

The shape of the market: mapping the Book of the Eparch*

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The perspective of this paper could certainly be judged as somewhat narrow by urban historians of ninth-century Constantinople. For the sake of clarity we should like to stress from the very start that it is the Bulgarian aspect of the problem that interests us. Whatever the answer to the question whether Byzantium was 'dead or alive' at the time, for Boris (who forced Bulgaria into Christendom), for his son Symeon (who became Bulgaria's first tsar), and for Symeon's son Peter (who took the first Byzantine princess to Veliki Preslav), the empire was certainly very much alive. These three rulers of the first Bulgarian kingdom lived at the time when the *renovatio* encapsulated by Theoktistos and Theodora in A.D. 843 was taken over by the usurper Basil; when, subsequently, the ascending *genos* of the *dysgenes* killer recreated — and at the same time distanced itself from — the broader framework of the Justinianic age; and, finally, when *eugenes* usurpers triumphed within the already established 'Macedonian' universe. Among the three of them, however, only Symeon had the rare opportunity of living in Constantinople, for fourteen years or so — between 872/4 and 887 — and in its First Region at that. Symeon became no Theodoric but what was it that he saw which made him 'half-Greek' and could have moulded or influenced some of his policies that led to the establishment of a new empire in the Balkans?

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In terms of visualised space, the post-Iconoclast *renovatio* in the capital was developing in the somewhat shabby open-air museum which Constantinople still was. Symeon came to the Byzantine capital just a few years after the earthquake of 869, which had caused great damage to the city. Nonetheless, the concentration of cultural landmarks was slowly acquiring new dimensions: the Emperor's Great Palace was absorbing and transforming the principal characteristics of the open-space Late Antique culture, while the church building gradually emerged as ranking first among all other previous 'receptacles' for assembling and holding the people. Basil I's building activity in the capital — rivalling Justinian's in the number of churches repaired or raised from the ground, although not in scope and essence — was crucial in this development.¹ That the *renovatio* was ecclesiastical in substance, and at the same time displayed the accumulation of both the material and spiritual wealth of the Emperor's abode and city, certainly did not escape Symeon's notice.

It is to the 'material side' to which we now turn our attention — to the world, or, the 'shape of the market'. We should like to acknowledge the fact that our inspiration has been nourished by many sources: Marlia Mundell Mango, we have been told, is continuing her work on 'the commercial map of Constantinople' — initially, a paper prepared for the cancelled Istanbul Symposium of 1994; Jonathan Shepard has recently put the so-called 'commercial war' of Symeon of Bulgaria in the context of the 'marked preference' of 'other "barbarians" for trading in Constantinople rather than in Byzantine provincial towns';² our own work on the *Atlas of Byzantium* urged us to go a little further than Johannes Koder in visualising Constantinople's market world as it emerges from the *Book of the*

1. From a somewhat different perspective see most recently, P. Magdalino, *Constantinople médiévale. Etudes sur l'évolution des structures urbaines* (Paris 1996) 49 (= *Travaux et Mémoires de Centre de Recherche d'Histoire et de Civilisation de Byzance*. Collège de France. Monographie 9).

2. J. Shepard, 'Constantinople — Gateway to the North: The Russians', in Cyril Mango, Gilbert Dagron (eds.), *Constantinople and its Hinterland: Papers from the Twenty-seventh Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies, Oxford, April 1993* (Aldershot 1995) 254-5 (= *Society for the Promotion of Byzantine Studies, Publications* 3) (hereafter *Constantinople and its Hinterland*).

Eparch.³ But here again, we have our particular angle: it is impossible — and unnecessary for our purposes — to deal with all problems of Constantinople's commercial topography. Instead, we shall focus our attention on some of its elements that desacralised — and quite actively at times — the newly emerging image of the great city. On Symeon, who came to Constantinople to take holy orders and prepare himself for the highest service in the Bulgarian church but upon his return was forced back into the world and had to ascend the throne of a secular ruler, those elements certainly had some effect.

A brief note on our main source may be needed here. For us it is not particularly important whether the *Book of the Eparch* was officially circulated or not: with all his qualifications Koder himself speaks of the *Veröffentlichung* of 912.⁴ What matters more is the link between the pre-history of the *Book* and the appearance of the fourth title of Photios's *Eisagoge*, dealing with the office of the Eparch.⁵ Symeon was therefore a witness of both that side of his teacher's activity — the law book was promulgated in 885/886 — and the process of collecting the evidence for what was subsequently to become the *Book of the Eparch*. It is now certain that the latter remained unfinished, and anyone wishing to catalogue and comment on Constantinople's guilds and trading activity at the turn of the ninth century has to draw upon a wide variety of other 'contemporary' sources.⁶ Where possible, we have tried to narrow the chronological scope of our references within the framework of the hundred years or so between the 'permanent' Bulgaro-Byzantine peace of 863 — resulting in the Christianisation of Bulgaria — and John Tzimiskes's triumphal entry into Constantinople in 971 — riding on a white horse behind a wagon

3. See Fig. 1 which is a photocopy of his Abbildung #11 on p. 148 of *Das Eparchenbuch Leons des Weisens*, CFHB 33 (Vienna 1991) (hereafter *EB*).

4. *EB*, Prolegomena 31-2.

5. *Ibidem* 21-3. See also the reviews by K.-P. Matschke in *BZ* 86-7 (1993-4) 145 and by I.P. Medvedev in *VV* 54 (1993) 184. It is worth repeating here the well-known fact that Photios also wrote the *Eisagoge*'s titles on the emperor and the patriarch.

6. *EB*, Prolegomena, p. 40; also Medvedev in *VV* 54 (1993) 185.

carrying the icon of the Virgin and the Bulgarian imperial regalia.⁷ However, a major point must be emphasised: we have not followed the 'order' of the entries as they appear in the *Book of the Eparch*. Instead, we have followed the triumphal route from the Golden Gate, down the Mese, and into Hagia Sophia: as a matter of fact the chronological frames just mentioned mark the two opposite extremes of Bulgaria's entry into the newly emerging Byzantine Commonwealth.⁸ Besides, while Leo the Deacon presents the parade of 971 as taking place in the Mese, he states that the one of the following year — to celebrate the conquest of Nisibis — triumphed '*dia tes agoras*'.⁹ The beginning of this overlap of the renovated commercial and Christianised ritual spaces is ascribed by the *Vita Basilii* to its protagonist: the Emperor built St. Mary of the Forum 'because he noticed that the artisans who made their living at the market had neither a place of spiritual refuge nor shelter from bad weather'.¹⁰ That Basil himself honoured the shrine during a victory parade is

7. One of these sources is to be singled out here due to its controversial dating. While J. Wortley and L. Rydén date the *Life of St. Andrew the Fool* to various decades of the first half and the middle of the tenth century C. Mango believes that the text was produced 'approximately between the years 680 and 695'. 'The Life of St. Andrew the Fool Reconsidered', in C. Mango, *Byzantium and its Image: History and Culture of the Byzantine Empire and its Heritage* (London: Var. repr. 1984), no. VIII 309, 310. On the tenth century sources, including the *Book of the Eparch*, see most recently Magdalino, *Constantinople médiévale*, 13-14.

8. While M. McCormick has given preference to Skylitzes's version that the ritual divestiture of the captive Boris II of Bulgaria was enacted in the Forum of Constantine — against that of Leo the Deacon, placing it in the Great Palace (*Eternal Victory: Triumphal Rulership in Late Antiquity, Byzantium, and the Early Medieval West* [Cambridge 1986] 174 n. 172 with references), recently G. Prinzing has reconsidered the evidence and suggested a possibility for a different source that Skylitzes might have used. He also paid greater attention to the deposition of the more beautiful and more valuable crown of Boris in Hagia Sophia: 'Das Bamberger Gunthertuch in neuer Sicht', *BSI* 54/1 (1993) 226-7.

9. Leo the Deacon, *History* 10.2 (Bonn 1828) 163 line 6. See M. McCormick for a comment on that new 'manner in which contemporaries perceived' 'the physical location of the ceremony': *Eternal Victory*, 185-6. In a note to us, however, C. Mango expressed his belief that Leo's expression here 'is simply a bit of classicism and does not refer to the market as such'.

10. Theoph. cont., 339 lines 1-6. English transl. by C. Mango, 'The Development of Constantinople as an Urban Centre', in *The 17th International Byzantine Congress: Major Papers* (New York 1986) 131.

evident from the description of his grandson's *On Imperial Expeditions* — based on a source dating from Leo VI's intermediate reign.¹¹ Significantly, the triumph of Basil and his son and co-emperor Constantine of A.D. 879 to honour the victory over the Paulicians was witnessed — amongst the myriad of other city-dwellers — by Symeon himself.

When the future Bulgarian tsar first arrived in Constantinople in the early 870s, he must have entered the city through the Gate of Charisios (Edirne kapı). As one may infer from Fig. 2, few things in the 'market scenery', if any, could have impressed the young Bulgarian before he reached the Philadelphion (Lâleli). To start with, the gardens between the Theodosian and the Constantinian walls, as well as the horticulture and farming near the Church of the Apostles, did not differ much from what he had just seen while approaching the city.¹² Later, when already living in Constantinople, Symeon would get accustomed to the farmers from the immediate vicinity (and from those gardens between the walls?) who would flock to the city on market days to sell their fresh produce.¹³ It seems that many of the shepherds from the surrounding Thracian villages would do the same with their sheep, expecting to sell them at the Strategion (Sirkeci).¹⁴

Few things would have been spotted along the southwestern branch of the Mese as well. At the Amastrion (south of the Murat Pasa Camii), one could meet the *bothroi* examining the horses and the donkeys sold there, and also buy oneself some freshly baked bread from the ovens installed in the square's hippodrome or theatre during

11. Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus, *De Ceremoniis aulae byzantinae*, 2 vols., I (Bonn 1829-30) 502 lines 2f.

12. Johannes Koder, 'Fresh Vegetables for the Capital', in *Constantinople and its Hinterland*, 52-3. Indeed, some time ago the Theodosian walls still stood in open countryside. Only in the last forty years have they been swallowed by the megalopolis. We owe this remark to Peter Baird.

13. See Fig. 2 for one of the 'venues' for fruits in the Artopoleia: *Vita S. Andreae Sali*, PG 111 cols. 712B & C, 713D.

14. *EB* 15.4. See also Johannes Koder, 'Epangelmata schetika me ton episitismo sto Eparchiko Biblio', in *Praktika tou A' Diethnous symposiou He kathemerine zoe sto Byzantio: Tomes kai synecheies sten hellenistike kai rhomaike paradose*, 15-17 Septembriou 1988 (Athens 1989) 368.

the reign of the Empress Irene (797-802).¹⁵ There was no station at the Amastrianon during the triumph of Basil and Constantine in 879, but it is listed in the *De ceremoniis* for processions from St. Mokios (near the cistern of the same name?) and Pege.¹⁶

The real market world of Constantinople stretched for some 1,850 m from the Capitol to the Milion (roughly today's Ordu Caddesi and Divan Yolu) and branched out to the north and the south.¹⁷ Along that route the first station of the triumph of A.D. 879 was the Forum Tauri (modern Beyazit) where bulls had been sold since the time of Constantine V, and the pig merchants were active. Here the *probatemporoi* could sell lambs between Easter and Pentecost.¹⁸ Here one could also see local fishermen displaying their catch.¹⁹ However, the Fish Market where the large vaulted shops of the *ichthyopratai* stood was much further and to the north — beside the Golden Horn piers and, inside, around the so-called Basilike Gate.²⁰

Next was spread out the Bread Market and the Bakers' Quarter, the Artopoleia (somewhat south of Kapalıçarşı).²¹ It was 'known for its porticos, its column with a cross, and an arch' and a mandatory station in all processions.²² Given the importance of bread in the Byzantine diet, this was surely a noteworthy place in the capital,

15. *EB*, 21.3 & 8 (on the *bothroi*); *Constantinople in the Early Eighth Century: The Parastaseis Syntomoi Chronikai*, trans. A. Cameron and J. Herrin (Leiden 1984) 187, 222, 225 (on the bakeries, with references). See also C. Mango, *Le développement urbain de Constantinople (IVe-VIIIe siècles)* (Paris 1992) 57.

16. McCormick, *Eternal Victory* 218 with references.

17. On the distance see Mango, 'Development', 123.

18. *EB*, 16.2 & 3 (on the *choiremporoi*) and 15.5 (on the *probatemporoi*). See also Mango, *Développement* 57.

19. M. Ia. Sjuzumov, *Vizantijskaya kniga Eparcha* (Moscow 1962) 232 with references (in Russian).

20. *EB*, 17.1. On this location see G. Dagron, 'Poissons, pêcheurs et poissonniers de Constantinople', in *Constantinople and its Hinterland*, 70. He also assumes that the Fish Market was identical with the late byzantine Basilike Market, but is hesitant about the identification of the Basilike Gate either as Ispigas/Cubalıkapı and Ayasmakapı or as Perama/Balıkpazar kapısı. See below n. 24.

21. In a metropolis the size of Constantinople it was quite probable that was not the sole and even the central Bread Market. At the same time, it seems that the one just mentioned was very popular and its name gradually acquired the meaning of a byword. See A. Berger, *Untersuchungen zu den Patria Konstantinupoleos* (Bonn 1988) 312-3.

22. McCormick, *Eternal Victory* 215, 219; Mango, *Développement* 31, 55.

although it is uncertain whether the breadmakers and the bread sellers were identical. At the Artopoleia the visitor could also buy himself some wine, fish, cheese and possibly honey.²³ One wonders whether the Bulgarian and other *ethnê* importing honey had their shops in the same place, since the Byzantines knew no sugar at that time, and used honey with their bread instead.²⁴

The 'barbarians' were also prominent in the slave trade as is evident from the Russo-Byzantine treaties of 911 and 944; one of the places where slaves were sold was at the Tetracylon, in the immediate vicinity of the Artopoleia.²⁵ The *ethnê* had their place in the linen trade as well.²⁶ A 'certificate of title' for an *ergasterion othoniopratikon*, dated June 959, locates it in the portico of the Forum.²⁷ Another, of

23. *Vita S. Andreae Sali*, cols. 648C, 657B, 708C.

24. *EB*, 9.6 on the Bulgarian importers of honey. It should be noted that from the seventh century onward the ratio of meat, lamb in particular, in the Byzantine diet increased at the expense of bread. But while until recently the Meat Market was thought to have been generally in the same area — to the south of the Forum Tauri, in the vicinity of the Armenian Patriarchate at Kumkapı (on which see R. Janin (*Constantinople byzantin* [Paris 1964] 379-80 with references) — now it seems that the so-called *stoa tou Makellou* behind the Forum of Constantine and the *Leomakellon* were not identical. The first mention of a *Lemomacellium* — possibly later corrupted to *Leomacellium* — is in the *Chronicon Paschale*, 284-628 AD (Liverpool 1989) 57-6 n. 186, referring to the slaughter of many Goths in AD400, but no location is given. A correction of Janin's thesis now in A. Berger 'Zur Topographie der Ufergegend am Goldenen Horn in der byzantinischen Zeit', *Istanbuler Mitteilungen* 45 (1995) 152-55 and the map on p. 151; *idem*, *Untersuchungen*, 515-6 and the map on p. 197. As a result of his etymological research concerning the word *macellum* he locates the *Leomakellon* besides the Golden Horn, to the northwest and quite near to the Basilike Gate (Unkapamı kapı, called also *porta platea* or *piazza*); whence, he assumes that the *Leomakellon* was identical with the Basilike Market (i.e. the Fish Market). In other words, it seems clear that *meat* and *fish* were sold in one and the same place. In support of this idea, it is interesting to note that in Harpers' *Latin Dictionary* 1091 (Revised, enlarged and great parts rewritten by Ch. Lewis and Ch. Short [New York 1879]) *macellum* has the meaning of 'meat-market, provision-market (where meat, fish and vegetables were sold)'. The same explanation may be found in *Latin-Bulgarian Dictionary* 358 (ed. by M. Voinov, A. Milev [Sofia 1937]).

25. On that side of the treaties see Shepard, 'Constantinople — Gateway to the North', 255. On the location see Mango, 'Development', 130 and *Développement* 57; also *Patria* II.64 in *Scriptores originum Constantinopolitanarum*, ed. T. Preger, 2 vols., II (Leipzig 1901-07) 185 lines 3-14.

26. *EB*, 9.6.

27. Nicolas Oikonomidès, 'Quelques boutiques de Constantinople au Xe s.: prix, loyers, imposition (Cod. Patmiacus 171)', *DOP* 16 (1972) 345 line 6.

April 957, speaks of an *ergasterion sklabin[ik?]arion* (in the same place?) and the *Book of the Eparch* mentions *sthlabinika phakiolia* (hats and kerchiefs?).²⁸ Could Symeon have met some of his compatriots selling their goods in the Forum? . . .

The circular square of Constantine was certainly a central climax of any triumphal or other procession, and it was also emerging as the hub of the city's commercial life.²⁹ The bazaar of horses' bridles, the Chalinaria, was in the northern outer portico of the square.³⁰ The shops of the *keroularioi*, the *prandiopratai*, the *metaxopratai*, and the furriers were located there; for the first and the last of these we even know that they were in the southern inner portico, in the vicinity of the Virgin-in-the-Forum.³¹ While the candlemakers had, understandably, many other shops — particularly in Hagia Sophia — it is significant that so many trades found their place in the Forum.³² Perhaps Cyril Mango is right to suggest that the church of St. Mary there was not a new foundation at all since it is more logical to believe that it had existed from an earlier period and evidently attracted 'the artisans' to seek protection in its vicinity, rather than to trust the inverted statement of the *Vita Basilii*.³³ On the other hand, it might be of some importance to emphasise that in 879 Basil and Constantine rode on *horseback* and in their military uniforms until they reached the Forum, where they dismounted and were met by Patriarch Photios outside the Virgin's shrine. Then, already in the shrine, the princes changed from their uniforms into the purple *divitisia*.³⁴ Could it be

28. *Ibidem*, 347 line 17; *EB*, 8.1.

29. Mango ('Development', 130) calls it Constantinople's 'main retail centre'.

30. C. Mango, 'Constantine's Porphyry Column and the Chapel of St. Constantine', in *idem*, *Studies on Constantinople* (Aldershot, Var. 1993), no. IV, 106 n. 2.

31. Theoph. Cont, 420 lines 13-6; *EB*, 6.13. See also Theophanes, *Chronographia*, ed. C. de Boor, 2 vols., I (Leipzig 1883-5) 487-8, esp. 487 lines 31-2. Inferring from the *EB*, 5.2 and Oikonomidès, *op. cit.*, 346 lines 23-4, could we suggest that the *Embolos* mentioned in the *Book* is that of the Forum?

32. It was even possible to purchase liturgical vessels there as is evident from the anonymous narrative on the 'good deeds' of the emperor Theophilus, a text compiled under Basil I: W. Regel, ed., *Analecta Byzantino-Russica* (St. Petersburg 1891) 42 lines 13-8 and p. xiii on the dating.

33. See above, p. 108; Mango, 'The Life of St. Andrew the Fool', 302-3; *idem*, 'Development', 131.

34. McCormick, *Eternal Victory* 215-6.

that the arrangement of the trades along the Upper and Lower Middle Avenue, and particularly in the Forum, had something to do with the transformation of an *adventus* from a military into a civilian Christian ceremony? It is indeed hard to say, given the paucity of our topographical data.

From the Forum down to Hagia Sophia, the world of the market was represented by the *argyropatai* and the *myrepsoi*.³⁵ It has been suggested that the *myrepsoi* were involved in the Smyrnion — the Spice Market located to the north.³⁶ As for their arrangement from Chalke to the Milion and its significance for the senses, human and divine, the *Book of the Eparch* is unequivocal.³⁷

On two trades — glass and tile making and selling — which we can suppose have certainly impressed Symeon given the archaeological evidence from early medieval Bulgaria, the *Book of the Eparch* is silent. However, recent archaeological discoveries in Istanbul coupled with newly published written sources have enabled scholars to locate a ninth-tenth century glass workshop near the Strategion.³⁸ Wasters excavated at the Kalenderhane Camii (The Virgin Kyriotissa Church) still await publication but it is evident that there was 'concentration of tiles in Constantinople and its immediate hinterland' and that 'their

35. We have tried our best to solve the puzzle regarding the location of the *argyropateia* portico — in the north or in the south section of the colonnaded Regia (basic texts: *Chronicon Paschale* (Bonn 1832) 623 lines 6-9 and Theophanes, 184 lines 14-7). Since the latter mention it in the singular, obviously it was a single portico. See G. Downey, 'Imperial Building Records in Malallas', *BZ* 38/1 (1938), 308. But while the *Paschal Chronicle* seems to imply that during the Nika riot the flames engulfed buildings located on both sides of the Mese, the portico of the silversmiths' shops included, Theophanes's text clearly speaks of the portico and the palace of Lausus as if they were in a row. The controversy has found its place in Abbildung no. 263 (on p. 232) and on p. 269 of W. Müller-Wiener's magisterial *Bildlexikon zur Topographie Istanbuls: Byzantion — Konstantinoupolis — Istanbul bis zum Beginn des 17. Jahrhunderts* (Tübingen 1977).

36. See Fig. 2; also Johannes Koder, 'Die Drogisten und ihre Waren im Eparchenbuch (EB, 10.1)', in *Antichnaya drevnost' i srednie veka* 26 (1992) 234.

37. EB, 10.1.

38. J. Henderson and M. Mundell Mango, 'Glass at Medieval Constantinople: Preliminary Scientific Evidence', in *Constantinople and its Hinterland*, 346.

dissemination elsewhere, to Bulgaria (Preslav) . . .', etc. 'was due probably to diplomatic rather than trade mechanisms'.³⁹

What Symeon saw was noteworthy indeed and he remembered it well. Was it then just a mere coincidence that he initiated his life and death struggle against Byzantium by a war for a market-place?

Sofia, Bulgaria

39. R.B. Mason and M. Mundell Mango, 'Glazed "Tiles of Nicomedia", in Bythnia, Constantinople and Elsewhere', in *Constantinople and its Hinterland*, 322.

Fig. 1

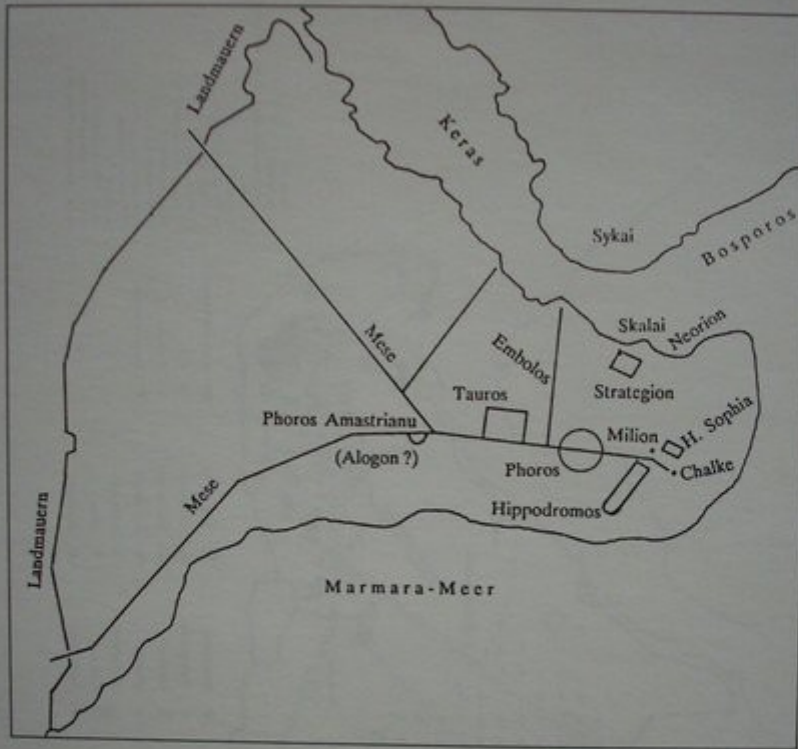


Fig. 2

