

Metropolis between the seas and continents: Early and Middle Byzantine Constantinople as the port city

SUMMARY



I

Mirosław J. Leszka

Constantinopolitan harbours in the 4th–12th centuries

The text is devoted to presenting the network of the most important Constantinopolitan harbours Neorion and Prosfhorion/Bosphorion by the Golden Horn, of Julian/Sophia and of Theodosius by the Sea of Marmara, and showing the changes which occurred therein during the early and middle Byzantine period.

During the first century of Constantinople's existence, characterised by its very dynamic development and several dozen-fold increase in its population, the existing harbours by the Golden Horn were expanded, and new ones (Harbour of Julian, Harbour of Theodosius) were created by the Sea of Marmara. Drastic reduction of the population, which occurred during the 40^s of the sixth century and which affected primarily those

parts of the Constantinople which lay by the Golden Horn, was one of the main reasons for moving the burden of servicing shipping arriving to Constantinople to the ports located by the Sea of Marmara. Finally, the naturally occurring silting of the latter, in particular of the Harbour of Theodosius, along with the simultaneous appearance of the foreign merchants (primarily of Italian origin) interested in the vicinity of Golden Horn, brought about the re-birth of the port infrastructure of that area in the eleventh century.

II

Łukasz Różycki

All ships of the emperor: Roman Navy during the reign of emperor Maurice (582–602)

The purpose of the piece is to present the condition of Roman navy on the verge of the 7th century. It is part of ongoing historical research to determine if the Empire had a central navy in the times of Emperor Maurice, and if so, what was its actual combat strength. To do that the author has analyzed the most important sources dealing with the final 20 years of the 6th century. Having made the assumption that the lifetime of a warship in Late Antiquity was 20–25 years and having analyzed the available materials, the author concluded that the Empire did not maintain a standing navy. But it is likely that some naval forces were available to regional commanders, although traces of their existence are difficult to find in written sources. A permanent Byzantine navy was established only with the emergence of a constant Arab threat from the sea.

III

Marcin Böhm

Constantinopolitan squadron in the era of imperial reign of Comnenian dynasty (1081–1185)

Imperial squadron operating in Constantinople during the reign of the rulers of the dynasty of Comneni, was an important element of the naval forces of Byzantium. Small in terms of the number, it was of critical

nature in diplomatic missions, on which, in many respects depended the fate of the empire. The most important function of this branch of the Comnenian Navy, was to provide the necessary mobility to the emperor, as well as to ensure the safety of the ruler while traveling the waters, both inland and at sea. In addition to those, ships of the squadron transported the guests of the emperor, as well as members of his family. Stationed near Bukoleon, the squadron was always available for emperors. The warships used for this purpose was of the two types, Dromon and Monera. They provided mobility on the one hand and on the other the strength, which was necessary in times of armed conflict with external enemies on land and sea, which struggled with the Byzantine Empire in the twelfth century.

IV

Rafał Kosiński

The Exiled Bishops of Constantinople from the Fourth to the Late Sixth Century

A number of cases of the bishops of Constantinople exiled over a period until as late as the close of the 6th century prove the fact that the rulers would always make an effort to remove the deposed bishops from the City, even though relocating the latter to specific destinations did not always have to be the case. In the 4th century, the bishops could withdraw to suburban districts or settle at their own estates, and it was not until the 5th century that depositions of the metropolitan bishops would involve, in principle, being deported to a specific place of exile. The purpose behind banishing a bishop from the City and putting him under supervision at a certain location was to prevent him from exerting any influence on the faithful in Constantinople.

It should be also noted that sending a person into exile was a form of punishment, especially when the destination was a remote location exposed to harsh weather conditions or the threat of sudden incursions by bands of nomads or brigands. Results of an analysis of the accessibility of exile destinations provide substantial evidence for an overwhelming proportion of inland urban localities. Although many of such places would

be located along or near various roads, they were generally situated far from the coast or the main routes to Constantinople.

V

Jarosław Dudek

The Khazars in Constantinople

Khazaria as a political organism, started in the years 657–670, had relations with the Byzantine Empire for three centuries, although their forms and intensity underwent changes. At the beginning it was a military alliance turned against caliphate, afterwards Byzantine and Khazaria competed for ruling the northern shores of the Black Sea. The next stages of the Khazar-Byzantine relations were characterised by more or less developed diplomatic exchange, there was also an influx of various groups of strangers from the territory of Khazaria to Constantinople. One ought not to forget to mention the two princesses, known under the Christian names as Theodora and Irena. They both married the emperors: Justinian II (705–711) and Constantine V (740–775). They were accompanied by the entourage which had a partial influence on customs and ceremonial of the palace, particularly for the latter princess, Irena. The presence of some Khazarian legations in Constantinople from the 9th to the 10th century was recorded. Their objectives of the missions were connected with both political and religious reasons. In Constantinople one could also notice the presence of Khazarian mercenary soldiers in the emperor's guard. The rest of comers (merchants, immigrants from southern Crimea and cities on the Taman Peninsula) are much more difficult to discern in sources. Against a background of the cosmopolitan metropolis because of their prosaic trades they did not differ much from other inhabitants of New Rome.

It needs to be emphasised that from the remaining sources it results that the vast majority of those comers from Khazaria arrived in the capital of the Byzantine Empire mainly by sea, across the Black Sea. Overland trails which were going through the Balkan Peninsula or passes of the Caucasus Mountains were too long and difficult to travel.

VI

Anna Kotłowska

The port in the plot of the twelfth-century Byzantine romance

The Greek term *port, harbour* (ὁ λιμὴν) dates back to a long time ago and was witnessed already in Linear B. The same word root can be found in the following words: *λειμών, meadow* and *λίμνη, stagnant water*, and hence also *swamp, pond, marsh*. Therefore, the term *λιμὴν*, seems to have more in common with the sphere of nature, and with the border between water and land, rather than with the human civilization. This article analyses, whether the above semantics, is reflected in the twelfth-century romance called *Rhodanthe and Dosikles* by Theodore Prodromus.

Three episodes comprising *port scenes*, fully confirm the ancient meaning of the term *limen*, emphasizing its importance as a *safe harbour* in the first place. Simultaneously, we can perceive the remarkable personality of Theodore Prodromus as a writer who goes beyond the aesthetic, normative and literary standards of his times.

VII

Piotr Kochanek

Vignette of Constantinople on the Ebstorf Map

The purpose of this article was to show the place of the vignette of Constantinople in the global system of vignettes on the Ebstorf Map (made around 1300). To achieve this, the vignette of Constantinople was compared with three vignettes' systems of this map. The first system was a group of 10 vignettes (Adrianopolis, Balchik, Constantinople, Lystra, Myrina (Lemnos), Nesebar, Pamphylia, Perge, Troy, Varna), that have been placed on both sides of the axis of symmetry, which is formed by the Aegean Sea, the Dardanelles, the Sea of Marmara, and the Bosphorus. Additionally, in this context have been considered 5 vignettes (anonymous city, Kavala, Makri, Marmara Ereğlisi = Perinthos/Heraclea, Sestos), which closes this zone on the map of Ebstorf from the north. The vignette of Constantinople is in this system the most graphically refined

vignette. The second system was 5 vignettes of the five major episcopal sees of Christianity – *Pentarchy*: Alexandria, Antioch, Constantinople, Jerusalem, and Rome. In this system, vignettes of Jerusalem and Rome clearly dominate the vignette of Constantinople. The third system was a group of 12 vignettes of important ports of the Mediterranean (Acre, Ancona, Brindisi, Constantinople, Genoa, Haifa, Jaffa, Ravenna, Sydon, Tripoli, Tyre, and Venice). Also in this system, the vignette of Constantinople is not an element, that attracts attention of the readers of this map. Conclusion: the makers of the Ebstorf Map did not treat the vignette of Constantinople with some special esteem. On the contrary, they tried to remove it aside. Constantinople was for the western cartographers just one of many secondary cities of the Mediterranean.

VIII

Piotr Łukasz Grotowski

The Hodegon. Considerations on the location of the Hodegetria sanctuary in Constantinople

One of the most famous sanctuaries of Constantinople remains covered by the fog of history. The complex that housed a miraculous icon of the Virgin – believed to have been painted by Luke the Evangelist – was built by the empress Pulcheria in the first district of the capital, to be significantly remodeled under Michael III. Although the monastery has not survived, it is known thanks to numerous descriptions, both Byzantine and those written by foreign travelers and pilgrims.

Previous identifications that associated Hodegon with the hexagonal construction discovered by R. Demangel and E. Mamboury, and recently with *hagiasma* found under the building at the corner of Mimar Mehmet Ağa and Admiral Tafdil streets, discovered two decades ago by F. Düzgüner in the heart of the modern Cankurtaran district, remain unsatisfactory. They do not correspond to the situation indicated by written sources. According to pilgrims' accounts Hodegon was located immediately to the east of Hagia Sophia. The complex was in close vicinity to Princess Marina's palace (rebuild by Leon VI into baths, which can be identified as the Demangel/Mamboury hexagon) outside the walls of the

Great Palace (as indicated by the description in the *Chronicle* of Simeon the Logothete). In turn the anonymous *Description of the Most Venerated, Holy and the Most Sacred Church of the Theotokos, called Hodegon* indicates that the church was a lofty building clearly visible over the city walls by sailors passing the Bosphorus. The text also informs us that the sanctuary was three-segmented. A nave covered by a dome rested on a substructure, only partly visible above the ground level; it was most probably a terrace with a cistern (mentioned in the epigrams of Theodore Balsamon).

A careful analysis of the written evidence forces us to return to an old hypothesis formulated a hundred years ago by K. Wulzinger. The German scholar identified Hodegon as a terrace under the military hospital of Gülhane. While the ruined (and recently restored) building remains inaccessible due to the fact that it belongs to the military complex, the terrace (and the cistern housed in it) is fairly well documented thanks to medical reports published at the beginning of the 20th century by the staff of the clinic. The structure built in mixed brick and stonework was originally supported on six columns with composite capitals and pilaster strips. Based on architectural analogies it can be generally dated between the ninth and eleventh centuries, when terraces under churches became popular in Constantinople (Nea, Pharos, Myrelaion, Peribleptos). This indicates that the cistern-terrace under the Hodegon was built during the reign of Michael III.

The final confirmation of the above hypotheses would only be possible if researchers had access to the Gülhane complex and the documentation related to its restoration, which is eagerly expected in the near future.

IX

Ireneusz Milewski

Pagan Private Commemorative Rites in the Early Byzantine Period

The cult of the dead occupied an important place in the religion of the ancient people. It was expressed primarily in commemorative rituals held to honour the dead on specific anniversaries (the day of birth and death) and upon the days of the dead. A graveside banquet composed the essential part of the ritual. Clearly, this custom was still practiced by

pagans in the Early Byzantine period. The above text addresses few written accounts and a tangible cultural heritage material on the commemorative rituals of pagans in the 4th and 5th centuries.

Appendix

The Itinerary of Stephen of Novgorod: Containing a Description of Kontoskalion Harbour in Constantinople (1348/1349).

Translation by Zofia Brzozowska

The so-called *Wanderer of Stephen of Novgorod* is an Old Russian itinerary, which contains a detailed description of late medieval Constantinople. The source can be dated 1348/1349. The publication is divided into three parts. In the introduction has been given a piece of information about the itinerary. Secondly, the edition of the source in its Old Russian original has been included. The edition has been prepared on the basis of the manuscript БАИ, 16.8.13, dating from the second quarter of the 16th century. The last part of the paper is the complete Polish translation of the source. All additional historical information and references can be found in footnotes.

