémoire » avec ses processions solennelles tous les 11 mai (le jour de la Naissance de Constantinople) mais aussi un lieu particulier auquel les notions de l'Empire et celle de la mission salvatrice du Fils incarné étaient étroitement liées. Sa matérialisation se trouvait dans l'insertion dans le monument d'un morceau de la vraie Croix.²⁶ Le point crucial du culte de Constantin demeure dans la vénération de cette Croix qui est, elle-même, en relation directe avec la vénération dominicale. Les images des saints Constantin et Hélène se rattachent non seulement à celle de la Vraie Croix mais également à l'Empire et à sa capitale, créée par cet empereur et portant son nom. Il faudrait noter le fait que la célébration des deux saints augustes a lieu le 21 mai, une date qui s'inscrit dans la chaîne des commémorations du mois de mai, le mois impérial et constantinopolitain qui inclut aussi le jour de la Naissance de la Ville, la fête de Mésopentecôte, le jour de saint Mocius, etc. Il est évident que Constantinople, elle-même, se présente aussi comme ville sainte par la présence de Dieu dont les manifestations y sont multiples. Sans pouvoir être la Ville Eternelle de Rome, puisque pour les chrétiens il n'y a pas d'objets éternels, elle perdure en tant que Ville Sainte qui ne succomberait qu'à la Fin du monde. Ces dimensions eschatologiques de la sauvegarde de la capitale sont étroitement liées au culte de saint Constantin.

²⁴ N. Oikonomidès, *Appendice II: La légende de Kastanomitou*, in N. Oikonomidès (ed.), *Archives de l'Athos*, IX, *Actes de Kastamonitou*, Paris, 1978, p. 97-101.

²⁵ Dans la traduction bulgare de la *Vita* d'Andrée Salos: *Старобългарска есхатология*, p. 193; v. aussi E. Folieri, *La fondazione di Costantinopoli*, p. 222-226; G. Dagrón, *Constantinople imaginaire*, p. 74-77, 136 suiv.; G. Fowden, *Constantine's Porphyry Column: The Earliest Literary Allusion*, in *JRS*, 81 (1991), p. 119-131; P. Stephenson, *Constantine. Unconquered Emperor, Christian Victor*, p. 190 suiv.; J. Bardill, *Constantine, Divine Emperor of the Christian Golden Age*, p. 28-36.

²⁶ C'était annoncé vers la fin du chapitre 17 du Premier livre de la *Historia ecclesiastica* de Socrates déjà en V^e siècle en citant que Saint Hélène a envoyé une partie de la Croix à son fils et il n'a caché dans sa statue sur la colonne: Socrates, *Historia ecclesiastica*, in *PG* 67, col 120; A. Eastmond, *Byzantine identity and relics of the True Cross in the thirteenth century*, in A. Лидов (ed.), *Восточнохристианские реликвию/Eastern Christian Relics*, Москва, 2003, p. 207; P. Stephenson, *Constantine. Unconquered Emperor, Christian Victor*, p. 201.

Le premier empereur romain chrétien était, sans doute, une figure triomphante. En tous cas, il l'était aux yeux de lui-même et ses contemporains, comme aussi dans la tradition des siècles suivants, ce que prouve le prénom de Victor qu'il s'approprie.²⁷ Cette image est inséparable de la vénération de la Croix conçue comme un *labarum* tropéophile.²⁸ Il me semble suffisamment convainquant d'insister que l'idée de la royauté triomphante, représentée par saint Constantin soit étroitement liée à l'idée de la protection. En effet, passer de la Victoire à la fonction apotropaïque n'exigeait que la possession de la force et du pouvoir pour s'opposer au Mal. La victoire chrétienne, si ce n'est pas seulement au temps de Constantin et de la Bas Empire, mais pour la toute la tradition médiévale, est plutôt la victoire du défenseur de la fois que celle du conquérant envahisseur.²⁹ C'est le cas de Constantin aussi.³⁰ Les batailles principales dont la tradition orthodoxe le glorifie, sont présentées comme une nécessité pour la sauvegarde des Chrétiens, de la Chrétienté et ses institutions universelles, et notamment, l'Eglise et l'Empire. Cet aspect de la vénération de saint Constantin est bien connu et développé. On ne l'utilisera ici uniquement en tant qu'argument de base pour d'autres éléments apotropaïques de son culte. Le père Christopher Walter dédia un article sur les fonctions apotropaïques de la Croix victorieuse où il traita

²⁷ C'est un des sujets généraux du livre suscité de Paul Stephenson (et plus particulièrement sur les pages suivantes: *Constantine. Unconquered Emperor, Christian Victor*, p. 215 suiv.). V. aussi J. Bardill, *Constantine, Divine Emperor of the Christian Golden Age*, p. 154 suiv.

²⁸ P. Stephenson, *Constantine. Unconquered Emperor, Christian Victor*, passim et p. 182 suiv.; J. Bardill, *Constantine, Divine Emperor of the Christian Golden Age*, p. 174–183.

²⁹ J. Bardill, *Constantine, Divine Emperor of the Christian Golden Age*, p. 58–104. Il faudrait noter que l'idée du roi-protecteur et sauveur est pré-chrétienne. Elle est représentée dans la figure du roi bon pasteur qui soigne son troupeau (*ibid.*, p. 138–139). C'est une image relative à Dieu que l'on retrouve aussi dans l'Ancien Testament. L'idée du roi-sauveur est bien évidente dans les royaumes hellénistiques où la figure la plus imposante était celle du pharaon Ptolémée I^{er} qui est allé jusqu'à s'approprier le nom de *Sôter* (*ibid.*, p. 126 suiv.). La religion païenne romaine connaissait aussi la divinité-protectrice et salvatrice (*Iuppiter Conservator* ou bien *Sol invictus comes*), une fonction qui passait souvent aux empereurs (par exemple *Aurelianus Augustus Conservator*) – *ibid.*, p. 62 suiv. Avec Constantin aussi, on retrouve cette fonction dans un contexte païen solaire où il était souvent présenté en tant que sauveur de l'Empire, plus spécialement par les panégyristes dans la Gaule (*ibid.*, p. 126 suiv.). Avec le christianisme Constantin se présentait en tant qu'imitateur du Seigneur et la voie par laquelle la grâce divine arrivait aux Romains (*ibid.*, p. 130–132).

³⁰ Les problèmes liés à Constantin et à la théologie de la victoire (selon les mots de J. Gagé, *Stavros Nikopoios. La victoire impériale dans l'empire chrétien*, in *Revue d'histoire et de philosophie religieuses*, 13 [1933], p. 370–400), son évolution dans le contexte païen et la continuité en Chrétienté, sont bien développés dans le livre de P. Stephenson, *Constantine. Unconquered Emperor. Christian Victor*, London, 2009, passim et plus spécialement p. 71 suiv., 138 suiv., 215 suiv. Il est important de mentionner les changements dans ce domaine qui ont eu lieu après le triomphe du Christianisme, donc Durant l'époque post-constantinienne: « One can also discern a shift from the traditional theology of vistory, centred on the 'manly aggressiveness' (*virtus*) of the commander, to a theology that rewarded personal piety » (*ibid.*, p. 302). J. Bardill touche à ce problème, lui aussi – v. la note précédente.

surtout de la liaison de sa représentation, accompagnée de l'inscription IC XC NI KA.³¹ Il nous propose une suite d'arguments sur l'utilisation de la Croix, qui au début n'est qu'un signe de la Victoire impériale, étroitement lié au pouvoir, mais qui petit à petit prend la forme d'un objet apotropaïque contre les démons, les différentes calamités et les forces du Malin en général.³² Mais, l'article du père Walter ne s'occupait que de problèmes très concrets, liés uniquement à la représentation de la Croix comportant l'inscription victorieuse. En tout les cas, et malgré le fait qu'il laissait de côté la signification impériale des images en question, son excellent article est une aide précieuse dans notre recherche actuelle car la vénération de la relique dominicale se joint à celle du premier empereur romain chrétien et de sa mère. Des images se rapportant avant tout à la Victoire mais aussi à la sauvegarde des Chrétiens tout en formant un ensemble bien précis.

On découvre de traits apotropaïques du culte de saint Constantin dans la foi populaire ainsi que dans la pratique de l'Eglise d'Orient qui exerçait parfois une influence forte en Occident et surtout en Italie. Bien que Constantin ne soit pas inclus dans le calendrier officiel romain, l'Eglise catholique tolère sa vénération locale. Ainsi, son culte est célébré encore aujourd'hui dans son sanctuaire à Sedilo en Sardaigne.³³ Lors des rites qu'on y accomplit, la victoire belliqueuse et le détournement du mal, coexistent incarnés et représentés par la figuration de l'empereur chrétien. Sardaigne, ainsi que Sicile et Venise, représentaient toujours une enclave « byzantine » en Occident. C'est une grande île qui tournait le dos à la mer d'où provenaient les dangers, les conquérants, les pirates, les Phéniciens, les Carthaginois, les Grecs, les Romains etc. Même à l'heure actuelle la Sardaigne est divisée en Romagna et Barbaggia (anciennes *Romania* et *Barbaria*) la première couvrant le littoral et la seconde l'intérieure de l'île. A la lisière entre les deux se trouve le petit village, Sedilo, où chaque année au début du mois de juillet a lieu une fête traditionnelle dite « Ardia ». Il s'agit d'une compétition équestre qui d'après les croyances locales représente la bataille du pont Milvius. Le vainqueur porte toute l'année suivante le nom de Constantin. En réalité, cette fête comprend beaucoup d'éléments de caractère apotropaïque. Elle représente une vénération exclusive du premier empereur romain chrétien, non accompagné de sa mère, fait dont nous ne trouvons pas le témoignage dans la Chrétienté orientale. Dans le culte à Sedilo, Constantin est perçu comme protecteur contre tous les malheurs: les maladies, les accidents routiers, les faillites, la pauvreté, les femmes ou les hommes infidèles, le chômage, les patrons avares et nerveux ou les ouvriers paresseux. Cette polyfonctionnalité de la protection se confirme par les *ex voto* qui couvrent les murs du sanctuaire. Comparée

³¹ Chr. Walter, IC XC NI KA. *The Apotropaic Function of the Victorious Cross*, in *REB*, 55 (1997), p. 193–220.

³² Chr. Walter, *The Apotropaic Function*, p. 210–215.

³³ En effet Saint Constantin est vénéré comme protecteur de Sardaigne. Pour une présentation complète des traditions de Sedilo, y compris celles liées à l'empereur Constantin le Grand, je pourrais suggérer le livre du Monseigneur Antonio Francesco Spada, publié en deux volumes: A. F. Spada, *Sedilo*, I: *La Storia*, II: *La Gente*, Sedilo, 1998.

d'autres pratiques de vénération populaire du saint empereur, la tradition constantinienne de Sardaigne reste spécifique, locale et isolée. Il faudrait souligner aussi qu'elle reste clairement d'origine orientale pour ne pas dire « d'origine byzantine ». Rien d'étonnant dans cela puisque la grande île dont le patron est saint Constantin subit plus longtemps qu'ailleurs une forte influence byzantine. Ainsi, la vénération qui lui est réservée, est celle de l'exemple parfait du souverain chrétien, Défenseur de la Foi et des fidèles.

Bien évidemment, la Croix et ceux qui l'avaient trouvée, autrement dit les saints empereurs, ne pouvaient être protecteurs contre le Mal qu'à l'aide de l'intervention divine. Par conséquent, c'est Dieu qui est le Vainqueur et Sa présence se manifeste à travers certains objets qui prennent le rôle de médiateurs. Les analogies vétérotestamentaires qui rappellent les victoires du Peuple élu ne manquent pas, comme par exemple le bâton de Moïse, l'Arche de l'Alliance et d'autres symboles de la présence du Seigneur.³⁴ Cette présence apparaît avant tout dans le cadre de la liturgie et surtout de la liturgie eucharistique. La présence de saint Constantin et la Croix est attestée à plusieurs endroits dans la pratique de l'Eglise orthodoxe, aussi bien dans le passé que maintenant. Quant à la liturgie eucharistique c'est surtout la croix avec l'inscription IC XC NI KA sur la *prosphora* qui a de l'importance. Cette dernière question a été largement discutée dans l'article du père Christopher Walter cité plus haut. Néanmoins, il rejette l'idée de l'utilisation de ce signe pendant la haute époque. Il ne trouve non plus de liaison entre la *prosphora* et la même inscription de la Croix victorieuse sur les monnaies impériales qui sont l'instrument principal de la propagande du pouvoir.³⁵ G. Gerov affirme dans un de ces articles que les représentations des saints empereurs et la Croix dans l'espace de l'autel de l'église possèdent une connotation eucharistique évidente.³⁶ Par ailleurs, il me semble intéressant d'attirer l'attention sur l'utilisation d'un objet constantinien utilisé lors de la liturgie eucharistique. Ainsi, Antoine de Novgorod³⁷ (XII^e siècle) nous informe qu'à la Grande Eglise Sainte-Sophia pour la communion on s'est servi du bouclier de l'empereur. L'utilisation lors de la communion du bouclier qui est un objet de protection, est révélatrice. L'idée que l'empereur chrétien soit protecteur des fidèles lors de leur union avec Dieu, plus, qu'il soit protecteur de l'Empire en générale, est évidente.

Les connotations eucharistiques dans la vénération du premier empereur romain chrétien, vue dans le contexte de son image de défenseur et d'intercesseur pour les Chrétiens, nous orientent vers l'interprétation de son culte en tant que protecteur des défunts. La victoire sur la mort est mentionnée dans une lettre de l'évêque de Jérusalem à l'empereur Constantius,

³⁴ Cette allégation est confirmée par la forte présence de la figure du prophète Moïse ainsi que les nombreux renvois à son histoire et à ses zèles dans le texte du service divin pour la fête de l'Exaltation de la Croix dans la Chrétienté orientale.

³⁵ Chr. Walter, *The Apotropaic Function*, p. 198–201.

³⁶ G. Gerov, *L'image de Constantin et Hélène avec la Croix: étapes de formation et contenu symbolique*, in *Ниш и Византија*, II, Ниш, 2004, p. 236.

³⁷ *Путешествие новгородскаго архиепископа Антония в Царьград в конце 12^{го} столетия*, ed. П. Савваитов, Санктпетербург, 1872, col. 37 (l. 7a), 103.

le fils de Constantin. On trouve la représentation de cette idée dans la peinture murale comme, par exemple, dans les fresques de l'église des Saints-Anargyres à Kastoria.³⁸ Cet élément du culte s'éloigne de notre sujet mais, en revanche, il est en relation étroite avec la protection du Chrétien contre les démons et contre le Mal eschatologique, et de ce fait, liée aux fonctions similaires des anges-gardiens ce qui est essentiel pour notre étude. L'idée de l'empereur-protecteur a dû apparaître dès le début de la tradition constantinienne car on trouve dans la *Vita Constantini* d'Eusèbe de Césarée une description du palais impérial où l'empereur fut représenté terrassant un dragon, une image sans conteste de l'empereur-vainqueur du Malin.³⁹

En continuant mes réflexions dans la même voie, je voudrais mentionner un élément du programme iconographique des fresques murales de certaines églises orthodoxes qui semble être significatif pour la création de l'espace sacré du temple. Sans prétentions d'être exhaustif, on peut signaler que l'image des saints Constantin et Hélène et la Croix est ordinairement disposée dans l'espace d'entrée de l'église et le plus souvent près de la porte du naos. Pourquoi justement là? Comment cette pratique s'est établie et quelle était la voie de son évolution? Quelles sont les idées, sur lesquelles elle est basée? Sans doute, est-elle une des conséquences de la fonction victorieuse et apotropaïque de la Croix et des deux saints. G. Gerov a consacré tout un article concernant l'étude de l'emplacement de l'image des saints empereurs dans la peinture murale de l'église et sa signification.⁴⁰ D'après l'auteur, le culte a subi un long développement pour arriver jusqu'à la fixation de ce programme dans la peinture des églises orthodoxes. La place de leurs images près de l'entrée de l'église fut définitivement fixée au cours de XI^e-XII^e.⁴¹ Symbolisant la transition du monde profane au monde sacré, cet endroit comporte toujours une signification liminale. La fonction de l'image des empereurs et la Croix pourrait être définie alors, comme purement apotropaïque, et dans ce cas, on peut supposer qu'elle contribue au détournement du mal dès l'entrée dans naos.

On peut noter que le saint empereur et sa mère n'étaient pas seuls à leur poste de gardiens. Ils étaient accompagnés par les archanges et surtout le taxiarque et archistratège Michel. Un autre article de G. Gerov concerne une étude sur l'image des anges-gardiens située dans l'entrée de l'église. L'auteur argumente d'une manière convaincante la signification de cet emplacement⁴² mais aussi révèle de quelle manière durant le XIII^e siècle on arrive à la fixation

³⁸ G. Gerov, *L'image de Constantin et Hélène avec la Croix: étapes de formation et contenu symbolique*, p. 231.

³⁹ Eusebius, *Life of Constantine*, ed. Av. Cameron, St. G. Hall, Oxford, 1999, p. 122 (l. III.3), 255–256; G. Gerov, *L'image de Constantin et Hélène avec la Croix: étapes de formation et contenu symbolique*, p. 229–230. Jonathan Bardill voit dans cette image une représentation de l'empereur en tant qu'*imitator Christi*: J. Bardill, *Constantine, Divine Emperor of the Christian Golden Age*, p. 143–145.

⁴⁰ G. Gerov, *L'image de Constantin et Hélène avec la Croix: étapes de formation et contenu symbolique*, p. 227–239.

⁴¹ G. Gerov, *L'image de Constantin et Hélène avec la Croix*, p. 235–237.

⁴² Г. Геров, *Ангелите-пазители на входа*, in *ZRVI*, 46 (2009), p. 435–448.

définitive de l'image de l'archange Michel près de la porte de l'église, représenté toujours comme militaire, un glaive dans sa main.⁴³ Ce développement comprend les représentations des archanges Michel et Gabriel en habits impériaux et l'attribution, faite graduellement, des fonctions martiales de saint Michel, ce qui laissait pour longtemps la fonction de l'archange Gabriel non clairement définie.

G. Gerov attribue à ces images des fonctions de psychopompe et de détournement du mal, nettement précisées en termes eschatologiques et religieux. Il insiste sur les attributs de l'archange Michel en tant que protecteur des morts, ses présentations dans le contexte du Dernier jugement, dans ses batailles contre les démons et surtout en tant que gardien de l'église et son espace sacré.⁴⁴ Dans ce sens, il suit l'idée générale de l'étude déjà citée du père Christopher Walter qui, lui également, laisse de côté la signification impériale de la fonction apotropaïque de la Croix victorieuse durant la basse époque.⁴⁵ G. Gerov trouve sans importance le fait que les archanges, présentés près de l'entrée, portent des habits impériaux car on les retrouve vêtus de cette manière dans d'autres parties du décor mural de l'église.⁴⁶ Cette question a déjà été le sujet de recherches qui tentent à prouver que les habits impériaux des archanges avaient, sans doute, leur signification emblématique, fortement liée à la conception du pouvoir.⁴⁷ En revanche, l'auteur – un des pionniers des études sur le sujet de l'emplacement des saints empereurs dans le contexte de la décoration du temple – ne fait aucune mention aux images des saints Constantin et Hélène qui accompagnent souvent celle de l'archange Michel représenté de l'autre côté de la porte d'entrée de l'église.⁴⁸

⁴³ Г. Геров, *Ангелите-пазители на входа*, p. 436–440.

⁴⁴ Г. Геров, *Ангелите-пазители на входа*, p. 438–439, 440–441.

⁴⁵ Chr. Walter, *The Apotropaic Function*, p. 213–215.

⁴⁶ Г. Геров, *Ангелите-пазители на входа*, p. 436–437.

⁴⁷ С. Jolivet-Lévy, *Notes sur la représentation des archanges en costume impérial dans l'iconographie byzantine*, in *Cahiers archéologiques*, 46 (1998), p. 121–128. L'archange Michel sans doute était-il une figure du pouvoir à Byzance ainsi qu'en Bulgarie médiévale: Д. Чешмеджиев, *Към въпроса за култа на Архангел Михаил в средновековна България*, in *Palaeobulgarica*, 1 (1996), p. 55; id., *Император Константин I Велики и княз Борис I Михаил: победата над езичниците*, in *Ниш и Византија*, VI, Ниш, 2008, p. 357–368; O. V. Olar, *Împăratul înararat. Cultul arhanghelului Mihail în lumea bizantină*, București, 2004; R. Rousseva, *The Legend of the Last Emperor and an Unpublished Eschatological scene from St. Nicholas Church in Perhondri Village (Albania, 14th Century)*, in *Huuu u Византија*, VI, Ниш, 2008, p. 232 suiv., 240 suiv.

⁴⁸ On peut trouver des arguments convaincants, par exemple, à l'église du monastère de Kremikovtzi ou bien à l'église du Saint-Pantaléon à Vidin.

3. Sauvegarde du temple, protection de l'Église, protection de la Ville capitale, protection du Peuple.

La question qui se pose devant nous est si les fonctions apotropaïques du culte de saints Constantin et Hélène et la Croix pourraient être étudiées en relation avec le sujet de notre recherche actuelle, c'est-à-dire, la protection de la capitale et de l'Empire dans le contexte de l'héritage romain et byzantin des pays orthodoxes, et concrètement de la Bulgarie. C'est-à-dire, si la protection eschatologique visant le Salut des humains contre les forces du Malin est applicable à la défense de la capitale dans le sens historique et politique. Pour en répondre, il faut préciser quelle était la conception de la capitale dans l'Empire et dans la Communauté byzantine. Pour les Romains, Rome a la signification de l'Empire tout entier. La construction politique universelle était bâtie sur le fondement de la citoyenneté de l'ancienne Ville éternelle dont on a parlé au début de cet article et qui commença par l'asile, créé par Romulus sur la colline Capito-line. Quand cet universalisme rencontra le Christianisme, autrement dit, la foi qui permettait une interprétation universelle du Testament entre Dieu et Son peuple, on arriva à l'Empire chrétien. Il en résultait un Etat qui avait toutes les raisons d'être eschatologiques. J'ai consacré quelques articles⁴⁹ au problème de la conception de l'Etat dans le Monde byzantin du Moyen âge et à la haute époque de la domination ottomane. Ainsi l'Etat orthodoxe existait de la manière dont on l'imaginait. Dans mes recherches, j'ai lancé l'idée des relations privilégiées entre l'Etat et l'Église en rapport avec leurs fonctions religieuses. L'Église était le *Corpus Christi* réunissant les êtres humains et les êtres célestes, présentant aux premiers l'unique voie de communier avec Dieu, mais l'Etat était aussi une institution sacrale. Ces devoirs, finalement, étaient les mêmes: assister et secourir les hommes sur leur chemin vers le Salut. Les manières d'agir et l'espace dans lequel on évoluait étaient différents, mais non pas les objectifs.

En suivant cet ordre d'idées, nous pouvons mentionner aussi la signification de la « ville » dans le sens religieux. Cette question mérite une étude à part et ici nous ne nous sommes occupés que de la place liturgique de la ville citée lors de l'office et plus particulièrement durant la Grande litanie et l'Anaphore de la Liturgie de saint Basile le Grand, de saint Jean Chrysostome aussi bien que dans la Grande litanie de la Liturgie des Dons Présanctifiés. Sans prétendre d'être exhaustif dans l'énumération des citations, on peut dire que « la ville » joue le rôle de communauté eucharistique universelle de la même manière que chaque liturgie eucharistique dans l'Église orthodoxe est universelle. Ce qui importe, c'est le fait de préserver le temple, ce qui veut dire de préserver l'Église comprise dans le sens ecclésiologique, et donc les fidèles c'est-à-dire le Peuple élu. C'est d'ailleurs une des prédestinations aussi des fonctions historiques de l'Empire dans ce siècle. Le bâtiment ecclésiastique était toujours perçu comme une construction visible de l'Église en tant qu'institution Divino-humaine. Voilà pourquoi un signe dominical, la Croix, et un souverain,

⁴⁹ Iv. Biliarsky, *La demeure et la corne de l'Empire*, p. 179–197 et d'autres articles cités ici dans la note 2.

représentant tout à fait particulier de l'Empire étaient choisis comme gardiens de l'entrée de l'église au même titre que le taxiarque des guerriers célestes.

Il est bien évident que les fonctions apotropaïques des représentations des gardiens de l'entrée du temple orthodoxe (les saints empereurs avec leur Croix et les archanges) sont polyvalentes et pourraient être étudiées de différents points de vue. L'eschatologie⁵⁰ y est particulièrement importante et parfois prédominante. On peut dire qu'elle trouve sa culmination dans les représentations de la cavalcade de l'Eglise militante de Pătrăuți qui reste sans parallèles dans l'art orthodoxe du Moyen âge.⁵¹ Néanmoins, ce point de vue eschatologique n'enlève pas l'importance de la sauvegarde historique du Peuple élu et la vigilance des fidèles par l'Empire, cette fois-ci incarné par le saint empereur Constantin et sa mère. Leur protection passe par la protection de l'Eglise, le Corps donc du Sauveur et des croyants.

4. Conclusion.

Dans cet article bref, j'ai essayé de présenter certains aspects concrets de l'héritage romain et constantinopolitain dans les pays orthodoxes: l'idéologie de la capitale, conçue comme point focal de l'Empire entier et dans le cas byzantin en tant que « l'œil du monde chrétien ». Certes, l'identification de la Ville à l'Empire universel est un trait caractéristique de l'héritage de la *Romanité* dont Rome et la Nouvelle Rome constituaient le noyau. Sans doute, pourrait-on y découvrir une dépendance de la création de la conception de la ville capitale et de son évolution par rapport à la Ville éternelle et la Ville impériale de l'Empire d'Orient. Cela commence par sa fondation et continue par sa défense historique ou imaginaire. Cette dernière était le sujet de cet article. En poursuivant certains éléments concrets je suis arrivé à l'édifice de son image religieuse et idéologique qui doit être définie comme fondamentale et indispensable à la théologie de la politique et de l'histoire du Monde byzantin. Ce qui donne l'unité de notre étude, c'est avant tout l'image polyvalente de saint Constantin, le premier empereur romain chrétien, le fondateur de la Nouvelle Rome, particulièrement vénéré dans la Chrétienté orientale qui était en même temps la personne historique par excellence et le saint qui incarnait toujours l'idée de la Romanité continuée.

⁵⁰ L'idée du sauveur eschatologique, de saint empereur Constantin est, sans doute, liée à son image christique que l'on retrouve parfois dans le rite de sa vénération: J. Bardill, *Constantine, Divine Emperor of the Christian Golden Age*, p. 338–384.

⁵¹ Il existe beaucoup de recherches sur ce sujet mais je ne me référerai ici que à l'article généralisant de Cesare Alzati dans l'Encyclopédie constantinienne avec la littérature y citée: C. Alzati, *Idea imperial et continuità romana. Aspetti del culto di san Costantino in ambito romeno*, p. 503–507. Je devrais signaler aussi le fait que l'influence du Second Empire bulgare était très forte en Moldavie au temps d'Etienne le Grand qui est le donateur d'ailleurs de l'église de Pătrăuți.

The Serbs and the Overlapping Authorities of Rome and Constantinople (7th to 16th Century)

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The political and ideological relations of the Serbs with Rome and Constantinople should clearly be analyzed bearing in mind the general context, character and rhythm of wider relations between these two political, ecclesiastical and ideological centres. Such analysis must never lose sight, however, of how inextricably these aspects were intertwined in the old Roman province of Illyricum – the often mutable historical and geographical term used to describe the territory of the original Serbian settlement in the Roman empire. The extent of the influence of Rome and Constantinople in the region depended, naturally, on many factors. Among these, four main vectors of structural character and of longer duration can be discerned. One is the rhythm and intensity of the imperial renewals of Rome and Constantinople as the two main centres from which the conception of *Romanitas* and the corresponding political and ideological influences were generated.¹ The next is the problem of church jurisdiction, which, until 1054, was usually resolved, theoretically and practically, by demarcation of the spheres of interest of the regional churches. After the division of the Christian world, however, the question of jurisdiction was additionally complicated by the two different conceptions of ecclesiology and Orthodoxy. The third factor is related to the four most important ‘Roman’ institutions: that of the Constantinopolitan (the Byzantine, including the Latin) emperor, the Pope, the Constantinopolitan Patriarch and the Western (Frankish and German) emperor, and to their perplexed mutual relations, especially with regard to their ambition and capacity to act as either theoretical or actual sources of earthly or spiritual authority and as the heads of corresponding, though often opposing, political

¹ The Roman identity of Byzantium has recently been discussed in several studies, see I. Stouraitis, *Roman identity in Byzantium: a critical approach*, in *BZ*, 107/1 (2014), p. 175–220; A. Kaldellis, *The Byzantine Republic: People and Power in New Rome*, Harvard, 2015; J. Haldon, *Res publica Byzantina? State formation and issues of identity in medieval east Rome*, in *BMGS*, 40/1 (2016), p. 4–16. For the genesis of the ‘two empires conflict’ s. D. Nehrich, *Diplomatische Gesandtschaften zwischen Ost- und Westkaisern 756–1002*, Bern, 1999; for the post-1204 period s. D. Angelov, *Imperial Ideology and Political Thought in Byzantium, 1204–1330*, Cambridge, 2006; F. Van Tricht, *The Latin ‘Renovatio’ of Byzantium: The Empire of Constantinople, 1204–1228*, Leiden – Boston, 2011.

hierarchies of earthly rulers. The fourth vector is local, related to the dynamics of Serbian social and political development and their relations with the different 'Roman' authorities.

The Roman administrative unit of Illyricum, which in its widest extent only partially corresponds to the modern day geographical terms 'the Balkans', 'the Balkan peninsula' or 'South-East Europe', is viewed here as a contact zone, a zone of mutual cooperation, coexistence, overlapping, opposition and conflict between the different authorities of Rome and Constantinople.² These contacts had a decisive impact on many aspects of the Serbian past in the period from the 7th to the 16th century, and it must be understood that here we can only hope to trace their general outlines, while drawing attention to certain particularly important facets of the problem. The main focus of this text will centre around the two peculiar problems: 1. The transition of the territories inhabited by the Serbs from the period of the Byzantine imperial restoration established after the successful wars of Basil II from 1018, into the period of the first twilight of the Byzantine empire from 1180 to 1204; 2. The emergence of the Serbian kingdom and autocephalous Greek-Orthodox church in the fragmented Byzantine world from 1204 to 1220. An examination of the cultural components of these relations, although many of them were of powerful political and ideological significance, has intentionally been omitted from this overview. These issues have recently been incorporated into another similar synthesis of somewhat wider scope.³ Due to limits on space the bibliography will be restricted to more recent works which nonetheless contain references to earlier scholarship.⁴ We shall also only briefly review the problem of the liturgical commemoration of the Byzantine emperor in the Serbian lands as an ecclesiological manifestation of current political relations and conceptions on the

² For the late-Roman and Byzantine notions of Illyricum, see G. Dagron, *Les villes dans l'Illyricum protobyzantin, Villes et peuplement dans l'Illyricum protobyzantin*, Rome, 1984, p. 1–20; J. Koder, *Το Βυζάντιο ως χώρος. Εισαγωγή στην ιστορική γεωγραφία της Ανατολικής Μεσογείου στην βυζαντινή εποχή*, Θεσσαλονίκη, 2004, p. 110–114, 143–151.

³ G. Subotić, Lj. Maksimović, *La Serbie entre Byzance et l'Occident*, in *XX^e congrès international des études byzantines, Collège de France – Sorbonne, 19–25 août 2001, Prés-acts I. Séances plénières*, Paris, 2001, p. 241–250; see also Lj. Maksimović, *The Byzantine 'Commonwealth': an Early Attempt on European Integration?*, in E. Chrysos, P. Kitromilides, C. Svolopoulos (ed.), *The Idea of European Community in History*, I, Athens, 2003, p. 99–109 (= *Византијски „Комонвелт“: један рани покушај европских интеграција*, in *Византијски свет и Срби*, Београд, 2008, p. 207–216).

⁴ A significant number of the questions covered by the title of this paper are addressed in earlier general works of Serbian history, notably in the relevant chapters of the *History of the Serbian People*, to which we will not refer directly here, see С. Ћирковић (ed.), *Историја српског народа*, I, Београд, 1981; Ј. Калић (ed.), *Историја српског народа*, II, Београд, 1982. This review includes also the results of my own research, conducted during the preparation of my unpublished doctoral thesis, *Byzantine Views of the Serbs at the time of the first Palaiologoi (c. 1261–c. 1371)*.

Constantinopolitan emperor's role in the Church, by highlighting certain characteristic moments or problems of its almost unknown history.⁵

Early medieval Serbian political geography has been taken as the starting point, namely the territories of Diocletia, Travunija, Zahumlje, Neretva and Serbia including Bosnia. The account of the arrival of the Serbs as federates in areas belonging to the Roman empire, of their settlement in the province of Dalmatia and the Christianization performed by priests sent from Rome at the time of Emperor Heraclius (610–641) forms part of the much later Byzantine-Roman historiography, written within the circle of Emperor Constantine VII Porfirogenetos (944–959).⁶ The baptistry of prince Višeslav (which dates from approximately the end of the 8th or the beginning of the 9th century) most probably testifies, taken together with elements of Latin church terminology and toponomy in the Serbian lands, to the fact that the Serbs belonged to the jurisdiction of the maritime church centres, and therefore to the jurisdiction of Rome, during the first centuries of their settlement in the territory of the Byzantine empire. This was interrupted, again most probably, by their ephemeral inclusion into the sphere of the patriarchate of Constantinople, in the time of Patriarch Photios and Emperor Basil I.⁷ As far as can be reconstructed, the activity of the Bishopric of Dubrovnik (from approximately the mid-10th century an archbishopric) was of special importance, since the archonties of Serbia, Travunija and Zahumlje were within its jurisdiction. The weak, and most probably very discontinuous political bonds between the Serbs and their communities (archonties), and Constantinople after they had been settled in Dalmatia depended, in the centuries to come, on the rhythm and intensity of the Byzantine imperial restoration in the Balkan peninsula. Imperial influences, manifested in the recognition of the supreme authority of the emperor in Constantinople, experienced a temporary increase in the times of Basil I (867–886), Roman I (920–944), Constantine VII

⁵ The issue of the commemoration of the secular authority during the liturgy as served in the churches of the Serbian lands has not been specifically researched, leaving aside the identification of the value as sources of the old Serbian breviaries, see: И. Ђурић, *Поменик светогорског Протата с краја XIV века*, in *ZRVI*, 20 (1981), p. 139–169. On the issue of the commemoration of the secular authority in the liturgy see, R. F. Taft, S. J., *The Diptychs*, IV, *A History of the Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom* (Orientalia Christiana Analecta, 238), Rome, 1991. Some general comments on the issue are made here, on the basis of our initial research.

⁶ Т. Џивковић, *De conversione Croatorum et Serborum. A lost source*, Belgrade, 2012; id., *The Urban Landscape of Early Medieval Slavic Principalities in the Territories of the Former Praefectura Illyricum and in the Province of Dalmatia (ca. 610–950)*, in S. Rudić (ed.), *The World of the Slavs*, Belgrade, 2013, p. 15–35.

⁷ Т. Живковић, *Црквена организација у српским земљама (рани средњи век)*, Београд, 2004, p. 73–84; П. Коматина, *Црквена политика Византије од краја иконоборства до смрти цара Василија I*, Београд, 2014, p. 261–285; С. Пириватрић, *Ђурилметодијевске традиције и српске области пре постанка аутокефалне цркве у краљевству Немањића 1219. године*, in J. Радић, В. Савић (ed.), *Свети Ђурило и Методије и словенско писано наслеђе (863–2013)*, Београд, 2014, p. 103–124, 103–107.

(944–959) and John I (969–976), but waned during the occasional Byzantine-Bulgarian wars (894–927).⁸ The theoretical question of the church commemoration of the Byzantine emperor in the Serbian archonties, can only be hypothetically answered in this way: the commemoration was continuous from the time of Basil I, with the exception of a short-term Bulgarian occupation of Serbia, whereas a certain discontinuity can be supposed for the earlier periods.

The renewal of direct or indirect rule from Constantinople after the demise of the Bulgarian empire at the hands of Basil II (976–1025) in 1018, included Serbian regions as well. The manner in which Byzantine-Roman control was exerted over Diocletia, Travunija, Serbia and Zahumlje presupposed their ephemeral inclusion into the administrative (thematic) system of the Empire and constant cooperation with the local ruling dynasties. The weakening of the Empire in the 11th century and the strengthening of the local dynasty of Travunian descent in Diocletia, Serbia and Zahumlje by 1042, were connected processes, the consequences of which were the cessation of direct Byzantine administration, followed by the granting of court titles to the local rulers and their inclusion into the virtual court of the Constantinopolitan emperor.⁹ With regard to the church administration, in 1019–1020 Basil II reorganized the territory of the former Bulgarian Patriarchate as an archbishopric with its seat in Ohrid, while in 1024 he moved to achieve a demarcation of the church spheres of Rome and Constantinople. As far as can be reconstructed, the demarcation line left Serbia, Travunija and Zahumlje within the frames of the Roman church, i.e. the Archbishopric of Dubrovnik, whereas Diocletia belonged to the sphere of the Constantinopolitan metropolis, i.e. the metropolis of Dyrrachion. Both of these areas were adjoined to the Archbishopric of Bulgaria with its centre in Ohrid, and its western bishoprics in Prizren, Lipljan, Ras and Sirmium.¹⁰

⁸ P. Stephenson, *Byzantium's Balkan Frontier. A Political Study of the Northern Balkans, 900–1204*, Cambridge, 2000, p. 18–58; Т. Живковић, *Јужни Словени под византијском влашћу*, Београд, 2002, p. 341–444; И. Коматина, *Црква и држава у српским земљама од XI до XIII века*, Београд, 2016, p. 51–91. Cf. also S. Pirivatrić, *The Dynamics of the Byzantine-Serbian relations*, in D. Popović, D. Vojvodić (ed.), *Byzantine Heritage and Serbian Art*, I–III, vol. I: V. Bikić (ed.), *Process of Byzantinization and Serbian Archaeology*, Belgrade, 2016, p. 17–35, 19–21 (also for further periods).

⁹ Љ. Максимовић, *Организација византијске власти у новоосвојеним областима после 1018. године*, in *ZRVI*, 36 (1997), p. 31–44 (= *Огледи о политичкој моћи у Византији*, Београд, 2013, p. 119–136); P. Stephenson, *Byzantium's Balkan Frontier*, p. 77–79, 117–135; Lj. Maksimović, *To Vvζάντιο και οι Σέρβοι τον 11^ο αιώνα: ζήτημα εσωτερικής ή εξωτερικής πολιτικής*, in V. Vlysidou (ed.), *Η Αυτοκρατορία σε κρίση (·). Το Vvζάντιο τον 11^ο αιώνα (1025–1081)*, Αθήνα, 2003, p. 75–85; П. Коматина, *Србија и Дукља у делу Јована Скилице*, in *ZRVI*, 49 (2012), p. 159–186.

¹⁰ Б. Крсмановић, *О односу управне и црквене организације на подручју Охридске архиепископије*, in Б. Крсмановић, Љ. Максимовић, Р. Радић (ed.), *Византијски свет на Балкану*, I, *Охридска архиепископија у византијском свету*, Београд, 2012, p. 17–39; Ј. Калић, *Црквене прилике у српским земљама до стварања архиепископије 1219. године*, in В. Ђурић (ed.), *Сава*

In the mid-11th century two convergent processes – one of general, another of local importance – made regional church jurisdiction a distinctive mark of belonging to one or another of two increasingly alienated worlds – that of Greek Orthodoxy and Roman Catholicism: the schism of 1054 happened at the moment when the power of Diocletia had started to grow. With the rise of the rulers of Diocletia and their independence from the Byzantine emperors also came the title of king, recognized by the Pope. A former ally of the emperor, King Mihajlo, the ruler of Diocletia and the adjacent Serbian regions, abandoned the hierarchy of the Constantinopolitan court, where he held the rank of protospatharius, and joined the western system, where emperors and popes were engaged in mutual rivalry, bestowing crowns and royal titles. In 1077 Mihajlo requested that the Pope send him a flag, which at the time was considered a sign of a ruler's loyalty and obedience. Mihajlo's son and successor King Bodin, styled as ruler of Diocletia and Serbia, was included as an unstable ally into the Constantinopolitan hierarchy by Alexios I Komnenos (1081–1118), most probably at the beginning of the Emperor's reign. Bodin was addressed as exousiastes, a Byzantine equivalent of his royal title, and was granted the court title of protosebastos. However, in ca. 1085 he seized control of the region of Ras from the Empire, where the most remote of the western bishoprics that belonged to the Orthodox archbishopric of Ohrid were situated. The creation of an ephemeral archbishopric in Bar by (anti) Pope Clement III in 1089, with authority stretching to Serbia, Bosnia and Travunija, should also be attributed to his political aspirations.¹¹ The Serbian perception of the Romans – Romaioi as “Greeks” and the Byzantine empire as the “Greek empire”, visible in the Serbian sources from the 12th century, is most probably the result of Roman propaganda at the first place, conceived within the context of the papal project concerning the restoration of the Roman empire with the cooperation of Charlemagne, after 800, appreciable from the epoch of Pope Nicolas I (858–867).¹² This phenomenon was to be a lasting consequence of the inclusion of the Serbian lands into the Roman jurisdictional area, and it is most likely that it was strengthened in the Serbian political perception through the connections of Diocletia with the Roman See. With respect to all these circumstances the commemoration of the Byzantine emperor at

Немањић – Свети Сава. Историја и предање, Београд, 1979, p. 27–53 (= *Европа и Срби*, Београд, 2006, p. 113–152); S. Pirivatrić, *Between Constantinople, Rome and Ohrid: A Short Survey of Church organization in the Serbian principalities 1019–1219*, in A.-E. Tachiaos (ed.), *Cyril and Methodius: Byzantium and the World of the Slavs*, Thessaloniki, 2015, p. 655–664; И. Коматина, *Црква и држава у српским земљама*, p. 91–123.

¹¹ J. Leśny, *Studia nad początkami serbskiej monarchii Nemaniczów (połowa XI–koniec XII wieku)*, Wrocław – Warszawa – Kraków – Gdańsk – Łódź, 1989, p. 79–96; P. Stephenson, *Byzantium's Balkan Frontier*, p. 138–150; П. Коматина, *Византијска титула Константина Бодина*, in *ZRVI*, 48 (2011), p. 61–76; S. Pirivatrić, *Between Constantinople, Rome and Ohrid*, p. 659–660; И. Коматина, *Црква и држава у српским земљама*, p. 132–144.

¹² PG 119, 4; *Monumenta Germaniae Historica*, Epistolae VII, 82, p. 433.

church service within the realm of Diocletia had most probably been abolished sometime before Mihajlo became a king.

The conquest of Ras broke the control of the Byzantine emperors over that region for decades, and proved to be the crucial precondition for a future turnover. Emperor Alexios I tried afterwards to establish control over the Serbian territories, i.e. over Bodin and Vukan, who was appointed local ruler in Raška by the king of Diocletia. During a confrontation Bodin was defeated and captured, but remained in power, undoubtedly with the emperor's approval. On the other hand, as the master of Serbia, now with Ras as its central region, Vukan led a series of military incursions into the territories of the Empire. The conflicts were ended with the meeting of Emperor Alexios Komnenos and Župan Vukan in 1094 and with the acknowledgment of Byzantine supreme power, the dispatch of Serbian hostages to Constantinople and with the demarcation. The feeble control of Byzantium over the Diocletia of Bodin's descendants was confirmed in later military campaigns, one of which was led by future Emperor John Komnenos. So Alexios I gradually imposed himself as the supreme lord of both states, at least for a while. The model of the Byzantine emperor's dominance included exercising his supreme rights to choose or confirm their rulers. In ca. 1122 Emperor John II Komnenos (1118–1143) retook the region of Ras for the Byzantine realm, a fact that meant the return of an Orthodox bishop and also a reincorporation of this bishopric into the jurisdiction of the Archbishopric of Ohrid. Power was shared between the Byzantine generals and members of the local dynasty of Vukan's relatives and descendants. During the first half of the 12th century Serbia, now with its core in the region of Ras, became much more important than the other regions of Bodin's former kingdom – that of Diocletia, Zahumlje, Travunija or Bosnia, which was already politically separated from the rest of Serbia by this time.¹³

However, in the area where the two Roman empires – the Byzantine of the Komnenoi and the German of the Hohenstaufens – confronted each other, with their unstable allies Hungary and Serbia, the existence of the Orthodox Bishop in Ras must have depended on a concrete Byzantine presence in the region. The Byzantine domination in Ras was challenged several times during the Byzantine-Hungarian wars of 1127–1129 and 1149–1155 with several consequent apostasies on the part of Serbian rulers – of Uroš I and his sons Uroš II, Beloš and Desa, who inclined more towards their Roman-Catholic Hungarian cousins than to the Greek-Orthodox Byzantine emperor. Namely, they were vassals of the Byzantine emperor, but they also had close family connections to the ruling dynasty of Hungary – Jelena, a daughter of Grand Župan Uroš I was married to Bela, the future king, in the context of the 1127–1129 conflict. The Byzantine garrisons were finally withdrawn from the region of Ras

¹³ И. Коматина, *Српски владари у Алексијади – хронолошки оквири деловања*, in *ZRVI*, 52 (2015), p. 173–194; Т. Живковић, *Дукља између Рашке и Византије у првој половини XII века*, in *ZRVI*, 43 (2006), p. 451–466. Αγγ. Παπαγεωργίου, *Βυζάντιο και Σέρβοι: Το ζήτημα των εκστρατειών του Ιωάννη Β' Κομνηνού εναντίον των Σέρβων*, in *Εόα και Εσπέρια*, 8 (2012), p. 353–366.

after 1155, leaving power exclusively in the hands of the local ruling family of the grand župan, who was nonetheless forced to acknowledge the Byzantine emperor as his master, was invested by him and became his pronoiar of a kind.¹⁴

It was Emperor Manuel I Komnenos (1143–1180) who reaffirmed the imperial authority in Serbia. His arbitration between two candidates to the throne of the Grand Župan in 1155 before German, French and Turkish emissaries was a scene calculated to impress and to show to the rival empire and others the nature of his imperial sovereignty over the Serbs.¹⁵ He also started to change the negative balance of power towards a predominant Byzantine influence in Serbia by investing the secondary branch of Vukan's family into the position of local 'power-sharing' rulers, being his vassals as well. The appearance of Stefan Nemanja and his brothers in that capacity should be seen as part of the emperor's enterprise to diminish Hungarian influence in Ras and Serbia and to strengthen that of Byzantium. Manuel I finally eliminated the pro-Hungarian branch in the Serbian ruling family by the deposition of Grand Župan Desa in 1165, during the new Byzantine-Hungarian conflict in 1162–1167. The year 1167 marked the peak of Byzantine power after the epoch of successful wars, controlling the regions of Dalmatia, Croatia, Srem, Bosnia, Serbia and Diocletia, in one way or another, as parts of the Empire. After he became grand župan, Stefan Nemanja (1166–1196) demonstrated a tendency to liberate himself from dependence on the Byzantine emperors on several occasions during his long rule (in 1172, from 1183–1191).¹⁶ His growing independence, as well as the conquest of the Byzantine province of Diocletia and Dalmatia, was followed by the abolition of the liturgical commemoration of the Byzantine emperor as a ruling sovereign and the introduction of Nemanja's own name into this practice.¹⁷ During the Third Crusade, in 1189 Nemanja established a friendly relationship with the German

¹⁴ F. Makk, *The Arpads and the Comneni. Political relations between Hungary and Byzantium in the 12th century*, Budapest, 1989, p. 31–62; P. Magdalino, *The Empire of Manuel I Komnenos, 1143–1180*, Cambridge, 1993, p. 41–95; P. Stephenson, *Byzantium's Balkan Frontier*, p. 211–247; J. Калић, *Жупан Белаш*, in *ZRVI*, 36 (1997), p. 63–81 (= *Европа и Срби*, p. 623–642); Lj. Maksimović, *Byzantinische Herrscherideologie und Regierungsmethoden im Falle Serbien. Ein Beitrag zum Verständnis des Byzantinischen Commonwealth*, in C. Scholz, G. Makris (ed.), *ΠΟΛΥΠΛΕΥΡΟΣ ΝΟΥΣ. Miscellanea für Peter Schreiner zu seinem 60. Geburtstag*, München – Leipzig, 2000, p. 174–192 (= *Византијски свет и Срби*, Београд, 2008, p. 159–177); С. Пириватрић, *Манојло I Комнин, „царски сан“ и „самодрици области српског престола“*, in *ZRVI*, 48 (2011), p. 89–118.

¹⁵ P. Stephenson, *Byzantium's Balkan Frontier*, p. 245–247; E. Blangez-Malamut, M. Sacouros, *L'image des Serbes dans la rethorique byzantine de la seconde moitié du XI^e siècle*, in K. Fledelius (ed.), *Byzantium. Identity, Image, Influence, XIX International Congress of Byzantine Studies, Copenhagen, 18–24 August 1996, Major Papers*, Copenhagen, 1996, p. 97–122; В. Станковић, *Срби у поезији Теодора Продрома и Анонима Манганског*, in *ZRVI*, 43 (2006), p. 437–450.

¹⁶ P. Stephenson, *Byzantium's Balkan Frontier*, p. 247–274; J. Калић, *Два царства у српској историји XII века*, in *ZRVI*, 38 (1999/2000), p. 197–212 (= *Европа и Срби*, p. 563–581).

¹⁷ Стефан Првовенчани, *Житије светог Симеона, Сабрана дела*, ed. Т. Јовановић, trans. Љ. Јухас-Георгиевска, Београд, 1999, p. 14–129, 36–41.

Roman emperor Frederic I Barbarossa (1152–1190), appearing also as his potential voluntary vassal. However, being defeated by Isakios II Angelos (1185–1195) in the important battle of the Morava in 1191, he had to acknowledge again the supreme power of the emperor, but without the obligation to send him auxiliary troops, while the marriage of the emperor's niece, Eudokia, to Nemanja's future heir, Stefan, signified his inclusion into the system of family rule of the Angeloi i.e. Komnenoi. The foundation of Studenica monastery shows, in a special way, the nature of the new relation between the emperor and the grand župan: Nemanja, as can be reconstructed, issued a chryssobull for his endowment and signed it as an "autokrator of all Serbian and maritime lands" (in Serbian). A Slav translation of the Byzantine title 'autokrator', the title 'samodržac' described the quasi-imperial capacity of his rule over the entire territory of his state, including the right to appoint and invest an heir, as indeed he did in 1196 when he abdicated in favour of Stefan, calling on everyone, in particular his eldest son Vukan, to submit to the new ruler, who was soon invested with the court title of sebastokrator.¹⁸ An important difference between the family of Nemanja and the previous generation of grand župans was the establishment of what have been termed monumental church endowments. His ktetorial activity presupposed cooperation with local bishops, which made him the defender of the western border of the Archbishopric of Ohrid, itself an outpost of the imperial policy in the interior of the Balkans. His ktetorial devotion reached its highest point after he abdicated and became the monk Simeon, with the renovation of the Hilandar monastery on Mount Athos carried out together with his youngest son, the monk Sava, as the result both of their Christian zeal and the high political interests of the imperial court.¹⁹ The foundation of a Serbian Hilandar summarized in a way the outcome of Byzantine-Serbian relations at the end of the 12th century, as well as the Byzantine-Hungarian struggle for domination over Serbia. The introductory lines of Nemanja's charter for Hilandar, issued in 1198 reflect the new quality of this relation, in which the divine origin of the power of the Byzantine emperor, the Hungarian king and the Serbian grand župan, and their hierarchical relation, are specially indicated.²⁰

¹⁸ Lj. Maksimović, *L'idéologie du souverain dans l'État serbe et la construction de Studenica*, in B. Korañ (ed.), *Студеница и византијска уметност око 1200. године*, Београд, 1988, p. 35–49, 36–41 (= *Византијски свет и Срби*, p. 113–131); С. Марјановић-Душанић, *Владарска идеологија Немањића. Дипломатичка студија*, Београд, 1997, p. 100–110; С. Пириватрић, *Хронологија и историјски контекст подизања манастира Студенице*, in *Зограф*, 39 (2015), p. 47–56.

¹⁹ Ј. Калић, *Охридска архиепископија и Србија XII века*, in *ZRVI*, 44/1 (2007), p. 197–208; М. Живојиновић, *Историја Хиландара*, Београд, 1998, p. 43–72; В. Krsmanović, *Mount Athos and Political Thought in the Slavic World*, in I. Ilyev et al. (ed.), *Proceedings of the 22nd International Congress of Byzantine Studies, Sofia, 22–27 August 2011, Volume I, Plenary papers*, Sofia, 2011, p. 145–166.

²⁰ Lj. Maksimović, *L'idéologie du souverain dans l'État serbe et la construction de Studenica*, p. 36–37; С. Марјановић-Душанић, *Владарска идеологија Немањића*, p. 60–69.

The court in Constantinople must have perceived Serbia at that time as its bastion towards Hungary and a part of the system of the imperial family rule – Grand Župan and Sebastokrator Stefan and his wife Eudokia were theoretically co-rulers, their state was mostly in the jurisdictional area of the Orthodox Archbishop of Ohrid, whose bishop in Ras had constitutive importance in the state, whereas the newly built monastery of Hilandar on Mont Athos represented a pledge of strong commitment from Serbia to the most significant spiritual centre of the Empire. However, this state of affairs did not last long. The rise of papal power during the time of Innocent III (1198–1216) and especially the outcome of the Fourth Crusade in 1204 with a further fragmentation of the Byzantine empire, a continuation of the process that had already started in the 1180s, brought about numerous short-term oscillations in the politics of the Serbian rulers of that time.²¹ The duality, in terms of church jurisdiction, within the state of “all Serbian and Maritime Lands” that Nemanja had left to his two sons contributed significantly to this. The coastal regions remained mostly under the jurisdiction of the Archbishops of Dubrovnik and Split, i.e. the see of Rome, while the jurisdiction of Dubrovnik over the old church province of Serbia was at that time already limited to Bosnia (*regnum Servilie quod est Bosna*), i.e. the rest was within the territory of the Orthodox Bishop of Ras. The de facto division of the ecclesiastical province of Serbia into Greek Orthodox and Roman Catholic jurisdictions was clearly an event with extremely important long term consequences. However, leaving aside the state of the bans of Bosnia, we will concentrate our attention here on the state of the grand župans, with the center in the region of Ras. The jurisdictional area of Dubrovnik was additionally limited by the tendency of separation of the episcopal see of Bar, which culminated in 1199 when, after an initiative started by Vukan, the ruler of the so-called “Maritime Lands” (the former Byzantine province of Diocletia and Dalmatia), Pope Innocent III recognized the rank of archbishopric for the throne of Bar (entrusting him with the jurisdiction over the nearby coastal cities and regions of Diocletia and Arvanon) and sent a pallium for the archbishop. At the same time, Grand Župan Stefan (1196–1227) asked the Pope for a crown which he did not get due to the opposition of the Hungarian king, while his marriage to the daughter of the Byzantine emperor was ended. After the very short reign of Vukan (1202–1205), who also hoped to obtain a crown, but did not get one, again because of the opposition of the Hungarian king, Stefan returned to the throne of Serbia. The reconciliation between brothers was consecrated on the relics of their venerable father who had died in 1199 and been translated from Hilandar to Studenica in 1207, while a few years later the Myrrh streaming from his grave was accepted as a sign of his sanctity. A period followed in which the influence of their younger brother archimandrite Sava, the future

²¹ B. Ferjančić, *Les états et les rapports internationaux après 1204*, in *The 17th International Byzantine Congress, Major papers, Dumbarton Oaks/Georgetown University, Washington, D.C., 3–8 August 1986*, New York, 1986, p. 639–668; id., *Србија и византијски свет у првој половини XIII века (1204–1261)*, in *ZRVI* 27/28, (1989), p. 103–148; Lj. Maksimović, *La Serbie et les contrées voisines avant et après la IV^e croisade*, in A. Laiou (ed.), *Urbs Capta. The Fourth Crusade and its Consequences, La IV^e Croisade et ses conséquences*, Paris, 2005, p. 269–282 (= *Византијски свет у Србу*, p. 417–432).

Saint Sava was strong, marked by the predominance of his political conceptions which rested on the institution of the deposed Emperor Alexios III (1195–1203), who was still considered the rightful Byzantine (“Greek”, in the local parlance of the time) emperor in Serbia.²² However, ca. 1215 a further change occurred when Grand Župan Stefan recognized Henry of Flanders, the Latin emperor of Constantinople, as the Byzantine (“Greek”) emperor, obviously slighting the imperial dignity of Theodore I Laskaris (1205–1221), who in 1208 was crowned as the emperor of the Romans in Nicaea.²³ Further steps included Stefan’s turn towards Venice and the papacy, followed by his marriage to Anna Dandolo and his coronation as king of “all Serbian and maritime lands” in 1217 with the crown sent to him by Pope Honorius III (1216–1227) through his legates.

Thus, the Serbian ruler entered into the order of the papal kings and became a part of the hierarchy of Western rulers, much as was the case at the time of the King of Diocletia Mihajlo, to whose precedent, it seems likely, Stefan appealed in his pretensions to the crown. It would be reasonable to assume that the next step, which never ensued, would have been the appointment of a Roman Catholic archpriest for those areas of the king’s state that were not under the jurisdiction of one of the coastal archbishops (a similar case occurred in Bulgaria a few years earlier, when the Pope appointed his primate there). The enterprise of archimandrite Sava, who had withdrawn to Mount Athos sometime earlier, led to the redefinition of the church and political circumstances in the state of his brother in the next few years, as well as to the relation of the church and state with regard to the different ‘Roman’ authorities.²⁴

Sava first travelled to Nicaea where he asked Emperor Theodore I Laskaris to have the Ecumenical Patriarch consecrate an archbishop for the state ruled by his brother Stefan. It is important to point out that the figure of Emperor Alexios III, who in the meantime had died, played an important part in the negotiations, all the more so, because Sava referred to the kinship between Nemanjić and Laskarids before the Nicaean emperor, established by the marital diplomacy of the Angeloi, i.e. Komnenoi, by marrying the emperor’s daughters to Stefan Nemanjić and Theodore Laskaris. More importantly, Sava’s appeal to the emperor

²² Г. Суботић, Б. Миљковић, И. Шпадијер, И. Тот (ed.), *Натписи историјске садржине у зидном сликарству, I, XII–XIII век*, Београд, 2015, р. 35–44 (Б. Миљковић); С. Пириватрић, *Византијски свет и постанак краљевства и аутокефалне цркве све српске и поморске земље* (forthcoming).

²³ Стефан Првовенчани, *Житије светог Симеона*, р. 100–105; С. Пириватрић, *Византијски свет и постанак краљевства и аутокефалне цркве*.

²⁴ D. Obolensky, *Six Byzantine Portraits*, Oxford, 1988, р. 115–172 (= *Шест византијских портрета*, Београд, 1991, р. 121–173); Б. Ферјанчић, Љ. Максимовић, *Свети Сава између Епира и Никеје*, in С. Ћирковић (ed.), *Свети Сава у српској историји и традицији*, Београд, 1998, р. 13–25; С. Ћирковић, *Свети Сава између Истока и Запада*, in *Свети Сава у српској историји и традицији*, р. 27–37; Ј. Калић, *Држава и црква у Србији XIII века*, in *ZRVI*, 46 (2009), р. 129–137; И. Коматина, *Црква и држава у српским земљама*, р. 192–228.

as a person with the power to intervene in the church affairs of the archbishopric of Ohrid was an acknowledgment of Theodore I as an authentic Byzantine (“Greek”) emperor. Along with his request, Sava offered the promise of the future liturgical commemoration of the emperor by the newly consecrated archbishop.²⁵ This diplomatic card should be perceived as part of Sava’s endeavors to reestablish the old political order, with the Byzantine emperor at its head, which had, presumably, been embodied, only a few years before, in the liturgical commemoration of the then living emperor, Alexios III Angelos, and which was reestablished in the time of Isaak II Angelos and Stefan Nemanja. Be that as it may, the emergence of the portrait of a Byzantine emperor in the iconographic program of the Mileševa monastery, possibly the only one of its kind in the Serbian church art of that time, placed just opposite the portrait of the ruling Serbian king, should be understood, in spite of recent controversy as to the exact identity of the painted figure, as a consequence of Sava’s agreement with Emperor Theodore. The older, as well as the later history of the church commemoration of the Byzantine emperor in the Serbian lands, which was an important expression of the conception of the hierarchy of the Orthodox rulers and of the true Emperor as the guardian of the faith, can be reconstructed mostly in a hypothetical way. Even though Sava’s mission led to the acknowledgment of Theodore I Laskaris as a true Orthodox emperor, the ethnic interpretation of his title in Serbia emphasized the Greek and not the Roman element, and thus remained within the context of the Western, papal discourse on the Byzantine Roman empire.²⁶ After 1219 the Nicaean emperor was perceived in Serbia as a “Constantinopolitan emperor”, which was, understandably, a case quite the opposite of the one valid only a couple of years earlier, when the Latin Emperor had been presented as the “Greek emperor” and also a significant indicator of a sui generis current theory of the *translatio imperii*. Consecrated as an archbishop in Nicaea, Sava was given the right of autocephaly, i.e. an independency in choosing and consecrating the archbishops at the territorial church council without the need to obtain confirmation of the synod of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. Sava apparently justified his request by highlighting the autocratic, quasi-imperial character of his brother’s rule, who also did not need the consent of other earthly authorities in choosing and investing his heir. The agreement included the obligation of liturgical commemoration of the Ecumenical Patriarch, which symbolized wider church unity and a parental relationship between the new autocephalous church and the mother-church.²⁷

In his relations towards Old Rome, Archbishop Sava minded the apostolic tradition and the primacy of the episcopal cathedra, as well as the royal dignity of “the Pope and the great Roman state”, as he addressed Pope Honorius III in his letter, which was brought to Rome

²⁵ Доментијан, *Житије светог Саве*, ed. Т. Јовановић, trans. Ј. Јухас-Георгиевска, Београд, 2001, p. 195–196.

²⁶ Ј. Максимовић, *Значење речи Грк и Јелин у српским средњовековним изворима*, in *ZRVI*, 38 (1999/2000), p. 215–227 (= *Византијски свет и Срби*, p. 219–231).

²⁷ Доментијан, *Житије светог Саве*, p. 201–202.

by his envoy, Bishop Methodios, in spring 1220. As can be reconstructed, archbishop Sava requested that Pope Honorius acknowledge the newly created situation – the existence of an Orthodox archbishop, who would, with the blessings of the Pope as the person who “shares his throne with the holy apostles” (Saint Peter and Saint Paul), crown the ruler with the king’s wreath sent also by him, the Pope. In his request, Sava appealed to the tradition of Diocletia as an old, i.e. first kingdom.²⁸ Sava’s diplomatic address to Honorius III was based on his respect for the Pope’s prerogatives and his dual character as Roman Bishop and ruler, which was followed by Sava’s acceptance of the Byzantine theory of the symphony between the church and the state in canon law, as well as by a careful avoidance of everything that was viewed as dogmatic deviation and novelty introduced by those outside the Orthodox Church, i.e. “the Pope and the Christians in the Western parties”.²⁹

Archbishop Sava finally crowned his brother Stefan in the coronation church of the Žiča monastery, which became a pattern for the sanctification of earthly rulers in Serbia over the coming decades. The hybrid political system, created by Archbishop Sava, determined the position of the Serbian ruler and archbishop in the political and church hierarchies of the two Romes. When compared to the state of affairs in 1019 – the year of the previous major intervention of the Roman Byzantine emperor in the church affairs in Illyricum – the situation in 1219 showed a significant difference. There was no possibility for an exact delimitation of the church jurisdictions to be made. Now the Orthodox see of Žiča overlapped with the three maritime catholic archbishoprics – that of Split, Dubrovnik and Bar. This overlapping was real in the coastal regions and more theoretical deeper in the interior of the country. Furthermore, during the thirteenth century the Catholic maritime archbishops fought each other because of their conflicting claims to jurisdiction over the interior, thus continuing the process that had begun earlier. Duality of legal theories, real or invented ancient rights on one side, and the reality of state and church powers on the other, would endure throughout the entire period of the Nemanjić dynasty and would continue into later epochs.

Challenges to the new position of the secular and ecclesiastical authorities in Serbia came from various sides. Initially, in 1220, the Archbishop of Ohrid, Demetrios Chomatinos challenged the legality of Sava’s ordination as Archbishop, as well as the separation of certain bishoprics from his dominion, threatening Sava with excommunication. King Stefan Radoslav Doukas (1227–1233), married to the daughter of Despot Theodor I Angelos (1215–1230), the lord of Epirus and later emperor in Thessaloniki, temporarily acknowledged the spiritual authority of the Archbishop of Ohrid, which represented only a momentary departure from the earlier political and church orientation towards the Nicaean-Byzantine empire. The reign of King Stefan Vladislav (1233–1243), married to the daughter of the

²⁸ Доментијан, *Житије светог Саве*, p. 247–250.

²⁹ М. М. Петровић, *Црквендржавне идеје светог Саве између Цариграда и Рима*, in С. Терзић (ed.), *Европа и Срби*, Београд, 1996, p. 99–114, 108 n. 33.

Bulgarian Emperor John II Asen (1218–1241), was ensued by a certain dissociation of the Serbian kingdom from the two Byzantine empires in the domain of practical policy, which continued into the first years of the rule of King Stefan Uroš I (1243–1276), married to the daughter of an important Hungarian nobleman. However, at the court of Nicaea in the mid-13th century, the Serbian king was considered to be the emperor's vassal, although this must have been only an exaggerated rhetorical interpretation based on the liturgical mention of the Nicaean emperor in Serbia and the current political alliance of the two rulers.³⁰

At the moment of the restoration of the Orthodox Empire of the Romans, i.e. the Greeks in Constantinople in 1261, which strengthened the authority of Michael VIII Palaiologos (1259–1282) as an Orthodox emperor, King Uroš I was already a vassal of the King of Hungary. The efforts of Michael VIII in renewing the jurisdictional area of the Ohrid Archbishopric in 1273 and his acceptance of union with the Roman Church in Lyons in 1274 led to a crisis in the political and church relations of Serbia and the Byzantine Roman empire, manifested in the omission of the name of the heretical Ecumenical Patriarch Joseph from the dyptichs of the Serbian Archbishop during the reign of Stefan Dragutin (1276–1282), which may subsequently have been reintroduced upon the restoration of Orthodoxy after the death of Michael Palaiologos.³¹ At the level of the relations between the rulers, the crisis lasted even longer, perhaps, with certain pauses, until the making of the peace between King Stefan Uroš II Milutin (1282–1321) and Emperor Andronikos II Palaiologos (1282–1328) in 1299, which stopped, at least for a while, the long standing war in Macedonia and significant territorial losses for the Empire. The axis of the peace contract was the marriage of Milutin to the emperor's daughter Simonis, which established a bond of kinship between emperor and king, analogous to that of “the parent” and “the beloved son and son-in-law”. Taking into account the nature of this relationship, a question arises about the possible liturgical mention of the emperor as an Orthodox ruler in the state of his adoptive son. The peace agreement included the recognition of earlier conquests in the form of a bridal dowry.³² The demarcation of the state was, apparently, followed by the demarcation of the church jurisdictions of Ohrid and Peć, which also implied the appropriate liturgical mention of the Ecumenical Patriarch and an abandonment of the earlier attempt to renew the old jurisdictional area of the See of Ohrid to its full scale.

Rejecting the Union of 1274, the Serbian Archbishopric stressed in those years that it based its devotion to the Orthodox Christian creed, in the historical sense, on the covenant of the episcopal see of New Rome. Occasional politically motivated negotiations with the

³⁰ Љ. Максимовић, „Византинизми“ краља Стефана Радослава, in *ZRVI*, 46 (2009), p. 139–147; Б. Миљковић, *Сава, Стефан Радослав и Димитрије Хоматин*, in *ZRVI*, 52 (2015), p. 259–275.

³¹ Теодосије Хиландарац, *Живот светога Саве*, ed. Ђ. Трифуновић, Београд 1973, p. 130–132, ex silentio argument, cf. Доментијан, *Житије светога Саве*, p. 201–202.

³² М. Živojinović, *La frontière serbobyzantine dans les premières décennies du XIV^e siècle*, in Ев. Παπαδοπούλου, Δ. Διαλέτη (ed.), *Βυζάντιο και Σερβία κατά τον ΙΔ' αιώνα*, Αθήνα, 1996, p. 57–66.

Popes about the acceptance of the papal primacy and the creed of the Roman Church would remain a characteristic of the politics of Serbian rulers towards Old Rome i.e. Avignon during the reign of King Milutin and his son and successor King Stefan Uroš III 'Dečanski' (1321–1331). These negotiations were connected with some other important considerations of realpolitik, dynastic marriages and the question of the royal succession. Ultimately, the Byzantine ambition of seeing a descendant of the Paleologos line on the Serbian throne was not crowned with success, but neither was the western hope of seeing an offspring of the Angevins, the titular candidates for the position of the Latin emperors of Constantinople, to take the same seat.³³

The reign of Stefan Dušan (1331–1355) brought important changes to the political system established by Saint Sava. During his gradual entry into the system of Byzantine imperial power in the first years of the civil war that started in Byzantium after the death of Andronikos III Palaiologos (1328–1341) and lasted, with interruptions, up to 1354, Dušan became the de facto ruler of important parts of the Empire (Macedonia without Thessaloniki, Epiros and Thessaly). However, a lot of questions relating to his formal status must remain open, as there are some indicators which suggest that he acted not only as an ally but as a practical co-ruler with the minor John V Palaiologos (1341–1391). Namely, his agreement of August 1343, with the regents of the young emperor meant recognition of his sovereignty over the lately occupied territories and a change in the traditional Nemanjić title of "King of all Serbian and Maritime lands" with the addition of a third, Byzantine element of the "Greek lands", designating a part of the Empire which he ruled as the "participant in the Greek realm" or "particeps Romaniae" – a factual participant in imperial dominion. The king's agreement with the administration of Mount Athos at the end of 1345 envisaged mentioning the name of Emperor John Palaiologos before the name of the king during the liturgical services.³⁴ This was followed, at Easter in 1346, by the coronation of Dušan as emperor of one part of the Empire, i.e. emperor of "the Serbs and Greeks", or of "Serbia and Romania", as this newly created state conception was manifested in his signatures in the official documents of his chancellery, reflecting the dual concept of his state, a factual personal union of Serbia and (part of) Byzantium under his scepter (his son and heir Uroš

³³ Б. Тодић, *Апостол Андреја и српски архиепископи на фрескама Сопоћана*, in Љ. Максимовић, Н. Радошевић, Е. Радловић (ed.), *Трећа југословенска конференција византолога*, Београд – Крушевац, 2002, р. 361–379; М. Антоновић, *Срби и Лионска унија: неуспео покушај приближавања* in Р. Поповић, монах Давид (Перовић) (ed.), *950 година од великог раскола (1054) и 800 година од пада Цариграда у руке крсташа (1204)*, Београд, 2005, р. 113–131; С. Марјановић-Душанић, *Свети краљ. Култ Стефана Дечанског*, Београд, 2007, р. 221–268; С. Пириватрић, *Византијско-српски односи из друге половине владавине краља Милутина (1299–1321) у делима савремених цариградских историографа*, in *Манастир Студеница – 700 година Краљеве цркве*, Београд, 2016 (forthcoming).

³⁴ *Грчке повеље српских владара*, ed. А. Соловјев, В. Мошин, Београд, 1936, V, р. 29–36 (= Variorum Reprints, London, 1974).

was simultaneously granted the courtesy title of king of Serbia). The basic elements of his imperial act, the coronation for the emperor, which was performed by the patriarchs of Serbia and Bulgaria, with the blessing of Mount Athos and certain Greek archpriests too, as well as the previous consecration of the Archbishop of Peć for the Patriarch as a necessary pre-condition for the ceremony of his imperial coronation, were at first treated by Byzantine political actors with a degree of nuance. But later, imperial and patriarchal promulgation were tightened by the excommunication of Dušan, the Serbian Patriarch and his bishops by act of the Patriarch of Constantinople Kallistos I and its synod, probably in the autumn of 1352, in the wider picture of the civil war and the politics of John VI Kantakouzenos (1341–1354), who, as victor in the first phase of this war in 1347, reached a position to challenge with all his imperial authority everything that Dušan had achieved earlier as an ally of the regents.³⁵ In Constantinople Dušan was seen as a usurper who aped Roman customs such as wearing the imperial diadem. It is not possible to give a reliable explanation of the genesis of Dušan's imperial ambition, but his seven-year residence in Constantinople, from 1314 onwards, with his father (later to become King Stefan 'Dečanski'), must have had a significant influence.³⁶ On the other hand, when he promulgated his imperial law code, inspired by the jurisprudence of Byzantium and Rome, Dušan styled himself as one of the "Greek emperors" in the succession from Constantine the Great. He was usually careful to avoid calling himself emperor of the Romans, insisting rather on the term "Romania", thus stressing the shared nature of his imperial sovereignty, and recognizing the position of John Palaiologos at the apex of the hierarchical pyramid. Thus, the two main elements of his Byzantine title, the "Greeks" and the "Romania" have their roots in Western discourse, which opens speculation on a host of possible motives for their very consistent usage.³⁷ In 1354 Dušan initiated negotiations with Pope Innocent VI on the union, asking to be nominated as the captain of the Christians against the Muslim Turks, but this unsuccessful action should be conceived also as an attempt to overcome the deadlock in relations with the Emperor and Patriarch in Constantinople. His position in 1355 was certainly unenviable,

³⁵ S. Ćirković, *Between Kingdom and Empire: Dušan's State (1346–1355) Reconsidered*, in *Βυζάντιο και Σερβία κατά τον ΙΔ' αιώνα*, p. 110–120 (= J. Shepard [ed.], *The Expansion of Orthodox Europe. Byzantium, the Balkans and Russia*, Aldershot – Burlington, 2007, p. 365–375); N. Oikonomides, *Emperor of the Romans – Emperor of the Romania*, in *Βυζάντιο και Σερβία κατά τον ΙΔ' αιώνα*, p. 121–128; С. Марјановић-Душанић, *Владарска идеологија Немањића*, p. 81–96; Lj. Maksimović, *L'empire de Stefan Dušan: genèse et caractère*, in *ТМ*, 14 (2002), p. 415–428 (= *Византијски свет и Срби*, p. 191–206); С. Пириватрић, *Улазак Стефана Душана у Царство*, in *ZRVI*, 44/2 (2007), p. 381–409.

³⁶ J. Shepard, *Manners maketh Romans? Young barbarians at the emperor's court*, in E. Jeffreys (ed.), *Byzantine style, religion and civilization. In Honour of Sir Steven Runciman*, Cambridge, 2006, p. 135–158 (= *Emergent Elites and Byzantium in the Balkans and East-Central Europe*, Variorum Reprints, Farnham, 2011, XII).

³⁷ С. Марјановић-Душанић, *Елементи царског програма у Душановој повељи уз „Законик“*, in *Прилози за књижевност, језик, историју и фолклор*, LXV–LXVI/1–4 (1999/2000), p. 3–20.

and this lends some credence to certain much later stories of how he died, allegedly during an attempt to conquer Constantinople, although it should again be stressed that no decisive proof of the veracity of such tales is possible.³⁸

After Dušan's death in 1355 his imperial idea gradually faded away, while the state inherited by his son Stefan Uroš (1355–1371) fell apart into several larger or smaller areas. Among the local lords, his son Uroš, widow Jelena, half-brother Simeon Uroš Palaiologos and the brother-in-law John Asen Komnenos, as well as a few others, maintained a Byzantine component in their rule, expressed in characteristic terms such as “Romans”, “Romania” or “Greeks”.³⁹ The most difficult problem, however, remained the excommunication and the factual schism between the Sees of Peć and Constantinople, which was only ended in 1375. The reconciliation led to the official posthumous recognition of the imperial title of the late Dušan by the Byzantine authorities, although limited to Serbia (John V, calling him the “uncle of the Empire”, had already acknowledged this title in 1351), as well as of the right to hold the title of Patriarch of Serbia in the internal correspondence for the Archbishop of Peć.⁴⁰ The Serbian traditions of the Empire vanished with the male line of the Nemanjić, whereas the tradition of their Kingdom continued with King Vukašin, who was invested with the title by Emperor Uroš, all up to his death at the battle of Marica in 1371, they continued with his son and heir King Marko, who was actually just a local lord in Macedonia and vassal of the Ottoman sultans, and ended with the death of the latter in 1395. At the same time, the traditions of the Serbian kingdom were taken over to Bosnia by Ban Tvrtko I Kotromanić (1353–1391) who was crowned King of the “Serbs and Bosnia” in 1377.

The downfall and dissolution of Dušan's empire, the migration of the kingdom to Bosnia, and the critics of the his imperial program within Serbian political and church circles contributed at an ideological level to the new entry of certain Serbian rulers into the system of the Byzantine political and virtual court hierarchy. First Emperor John VII and then Manuel II (1391–1425) and John VIII (1425–1448) Palaiologoi invested Stefan Lazarević (1389–1427), Đurađ (1427–1456) and Lazar Branković (1456–1458) – who otherwise styled themselves most frequently as “lords of all Serbs” – with the title of despot in the first half

³⁸ S. Pirivatrić, *Death of Stefan Dušan. Contribution to the problem*, in M. Kaimakamova, M. Salamon, M. Smorag Rozicka (ed.), *Byzantium, New Peoples, New Powers: The Byzantino-Slav Contact Zone, from the Ninth to the Fifteenth Century*, Cracow, 2007, p. 285–302.

³⁹ Р. Михальчић, *Крај српског царства*, Београд, 1975 (репр. 1989, 2000); R. Radić, *Ο Συμεών Ούρεσης Παλαιόλογος και το κράτος του μεταξύ της βυζαντινής και της σερβικής αυτοκρατορίας, in Βυζάντιο και Σερβία κατά τον ΙΔ' αιώνα*, p. 195–208; Б. Ферјанчић, *Византијски и српски Сер у XIV столећу*, Београд, 1994.

⁴⁰ Ф. Баришић, *О измирењу српске и византијске цркве 1375*, in *ZRVI*, 21 (1982), p. 159–182; Б. Ферјанчић, *Византија према Српском царству*, in *Глас САНУ*, 384/Одељење историјских наука, 10 (1998), p. 155–171; D. I. Mureşan, *Le patriarcat œcuménique et les patriarcats balkaniques (Tarnovo, Peć). Enjeux ecclésiastiques et impériaux au XIV^e s.*, in M.-H. Blanchet, M.-H. Congourdeau, D. I. Mureşan (ed.), *Le patriarcat œcuménique de Constantinople et Byzance hors frontières (1204–1586)*, Paris, 2014, p. 203–242, 228–242.

of the 15th century.⁴¹ The relationship of an ideal hierarchy would give substance to the assumption regarding the mention of the Byzantine emperor's name in the liturgical service in the land ruled by the despots, which could have been introduced as early as the church reconciliation of 1375. We should also consider the well-known opposite example from the end of the 14th century, when the mention of the Byzantine emperor's name was omitted in services in Russia.⁴² However, the perception of the Emperor as an Orthodox ruler had to have been an indispensable condition for the liturgical mention, and this did not exist in cases when the emperors had agreed to the Union of the Church. The Byzantine emperor and the Serbian despot split at that point in 1439, since Despot Đurađ Branković did not accept the Union proclaimed at the Council of Florence.

In the intertwined relations of practical politics, dependence and ideal hierarchies, the despots were simultaneously courtiers of the Byzantine-Roman Emperor and vassals of the Ottoman sultans and Hungarian kings. At the time when the Hungarian kings were also the rulers of the Holy Roman empire, as was the case with Sigismund I of Luxembourg (1433–1437), the despots of Raška also entered their hierarchical system. The naming of the despots continued even after the fall of the Serbian despotate in 1459, in Hungary, where the kings invested the descendants of Branković and other noble families with the title of despot, as well as after 1527, in Austria, where Roman Emperor Charles V of Habsburg (1519–1556) continued for a while this practice in his new capacity as the king of Hungary. From the middle of the 16th century this practice ceased as a consequence of the collapse of the Hungarian kingdom, the Ottoman conquest of Budim and the retreat of the Habsburgs from the Serbian territories.⁴³ After the Ottoman conquests the remaining Byzantine and Serbian lands were included into the Rum-millet whose leadership was entrusted to the Ecumenical Patriarch in Constantinople. The discontinuing history of the Patriarchate in Peć after the fall of Serbia in 1459 is difficult to follow with precision, whereas the renewal of the Patriarchate and the definition of its new territory in 1557 came as a result of the politics of Suleiman I (1520–1566) in response to post-Trent Roman Catholic action in the Balkan peninsula.⁴⁴

⁴¹ И. Ђурић, *Сумрак Византије. Време Јована VIII Палеолога*, Београд, 1984, 2008 (= *Il crepuscolo di Bisanzio, I tempi di Giovanni VIII Paleologo (1392–1448)*, Roma, 1995, 2001, 2009; *Le crépuscule de Byzance*, Paris 1996); Б. Ферјанчић, *Византинци у Србији прве половине XV века*, in *ZRVI*, 26 (1987), p. 173–215; М. Спремић, *Деспот Ђурађ Бранковић и његово доба*, Београд, 1994; Ј. Калић, *Срби у позном средњем веку*, Београд, 1994.

⁴² F. Miklosich, I. Müller, *Acta et diplomata graeca*, II, Vindobonae, 1862, CCCCXLVII, p. 188–192, 190–192.

⁴³ С. Ћирковић, *Поствизантијски деспоти*, in *ZRVI*, 38 (1999/2000), p. 395–406.

⁴⁴ Р. Самарџић, *Српски народ под турском влашћу*, in id. (ed.), *Историја српског народа*, III, Београд, 1993, p. 7–114.

Concluding remarks

The political and ideological relations of the Serbs with the ‘universal authorities’, political and ecclesiastical, of the Old and the New Rome, naturally depended on the highly changeable relationship between these two centres, but also on the constantly fluctuating capacities of various Roman institutions to exert real influence over the part of Illyricum, i.e. South-eastern Europe where the Serbs had settled and established their own institutions of society and governance. Given the context of these complex and multi-faceted relationships, the role of local actors in shaping these relationships was, initially, of secondary importance. The ideologically motivated ethnic interpretation promoted in the West, of the Byzantine Roman empire as the Empire of the Greeks rather than of the Romans also became established over time in the Serbian lands as a lasting conception of political ideology, independent of the character and strength of the Byzantine imperial authority. The periodic crises in the imperial power of Constantinople made a redefinition of the relationship between the rulers of Serbia and the Roman authorities unavoidable. Taking an overview of the period as a whole, this phenomenon is most obvious in certain characteristic cases and at particular times. First there was the creation of the ephemeral papal kingdom of Diocletia and Serbia around the year 1077, then the somewhat longer-lasting synthesis of church and state under the Nemanjić dynasty that took shape in about 1217–1220 and which later partially collapsed in the set of circumstances surrounding their unsuccessful attempt to enter the system of Byzantine imperial government between 1342 and 1375, but which nonetheless laid the foundation for a newly conceived relationship which lasted from 1402 until the death of the last Byzantine Roman emperor, only to be taken over, however briefly, by the Germanic Roman emperors in the 16th century, in their capacity as kings of Hungary. The picture of ecclesiastical relations is only superficially less complex because in the theoretical and practical overlapping of the competing ‘Roman’ jurisdictions following the Schism of 1054, the foundation of the autocephalous Serbian Orthodox Church in 1219 turned out to be a long lasting phenomenon on the foundations of which a great revival was to be based in 1557. On the other hand, early local examples of the *cuius regio eius religio* principle were the cause of a permanent division in the one-time Roman dioceses of Serbia into Greek Orthodox and Roman Catholic parts, a division cemented, and to some extent symbolised by the emergence and historical role of the Nemanjić and Kotromanić dynasties of Ras and Bosnia. As a form of counterpoint to the papal appellation of the Byzantine Roman empire as the Greek empire which spread throughout the Serbian lands, was the liturgical commemoration of the “Greek emperor” as the ‘Emperor of the true faith’, (re)introduced after 1219 in the state of “all Serbian and Maritime Lands”, which at that time the descendants of Nemanja already ruled as “autocrats”, i.e. those who chose and invested their own successors. This practice, which placed the Greek but not the Roman emperor at the centre of the political universe in the Church, certainly was not continuous. Unfortunately, it can only be discussed occasionally on the basis of original data and more often can only be assumed from the political context. Be that as it may, the commemoration of the secular rulers in the churches of the Serbian lands throughout the Middle Ages, seen as a kind of encapsulating political and ecclesiastical statement, is a subject worth further examination.

Medieval Russia between Two Romes: Challenges and Responses (10th–16th Centuries)

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Introduction

The Russian civilization emerged at the eastern border of the Slavic world in the early Middle Ages. The Slav tribes colonized the East European plain relatively late, around the seventh or eighth century. By that time in Europe the formation and development of post-Roman German kingdoms was already in progress. Due to its geographic position and, first of all, because of remoteness from European political and cultural centres, the Russian state with its two capitals, Kiev and Novgorod, was founded only in the late ninth century. Toward the end of the tenth century, after a long period of military expeditions against the neighboring peoples and against the Greeks, Kievan Rus' adopted Christianity and became a member of the European Christian community.

The geographic location of the Kievan state on the extreme Eastern periphery of Europe has greatly influenced Russian medieval culture. Starting its history as a European cultural province, the Old Russia formed and upheld throughout the centuries a specific type of civilization, which I would call the 'society of secondary reception' in contrast to the traditional medieval states of Central Europe, which may be called 'societies of primary reception'. In both cases the term 'reception' has the meaning of learning and appropriation of the classical heritage of Rome. The Roman Empire has to be considered in this scheme of inheritance as the 'donating/granting society'.

Barbarian successor-states, which had been established on the ruins of the Roman Empire, inherited from it the highly elaborate Latin language, the great literature, the splendid philosophic and legal tradition, and – last, not least – diverse skills and many kinds of technical knowhow. True, Europe has needed a span of more than thousand years to master all this intellectual and cultural abundance, but it is a fact that Europe received it more or less directly.¹ To this same type of 'recipient' societies belonged as well the

¹ The Arab intermediation in the Western reception of classical Greek philosophy and natural sciences was an important episode in the history of the European culture, but nevertheless, all the Latin

medieval civilizations of Bulgaria and Serbia, whose cultural traditions had undergone a multiple direct impact from the Byzantine Empire. In contrast to Bulgaria and Serbia, the early West Slavic state of Great Moravia has, in my opinion, to be considered as a society of 'secondary reception', since it received Christian faith and cult indirectly from Bavaria, and the national Moravian literacy in Church Slavonic was created through the intermediation of the saintly brothers Cyril and Methodius, who were Byzantine Slavs.

The early Russian civilization, like that of Great Moravia, could be referred to as a society of 'secondary cultural reception'. Even if it received Christianity directly from Byzantium, the Christian cult in Russia, however, was strongly intermediated through the Bulgarian impact – I mean herewith not only Church Slavonic as the sacred language, which was imported from Bulgaria, but also a great variety of Bulgarian translations from Greek, brought to Kiev by the Bulgarian literati, who had to flee from their land in the course of the Byzantine annexation in the early eleventh century. The direct contribution of Byzantium and the Greeks to the Russian culture until the early sixteenth century was in fact very scanty – it was restricted primarily to the divine service and other, more or less trivial, ecclesiastic affairs. Russian laic political and cultural traditions as well as non-trivial ecclesiastic ones go back to other cultural models, namely, those of the European West (I mean first of all the republic of Novgorod) and/or the Asian steppe. From the very beginning of the Russian state in the ninth century one may observe a certain cultural ambiguity as regards contradicting impacts either from the West or from the East, which contributed to the specific Eurasian character of the rising Russian world.

To summarize my introductory words, I would like to sketch out some fundamental characteristics of the Russian civilization of the tenth–sixteenth centuries, which remain relevant also for the present situation.

1. Remote geographic location on the extreme periphery with regard to all cultural centres of the West and the East.
2. Latent 'complex of provinciality' with regard to Byzantium and, later, to the West.
3. Flashy feeling of national pride, patriotic cast of mind (despite of, or, rather, due to the provinciality complex mentioned above).
4. Constant official endeavours to establish profitable economic, trading, diplomatic and dynastic contacts to the European cultural and power centres, but still without any clear official claim to become one of them.

heritage was received by West European local civilizations directly from the Roman 'granting society' by means of 'primary reception'.

I. Baptism of Kievan Rus' and first 'exclusion' from Europe in the thirteenth century

For the first time the East Slavs came in contact with a highly developed Mediterranean society in the mid-ninth century, in the course of the first Russian attack on Constantinople. This expedition was practically an offshoot of the European expansion of the Vikings and the Normans. The latter, however, couldn't start their military confrontation with Byzantium before the eleventh century, whereas the Scandinavian military elite, who settled in the North of Russia around the mid-ninth century and some decades later seized Kiev, attacked Constantinople first in 860. Throughout the following hundred years the Russians organized three further military expeditions against the Greeks in 907, 941–944 and 971, each of them resulting in a peace treaty for regulation of trading contacts and other affairs between the two states. As contacts with Byzantium developed over the famous 'trade route from the Varangians to the Greeks', Kievan Russia in the tenth century came in touch with Byzantine Christianity. The first member of the ruling dynasty of Rurikids to adopt the Christian faith from Byzantium was Princess Olga (c. 890–969), the wife of Prince Igor of Kiev (912–945). Even if her son Svyatoslav remained in paganism all his life, her grandson Prince Vladimir (980–1015) was to become the baptizer of Rus'.

In 987, the throne of the Byzantine Emperor, Basil II (976–1025), was tottering, for Bardas Phokas' successful revolt in Asia Minor was already threatening Constantinople. Basil, unable to suppress the revolt with his own forces, called on Vladimir for help and succeeded in making a friendly agreement with him by promising him the hand of the Greek princess Anna, perhaps Basil's own sister. The promise, however, was bound to the condition that Vladimir must adopt Christianity and be baptized. In accordance with this agreement Vladimir sent a body of six thousand Russian soldiers to Constantinople. With this help Emperor Basil succeeded in crushing the revolt of Bardas Phokas.

Yet, once the imminent danger had been averted, Basil wouldn't keep his promise, so that Prince Vladimir had to insist upon it by besieging the important Greek seaport of Chersonesus in Crimea. The city was seized, and Emperor Basil had to give in. After the arrival of the Byzantine princess in Kiev in 988 or 989, Vladimir was baptized. This event marked Russia's official entry into Christian Europe.

Prince Vladimir's baptism was indeed a strategic choice of European spiritual values and way of life. It is, however, quite apparent that the adoption of Christianity wasn't but a secondary goal of the Russian ruler, whereas the primary one appears to have been the dynastic marriage with a representative of the Byzantine ruling dynasty and participation in the Roman imperial heritage. The military demonstration by Vladimir in Crimea and siege of Chersonesus aimed first of all at forcing the emperor Basil to keep his promise as regarded the marriage, the adoption of Christianity being just a condition for implementation of this agreement. Be that as it may, the first step towards the Christian civilization of Europe was

made. In full accordance with the idea of the 'secondary reception' formulated above, it was a step of an initiate towards his master.

The initiate, however, turned out to be a willful and choosy one. As has been stated above, the Russians made use only of Byzantine ecclesiastic everyday culture – that means the church service, the literary genre of homiletics (as a part of the service), rules of monastic life and Byzantine canon law. In those fields the Russian Church was able not only to receive Byzantine heritage in form of manuscripts with relevant texts in Slavonic translations, but also create on that basis something original and new. On the contrary, rather unpopular or completely ignored in Russia were state institutions of Byzantium (including the hierarchy of offices, traditions of Roman jurisprudence, high schools etc.), organization of the armed forces and theory of warfare, crafts, antic traditions of natural and social sciences, sophisticated techniques of fine arts (except for icon-painting), architecture, almost complete variety of Byzantine laic fiction (including poetry) as well as highly elaborate theological tradition based on the classical Greek philosophy. Accordingly, in the vast plains of the Kievan and, later, the Muscovite state there appeared neither original laic fiction, nor more or less significant schools of theological or philosophical thought, nor comparable to Europe technical inventions, nor masterpieces of fine arts. Instead, Russia succeeded in creating specific state institutions and legal tradition, original works of ecclesiastic architecture and chant as well as of wall- and icon-painting.

Throughout the centuries after the birth of the Old Russian state up until the Mongol invasion of 1237–1240, Kievan Russia maintained active political and trading relationships with Europe. To say it more correctly, it was an integral part of Europe. The crucial tenor of Russian foreign policy in the epoch of Grand Prince Yaroslav the Wise (1019–1054) and his successors was establishing of marital ties between the Kievan dynasty of Rurikids and those of Byzantium and of the Catholic West. Grand Prince Yaroslav, himself, was married for the first time to a certain Norwegian Anna, for the second time to Ingegerd, daughter of Olaf Skötkonung, the first Christian king of Sweden.² Daughters and sons of Yaroslav and Ingegerd were married into European royal houses: Izyaslav married Gertrude, the daughter of King Mieszko II of Poland, Vsevolod married presumably a daughter of Byzantine emperor Constantine IX Monomachos (her name is unknown). Svyatoslav had two wives, Kelikia (i.e. Cecilia) and Oda of Stade, each coming from the West. Yaroslav's daughter Elisabeth (Elisiv) married Prince Harald Sigurdsson, the future King of Norway, Anastasia became a wife of King Andrew I of Hungary, Anna married King Henry I of France. Yaroslav's granddaughter Eupraxia (or, by Catholic name, Adelheid) married first Count Heinrich III of Stade, and, after his death in 1087, German Emperor Heinrich IV; her solemn coronation took place in 1089 in Cologne.

² Ingegerd was called in Kiev in a more familiar Greek way Irene, later she turned to monastic life and was canonized after her death in 1050 (buried in the Saint Sophia Cathedral in Novgorod).

Vladimir Monomakh, Grand Prince of Kiev (1113–1125), married first the exiled Princess Gytha of Wessex, daughter of King Harold II of England (1074). The second marriage of Monomakh was to a certain Eufemia (possibly of Greek origin) (ca. 1099), and his third marriage was to a daughter of the Cuman ruler (after 1107). Monomakh's children married representatives of royal houses of Hungary, Denmark, Sweden and Germany.

Close dynastic ties to Western monarchies demonstrate the force of mutual attraction that united Kievan Russia and Europe in a sort of community with shared values. Despite the Great Schism of 1054 and regardless the anti-Western propaganda of Greek Metropolitans, political and military conflicts between the Russian Princes and the Western rulers were at that time a rarity. As regards political relationships to Byzantium in the eleventh and the twelfth centuries, they were developing overall quite peacefully, with quite few exceptions.

Despite the contemporary Western view on Russia as a vassal state of Byzantium,³ a certain dependence in fact may be traced only in the diplomatic ceremonial and rhetoric, whereas in reality Kievan Russia was quite a sovereign state. E.g., Grand Prince Vladimir Monomakh of Kiev could afford to officially recognize around the year 1114 the pretender to the Byzantine throne, Pseudo-Leo (or Constantine) Diogenes, who claimed to be a son of Emperor Romanos IV Diogenes, and even give him the hand of his daughter Maria (Marica). In 1116 Prince Vladimir gathered considerable troops and organized a military expedition against Byzantine fortresses on the Danube. The mutual hostilities were going on until 1123. Then a peace agreement was concluded and Monomakh's granddaughter Eupraxia became the wife of Alexios Comnenos (died in 1142), the eldest son and co-emperor of John II Comnenos of Byzantium (1118–1143).

After the death of Vladimir Monomakh in 1125, and especially after the death of his son Mstislav I the Great in 1132, Kievan Rus' entered a period of disintegration and rapid decline. The leading position of the Grand Prince of Kiev was weakened by self-determination of regional clans as well as by the growing power of the Novgorod republic. In the late twelfth century the Kievan state became even further fragmented and fell apart into roughly twelve different principalities. In these hard times the Greek metropolitans of Kiev took on the important task of enlightening the local princes to maintain brotherly love and unanimity, in which they seem to have often been successful.

II. Relationships to the Roman Church in the eleventh–thirteenth centuries

Western sources indicate that after the assassination of Prince Igor of Kiev in 945 by a rebellious tribe of Drevlyans, his widow, Princess Olga (945–c. 963), sent an embassy to Otto I (King of Germany since 936, Emperor 962–973). Otto charged Bishop Adaldag of Bremen with missionary work to the Rus'; Adaldag consecrated the monk Libutius of the Convent of

³ A. Vasiliev, *Was Old Russia a Vassal State of Byzantium?*, in *Speculum*, 7 (1932), p. 350–360.

St. Albano as bishop of Russia, but Libutius died before he ever set foot in Russia. He was succeeded by Adalbertus, a monk of the convent of St. Maximinus at Trier. According to Western reports, though denied by some historians, Adalbertus arrived in Rus', but had to return to Germany after several of his companions were killed. A few decades later, in 991, Olga's grandson and the baptizer of Russia, Prince Vladimir (980–1015) is said to have sent emissaries to Rome. Popes John XV (985–996) and Sylvester II (999–1003), in turn, sent three embassies to Kiev. A German chronicler, Dithmar, relates that the Archbishop of Magdeburg consecrated a Saxon as archbishop of Russia and that the latter arrived in Russia, where he preached the Gospel and was killed with eighteen of his companions in 1002. At this same time, Bishop Reinbert of Kolberg accompanied the daughter of Duke Boleslaw I of Poland (992–1025) to her wedding when she married Vladimir's son Svyatopolk. Reinbert was arrested for his efforts to proselytize and died in prison. Bruno of Querfurt was then sent as a missionary bishop to the Pechenegs and spent several months in Kiev in 1008; he wrote a letter to the Holy Roman Emperor Henry II in 1009.

These embassies to and from Rus' may be the basis for the somewhat fanciful account in the Russian Primary Chronicle of Prince Vladimir sending out emissaries to the various religions around Rus' (Islam, Judaism, Western and Eastern Christianity), including the Catholic Church in Germany. In this report the emissaries are said to have returned unimpressed by Western Christianity, which served to explain the adoption of Orthodox Christianity by Vladimir.⁴

The Russian Orthodox Church, being up to the late sixteenth century an integral part of the Patriarchate of Constantinople, was at all points bound to the church policy of the latter, especially with regard to Catholicism. After the baptism of Rus' the Western tradesmen were allowed to build churches in the main trading centres: thus, in Novgorod of the late eleventh century, the Swedes founded the church of Saint Olaf (II, King of Norway 1015–1028), in the late twelfth century the German Hanseatic merchants built there the church of Saint Peter. The Germans, besides, kept the church of Saint Nicolaus in Ladoga (the so called *sanctus Nycholaus in Aldachen*). In the first half of the thirteenth century there existed in Kiev an Irish Benedictine monastery of Saint Maria.⁵

After the Great Schism the Russian attitude to the Roman Church, called 'Latin' or 'Frankish', didn't change significantly. The hostilities were basically limited to the sphere of Church polemic. Greek Metropolitans Ephrem (1054/1055–ca. 1065) and John II of Kiev (around 1076/77–1089) were the first churchmen in Rus' to compose polemical writings against the Catholics. John II responded around 1085 to a proposal of antipope Clement III (1080/1084–1100) for union of Churches with a letter, outlining the canonical and theological

⁴ *Lavrentjevskaja Letopis'*, in *Polnoe Sobranie Russkikh Letopisej*, I, col. 106–108.

⁵ Mentioned in the Vita of Saint Hyacinth of Poland (1183–1257) about 1228, in the Polish Chronicle of Ian Długosz (1415–1480) under the year 1233 and finally in a letter of the abbot of the Benedictine Saint Maria monastery in Vienna from 1242. The letter is preserved in the supplement to the 'Chronica Maiora' of Matthew Paris (ca. 1200–1259).

differences with Catholicism. The crucial points of Anti-Latin polemics, formulated in this letter, may be summarized in the following blames: 1) fasting on Saturdays; 2) consumption of milk, cheese and eggs in the Lent; 3) the institution of celibate of clergymen; 4) anointment with myrrh by bishops in addition to baptism (the rite of Confirmation); 5) use of unleavened bread for Communion; 6) addition of the *Filioque* to the Creed. With reference to the decrees of the seven ecumenical councils acknowledged by previous Roman Popes, Metropolitan John II was appealing to the Western Church in the person of antipope Clement to reject heretical errors and restore unity with Orthodoxy. Metropolitan Nicephorus I (1103–1121) in his letter to Prince Vladimir Monomakh also considered Catholicism a heresy due to the addition of the *Filioque*. Moreover, Archbishop Nifont of Novgorod (1135–1156), in the instructional ‘Questions of Kirik’, responded that a woman who took her children to be baptized by a Catholic (the term ‘Varangian’, that is, Viking, is used) priest was to incur the same penance as one who took them to be blessed by a pagan sorcerer. In the Russian homiletic works Catholicism was also considered a heresy to be shunned. Up until the time of Metropolitan Isidore (1431–1437), the metropolitans of Kiev had almost no contact with Rome.

In the modern Catholic historiography some points of the early Russian relationships to Rome used to get a somewhat biased interpretation. This concerns, for example, the facts of dynastic rivalry of the Russian princes in the second half of the eleventh century. Namely, as Prince Izyaslav Yaroslavich (1054–68; 1069–73; 1076–78) was expelled from Kiev by his brothers, he appealed for help first to his cousin, Duke Boleslaw II of Poland, then to Emperor Heinrich IV of Germany. Both of them accepted rich gifts from the exiled Prince, but didn’t offer him any assistance. In great distress, he sent around 1075 his son Yaropolk to Pope Gregory VII (1073–1085), asking for papal support and promising in that case to make Russia a vassal of the Holy See. The Pope couldn’t help him in any other way but to write a letter to Boleslaw with request to return Izyaslav’s gifts back (this request, however, had no effect). Having reconciled with his brother Vsevolod in 1076, Izyaslav, along with his son and ambassador Yaropolk, regained the throne in Kiev and evidently forgot all his promises made to Emperor Heinrich as well as to Pope Gregory. The Russian state didn’t become a vassal neither of Germany nor of Rome. Nonetheless, in the Catholic historiography (M. Jugie) and even in official papal documents those events have been misinterpreted as a union. Thus, in the Apostolic Letter of Pope Pius XII to all people of Russia ‘Sacro vergente anno’ (July 7, 1952) this historical episode is referred to as official union of Russia with Catholicism. In this papal document we find a quotation from the letter of Gregory VII to Izyaslav, dated April 17, 1075. This letter informs that Yaropolk swore fidelity to St. Peter and the Apostolic See and received the power over Russia from papal hands.⁶

⁶ “Your son, while visiting the sacred thresholds of the Apostles, came to Us, and because he wanted to get the kingdom from Our hand as a gift of St. Peter, having made profession of allegiance to the same prince of the apostles, he asked for it with devout prayers, ensuring no doubt that his request

The letter ‘*Sacro vergente anno*’ of Pope Pius by-passed, however, that Yaropolk’s profession of fidelity to Rome was crucially bound to papal assistance in the dynastic rivalry. Also, no mention is made of the fact that Pope Gregory didn’t meet the expectations and in fact wasn’t able to intermediate in restoring Izyaslav’s dynastic rights. Finally, Yaropolk was just an ambassador asking for help, not a person authorized to conclude official Church unions or accept princely power for his father from the bishop of Rome.

As long as the Kievan state remained centralized and mighty, and the Russian Church could rely upon protection and support from Byzantium, the Russians enjoyed great respect in the West. True, the Western impact on the ecclesiastical affairs of Kievan Rus’ was also remarkable, especially as regards the worship of Western saints. Soon after the translation of the relics of St. Nicholas from Myra in Lycia to Bari (1087) Grand Prince Vsevolod Yaroslavich (1078–1093) established the feast of Translation, then approved by Pope Urban II (1088–99), who in 1091 sent Bishop Teodoro to Vsevolod with relics.

With progressing defragmentation of Kievan Rus’, the gradual change of the Catholic attitude to the Russians came to light. The highlight of this process is the letter of bishop Mathew of Cracovia in the mid-twelfth century, on the eve of the Second Crusade. Mathew sent to the ardent supporter of the Crusades, St. Bernard of Clairvaux (1091–1153), a provocative appeal to proselytize Russia. He described the Russians as barbarians who live in dissent with both Western and Eastern churches. But the Kievan state was far too strong at that time to let the external powers interfere in its internal affairs.

In the late twelfth century the West of the Russian realm was reigned by a talented ruler, Prince Roman of Volhynia and Galicia (1199–1205), Grand Prince of Kiev (1201, 1204). Roman was a loyal ally of Byzantine Emperor Alexius III Angelos (1195–1203), his second wife Anna is sometimes supposed to have been a Byzantine Princess, daughter of Alexius’ predecessor Isaac II Angelos (1185–1195, 1203–1204). According to the ‘Russian history’ by Vasily Tatiščev,⁷ in 1203, Pope Innocent III (1198–1216) sent legates to Prince Roman, trying to convert him to Catholicism by promising “a great kingdom to conquer with the sword of St. Peter”. The Russian Prince is said to pull his sword from the scabbard asking the legate, if the Pope would have something alike, and then concluded: “With this one I don’t need another”. The papal mission failed. Innocent, however, sent in 1207 a letter to the Russians with a Cardinal, who was charged “to return the daughter to the mother and the member to the head”.⁸ This diplomatic manoeuvre was also unsuccessful.

would be ratified and confirmed by you, if he had the favor and protection of the apostolic authority. As these votes and these requests seemed legitimate, both for your consent and for the devotion of the applicant, we finally have accepted them, and we delivered on the part of St. Peter the government of your kingdom.”

⁷ In five volumes, written in the first half of the eighteenth century, first published between 1768 and 1848.

⁸ “*Ut filiam reducat ad matrem et membrum ad caput*”, cf.: *Historica Russiae Monimenta*, ab A. I. Turgenio, I, 1841, p. 4.

Meanwhile, Rus' had to face great military as well as ecclesiastic challenges in the South and in the North. First, after the devastation of Constantinople by the knights of the Fourth Crusade in 1204, a Catholic Patriarch was installed there, whereas the Orthodox Church of Constantinople went to exile to Nicaea. In the North, Port of Riga on the Baltic Sea was founded in 1200 under Pope Innocent III as an outpost for proselytizing of the pagans and annexation of their lands. The migrants from Germany began colonizing them 'by fire and cross'. In 1202, Pope Innocent III officially confirmed the statute of the Livonian Brothers of the Sword, who repeatedly opened military actions against the local pagans. In 1222–1226, Russian Princes organized some expeditions to the Baltic region to support their pagan allies against the Livonian knights.

Pope Gregory IX (1227–1241) endorsed the idea of the Northern Crusade with the aim of conquering the territories to the South of Ladoga Lake (i.e., the region around Pskov and Novgorod). The Swedes, Danes, and other Catholic powers launched a series of crusades against Pskov, Novgorod, and other towns in northwestern Russia, so that the Novgorodians had to fight hard to keep the knights out of the Novgorodian land.

In 1232, Pope Gregory requested the Teutonic Order to send troops to protect Finland, whose semi-pagan people were fighting against Novgorod in the Finnish-Novgorodian wars; however, there is no information if any ever arrived to assist. Two years later (1234) Prince Yaroslav of Novgorod defeated the Livonian Brothers of the Sword in the battle on the Omovzha River (now the River Emajõgi in Estonia).

Along with military operations the Popes attempted diplomatic means of conversion as well. A further attempt to bring the Russians to union with Catholicism was made by Pope Gregory IX as he wrote a letter to Prince Yuri (George) II of Vladimir (1212–1216, 1218–1238).⁹ The Prince, however, soon fell in the battle against the Mongols.

The Mongol invasions of 1237–1240 devastated the Russian regions of the South and the East, but the northern lands around Pskov and Novgorod remained unharmed. The Christian Teutonic knights and the pagan Lithuanians were thus tempted to occupy these lands, especially after Pope Gregory published a bull in 1237 with an appeal to the Catholic rulers for a new crusade in the North. King Eric XI ('the Lisp') of Sweden immediately attacked Novgorodian lands. Prince Yaroslav of Novgorod had to conclude a vassal agreement with the Mongols to secure the borders in the South-East. Having the affairs with the Mongols settled, Prince Yaroslav defeated the Lithuanians (1239) and his son and successor Prince Alexander, then only 19 years old, defeated the Swedes in a famous battle on the Neva River (1240), after which he received the sobriquet 'Nevsky' (i.e. 'of Neva'). Nevertheless, he had then to leave Novgorod because of the intrigues of the city *boyars*. During his absence, the Teutonic knights seized Izborsk, Pskov along with other cities, and threatened Novgorod. Then Alexander was called back from his exile, and until 1242 he regained all the lands and cities occupied by the enemies. Finally, the Novgorodian troops under Prince Alexander

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 30–31.

inflicted a crushing defeat to the Teutonic knights in the battle on the ice of the Lake Peipus (April 5, 1242). After this kind of experience with the Western ‘missionaries’, it appears somewhat naive that Pope Innocent IV (1243–1254) sent two Cardinals to Prince Alexander in 1248 requesting him to become Catholic. Pope Innocent, in his letter to the Prince, asserted that Alexander’s father, Prince Yaroslav, who died in the Golden Horde, wished his son to become a Catholic, as he expressed his last will to John de Plano Carpini, the papal ambassador to the Mongols. The legates, to their misfortune, didn’t know that Alexander had a copy of the writings of Carpini at his disposal, so that he could immediately prove that his father hadn’t formulated his last will in that way and, hence, the argument of Pope Innocent wasn’t but a false one. No wonder that this diplomatic mission, aimed at converting the Russian Prince to Catholicism, failed. As for Prince Alexander, he was canonized by the Russian Orthodox Church after his death in 1263.

To summarize this part of my presentation, it remains to say that the process of Russia’s gradual approach to Europe in the early Middle Ages on the economic (trading connections), ideological (adoption of Christianity) and dynastic levels, which had begun in the tenth century under the first Princes of Kiev, came to a halt in the mid-thirteenth century due to loss of all positions previously won. Because of the catastrophic invasions of the Mongols from the East, on the one hand, and due to the fall of Constantinople to the crusaders and disintegration of the Byzantine Empire, on the other, Kievan Russia was in great distress. The aggressive expansion of the Livonian Brothers of Sword and the Teutonic Order, simultaneously launched and coordinated from papal Rome, sealed the first isolation of Russia from the European community.

III. Relationships to Europe and Byzantium in the thirteenth–sixteenth centuries and the second isolation of Russia

After brutal destruction of the most of the Russian cities including Kiev by the Mongols, the Russian state had to move its capital from the South to the North-East. After that crucial historical shift, the princes of Vladimir, Suzdal’, Tver’ and Moscow were to become rivals in a long historical struggle for domination.

Meanwhile, in the extreme West of Old Russia, Prince Daniel of Galicia (1205–1255) in 1246 contacted Pope Innocent IV for support against the Mongols. Until 1249 the Pope sent to him more than a dozen letters suggesting the royal crown in exchange for becoming a Catholic. Latin bishop Albert was sent to Galich, the capital of Galicia, to arrange the conversion. Prince Daniel was repeatedly, but still in vain, trying to demonstrate that he wished a European crusade against the Mongols rather than the crown from Rome. Finally, after all his attempts to get support from the West proved unsuccessful, he expelled the papal bishop from Galich (1249). In 1254, Pope Innocent sent another legate, this time with the crown itself as the most convincing argument. Next year, Daniel at last accepted it and was

crowned, having proclaimed the Pope his “father” and the “vicar of St. Peter”. Nonetheless, he rejected to bring his Orthodox subjects to Catholicism before the ecumenical council, which was about to convene, has stated it officially. Pope Innocent sent an appeal for crusade to the Czech and the Polish kings, but out of fear of the Mongols this appeal had no effect. As Prince Daniel, deeply disappointed, broke finally his connections to Rome, Pope Innocent, in revenge, ‘bestowed’ the principality of Galicia to Daniel’s adversary, Prince Mindaugas of Lithuania, who just converted to Catholicism to save his land from the Livonian swords. The authority of Rome in the Russian lands sank after that to the lowest point. As regards Prince Mindaugas, he was, after that ‘bestowal’, repeatedly defeated by Daniel, compelled to pay tribute to Galicia, and finally converted from Catholicism to the Orthodox faith.

After the death of Daniel in 1264, his principality was occupied and divided between Poland and Lithuania. The local East Slav population clearly preferred Polish-Lithuanian rule to that of the Mongols. It was then that the rise of the Great Duchy of Lithuania began, with many Orthodox East Slavs in the ruling elite and Church Slavonic as the official language.

In the fourteenth century, the union of Poland with Lithuania through dynastic marriage of the Polish Princess Jadwiga with Grand Duke Jogaila (Jagiello) of Lithuania in 1386 meant a start of repressions for the pagan and later, for the Orthodox population of the kingdom. The Catholic Grand Dukes, such as Vytautas the Great (1392–1430), attempted to establish separate metropolitanates in the Russian lands they controlled. The Russian Church always fought against this, in large part out of fear that the new metropolitanates would be converted to Catholic provinces.

It is hardly appropriate now to follow all twists and turns of that difficult historical period. Suffice it to say that Lithuania, after the absorption of all former principalities in the South and in the West of Kievan Russia, became gradually a great threat for the Muscovite state. In the fourteenth century the Lithuanians occupied the lands of White Russia, Polotsk, Turov and Pinsk, then Volhynia, the region around Kiev and far to the East including Kursk, until 1420 the key-city of Smolensk and the lands in the lower reaches of the Dnieper up to the Black Sea were under Lithuanian control. The Russian state of Muscovy was for the second time isolated from the West by a strong adversary whose ruling elite belonged mostly to Catholicism, but of whose population two-thirds were Orthodox. Speaking in A. J. Toynbee’s terms, in this epoch the Russian state was once more facing a great ‘challenge’ from the side of the close allies, Poland and Lithuania. In accordance with Toynbee’s scheme, a ‘response’ had to be found.

In Muscovy the fourteenth century elapsed in attempts to consolidate the peoples of the North-Eastern principalities so as to centralize the state. Under Ivan I Kalita (1328–1340), the Duchy of Moscow started gaining the upper hand in the rivalries for domination. The leadership of Moscow became undeniable after the crushing defeat of the Mongols in the bloody battle of Kulikovo at the source of the River Don by the united Russian troops under the command of Prince Dmitri of Moscow (1380). Novgorod, along with all dependent regions, was annexed by Moscow in 1478, two years after the dominance by the

Tatars' Golden Horde ended officially (1480). Finally, in 1485, the Grand Duchy of Tver was absorbed, so that Moscow gained full sovereignty over a significant part of North-East Russia.

In 1437, Patriarch Josef II of Constantinople (1416–1439) appointed a learned Greek Isidore the Metropolitan of the Muscovite see. Grand Duke of Moscow Vasily II (1416–1462) wasn't at all satisfied with this decision, being a partisan of the Muscovite candidate, bishop Jonah of Ryazan. After the adoption of union with Catholicism at the Council of Ferrara-Florence (1438–1439), Isidore's reputation in Moscow was hopelessly ruined. On his return on Easter 1441 he was immediately deposed by six Muscovite bishops and imprisoned (in 1443, however, he was allowed to flee to Lithuania without being pursued). Thenceforth the Princes of the Grand Duchy of Moscow permanently rejected Church union with Rome. The Byzantine Emperor John VII, who adopted the Church union of Florence, wasn't any longer considered an Orthodox ruler and Head of Orthodox Church. Muscovite Russia stood now for necessity of definite emancipation from the 'unfaithful' Greeks. In 1448, the first independent Metropolitan, Jonah, was elected at a council of the Russian bishops without the consent from Constantinople.

The Metropolitans of Muscovy were traditionally called 'of Kiev and All Rus'', though their actual residence after the Mongol invasion was Vladimir-on-Klyazma. Metropolitan Peter (1308–1326) was the first to prefer long stays in Moscow, and his successor, Theognost the Greek, moved to Moscow once for all. Nonetheless, the Muscovite Metropolitans retained the title 'of Kiev' for the next hundred years, and only since 1461 (death of Metropolitan Jonah) they accepted the title 'of Moscow and All Rus'', which has been preserved up to the present day. The title 'Metropolitan of Kiev, Galich and All Rus'' was then reserved for Uniate Metropolitan Gregory II Bulgarian of Lithuania (1458–1464).

IV. *Translatio imperii* (1453–1547)

In the last years of the fourteenth century, as Constantinople was besieged by the Turks, Grand Prince Vasily I of Moscow (1389–1425) forbade the traditional mention of the Byzantine Emperor in Russian church services, because, as he said, "Russia has a church, but no emperor". Then Patriarch Antony IV of Constantinople (1389–1390, 1391–1398) sent a letter to Moscow, seeking to enlighten the Muscovite ruler on the high position of the emperor within the Church, stating that he cannot be compared to other princes and rulers. "And even though it is God's Will that heathens are now besieging the emperor's domain, he receives, to the present day, the same consecration, the same honors and the same prayers from the Church and is anointed with the same Holy Myrrh and ordained as emperor and autocrat of the Romans, which means of all Christians... This is why it is not at all good, my son, when thou sayest: 'we have a church, but no emperor'. For emperorship and Church constitute one integral entity and it is quite impossible to separate them from each other... When certain other Christians assumed the emperor's title, this came to pass

in contradiction to the natural order of things and to the laws, through the imposition of tyranny and violence”.¹⁰

After the fall of Constantinople in 1453, there was, all of a sudden, no more Emperor in the Orthodox world. Some decades were needed for this fact to be evaluated, until under Grand Prince Ivan III (1462–1505) legends first appeared, alleging Muscovite rulers to be the successors and heirs of the Emperors of Old Rome. In the anonymous ‘Tale of the Princes of Vladimir’ (‘Skazanie o knjazjakh Vladimirskikh’), composed some time before 1527, a new historical myth was created, according to which the Muscovite dynasty of Rurikids goes back to a certain Prus, who was allegedly the brother of Octavianus Augustus. Moreover, Grand Prince Vladimir Monomakh of Kiev is said here to have received the royal insignia from the Byzantine Emperor Constantine Monomakhos. Those legends were first brought into play in the diplomacy of Vasily III (1505–1533) and then of his son and successor, Ivan IV the Terrible (1533–1584).

In 1498, for the first time in Russian history, the coronation of a co-ruler of Muscovy took place after the Byzantine imperial coronation rite. Grand Prince Ivan III put the so-called ‘Monomakh’s Cap’ on the head of his underage grandson Dmitry Ivanovich, proclaiming him the ‘Grand Prince of Vladimir and Moscow’.

As a logical finish of the elaboration of the Russian imperial idea, lasting for almost a century, Ivan IV was crowned in 1547 according to the same Byzantine rite as the Tsar (i.e. Emperor) of All Russia and other lands. Thenceforth the Orthodox Church had its Orthodox Emperor again, just as Patriarch Joseph wished it in his letter to the Grand Duke of Moscow a hundred and fifty years earlier.

Conclusion

Returning to my starting point on the character of Russian medieval culture, I would like to highlight some important implications of the general (may be, rather intuitive) assertions made in the Introduction.

Firstly, in ecclesiastical affairs the Russians – be it of Kiev, Novgorod or Moscow – were throughout many centuries acting defensively, giving ‘responses’ to the multiple ‘challenges’ without any memorable attempt to create ‘challenges’ from its own side. No doubt, this passive conduct was determined by the dependence of the Russian Church upon Constantinople in the crucial issues of Church policy, dogma and discipline. This formally administrative as well as spiritual dependence was so strong that even the acceptance of the Church union of Florence by the Byzantine Emperor wasn’t considered by the Russians as an excuse for the break in relations. The remarkable devotion to the Mother-Church might be explained in different ways, the most plausible explanation, in my view, being the

¹⁰ F. Miklosich, I. Müller, *Acta et diplomata graeca*, II, Vindobonae, 1862, p. 190–192.

common complex of Russian marginality – geographic, religious and cultural. In contrast to the medieval Catholic Church with its militant monastic orders and sometimes brutal ways of proselytizing, the Orthodox Church in Russia was always cautious and timid in its missionary work. Furthermore, in contrast to the Church of Byzantium, whose Patriarchs were often self-conscious and reluctant to the Emperors, the Russian churchmen, especially in the Muscovite period, preferred to stay in the shadow of the laic rulers. Nonetheless, the Metropolitans of Kiev and Moscow, both the Greeks and the Russians, played generally a very positive role in the state government as counselors of Grand Princes.

Secondly, the geographically peripheral location of the Russian realm along with the vast space with a sparse population led to fundamental gaps in the intermediate (secondary) reception of European intellectual practices and products, and, hence, to the scarcity of Old Russian religious and cultural output in the early Middle Ages. No wonder that in the Catholic West (primarily in papal Rome) this was in the course of time interpreted as a token of barbarism and cultural backwardness. After the Great Schism of 1054 and especially after the remarkable rise of the papal authority under Pope Innocent III (1198–1216), this patronizing Catholic perception of Russia was increasingly accompanied with appeals to bring the Eastern ‘schismatics’ to reason. This almost thousand-year-old attitude toward Russian religious and cultural traditions created in the Western ruling elites the persistent ‘missionary’ complex, which has evidently lasted up to the present day.

Finally, the ‘challenge’ of Rus’ isolation from the South and the West in the thirteenth century was answered with the only possible ‘response’, that is with extension of the state territory to the North-East together with the move of the Kievan metropolitan see to the city of Vladimir. The ‘challenge’ of the fifteenth century (the formation of the Lithuanian state at the Western borders of Rus’ and the fall of the Orthodox monarchy in Constantinople) was answered by consolidating the North-Western principalities under Muscovite rule as well as taking over the imperial ideology from Byzantium.

All in all, the second ‘exclusion’ of Russia from the Catholic West resulted in the formation of the mighty and self-conscious Muscovite monarchy, whose ideology was based on the imperial idea of the Byzantines, whereas the state institutions and the common way of life were quite different from the Byzantine model. Facing the insurmountable obstacles in the West, Russia went on with the expansion to the East, annexing in the sixteenth and seventeenth century the remnants of the Golden Horde. The first substantial breakout to the West was to come only in the early eighteenth century. Under Tsar Peter I the Great, Russia first began with the ‘primary reception’ of the West-European culture of the Modern Age.

V

How the Byzantines Wrote History

Moderator: **Ruth Macrides**

Leonora Neville Why Did the Byzantines Write History?

Warren Treadgold The Unwritten Rules for Writing
Byzantine History

Anthony Kaldellis The Manufacture of History in the
Later Tenth and Eleventh Centuries:
Rhetorical Templates and Narrative
Ontologies

How the Byzantines Wrote History

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Congresses provide occasions for taking stock, looking back at what has been accomplished and forward to what still needs to be done. In the case of our plenary session on ‘How the Byzantines wrote History’, the subjects to be addressed in our discussion are the way we read Byzantine historical writing and how we write about the Byzantine past using that writing.

Let me begin with an anecdote from and about the giants of our subject. August Heisenberg, it is said, commented to Franz Dölger that he thought Immanuel Bekker, the editor responsible for 25 volumes of the Bonn Corpus, must have revised the texts lying on the sofa with a cigar in his mouth. Heisenberg’s picture of Bekker was drawn from Bekker’s lack of enthusiasm for the work he had undertaken and his contempt for the authors whose work he had to edit. His prefaces to the editions provide testimony for his views.¹

It cannot be said that Bekker’s body language or his attitude pertain to any of us. We have been sitting upright at our desks. Proof can be found in the new editions,² new translations,³ surveys of Byzantine historical works,⁴ and monographs on individual authors⁵ that have been produced in the last ten years. They indicate that our subject – Byzantine studies in general and Byzantine historical writing in particular – is thriving.

¹ D. R. Reinsch, *The history of editing Byzantine historiographical texts*, in P. Stephenson (ed.), *The Byzantine world*, Abingdon – New York, 2010, p. 435–444, here at 441.

² The list of new editions and promised editions can be consulted at http://www.oeaw.ac.at/byzanz/pdf/CFHB_2014.pdf.

³ The Dumbarton Oaks Medieval Library (DOML) has produced a steady stream of English translations of Byzantine histories. See also the ‘Translated Texts for Byzantinists’ series: liverpooluniversitypress.co.uk/collections/series-translated-texts-for-byzantinists.

⁴ H. Hunger, *Die profane hochsprachliche Literatur der Byzantiner*, I–II, Munich, 1978; A. Kazhdan (with L. F. Sherry and Ch. Angelidi), *A History of Byzantine Literature*, I–II, Athens, 1999, 2006; W. Treadgold, *Early Byzantine Historians*, Basingstoke, 2007; id., *Middle Byzantine Historians*, Basingstoke, 2013; A. Karpozilos, *Βυζαντινοὶ ἱστορικοὶ καὶ χρονολόγοι*, I–IV, Athens, 1997–2015.

⁵ To name a few of the more recent publications: L. Neville, *Heroes and Romans in Twelfth-Century Byzantium. The Material for History of Nikephoros Bryennios*, Cambridge, 2012; F. Lauritzen, *The Depiction of Character in the Chronographia of Michael Psellos*, Turnhout, 2013; S. Papaioannou, *Michael Psellos. Rhetoric and Authorship in Byzantium*, Cambridge, 2013; A. Simpson, *Niketas Choniates. A Historiographical Study*, Oxford, 2013; P. Buckley, *The Alexiad of Anna Komnene. Artistic Strategy in the Making of a Myth*, Cambridge, 2014; A. Kaldellis, *A New Herodotos. Laonikos Chalkokondyles on the Ottoman Empire, the Fall of Byzantium, and the Emergence of the West*, Washington, D. C., 2014; L. Neville, *Anna Komnene. The Life and Work of a Medieval Historian*, Oxford, 2016.

Our industry is not the only sign that we have moved from the sofa and thrown the cigar away. Change in our evaluation of historical writing can be detected in the language we use to discuss it. Whereas once we spoke of the classical tradition, continuity and imitation, now we talk about originality, innovation and change.⁶ We see that originality and innovation can be achieved “through choices defined by tradition”, “hidden creatively behind the mask of tradition”.⁷ We work with tradition instead of seeing it as a stifling influence on creativity. Once, following Krumbacher’s categories, we spoke of the typical monk’s chronicle but now we know that there is no such thing as a *typical* monk’s chronicle and, besides, that they are not even *monks’* chronicles.⁸ Today we refer to and know historical writing to be literature,⁹ although we do not necessarily agree on the meaning of this categorization, nor do we agree on its significance for the way we read historical works. In all this we see, at least, developments in our subject and, some would say, progress.

But even in this short list of change in perceptions in the study of Byzantine historical writing there is no consensus of opinion. Take the way we read universal or world chronicles. It has been observed more than once that the message of Beck’s study of 1965 has not been fully digested. The same historians who repeat Beck’s conclusions and cite the work positively betray, in the very next sentence, their lack of comprehension of the full implication of the study. And this was the case in the 1970s, 80s, 90s and even today.¹⁰ Yet, when a checklist is made of features that relate respectively to chronicles and histories, so many of them are shared that it is difficult to make a strict division. The one clear and consistent difference between the two so-called genres of historical writing is the chronological span

⁶ For this point see J. Ljubarskij, *Quellenforschung and/or literary criticism: narrative structures in Byzantine historical writings*, in *Symbolae Osloenses*, 73 (1998), p. 5–73, here at 5.

⁷ S. Papaioannou, *Michael Psellos*, p. 19–20.

⁸ K. Krumbacher, *Geschichte der byzantinischen Litteratur von Justinian bis zum Ende des oströmischen Reiches (527–1453)*, Munich, 1892, 2nd ed. 1897, p. 219–318, 319–408; on Krumbacher, see now P. A. Agapitos, *Karl Krumbacher and the history of Byzantine literature*, in *BZ*, 108/1 (2015), p. 1–52. H.-G. Beck, *Zur byzantinischen Mönchschronik*, in *Speculum historiale: Geschichte im Spiegel von Geschichtsschreibung und Geschichtsdeutung (Festschrift K. Adler)*, Freiburg – Munich, 1965, p. 188–197; repr. in H.-G. Beck, *Ideen und Realitäten in Byzanz. Gesammelte Aufsätze*, London, 1972, no. XVI.

⁹ P. Odorico, P. A. Agapitos, H. Hinterberger (ed.), *L’écriture de la mémoire. La littérature de l’historiographie*, *Actes du III^e colloque international philologique Nicosie, 6–8 mai 2004*, Paris, 2006; J. Burke, U. Betka, R. Scott (ed.), *Byzantine Narrative: Papers in Honour of Roger Scott*, Melbourne, 2006; R. Macrides (ed.), *History as Literature in Byzantium*, 34th Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies, Birmingham 1–4 April 2007, Farnham – Burlington, VT, 2010.

¹⁰ H. Hunger, *Die profane hochsprachliche Literatur der Byzantiner*, I, p. 253, 255–278; J. Ljubarskij, *Quellenforschung and/or Literary Criticism*, p. 11–12, and W. Treadgold’s response, 59; J. M. Ljubarskij, *New trends in the study of Byzantine historiography*, in *DOP*, 47 (1993), p. 131–138, here at 133.

covered, reflected in the length or size of the work.¹¹ The Byzantines themselves did not make any special distinction, as can be seen in the way they labelled their historical works, using a variety of words, with *historia* and *chronikon* or *chronographia* used interchangeably and in combination with *biblos* or *diegesis*, *ekthesis*, *epitome*.¹² It was long ago pointed out by Alexander Kazhdan that the best histories were called *chronographia* or *chronike diegesis*.¹³ The lack of distinction between chronicles and histories can, furthermore, be seen in pronouncements of Byzantine historians themselves, as the following statement from the preface of George Akropolites' *Chronike Syngraphe* indicates:

Now those who have written histories (ιστορικῶς) about our affairs have taken various starting points. Some began with the creation of the world, others from some notable empire, either that of the Persians or the Greeks, the Romans or some other people, each one adjusting his own work in relation to his aim. In our case too our composition will be brought to completion in the same way. However, events from the beginning of the creation of the world have been narrated by many people at many times.¹⁴

According to Akropolites, then, the key element that distinguished his work from that of others is its starting point. Given the way in which the Byzantines labelled their historical works and talked about them and the pejorative evaluations which chronicles have received over long time, might we not be better advised to free ourselves of that negative inheritance and use one word to denote all Byzantine historical works and their authors: histories/historians? Western medievalists do not make distinctions among their historical writers.¹⁵ Do we need to? We think that the Byzantines were slavishly devoted to tradition but it seems we are too.

The backbone of modern historical writing on Byzantium is constituted of the historical narratives that have survived in an almost unbroken chain over a thousand years. Historians in search of answers to their questions, in their need to reconstruct the past as it really was, have gone to the histories of the past as their main source of information.¹⁶ We are and will

¹¹ P. Magdalino, *Byzantine historical writing, 900–1400*, in S. Foot, C. F. Robinson (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Historical Writing, 400–1400*, II, Oxford, 2012, p. 218–237, here at 223 for the checklist; R. Scott, *Byzantine chronicles*, in *The Medieval Chronicle*, 6 (2009), p. 31–57, at 40 for lengths of chronicles; A. Markopoulos, *Le public des textes historiographiques à l'époque macédonienne*, in *Parekbolai*, 5 (2015), p. 53–74, at 60: “many elements are present in one but also in the other”. See also A. Markopoulos, *Η θέση τοῦ χρονογράφου στὴ βυζαντινὴ κοινωνία. Νοστοροπία – Τεχνοτροπία* (Ὁψεις τῆς Βυζαντινῆς Κοινωνίας, 4), Athens, 1993, p. 21–22 for the lack of distinction made by Byzantine authors and readers.

¹² P. Magdalino, *Byzantine historical writing*, p. 219.

¹³ A. Kazhdan, *Der Mensch in der byzantinischen Literaturgeschichte*, in *JÖB*, 28 (1979), p. 1–21, here at 3.

¹⁴ George Akropolites, *The History*, trans. R. Macrides, Oxford, 2007, §1, 105.

¹⁵ B. Smalley, *Historians in the Middle Ages*, London, 1974, chapter 7: ‘Universal history’.

¹⁶ But see the work of McCormick who leaves historical narratives aside in favour of other source material: M. McCormick, *Byzantium on the move: imagining a communications history*, in R. Macrides

always be in search of factual information. Yet we have all experienced disappointments at not finding answers. To give a particularly striking example, the story of the failed usurpation attempt of John Komnenos the Fat, survives in five contemporary accounts by four authors, including an eyewitness, Nikolaos Mesarites. Not one author gives the year of the event.¹⁷

In searching for ‘hard facts’ historians have often ignored or discarded other information given by their sources. They have skimmed over it or pushed it to the side, considering it not useful. At worst they have mutilated their texts; at best they have missed important information. An example of this kind of treatment of a text is the Penguin translation of Anna Komnene’s *Alexiad*, an influential translation with a large readership. Sewter, the translator, decided that a considerable number of passages in Anna Komnene’s work were digressions or asides, and he took it upon himself to remove them from the body of her text and put them in footnotes with the initials A. C. in parentheses next to them.¹⁸ This has gone unnoticed by generations of students who in this way have missed out on the full *Alexiad* experience.

In many ways the historians on whom we depend are like us and it is this identification of ourselves with them that makes us feel we can use their writings for our own purposes. We have the same or similar key words: accuracy, truth, usefulness. Our aim is ostensibly the same as theirs – to keep the memory of the past alive. Byzantine authors display their purpose and method in their prefaces, as do we. They know and we know that we are all part of a tradition of historical writing but they do not acknowledge by name those who came before them, their sources. We do. But here is the thing. We treat the historical works on which our histories of Byzantium are based as if they were documents, mainly because we have no others or very few others. But the writings of Byzantine authors are not documents and their authors did not write to provide us with sources for the reconstruction of their world. The situation is best described in the following way:

Despite its modern or even postmodern flavour, the notion that narrative history is a verbal construct, a textual artefact with its own poetics rather than a direct, uncomplicated reflection of events, would have come as no surprise to medieval writers and readers. It is really the opposite views that are modern. History as scholarly inquiry concerned with archival research and documents is only about two centuries old, especially in the institutional academic form we know now.¹⁹

Although these comments are not news to us, the action we should take in the face of them is a matter of some debate. That Byzantine historical writing is literature and, by virtue of

(ed.), *Travel in the Byzantine World*, Aldershot, 2002, p. 3–23.

¹⁷ M. Angold, *The anatomy of a failed coup: the abortive uprising of John the Fat (31 July 1200)*, in A. Simpson (ed.), *Byzantium, 1180–1204: ‘The Sad Quarter of a Century’?*, Athens, 2015, p. 113–134, here 113–114.

¹⁸ *The Alexiad of Anna Comnena*, trans. E. R. A. Sewter, Harmondsworth, 1969. See, for example, p. 37 notes 12, 13, p. 70 note 47, p. 231 notes 17, 19, p. 233 note 20, p. 277 note 2.

¹⁹ M. Otter, *Functions of fiction in historical writing*, in N. Partner (ed.), *Writing Medieval History*, New York, 2005, p. 109–130, here 109.

its quantity and its quality, has a prominent role to play in any history of Byzantine literature is relatively uncontroversial.²⁰ As the most studied of all Byzantine literature, as it has been called,²¹ historical writing should by now be in a more stable position with regard to the way it is read, evaluated and used to write histories of Byzantium today. But, again, there is no consensus on how to approach this literature. When a historian hears that narrative history is a verbal construct, he or she may feel the ground giving way under their feet. The word fiction, much used by literary historians, inspires fear in the historian. To talk of applying to histories the analyses that have been applied to fiction by literary historians might seem to commit us to the view that history is fiction.

Byzantine historical texts are, however, literature at the very least because historical writing was governed by the rhetorical demands of narrative, *diegesis*, which aimed at the production of a persuasive story.²² Byzantine historians were writers and not only of histories. They brought to their writing of historical narrative the same techniques that they used in writing other forms of literature,²³ all the while maintaining a clear knowledge of and distinction between various genres, often self-consciously reminding readers that they were writing in one genre, not another. Their rhetorical training included *ethopoia*, impersonation of mythical figures but also of real people and events.²⁴

We know, however, that the distinguishing characteristic of historical writing, what separates it from other kinds of literature, is the claim to truth. Indeed, Byzantine historians insist on it. Anna Komnene, when speaking of her sources, the accounts of old soldiers, says that they adhered closely to the truth and that she based the truth of her history on them. She concludes her account of her sources by saying, “From all these the whole fabric, that

²⁰ See especially, P. Magdalino, *A history of Byzantine literature for historians*, in P. Odorico, P. A. Agapitos (ed.), *Pour une ‘Nouvelle’ Histoire de la Littérature byzantine, Actes du colloque international philologique, Nicosie, 25–28 mai 2000*, Paris, 2002, p. 167–184; I. Nilsson, R. Scott, *Towards a new history of Byzantine literature: the case of historiography*, in *Classica et Mediaevalia*, 58 (2007), p. 319–332.

²¹ M. Mullett, *Dancing with the deconstructionists in the garden of the muses: new literary history vs ?*, in *BMGS*, 14 (1990), p. 258–273, here 268. At this Congress, as in many others, it is historical writing and hagiography that are the subjects of plenary sessions as the two representatives of Byzantine literature.

²² M. Mullett, *No drama, no poetry, no fiction, no readership, no literature*, in L. James (ed.), *A companion to Byzantium*, Oxford, 2010, p. 227–238, here at 230.

²³ C. Holmes, *The rhetorical structures of John Skylitzes’ Synopsis Historion*, in E. Jeffrey (ed.), *Rhetoric in Byzantium. Papers from the 35th Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies, Exeter College, University of Oxford, March 2001*, Aldershot – Burlington, VT, 2003, p. 187–199, here at 199; A. Kaldellis, *The emergence of literary fiction in Byzantium and the paradox of plausibility*, in P. Roilos (ed.), *Medieval Greek Storytelling. Fictionality and Narrative in Byzantium*, Wiesbaden, 2014, p. 115–130, here at 115.

²⁴ F. Bernard, *Writing and reading Byzantine secular poetry, 1025–1081*, Oxford, 2014, p. 222–225.

of the truth, has been woven”.²⁵ George Pachymeres goes so far as to assert that “the soul of history, one could say, is truth, and the matter of truth is necessarily sacred, while he who puts falsehood before truth is openly sacrilegious”.²⁶ He repeats ἀλήθεια four times in two lines.

Byzantine historians, while emphasizing truth in their prefaces and elsewhere in their histories, also asserted that they wrote impartially, for the sake of history alone and not ‘out of enmity or goodwill’. This claim is manifestly not true. We encounter partiality everywhere, a fact that makes the use of the word ‘bias’ redundant and meaningless. As historians we seek reliability, trustworthiness. Lack of hard facts is debilitating for the modern historian but even more so is concern over the reliability of histories. Already in 1980 Alexander Kazhdan pointed to the way in which Kantakouzenos’ History was seen to be a partial account that deformed the bigger picture yet was used as the basis of reconstructions of political events, ecclesiastical controversy and social structure of Byzantium. He proceeded to examine how the History was constructed, studying Kantakouzenos’ use of words. He found that the disinterested honesty which is a theme of the History was contradicted, at the lexical level, by the prominence of profit, κέρδος.²⁷

The discrepancies we find between theory and practice in Byzantine histories alert us to the need to find other ways to read our sources if they are going to help us to reconstruct the past. The author has been resurrected,²⁸ the worst excesses of the Linguistic Turn have passed,²⁹ but we have to take seriously the literariness of the histories we read and draw from. This is the work of interrogation and scrutiny: How is the narrative organized? What stories did authors tell and where did they situate them in their narrative? Who is speaking when?³⁰ There is no single way to read the histories; there are perhaps as many ways as there are texts. This work is long overdue. Commentaries on individual histories are urgently needed.³¹

²⁵ D. R. Reinsch, A. Kambylis, *Annae Comnenae Alexias*, Berlin – New York, 2001, 14.7.64–81 (p. 452).

²⁶ Georges Pachymères, *Relations historiques*, ed. and trans. A. Failler, V. Laurent, I, Paris, 1984, 23.18–19.

²⁷ A. P. Kazhdan, *L’Histoire de Cantacuzène en tant qu’oeuvre littéraire*, in *Byzantion*, 50 (1980), p. 279–335.

²⁸ A. Pizzone (ed.), *The author in middle Byzantine literature: modes, functions, and identities*, Boston – Berlin, 2014.

²⁹ A. Kaldellis, *The study of women and children. Methodological challenges and new directions*, in P. Stephenson (ed.), *The Byzantine World*, Abingdon – New York, 2010, p. 61–71.

³⁰ The most recent study is R.-J. Lilie, *Reality and invention: reflections on Byzantine historiography*, in *DOP*, 68 (2014), p. 157–210. Lilie looks at narrative features of Byzantine historical texts which he calls ‘idiosyncracies’. He has suggested that the Byzantines had a different concept of historical truth from us.

³¹ See St. Efthymiadis’ review of N. Zorzi, *La storia di Niceta Coniata, Libri I–VIII*, Venice, 2012, in *BZ*, 107 (2014), p. 927–929, here at 929: “the absence of commentary on major Byzantine authors and texts has been a serious symptom of the arrested development of Byzantine studies”.

Literature is not for stating the obvious or reporting information but for evoking. Mimesis can be an evocative technique. Topoi do not lose their relevance or meaning through repetition. All this is true of historical literature. As to how truth got mixed up in all this I pass the microphone to Nikolaos Mesarites. He is eloquent and he divulges much about the past that we want to know. Here is what he says about truth in narrative:

In writing a narrative, most people who are deep-thinking and resourceful, combine true events (ταῖς ἀληθείαις) with inventions (ἀναπλάσματα) which are appropriate to their purpose, making use of what is plausible (τῷ πιθανῷ) and simulating these with fluency and refinements; the balance of time shows it to be unreliable or the most truthful narration of a truth-loving man.³²

Mesarites reminds us the “the work of representing a reality that does not exist because it no longer exists is an act both of imagination and of literary composition”.³³ If we, as historians of Byzantium, have always known this, we have not given it much time or space in our histories. This is the challenge for our subject in the 21st century.³⁴

³² A. Heisenberg, *Nikolaos Mesarites, Die Palastrevolution des Johannes Komnenos* (Programm des k. alten Gymnasiums zu Würzburg), Würzburg, 1907, 19.6–11.

³³ R. M. Stein, *Literary criticism and the evidence of history*, in N. Partner (ed.), *Writing Medieval History*, p. 67–87, here at 80.

³⁴ For an imaginative approach see F. Kolovou, *Der gefangene Gelehrte und sein nächtlicher Gast: Geschichtskonzeption und Phantasie in Nikephoros Gregoras' Rhomaike Historia* (Sitzungsberichte der Sächsischen Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Leipzig, Philologisch-Historische Klasse, Bd 141, Heft 4), Leipzig, 2016.

Why Did the Byzantines Write History?

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Our desires and expectations for good history do not align with those of the medieval authors of Byzantine histories. If modern historians and medieval Romans valued the same things in history, we would teach Roman history by having students read Constantine Manasses's verse history, which appears to be the mostly highly prized medieval treatment of the subject. The manuscript record indicates that the histories by Manasses and George the Monk were the favorites among medieval Romans.¹ Yet one could read a great deal of modern scholarship on the Byzantine Empire and never see them cited as sources of historical information, and I can't hand my students a translation of either. In contrast, some of our favorite histories, such as those by Psellos and Leo the Deacon, survived in a single copy.² Clearly we and the medieval Romans have different tastes in history. It is worth taking a step back from the details of our research to consider how differences in our motivations for writing history may affect our interpretations of Byzantine historiography. Here I would like us to consider the reasons why Byzantines wrote history and start a conversation about how historiography fits in with the rest of what we are learning about Byzantine culture.

While the reasons for writing history are complex and various, both now and in the middle ages, a few examples can lay bare some fundamental differences in approach. When medieval Roman and modern western historians treated the history of the Assyrian king Sardanapalus, they all knew about him mostly from the record of Diodoros, which contains political and military details and a description of Sardanapalus' character.³ Yet they used Diodoros in different ways because they were asking different questions. For the modern academy the animating question was whether he was really Ashurbanipal (we now think he was Shamash-shum-ukin) and whether the politics described by Diodoros should

¹ There are 30 manuscripts of one version of George's history and over 120 of Manasses. D. Afinogenov, *Le manuscrit grec Coislin. 305: la version primitive de la Chronique de Georges le Moine*, in *REB*, 62/1 (2004), p. 239–246. *Constantini Manassis Breviarium Chronicum*, ed. O. Lampsides, Athens, 1996, LXXVII–CXLIX.

² Paris. Gr. 1712. K. Snipes, *The "Chronographia" of Michael Psellos and the Textual Tradition and Transmission of the Byzantine Historians of the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries*, in *ZRVI*, 27/28 (1981), p. 43–62.

³ Diod. Bk II 23–28.

be added to our list of events of Assyrian history.⁴ This desire for precision in abstract knowledge reflects the scientific impulse in history: finding the right place to put him in the tally of Assyrian kings is a valuable exercise because all knowledge of the world is intrinsically prized. Desire to learn about the politics of the Assyrian empire is also driven by the hermeneutical impulse in contemporary history which strives for understanding the variety of human cultures and societies, contextualization of experiences, and increased perspective about our relation to the world. In addition to knowing for the sake of knowing, we want to get the details right because better understanding of Assyrian civilization provides perspective, increases our capacity to see differences, and resists setting current politics in a void. Both the scientific and hermeneutical impulses lead to a desire for accuracy and precision in reconstructions of past events and cultures.⁵ In contrast, when Roman historians, such as George the Monk or Manasses told the story of Sardanapalus, the political details of Diodoros's account (the ones our Assyriologists fight over) are omitted completely.⁶ They focus on Sardanapalus's rampant hedonism and self-immolation along with his wealth and concubines, the subjects we left to poets and artists.⁷ Sardanapalus becomes a moralizing and entertaining story. His deeds were preserved because they were worth vilifying. The emphasis in the medieval histories is on presenting models of good and bad behavior for emulation.

In an example from the monographic tradition of Greek historiography, we see similar interests at play in the treatment of the battle of Mantzikert. Again we are animated by desires for knowledge and understanding. Delight in knowing recently motivated the deployment of digital simulations to model the logistics of the campaign, using new technologies to augment that data of medieval histories.⁸ Desire to understand a foreign culture motivates others to study the battle for the sake of learning about cultural responses to war that guided the decisions men made and the ideals of honor, strength, and weakness that drove conduct in war.⁹ Michael Attaleiates and Nikephoros Bryennios did not have our desires in mind when they wrote their histories of the battle. I see their writing as guided by concerns about

⁴ *Sardanapalus*, in *The Encyclopædia Britannica*, 11th Edition, Cambridge, 1910; S. Ahmed, *Southern Mesopotamia in the time of Ashurbanipal*, Paris, 1968, p. 43–45. J. Scurlock, *Babylon*, in *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Greece and Rome*, Oxford, 2010.

⁵ For more theoretical reflections on the state the field: G. Spiegel, *The Future of the Past: History, Memory and the Ethical Imperatives of Writing History*, in *Journal of the Philosophy of History*, 8 (2014), p. 149–179.

⁶ *Georgii Monachi Chronicon*, ed. P. Wirth, Stuttgart, 1978, p. 13–14. *Constantini Manassis*, I. 624–644.

⁷ George even left out the immolation story. Sardanapalus was a subject for Byron and Delacroix.

⁸ J. Haldon et al., *Marching Across Anatolia – Medieval Logistics and Modeling the Mantzikert Campaign*, in *DOP*, 65/66 (2011), p. 209–235.

⁹ D. Krallis, *Michael Attaleiates and the Politics of Imperial Decline in Eleventh-century Byzantium*, Tempe, 2012, p. 126–157; L. Neville, *Heroes and Romans in Twelfth-Century Byzantium: The “Material for History” of Nikephoros Bryennios*, Cambridge, 2012, p. 121–138.

commemoration of good and bad conduct, preservation of the memory of great deeds for posterity, and the lessons to be drawn from history. While their moralizing is less overt than in the stories of Sardanapalus, they tell a gripping and tragic tale of heroic and craven conduct. Their story packs a moral punch. Fundamentally, they are as concerned with history as a vehicle for the identification and commemoration of good or bad behaviors as the chroniclers who included the story of Sardanapalus.

The impression that medieval Roman historians wrote with commemorative and educational aims accords with the reasons they gave for writing. Taking them at their word, their project is primarily about preventing great deeds, worthy of being remembered, from being forgotten. History writing was provoked by desire for commemoration and preservation of memory. Time is depicted as an uncontrollable stream relentlessly sweeping away the memory of all things regardless of whether they are trivial or “great and worthy of memory”.¹⁰ History provides a way of fighting the river of forgetfulness: “The art of history is the strongest bulwark against the stream of time and, to some extent, it stays time’s irresistible stream...”.¹¹ Authors commonly evoked the destructive effects of time and the value of history in fighting it.¹² Leo the Deacon holds that history is useful “inasmuch as it brings mortal affairs back to life or gives them youthful vigor, and does not allow them to be swept away and concealed in the depths of oblivion”.¹³ George Akropolites argued that historians should write “so that what has been done by some, whether good or bad, is not relegated to the depths of oblivion which time is wont to produce”.¹⁴ The concern with preventing time from erasing the memory of great deeds is a point of commonality between Byzantine historiography and rest of the tradition of Greek history writing stretching back to Herodotus. History was a matter of keeping memory of the past alive.

¹⁰ *Alexiad*, ed. D. Reinsch, A. Kambylis, Berlin, 2001, P1.2.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, P1.1.

¹² *Ibid.* “Time, moving eternally with its uncontrollable streams, sweeps away and carries off all things in creation and plunges them into deep obscurity, whether these matters are not worthy of mention, or great and worthy of memory, and, according to the Tragedian, ‘first draw fourth from darkness then bury from light’”, alluding to Sophocles *Ajax* 646–647. George Pachymeres expresses a similar sentiment alluding to the same line of Sophocles. George Pachymeres, *Relations historiques*, ed. A. Failler, Paris, 1984, I, p. 23, l. 13–16. Michael Attaleiates said his purpose was “to prevent noteworthy matters from slipping into the depths of oblivion for the passage of time, and to grant them in mortal remembrance”. *Michael Attaleiates: The history*, trans. A. Kaldellis, D. Krallis, Cambridge, 2012, p. 11. Skylitzes says that “reading provokes recollection; recollection nurses and expands memory, just as, quite the contrary, negligence and laziness provoke forgetfulness which darkens and confuses the memory of what has happened in the past”. *John Skylitzes: a synopsis of Byzantine history, 811–1057*, trans. J. Wortley, Cambridge, 2010, p. 3.

¹³ *The history of Leo the Deacon: Byzantine military expansion in the tenth century*, trans. D. Sullivan, A-M. Talbot, Washington, D. C., 2005, p. 55.

¹⁴ *George Akropolites: the history*, trans. R. Macrides, Oxford, 2007, p. 105.

Writing a history was a way of saying that particular deeds and events were worthy of memory. If something especially worthy of eternal memory happened, then an historian ought to record it. Kritovoulos wrote his history to preserve the memory of deeds so great that they rivaled those of the ancients.¹⁵ Laonikos Chalkokondyles wrote the history of the events of his lifetime “believing ... that none of the events he included should be forgotten by future generations. In my opinion, those events are in no way less worthy of being remembered than any that have ever taken place anywhere in the world”.¹⁶ Once an event had been recorded in a history book, it was set down “as if on imperishable columns” and the danger of its disappearance was removed.¹⁷ As time passed, what was not recorded in histories would inevitably be forgotten and lost. History was a fight against oblivion.

Beyond commemoration of the dead, there was a strong utilitarian purpose in preserving the memory of great deeds of the past. The accurate assessment and understanding of past deeds gave the audience models of action to emulate or shun. The important thing to learn from history was how to behave.¹⁸ As Attaleiates explains, history “has proven to be exceedingly useful for life, as it reveals the lives of those who were virtuous and those who are not, describes illustrious deeds born of flawless planning and effort as well as inglorious actions caused by the faulty planning or negligence of those governing public affairs.”¹⁹ The victories and defeats recorded in histories “convey clear instruction and set patterns for the future. They simply lead us to imitate what was discerned well and to avoid ill-advised and shameful deeds in wars, battles, and in all other most necessary offensive adventures and challenges of defense”.²⁰ Attaleiates’s sentiment was common. The history of Basil I was told so that “a standard of virtue, a statue, and a model for imitation, be erected for his progeny within their own halls”.²¹ Leo the Deacon explained that history “ordains for men to strive after and emulate some deeds, while rejecting and avoiding others, so that they may not inadvertently neglect that which is useful and beneficial, and attach themselves to that which is abominable and harmful”.²² Michael Psellos’s history textbook *Historia*

¹⁵ *Critobuli Imbriotae historiae*, ed. D. Reinsch, Berlin, 1983, Book 1 chapter 1.

¹⁶ *Laonikos Chalkokondylēs: The histories*, trans. A. Kaldellis, Cambridge, 2014, p. 3.

¹⁷ *Ioannis Cinnami epitome rerum ab Ioanne et Alexio Comnenis gestarum*, ed. A. Meineke, Bonn, 1836, p. 3.

¹⁸ This is understanding of the value of history was common in the ancient world and through the nineteenth century. A. Grafton, *Historiography*, in A. Grafton et al. (ed.), *The classical tradition*, Cambridge, 2010. D. Afinogenov, *Some observations on genres of Byzantine historiography*, in *Byzantion*, 62 (1992), p. 13–33, 16.

¹⁹ *Michael Attaleiates*, p. 9.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ *Chronographiae quae Theophanis Continuati nomine fertur Liber quo Vita Basilii Imperatoris amplectitur*, ed. I. Ševčenko, Berlin, 2011, p. 10–11.

²² *The history of Leo the Deacon*, trans. D. Sullivan, A-M. Talbot, Washington, D. C., 2005, p. 55.

Syntomos had an explicitly didactic purpose of educating a future emperor.²³ History was a teacher of character.²⁴

The authors of history were therefore engaged in moral evaluation of the past as they told their histories.²⁵ Historians told their audiences who they should admire and emulate, and whose behaviors they should avoid. They were bound to speak truth without favor or hatred, but they did so with the explicit purpose of presenting models of behavior. In deciding which deeds to commemorate and how to present them, historians became arbiters of morality and character, as well as success and failure.²⁶ In presenting models of behavior for emulation, the histories had a similar function to hagiography, which also commemorated great deeds of the past (and were far more widely read than histories).²⁷

We know that history was fundamentally not a scientific genre in Byzantium because it was considered a form of display oratory, like epic and poetry. History was classified as *panēgyrikos logos*, which included all written discourse meant to be entertaining rather than utilitarian whereas the more prestigious *politikos logos* encompassed discourse having to do with civic and legal matters.²⁸ History in the Greek tradition was kin to epic. The ideas that history should record great deeds, and great words, and celebrate them, are part of the

²³ S. Papaioannou, J. Duffy, *Michael Psellos and the Authorship of the Historia Syntomos: Final Considerations*, in A. Abramea et al. (ed.), *Byzantium, State and Society: In Memory of Nikos Oikonomides*, Athens, 2003, p. 219–229.

²⁴ Choniates “Whether the actions of a man during his lifetime were holy and righteous or lawless and contemptible, and whether he lived a happy life or gave up the ghost in evildoing, are proclaimed loudly by history”. *O city of Byzantium: annals of Niketas Choniates*, trans. H. Magoulias, Detroit, 1984, p. 3.

²⁵ They of course had other interests as well, including cultural understanding and desire for abstract knowledge. Manasses’s history does a superb job of explaining how the classical and biblical parts of Byzantine heritage fitted together and so would be a great help in developing perspective. For other evaluations of the goals of Byzantine history writing see: A. Markopoulos, *From narrative historiography to historical biography. New trends in Byzantine historical writing in the 10th–11th centuries*, in *BZ*, 102 (2010), p. 697–715; P. Odorico et al. (ed.), *L’écriture de la mémoire: la littérature de l’historiographie*, Paris, 2006; R. Macrides (ed.), *History as literature in Byzantium*, Farnham, 2010.

²⁶ A. Markopoulos, *Byzantine history writing at the end of the first millennium*, in *Byzantium in the Year 1000*, Leiden, 2003, p. 183–197, here at 186.

²⁷ Papaioannou emphasizes that hagiographies, icons, and ancient objects contributed far more to Byzantine sense of history than the rarely-read formal histories. S. Papaioannou, *Byzantine Historia*, in Kurt Raaflaub (ed.), *Thinking, Recording, and Writing History in the Ancient World*, Malden, 2014, p. 297–313, here at 298. G. Klaniczay, *Hagiography and historical narrative*, in J. Bak, I. Jurković (ed.), *Chronicon: medieval narrative sources: a chronological guide with introductory essays*, Turnhout, 2013.

²⁸ S. Papaioannou, *Michael Psellos rhetoric and authorship in Byzantium*, Cambridge, 2013, p. 103. On the connection between history and entertainment: S. Papaioannou, *The aesthetics of history: from Theophanes to Eustathios*, in R. Macrides (ed.), *History as literature in Byzantium*, Farnham, 2010, p. 3–21; P. Magdalino, *Byzantine Historical Writing, 900–1400*, in S. Foot et al. (ed.), *The Oxford history of historical writing*, II, Oxford, 2012, p. 218–237, here at 221.

legacy of Homeric epic for historiography. Homer also lent history writing the third person narrative, and concern with the sequence of events, their causes and effects.²⁹ Both genres were commemorative and morally edifying. Both were studied for the sake of learning proper expression.³⁰ Commonalities in the fundamental structure (sequential narrative in the third person) and the base purpose (preserving the memory of great deeds) ensured that history and epic were classified as kindred types of discourse. That history was a genre of entertainment did not make it unimportant. Like epic, it taught people how to act and who to admire, as well as lessons in elegance of expression and proper narrative.

Interests in presenting lessons in conduct reinforced interests in good story telling. Diverting and morally edifying stories are so prominent in George the Monk's history that he has justly been called a short story writer.³¹ The entertaining value of his stories likely helped drive home his intended lessons, or at least persuaded audiences to listen to them. Manasses makes history richly entertaining. In telling the history from Creation to 1081 in 6 734 lines, he gave 23 lines to the story of the Lydian king Kandaules foolishly letting his guard Gygas see his wife naked. Kandaules was worthy of memory because his history conveyed good moral lessons about the dangers of boastfulness and provoking a woman's wrath, and it was an entertaining story.³²

Other histories seem to have prized a good narrative of an episode over a precise record of idiosyncratic details. The characteristics that make episodes seem dramatic and entertaining also can give them weight as moral exemplars. When grand villains clash dramatically with valiant heroes, it is both easier to get caught up in the action and to realize who you should be like. Skylitzes rewrote his source material so as to offer homogenized episodes of cinematic action. He did not change the upshot of what had happened, but he replaced specific administrative terms with generic ones and subordinated geographic details to accentuate the basic plot line.³³ Modern readers searching for precise detail and particularities

²⁹ R. Nicolai, *The Place of History in the Ancient World*, in J. Marincola (ed.), *A Companion to Greek and Roman Historiography*, Oxford, 2010, p. 13–26; J. Marincola, *Authority and tradition in ancient historiography*, Cambridge, 1997, p. 6. C. Fornara, *The nature of history in ancient Greece and Rome*, Berkeley, 1983, p. 31, 61–90.

³⁰ Xenophon and Thucydides were studied more as models of rhetoric than out of interest in ancient Greece. A. Kaldellis, *The Byzantine Role in the Making of the Corpus of Classical Greek Historiography: A Preliminary Investigation*, in *JHS*, 132 (2012), p. 71–85.

³¹ J. Ljubarskij, *George the Monk as a Short-Story Writer*, in *JÖB*, 44 (1994), p. 255–264. D. Afinogenov, *Some observations on genres of Byzantine historiography*, in *Byzantion*, 62 (1992), p. 13–33.

³² *Constantini Manassis*, l. 813–836.

³³ C. Holmes, *Basil II and the Government of Empire: 976–1025*, Oxford, 1999, p. 120–239. S. McGrath, *The battles of Dorostolon (971): rhetoric and reality*, in *Peace and War in Byzantium: essays in honor of George T. Dennis*, Washington, D.C., 1995, p. 152–164. T. Sklavos, *Moralising History: the Synopsis Historiarum of John Skylitzes*, in J. Burke et al. (ed.), *Byzantine Narrative*, Melbourne, 2006, p. 110–119.

are frustrated, but medieval readers probably appreciated the way his pruning of odd terms and extraneous detail heightened the drama and characterization of the story. Nikephoros Bryennios's history is similarly a series of fairly short dramatic stories in which characters play highly formalized roles. There are repeated scenarios in which all the Turks and all the Romans play according to type. The episodes relate what happened, but also provide moral evaluations about the actions of the historical characters that lead to clear lessons for the audience.³⁴

The suggestion that medieval Roman historians were concerned with commemoration of great deeds, character formation, and entertainment does not imply that they were unconcerned with truth. It is a truth that Sardanapalus either was or wasn't Asherbanipal. It is equally a truth that it is stupid to let a friend look at your naked spouse (and that you can learn a lot of Greek by reading Thucydides). Which sort of truth historians should worry about is a matter of cultural predilection. As with ancient historiography, Byzantine worry over truth was often about avoiding bias, flattery, or false condemnation.³⁵ Historians wanted to be accurate in the description and evaluation of men's deeds so that audiences could draw the proper moral lessons from history. George Akropolites provides a classic formulation: "the author ought to write with neither favor nor with malice, nor out of hatred or goodwill but for the sake of history alone..."³⁶ Concern with truth can also be a worry about moral or dogmatic truth. George the Monk expresses great concern for truth in his preface, but he was manifestly not interested in the truth expressed through chronological accuracy – in one case we know that his chronological placement of an episode was off by three hundred years. Rather it is clear that he envisioned truth as what was morally right and ontologically true: he told the episode with a cleaner, more incisive characterization of the principle characters and the lesson to be learned.³⁷ George was genuinely concerned with truth, but in a way that did not lead to an abstract desire for knowledge for its own sake.³⁸ When we better understand what medieval Roman historians were trying to do, we can appreciate how good they were at it.

So far my comments should not be controversial and, aside of a greater emphasis on character formation, mostly work to align Byzantine historiography more fully with classical historiography. I would like to go a step further in thinking about the relationship between the way histories present models for emulation and what we have been learning about the formation of the self in Byzantine culture. Simultaneously I may address some objections that may be brewing, because at this point some readers will be thinking that I have gone

³⁴ L. Neville, *Heroes and Romans*, p. 89–103.

³⁵ J. Marincola, *Authority and tradition*, p. 158–174. C. Fornara, *The nature of history*, p. 91–141.

³⁶ *George Akropolites*, p. 105.

³⁷ J. Ljubarskij, *George the Monk as a Short-Story Writer*, p. 259. D. Afinogenov, *Some observations*, p. 18.

³⁸ On historicity of Byzantine histories see R. Lilie, *Reality and invention: Reflections on Byzantine Historiography*, in *DOP*, 68 (2014), p. 157–210.

seriously astray in using as substantive evidence what any decent Byzantinist should recognize as literary *topoi*. They will say that statements about saving memories from the river of forgetfulness are present in texts because such repetition of expected literary tropes was a standard part of Byzantine rhetoric and, since statements that have been repeated ever since Herodotus are simply not evidentiary for the medieval period, I mistake mere rhetoric for reality.

My answer to this criticism goes to the heart of why I think historiography mattered in Byzantium, or rather, how historiography fit into the larger cultural concerns of Byzantine discourse. Our evolving understanding of the formation of identity in Byzantine culture indicates that the *topoi* are not chaff to be sifted out, but the means by which medieval Romans expressed their selves and their values. The Byzantine conception of ethics in the formation of individual character relied on patterning one's own behavior on idealized types. As Stratis Papaioannou explains:

In this rhetorical tradition, to be oneself ... one must reenact a set of *typoi* and *topoi*, generic rhetorical types and patterns, for presenting subjectivity. ... Rhetoricians learned rhetoric by staging the first person speech of stock characters, thus imagining themselves as another. ... Biblical exegesis also promoted identification of the characters of biblical stories. ... readers were urged to fashion themselves according to model biblical figures.³⁹

Byzantine people did not express their identity by explaining how they were unique, but who they were like. The practice of patterning self on models was taught to laity through participation in liturgy and the singing of psalms. Derek Krueger's study of the formation of self through liturgy confirms the centrality of patterning self on models: "the interiority that emerges in conformity to the Psalms proceeds not through a discovery of the individual, but by absorbing the subject into preexistent models".⁴⁰ Christian selves were formed through purposeful enactment of scripted patterns:

Hymns and prayers provided models for the self, offering access to interior lives, focusing introspection, and patterning affect. Byzantine liturgy provided a venue of the merging of speech and subjectivity, where Christians might immerse themselves in scripted performances, becoming themselves through the making or doing (*to poiein*) of the self.⁴¹

³⁹ S. Papaioannou, *Michael Psellos rhetoric and authorship in Byzantium*, Cambridge, 2013, p. 135–136.

⁴⁰ D. Krueger, *Liturgical subjects: Christian ritual, Biblical narrative, and the formation of the self in Byzantium*, Philadelphia, 2014, p. 18.

⁴¹ "The songs of the sinner conveyed identities that could be produced and inhabited through repetition. Implicit in such practices of chanting, singing, or prayer lay theories of how subjects formed. The Stoudite hymns rendered the personas of the lectionary as roles to be played. The monastery became a sort of Actors Studio to teach the poetics of the Byzantine Christian self through ritual." Krueger's work also emphasizes the workings of this process of self-formation among laity through liturgical prayers and hymns, participation in the lectionary cycle, and the calendar of feasts. *Ibid.*, p. 197.

Repeating often repeated phrases was an aspect of the formation and performance of self in Byzantine culture.

The pervasiveness of the liturgical calls to form self through patterning on models implies that the attention to *topoi* and *typoi* we see in highly crafted rhetorical texts is not merely a product of classical education. Rather than trickling-down from the classically educated to everyone else, the attention to modeling self on patterns was a common aspect of Byzantine culture. While the bulk of our evidence comes from highly educated circles, I see no reason to think that people in other arenas had a culture that operated in fundamentally different ways. Certainly our rare glimpses of provincial non-elite people suggest they worked hard to embody recognizable positive archetypes.⁴²

Acknowledging the role of ancient models in the formation of character and culture in Byzantine society requires that we see the *topoi* and literary *mimesis*, not as inconsequential rhetorical dressing to be scraped off and disregarded, but as the touchstones for self-expression. Because identity was expressed by saying who one was like, the *topoi* speak to the truth of one's character. The *topoi* are not what should be ignored, but what were considered most important.

When historians talked about how they wanted to stave off the river of forgetfulness by preserving the memory of great deeds, they were imitating ancient historians, but this imitation was a significant, purposeful statement about who they wanted to be and what sort of history they prized. Nothing about the repetition of an expected *topos* made it unimportant. Of all the possible ways to imitate ancient historians – and there were many – this particular metaphor had power because that sentiment was appealing and satisfying. There is nothing inevitable in the choices medieval writers made. Medieval historians could choose to be like the author of the biblical Books of Kings, or like Eusebios, or like Procopios. When they chose to be like Polybios, it was because they found resonance in those ideas. *Topoi* were repeated because authors used them to powerfully express what they thought mattered. Histories began by asserting that their purpose was commemoration, because their purpose was commemoration. Historians said that the memory of good and bad gave valuable models to praise or shun because they believed that teaching character was an important function of history.

That self in Byzantine culture was created and expressed through patterning behavior on models allowed histories to play a role in the moral formation of their audiences. People practiced in forming character through patterning themselves on biblical models and performance of psalms, or through composing *ethopoeia*, would naturally perceive the characters presented in histories as potential models to emulate or avoid. Historiography likely had a secondary place in ethical formation insofar as other kinds of discourse and material culture were more common, but in that histories provided multiple examples of great or horrible behavior they gave their readers powerful, memorable lessons in how to

⁴² L. Neville, *Authority in Byzantine Provincial Society, 950–1100*, Cambridge, 2004, p. 156–164.

be virtuous and effective. When Skylitzes and Bryennios homogenized individuals into examples of particular types of characters, they were making their histories *more* useful, by making the important patterns clearer. As different authors chose who to exalt and who to condemn in their histories, or how to tell the stories so that their audiences knew who they should be like, they nudged their contemporaries to adopt a particular kind of moral formation and politics.

A sense of self is formed in conjunction with the development of a sense of community. Histories could help form an individual's character, but when read in community, they could also play a role in the formation of shared culture. Since the formation of self in medieval Roman culture was made in reference to past models, Byzantine community and society was likewise inflected by engagement with the past. Studies of cultural memory help explain how communities can be created and made more cohesive through perceptions of common experiences and common pasts.⁴³ Histories, and other texts that memorialize past experiences – such as hagiographies or liturgical poetry – can bring a particular vision of the past to the minds of people within a much later community. If the later community perceives that past as a part of their own living cultural memory, that memory can shape the community's self-understanding of who they are, and provide an interlocutor for intellectual and artistic creation of culture.⁴⁴

This conception of cultural memory as a means of making past events and cultural products living sparks for the constitution of later communities is helpful in understanding Byzantium because it explains how these people were able to be both Romans and singers of Psalms despite yawning gulfs of time and place. People who consider the Byzantines' belief that they were Romans as a form of false-consciousness sometimes appeal to vast stretch of time, or breaks in social continuity, as making it somehow impossible for the medieval Romans to *really* be Romans. But it is entirely possible to have gaps in continuity – even centuries-long gaps – because once a text is picked up, and perceived as expressing truth about one's own past, and that vision is shared within a community, that vision of the past can become living cultural memory. People who sincerely sing along with the Lenten Triodion, ventriloquizing Adam's self-accusation and penance, become the type of the penitent sinner.⁴⁵ Eden becomes living memory and worry over continuity is meaningless.

⁴³ J. Assmann, *Cultural Memory and Early Civilization: Writing, Remembrance, and Political Imagination*, Cambridge, 2011; J. Assmann, *Religion and cultural memory: ten studies*, Stanford, 2006; A. Erll, A. Nünning, *A Companion to Cultural Memory Studies*, Berlin, 2010.

⁴⁴ "... the history of thought cannot be completely grasped if reconstructed solely in terms of evolution and progress. The concept of evolution, that is, of an accumulation by which the old is absorbed in the new, has to be complemented by the concept of memory, through which the old remains present and valid, and progress is matched by recursion and even regression. The hypoleptic constitution of cultural memory implies not only reception and elaboration but also rejection and a return to once abandoned positions." J. Assmann, *Cultural Memory*, p. 266–267.

⁴⁵ D. Krueger, *Liturgical subjects*, p. 164–196.

Medieval Romans' creation of self through patterning on models heightened the sense in which their culture was formed in relation to memory. Biblical and classical figures were chosen as models of behavior, and community was created in relation to history. The modeling led to some conservatism and uniformity, as we saw with multiple authors in different centuries using the same metaphor. At the same time, individuals chose who to emulate. Not every classical or biblical figure made the cut, and not every medieval person made the same choices. Romanos the Melodist had strong ideas about who Christians should model their behavior on, but Polybios also provided enthralling exemplary characters. Nothing compelled exclusive loyalty to any particular model, to the contrary, it seems people interacted with whatever strand of their perceived heritage was useful in the context of the moment.⁴⁶ Writers and artists were beholden to common ideas of culture insofar as they needed to work in a context that made sense to themselves and others, but they also produced works that reflected their own values and asked readers and witnesses to admire and emulate particular traits.

Anna Komnene and Nikephoros Bryennios provide an example of contemporary historians presenting history as offering divergent lessons. They told the same stories about Alexios Komnenos, but in such a way that their audiences would take away opposite moral valuations of his behavior. Bryennios presented Alexios's generalship as craven, duplicitous and un-Roman, while Anna told essentially the same stories about the same events in such a way that Alexios appeared as a clever master strategist in the ancient Greek style. While historians could not control reader's responses to their texts, they could certainly try to shape what their moral messages would be. In reinventing Alexios as a morally virtuous trickster, Anna Komnene created a new model of action for her grandchildren to emulate.⁴⁷ It was an attempt to nudge the morality and politics of her contemporaries. The decisions that historians, and other authors and artists, made about which deeds to preserve for eternity and which to hold up as models encouraged the culture of their contemporaries to adopt particular values.

The vast trove of possible models – Biblical, Greek, Roman – allowed for remarkable variation of culture and morality all while maintaining the practice of cultural formation via relationship with the past. The shifting fashions of exemplars are changes in the formation of Byzantine culture, always created in concert with an understanding of the past. I see the interaction of personal choices and past models as giving Byzantine culture both its constantly shifting mutability and its appearance of stasis. This understanding of medieval Romans as constantly creating themselves through choosing various bits of their immense ancient heritage to emulate seems a far superior way of conceiving of cultural shifts than the old metaphors of decline and rebirth. Scholars who like Byzantine culture have often described their favorite parts as revivals or renaissances. We have identified 'revivals' and

⁴⁶ S. Papaioannou, *Byzantium and the Modernist Subject*, in R. Betancourt, M. Taroutina (ed.), *Byzantium/Modernism: The Byzantine and Method in Modernity*, Leiden, 2015, p. 195–211, here at 206.

⁴⁷ L. Neville, *Heroes and Romans*, p. 182–203.

‘renewals’ of classical culture in the ninth, tenth, twelfth, fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Since only what has died or decayed can be reborn, the intervening moments are necessarily ones of decline, and the story of Byzantine high culture becomes a continuous flux of vitality and decay, birth and death. Yet the interstices of decay of classical culture are more often than not seen by scholars of Orthodoxy as moments of hagiographical or theological flourishing. The scholars who chart the revivals generally want to defend Byzantium, but the metaphor of new birth and revival – from death and decay – rather reinforces the impression that this was a culture with health problems.⁴⁸

Rather than being passively subject to the vitality of classicism, medieval authors and artists, responding to changing challenges of their society and culture, shifted their appraisals of what in the past held meaning for them. Nothing was reborn and nothing died as medieval Roman creators of cultural products altered their appreciation of what aspects of their ancient heritage were engaging. The ability of Byzantine authors to shift their stances relative to their various ancient models frustrate the efforts of modern scholars to marshal Byzantine culture into neat trends or fashions.⁴⁹

I would like us to see historiography as one of the many forms of discourse that were used by medieval Romans in their process of self-expression and self-formation. Liturgical discourse was undoubtedly more common, but historical discourse could be powerful: one reading of Plutarch is enough for us to remember lives of Tiberius and Gaius Gracchus, or Attaleiates on Romanos Diogenes. The reach of historiography was small and elite, but elites are influential.

Regardless of how many people took historical types as models of action, understanding the process of self-formation in Byzantine culture lets us see better what historians were doing. Bryennios fitted the majority of characters in his history into recognizable roles and types, because he thought that was good history, and, more importantly, because that was how he was taught to think. He made Anna Dalassene look like Theodora, Cornelia, and a martyr facing down a judge (not at the same time)⁵⁰ because those patterns revealed true things about who she was, and it was the natural way for him to organize and explain experience. Further, within her culture, how could Anna construct a personality without aligning her behavior with such ideal types? Byzantine history writing took place within Byzantine culture, and we need to apply all that we have learned about that culture to the study of historiography.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 194–198.

⁴⁹ “Byzantine writing (similarly to, but more pointedly than, Byzantine art) operated within the various and often contradictory series of *inherited* vocabularies and registers of discourse – bodies of language, texts, forms, and knowledge that originated in the earlier Greco-Roman tradition. Byzantine writers were trained to switch between these registers in almost imperceptible ways that cannot satisfy the double impulse of modern historiography to identify coherent *systems* of thoughts and linear *histories* of form.” S. Papaioannou, *Byzantium and the Modernist Subject*, p. 206–207.

⁵⁰ L. Neville, *Heroes and Romans*, p. 139–158.

The Unwritten Rules for Writing Byzantine History

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My subject here is what the Byzantines considered appropriate in an historical work. My main concern is not with writing style, because the Byzantines judged the style of histories in much the same way as they judged the style of other forms of literature. Yet from histories the Byzantines expected something more than stylistic elegance: they expected truthfulness. The Byzantines differed from modern scholars who deny any clear distinction between history and fiction.¹ No Byzantine would have criticized a play or novel because its characters had never existed, or had never done what they were said to have done. Since everyone knew that tragedies, comedies, novels, and romances described fictional people and fictional events, the Byzantines could praise dramatists and novelists for inventing characters and events entertainingly and plausibly.² By contrast, the Byzantines would have condemned a work of history that knowingly described people who had never existed, or had never done what they were said to have done, because Byzantines expected historians to try to tell the truth about the past, and certainly not to invent people or events. If historians failed to tell the truth, through carelessness or bias or some other sort of dishonesty, the Byzantines considered them bad historians.³ The Byzantines thought anyone who presented fiction as fact was a liar.

¹ Such is the position of R.-J. Lillie, *Reality and Invention: Reflections on Byzantine Historiography*, in *DOP*, 68 (2014), p. 157–210, especially p. 158–159, where he inaccurately describes me as one who “rejects source-critical approaches altogether” while accurately quoting my reference to “a very modern attitude that Professor [Jakov] Ljubarskij accepts but I cannot, that ‘there is no clear distinction between history and fiction’”. See J. Ljubarskij et al., *Quellenforschung and/or Literary Criticism: Narrative Structures in Byzantine Historical Writing*, in *Symbolae Osloenses*, 73 (1998), p. 5–73 (quotation from Ljubarskij on p. 11; quotation from me on p. 58). See also my remarks in W. Treadgold, *The Early Byzantine Historians*, Basingstoke, 2007, p. xii–xiii. Let me make clear that I believe Professor Lillie has usefully identified many possibly, probably, or certainly false reports in Byzantine historiography, and that I disagree with him mainly about the general theoretical conclusions he draws from these reports.

² See, e.g., Photius, *Bibliotheca*, codd. 73 (on Heliodorus), 94 (on Jamblichus), and 166 (on Antonius Diogenes).

³ See, e.g., John Scylitzes, *Synopsis of Histories*, preface (on several historians, including Michael Psellus, Theodore Daphnopates [probably the author of the *Life of Basil* and *Theophanes Continuatus*], and Nicetas the Paphlagonian, who will be discussed in this paper).

The Byzantines' ideas of truthfulness were however not necessarily identical to ours. Although most Byzantine historians began their work with a preface affirming that they would tell the truth about historical events, these affirmations raise several questions. Byzantine histories plainly include some statements that are not objectively accurate; and sometimes we can be fairly sure that the inaccuracies were deliberate. This may mean that the historians, like many of us, sometimes did things that by their own standards were less than absolutely honest. Yet it may also mean that the historians were trying to be truthful in their own way, but had different ideas from ours of the rules that historians needed to follow in order to be considered truthful.

One obvious though not very problematic difference, inherited from Herodotus and Thucydides, was the invented speech in direct discourse, put into the mouth of an historical character. Unlike modern historians, the Byzantines thought including such speeches in a history was meritorious, and compatible with truthfulness. Technically, of course, they were wrong; if the historical figure had used different words, or had said something completely different, or had said nothing at all at the time, the invented speech was historically inaccurate. But this exception is not really a problem. Since every educated Byzantine knew that such speeches were invented by the historian, they were not intended to deceive, and they were therefore not really untruthful. To invent a speech was not to present it as a fact, and was therefore not lying.

A slightly more problematic difference between Byzantine and modern historians is their method of referring to their sources. Modern historians use footnotes for such references, sometimes also mentioning the source in their text. Before the invention of the footnote, Byzantine historians had no such duty to name their sources.⁴ Since any intelligent reader realized that historians must have had a source for anything they did not know from their own experience, not to cite a source was not deceptive or dishonest, though it may annoy modern historians who want to identify the source. Of course, many Byzantine historians did name some of their sources; but if they used a source that cited another source, they usually named not their direct source but their source's source. By citing their original source, Byzantine historians were not being deceptive or dishonest – unless they explicitly stated that they had read the original text. On the other hand, if an historian had no source for what he said, but had simply invented the information, that really was deceptive and dishonest, by both our standards and his. The worst sort of dishonesty would be to cite an invented source, as we shall see sometimes happened.

Also worth noting is that Byzantine historians, living under an absolute monarchy, needed to be cautious about criticizing their current rulers. Most historians tried to avoid this problem by ending their histories with the accession of the reigning emperor; but contemporary historians could find this difficult, especially if the emperor had been reigning for many

⁴ The most recent study, with references to earlier literature, is A. Grafton, *The Footnote: A Curious History*, Cambridge, MA, 1997.

years. We should therefore not be too eager to condemn Byzantine historians for writing less than candidly about current rulers. Laws against defaming the head of state still exist in many countries, and were much more prevalent a century ago. Moreover, many modern contemporary historians are less than totally impartial in describing their contemporaries, particularly those under whom they have served as officials. We should also realize that Byzantine historians, like all of us, had imperfect memories, and that their lapses of memory, like ours, were more likely to favor themselves and their friends than to favor their enemies. Though modern contemporary historians can at least check their memories against other published accounts, the Byzantines generally could not. Misremembered information can be wrong without being deliberately falsified.

Another problem that has faced every historian from Herodotus to the present, including the Byzantines, is what to do about dubious sources. Omitting every report that could possibly be erroneous is plainly too drastic a solution. Omitting all reports that appear to be false may seem the best solution, but even that raises questions. First, how easily could the Byzantines detect false reports? Though we may think a story that includes supernatural elements is obviously false, most Byzantines believed in miracles, angels, and demons, and thought that some prophecies were accurate.⁵ And what about reports that mix elements that are dubious with elements that are plausible? We may try to rationalize such stories by omitting their dubious details, as the Byzantines sometimes did. Yet such rationalizing can be dangerous, because it means altering the original source without additional information. Besides, people can disagree about what is improbable, and not everything that sounds improbable is false.⁶ Perhaps a better way to deal with a questionable report is to repeat it while expressing doubts about it, and the Byzantines sometimes did that too. In any case, we should realize that an historian who repeats a source's dubious report is guilty at most of poor judgment, not of deception or dishonesty.

To illustrate the Byzantines' unwritten rules for writing history I shall briefly describe eight examples, four histories that seem to follow the unwritten rules for writing an accurate history and another four histories that seem to break those rules. Within each group of four, two of the histories date from Late Antiquity and two from the later Byzantine period.⁷ I shall also assess the opinion the Byzantines had of these histories. This can admittedly be hard to determine, but sometimes we can find Byzantines expressing such opinions. Even when we cannot, the number of manuscripts of a history that are preserved today, and the

⁵ A point recognized by R.-J. Lillie, *Reality*, p. 196.

⁶ Another point recognized by R.-J. Lillie, *Reality*, p. 181.

⁷ My sample includes no histories from the period after 1204 because at the time of writing I know most of those histories less well, since the volume of my survey of Byzantine historians of that period, tentatively entitled *The Later Byzantine Historians*, is still in progress. In this paper I refer frequently to my own books on the historians in order to save space, since mine are usually the most recent discussions of them and include references to earlier scholarship; but I also mention here relevant publications that are later than mine and points on which I have changed my mind.

number of references to that history that are found in other Byzantine works, can give us some idea of how much the history was admired.

My first example is the *Wars* of Procopius of Caesarea, a history that later Byzantine historians greatly respected, to judge from the large number of times they cited or imitated it, a number of which we are becoming increasingly aware.⁸ Although the *Wars* praises Procopius' employer Belisarius much more than it praises Justinian, Justinian seems to have recognized the work's excellence by giving Procopius the rank of *illustris* and an official commission to write an account of the emperor's buildings.⁹ Just a generation later, Procopius' continuer Agathias seems already to have envied the esteem Procopius enjoyed.¹⁰ The fifty-odd manuscripts of Procopius' *Wars* that have reached us are also unusually numerous, especially when we consider that the *Wars* is the longest history written in Greek before the twelfth century to survive intact. No doubt the success of the *Wars* was due chiefly to Procopius' rare combination of direct experience of events and talent for writing lively narrative; but the *Wars* also seems to have conformed well to the Byzantines' rules for historical accuracy.

Procopius often includes speeches and letters, which he invents expertly. The speeches and letters in the *Wars* are not just eloquent but unusually appropriate to the situations; some of those attributed to Belisarius may actually be based on the original texts, drafted by Procopius as Belisarius' secretary and kept for use in the history Procopius expected to write.¹¹ In the *Wars* Procopius is surprisingly willing to criticize Justinian, particularly for his failure either to support or to discipline his officials and generals.¹² Such criticism in a work that Procopius must have expected Justinian to read testifies both to Procopius' courage and to Justinian's tolerance, though we should realize that Procopius circulated the *Wars* only after the death of the much less tolerant empress Theodora.¹³ Procopius also openly condemns such powerful men as the Pretorian Prefect John the Cappadocian and the generals Sergius and Bessas. Thus Procopius seems to have made a real effort to live

⁸ On Procopius in general, see W. Treadgold, *Early Byzantine Historians*, p. 176–226. For later use of Procopius by Byzantine historians, see B. Rubin in *Paulys Realencyclopädie der Classischen Altertumswissenschaft* XXIII.1, Stuttgart, 1957, col. 587–594; for some recent additions to this list, see W. Treadgold, *The Middle Byzantine Historians*, Basingstoke, 2013, p. 477, and A. Kaldellis, *The Byzantine Conquest of Crete (961 AD), Prokopios' Vandal War, and the Continuator of the Chronicle of Symeon*, in *BMGS*, 39 (2015), p. 302–311.

⁹ On Procopius' apparent rewards from Justinian, see W. Treadgold, *Early Byzantine Historians*, p. 189–190.

¹⁰ On Agathias' apparent envy of Procopius, see W. Treadgold, *Early Byzantine Historians*, p. 286.

¹¹ A suggestion I made in W. Treadgold, *Early Byzantine Historians*, p. 216. Admittedly, however, the letters and speeches as we have them seem somewhat too rhetorical to have been delivered to soldiers or sent for practical purposes (even to Justinian).

¹² See W. Treadgold, *Early Byzantine Historians*, p. 213–214.

¹³ Theodora died in 548, and Procopius circulated Books I–VII of the *Wars* in 551; see W. Treadgold, *Early Byzantine Historians*, p. 187–189.

up to his statement in his preface that he has “accurately recorded everything that chanced to be done by everyone, whether it was good or not”.¹⁴

With his first-hand knowledge of most of Belisarius’ campaigns and his access to many good oral sources in the army and government – and in Syria, Africa, and Italy – Procopius seldom needed to rely on literary sources. His main literary source for times earlier than his own was evidently the lost history of Eustathius of Epiphania, which I shall soon discuss. Yet some of Procopius’ oral sources did present him with problems. For example, he tells a ridiculous story he attributes to “the Persians” about a pearl snatched from an oyster guarded by a shark and given to King Cabades of Persia; Procopius explains that this story “may not perhaps appear altogether incredible to someone”.¹⁵ Later he tells a story he attributes to “numberless men” that “did not seem to me at all reliable”, namely that the souls of the dead went to the mysterious island of “Brittia” in the far north.¹⁶ Here Procopius, who seems not to have believed either story, apparently followed the dictum of Herodotus that his task as an historian was to repeat what people said, not to believe it.¹⁷ After all, that some Persians and Germans believed these tales was an ethnographic fact.

Procopius further records that “they say” the Western emperor Honorius, when told of the fall of Rome in 410, was at first distraught when he thought this meant the death of his pet rooster named Rome, then was relieved to learn that only the city of Rome had fallen. Procopius concludes, “They say that this emperor was possessed by such stupidity”.¹⁸ Procopius expresses no opinion about the truth of the anecdote, but he repeats it, not so much because it was amusing as because he thought it illustrated the character of Honorius, who does seem to have been fairly obtuse. Procopius notes that he had heard the stories of Cabades’ pearl, the ghosts in Brittia, and the folly of Honorius from other people, and we have no good reason to think he made them up himself.¹⁹ Most of us think they improve the *Wars* as a work of literature without compromising its historical value. The information in the *Wars* that is derived from Procopius’ personal knowledge, or from sources he considered trustworthy, appears much more reliable.

A second work that seems to have been scrupulous in following the Byzantines’ rules for history is the nominally lost *Chronological Epitome* of Eustathius of Epiphania. Eustathius

¹⁴ Procopius, *Wars* I.1.5.

¹⁵ Procopius, *Wars* I.4.17.

¹⁶ Procopius, *Wars* VIII.20.47. At VIII.20.4 Procopius locates “Brittia” between Britain and Thule (Scandinavia?). Perhaps his sources were referring to Jutland, misunderstanding it to be an island rather than a peninsula.

¹⁷ Herodotus VII.152.

¹⁸ Procopius, *Wars* III.2.25–26.

¹⁹ Anything he invented would surely have been more plausible than the stories about the shark and the ghosts. The story about Honorius seems to have been invented by someone with a broader sense of humor than Procopius had; on Procopius’ sense of humor, see W. Treadgold, *Early Byzantine Historians*, p. 217–218.

wrote in the early sixth century, rather earlier than Procopius, but died suddenly, perhaps in an earthquake at Antioch, before he could add the finishing touches to his history and distribute it. I have argued elsewhere, so far without being refuted, that about half of Eustathius' history survives in later Byzantine works, chiefly in the abundant fragments attributed to John of Antioch.²⁰ Apparently John of Antioch copied Eustathius almost verbatim, while John Malalas paraphrased Eustathius' Atticizing Greek into much more popular language. Several sixth-century historians, including Procopius and Evagrius Scholasticus, evidently used Eustathius' history in its original form. Apart from the fragments of Eustathius ascribed to John of Antioch in the *Historical Excerpts* of Constantine VII, more material from Eustathius appears to survive in several later Byzantine histories, especially those of John Zonaras and Theodore Scutariotes. Eustathius' history was evidently much the most influential 'lost' work in Byzantine historiography.

Eustathius wrote a world history beginning with the Creation. While he also recorded recent times in some detail – he disliked the emperors Zeno and Anastasius – for the most part he used written sources. Evagrius Scholasticus provides a list of some of Eustathius' sources, which we can supplement from the source references in the fragments of John of Antioch; we can add even more sources from John Malalas, if we subtract sources that Malalas apparently invented. The grand total of Eustathius' sources comes to about ninety.²¹ Since many of these were obscure and probably lost by his time, Eustathius probably referred to material taken from them by earlier compilers. Yet he chose those compilers well and copied their source references carefully. I recently argued that one of his main sources was Ammianus Marcellinus, including Ammianus' otherwise lost books on the third and early fourth centuries.²² Eustathius evidently knew Latin, though he made some minor errors in translating Ammianus.

When Eustathius took information from an intermediary who identified his source, Eustathius usually cited the original source, not the intermediary. For example, when he

²⁰ On Eustathius, see W. Treadgold, *Early Byzantine Historians*, p. 114–119, 250–256, and 316–329 and *The Byzantine World Histories of John Malalas and Eustathius of Epiphania*, in *International History Review*, 29 (2007), p. 709–745.

²¹ In W. Treadgold, *Early Byzantine Historians*, p. 317–318, I estimated the number at 88. There, however, I failed to see that the second reference to “Eusebius” at Evagrius V.24 is to a pagan Eusebius who was different from Eusebius of Caesarea, mentioned in the first reference; see W. Treadgold, *The Lost Books of Ammianus in Byzantine Historiography*, in C. Horn et al. (ed.), *Armenia between Byzantium and the Orient: Celebrating the Memory of Karen Yuzbashyan* (Leiden, forthcoming). I have also learned from Benjamin Garstad (in an article on Malalas and Euhemerus forthcoming in the *International History Review* that he kindly sent me in draft) that the “Bottius” whom Elizabeth Jeffreys and I suspected of being a source forged by Malalas (*Early Byzantine Historians*, p. 248–249) is actually the Bruttius or Brettius attested by the chronicles of Eusebius and Jerome; cf. Malalas X.48 with Jerome, *Chronicle* 96^e (and the apparatus of Rudolf Helm's edition; “Brettios” is the form in the Armenian translation of Eusebius).

²² See W. Treadgold, *Lost Books*.

cited material from Ammianus that depended on Dexippus, Eustathius cited Dexippus, not Ammianus. Though this practice is contrary to modern usage, it was standard for Byzantines, and not unreasonable. After all, the original source of the report was Dexippus, not Ammianus, who merely transmitted what Dexippus had said. We might still think that Eustathius should have checked the text of Dexippus; but Eustathius was probably unable to find it, since Dexippus' history must always have been rare and is lost today.²³ In fact, Eustathius is the only historian we know who found and read the lost books of Ammianus. Eustathius' enormous compilation of well-summarized and well-attributed source material, in the original or in its transcription by John of Antioch, came to be used as a resource by at least fifteen Byzantine historians.²⁴ While we still lack a complete collection of Eustathius' fragments, they seem to include many interesting historical details now neglected by modern historians. No doubt some of these details are wrong, but that is not the fault of Eustathius, who appears to have transmitted his material meticulously by the standards of his time.

My third example of a history that was truthful by prevailing Byzantine standards is the original version of the *Chronography* of Michael Psellus.²⁵ Even more than Procopius, Psellus wrote on the basis of his own experience; but his method was different from Procopius'. Procopius must have kept detailed notes from the time when he decided to write a history of the wars fought by his employer Belisarius; the best proof of this is the inaccuracy of the very earliest part of the *Wars*, before Procopius began keeping such a record.²⁶ Psellus however says that for some time he resisted friends who wanted him to write a history of his times; he agreed only when pressed by someone he calls "dearest of all men", apparently Constantine X Ducas, who was emperor when Psellus wrote the first version of the *Chronography* around 1062.²⁷ Therefore Psellus was writing about events as long ago as eighty-six years, without recourse to earlier notes or documents as far as we can tell. What he wrote was what he remembered seeing or having heard, and though his memory may have been encyclopedic it cannot have been infallible. Inevitably he made mistakes; but did he avoid deliberate deception?

Ralph-Johannes Lilie has accused Psellus of fabrication because his negative depiction of the emperor Constantine VIII includes the contradictory reports that Constantine was

²³ That Photius and the excerptors working for Constantine VII found a copy of Dexippus' history in middle Byzantine Constantinople is no proof that Eustathius could have found one in sixth-century Antioch. Ammianus himself seems not to have found Dexippus' history in fourth-century Rome and relied instead on a summary of Dexippus by the pagan Eusebius; see W. Treadgold, *Lost Books*.

²⁴ Those identified so far are John Malalas, Procopius, Hesychius of Miletus, Evagrius, John of Antioch, George Syncellus, Theophanes Confessor, George the Monk, Constantine VII, Symeon the Logothete, Pseudo-Symeon, George Cedrenus, John Zonaras, Theodore Scutariotes, and Nicephorus Callistus Xanthopoulos; see W. Treadgold, *Lost Books*.

²⁵ On Psellus, see W. Treadgold, *Middle Byzantine Historians*, p. 271–308.

²⁶ W. Treadgold, *Early Byzantine Historians*, p. 179 and n. 21.

²⁷ W. Treadgold, *Middle Byzantine Historians*, p. 277–278 and 289–291, citing Psellus, *Chronography* VI.22–28 and 73.

unable to walk because of arthritis and that he competed as a wrestler during his reign.²⁸ That Constantine had arthritis when he became sole emperor at the age of sixty-five is perfectly credible.²⁹ That he competed as a wrestler at that age is incredible; but then he had officially been joint emperor since he was fifteen, throughout the reign of his brother Basil II, when Psellus says Constantine took no part in governing.³⁰ The report of his wrestling, whether true or false, must refer to that time. Moreover, Psellus, who was just ten years old when Constantine died, writes that he could not recall having seen the emperor and had to rely on what others said about him.³¹ While Psellus was probably right that Constantine was frivolous throughout his long reign and debilitated during his brief rule, we cannot fairly accuse Psellus of distortion if he was wrong, as long as he had heard these stories from others. We can safely discard the idea that Psellus invented a story of the arthritic old emperor's wrestling and expected his readers to believe it.³²

Psellus says he was reluctant to write contemporary history because he feared he would be blamed either for writing fiction if he praised his patrons, or for ingratitude if he criticized them. The term he uses for 'writing fiction' is "inventing events as if for the stage" – that is, in a play.³³ Psellus avoided this dilemma with Constantine X by concluding the original version of the *Chronography* with Constantine's accession in 1059 and saying next to nothing about him before that.³⁴ Yet Psellus faces the problem explicitly in his treatment of Constantine IX Monomachus, who had first promoted Psellus to high office. Declaring that as an historian he must tell the truth and that no emperors were blameless, Psellus proceeds to give a devastating description of Monomachus. Although Psellus had personally suffered from Monomachus' capriciousness, which led Psellus to enter a monastery, his judgment of Monomachus seems to be sincere – and more or less what Monomachus deserved.

A good argument can be made that Psellus presents an inflated picture of his own importance in contemporary politics.³⁵ This is hard to avoid in a political memoir, since the alternative is to omit pertinent and interesting information that the author knew. Moreover, any careful reader of the *Chronography* can see that Psellus never had decisive control

²⁸ R.-J. Lilie, *Reality*, p. 167, citing Psellus, *Chronography* II.7–8.

²⁹ For his age, see W. Treadgold, *Middle Byzantine Historians*, p. 233–234 and n. 35.

³⁰ Psellus, *Chronography* I.2.

³¹ Psellus, *Chronography* III.1.

³² Yet such seems to be the conclusion of R.-J. Lilie, *Reality*, p. 167: "[Psellus] disparages [Constantine] as an individual, as well as for his performance as an emperor, with all the rhetorical tools at his disposal".

³³ Psellus, *Chronography* VI.22 (πλάττων ὡσπερ ἐπὶ σκηνῆς πράγματα).

³⁴ W. Treadgold, *Middle Byzantine Historians*, p. 289–290.

³⁵ See M. Jeffreys, *Psellos and 'His Emperors': Fact, Fiction, and Genre*, in R. Macrides (ed.), *History as Literature in Byzantium*, Farnham, 2010, p. 73–91.

over public affairs; he often states – or clearly implies – that his advice was ignored.³⁶ While not a modest man, Psellus was right to think he was far more intelligent than any of the rulers he advised. Even if he sometimes exaggerated his influence, in the original version of the *Chronography* he still appears to have been reporting the truth as he saw and recalled it. The supplement that he added later, under Michael VII, is different, degenerating into outright panegyric of Michael; but at that point Psellus was struggling for influence over the incompetent emperor during a military crisis. Psellus might have argued that by not mentioning the events of Michael's reign he implied that his treatment of Michael was not history but panegyric, which nobody expected to be sincere.³⁷ The earlier part of the *Chronography* is much more candid. This is by far the larger part – and the part that influenced Psellus' great successors Anna Comnena and Nicetas Choniates.³⁸

Nicetas Choniates wrote the last of the four histories I take here as models of the Byzantines' rules for historical accuracy.³⁹ Like Psellus, Choniates wrote more than one version of his history; in contrast to Psellus, what Choniates wrote later is more candid than what he wrote at first. Choniates produced the first version of his history around 1202, when he had to be careful not to offend many powerful people. Later he revised and continued his work after the sack of Constantinople in 1204, when he had seen the results of the disastrous Byzantine administration before the sack and saw no reason to disguise his opinion of those he considered responsible. Naturally he writes with hindsight; but then so do modern historians of Byzantium, not all of whom are necessarily wrong. In my view, Choniates' harsh judgment of the twelfth-century Byzantine rulers is more reliable than some recent attempts to rehabilitate them.

³⁶ E.g., Psellus, *Chronography* VI.133 (Constantine IX), VI.209 (Theodora), VII.10–11 (Michael VI), VII.110 (Constantine X), VII.6 (Eudocia), and VII.133 (Romanus IV). While M. Jeffreys, *Psellos*, p. 78–81 is right that Psellus' depiction of Isaac I's deference to him in the *Chronography* contrasts with the lack of closeness apparent in Psellus' letters, the *Chronography* still implies that despite his outward deference Isaac pursued policies that Psellus disapproved.

³⁷ On the point of division between the original and the supplement at the end of Psellus, *Chronography* VII.91, and the circumstances under which Psellus wrote the supplement, see W. Treadgold, *Middle Byzantine Historians*, p. 279–280 and 294 n. 104.

³⁸ Though I have omitted discussing Comnena here for reasons of space, she seems to me to have followed the rules as scrupulously as Psellus or Choniates. I disagree with R.-J. Lilie, *Reality*, who on p. 161 is skeptical of Comnena's description of her oral and written sources; on p. 171 says "There can be no doubt that Anna Komnene invented this entire story" of Bohemond's escape from Antioch; on p. 180 declares that she "invented a battle" she dates to 1097 (when she was 14 years old); and on p. 186–187 similarly dismisses her story of an insolent Frankish noble who sat on the Byzantine throne. I am confident that she had oral sources for all three episodes, though those sources may well have invented or embellished what had happened; cf. W. Treadgold, *Middle Byzantine Historians*, p. 362–364.

³⁹ On Nicetas, see now the detailed study of A. Simpson, *Niketas Choniates: A Historiographical Study*, Oxford, 2013, which appeared too late for me to use in my account of Nicetas in W. Treadgold, *Middle Byzantine Historians*, p. 422–456 (which in turn appeared too late for Simpson to use in her book).

Lilie has accused Choniates of fabrication for unfavorable anecdotes he tells about two leading officials of the emperor Manuel I. Choniates records that the greedy finance minister John of Putze used to receive as bribes and then repeatedly resell large fish, and that the greedy Logothete John Camaterus once ate an entire field of green beans at a sitting.⁴⁰ These anecdotes, while obviously absurd exaggerations, are also trivial; the value of a crop of beans, or several times the price of a large fish, was insignificant for a high official. In fact, Choniates describes both men, despite their greed, as generally capable.⁴¹ Moreover, their careers belonged to a time before Choniates had any experience in public affairs.⁴² Perhaps he should have omitted these anecdotes; but he must have heard them from someone, and they were at least evidence that the two officials had reputations for greed.⁴³ What Choniates says about the officials and emperors he knew personally is often sarcastic and hyperbolic, but less trivial. For example, he writes that the minister Constantine Mesopotamites asserted himself arrogantly despite his youth, “just as they say of the Sybil, that as soon as she slipped from her mother’s womb she began pontificating about the universe”. Then Choniates says that Isaac II preferred to relax in his country palaces and at Constantinople “was periodically sighted like that bird, the phoenix” (which appeared once in a century).⁴⁴ Choniates means simply that Mesopotamites was arrogant and Isaac was inaccessible, just as John of Putze and Camaterus were greedy. Probably Choniates was right about all of them.

Choniates’ history, like Procopius’ *Wars*, seems to have been unusually popular. Like our fifty-two manuscripts of the *Wars*, our thirty-six manuscripts of Choniates’ history are an extraordinary number for a contemporary history in a difficult prose style. I suspect that the reasons for the popularity of both works were similar. Both describe contemporary events critically, as most contemporary historians were afraid to do. Psellus in his *Chronography* and Eustathius of Epiphania in his history did much the same thing.⁴⁵ Most Byzantine readers were bureaucrats who were afraid to criticize their emperors and colleagues, but enjoyed reading justified criticisms of earlier rulers. Yet such readers did not want to see earlier

⁴⁰ R.-J. Lilie, *Reality*, p. 168–170, citing Choniates, *Chronological Narrative*, p. 55–57 and 114–115.

⁴¹ Choniates, *Chronological Narrative*, p. 54–56 and 115.

⁴² Camaterus was connected with the punishment of Theodore Styppiotēs in 1159, while Choniates was born around 1156 and arrived in Constantinople around 1165; cf. W. Treadgold, *Middle Byzantine Historians*, p. 404 and 423.

⁴³ R.-J. Lilie, *Reality*, p. 170 is certainly mistaken to say that Choniates means that his anecdote about Camaterus’ eating the beans “is not, I trust, without profit, charm, and grace for most”, because the context of Choniates, *Chronological Narrative*, p. 115 shows that these words refer only to the edifying story of Camaterus’ deathbed repentance and Styppiotēs’ forgiveness.

⁴⁴ Choniates, *Chronological Narrative*, p. 439 and 442 (cf. Herodotus II.73).

⁴⁵ I would explain the lack of MSS of Eustathius’ history, despite its great influence, by his sudden death before he could finish and distribute his work; cf. W. Treadgold, *Early Byzantine Historians*, p. 114–118 and 251–252 and *Byzantine World Histories*, p. 744–745. The scarcity of MSS of Psellus’ *Chronography* remains somewhat mysterious; see W. Treadgold, *Middle Byzantine Historians*, p. 307–308.

emperors and officials falsely accused, any more than they wanted themselves and people they respected to be slandered. They expected from a history not the insincere panegyrics that they had to hear so often at court but the historical truth, in substance if not in every minor detail.

Let us now turn to four histories that seem to me to violate the rules by which the Byzantines measured historical accuracy. The first is actually by Procopius: his famous *Secret History*.⁴⁶ Though the *Secret History* is certainly an unusual history, in his preface Procopius presents it as a supplement to the *Wars*, in which he will relate events and circumstances that he should have included in the *Wars* but had omitted out of fear of Justinian.⁴⁷ Even so, Procopius says he hesitated before writing the *Secret History* because “I feared I may both gain a reputation for writing myths and be classed among the tragic playwrights”. He decided to write the *Secret History* only when he realized that many of his contemporaries would corroborate its accuracy. Note that here, like Psellus in his *Chronography*, Procopius says his greatest fear was being compared to a playwright.⁴⁸ Neither historian would have said anything similar if he had not drawn a sharp distinction between history and fiction. The Byzantines greatly esteemed the plays of Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripides, and Aristophanes, which every well-educated Byzantine read in school; but no Byzantine imagined that the plays were historically accurate. What Procopius feared was that his readers would think the *Secret History* was a well-written collection of cleverly invented stories about Justinian and his court, and not what Procopius meant it to be: an accurate history. Since his hatred for Justinian and Theodora is patent, he obviously wanted his readership to think his accusations against them were literally true, not just ingenious slanders.

Therefore we may fairly judge the *Secret History* as a history. Unlike the *Wars*, however, it survives in few Byzantine manuscripts and had little influence on later Byzantine historians. I know of only one Byzantine judgment on the *Secret History*, written by Procopius’ contemporary Hesychius of Miletus, who says it “contains insults and a comic play (κωμῳδία) about the emperor Justinian, his wife Theodora, and even Belisarius himself and his wife”.⁴⁹ That is, Hesychius thought the *Secret History* was what Procopius had insisted it was not: fiction. Evidently Hesychius thought Procopius had gone too far in denouncing Justinian and Theodora to be credible. Hesychius, who had himself lived through Justinian’s reign,

⁴⁶ My main discussion of the *Secret History* is in W. Treadgold, *Early Byzantine Historians*, p. 205–213. Now see also A. Kaldellis, *Prokopios: The Secret History, with Related Texts*, Indianapolis, 2010, p. vii–lxi, who considers the work to be more trustworthy than I do.

⁴⁷ Note that Hesychius (*Suda*, Π 2479), whom I shall discuss in a moment, counts the *Secret History* as another book of the *Wars*, making nine books in all.

⁴⁸ Procopius, *Secret History* 1.1–5 (1.4: κὰν τοῖς τραγωδοδιδασκάλοις τετάξομαι). For Psellus’ fear, see n. 33 above.

⁴⁹ Preserved in the *Suda*, Π 2479; on Hesychius, see W. Treadgold, *Early Byzantine Historians*, p. 270–278 (where I now think my translation of κωμῳδία as “mockery” was not literal enough).

must have had his own opinions of the emperor and empress, both of whom were long dead when he wrote. He would have expected criticism of them in a history; but what Procopius wrote was not what Hesychius expected of a history. Procopius' criticism was reckless and relentless, without context or concessions, even if set alongside the rare and faint praise given Justinian in the *Wars*.

Most hyperbolically, in the *Secret History* Procopius declares that Justinian and Theodora were demons in human form.⁵⁰ While most Byzantines believed in demons, to say that someone was literally a demon was a serious charge, not to be made lightly. Moreover, the Byzantines were uneasy about including supernatural elements in a secular history, realizing that they were easy to invent and hard to disprove; the supernatural was to be mentioned, as by Herodotus and Thucydides, only sparingly, for good reasons, and either on strong evidence or with strong expressions of doubt. Realizing this rule, Procopius both insisted on his evidence and expressed doubt about it, but by doing both at once he led his readers to question both his evidence and his doubts.⁵¹ In the end, the result seemed to Hesychius not really a history, nor even a tragedy, but like Aristophanes' unbridled mockery of Cleon in the *Knights*: a comedy, not to be taken seriously as fact. It was a panegyric in reverse, in which Procopius acted not as advocate but as prosecutor. An historian, however, was supposed to act as a judge, who might deliver a verdict of guilty, but only after making a show of impartiality.

My second example of an historian who broke the Byzantines' rules is John Malalas.⁵² Malalas has, in my opinion, been judged too leniently by recent scholars, partly because he has received credit for the research of Eustathius of Epiphania, whom he plagiarized. Once we subtract the information attributable to Eustathius, the part of Malalas' history that we can assign to Malalas is (except for his account of contemporary events) a tissue of confusions and fabrications. For example, Malalas tells us that the poet Apollonius Rhodius was a "very learned historian", that after killing Pompey Julius Caesar ruled eighteen years (he ruled four), that Nero was assassinated at the age of 69 by Galba (Nero committed suicide at 30), and that the emperor Carus gave his name to both the province of Caria and the city of Carrhae.⁵³ Malalas seems not to have had any sources for such errors. Worse yet, he evidently invented eight of the sources he cites. Some of his invented names look absurd, like Nestorianus ("the Nestorian") or Eutychnianus ("the Eutychnian" – that is, extreme Monophysite).⁵⁴ In his preface Malalas claims he had personally consulted many of

⁵⁰ See my remarks in W. Treadgold, *Early Byzantine Historians*, p. 210–212.

⁵¹ Cf. Procopius, *Secret History* 12.14–32 and 30.34.

⁵² On Malalas, see W. Treadgold, *Early Byzantine Historians*, p. 235–256 and *Byzantine World Histories*.

⁵³ Malalas IV.9 (Apollonius), IX.3 (Caesar), X.40–41 (Nero), and XII.34 (Carus).

⁵⁴ See W. Treadgold, *Early Byzantine Historians*, p. 246–252 (though note that the suspicious "Bottius" has since been identified as a genuine source; see n. 21 above).

his sources, including three of the apparently fictitious ones.⁵⁵ In reality, Malalas evidently copied his preface from Eustathius' preface, which as preserved by John of Antioch omits the three fictitious sources.⁵⁶

Malalas' reason for this smokescreen is not hard to guess: he wanted to disguise the fact that for earlier events he had merely copied Eustathius' massive research and done no research of his own. He therefore paraphrased Eustathius' text, rearranged its material somewhat, and inserted some fictitious details and sources. Consequently, even if readers of Malalas found a copy of Eustathius' history for comparison, they would have seen that Malalas had modified and supplemented it. As it happens, paraphrasing someone else's history was by no means against the rules of ancient Greek or Byzantine historiography. Many Byzantine historians did it, though they usually copied more than one history; often they added a section on recent events, as Malalas did.⁵⁷ Yet Malalas' ambition to be known as a scholar in his own right, and not just as a copyist of Eustathius' history, led him into obvious dishonesty. Even with the advantage of modern reference works, we may still have trouble distinguishing Malalas' forged sources from Eustathius' real ones, and Malalas' invented details from Eustathius' attested ones.⁵⁸ For Byzantine readers, uncovering the full extent of Malalas' deception was practically impossible.

Nonetheless, the Byzantines seem to have had a low opinion of Malalas' work. A comparison of Constantine VII's excerpts with our main manuscript of Malalas shows that our text has often been abridged, evidently because the copyist thought it was not worth copying in full. Another manuscript of Malalas was erased and reused as a palimpsest. Malalas' history seems not to have advanced his career as he had hoped it would. Its influence on later historiography appears to have been slight, though modern scholars have sometimes exaggerated it by confusing Malalas' influence with that of Eustathius and John of Antioch.⁵⁹ While Malalas' poor style and slipshod organization were doubtless among the reasons for his work's unpopularity, the main reason must have been its pervasive inaccuracy. Any well-educated Byzantine should at least have suspected that not just its facts but its references were unreliable.

My third example of a Byzantine history that broke the rules for historical accuracy survives only indirectly and was identified only recently: the tenth-century *Secret History* of Nicetas the Paphlagonian.⁶⁰ A late Byzantine reviewer says that the historian, after describing

⁵⁵ Malalas, preface; the apparently invented sources are Theophilus, Clement, and Dominus.

⁵⁶ See W. Treadgold, *Early Byzantine Historians*, p. 312 and n. 6.

⁵⁷ Thus Leo the Grammarian and Theodosius Melissenus simply copied the history of Symeon the Logothete, while Zosimus copied Dexippus, Eunapius, and Olympiodorus and George Cedrenus copied Pseudo-Symeon and John Scylitzes.

⁵⁸ Again, see n. 21 above.

⁵⁹ See especially W. Treadgold, *Byzantine World Histories*, p. 709–715.

⁶⁰ On Nicetas' history, see W. Treadgold, *Middle Byzantine Historians*, p. 134–152 and *The Lost Secret History of Nicetas the Paphlagonian*, in F. Curta, B.-P. Maleon (ed.), *The Steppe Lands and the*

events before the ninth century, “describes everything else cursorily and ... superficially, and lavishes most of his narrative on [denouncing] the wickedness of the patriarch Photius. With this idea in mind he approaches every subject right up to [Photius’] death, and abuses the man and describes his monstrously unspeakable deeds at such length that one might suppose [the historian] had undertaken the whole remainder of his work for this very purpose”. I have argued that this lost work was a major source of four existing histories: the *Life of Basil*, *Theophanes Continuatus*, *Genesisius*, and *Pseudo-Symeon*.⁶¹ Henri Grégoire once wrote of these, “They must be read with the most extreme skepticism and believed capable of anything”.⁶² Lilie repeatedly cites them as evidence for his belief “that Byzantium had a conception of historical writing wholly different from our own”.⁶³ Actually, I believe the passages Lilie cites were simply copied by the authors of these histories and represent the ideas not of Byzantine historiography in general, but merely of the eccentric Nicetas the Paphlagonian.

Given his well-known hatred of Photius, Nicetas is almost surely the source of Pseudo-Symeon’s reports that Photius was the son of a ravished nun, had been denounced before and after his birth in prophecies by various holy monks, and received his knowledge of the pagan classics from a Jewish magician in return for denying the Cross.⁶⁴ We can also attribute to Nicetas’ history other alleged prophecies that were always fulfilled, including those that Leo V and Michael II would become emperors and that Thomas the Slav would rebel unsuccessfully. Nicetas seems to have been fond of supernatural events, including a story that demons in the Peloponnesus were overheard discussing the fall of Syracuse to the Arabs. Nicetas disliked nearly all the emperors he wrote about, though all our sources but Pseudo-Symeon seem to have suppressed his worst libels of Basil I and Leo VI out of respect for the Macedonian dynasty. The reasons Nicetas’ *Secret History* has been lost are probably similar to those that made Procopius’ *Secret History* much less popular than his *Wars*: Nicetas made no effort to seem fair, condemned almost everyone, and included too much supernatural material.⁶⁵

World Beyond Them: Studies in Honor of Victor Spinei on his 70th Birthday, Iași, 2013, p. 645–676.

⁶¹ It was also a major source for the fragmentary *Life of Euthymius* and a less important source for Symeon the Logothete (probably only by way of the lost history of Manuel the Protospatharius) and Constantine VII’s *De Administrando Imperio*. Note that the *Life of Basil* and *Theophanes Continuatus* were probably both written by the same author, Theodore Daphnopates (W. Treadgold, *Middle Byzantine Historians*, p. 176–180 and 188–190).

⁶² H. Grégoire, *Manuel et Théophobe, ou la concurrence de deux monastères*, in *Byzantion*, 9 (1934), p. 204.

⁶³ R.-J. Lilie, *Reality*, p. 164–165, 166–167, 172–174, 175, 177, 193, 194, 195, 198–199, and 209 (the concluding quotation).

⁶⁴ Pseudo-Symeon, p. 668–670.

⁶⁵ Note, however, that though one of our sources actually calls Nicetas’ work a “secret history” (ἐν ἀποκρύφῳ ἱστορίᾳ, perhaps meaning this was its title), Procopius’ work is termed “the so-called

Like Procopius, my last example of a Byzantine historian who violated the rules for historical accuracy in one of his works followed those rules in another of his works. This is Michael Psellus, whose rule-breaking work is his *Concise History*, rediscovered about fifty years ago.⁶⁶ Though Psellus' authorship of the *Concise History* has been disputed, the attribution appears in the title of its single manuscript; it is composed in Psellus' idiosyncratic style; and nobody else is at all likely to have written it. It must be the history that made the historian John Scylitzes put Psellus among those who, "applying themselves to their task inattentively, have fallen short of accuracy" and "made a mere inventory of the emperors ... and nothing more".⁶⁷ This would be an impossible criticism of the highly detailed *Chronography*, but not of the *Concise History*. The *Concise History* is a brief historical manual, evidently commissioned by the emperor Constantine X Ducas as a schoolbook for his young son Michael VII, whom Psellus tutored. Well aware of his pupil's stupidity, Psellus seems not to have taken his assignment seriously and to have spent as little time and effort on it as he could.

The *Concise History* opens with brief biographies of the kings of Rome, refers briefly to the Roman consuls, then strings together brief biographies of the Roman emperors up to Basil II. It often mangles names: the Roman king Servius Tullius becomes "Stullius", the emperor Nerva becomes "Gerva", and the emperor Carus becomes "Marus". Other errors are frequent: the Jewish king Herod Agrippa turns into two kings, Agrippa and Herod; the Eastern emperors Gallus and Valens are described as Western emperors; and Spain is called "the most powerful city of Western Iberia". The *Concise History* also quotes many sayings of the emperors that seem to be fabricated, like the emperor Heraclius' praise for philosophy and astronomy, which were interests of Psellus but apparently not of Heraclius.⁶⁸ Psellus seems to have composed the *Concise History* by referring to Symeon the Logothete's chronicle and supplementing it with material that he remembered, misremembered, or invented. In his other writings Psellus never mentions having written the *Concise History*, probably because he realized, as Scylitzes did, that it was not a good history.

What, then, were the Byzantines' unwritten rules for historical accuracy? On the basis of the preceding discussion, I propose seven rules that reasonably sophisticated Byzantine readers would have recognized as valid.⁶⁹

'unpublished things'" (τὰ καλούμενα ἀνέκδοτα; *Suda*, II 2479) by Hesychius and *Secret History* only by post-Byzantine scholars.

⁶⁶ On the *Concise History*, see W. Treadgold, *Middle Byzantine Historians*, p. 282–289. Note that R.-J. Lilie, *Reality*, p. 197 n. 153 rejects its attribution to Psellus.

⁶⁷ John Scylitzes, preface, p. 3.

⁶⁸ These, which are too short and simple to be plausibly classified as invented speeches, are discussed in W. Treadgold, *Middle Byzantine Historians*, p. 284–285.

⁶⁹ I therefore disagree with R.-J. Lilie, *Reality*, p. 207: "One can, in any case, rule out the possibility that there were standard rules regulating up to which point a description had to be factual, and from when on it could be fictitious or contain fictitious elements".

1. The Byzantines assumed that invented speeches were not subject to the rules of historical accuracy.
2. While understanding that a contemporary historian might need to protect himself by omitting justified criticism of powerful people, the Byzantines admired historians who included criticism when it was deserved.
3. The Byzantines however disapproved of undeserved criticism, since they thought that historians should try to judge historical figures fairly.
4. The Byzantines also thought that histories should not include undeserved praise, even of contemporary emperors.
5. Realizing that the probability of supernatural events was hard to judge, the Byzantines thought that historians should record such events only sparingly and with caution.
6. The Byzantines permitted historians to repeat any interesting report from a source, but thought they should include a disclaimer if they believed the report was false.
7. The Byzantines believed historians should never explicitly claim direct knowledge when their knowledge was indirect, and should never invent information or sources.

Except for the rule condoning invented speeches (which remained a feature of Western historiography as late as the Renaissance), none of these rules differs much from the practice of modern historians. Modern scholars who have denied the existence of such rules seem to me to have made two main mistakes. First, they have failed to distinguish Byzantine histories that followed the rules from those that broke the rules or were not really histories at all.⁷⁰ Second, they have blamed Byzantine historians for inventing dubious material that they had actually learned from their sources and believed to be at least possibly correct. We should always remember that Byzantine historians had no Internet, no newspapers, few reference works, and only incomplete and disorganized libraries and archives.⁷¹ They also knew much less than we do about such fields as geography and medicine, and believed that supernatural events were possible in principle. Such are the reasons that much of what appears in Byzantine histories is either inaccurate or of dubious accuracy. The reason is not, however, that the Byzantines had different ideas from ours of how to define accuracy.

⁷⁰ For example, the anonymous *Expositions of a Concise Chronicle* (Παραστάσεις Σύντομοι Χρονικαί) is pretty clearly not a history, and whether the chronicle of George the Monk should be considered a history is questionable; see W. Treadgold, *Middle Byzantine Historians*, p. 35–37 and 114–119 (“[George’s] aim was to distill from what he thought was a largely useless mass of historical material whatever could provide morally improving instruction...”) and A. Kazhdan, *A History of Byzantine Literature (850–1000)*, Athens, 2006, p. 52 (“George was not a historian”). R.-J. Lillie, *Reality*, p. 197–199 and 208 is right that George’s chronicle is not “a ‘serious’ historical work”, though I doubt Lillie’s contention that Byzantine readers would have found much “entertainment value” in its long and dreary text.

⁷¹ See W. Treadgold, *Early Byzantine Historians*, p. 354–355 and 365 and *Middle Byzantine Historians*, p. 476–477.

The Manufacture of History in the Later Tenth and Eleventh Centuries: Rhetorical Templates and Narrative Ontologies

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How much history is there in Byzantine historical texts?

During the past decade or so, the study of Byzantine historiography has been trying valiantly to make the Linguistic Turn, which, for present purposes might be defined as the insight that our texts are not merely collections of ostensible facts that are either true or false, but consist of representations of reality crafted on a deeper level according to various literary norms and tropes and intended to promote specific cultural or authorial goals, not an immaculate presentation of historical fact. Factual claims in the texts are enmeshed in overlapping literary matrices of meaning that are ordered by a complicated set of authorial strategies: these do not, in the end, constitute a linear and homogenous epistemological field, thereby potentially fracturing the very ontology of history to often incommensurate literary gestures (e.g., a panegyric claim here, a classical allusion there, ironic word-play thereafter, and later on a dramatic moment). Therefore, up to a (heuristic) point it is profitable to read historical texts as works of invention, for they were written in large part according to the rhetorical and narrative tropes that we find, for example, in poetry, ekphrasis, and novels.¹ While I am hardly convinced that true historical claims are ultimately impossible or that history is only representation, nevertheless the ontology of our *texts* is literary, by definition: the ‘stuff’ that furnishes each textual universe consists, proximately, of literary artifacts.²

This agenda has inevitably elicited push-back, some of it justifiable. Beyond their jargon-dense and confusing prose, ‘theoretical’ studies tend to mechanically apply a priori typologies, forcing our texts to yield examples of this or that trope or modality and, in the process, lose sight of the themes that are distinctive to each text (which, in my view, constitutes a failure of literary analysis). Claims to ‘narratology’ often disguise banal or just

¹ For a range of approaches, see R. Macrides (ed.), *History as Literature in Byzantium*, Farnham, UK, 2010.

² For literary and ontological approaches to historiography, see F. R. Ankersmit, *Narrative and Interpretation*, in A. Tucker (ed.), *A Companion to the Philosophy of History and Historiography*, Malden, MA, 2009, p. 199–208; and L. Udehn, *The Ontology of the Objects of Historiography*, in *ibid.*, p. 209–219.

redescriptive plot-mapping. These are familiar complaints. Moreover, the Linguistic Turn has not served historians well. What are they to do now that their texts are revealed to be not full of facts but... something else? This paradigm shift sometimes delights in making facts ‘vanish’ in puffs of literary criticism,³ leaving historians with less and less material at their disposal, or at least uncertain how to use it. I too have written studies of such a kind, arguing that whole sections or aspects of historical texts cannot be taken at face value as history at all, but serve other literary goals. Still, the Linguistic Turn is not a complete loss for historians. First, it has opened up previously unseen vistas in the history of literature, mentalities, and the social use of the images and representations deployed in texts. It enables other *kinds* of histories that look at new topics⁴ (though fewer Byzantinists have taken up the challenge than medievalists, and recent theoretical developments have still not resulted in readable histories of Byzantine literature).⁵ Second, even the most positivist historians should be grateful to know the limitations of their sources, even if those run deeper than the mere imputation of ‘bias’, which can, perhaps, be more easily corrected than the fundamental rhetorical matrix of a text.

Still, Byzantinists have not yet had this discussion. How are we to write history in light of what we know now about our sources? I do not mean the history of beauty, gender roles, or irony, but specifically the kind of history that our texts purport to be conveying: military and political history. Those other themes we uncover by working *around* the main story, by looking for incidental or underlying textual phenomena. But how do we write about the same topics as the Byzantine historians? Recently, I decided that it would be fun to sit on the other side of the ontological table and try, in light of these and other developments, to write a political and military history of Byzantium in 955–1081 AD.⁶ What was I to do with the bulk of the narrative testimony in our sources? I return to the question posed above: How much trustworthy history is there in them?

The short answer would probably be: even *less* than we think now, after decades of critical scrutiny of the sources. We are never in the position of having made *all* the necessary adjustments and concessions to the literariness of our literary sources, to their sheer capacity for inventing the world they represent, or even to the distortions of their partisan politics. Even if we think we are in that position, someone may come along later and find more, nibbling away at our diminishing store of fact. The present contribution is, therefore, a report from the trenches, written after the completion of a new narrative history, mainly political and military, of the years 955–1081. Such a book cannot consist only of a series of professedly

³ E. A. Clark, *The Lady Vanishes: Dilemmas of a Feminist Historian after the ‘Linguistic Turn’*, in *Church History*, 67 (1998), p. 1–31.

⁴ An excellent example is M. Hatzaki, *Beauty and the Male Body in Byzantium: Perceptions and Representations in Art and Text*, Palgrave, 2009.

⁵ I fear that when they begin to appear they will be mechanistic and redescriptive.

⁶ Tentatively entitled *The Golden Age of Byzantium: A Narrative History, 955 to the First Crusade*, Oxford, forthcoming.

subjective representations (event-image a in source x, followed by event-image b in source y): at the end of the day, it has to take a stand on whether something happened or not, how it happened, and who it affected. I offer here a survey of the problems posed by the narrative Byzantine sources (though what follows is not a ‘methodology’). These are the Continuer of Symeon, Leon the deacon, Psellos, Attaleiates, Skylitzes, and Bryennios. Theodosios the deacon’s *Capture of Crete* and Kekaumenos’ *Strategikon* are quasi-historical sources.⁷

Despite calls to expand the analytical field of Byzantine historiography and include contemporary texts produced in neighboring cultures, I see no evidence for dialogue or mutual exchange between them. No foreign source has been identified behind any of the Greek narratives; none of their authors can be proven to have known another language; they wrote usually for the same elite audience in Constantinople;⁸ they read and sometimes responded to each other but never to non-Greek texts or perceptions; and they shared the following points of reference: the imperial court; the Roman armies; the classical literary tradition, with which they engaged in different ways; and the evolving conventions of Greek historiography. Thus, while we modern historians *must* use non-Greek sources for Byzantine history (see below), and a good case can be made that non-Greek authors in this period did engage with Greek texts,⁹ the Byzantine historians themselves remained insular.

I will identify six types of ‘unhistory’ found in the Greek sources. By this I mean narratives (or aspects of narratives) that pose as factual accounts but should not be treated as such in modern reconstructions (I avoid the term ‘fiction’ because that is a type of literature that can be defined as requiring the readers’ active participation in make-believe).¹⁰ Some of these categories overlap, but it is useful to think of them as distinct. There are others in addition to these, but we are constrained by space. I begin with types that are familiar to traditional forms of positivist source-criticism and move to thornier issues of literary representation. I draw throughout on the arguments and conclusions that I reach in the aforementioned narrative.

One, narratives that are almost entirely made up to make someone look good or tough. It is well understood that Byzantine histories of this period are politically biased, that they not only praise or condemn specific figures but that many of them were written specifically to do so.¹¹ In his preface, Skylitzes criticizes most of his predecessors for this failing. It

⁷ To save space, I assume that anyone reading this paper can find the latest editions.

⁸ B. Croke, ‘Uncovering Byzantium’s Historiographical Audience,’ in R. Macrides (ed.), *History as Literature in Byzantium*, p. 25–53; A. Markopoulos, *Le public des textes historiographiques à l’époque macédonienne*, in *Parekbolai*, 5 (2015), p. 53–74.

⁹ C. Holmes, *Basil II and the Governance of Empire (976–1025)*, Oxford, 2005.

¹⁰ A. Kaldellis, *The Emergence of Literary Fiction in Byzantium and the Paradox of Plausibility*, in P. Roilos (ed.), *Medieval Greek Storytelling: Fictionality and Narrative in Byzantium*, Wiesbaden, 2014, p. 115–130.

¹¹ A. Markopoulos, *From Narrative Historiography to Historical Biography: New Trends in Byzantine Historical Writing in the 10th–11th Centuries*, in *BZ*, 102 (2009), p. 697–715.

has been argued, for example, that different versions of the Logothete chronicle were put into circulation by different political factions.¹² On the whole, we can more easily identify passages of explicit praise or criticism along with over-the-top mythological inventions (such as the opening scenes of the *Life of Basileios I*), and adjust for the distortions that they introduce. But what if the invention operates on the level of the reported events themselves? Examples that I found (and accordingly excluded from my narrative reconstruction) include Nikephoros II Phokas' alleged campaign against the Bulgarians in 967 in Leon the deacon, and Skleros' martial triumphs at, and heroic 'escape' from, Baghdad in Psellos.¹³ The 'fire' behind the smoke was only that Nikephoros toured Thrace, and Skleros was held as a political hostage by the Buyids before being released to wage war against Basileios II. All the aggression and heroics were invented by Phokas and Skleros partisans. In these cases, as Warren Treadgold once told me, where there is smoke there is a smoke-making machine.

As for Skleros, we know the nature of his stay at Baghdad from Arab sources, which are circumstantial.¹⁴ The narratives in Leon and Psellos, by contrast, have little detail: they abstractly stress aggression and heroism to make one person look tough. Both were likely circulated for partisan purposes before they were incorporated in historical works, taken at face value. Much the same – all smoke, little fire – can be said about Attaleiates' accounts of Botaneiates' heroic retreats from past defeats, which the historian probably added to the narrative to complement his panegyric conclusion on Botaneiates. These accounts are also suspiciously vague and panegyric.¹⁵ All we can say for sure is that Botaneiates survived those battles (*if* he was even present); the rest was made up, probably by Attaleiates, and is as vague as the heroics of Nikephoros in Leon and Skleros in Psellos. In this period, the Byzantines apparently produced no story-teller as clever as the mystery author of the *Historia Augusta*, who knew how to add invented detail to give credibility to a story he had made-up. At any rate, if they did produce such a writer, he was so good that we have not exposed him yet.¹⁶

Two, malicious gossip about secret actions that could not really be known. The stories that I just called into question were, supposedly, heroic mass actions performed in full view of witnesses. These now are the opposite: nefarious actions that would have been

¹² A. Markopoulos, *Byzantine History Writing at the End of the First Millennium*, in P. Magdalino (ed.), *Byzantium in the Year 1000*, Leiden, 2003, p. 183–197.

¹³ Leon, *History* 4.5–6; Psellos, *Chronographia* 1.11–12.

¹⁴ A. Beihammer, *Der harte Sturz des Bardas Skleros: Eine Fallstudie zu zwischenstaatliche Kommunikation und Konfliktführung in der byzantinisch-arabischen Diplomatie des 10. Jahrhunderts*, in *Römische historische Mitteilungen*, 45 (2003), p. 21–57.

¹⁵ D. Krallis, *Michael Attaleiates and the Politics of Imperial Decline in Eleventh-Century Byzantium*, Tempe, AZ, 2012, p. 142–157.

¹⁶ Cf. T. P. Wiseman, *Lying Historians: Seven Types of Mendacity*, in id., C. Gill (ed.), *Lies and Fiction in the Ancient World*, Austin, TX, 1993, p. 122–146, here 141 on lies of too much detail vs. lies of not enough.

performed in secret. I am especially skeptical of stories of poisoning. Even if this could be done successfully, it is not clear how it would enter the historical record, or how the culprit could be identified. The empress Theophano, for example, was credited with poisoning Konstantinos VII *and* her husband Romanos II, of having an affair with Tzimiskes (even while he was under house arrest in eastern Asia Minor), and assisting the murder of Nikephoros Phokas.¹⁷ None of this was likely true. It is probable that she did nothing wrong – in fact, nothing at all – but her reputation was blackened by the men who stood to gain from it: Tzimiskes, Basileios *nothos*, and the Phokades. Basileios *nothos* was, in turn, suspected of poisoning Tzimiskes.¹⁸ It is more likely that someone invented this to create a villain for a story than that reliable knowledge of it somehow ‘leaked’. In sum, it is easier to believe that someone invented a tale of poisoning by a woman or evil eunuch than that such an action was both successfully carried out and correctly reported to a later historian.

Such narrative tropes (discussed below) required hefty doses of invention, which is especially evident when historians delineate their characters’ personalities to fit the necessary type and resort to mind-reading. Whenever a historian tells us what his character is thinking, feeling, or saying in a private setting, we should automatically treat it as a narrative invention. This is not an isolated problem, however, because it signals that we are in the midst of a particular type of story, one which requires this characterization, and if it requires this then it probably requires more. Consider the alleged plot of the eunuch Ioseph Bringas against the general Nikephoros Phokas, which, according to Leon, “forced” the latter to rebel and claim the throne. The whole story, pages upon pages of narrative, is premised on a type-cast scenario. We are treated to Bringas’ thoughts, anxieties, and secret conversations with an ally, to the (unlikely) contents of his missive to Tzimiskes, and then another private meeting between Tzimiskes and Phokas, which ends with a vicious sexualized portrayal of Bringas as an evil eunuch.¹⁹ I do not accept any of this, nor am I sure that Bringas even did make an overture to Tzimiskes. All of it is likely a typecast invention of pro-Phokas propaganda to justify the rebellion.

Three, word-for-word recycling of ancient material. The Byzantine ‘imitation’ of classical texts is a multifaceted phenomenon entailing a variety of textual modes, some of which compromise the historicity of a reported narrative more than others.²⁰ I am here concerned with those that absolutely do. The account of the conquest of Crete in 960–961 by Nikephoros Phokas in the Continuer of Symeon *logothetes* is based, word-for-word, on the account of the conquest of North Africa by Belisarios in Prokopios, so much so that we cannot accept

¹⁷ Leon, *History* 2.10; Skylitzes, *Synopsis* 240, 246–247.

¹⁸ Leon, *History* 10.11; Skylitzes, *Synopsis* 311–312; the tale reached al-Rudhrawari, *Continuation*, 6.

¹⁹ Leon, *History* 3.1–3.

²⁰ A. Kaldellis, *Procopius of Caesarea: Tyranny, History, and Philosophy at the End of Antiquity*, Philadelphia, 2004, ch. 1.

its testimony except (a) when it deviates from its source and (a) in the broad outline of the events (which we know only by comparing all our sources for the campaign, none of which is especially reliable). But we can no longer just repeat the Continuer's testimony.²¹ In this case, it is both the structure and the details of the account that are compromised. In the case of Tzimiskes' war against the Rus' in 971, Leon and Skylitzes both used a single classicizing source that did not copy one ancient text word-for-word but rather embellished its narrative with vignettes from a variety of classical authors designed to assimilate Tzimiskes to ancient heroes. Here we need to be careful of the details rather than the overall structure.²² Historians cannot ignore the problems posed by this aspect of literary imitation. Many economic historians, for example, continue to rely on the 'data' regarding the widow Danielis in the Peloponnese who was befriended by Basileios I before he became emperor, but it has long been known that she is a literary conflation of a queen from the Alexander Romance and the Queen of Sheba from the Old Testament. There may have been a wealthy widow in the Peloponnese who supported Basileios, but that is about all that we can say about her, and even that is not absolutely certain.²³

Four, authorial career politics. We are used to the idea that historians often wrote in a partisan way, but what if they were their own partisans? I am concerned here with distortions caused by the author's personal role in his history.²⁴ For this period, we are fortunate to have accounts written by witnesses and even participants. The Continuer of Symeon was probably Symeon himself, a member of the regimes of Romanos II and Nikephoros II;²⁵ Leon witnessed Basileios II's rout by the Bulgarians in 986;²⁶ Skylitzes incorporates material written possibly by Katakalon Kekaumenos, one of the leaders of the revolt of 1057 (active in other events too);²⁷ the author Kekaumenos quotes the apologia of one Nikoloutzas Delphinias; and Bryennios includes material that seems to come from a memoir by Ioannes Doukas, the

²¹ A. Kaldellis, *The Byzantine Conquest of Crete (961 AD), Prokopios' Vandal War, and the Continuator of the Chronicle of Symeon*, in *BMGS*, 39 (2015), p. 302–311.

²² A. Kaldellis, *The Original Source for Tzimiskes' Balkan Campaign (971) and the Emperor's Classicizing Propaganda*, in *BMGS*, 37 (2013), p. 1–18.

²³ I. Anagnostakis, A. Kaldellis, *The Textual Sources for the Peloponnese, A.D. 582–959: Their Creative Engagement with Ancient Literature*, in *GRBS*, 54 (2014), p. 105–135, here 115–123.

²⁴ The starting-point for the study of this theme in general is R. Macrides, *The Historian in the History*, in C. N. Constantinides et al. (ed.), *ΦΙΛΕΛΛΗΝ: Studies in Honour of Robert Browning*, Venice, 1996, p. 205–224.

²⁵ W. Treadgold, *The Middle Byzantine Historians*, New York, 2013, p. 214–215. For all that he was writing under and supporting Nikephoros Phokas, Symeon even-handedly gave a positive account of the latter's enemy Ioseph Bringas.

²⁶ Leon, *History* 10.8.

²⁷ J. Shepard, *A Suspected Source of Skylitzes' Synopsis Historion: The Great Catacalon Cekaumenos*, in *BMGS*, 16 (1992), p. 171–181.

brother of Konstantinos X.²⁸ We also have the highly autobiographical histories by Psellos and Attaleiates. This corpus, then, gives us a wonderful set of contrasting perspectives on the period. Their biases reveal the flash-points of political debate and the way in which the self-serving narratives themselves sought to intervene in contestation and shape its terms.

What we have not yet explored is the extent of the distortion in Psellos and Attaleiates in particular. These were men who not only took sides, they were writing in the aftermath of personal careers in politics that involved controversial choices and affiliations, and this personal baggage shaped their accounts on a deeper level than we have so far realized. Focusing here on some big items only, Psellos had an especially complicated relationship with Konstantinos IX Monomachos. Monomachos had advanced Psellos' career significantly and had received fulsome panegyric orations from him. But toward the end of the reign, the emperor seems to have refused to protect Psellos from his enemies, forcing him to flee the court and capital and become a monk, against his wishes. This later put Psellos the historian in a conflicted position. He wanted to depict Monomachos as a charming and pleasant man but an unserious and irresponsible emperor who failed the Romans by devoting all his time to affairs and churches. This is the image that comes across in the *Chronographia*. To pull it off, Psellos had to counter his prior panegyric image of Monomachos, which explains the long digressions in Book 6 on how rhetoric works as opposed to history, which tells the whole truth.²⁹ But my reconstruction of the military history of the reign has convinced me that the image of Monomachos in the *Chronographia* is unhistorical. Monomachos was extremely energetic on the military front, attentive to all the empire's problems, and responsible. Therefore, the Monomachos of Book 6 is not a historical figure but yet another rhetorical fiction by Psellos. One way by which Psellos gets away with this is to stop reporting on foreign wars entirely after 1043.

Attaleiates was in a comparable situation. His career was too closely tied to the tragic emperor Romanos IV Diogenes, the loser at Mantzikert, and he was writing now under Botaneiates, who had displaced the Doukas dynasty. Attaleiates had to justify his association with Diogenes, and so partially defend that emperor, but he also had to ensure that none of the blame for the emperor's failure to clear Asia Minor of Turks attached to himself. He also criticized the Doukai, both because they had overthrown his patron Diogenes and also because they had just been overthrown by his current patron Botaneiates. I will focus on the image of Diogenes. Attaleiates presents him as dynamic but recklessly following the wrong policies, whereas he presents himself as a loyal but critical advisor who recommended correct policies, which would presumably not have led to defeat. This was a rhetorical strategy for defending his own reputation in what was obviously a context of fierce debate over what had gone wrong. Yet in almost all cases, looking at the military situation closely, it seems to

²⁸ L. Neville, *Heroes and Romans in Twelfth-Century Byzantium: The Materials for a History of Nikephoros Bryennios*, Cambridge, 2012, ch. 4.

²⁹ A. Kaldellis, *The Argument of Psellos' Chronographia*, Leiden, 1999, p. 127–154.

me that Diogenes followed a sounder strategy than anything recommended by Attaleiates, at least until he split the army at Mantzikert, which was a disastrous mistake.

Attaleiates has reverse-engineered his image of previous emperors to defend his own career. This may have shaped his account of Mantzikert too. He does not give the impression that there was a formal battle as such: Diogenes is captured when he boldly but recklessly advances ahead of the other Romans, a fitting image for the reign as it is presented in the *History*. (Bryennios, by contrast, has a formal pitched battle.) Attaleiates also takes care to stress that the Pecheneg allies entrusted to him personally at the time did not change sides.³⁰ This also points to a contemporary debate over his own role in events. In sum, it is not only political bias that shapes our sources but the personal stake of our authors in the history they are telling, given their own prior roles in making it to begin with.

Five, rhetorical infill, set-pieces, and elaboration. Formal prose composition was practiced in Byzantium in the rhetorical curriculum, which included both explicit instructions and the practice of set-piece exemplars (honed in *progymnasmata*).³¹ It was inevitable that these formulaic templates would be embedded in historical narrative. Before writing histories, our authors had practiced at imaginary speeches (matching them to the speaker's character and circumstances); action sequences, including sieges and battles; *ekphraseis* of people, buildings, and events; character-studies, including physiognomic elements (e.g., that of Basileios II in Psellos); and of course invective and panegyric (both Psellos' *Chronographia* and Attaleiates' *History* end with tacked-on panegyrics of current rulers). Rhetoric was the compositional matrix of Byzantine historical writing, creating the suspicion that historical narrative was just rhetoric by another means.³² Beyond its more obvious modalities, it was this tradition of rhetorical templates that enabled Attaleiates to generate the moral comparison between modern and ancient Romans (a *synkrisis*),³³ and to flesh out his pose as the wise counselor to the emperor. From the standpoint of historical positivism, this means that much of the reporting in these works could have been written up based on a minimal or even non-existent factual basis.

This is all generally known, or suspected, though we have still not produced detailed studies to show us how aspiring historians actually used the toolkit of these rhetorical forms to craft the narratives that we have. It also problematizes the ontology of our narratives. How much in them is generic infill, write-up, and elaboration, and how much fact? Obviously,

³⁰ Attaleiates, *History* 158–159.

³¹ Cf. T. P. Wiseman, *Seven Types*, p. 144–145; A. Kaldellis, *The Classicism of Procopius*, in M. Meier (ed.), *The Brill Companion to Procopius* (vol. in preparation).

³² See, for example, the discussion in L. M. Hoffmann, *Geschichtsschreibung oder Rhetorik? Zum logos parakletikos bei Leon Diakonos*, in M. Grünbart (ed.), *Theatron: Rhetorische Kultur in Spätantike und Mittelalter*, Berlin, 2007, p. 105–139; for antiquity, see A. J. Woodman, *Rhetoric in Classical Historiography: Four Studies*, Portland, 1988.

³³ A. Kaldellis, *A Byzantine Argument for the Equivalence of All Religions: Michael Attaleiates on Ancient and Modern Romans*, in *International Journal of the Classical Tradition*, 14 (2007), p. 1–22.

each passage in question would be a mixture of both, but on a skeptical reading Psellos would have required little actual information to write his character-studies. Rhetorical training enabled our authors to manufacture compelling and ‘creative reconstructions’ out of a meager data-base.³⁴ I would not be surprised if they could be spun out of nothing. This was certainly the case with the mendacious genre of panegyric, despite Psellos’ self-serving assurance that its sins were only those of omission and not of out-and-out invention.³⁵ Let me share another suspicion here. The *History* of Leon the deacon is regularly cited in studies of Byzantine warfare as it is full of technical military information that seems to complement, as a ‘live’ narrative, the military manuals of the age. Leon confirms that the theory found in them actually did correspond with practice. But I suspect the opposite happened. Leon did not have now-lost histories rich in technical military jargon; instead, he used military manuals to embellish a tiny core of hard data about the campaigns. He used ekphrasis and the military manuals to elaborate that tiny core into full-blown rhetorical set-pieces. When we squeeze his accounts, little juice comes out. We need more study of such rhetorical set-pieces, which were regarded by Byzantine readers as *enhancing* the plausibility and persuasiveness of a narrative rather than making it seem more ‘fictional’.³⁶

Six, dramatization and characterization. Rhetorical infill and set-pieces tend to conform to the rules of an ancillary genre that can usually be identified and extracted from the surrounding narrative. But our historians could dramatize the overall sweep of a reign according to various plot types. Hayden White famously identified four such in nineteenth-century historiography: romance, comedy, tragedy, and satire.³⁷ We do not have to agree with White’s specific claims (or with his overall argument that all history is invented) to realize that our authors deployed similar dramatic templates. Polybios had already complained about the excesses of what he called “tragic history”, targeting precisely the kinds of laments, expostulations, and attempts to create pathos and tears that we find, for example, in Attaleiates’ accounts of the civil war of 1057 and the blinding of Diogenes.³⁸ As always, Psellos was more open and self-reflexive about his toolbox of literary emplotment and elaboration. In his account of the fall of Michael V (1042) – an event that impressed contemporaries (we have at least three separate accounts) – he claims that the events were so far “beyond measure” that not even the resources and tropes of epic poetry, rhetoric, or

³⁴ The phrase is from C. B. R. Pelling, *Truth and Fiction in Plutarch’s Lives*, in D. A. Russell (ed.), *Antonine Literature*, Oxford, 1990, p. 19–52, here 38.

³⁵ Psellos, *Chronographia* 6.25, 6.161.

³⁶ A. Kaldellis, *The Emergence of Literary Fiction*.

³⁷ H. White, *Metahistory: The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-century Europe*, Baltimore, 1973; for a response to White’s ontology and epistemology, see P. Lamarque, S. H. Olsen, *Truth, Fiction, and Literature*, Oxford, 1994.

³⁸ Attaleiates, *History* 55, 176–177.

philosophy would suffice to capture them, and he explains how each of the three would go about approaching the topic to produce an account distinctive to each discipline.³⁹

Staying with White's types, there are sections and even whole books in Psellos' *Chronographia* that are structured to highlight romance and satire (comedy is harder to find, in part because it is harder to define). Consider the romance between Michael and Zoe,⁴⁰ and the satire targeting Romanos III and Konstantinos IX. Nor should we limit ourselves to White's tropes.⁴¹ The Byzantines were culturally attuned to narrative tropes beyond those that survived into modern historiography, including a range of pious ones (martyrology, the miracle tale, rewarded piety), epic-heroic history, and (as we saw) the noble hero persecuted by an evil eunuch. Each of these lent itself easily to invention. Byzantine religious literature, after all, rested on a bedrock of forgery and historical falsification. Beyond being just templates, some of these tropes were almost *ritually* enacted in many texts, they were so deeply embedded in Byzantine narrative thought.⁴² Our field has not yet systematically identified and classified their uses in historiography (we talk much more about *topos* than narrative *tropos*). Students have to learn about them in a haphazard way, from articles here and there that are often using incommensurate theoretical frameworks.

Tropes could be inverted too. Psellos presents the final bath of Romanos III as a failed purification or even baptism that leads to his demise (upon which are added the rumors of the emperor's assassination).⁴³ We also lack second-order histories of non-religious narrative tropes in the Byzantine imagination. For example, the heroic mode is prominent in Leon the deacon. Setting aside how it may have distorted the events in his work, it is not even clear that its use by Leon necessarily even reflects the social and cultural values of his time. Did the Byzantine military elite already aspire to the kind of heroic image that we find later among the Komnenoi, or was this an 'untimely' trope deployed by Leon or his sources?⁴⁴ Is there even cultural history behind this aspect of the text, or a singular literary invention?

Beyond (or behind) the specific types of 'unhistory' listed above is of course the problem of language itself. Philosophers of language ask whether words refer to things in the world,

³⁹ Psellos, *Chronographia* 5.24; cf. A. Kaldellis, *Argument*, p. 102–104.

⁴⁰ I. Polemis, *Michael Psellos the Novelist: Some Notes on the Story of the Empress Zoe*, in T. Antonopoulou et al. (ed.), *Myriobiblos: Essays on Byzantine Literature and Culture*, Berlin, 2015, p. 284–295.

⁴¹ Cf. R. Tobias, *Twenty Master Plots and How to Build Them*, Cincinnati, 1993.

⁴² Cf. J. Duffy, *Playing at Ritual: Variations on a Theme in Byzantine Religious Tales*, in D. Yatromanolakis, P. Roilos (ed.), *Greek Ritual Poetics*, Cambridge, MA, 2004, p. 199–209; S. Papaioannou, *Byzantine historia*, in K. A. Raaflaub (ed.), *Thinking, Recording, and Writing History in the Ancient World*, Malden, MA, 2013, p. 297–313, here 299.

⁴³ S. Efthymiades, *Michael Psellos and the Death of Romanos III (Chronographia III 26): A Failed Bath of Regeneration and a Non-Ascent from Hades*, in L. M. Hoffmann (ed.), *Zwischen Polis, Provinz und Peripherie: Beiträge zur byzantinischen Geschichte und Kultur*, Wiesbaden, 2005, p. 255–265.

⁴⁴ A. Kazhdan, *The Aristocracy and the Imperial Idea*, in M. Angold (ed.), *The Byzantine Aristocracy IX to XII Centuries*, Oxford, 1984, p. 43–57.

how they do so, or how well they do so. For scholars who need to extract history from literary texts, the problem is posed by the cultural-linguistic entanglements of any utterance in a specific language and the weave, texture, and matrix of meaning constituted by an author's individual word choices, those foot-soldiers of historical representation. The resultant ontology is, as I have said, more literary than historical.

When all is said and done – and more could be said if there were room – much that is recounted in the narrative sources is not credible history. In our arguments, we insist that *this* is what the sources say or that *that* is not found in any source (and so it is only a conjecture), but we forget when we say such things that our sources can be little more than rhetorically embellished gossip and self-serving politicking. Consider the conquest of Crete. We have a heroic epic poem in praise of Nikephoros whose factual reporting is hopelessly vague (Theodosios); a narrative lifted directly from Prokopios (Symeon); and Leon, who possibly elaborated a miniscule amount of information with rhetorical set-pieces and technical jargon from the military manuals. A later report by Attaleiates is about the piety of the general Nikephoros, a trope serving later political interests. Epistemologically, we probably have to jettison most of the characterization and psychology of the protagonists as presented in our sources. We have, for example, a caricature of Ioseph Bringas in Leon (on the one hand) and a positive image in the Continuer of Symeon that reverses Prokopios' image of John the Cappadocian: neither makes for good history. We have similarly contrasting images of Nikephoros Phokas, each constructed to serve a different political purpose; a deliberately distorted image of Monomachos in Psellos; and so on. I distrust what is reported about intentions, which usually consists of praise or blame (“to protect the Romans he...,” or “he was greedy and so he...”).

If we accept this conclusion, we have to jettison most of the ‘analysis’ offered by our authors, which is usually personality-driven. Attaleiates, for example, loudly asserts that he will divulge the causes of events, but all we find behind that claim are personalities and more events (not always the ones we want). The historians of this period tell us almost nothing about the cultures and societies of the foreign peoples with whom the empire was at war;⁴⁵ or about major reforms to the administration such as the institution of the *doukate* and *katepanate* (ca. 970) and changes to taxation and military recruitment, for example the fiscalization of *strateia*. Attaleiates, Skylitzes, and Kekaumenos try to explain Monomachos' reorganization of the Iberian army (ca. 1050), but all fail to do so adequately, and as a result we do not know what was actually done or planned (probably something far less dramatic than what is alleged).⁴⁶ What the historians reveal with clarity is the challenges that emperors chronically faced along with some of the underlying assumptions about political power, but

⁴⁵ A. Kaldellis, *Ethnography after Antiquity: Foreign Lands and People in Byzantine Literature*, Philadelphia, 2014, ch. 3.

⁴⁶ A number of explanations surveyed in M. Grigoriou-Ioannidou, *Οργανωτικά μέτρα του Κωνσταντίνου Θ' Μονομάχου: Το πρόβλημα του στρατού της Ιβηρίας*, Thessalonike, 1993.

they shy away from a deeper ideological analysis and do not divulge the basis of rebels' support in the provinces. The only one who delivers a passable analysis of the problems faced by the Roman state in the eleventh century, and who understands them on a structural and diachronic level and not exclusively on a personal one, was Psellos. He was absolutely correct in pointing to the massive and growing expenditures that the state incurred from each emperor's need to purchase political support, given the lack of legitimacy endemic to the Roman imperial system, which caused every emperor to fail compared to the exalted image of the imperial position in panegyrics. As panegyrist-in-chief, Psellos understood well that the imperial idea was a piece of rhetorical theater and that emperors had to engage in complicated negotiations to appease the military and civilian classes as well as the people of Constantinople. Not all regimes were up to the challenge. However, he ignores military history and the conditions that contributed to victory or defeat on the international stage.⁴⁷

What recourse do we have, then? A different paper would ideally be required to answer that question, but I can here gesture in some directions.

When it comes to reconstructing policy or structural shifts in governance, we can primarily use non-literary sources (such as the *Taktika*) or rely on the smallest set of information in the narrative sources that we can reasonably be sure is safe. But how do we identify that? There can be no 'methodology' here (that is a fiction of modern scholarship). After all reasonable skepticism, we must rely on intuition and the context provided by other (tentatively) accepted facts. For the period under discussion, I fell back on two additional recourses: Skylitzes and foreign sources. Skylitzes is a great resource because he contains a large amount of information stripped of narrative context and rhetorical elaboration. For many reigns, he has then jumbled much of this information out of its chronological order, resulting not only in narrative incoherence but in reigns whose image is not governed by a single agenda, or, as in the notorious case of Nikephoros Phokas, that alternates among two or more politically motivated sources. To be sure, this information may have its origin in unreliable prior sources, thereby shifting the problem over to them, but I doubt this vitiates even a majority of it, as a lot of what Skylitzes reports is fairly banal, lacking elaboration and some of it can be confirmed by foreign sources. In the case of Monomachos, his testimony proves crucial. Skylitzes does have a coherent view of Monomachos, but the effort to correct his jumbled chronology results in an image of the reign that refutes that of Psellos, who occludes Monomachos' later wars to make him seem a careless hedonist.

Our greatest recourse for getting around the Greek sources are the non-Greek sources, of which there are many, and they are indispensable. They include Yahya of Antioch, Miskawayah, and Rudhrawari (Arabic); Stepanos of Taron, Aristakes of Lastivert, and Matteos of Edessa (Armenian); the royal *Georgian Chronicles*; the *Russian Primary Chronicle* (or *Tale of Bygone Years*); Michael the Syrian (helpful mostly for the Syrian Church); and (why not?) Liudprand's *Embassy*. Not only do their narratives flesh out areas

⁴⁷ Analysis: Psellos, *Chronographia* 7.51–60; systemic failure: 6.27; politics: 7.1–2.

overlooked in the Greek sources, they often independently confirm or refute them. This is one way to escape the textual loop: what independent authors in Constantinople and Baghdad report in common can tentatively be accepted.

Yahya of Antioch is the best non-Greek history that covers Byzantine affairs from any period. He generally presents information in a dry annalistic way, with an emphasis on dates (which are almost entirely missing in the Greek tradition).⁴⁸ When it comes to Byzantium he can occasionally be wrong but he is rarely biased (his animus is directed against the Fatimid caliph al-Hakim). Granted, Yahya used (now lost) Greek sources so he potentially inherited their problems, but I doubt that most of his material came from them as it focused on the eastern frontier, which is systematically ignored by Greek authors of this period who were not personally involved in events (i.e., almost all of them). Moreover, by removing the information in Greek texts from its narrative context and presenting it boiled down to its essentials in a different language, Yahya stripped it of most of its literary politics, leaving us to cope only with hard inventions (of which there are some). Miskawayah and Rudhrawari are also necessary for the east, and the former was a serious thinker to boot, a philosopher-historian at the court and Muslim counterpart of Psellos.⁴⁹ And these sources are essential not only for the east: Yahya provides the best proof from anywhere that Samuil of Bulgaria claimed the imperial title; also, the best sources for the conversion of Vladimir of Kiev (ignored by the Byzantines) are eastern; and it is again eastern sources that confirm Basileios' long war with Bulgaria.

This is not to deny that foreign sources have agendas of their own or are written according to literary conventions in their respective languages. Aristakes reports solid information about Armenia and the east, but it is drenched in the lamentation that is the chief rhetorical goal (and title) of his work.⁵⁰ About others I am more skeptical than the mainstream of scholarship. Stepanos of Taron is useful but he has an Armenian nationalist obsession, seeing Armenians as the protagonists or the ancestors of the protagonists in major events that took place anywhere in the world. These claims have often been taken at face value, though his tales often bear the unmistakable imprint of legend and invention. The Rus' chronicle is, for Byzantine-Rus' relations in this period, a tissue of legends and self-serving distortions. At least, this is how it seems whenever it can be checked against sober sources, which should cause us to bracket its testimony in places where it cannot. Its prestigious status in Russian historiography has given it a pass in this respect. The least reliable foreign source is Matteos of Edessa, who, for this period, offers mostly romantic legends and biased pro-Armenian tales. Whenever better sources exist, he is not used because his testimony is

⁴⁸ J. H. Forsyth, *The Byzantine-Arab Chronicle (938–1034) of Yahya b. Sa' id al-Antaki*, I–II, PhD thesis, University of Michigan, 1977.

⁴⁹ T. Khalidi, *Arabic Historical Thought in the Classical Period*, Cambridge, 1994, p. 170–176.

⁵⁰ R. W. Thomson, *Aristakes of Lastivert and Armenian Reactions to Invasion*, in R. G. Hovannisian (ed.), *Armenian Karin/Erzerum*, Costa Mesa, CA, 2003, p. 72–89.

palpably nonsense, but it is surprising how often he is given the benefit of the doubt when he alone reports an event. Historians love to quote a fantastic letter of Tzimiskes to the Armenian king that Matteos claims to preserve, according to which the emperor came close to Jerusalem in his eastern campaign of 975.⁵¹ No historian would take the rest of Matteos on Tzimiskes at face value, but this forgery has had an extraordinary career in scholarship about proto-crusading ideals in Byzantium. Yet it was obviously written in a crusading context.

This inquiry can have no conclusion because there are no methodologies to be had. Writing history involves tentative conjecture and guesswork and every report has to be treated differently. The texts that are most interesting to read on their own are not the same as those which the historian will typically rely on the most. Psellos is at one end of the spectrum, Skylitzes and Yahya on the other. Attaleiates and Leon the deacon are in between.

⁵¹ A. Kaldellis, *Did Ioannes I Tzimiskes campaign in the east in 974?*, in *Byzantion*, 84 (2014), p. 235–240.

VI

Byzantine Studies in the New Millenium

Moderator: **Claudia Rapp**

- Sofia Kotzabassi** Byzantine Studies in the New Millennium: The Perspective of Texts and Manuscripts
- Jean-Michel Spieser** Histoire de l'art et archéologie dans les études byzantines: bilans et perspectives
- Jan Ziolkowsky** Byzantine Studies in North America: Position and Perspectives
- Bronwen Neil** Byzantine Scholarship in Australia in the New Millennium
- Xu Jialing** Byzantine Studies in the New Millenium: New Developments in China

Introduction

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Byzantine studies as a discipline have a long history that developed in different countries at a different pace. Individual scholars have been interested in Byzantium for centuries, and definitely since the late 16th century, when Hieronymus Wolf (1516–1580) coined the term ‘Byzantine’ for the Christian medieval culture that preceded the Ottoman Empire. But it would take until the late 19th century that Byzantium began to be studied within a permanent institutional framework by dedicated scholars and that publication platforms were created for the communication of research and the exchange of ideas. The establishment of chairs or institutes and the foundation of scholarly journals are thus the significant milestones in the history of the discipline, beginning with the *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* (Munich) in 1892 and the *Vizantiiski Vremmenik* (St. Petersburg) in 1894. After the First World War, and again in the 1960s, other countries in Europe and the US followed suit with the creation of dedicated journals. For many generations of scholars, art history and classical philology were the entry points into the field. This shaped outlook and method. Art historians were interested in the Byzantine remains or the Byzantine influence within their own region, while classical philologists explored the *Nachleben* of Greek language and literature as manifest in the manuscripts copied during the Byzantine centuries. A regional focus on extant works of art, on the one hand, was complemented by a diachronic approach to Greek texts that had to be recovered from manuscripts preserved in the libraries of the great European cities or in distant monasteries in the former sphere of Byzantine influence.

Byzantine Studies in the new millennium, like other disciplines in the humanities and social sciences, are affected by new developments and trends in contemporary politics and culture on a larger scale that have significant ramifications – most important among them political globalization and the knowledge explosion that is associated with the internet revolution.

As a result, now more than ever before, the study of Byzantium is no longer the exclusive domain of European countries that developed in the tradition of ancient, Roman and Byzantine cultural, legal and administrative structures, including those countries that formerly belonged to the Byzantine empire and for whom the Byzantine Middle Ages form part of their national heritage. At this time in the new millennium, Byzantium has become part of the global heritage of world history and is studied in academic contexts on all five continents. Byzantine studies are opening up to new audiences, and the papers in this panel were chosen to reflect that.

A second, but related development is the knowledge explosion resulting from the internet revolution. The internet has done immense service in making Byzantium more accessible to academics and non-academics alike. An ever increasing amount of Byzantine texts is now available in translations online, free of charge. Dumbarton Oaks has made important print publications available through its website and thus facilitated the study of the Byzantine economy as well as hagiography and monasticism, to name just a few. This wider availability gives Byzantium greater exposure. Regardless of academic qualifications or geographical location, anyone with an internet connection can access the sources that are the foundation of the scholar's interpretive work. With such ease of access, it is easy to forget that these translations themselves are the result of palaeographical and editorial scholarship by generations of scholars. This democratization of access also bears the danger of misunderstanding or misinterpreting the written sources. This is especially true for those who depend on translations only. Specialized knowledge of medieval Greek and of palaeography, essential for the editorial work that still must be done, is becoming a rarity. There is a real risk that the view of Byzantium in the popular understanding becomes foreshortened or skewed as a result.

At the same time, we note with some degree of concern that neither the increased availability of sources nor the political developments – some of them tragic – in regions of the former Byzantine empire that inevitably draw attention to their deep history, has led to an increase in academic positions or research institutes in our field. Why is it that cultural and educational administrators at the highest levels are so often hesitant to support Byzantine studies, even in places where they have a long tradition? We live in times of economic constraint as a global result of the re-distribution of wealth and are exposed to a general crisis in the humanities that hits the historical and philological disciplines especially hard. What should be our response, as inheritors of a long tradition of scholarship and masters of highly specialized skills in the various sub-disciplines of *Grundlagenforschung*, to ensure that Byzantine studies continue to thrive in the new millennium?

This panel convenes specialists from four continents, each with its own research traditions, to address the issues that arise from these developments: How has globalization affected the research agenda and research methods? What are the opportunities and challenges posed by the internet revolution in the academic environment? What is the impact of changes in emphasis and methodology in the historical sciences in general, and in medieval studies in particular?

Sophia Kotzabassi, professor of Byzantine philology at Aristotle University in Thessaloniki, Greece, highlights the great potential of online publishing for reaching larger audiences. Michel Spieser, professor (em.) of early Christian and Byzantine archaeology at Fribourg University, Switzerland, presents the most important recent trends in the study of material culture and comes to the conclusion that, despite exciting new discoveries and a general increase in interest in Byzantium among museum-goers and archaeologists, the current outlook for the future of academic instruction in Byzantine studies is not encouraging.

Highlighting the global connections of scholarship, the next three contributions come from outside Europe: North America, Australia and China. Jan Ziolkowski, Director of the Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection and Arthur Kingsley Porter Professor of Medieval Latin at Harvard University, combines the perspective of a philologist, director of a large international research institution, and astute observer of larger trends in education and culture in the USA. While he expresses concern for the continuity of linguistic and editorial skills that are essential for the study of the written heritage of the middle ages, he also points to two new directions in Byzantine studies: an increased retrospective interest in the reception of Byzantium – in scholarship, but also in the arts – within the national and cultural frameworks of 19th and 20th century Europe, and a greater openness to the study of Byzantium within larger geopolitical frameworks that extend from Western Europe to East Asia, partly manifest in the current boom of Syriac studies in North America. In terms of methodology, the two trends that will have the greatest impact, Ziolkowski speculates, are interdisciplinarity and the digital humanities. With greater advances in scholarship and a wider geographical and chronological scope of investigation, knowledge has now become so detailed and linguistic and technical skill sets so specialized, that scholars will need to work together on a greater scale than ever before. There is now a greater willingness to work across disciplinary boundaries, and interdisciplinarity requires collaboration. The digital humanities are a good test case for that, as scholars who are trained as philologists or historians, art historians or geographers, avail themselves of the possibilities offered by electronic and digital media to develop new tools and to create new knowledge that would otherwise be inaccessible or invisible. The collaboration that is essential in the pursuit of interdisciplinarity and digital humanities represents a challenge to the established compartmentalized and departmental structures of academic institutions and will also affect evaluation procedures for the contribution of individual scholars.

Bronwen Neil, Past President of the Australian Association of Byzantine Studies, and professor at the Australian Catholic University in Melbourne highlights the contribution of Australian scholars to Byzantine research. She also points out that this success story depended to a great extent on demographic developments. The most active generation of scholars were all trained in the UK, mostly at Oxford or Cambridge, and were appointed to academic positions in Australia in the 1970s and 1980s, when immigrants from Greece and their children showed great interest in the study of the Hellenic tradition, including that of the Byzantine Middle Ages. In recent years, as new generations of students have developed new interests, university leadership – often under financial pressure – has responded by re-allocating funds to other purposes rather than replacing professorships in Byzantine studies after retirement.

Australia throws into sharp relief a trend that is also present in many other countries, especially in Europe and the US: in the second half of the 20th century, Byzantine university and research positions experienced expansion, but now are facing contraction. The reasons for this are manifold and interconnected, but the two most important factors would seem

to be, first, a general cultural trend away from the canon of ‘Western Civilization’, from the study of earlier times, their cultures, histories, literatures, languages, artifacts and religions and indeed from ‘the Humanities’ in general, and second, increasing financial pressure on academic institutions, whose funding – in the final analysis – depends on the political will of the decision makers at the highest level. The paradox lies in the fact that at the same time, as Spieser points out, exhibitions and excavations elicit public interest in Byzantium on an unprecedented scale.

The challenge for the future of Byzantine studies will depend on the ability of scholars to conceptualize and communicate the importance of Byzantine culture as a world culture that can and must be studied for its own sake. The contribution by Xu Jialing, professor for Byzantine and medieval studies at Northeast Normal University in Changchun (People’s Republic of China), shows how the first steps in this direction that have been taken in China since the 1990s. Thanks to the initiative of a small handful of medieval historians, with the collaboration and support of experts especially from Europe, several generations of students have now become acquainted with Byzantine culture. Step by step, sources are made accessible in translation and studied through new interpretive approaches. In Chinese universities, it is becoming ever more possible to integrate the study of Byzantium into the framework of historical and cultural studies.

The second challenge for the future of our field will consist of striving for the right balance between the dissemination and popularization of our field, on the one hand, and ensuring the continuity of academic frameworks for the instruction of highly specialized skills in Byzantine Greek and palaeography, on the other hand. It is upon these two foundations that the progress of scholarship – and with it the continuity of our field for the sake of future generations – will ultimately depend.

Byzantine Studies in the New Millennium: The Perspective of Texts and Manuscripts

Sofia Kotzabassi

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Globalisation as a general change in the human condition and the prospects for humanity has affected everything relating to it, including, of course, scholarship. This is clear, even in the humanities.

Globalisation can be understood as (a) an expansion of the geographical environment in which Byzantine studies take place, (b) an expansion of the circle of Byzantine scholars, (c) an expansion of the sectors that the research scholar is invited to consider, (d) an expansion of the methods, topics and literature that must be covered, (e) an expansion of the possibilities that are open.

Byzantine Philology was until recently a geographically fairly limited field of study. In the globalised scholarly community of the 21st century Byzantine Philology has begun to attract interest in countries where this was never previously the case. China is one such example: in recent years Byzantine studies have entered the teaching and research programmes of a number of Chinese universities, which are already engaging in cultural and scholarly exchanges with European (including Greek) universities and their corresponding Faculties of Arts and Departments of History and Archaeology. In the context of these exchanges there are students from these ‘new’ countries who are interested in questions concerning the relation between Byzantium and their own lands. Their presence is also an occasion for engaging with related subjects. This is paralleled by the development of other branches of mediaeval studies (Slavic, Syriac, Arabic, Turkish), the edition of related historical and literary sources, and the cataloguing and study of manuscripts in those languages.

Globalisation has also led to closer contact with other branches of scholarship and the utilisation of their methods and theories. This works on two levels: the synchronic and the diachronic, in collaboration and the use of methods drawn from scholarship dealing mainly with the Western Middle Ages, and in the application of methods used in Classical Antiquity, Literary Theory and contemporary History.

This collaboration strengthens interdisciplinarity in research and fosters the development and spread of Byzantine studies, since it expands the public with which the discipline can converse and to which it is addressed.

* * *

The internet revolution has been extraordinarily important, and has continuously and radically changed the basic facts and conditions of research over the past few years.

In the field of bibliography, the digitisation of old editions of texts and monographs,¹ periodicals² and catalogues of manuscripts³ is an invaluable aid to research, since access to old editions and older bibliography, which is essential to research in the humanities, is difficult, especially in the newer universities. Another valuable development is the publication of new periodicals⁴ and monographs⁵ in electronic form (open access), which facilitates access to them even when restrictions on a university's acquisitions budget make the purchase of new books or subscriptions to journals and series difficult.⁶

One important development in the field of basic research has been the digitisation of many Greek manuscripts, which thanks to the generosity of many libraries are now freely accessible.

¹ A large number of texts and monographs have been digitised by Google in co-operation with American libraries (not always accessible to European users), while many libraries make digitised texts and monographs available to readers. Other useful research tools for digitised books are the Europeana web page (<http://www.europeana.eu/portal/>), the Central and Eastern European Online Library (<http://www.ceeol.com>), The Digital Library of Modern Greek Studies (<http://anemi.lib.uoc.gr>), and <http://www.openarchives.gr/>. All the volumes of the Series Berolinensis of the Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae have already been digitised by DeGruyter (<http://www.degruyter.com/view/serial/16787?rskey=JgEKOH&result=1>), as have the out-of-print volumes of the Byzantine Texts and Studies series of the Centre of Byzantine Studies of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (<http://www.kbe.auth.gr/fbkm.html>) and others.

² These are either initiatives of national institutions or publishers, e.g. the digitisation of many French-language periodicals on Byzantine studies on the <http://www.persee.fr> web page (e.g. *Scriptorium*, *Revue des Etudes byzantines*, *Revue d'Histoire des Textes*, *Echos d'Orient*), the Greek National Documentation Center's digitisation of corresponding Greek periodicals on its website <http://web.ekt.gr/en/ilektronikes-ekdoseis> (*Δελτίον Χριστιανικής Αρχαιολογικής Εταιρείας*, *Βυζαντινά Σύμμεικτα*, *Εώα και Εσπέρια*), the digitisation of periodicals by their publishers, such as DeGruyter's digitisation of the *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* (<http://www.degruyter.com/view/j/byzs?rskey=UasSLP&result=1>) and Maney Publishing's digitisation of *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* (<http://www.maneyonline.com/loi/byz>), or initiatives of publishing institutions (e.g. the periodical *Byzantina* put out by the Centre of Byzantine Studies: <http://ejournals.lib.auth.gr/BYZANTINA>, and the periodical *Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies*: <http://grbs.library.duke.edu>), or other bodies, such as the website <http://www.jstor.org> (for older periodicals).

³ See *infra* n. 11.

⁴ See e.g. *Porphyra. International Academic Journal in Byzantine Studies* (<http://www.porphyra.it>), and *Parekbolai. An Electronical Journal for Byzantine Literature* (<http://ejournals.lib.auth.gr/parekbolai/index>).

⁵ See e.g. A. Rhoby (ed.), *Inscriptions in Byzantium and Beyond*, (Veröffentlichungen zur Byzanzforschung, 38), Vienna, 2015, and L. M. Peltomaa, A. Külzer, P. Allen (ed.), *Presbeia Theotokou* (Veröffentlichungen zur Byzanzforschung, 39), Vienna, 2015.

⁶ See a presentation of the preliminary results of a research which rates users' needs and satisfaction related with the e-journal *Byzantina Symmeikta* (<http://www.epset.gr/en/Nisrt-Files/Presentations/e-journal-and-open-access-journal-publishing-humanities-preliminary>).

The website created by David Jenkins, Librarian for Classics, Hellenic Studies and Linguistics at Princeton University, is a useful tool for locating digitised manuscripts.⁷ Some libraries attach a description (new or copied from the catalogue) and a bibliography to the digitisations of manuscripts in their collections.⁸ There are also sites where the researcher can find digitised manuscripts of specific content, e.g. Old Testament⁹ or New Testament¹⁰ manuscripts. Many digitised catalogues of manuscripts are published on libraries' websites or specialised web pages.¹¹

One particularly valuable search tool for manuscripts of Byzantine writers is the IRHT/CNRS Pinakes database, which lists the manuscripts of each work by a Byzantine author.¹²

An indispensable tool and invaluable aid for the editor and student of Byzantine texts is the Thesaurus Linguae Graecae, which in recent years has not only integrated almost the entire corpus of Byzantine literature, scholarly as well as popular, but is linked to all the existing dictionaries of Ancient, Mediaeval and Modern Greek.¹³

Completion of the almost parallel programmes on Byzantine prosopography of the Middle Byzantine period by King's College London and the British Academy (641–867)¹⁴ and its continuation, *Prosopography of the Byzantine World (1025–1150)*,¹⁵ on the one hand, and of the programme of the Berlin-Brandenburgische Akademie der Wissenschaften, *Prosopographie der mittelbyzantinische Zeit* (The Prosopography of the Middle Byzantine Period),¹⁶ on the other, and online access to them is a huge contribution to research which will soon be supplemented by online access to the prosopographical dictionary that was published first, the *Prosopographisches Lexikon der Palaiologenzeit*.¹⁷

Another of the possibilities offered by the internet is the creation of databases, of which there are now many, among them the Dumbarton Oaks Hagiography Database, the oldest

⁷ See <http://library.princeton.edu/byzantine/manuscript-title-list>.

⁸ See British Library (<http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/Default.aspx>) and Greek manuscripts in Sweden (<http://www.manuscripta.se>).

⁹ See <http://adw-goe.de/forschung/forschungsprojekte-akademienprogramm/septuaginta-unternehmen>.

¹⁰ See <http://csntm.org/About/WhoWeAre/Digitizing>.

¹¹ See e.g. the recent descriptions of manuscripts in Italy: <http://www.nuovabibliotecamanoscritta.it/MaGI/index.html>, catalogues of manuscripts in Germany and Austria: <http://www.manuscripta-mediaevalia.de/hs/kataloge-online.htm>, manuscripts of Aristotle: <http://www.teuchos.uni-hamburg.de>. See also The Diktyon. Digital network page for Greek manuscripts (<http://www.diktyon.org/en/>).

¹² See <http://pinakes.irht.cnrs.fr>.

¹³ See <http://stephanus.tlg.uci.edu/canon.php>, and <http://stephanus.tlg.uci.edu/lexica.php>.

¹⁴ <http://www.pbe.kcl.ac.uk>, ed. J. Martindale.

¹⁵ <http://blog.pbw.cch.kcl.ac.uk>, ed. M. Jeffreys.

¹⁶ http://telota.bbaw.de/pmbz/index_engl.html, ed. R.-J. Lilie.

¹⁷ E. Trapp et al., *Prosopographisches Lexikon der Palaiologenzeit*, Vienna, 1976–1996, and temporarily online <http://www-old.lit.auth.gr/plp/>.

of them all, originally released in 1998,¹⁸ and the Database of Byzantine Book Epigrams, which was created by a team at the University of Ghent headed by Kristoffel Demoen.¹⁹ The new web-pages constantly being created include sites on subjects relating to Byzantine studies,²⁰ bibliographies on Byzantine writers²¹ or various topics,²² and translations of Byzantine texts,²³ many of which are systematically updated. To these must be added the many related reference works that exist online (some free, some requiring a subscription or payment of a user fee) and are of immense help to both students and research scholars.²⁴

These are just a few examples of the rapid and on-going transformation of Byzantine studies that the internet has brought about in the past few years.

* * *

The change in cultural trends has of course affected both the subject matter and the methodology of Byzantine studies, especially in the field of Byzantine philology. The study of Byzantine epistolography is no longer limited, as it used to be, to the content of the letters, their references to the activities of the writer or to realia. The re-functionalisation of letters that is the domain of the Medievalists has become a focus for those who study Byzantine letters.²⁵ Text is one element of communication, which also includes oral messages and gifts.

¹⁸ <http://www.doaks.org/research/byzantine/resources/hagiography-database>.

¹⁹ <http://www.dbbe.ugent.be>. The supplements to the very important I. Vassis collection, *Initia carminum byzantinorum. Supplementa byzantina* (Texte und Untersuchungen, 8), Berlin – New York, 2005, which include more than 1500 new epigrams, are now available in electronic form. See I. Vassis, *Initia carminum byzantinorum: Supplementum I*, in *Parekbolai*, 1 (2011), p. 187–285, <http://ejournals.lib.auth.gr/parekbolai/article/view/317/290>.

²⁰ See e.g. Byzantium: Byzantine Studies on the Internet (<http://legacy.fordham.edu/halsall/byzantium/>).

²¹ See e.g. the bibliography on Michael Psellus: https://www.academia.edu/9056341/Psellos_Bibliography_2000-2015_10_12_15_.

²² See e.g. the bibliography on Greek Palaeography: https://www.academia.edu/14070939/Papaioannou_Greek_Palaeography_and_Byzantine_Book_Culture_A_Bibliographical_Essay_Version_3_Updated_and_Revised_June_2015_along_with_Descriptions_of_Minuscule_Hands.

²³ See <http://library.princeton.edu/byzantine/>.

²⁴ See e.g. *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium* (<http://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/acref/9780195046526.001.0001/acref-9780195046526>), *Biographisch-Bibliographisches Kirchenlexikon* (<http://www.bkk1.de>).

²⁵ See e.g. W. Ysebaert, *Medieval Letters and Letter Collections as Historical Sources: Methodological Questions and Reflections and Research Perspectives (6th–14th centuries)*, in *Studi medievali*, 50 (2009), p. 41–73; A. Riehle, *Rhetorik, Ritual und Repräsentation. Zur Briefliteratur gebildeter Eliten im spätbyzantinischen Konstantinopel (1261–1328)*, in K. Beyer, M. Grünbart (ed.), *Urbanitas und asteiotes. Kulturelle Ausdrucksformen von Status (10.–15. Jahrhundert)* (Frühmittelalterliche Studien, 45), Münster, 2011, p. 259–276.

How a letter is delivered, the letter as physical object and the gifts accompanying the letter are all elements that are increasingly of interest to the scholar. Byzantine letters are also studied with the objective of investigating and tracing the social networks of the period.

The subject of networks (social networks, networks of learning) has also opened new research perspectives in the field of Byzantine literature, not confined to letters but extending to other texts as well.²⁶

More than the bare facts of an author's life, it is the self-presentation of the writer's personality as it emerges from his writings (rhetorical, historical, poetical, as well as letters),²⁷ his education and the influences on his work that are of interest to modern research. Gender studies, too, which have been a field of research in other sciences, have had a considerable impact on textual research possibilities in the field of Byzantine studies.²⁸

Two further recent trends may be identified, which are associated with corresponding trends in other fields. One is studies relating to performance, as this appears in various kinds of texts (letters, speeches, hagiography, history, etc.),²⁹ and the other is studies examining the relation between word and image in prose or poetry.³⁰

Also apparent is the influence of narrative theory, which is used in other literatures, and the investigation of different narrative techniques identified in narrative texts, including

²⁶ See e.g. A. Riehle, *Epistolography, Social Exchange and Intellectual Discourse (1261–1453)*, in S. Kotzabassi (ed.), *A Companion to the Intellectual Life in the Palaeologan Period* (forthcoming), and S. Steckel, *Networks of Learning in Byzantine East and Latin West: Methodological Considerations and Starting Points of Further Work*, in S. Steckel, N. Gaul, M. Grünbart (ed.), *Networks of Learning. Perspectives on Scholars in Byzantine East and Latin West, c. 1000–1200* (Byzantinische Studien und Texte), Zürich – Münster, 2014, p. 185–233.

²⁷ See e.g. S. Papaioannou, *Michael Psellos. Rhetoric and Authorship in Byzantium*, Cambridge, 2013 and D. Krueger, *Authorial Voice and Self-Presentation in a 9th-Century Hymn on the Prodigal Son*, in A. Pizzone (ed.), *The Author in Middle Byzantine Literature. Modes, Functions, and Identities* (BA, 28), Boston – Berlin, 2014, p. 105–118.

²⁸ See e.g. Bibliography on Gender in Byzantium, http://www.doaks.org/research/byzantine/resources/bibliography-on-gender-in-byzantium#c2=all&b_start=0; L. M. Peltomaa, *Gender and Byzantine Studies from the Viewpoint of Methodology*, in *Anzeiger der philosophisch-historischen Klasse*, 140 (2005), p. 23–44; Gender Project of AHRB Centre for Byzantine Cultural History (<http://www.byzantine-ahrb-centre.ac.uk/Projects/Gender.htm>), and B. Neil, L. Garland (ed.), *Questions of Gender in Byzantine Society*, Ashgate, 2013.

²⁹ See e.g. F. Kolovou, *Ceremonies and Performances of Byzantine Friendship: Gift-Giving Between High-Level Rhetoric and Everyday Criticism*, in S. Steckel, N. Gaul, M. Grünbart (ed.), *Networks of Learning. Perspectives on Scholars in Byzantine East and Latin West, c. 1000–1200* (Byzantinische Studien und Texte), Zürich – Münster, 2014, p. 57–66.

³⁰ See e.g. I. Nielson, *Narrating Images in Byzantine Literature: The Ekphrasis of Konstantinos Manasses*, in *JÖB*, 55 (2005), p. 121–146, and M. Loukaki, *Ekphrasis Earos, Le topos de la venue du printemps ches des auteurs byzantins*, in *Parekbolai*, 3 (2013), p. 77–106.

histories, hagiographies, novels, learned and popular discourse, and comparison of them with those used in other Western and Eastern mediaeval texts.³¹

Finally, the linguistic study of Byzantine texts has in recent years been influenced by sociolinguistics, as a tool for understanding Byzantine society, particularly in its last centuries.³²

These new trends open new research perspectives, facilitate research for those unfamiliar with the mediaeval Greek of the original texts, and may perhaps make Byzantine studies more interesting and accessible to a wider audience than that of Byzantine scholars.

These new trends must not, of course, distract scholars from other research desiderata, some of which have been delayed for many decades: these include critical editions of many Byzantine texts for which we have only old editions or that have never been edited or that remain unknown in manuscripts, and systematic studies of the language and grammar of Byzantine texts based on new editions. These editions and studies will contribute materially to our fuller knowledge and a more detailed picture of Byzantium, the Byzantines and their society, and will foster contact with the original language of the texts, which is indispensable for the long-term survival of Byzantine studies.

³¹ See e.g. E. C. Bourbouhakis, I. Nilsson, *Byzantine Narrative: the Form of Storytelling in Byzantium*, in L. James (ed.), *A Companion to Byzantium*, Oxford, 2010, and P. Roilos (ed.), *Medieval Greek Storytelling. Fictionality and Narrative in Byzantium* (Mainzer Veröffentlichungen zur Byzantinistik, 12), Wiesbaden, 2014.

³² See e.g. https://www.academia.edu/3658070/Approaches_to_Late_Byzantine_Historiography_Between_Philology_and_Sociolinguistics._June_20_2013._Austrian_Academy_of_Sciences_-_Vienna, and <http://www.oeaw.ac.at/imafo/die-abteilungen/byzanzforschung/language-cultural-heritage/lexikographie-soziolinguistik/>.

Histoire de l'art et archéologie dans les études byzantines: bilans et perspectives

Jean-Michel Spieser

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Un observateur étranger au monde académique, qui suivrait l'actualité de ce qui est présenté au grand public dans le domaine artistique, dira qu'on n'a jamais autant parlé de Byzance. Il est vrai que les expositions avec le monde byzantin comme objet principal se sont multipliées depuis environ vingt-cinq ans. L'importante exposition de Paris de 1992 est la première d'une série qui se prolonge jusqu'à aujourd'hui. Il en va de même tant pour les livres à destination d'un large public que pour les manuels alors qu'un étudiant français qui voulait s'intéresser à l'art byzantin au milieu des années soixante était d'abord orienté vers le manuel de Charles Diehl avec ses photographies assez tristes. La situation universitaire incite moins à l'optimisme: nous avons tous entendu parler de suppressions de postes, de coupes budgétaires, de baisse de niveau des étudiants, plaintes qui ne sont pas propre aux seuls byzantinistes.

N'oublions néanmoins pas, pour tempérer notre pessimisme, que, si on considère les cinquante dernières années, les difficultés actuelles ont été précédées d'une large période d'expansion où les universités ont connu, presque partout, une spectaculaire augmentation du nombre de leurs postes, dont ont aussi profité les études d'archéologie et d'histoire de l'art dans le monde byzantin, entendu au sens large du mot, aussi bien la période appelée, suivant les circonstances, paléochrétienne ou antiquité tardive que la Byzance médiévale. Il reste qu'il ne faut pas sous-estimer la crise actuelle et qu'il nous appartient de défendre l'acquis.

Ce développement a entraîné un accroissement des publications qui n'ont jamais été aussi nombreuses, oserais-je dire parfois trop nombreuses. Paul Lemerle, dans son séminaire, disait qu'il ne s'agit pas d'écrire de nombreux, mais d'excellents articles. Mais la manière dont les carrières se construisent me semble pousser, même forcer, nos jeunes collègues à écrire vite de nombreux articles. Il convient de les aider à éviter ce piège.

Je voudrais surtout insister sur quelques ruptures qui ont marqué ces dernières décennies. Avant tout, le discours qui faisait considérer Byzance comme une sorte d'appendice plus ou moins intéressant du monde antique a pratiquement disparu du monde académique et même du public cultivé. Le Bas-Empire a cessé d'être décadent et s'appelle maintenant Antiquité Tardive. En même temps, l'histoire de l'art (et l'archéologie était encore proche de celle-ci) cessait d'être une discipline qui s'occupait uniquement de l'évolution des formes, mais était mise en rapport avec une évolution historique plus générale.

Donc, une première constatation: le développement, dans les dernières décennies, des études byzantines, mais en particulier de ce qui concerne l'archéologie et l'histoire de l'art, est largement positif.

D'abord l'**archéologie**. Ne pouvant ici être exhaustif, j'insisterai sur quelques aspects qui relèvent d'un changement de regard et de paradigme.

Les réflexions sur l'évolution des villes dans l'antiquité tardive se sont développées et enrichies, aidées par l'apport de l'archéologie, par l'utilisation conjointe des sources historiques et archéologiques, mais aussi à travers de nouvelles interrogations. Longtemps, le débat se réduisait à savoir s'il y avait eu décadence ou développement; il semblait concerner essentiellement des historiens, opposant A. Kazhdan et G. Ostrogorsky, et s'appuyer surtout sur ce qui était connu des monnaies byzantines. Mais la numismatique elle-même s'est transformée. Les vieux catalogues de Sabatier et de Wroth ont été remplacés par ceux de C. Morrisson pour la Bibliothèque nationale de France et de Ph. Grierson, A. Bellinger et M. Hendy pour la collection de Dumbarton Oaks. Surtout, la numismatique ne se limite plus à la description des monnaies, mais cherche à comprendre leur utilisation, leur rôle dans l'économie byzantine et ce qu'elles nous apprennent sur celle-ci, comme le montrent les livres et les articles de C. Morrisson et de M. Hendy.

Les archéologues ont cessé de s'intéresser uniquement aux monuments pris en eux-mêmes. Ils cherchent à comprendre leur situation dans la ville, la durée de leur vie, ce qu'ils apprennent sur l'évolution de la ville. Cette évolution s'est faite à travers la collaboration entre archéologues et historiens. Rappelons, dans cette perspective, les deux séminaires qui ont été organisés à Paris sur le thème « Hommes et Richesses ».

Mais l'expression « sources archéologiques » cache quelques problèmes. Dans les bibliographies, les publications archéologiques figurent au milieu de ce qui est généralement appelé « sources secondaires » ou « bibliographie » par rapport à des « sources » qui sont des sources textuelles. Pourtant la publication d'un monument devrait être considérée comme la mise au point d'un texte, qui, s'il est bien établi, servira de source à d'autres conclusions. Mais ces « textes établis » sont encore rares, trop rares. Combien de basiliques paléochrétiennes, pour ne pas parler des églises byzantines, ont été publiées avec toute la précision nécessaire, avec des relevés de l'ensemble et des détails? Pour combien de ces monuments, des fouilles ou des sondages complémentaires, si les fouilles ont été faites à époque ancienne, ont-ils permis d'en éclairer l'histoire, de voir s'il y a plusieurs états ou, dans le meilleur des cas, de proposer une chronologie qui ne soit pas fondée seulement sur la typologie des chapiteaux? Il serait facile d'en citer quelques exemples réussis, mais c'est peu par rapport à celles qui existent et trop peu pour éclairer quelques problèmes. Pourtant l'architecture monumentale dispose de nouveaux moyens qui permettent des relevés plus rapides et, aussi, de remarquables restitutions en 3D.

L'archéologie paléochrétienne et byzantine, participant à une évolution profonde de l'archéologie, a pris de nouvelles orientations, d'abord apparues dans l'archéologie préhistorique et de l'archéologie du Moyen âge occidental, mais elle a dû et su s'adapter à des conditions de travail et à des contextes différents. Des fouilles sont menées pour dégager non seulement les principaux monuments, mais aussi les quartiers d'habitat, lorsque les

conditions de terrain le permettent. Parmi les villes, les ports et leurs installations suscitent un intérêt particulier; comment ne pas mentionner les extraordinaires découvertes du port de Constantinople, avec une série spectaculaire de vestiges de bateaux?

Cette archéologie ne se limite plus aux villes, mais se déplace vers les villages, dans la voie ouverte par G. Tchalenko, même si les conditions du terrain entraînaient en Syrie des approches différentes. Un volume issu de plusieurs sessions au congrès de Paris en 2001 a montré que les villages sont maintenant étudiés dans toute l'étendue de l'empire byzantin.

Aussi bien fouilles de villes que de villages profitent de nouvelles interrogations sur les structures de la vie quotidienne: l'archéobiologie donne des informations sur la santé et l'alimentation; elle est complétée par l'archéozoologie. L'intérêt porté aux installations agricoles, aux pressoirs, aux ateliers permet de parler d'une archéologie de la production tandis qu'une archéologie du commerce se développe à partir des connaissances qui s'accumulent sur des matériaux bruts comme sur des produits manufacturés (céramique, marbre, verre...), en partie grâce à l'utilisation de techniques d'analyses qui viennent des sciences de la matière.

Cette constatation en entraîne une autre: à côté de l'archéologie paléochrétienne ou de l'antiquité tardive qui s'était développée dans le sillage de l'archéologie classique, il existe maintenant une archéologie byzantine, disons, pour éviter toutes les ambiguïtés liées au vocabulaire, une archéologie de Byzance au Moyen Âge. Les fouilles des villages qui viennent d'être mentionnées en sont une indication, comme la fouille de centres urbains. Citons les fouilles en cours d'Amorium, mais aussi la publication de l'agglomération byzantine de Pergame. L'habitat modeste de la campagne et des petites villes commence à être connu. C'est l'habitat médiéval des milieux aisés qui échappe encore à l'attention, alors que les *domus* et *villae* de l'antiquité tardive de la tradition romaine, sont bien connues et que des avancées récentes ont été faites sur le passage dès le VI^e siècle à une nouvelle forme d'habitat.

D'autres problématiques sont apparues, comme le ravitaillement en eau des villes. De magistrales études ont été faites pour Constantinople. Un travail du même genre serait certainement possible pour Thessalonique. Enfin, une véritable archéologie du paysage s'est développée- En lien avec l'intérêt pour les villages, elle cherche à comprendre la répartition des sites, des agglomérations dans l'espace. Des prospections, extensives ou intensives, suivant l'étendue du territoire à explorer, donnent des résultats importants, mis en valeur par de récentes applications informatiques (GIS). Elles sont d'autant plus intéressantes qu'elles se font en collaboration avec les historiens, sinon à l'initiative d'historiens, comme les recherches de Jacques Lefort en Bithynie ou celles de John Haldon à Euchaita dans le Pont.

Ce passage d'une archéologie orientée vers le monument à une archéologie plus complète a favorisé le développement des études sur la céramique. Faut-il rappeler l'énorme essor de l'étude de la Late Antique Ware due aux travaux de J. W. Hayes? L'intérêt pour la céramique byzantine s'est développé plus tard, mais le progrès des connaissances est évident. Dans les congrès internationaux dédiés à la céramique médiévale, elle a désormais sa place. Un signe en est que l'un d'entre eux a été organisé à Thessalonique.

L'**histoire de l'art** a vécu une évolution parallèle. L'intérêt porté maintenant aux églises de village décorées de modestes peintures l'indique. Comme pour l'archéologie,

une transformation du champ de l'histoire de l'art a permis cette évolution. La vie des formes, l'approche de la chronologie par les chefs d'œuvre ou une approche essentiellement chronologique de l'évolution des styles et de l'iconographie ne sont plus les seuls thèmes de recherche. Il n'y pas lieu ici de faire la chronologie de cette transformation ou d'en signaler acteurs et précurseurs, mais il me semble que l'histoire de l'art byzantin est bien présente dans cette évolution.

Parallèlement aux centres d'intérêts des historiens de l'art du Moyen Âge occidental, la réflexion sur ce qu'est une image, sur ce que les Byzantins pensaient de la nature de l'image, a suscité de nombreuses études. De manière assez attendue, la question de l'iconoclasme revient dans ce débat, puisque c'est un moment central dans le développement des réflexions sur l'image à Byzance. L'iconoclasme, en tant que tel, continue à être un sujet largement débattu: quelle est sa véritable importance? L'image en est-elle le réel enjeu ou quels autres enjeux se cachent-ils derrière cette lutte à propos des images?

Les images ont aussi été replacées dans leur contexte à travers la question des programmes. Des nuances importantes ont été introduites dans les conclusions pionnières d'O. Demus. On a mis en évidence les variantes liées à l'architecture, le rôle des donateurs, la souplesse des programmes. L'évolution de la liturgie, celle de la perception de l'espace sacré, la séparation de plus en plus nette entre sanctuaire et espace des fidèles sont des facteurs dont l'analyse tient désormais compte. Le décor peint n'est pas le seul élément qui fait naître la sensation du sacré. D'autres aspects de la perception entrent en jeu, son, parfum, lumière. Ces différents facteurs, créateurs d'un espace sacré, ont été réunis sous le terme d'*hiérotopie* par Alexis Lidov.

Les images et leur cadre ne sont jamais seuls. Leur réception par ceux qui les commandent ou les regardent n'est plus oubliée. On ne saurait trop se réjouir de la publication récente des épigrammes inscrites sur des icônes ou d'autres objets transmis par la tradition littéraire, comme de celles qui se trouvent sur des objets conservés et sur des monuments. Ce qui est en jeu, c'est une compréhension des rapports entre les hommes et les images et œuvres, qu'ils en soient producteurs ou récepteurs.

Encore faut-il éviter de faire l'erreur que les historiens d'art reprochent parfois aux historiens, une utilisation un peu rapide ou simpliste des images considérées comme de simples illustrations et, donc, ne pas penser que le bon sens quotidien suffit pour donner une interprétation sociologique ou anthropologique des images. Des connaissances sont nécessaires; il ne m'appartient pas d'indiquer mes préférences personnelles, mais veillons ni à utiliser des théories vieilles, qui ont été suffisamment à la mode dans le demi siècle précédent pour paraître aller de soi, ni à nécessairement adopter toutes les tendances à la mode.

À côté de ce souci qui introduit des préoccupations sociologique ou anthropologique dans l'interprétation des monuments et des objets, une réflexion sur leur matérialité, leur fabrication plus ou moins difficile, les conditions concrètes des échanges, des contacts, s'est développée. Les réflexions d'A. Cutler sur l'artisanat de l'ivoire en sont un bel exemple;

des considérations analogues sur les sarcophages et sur la sculpture de l'antiquité tardive promettent aussi d'être fructueuses. Pour expliquer comment une technique, une iconographie sont passées d'une région, d'une culture à une autre, la notion d'influence tend heureusement à être remplacée par des explications sur les modalités concrètes de contacts et par une réflexion sur les conditions qui ont permis ces emprunts.

Une approche concrète s'impose d'autant plus qu'il me paraît nécessaire d'essayer d'interpréter les monuments byzantins en fonction des idées et des approches qui se développent dans d'autres domaines des sciences humaines, sinon de contribuer à ce développement. Mais ces réflexions, quel que soit leur niveau d'abstraction ou de généralisation, doivent partir de bases solides et concrètes. Je comprends sans réticence l'intérêt à développer des réflexions très personnelles ou liées à des approches éloignées des contraintes historiques. Elles peuvent être fécondes à plus d'un titre, mais il serait regrettable que, dans le monde académique en particulier, ces réflexions, au lieu de la compléter, se substituent à une approche où la prise en compte de l'histoire doit jouer un rôle essentiel. On aura compris que, pour moi, dans l'expression consacrée « histoire de l'art », le mot « histoire » est aussi important que le mot « art », ce qui est loin de vouloir dire que la datation des monuments doit être le seul but des recherches.

Il faut donc, comme je l'ai rappelé plus haut pour l'archéologie, partir d'une documentation de base solidement établie. Est-il besoin de rappeler qu'il y a encore beaucoup à faire, que bien des églises, des monuments, des manuscrits pour ne pas parler d'objets séparés de leur contexte, ne sont guère connus de manière précise et sûre? Les circonstances, il est vrai, ne sont pas favorables, les crédits manquent, une connaissance approfondie d'un monument suppose le financement de plusieurs personnes. Pour les monuments tant soit peu importants ou complexes, une collaboration entre architectes, archéologues et historiens de l'art serait plus qu'utile. Certes quelques livres récents et importants font le point sur l'architecture de différentes régions du monde byzantin, pour l'Épire, un livre ancien de quelques années déjà de P. Vokotopoulos, plus récemment deux livres sur l'architecture en Grèce de Ch. Bouras, très récemment un important volume sur les Balkans de S. Ćurčić. Mais, à côté de ces avancées, peu d'églises de Constantinople ou de Thessalonique ont reçu une publication architecturale véritablement définitive. Un seul livre, jusqu'à présent, a abordé de manière approfondie les questions de matériaux, de techniques de construction, de mise en œuvre d'un projet.

Pour les images, des études d'iconographie et de style restent nécessaires. Je voudrais néanmoins appeler à de larges changements dans l'établissement de cette indispensable documentation de base. Il ne me paraît pas utile de refaire l'évolution de l'iconographie de chaque scène dans chaque église publiée. C'est malheureusement un exercice académique obligé, car ces publications sont souvent l'occasion d'une thèse. Ne faudrait-il pas envisager deux niveaux de publication? À côté de celles que je viens d'évoquer, il me paraît nécessaire que soient encouragées, autorisées des publications qu'on pourrait appeler « light ». Elles fourniraient une documentation brute, mettant à la disposition des chercheurs des ensembles

d'images permettant d'avancer dans la réflexion. Je tiens à citer le considérable travail qui a été fait pour les peintures de la Serbie médiévale sur le site <http://www.srpskoblogo.org/Archives/>. De telles données n'oblitéreraient pas les droits de ceux qui les ont pour la publication d'un monument: une publication systématique ne serait pas possible sans revenir sur le monument et sans obtenir les usuelles autorisations, mais un élan nouveau serait donné à la compréhension de problèmes iconographiques, à une vue plus précise sur l'évolution des programmes qui, encore aujourd'hui, repose pour une large part sur la connaissance de quelques monuments phares.

Il ne faut pas se tromper: l'approche et l'étude des monuments et objets byzantins est difficile. Nous parlons à des étudiants qui n'ont aucune notion de la culture et de l'histoire du monde dont nous leur montrons quelques images. Rares sont les universités où ils peuvent suivre à la fois une initiation à l'art byzantin, une initiation à l'histoire byzantine sans parler même du grec byzantin. Peut-on, dans les structures académiques actuelles dans la plupart des pays d'Europe, se former à la fois comme archéologue ou historien de l'art au courant des techniques et des approches actuelles et comme byzantiniste, ce qui inclut, évidemment – j'insiste sur le mot « évidemment » – la connaissance du grec? La rigidité des cursus universitaires, en particulier dans la plupart des pays d'Europe occidentale qui ont signé la funeste convention dite de Bologne, est un facteur de cette situation. C'est très souvent la connaissance du grec qui est le plus oubliée dans ces conditions, même si la multiplication d'écoles d'été pour initier au grec byzantin vont dans la bonne direction. Pour l'avenir des études byzantines de qualité, qui, aujourd'hui paraissent en bonne santé, c'est certainement un point crucial auquel il conviendra de prêter attention. Notre avenir dépend aussi de la qualité de la formation.

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Byzantine Studies in North America: Position and Perspectives

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Writing these few pages has cost me considerable fretting. I accepted the task of speaking here in Belgrade out of the deep respect and ambition that I cherish for Byzantine studies. The respect comes along with admiration for the daunting demands that the field imposes on its practitioners, whether they specialize in history, art history, philology, or other disciplines. The ambition reflects my position as director of a research facility that I aspire to make the world's best in its areas of concentration.

A Medieval Latinist by training, I nurture a particular affinity for Byzantine Greek philology. The language-based sectors of Byzantine studies share with Medieval Latin philology both pride in the underdeveloped vastness of their domain and a still sometimes defensive awareness that they are immature and marginal vis-à-vis classical philology. Being regarded as a second-class citizen can instill a scholar with the desire to outdo the mother field in technical competencies. This overcompensation has consequences both positive and negative. No field in the humanities maintains higher standards in the solidity of its scholarship than Byzantine studies. By the same token, both Byzantinists and Western medievalists must apply extra efforts to make their fields accessible to the broadest audiences.

From being a medievalist I realize keenly what it means to be an outsider within the sodality of Byzantinists. A plaque beside the main entrance to my institution refers to the Byzantine and medieval humanities. Although the two can and should constitute natural neighbors, their relationship was labeled long ago (by a Byzantinist) as sibling rivalry. In its early years Dumbarton Oaks had celebrities who worked both sides of the aisle with equal ease. From my perspective, the two fields have tended since those glory days to be far more aloof than would be ideal.

Lately Western medievalists have reached out to Byzantinists, at least in the New World. As confirmation, consider the well-deserved election of Alice-Mary Talbot to the presidency of the Medieval Academy of America. It is impossible to conceive of full reciprocity: imagine a medievalist voted in as president of the International Association of Byzantine Studies.

The damage that was inflicted upon Byzantium in 1204 by the Fourth Crusade distracts from the deeper injustice that has been perpetrated upon the field for centuries in Western historiography. I refer to the misnomer 'Byzantine'. That said, the nomenclature will not be reformulated and replaced any time soon. Asians exist in the billions to object to the words

Orient and Oriental and to combat the presuppositions and prejudices that pass under the name of Orientalism. Alas, no Eastern Romans have lived to advocate against Byzantine and related terms. Greeks, Turks, and Orthodox all have different reasons to feel ambivalent about the past before 1453 and to shy away from major redefinitions.

Setting aside the rightness or wrongness of the designation Byzantium and its various derivatives, how should Byzantine studies be defined? Consensus is lacking on what constitutes Byzantine. Since its inception, Byzantine studies has traced the ups and downs of a sine wave between, on the one hand, strict and narrow self-conceptions and, on the other, more expansive ones. The systole and diastole have consequences both chronological and geographical.

When does or should Byzantine studies begin and end? At the starting line looms the question of Constantine or, to put the matter differently, the relationship of late antiquity to Byzantine. Once again, to me as a Medieval Latinist the situation looks familiar, since my peers are often expected to cover Late Latin. Does the shared condition of the coincidence between Greco-Roman culture and Christianity trump the difference between one phase of culture in which a classical language remained more or less a mother tongue and another in which it was a father tongue, acquired only through formal schooling? As most would admit with good grace, Peter Brown almost singlehandedly put late antiquity on the map. Some classics departments have embraced the period and others will do so eventually. Yet the bear hug will not and cannot be universal. By and large ancient Greece and Rome have been defined by the exclusion of Christianity. As a result, Byzantine studies should feel free to grab late antiquity and hold onto it when the opportunities permit. The formal Christianization of the empire coincided closely with the establishment of Constantinople. What more reason could be needed?

At the other end of the timeline stands 1453. Should the portcullis crash down on Byzantine studies when the gates to Byzantium were breached forevermore by invaders, or should the notion of gradualism be embraced, from Byzantine to Ottoman, from Constantinople to Renaissance Italy, from manuscript to printed book, and so forth? To complicate and enlarge still further, I favor paying attention to not only survivals but also revivals of Byzantine culture. We need all the ways we can devise to show the interweaving of pre-modern cultures with those that have succeeded, down to and including our own.

If chronology raises challenges, the same holds all the truer for geography. Once again, competing views contend with each other. We could talk about a greater and lesser or a big and little Byzantium. More trendily, we could frame the issue in terms of center and periphery or Greek- and non-Greek-speaking. In either case, the topic has to it a chicken-and-egg dimension. By personal inclination some people are drawn to the complex solidity of an embattled and walled-in empire, others to the multiplicity of cultural encounters that run along, inside, and outside shifting frontiers. In turn, their characters as researchers will be corroborated as they concentrate upon either the omphalos or the outlying limbs.

In my belief, Byzantine studies must take advantage of valid opportunities for both chronological and geographical breadth. Were we meeting in a different location, I could dare to designate the tolls of self-segregation and specialization as 'balkanization'. To pivot to geography, a new or renewed excitement is palpable about recalibrating the relationship between Constantinople and everywhere else that the Eastern Roman empire touched with its culture. Accepting this enlargement offers all sorts of opportunities. The Balkans, Italy, North Africa – the list could go on and on. To take only one of many examples, the weird and wonderful Wild Wild East of Syriac has sparked interest as never before.

Beyond Syriac, the intellectual allures of Islam and the East pull more irresistibly than ever. The ties of Byzantium to the Silk Road could afford opportunities to connect Byzantine studies meaningfully with locations as remote as East Asia. The potential for engagement must not be ignored, but it will require massive efforts to communicate with such culturally diverse audiences. Please note the deliberate choice of the preposition *with* instead of *to*: the gains will be huge if Byzantinists can open both minds and hearts in seeking not only to teach but also to learn, particularly in framing big new questions and answers, as they engage with East Asia.

No matter how much we may endeavor to attain the objectivity of science in our investigations, the geopolitics of the present have ineluctable consequences upon the examination of the past. For four decades after the launch of Sputnik, the satellites that enabled us to view the earth from a high altitude clustered over the North Atlantic. Scholarship was supported to achieve aims consonant with the rivalries – military, economic, political, and cultural – between two sides, NATO and the Soviet Union, the United States and Russia. Greece and Turkey mattered as border zones.

The heart of the long-gone Byzantine empire retains importance, but what the present-day nation states of Turkey and Greece flank has changed. The new millennium seems sometimes to wrestle with issues that have languished unresolved since the Umayyad caliphate. A chief challenge facing the field of Byzantine studies will be to benefit wisely and strategically from the latest wave of orientalism to lap over Western culture. Students are eager to study Islam and to deepen their understanding of conflicts between it and other religions, perhaps particularly Christianity. Hawks put the accent on the clash of civilizations, doves on the feel-good concept of *convivencia*. Both perspectives have truth to them, just as do the realities of what befell both Asia Minor in 1453 and the Iberian Peninsula in 1492.

What could be the downsides if Byzantine studies capitalizes upon the fascination with Islam? One is running a constant danger of anachronism. Whereas earlier in my career all too many imposed nationalism unconsciously and anachronistically upon the past, nowadays we force post-nationalism anachronistically upon it. The pre-national world of empires such as Byzantium anticipates only faintly the work-in-progress of globalization and post-nationalism.

Another major peril is linguistic. The hegemony of what could be styled the Anglosphere has coincided with the spread of the web and globalization. Byzantine studies will be undermined and even destroyed if knowledge of Greek diminishes or even disappears. The still inchoate field of Mediterranean studies does not have to be the mortal enemy of

Byzantine studies, but it will be if it legitimates professors without Greek teaching courses in translation.

Let me stress that translation is not *per se* the problem. Modern-language versions of Byzantine texts not only offer the first line of commentary and interpretation but also provide the best means of seducing students and scholars into recognizing the attractions of the field. As all of you know far better than I, Byzantine studies has to overcome a popular prejudice that 'Byzantine' pertains to what is not straightforward and clear. Accordingly, it must be all the more on constant guard against any tendency to view accessibility to non-professionals as a sign of weakness or capitulation. It is a false dichotomy to posit a friction between making Byzantine studies more accessible to a general audience and maintaining high standards of scholarliness.

Sometimes I encounter what is almost a presumption that a field which is not dying cannot be serious. Corollaries to this view are the convictions 'It is better not to be understood than to be approximate' and 'If a lay person can understand me, I am not learned'. A person who is unintelligible by choice has no right to complain of being misunderstood. If we must choose between slight imprecision and total incomprehensibility, I vote for imprecision. That is the choice we make whenever we use language. Not to translate for those who do not know a language or not to explain for those who do not know a word is not a victory for erudition. It is a triumph for unintelligibility and pedantry.

In my view, academics must be able to set their work within the larger context of contemporary life, to know how it fits with general social, political, and economic trends, and to be capable of explaining its significance positively and passionately. Over the past few years I have sensed such positive passion in younger exponents of the profession. Likewise, I have been struck by what I would call their strong eclecticism. Without straining to make a special effort, many of them pursue inherently interdisciplinary work, so much so that an outsider might have difficulty in attaching a single disciplinary label to it – along the lines of 'this person's in literature, this person's in history, this person's in liturgy' – because they move fluidly and unselfconsciously across disciplines. This state of affairs indicates that an already vigorous field is strengthening.

While simultaneously retaining a focused self-definition, Byzantinists have expanded their optics to encompass areas and approaches that would have hitherto lain beyond the pale. You seek to embrace more, geographically and culturally. You pay ever more attention to adjacent cultures, such as Islam, and likewise to other languages beyond Greek. You make forays into different disciplines. So long as standards in the specific disciplines are upheld, and people help each other, these developments can lead to fruitful results that may well be more approachable and appealing to a broader public.

Right now digital humanities are chic. We make great fanfare over everything digital. Within at most ten years the special emphasis on digital humanities will evaporate, since digital access and analysis will have been incorporated into the basic operations of all the humanities. The use and production of digital content will take countless forms, no one

will be expected to cover them all, but everyone will need to use some of them routinely. Innovation in the collection, organization, analysis, presentation, and dissemination of data will be non-stop. Explosive advances will be achieved in the visual presentation of data, which will accompany ongoing innovations in how information is searched, collected, analyzed, and communicated. Computer-assisted research and writing will arrive sooner than we think. In most cases these changes will not displace but amplify traditional methods of research. On the contrary, tradition and innovation will go hand in hand.

The great uncertainties are how to distribute and preserve the results of basic scholarship. Who will handle outreach, by communicating advanced findings to a broad public, and inreach, by doing the same within universities to large audiences of undergraduates, colleagues, and administrators? What will go into books, what will circulate on the web, and what relative weight will be assigned to the two in promotion assessments? How will individual monographic research survive when the paradigm has shifted toward collaborative projects on the model of the sciences? Right now we have more and more edited volumes, handbooks, and companions. Monographs too have proliferated, but are sometimes hopelessly narrow, difficult to access, and little read. We need both forms, since the group projects are like films, while the others resemble single-author novels. In the novels, we need individual work that is both bold and solid. The pressure to secure tenure-track positions and to advance in careers continues to force short-term over long-term.

Please take those last few sentences as an expression of concern and interest rather than of negativism. In fact, many developments make me feel strongly positive about the directions in which Byzantine studies have been evolving. In general, I harbor profound optimism about the prospects for the future. Byzantine studies holds immense attractions and has few natural enemies, with the major exception of general anti-humanistic philistinism. Its only internal weakness relates to its own strength: it must not allow precisianarianism to trump intelligibility, exactitude to override clarity. So long as Byzantinists have the determination to reach out and engage, the field will occupy ever more securely the place it has long deserved within the humanities and social sciences.

Byzantine Scholarship in Australia in the New Millennium

Bronwen Neil

Australian Catholic University

The following presentation addresses how globalization has affected the research agenda and research methods in Byzantine Studies in Australia over the past decade.¹ I seek to highlight the opportunities and challenges for Byzantinists posed by the internet revolution in the Australian academic environment. I also look at the impact of larger cultural trends on Byzantine studies in Australia, especially the increasingly limited opportunities for government funding in the Humanities generally. As in other countries, our scholarship is affected by changes in emphasis and methodology in the historical sciences in general, and in Byzantine and medieval studies in particular. These considerations will lead to a more accurate and nuanced understanding of the opportunities and challenges that our field faces in the new millennium.

Opportunities and challenges afforded by the internet revolution

The field of Byzantine studies has been vastly assisted by the internet revolution, and recent technological advances in the fields of information dissemination and publication. Three recent trends in the discipline reflect these advances: interdisciplinarity, e-publishing, online language teaching, the explosion of the handbook, and the growth in electronic scholarly networks.

a. Interdisciplinarity or fusion

Australian scholars in Byzantine studies increasingly endeavour to cross traditional divides, e.g. between Classics and Christian literature; archaeology and literary studies; social history and theology; Christian and early Islamic history; studies in Late Antiquity, defined as the period from the fourth to seventh centuries. Necessity has surely been the mother of invention

¹ Similar material is covered for the discipline of Patristics by B. Neil, *Patristics in Australia: Current Status and Future Potential*, in C. Harrison, B. Bitton-Ashkelony, T. de Bruyn (ed.), *Patristics in the Twenty-first Century. 50th Anniversary Conference of the International Association for Patristic Studies, Hebrew University, 25–27 June 2013, Jerusalem*, Leuven, 2015, p. 145–161.

here, as we scramble to achieve or maintain ‘critical mass’ in an increasingly uncertain economic climate. The emphasis on interdisciplinarity continues to attract collaborations with scholars of other disciplines.

b. Desktop and e-publishing

Several well-established publishing houses have joined forces with Australian universities to produce and distribute works on Byzantine Studies. Brepols co-publishes with Macquarie University the *Studia Antiqua Australiensia*.² *Byzantina Australiensia* is still going strong and has recently published its twentieth volume. A recent highlight has been the success of Ann Moffatt’s newly published English translation of *De ceremoniis* in two volumes with the Bonn text.³ The founding members of the Australian Association for Byzantine Studies (Ann Moffatt, Michael Jeffreys, Elizabeth Jeffreys, and Roger Scott) produced the first English translations of some key Byzantine sources, including John Malalas and Marcellinus *comes*. Classicist Ron Ridley, from the University of Melbourne, produced a hugely popular translation of Zosimus. Recent volumes include a translation and commentary on some of Eustathios of Thessaloniki’s *Secular Orations*.⁴ The website of the Australian Association for Byzantine Studies, set up and managed by retired librarian and webmaster Andrew Stephenson, allows us to market our publications and biennial conferences freely to a broad audience.⁵ Low overheads and low memberships, as well as affordable prices for our publications, have always been key to the Association’s success. The 18th AABS conference was held at the University of Queensland in November 2014, on the theme of *Byzantine Culture in Translation*, with international guest speaker Maria Mavroudi. The

² The first two volumes in the series appeared in 2006: a monograph by M. Choat, *Belief and Cult in Fourth-Century Papyri* (*Studia Antiqua Australiensia*, 1), Turnhout – Sydney, 2006; and an edition and translation of an account of Pope Martin I (649–653) in exile by B. Neil, *Seventh-century Popes and Martyrs: The Political Hagiography of Anastasius Bibliothecarius* (*Studia Antiqua Australiensia*, 2), Turnhout – Sydney, 2006. Five more volumes have since appeared.

³ *Constantine Porphyrogenetos, The Book of Ceremonies*, I–II, trans. and comm. A. Moffatt (*Byzantina Australiensia*, 18), Canberra, 2012.

⁴ *Eustathios of Thessaloniki, Secular Orations 1167/8 to 1179*, trans. and comm. A. Stone, with J. Melville-Jones (*Byzantina Australiensia*, 19), Brisbane, 2013. Prof. Melville-Jones, emeritus at University of Western Australia, Perth, has been recognised for his contribution over 50 years to Byzantine studies and numismatics. A full list of *Byzantina Australiensia* publications can be found at <http://www.aabs.org.au/byzaust/>.

⁵ When the newly revamped website crashed the day before our conference on *Byzantine Culture in Translation* was to begin, we felt the drawbacks of reliance on the website for communicating programme and venue details. Our webmaster was otherwise engaged in driving the 2 000 km from Melbourne to Brisbane. The occurrence of a localised mini-cyclone in the suburb of the University of Queensland, the conference venue, on the following day did not improve his mood. Changing weather patterns are also a consequence of globalisation. Fortunately only a few of our conference rooms had their windows broken by hail, and we could go ahead relatively undisturbed.

proceedings of this conference are published in the series *Byzantina Australiensia*. Derek Krueger is the keynote speaker for the 19th AABS conference in February 2017, on the theme *Dreams, Memory and Imagination in Byzantium*. Its convenor is Eva Anagnostou-Laoutides, lecturer in Hellenic Studies at Monash University in Melbourne.⁶

Studies in Byzantine theology are well served by St Andrew's Greek Orthodox Theological College. Its relatively new journal, *Phronema*, has slowly but surely raised the profile of Byzantine and patristic studies in Australia.

Relatively small publishers like Ashgate (recently taken over by publishing giant Taylor and Francis), Brepols and Brill have been able to continue to make volumes on Byzantine studies available online. A recent volume of papers given at the 16th Australian Association for Byzantine Studies (AABS) conference, along with several international contributions, was published by Ashgate as *Questions of Gender in Byzantine Culture*.⁷ The publication of Roger Scott's Variorum volume on Byzantine chronicles in 2012 was also a milestone for local Byzantinists.⁸ The uptake of e-books has been particularly avid in Australia, where the distance from North American, British, and European publishing houses means long delays and high retail prices.

c. The handbook phenomenon

The field of Byzantine studies is by no means alone in the proliferation of handbooks and companion volumes, a peculiarly Byzantinesque genre (just think of Photios' *Bibliotheca*), aimed not just at scholars in the field but also at students and the interested layperson. Two Byzantine/Orthodox theological handbooks have recently appeared under Australian editorship: *The Oxford Handbook of Maximus Confessor*⁹ and *The Wiley-Blackwell Handbook of Patristic Reception*.¹⁰ The forthcoming *Oxford Handbook of Michael Psellos* is being edited by Michael Jeffreys. The publication of these handbooks has been much enabled by the appearance of the e-book, which has the added advantage of being able to be continually updated as new secondary sources appear.

d. Online language teaching

Our research foci include the languages and literatures of early Christianity and Late Antiquity

⁶ Regular updates on the Association and its activities are posted at <http://www.aabs.org.au/conferences/>.

⁷ B. Neil, L. Garland (ed.), *Questions of Gender in Byzantine Culture*, Farnham, 2013.

⁸ R. Scott, *Byzantine Chronicles and the Sixth Century* (Variorum Collected Studies Series, 1004), Farnham, 2012.

⁹ P. Allen, B. Neil (ed.), *Oxford Handbook of Maximus Confessor*, Oxford, 2015.

¹⁰ K. Parry (ed.), *Wiley-Blackwell Handbook of Patristic Reception*, Oxford, 2015. Ken Parry is also the editor of a new Brill series, *Texts and Studies in Eastern Christianity*.

(Greek, Latin, Syriac, Coptic, Arabic, and Chinese) as well as history, theology, philosophy, art history, and Greek and Latin text editions. The teaching of Latin, patristic Greek and Syriac online allows us to run small combined classes of local and international students, even though there is no substitute for face-to-face teaching in real time. The requirement to teach for seminaries affects the curriculum and content but also allows us to keep ecclesiastical Latin and patristic Greek courses alive. Many more institutions offer *koinê* Greek as part of their biblical studies offerings but no patristic Greek. A working knowledge of Latin and/or Greek, which used to be mandatory for those wishing to undertake postgraduate studies in Byzantine studies, is increasingly difficult to insist upon as a criterion for enrolment.

Larger Cultural Trends

Australian Byzantine studies are not immune from larger cultural trends, which will determine the future success of Byzantine studies in Australia. These include decreasing government funding for research projects and international student enrolments in higher degrees, the reduction of smaller research institutes and centres and their amalgamation with larger and more general bodies, and the expansion of electronic networks.

a. Decreasing government funding for research activities in Humanities

The Australian Research Council has limited federal resources for funding research in the Humanities. The tiny proportion that is awarded to history projects favours Australian and especially Indigenous history. Religious studies are likewise not well funded. That being said, Byzantine research proposals are perhaps disproportionately successful, due to their capacity to adapt their research methods and agenda in response to globalisation.

The lack of a separate funding body for the Humanities in Australia has meant that humanities projects must compete with those in science and technology for a fairly limited pool of funding. Over the past ten years Australian scholars have received government funding for various projects: Roger Scott and John Burke received three years' funding from the Australian Research Council for their edition of the Skylitzes Codex. The other funded projects are just as much Late Antique history as Byzantine: Amelia Brown was awarded an Early Career Research Award for a history of maritime religion in ancient Greece (University of Queensland), but as a Hellenist her interests extend well into Byzantium, and she is also working on a diachronic study of ancient Corinth, through its pagan, early Christian, Byzantine and later incarnations. Caillan Davenport also received an Early Career Research Award for his study of changing perceptions of the emperor in the fourth and fifth centuries (also at the University of Queensland). Bronwen Neil has received four years of funding at professorial level for her project on *Dreams, Prophecy and Violence from 400–1000 CE*, which combines the study of patristic, Byzantine and early Islamic texts on dreams and dream interpretation. Many of these projects have involved the edition,

translation and commentaries upon Latin and Greek texts, a species of academic production that is not recognised by the Department of Training and Education as a book, unless it is accompanied by a hefty introduction demonstrating ‘original research’. Government-funding of projects on classical and Byzantine archaeology, history and religious studies has declined markedly, making the period from 1990 to mid-2000s appear in retrospect a Golden Age for the funding of ‘pure basic’ research. Our stress on an objective, non-confessional approach to the sources is partially dictated by funding constraints. Recent Australian projects, however, have increasingly been shaped according to the need to demonstrate that they meet a perceived national benefit (e.g. *Defending Australia’s Borders*; *Understanding Cultures and Communities*). These benefits include a greater understanding of inter- and intra-religious dialogue and conflict. Projects which locate Australia in its Asian cultural context are also strongly encouraged.

A leader in late antique studies and Byzantine studies is the Ancient Cultures Research Centre at Macquarie University, Sydney. Its director, Assoc. Prof. Malcolm Choat, is an internationally recognised specialist in Coptic studies, whose most recent research project focussed on literacy and scribal practices in Late Antique Egypt.¹¹ The Centre was founded by three prominent Australian Byzantinists, Prof. Edwin Judge, Emeritus; Prof. Alanna Nobbs (recently retired); and Prof. Samuel Lieu (retired in 2015). Another key researcher at the Centre is Dr. Ken Parry, current president of the Australian Association for Byzantine Studies, and a specialist in Orthodox and Byzantine studies. The Ancient Cultures Research Centre co-publishes the Brepols series *Studia Antiqua Australiensia*, which includes several volumes on patristic themes. In 2013, Prof. Samuel Lieu was the recipient of a five-year Discovery Outstanding Research Award by the Australian Research Council for his project on *Skilfully planting the trees of light: Manichaean texts in Chinese*. Prof. Lieu’s project employs several European collaborators. The Asian focus of the research was crucial, as the project description emphasizes: “Manichaeism spread rapidly and successfully along the Silk Road and arrived in China before the Tang dynasty. This project will throw light on Manichaean missionary techniques through close examination and full publication of the surviving texts in Chinese from Dunhuang and Turfan and their parallels in Middle Iranian, Old Turkish and Coptic”.¹² Incidentally, out of more than 700 projects funded by the Australian Research Council in 2013, this was one of only two projects with the self-nominated Field of Research classification ‘Religion and Religious Studies’.

Another funded Australian Research Council Discovery Project, hosted by Australian Catholic University, involves the study of letters in Greek, Syriac and Latin between Rome and Constantinople in the context of the religious controversies that plagued the

¹¹ See the project description at the website for the Ancient Cultures Research Centre, http://mq.edu.au/research/centres_and_groups/ancient_cultures_research_centre/ (accessed 31.8.15).

¹² Cited from the Australian Research Council website, http://arc.gov.au/pdf/DP13/DP13_Listing_by_all_State_Organisation.pdf (accessed 31.8.15).

seventh century.¹³ Its chief investigators, Pauline Allen and Bronwen Neil, are aided by post-doctoral fellow Leonela Fundic, who will return to work in Belgrade in 2016. Other members of Centre for Early Christian Studies are also now focussing on the study of inter- and intra-religious dialogue and conflict in the first seven centuries of Christianity – relations between Christianity and Judaism, paganism, and Islam have been the subject of their recent publications.

The three-year federal election cycle in Australia has huge repercussions for the long-term funding of any research, and the recent abolition of research fellowships for mid-career scholars has hit postdoctoral researchers very hard, in Australia as elsewhere in the world. They have been replaced by Future Fellowships, mainly intended for Australians who wish to return from overseas. From the next round, in 2016, these will be limited to applicants who do not already have academic positions.

b. International doctoral student enrolments

Closely linked to decreased research funding is the more limited federal and university funding of international scholarships for higher degree students. Higher degree fees for international students have reached prohibitive levels, and local students (Australians and New Zealanders) are now facing the same threat. This limits the pool of applicants to those with private means, or those who can guarantee to repay a hefty student loan. The pool of talent is correspondingly affected.

International doctoral scholarships have in recent years been awarded to students from Belgium, North America and eastern Europe. A joint-PhD award system with some European universities has facilitated this exchange. Recently, a Bosnian doctoral student received three years of funding from Australian Catholic University, as part of its research intensification strategy, for his thesis on the hymnography attributed to Germanos; and a student from University of Kentucky was awarded an international scholarship to complete a PhD thesis on seventh-century apocalyptic literature. This is something of a milestone for a Catholic university. There are many more expressions of interest – especially from Greece and eastern Europe as a result of the financial crisis that is gripping those countries – than there are successful candidates, unfortunately. There is also a pressing need for more postdoctoral fellowship funding, for both Australian and international students.

c. Amalgamation of research centres (silo-extermination)

The winds of institutional change are spreading a chill through the bones of Byzantinists in particular. Smaller centres, known as ‘silos’, such as the Centre for Early Christian Studies, are under pressure to join larger research institutes with a much broader focus, for instance

¹³ DP 140101909: *Negotiating Religious Conflict Between Rome and Constantinople Through Letter-Writing in the Seventh Century, An Era of Crisis.*

the Institute for Religion and Critical Inquiry at Australian Catholic University. Similar pressures are being faced by Macquarie University's Ancient Cultures Research Centre. This is now the case even at the University of Oxford, where the Oriental Institute, which houses several Byzantinists, recently successfully opposed the proposal to amalgamate its specialist library into a larger collection.

d. Expansion of electronic scholarly networks

List-serves have also helped us build and participate in international scholarly networks. Our greatest opportunity to build international networks comes from conferences; the five-yearly International Byzantine Congress, and our biennial AABS conference. The new website of the AIEB will strengthen Australia's connections with the international Byzantine community.

What does the future hold for Byzantine studies in Australia?

This is a critical period for the disciplines that come under the umbrella of Byzantine studies, not just in Australia but world-wide, with funding for the humanities generally at an all-time low due to the recent Global Financial Crisis in 2008.

An increasing degree of secularisation is inevitable, and should perhaps be embraced as broadening public interest in the Byzantine centuries, their literature, and their material culture. The focus is turning away from the narrowly theological towards the broadly historical, and especially social and cultural history. The expansion of 'Byzantine' to include studies in Late Antiquity, from the foundation of Constantinople, has helped improve its profile and appeal. We need to de-mystify and secularise our scholarly undertakings so as to reach a broader audience. Similarly, the teaching and research of Byzantine studies need to be adapted to a broader (non-Greek-speaking) audience if they are to survive into the next millennium in our universities and beyond. As mentioned above, it is increasingly limiting to insist upon a working knowledge of Greek or Latin as a criterion for enrolment in postgraduate studies in Byzantine studies. The second best option is to offer bridging courses for those who need to improve their language skills at the beginning of their candidature.

Technological breakthroughs – websites, web-marketing, E-newsletters, online teaching, print-on-demand, e-books and e-journals – have largely allowed Australians and New Zealanders to conquer the tyranny of distance that afflicted Antipodean scholarship for many decades, while also making us notorious globe-trotters. The expense of air travel is still our biggest stumbling block. Globalisation has made Byzantine studies more accessible in Australia, not less, even if most of the interest is generated from the educated public and theological colleges, rather than in our secular universities. The challenges of our Byzantine researchers' dependence on diminishing public funds will need to be met by innovation and adaptability to the new global market.

Byzantine Studies in the New Millennium: New Developments in China

Xu Jialing

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Byzantine Studies in China can be traced back to the 1950s, when the New China had just been set up. At this time, Chinese scholars mainly focused on the feudalization of the Byzantine Empire and its particularities, because in this period, China and its ideology were heavily under the influence of the Soviet Union. During the whole period from the 1950s–1980s, we had only one translation about Byzantine history from Russian, written by Lievchinco, *Byzantium*. Since the middle of the 1980s, Byzantine Studies stepped onto a new stage in China. Several scholars studying Byzantine history and culture abroad claimed that Chinese scholars should pay more attention to Byzantine Studies.¹ Since then, along with the rapid development of China and its attitude of openness, more and more scholars have entered the field of Byzantine Studies, also publications increased in quantity and quality. Along with the coming of 21st century, and the quick development of China in every field, more attention was paid to the field of world history, too, and Byzantine Studies have received more attention, generated important achievements and fostered new features and trends. This paper intends to present the new features and trends of Byzantine Studies in China in the new Millennium.²

I. The Circumstances of Byzantine Research in China

Since the beginning of the new Millennium, circumstances for Byzantine research have improved significantly. The development of introductions, translations as well as the use of original sources, combined with international co-operations have provided favorable conditions for our studies.

i. More Byzantinists are trained, and professional academic teams are coming into being; those elements are enriching the achievements of Byzantine Studies

Though Byzantine Studies began in the 1950s in China, it developed slowly until two

¹ Lin Qiang, *The Byzantine Studies should be given attention*, in *World History*, 11 (1986).

² On the detail of Chinese Byzantine research in the 20th century, see Zheng Wei, *Review: Byzantine research in China*, in *Historiography Quarterly*, 1 (2000).

academic centres for Byzantine Studies were set up in Chinese universities (Nankai University and Northeast Normal University) in the later 1980s. Since then, an increasing number of students have been enrolled in Byzantine Studies (MA and PhD). From the beginning of the 21st century, the situation has improved further, more and more MA and PhD students have graduated and started their career in universities. With financial support from different sources (especially from the Chinese government), these scholars have formed different research teams on Byzantine law, literature, historiography etc. By now, there is a constant rate of publications of works and theses on Byzantine Studies. Compared with the publications before 2000 (Table I), 345 papers (including 69 theses) and 61 books (monographs, textbooks, translations, collections etc.) have been published within 15 years from 2000 to 2015 (Table II).

ii. Introductions and translations of original sources

At the beginning of Byzantine Studies in China, for all kinds of reasons, Chinese scholars neither had access to Byzantine original sources, nor did they have sufficient ability in reading Byzantine Greek or Medieval Latin. Thus, their research mostly relied on the secondary sources (mainly by English scholars) published in the previous century, even though they were aware of the importance of original sources. This situation has improved constantly in the new millennium. A great number of Byzantine original sources have been translated into Chinese, such as Procopius' *Secret History* and *History of the Wars*,³ Eusebius' *Ecclesiastical History*,⁴ Jordanes' *Getica*,⁵ and Albert of Aachen's *Historia Ierosolymitana*,⁶ while other translation projects are currently on the way.⁷ The program 'Translation and Study of Middle Byzantine Legislation' directed by Xu Jialing has contributed several legislative documents, such as the *Farmer's Law*, the *Book of the Eparch*, *Soldiers' Laws*, the *Rhodian Sea-Law*, Justinian's *Pragmatica Sanctio*, and the collection of *Legislative Documents on Land in the Macedonian Dynasty*.⁸ In addition, several MA and PhD theses on Byzantine society, based on Byzantine original sources, have been or are

³ Procopius, *Secret History*, trans. Wu Shuping, Lv Lirong, Shanghai, 2007; Procopius, *Wars*, trans. Wang Yizhu, Cui Miaoyin, Beijing, 2010.

⁴ Eusebius, *Church History*, trans. Qu Xutong, Shanghai, 2009.

⁵ Jordanes, *The Origins and Deeds of the Goths*, trans. Luo Sanyang, Beijing, 2012.

⁶ Albert of Aachen, *Historia Ierosolymitana*, trans. Wang Xiangpeng, Zhengzhou, 2014.

⁷ Dr. Li Qiang (IHAC, Northeast Normal University) is working on the translation *Agathias' Histories*, and Dr. Ma Feng (Department of History, Northwest University) is working on the *Strategikon* of Maurice etc.

⁸ Wang Xiaobo, *A Translation and Commentary of The Rhodian Sea-law*, in *The Journal of Ancient Civilizations*, 3 (2010); Wang Qiao, Li Qiang, *A Chinese Translation of the Byzantine Farmer's Law with Commentary*, in *The Journal of Ancient Civilizations*, 4 (2011); Mao Xinxin, Li Qiang, *A Chinese Translation and Commentary of the Byzantine Book of the Eparch*, in *The Journal of Ancient Civilizations*, 3 (2012); Li Qiang, Xu Jialing, *A Chinese Translation and Annotation of the Military Code of the Byzantine Empire*, in *The Journal of Ancient Civilizations*, 2 (2013); Zhang Shuli, *A Chinese*

produced continually.⁹ The increasing publications of translations and study of the original sources benefit from three developments: (1) the growing tradition of ancient Greek and Latin language education in several Chinese universities (especially in the Institute for the History of Ancient Civilizations [IHAC] of Northeast Normal University); (2) the opening policy of the Chinese government which facilitates access to the Byzantine original sources; (3) the hard work and efforts of individual scholars. These achievements reflect one of the most outstanding developments in the new millennium and are also the foundation for further progress in Byzantine Studies in China.

iii. Development of international communication and cooperation

Thanks to the encouragement and support of the Chinese government, universities in China make strong efforts to promote communication with international Byzantine institutes and distinguished Byzantinists around the world. For instance, at Northeast Normal University in Changchun, in the past ten years, we have invited distinguished Byzantinists from UK, Greece and Australia for lectures and seminars, such as Averil Cameron (2002), John Melville-Jones (2003), Elizabeth Jeffreys (2004), Michael Jeffreys (2004), Margaret Mullet (2005), James Howard-Johnston (2006), Michael Kordosis (2009–2013). Their lectures familiarized us with new trends and dynamics of Byzantine Studies from outside of China, and inspired our students to undertake further studies and in-depth research. In the last five years, we started new Byzantine research programs, with a focus on Byzantine law/legislation, military and literature.

In this context, we have invited five foreign Byzantine scholars for short-time lectures, Michael Kordosis from Greece, Alfred Andrew from the US, Claudia Sode from Germany, Staffan Wahlgren from Norway and Stefanos Kordosis from Greece. Their lectures and seminars show us the latest research of Byzantine Studies in international circles, and offer practical suggestions for our future development. With the help of these scholars, we are now planning to build up further cooperations with different institutes of Byzantine Studies

Translation and Commentary of Justinian's Pragmatica Sanctio, in *The Journal of Ancient Civilizations*, 4 (2013).

⁹ Cui Yanhong, *The Study of Procopius' History of the Wars*, PhD Dissertation, Nankai University, 2003; Li Lingli, *The Epic Digenis Akritis and Byzantine Society in the Reign of Basil II*, MA Thesis, Northeast Normal University, 2005; Dong Xiaojia, *The Reconstruction of the Order of the Empire: The Byzantine World in the Ecclesiastical of Socrates*, PhD Dissertation, Nankai University, 2010; Zhao Kangying, *A Study in Eusebius of Caesarea and his Ecclesiastical History*, PhD Dissertation, Nankai University, 2010; Wang Xiaoi, *Observation on the Status of the Senatorial Aristocracy in the Age of Justinian through Secret History*, MA Thesis, Zhenzhou University, 2010; Sun Lifang, *Researches on Akropolites' History*, PhD Dissertation, Nankai University, 2014; Wu Peng, *The Era of Foundation and Transformation: Study on the Byzantine Empire in the Church History of Evagrius*, PhD Dissertation, Nankai University, 2009; Zou Wei, *Study on the Annals of Nicetas Choniates*, PhD Dissertation, Nankai University, 2009.

around the world. From the 2010s on, we started programs of students' and teachers' exchange projects with the support of the Chinese government. At present, we are cooperating with the University of Ioannina and the University of Cologne. Our three PhD students have worked or are still working there, another scholar is currently at the University of Ioannina for a short period of research. The other center of Byzantine Studies in China, Nankai University, is also doing similar work, and four scholars from there have done research in Greece, Canada and the US.

II. Achievements of Byzantine Studies in the New Millennium

Besides the improved conditions, the combination of macro- and microcosmic research not only provides new solutions for the traditional objects of study but also generates new study fields, such as studies on Byzantine social life, on laws, on literature and arts and so on. Here I would like to introduce the progress of Byzantine Studies in China in two aspects, the research on Byzantium itself, and the research on the relationships between Byzantium and other civilizations.

i. Research on Byzantium Itself

a) Politics

Chinese scholars did much research on the decline of the Byzantine Empire in the 20th century and drew some conclusions.¹⁰ In addition to Byzantine foreign politics and the effect of the Crusades, scholars have suggested that the Christian world view and problems of imperial succession were among the elements which caused the decline of the empire.¹¹ In order to enhance our understanding of the empire's fall, Chen Zhiqiang provides details about the deficiencies of the Byzantine artillery and the mental condition of the population at the end of the empire by analyzing original texts.¹² In another paper, he emphasizes that Giovanni Giustiniani should not be held responsible for the fall of Constantinople in 1453.¹³

In addition, researchers have drawn their attention to important reformations throughout the history of the Byzantine empire. Among these papers, the discussion of the Comnenian

¹⁰ Cui Yanhong, *Review on the Research of the Reasons for the Decline of the Byzantine Empire by Foreign Scholars*, in *World History*, 6 (2002).

¹¹ Xu Jialing, Cui Yanhong, *On the Cause of the Decline of Byzantine Empire*, in *Journal of Northeast Normal University (Philosophy and Social Sciences)*, 6 (2001).

¹² Chen Zhiqiang, *Study on the Byzantine Canon*, in *Social Scientist*, 2 (2014).

¹³ Chen Zhiqiang, *Who Should be Responsible for the Last Defeat of the Battle of Constantinople*, in *Journal of Historical Science*, 1 (2015).

system may be straightforward, but is interesting nonetheless.¹⁴ Indeed, the definition, progress and influence of the system founded by Alexius I deserves further research. Also more attention should be paid to the Byzantine bureaucracy.¹⁵

b) Economics

On rural economics or agriculture, Chinese scholars have turned gradually from research on the feudalization of Byzantine society to the concrete study of agriculture. Chen Zhiqiang divides the original sources for Byzantine agriculture into four groups: governmental documents, legal documents, literature and archaeology. He analyzes the advantages and disadvantages of each group, which provides reference for researchers.¹⁶ Zhen Wei suggests the following reasons for the rise of rural economics: (1) the decline of urban economies stressed the importance of agriculture; (2) the Slavic invasion destroyed the old economic system while causing an increase of laborers; (3) the implementation of the theme system acted as a guarantor of the development of agriculture.¹⁷ Yin Zhonghai's research mentioned above in part III, gives us a new angle to investigate agriculture in the middle Byzantine empire.

The Economic History of Roman and Byzantine Empire,¹⁸ a monograph written by Li Yi'ning deserves attention, too. This monograph derives from Professor Li's research over several years. While paying attention to industrial and commercial progress, this monograph mainly discusses the development of agriculture, especially the progress of agricultural productivity and relations based on landed property. As a history of economics, this monograph is written with a wide angle to ensure a better understanding of changes of Byzantine economic history against the background of society as a whole.

On the management of Constantinople, church economy, immigration and exploitation, there are two papers. Mao Xinxin deals with the management of imperial factories, private industry in Constantinople and the city's public service.¹⁹ Xu Jialing stresses that, in contrast to immigration in ancient Rome, the immigration into Byzantine Empire during the 7th to

¹⁴ Luo Chunmei, *On the Functions of the Comnenian System in the Byzantine Empire*, in *Journal of Central South University (Social Science)*, 6 (2013).

¹⁵ Xu Jialing, *A Research on the Functions of the Master of Offices in Early Byzantine Period*, in *Collected Papers of History Studies*, 4 (2003); Guan Min, *On the Bureaucracy of Early Byzantine Empire*, MA Thesis, Liaoning University, 2014.

¹⁶ Chen Zhiqiang, *The Study on the Historical Data of Byzantine Feudlization*, in *Guizhou Social Sciences*, 2 (2013).

¹⁷ Zhen Wei, *On the Reasons of the Rural and Agricultural Prosperity of Byzantine Empire in 7th-9th Century*, in *History Teaching*, 6 (2004).

¹⁸ Li Yi'ning, *Roman-Byzantine Economic History*, Beijing, 2006.

¹⁹ Mao Xinxin, *A Study on City Administration of Constantinople*, PhD Dissertation, Northeast Normal University, 2012.

9th century was more dependent on the physical geography of its territory and had great effects on the ethnic mixture in Eastern Europe.²⁰

c) Military

Chinese scholars also show great interest in the important topic of the Crusades.

During the First Crusade, the conflict and mutual misunderstanding between the crusader leaders and Alexius I resulted in the vilification of Alexius I by the Latins,²¹ which forced the successors of Alexius I to cater to the crusaders.²² The depiction of the First Crusade in the sources shows that the construction of the crusaders reflects the social structure and order of Western Europe.²³

Was the Fourth Crusade directed from its beginning against Constantinople? Luo Chunmei concludes through her in-depth analysis of Geoffery of Villehardouin's *Chronicles of the Crusades* that the crusaders turned to Constantinople on purpose.²⁴ The interests and demands of both the crusaders and the Republic of Venice was the internal reason for the crusader's turn against Constantinople, while the decline of the empire was the external reason.²⁵

Rather than only describing the Crusades, especially the Fourth Crusade with the capture of Constantinople in 1204, as a catastrophe for the Byzantine Empire, scholars stress their positive effects on the communication between Eastern and Western Europe.²⁶

Besides the study of the Crusades, scholars devote themselves to the analysis of military strategy and reforms.²⁷ They also turn to microcosmic studies, as they began to deal with a

²⁰ Xu Jialing, *On the Immigration and Exploitation in Byzantine Empire*, in *World History*, 2 (2009).

²¹ Luo Chunmei, *The Causes of the Uglification of Alexius I in the West*, in *Journal of Southwest University (Social Sciences Edition)*, 4 (2009).

²² Luo Chunmei, *The Influence of the first Three Crusaders to Byzantium*, in *Gansu Social Science*, 4 (2012).

²³ Wang Xiangpeng, *On the Army of the First Crusade from the Perspective of the Christian World – Seen through the Battle of Antioch*, in *Journal of Northeast Normal University (Philosophy and Social Sciences)*, 5 (2011).

²⁴ Luo Chunmei, *The Turn of the Fourth Crusade is not Occasional*, in *Jiangxi Social Sciences*, 6 (2012).

²⁵ Zhao Faxin, *Reasons of Diversion of the Fourth Crusade to Constantinople and the City's Fall*, in *Journal of Yanbei Normal University*, 4 (2005).

²⁶ J. Durand, *The Mediterranean in the Middle Ages: From the Crusades to the Reconquista*, in *Journal of National Museum of China*, 12 (2013).

²⁷ For example, Ma Feng, *The Epoch of Great Change and the Formation of the Military System of the Byzantine Empire: On the Military Revolutions from the Epoch of Diocletian to the Times of Justinian*, in *The Journal of Ancient Civilizations*, 4 (2012).

single fortress, a general and a battle.²⁸ Even though these papers may be straightforward, they are still a great breakthrough for military research.

d) Religion and Culture

Chinese scholars have always been interested in Byzantine culture. According to Table I (below), thirteen works out of sixty-one concern Byzantine culture and religion.

On Byzantine cultural influence, Xu Jialing reminds us that the impact of Byzantine culture on the Renaissance in Italy was significant, but not decisive. The conservative nature of Byzantine culture means that further cultural developments occurred in the West, rather than in Byzantium.²⁹ Chen Zhiqiang discusses, based on a letter from Boris I to Pope Nicholas I, the Slavs's ambivalent reception of Byzantine culture.³⁰

Many aspects of Byzantine Christianity have been studied in China. In Zhang Riyuan's opinion, Christianity played an important role in the political life during the early Byzantine Empire. The Orthodox Church not only offered a 'holy theory' for the sovereign, but also maintained the upper hand in matters of local administration and exerted important influence on directing people's behavior.³¹ Many pagan traditions were accepted and transformed by Christianity, which is the reason why Christianity was able to replace paganism.³² Xu Jialing treats the theoretical debates within early Byzantine churches as the conflict between different cultural traditions in the Near East and a struggle inside Christianity for superior control of the church.³³ Monasticism, superstition and cults also received the attention of scholars.³⁴ While these researches are not as profound as we hoped, they have their merit in that they offer us some new inspiration for further research.

²⁸ For example, on Belisarius, Shao Zhaoyin, *Research on the General Belisarius*, PhD Dissertation, Nankai University, 2014; Xu Yin, *Belisarius and the Gothic War*, MA Thesis, East China Normal University, 2011.

²⁹ Xu Jialing, *The Cultural Connections between Byzantium and the West*, in *Journal of Henan University (Social Science)*, 2 (2001).

³⁰ Chen Zhiqiang, *Byzantine Culture and the Balkan Problem: a Study on Boris Confusion*, in *Historiography Quarterly*, 3 (2007).

³¹ Zhang Riyuan, *On the Political Role of the Christianity in Early Byzantine Empire*, in *History Teaching*, 18 (2008).

³² Zhang Riyuan, *An Analysis of the Cult of Saint in Byzantine Empire in the Fourth to Ninth Centuries*, in *Journal of Southwest University (Social Sciences Edition)*, 6 (2009).

³³ Xu Jialing, *Religious Controversy in Early Byzantine Empire*, in *Collected Papers of Historical Studies*, 3 (2000).

³⁴ Luo Chunmei, *On the Influence of Byzantine Emperors' Superstition in 1180–1203*, in *History Teaching*, 20 (2008); Zou Wei, *The Characteristics of Byzantine Occult in the 12th Century and Its Political Functions*, in *Journal of Sichuan University (Social Sciences Edition)*, 4 (2015).

e) Social History

For the so-called Great Plague in the Justinianic period, Chen Zhiqiang compares the textual sources of Procopius and Thucydides, depicting a plague, and concludes convincingly that both authors are different not only in their aim of writing, but also in their description of the origin, symptoms, and influence of the plagues. It becomes clear that Procopius did not simply copy from or imitate Thucydides, and the plague really did happen in the 6th century.³⁵ In his opinion, different research angles and the methods for explaining sources would influence historians' knowledge, and lead to different conclusions.³⁶ Chen Zhiqiang and Cui Yanhong have also done much work concerning the details and the influence of the so-called 'Justinian's Plague'.³⁷ It caused a severe decrease in population, and generated chaos in politics, economics, society and religion. The collaboration between emperor and church in religious affairs acquired more facets as a result of that plague.³⁸ Regarding earthquakes, researchers point out, that earthquakes accelerated the decline of cities and the loss of spirit in human beings.³⁹ Liu Rongrong mainly focuses on the governmental measures in conjunction with earthquakes and concludes that the government, in times of financial difficulties, turned from material to spiritual assistance.⁴⁰

In addition, Xu Jialing reveals, based on the literary analysis of the epitaph of Basil II, the way that imperial power penetrated Byzantines' ordinary life.⁴¹

f) Laws

As mentioned above, some laws/legislative texts have been translated and studied. In *A Study of the Rhodian Sea-Law*,⁴² Wang Xiaobo offers a translation and literary analysis of the text and explains its relation to other laws in the Middle Byzantine Epoch and its influence on Mediterranean trade of the Middle Ages and modern times. Chen Yue's contribution on the family and marriage laws in the Middle Byzantine Empire reveals the compromise between the church and the secular sphere, and argues that the laws were published for solving the

³⁵ Chen Zhiqiang, *Textual Evaluations on the Justinian Plague*, in *Clio at Beida*, 2005.

³⁶ Chen Zhiqiang, *Research Angles and Historical Materials – A Case Study of 'Justinian's Plague'*, in *Collected Papers of History Studies*, 1 (2006).

³⁷ Chen Zhiqiang, *A Study of the First Bubonic Plague in the Mediterranean Area*, in *Historical Research*, 1 (2008).

³⁸ Cui Yanhong, *On Justinianic Plague*, in *Collected Papers of History Studies*, 3 (2003).

³⁹ Wu Peng, *Earthquakes and the Decline of Cities of East Mediterranean in 6th Century*, in *Social Scientist*, 10 (2014); Wu Peng, Liu Rongrong, *Spiritual Influence of Earthquakes in the East Mediterranean in 6th Century*, in *Journal of Southwest University (Social Sciences Edition)*, 6 (2014).

⁴⁰ Liu Rongrong, *Earthquake in the East Mediterranean and government Relief in the 6th Century*, in *Historical Review*, 3 (2014).

⁴¹ Yin Zhonghai, Xu Jialing, *Purple and Power: an Interpretation of Basil II's Epitaph*, in *Study and Exploration*, 6 (2007).

⁴² Wang Xiaobo, *A Study of the Rhodian Sea-Law*, PhD Dissertation, Northeast Normal University, 2010.

population crisis while they contained some articles protecting women and children.⁴³

On the influence of the Byzantine laws, Wang Xiaobo points out that Byzantine Law had great influence on the legislations of Russia and Bulgaria on war and trade, as well as the expressions and organization of Christianity.⁴⁴ This approach can, for example, offer inspiration for other aspects of the interaction between the Byzantine Empire and Russia.

g) Groups

The study of groups is a recent research interest. Zhang Junfang focuses on a particular group of people, the Byzantine scholars who went to the West and stayed in Italy, and reveals the background, reasons and influence of their departure to Italy.⁴⁵

Gender research, mostly concentrated on women, is a new development in China. Several students, especially female ones, pay attention to Byzantine women, both royal, as Anna Comnena and other ‘purple-born’ women, and also intellectual women, such as Hypatia; since 2000,⁴⁶ even ‘the third sex’ – eunuchs at the Byzantine imperial court have been studied.

h) Literature and Arts

Studies on Byzantine literature and arts is growing slowly in China. Even though 5 works and 28 papers have been delivered, most of them are introductory rather than presenting individual research.

Among these achievements, the study of Byzantine music is particularly worthy of note.⁴⁷ Gao Zhimin’s PhD thesis is the most recent research on Byzantine music in China. It mainly discusses the origin of Church music, its development in the Byzantine era and its influence.⁴⁸

⁴³ Chen Yue, *The Features of the mid-Byzantine Marriage Law*, in *Journal of Southwest University (Social Sciences Edition)*, 1 (2013).

⁴⁴ Wang Xiaobo, *How the Rus Law Came Out under the Byzantine Influence*, in *Forward Position*, 9 (2008).

⁴⁵ Zhang Junfang, *A Research on the Relationship between Byzantine Scholars and the Renaissance in Italy from 14th to 16th Century*, PhD Dissertation, Nankai University, 2007.

⁴⁶ Liu Hongying, *A Study on Byzantine Imperial Women from 11th to 13th Century*, PhD Dissertation, Northeast Normal University, 2004; Wang Hang, *Analysis on the Byzantine Imperial Women Scholar Anna Comnena*, MA Thesis, Northeast Normal University, 2010; Jia Jiyu, *A Research on the Status of the Purple-born Women in Early Byzantine Period*, MA Thesis, Northeast Normal University, 2011; Zhao Qiuyuan, *The Martyr of Classical Civilization: A Female Philosopher, Hypatia of Alexandria*, MA Thesis, Northeast Normal University, 2012; Zhao Yue, *A Study on Type of Role and Status of Eunuchs in Byzantium*, MA Thesis, Northeast Normal University, 2013; Chen Yue, *The Byzantine Empresses in the 11th Century*, PhD Dissertation, Nankai University, 2013.

⁴⁷ Gao Zhimin, *Review of the Studies on Byzantine Music*, in *The Journal of Ancient Civilizations*, 1 (2014).

⁴⁸ Gao Zhimin, *A Study on the Byzantine Church Music*, PhD Dissertation, Northeast Normal University, 2014.

ii. Research on the Relationship between Byzantium and Other Civilizations

With the rapid development of globalization, the perspective of global history has quickly become the main focus of scholars in different areas. Byzantinists are not excluded from this trend. In China, scholars have published a number of articles on that issue.

Among these, nineteen papers are about the communication between the Byzantine Empire and other countries, including the Arab lands, Persia, Bulgaria, Rus and the Western Turkic Khanate (AD 552–659). There are four theses which involve the Arabs,⁴⁹ Bulgaria⁵⁰ and Rus.⁵¹

Particularly popular for Chinese scholars is research on Chinese-Byzantine relations, which generated our interest in the last century and has acquired rapid progress in the new millennium. Scholars research Chinese-Byzantine relations from different angles:

a) Fulin problem: Byzantium in Chinese Literature

That the expression ‘Fulin’ refers to the Byzantine Empire during the Tang Dynasty is firmly established, but where does it derive from? According to Zhang Xushan’s opinion, ‘Fulin’ derives from ‘Rum’, which was transformed by the Sogdians into ‘From’, ‘Furum’, ‘Forum’.⁵² The Byzantine Empire sent ‘ambassadors’ to China on seven occasions in the period from 643 to 742. The ambassadors in 643 may have been sent in the context of plans by the emperor Heraclius to negotiate an alliance with the Tang Dynasty against the Arabs. After the Arabs had conquered the Iranian Plateau, the ‘ambassadors’ on the subsequent six diplomatic missions may have dealt with the Nestorians in central Asia.⁵³

What does ‘Fulin’ refer to after the Tang Dynasty? On this issue, there is a debate among Chinese scholars. Xu Jialing investigates a piece of narrative from *Sung-shih* from the perspectives of geography, climate, customs and apparel, concluding that the so-called ‘Fulin’ in *Sung-shih* (focus on the history of Chinese Song Dynasty, around AD 960–1279)

⁴⁹ Pan Yuying, *Research On Hegemony over the Mediterranean Between Byzantines and Arabs in the 7th–8th Century and the Significance of the Times*, MA Thesis, Northeast Normal University, 2008; Duan Guanqiang, *The Study of Early Relationship between Arabs and Byzantines (7th–8th century)*, MA Thesis, Guangxi Normal University, 2011.

⁵⁰ Cai Jiayu, *The Study of Relationship between Ancient Bulgaria and Byzantium (5th–10th century)*, MA Thesis, Guangxi Normal University, 2010.

⁵¹ Mao Chenlan, *The Study of Relationship between Byzantium and Rus*, MA Thesis, Guangxi Normal University, 2005.

⁵² Zhang Xushan, *Review on the Etymological Study in ‘Fu-lin’*, in *Historical Research*, 5 (2009).

⁵³ Zhang Xushan, *Byzantine Embassies to the Tang Dynasty in Chinese Sources*, in *World History*, 1 (2010).

refers to Sultanate of Rum in Asia Minor, not to the Byzantine Empire.⁵⁴ Zhang Xushan also supports this opinion.⁵⁵ However, there are some different opinions.

b) Theophylaktos Simocatta: China in Byzantine Literature

In the late sixth century, the Khanate of the Western Turks was in close communication with both China and Byzantium, so the knowledge of China spread to Byzantium in this way and entered into the depiction of the works of the well-known historian Theophylaktos Simocatta. “Taugast” in Theophylaktos’ work refers to China, it comes from ‘Dahan’; the war which he recorded refers to the war in which the Northern Zhou Dynasty wiped out the Northern Qi Dynasty, not the Southern Chen Dynasty.⁵⁶

c) Christians

Nestorians contributed a lot to the contacts between China and Byzantium. The Nestorians must have arrived prior to 635, the year inscribed on the Nestorian monument in China; perhaps they came to China in the first half of the sixth century. They brought Western theories of medicine, architecture and astronomy to China.⁵⁷

On the Christians who had arrived in China, Lin Ying proposes a view at variance with other scholars. According to her hypothesis, due to the situation in Arabia and Middle Asia, not Nestorians, but Melkites might have arrived in China.⁵⁸

d) Trade and Communication

The Byzantine Empire had a large demand for Chinese silk, a trend that began already in Roman times, since the first century CE. In order to break Persia’s monopoly of silk trade, the Byzantine Empire made great efforts to secure its access to Chinese silk from the Silk Road, by the sea as well as the land route across the Eurasian Steppe. The trade with Eastern nations supported the transportation of silk from China to the West, while many Byzantine coins flowed eastward. The contacts with the East caused the spread of Byzantine folk tales into China and their incorporation into Chinese literature.⁵⁹

⁵⁴ Xu Jialing, *Byzantium or Seljuk Sultanate? – On a piece of Narrative on ‘Fu-lin’ in Sung-shih*, in *The Journal of Ancient Civilizations*, 3 (2009).

⁵⁵ Zhang Xushan, *On So-called Fu-lin Embassies to China in the Post-Tang Period in Chinese Sources*, in *Journal of Tsinghua University (Philosophy and Social Sciences)*, 6 (2010).

⁵⁶ Zhang Xushan, *On the History and Customs recorded by Simocatta*, in *Collection of Traditional Chinese Studies*, 2006.

⁵⁷ Zhang Xushan, *Nestorians and the Greek-Byzantine Cultures in China*, in *World History*, 6 (2005).

⁵⁸ Lin Ying, *A Speculation on ‘Fu-lin Monk’: Christians except Nestorians in Tang Dynasty*, in *Studies in World Religions*, 2 (2006).

⁵⁹ Zhang Xushan, *The Byzantine Empire and Chinese Silk Trade During the Sixth and Seventh Century*, in *Clio at Beida*, 2005.

Once Byzantium had acquired the skill of raising silkworms, the basis for these relations changed.⁶⁰ The Nestorians gained silkworms from somewhere in Central Asia, then went along the prairie road towards the Northern shore of the Caspian Sea to the Byzantine-controlled harbors in the Black Sea, and from there brought the silkworm to Constantinople. The Chinese government never prevented the knowledge and skill of raising silkworms from spreading. That the Byzantine Empire gained this skill only slowly can be attributed to three reasons: (1) the monopoly of intermediary nations; (2) the customs in China to keep strangers outside, especially during periods of plague, so that no illness could come inside; (3) knowledge did not spread easily before the emergence of paper.

e) Coins

Since the first Byzantine coin was found in Xinjiang, China, in 1897, over 100 Byzantine coins have been found in China up to now,⁶¹ most of which are *solidi* (real and imitated). The coin finds in China are more significant for historical than for numismatic research.⁶² They provide clear evidence for communication processes between Byzantium and China through the Silk Road, and plenty of studies elucidate the route of their spread, function, use, and significance.⁶³

III. Future Plans

As I have mentioned above, Byzantine Studies in China have made great progress since the beginning of the 21st century, however, it is still far behind the international circle of Byzantine Studies.

Thanks to the program (Studies of Byzantine History and Culture) of Chen Zhiqiang, which has received support from the Chinese government, basically all Chinese Byzantinists have participated in international co-operations. We are planning to publish the history of Byzantium in a series of volumes. Besides this, Xu Jialing plans to publish a series of translations (into Chinese) of Byzantine historical works and to undertake further research on Byzantine historiography. Lin Ying devotes herself to a high-quality catalogue of the finds of Byzantine coins and their imitation in China.

We need to make great efforts to accomplish the following three aspects:

⁶⁰ Zhang Xushan, *Restudy on the Westward of the Chinese Sericulture*, in *Eurasian Studies*, 8 (2006).

⁶¹ Guo Yunyan, *Research on the Discovery of Byzantine Coins and Their Imitations Found in China*, PhD Dissertation, Nankai University, 2006.

⁶² Chen Zhiqiang, *On the Mistakes in Research on Byzantine Coins Found in China*, in *Nankai Journal (Philosophy, Literature and Social Science Edition)*, 5 (2004).

⁶³ For the dynamics of their research cf. Li Qiang, *Roman Coins Discovered in China and Their Research*, in *Eirene. Studia Graeca et Latina*, Centre for Classical Studies, Prague, 2015, p. 279–299.

First, we should improve the skills of our scholars in Latin and Classical-Byzantine Greek. This will help them to use the original sources for their research.

Second, we should send more scholars and students to study or research abroad. This will help them to learn the latest research dynamics and to become familiar with the way and methods of international Byzantine research.

Third, we should welcome more international Byzantinists to come to China for lectures, workshops and cooperation projects.

This is what we will be promoting in the next years. Thus, we warmly welcome suggestions from international circles with their view on the development of Byzantine Studies in China.⁶⁴

Table I: Classification and number of achievements of Byzantine research in China (since 1950s)

	1950s–80s	1980s–2000	2000–
Books	1	8	61
Papers	35	29	345

Table II: Classification and number of achievements of Byzantine research in China (since 2000s)

2000–			
Books		61	
Translation		22	
Monograph		39	
Papers (including the Theses)		345	
Politics	25	Arts	39
Economy	13	Communication between civilizations	66
Military	44	Historiography	15
Culture	32	Diplomacy and foreign relations	11
Religion	18	Others	25
Society	41		
Laws	16		

Mainly based on the data in the database of China National Knowledge Infrastructure (CNKI)

⁶⁴ Acknowledgment: I would like to thank Prof. Claudia Rapp who provided me this opportunity to share this paper with you. During the writing, I also received plenty of good suggestions from her. Second, I also need to thank other people who contributed to the paper: my colleagues Prof. Sven Gunther and Prof. Matylda Obryk from IHAC at the Northeast Normal University have corrected my English. My students Li Qiang and Huang Qun have done much work on collecting the materials.

Postscript

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The five papers in this session have made abundantly clear that the tradition of Byzantine studies is evolving with the times. Byzantium is now studied in academic contexts and in locations that had been unimaginable to our founding figures. There are new generations of students who are asking new questions of old sources and indeed exploring new sources (including those in non-Greek languages) that had until recently been marginal. In the new millennium, our field is exposed to the possibilities of new technologies and the widening horizon of a global world. We must meet the challenge of engaging with these trends without neglecting the long-established methods and skills, especially language competence, upon which our discipline is built. This is a balancing act that will best be achieved through the joining of forces and the sustained and structured exchange of ideas. In this regard, too, collaboration is the way to the future. It will be interesting to see how future International Congresses of Byzantine Studies respond and react to the trends that were outlined here.

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