

# Teresa Wolińska, Piotr Łukasz Grotowski

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## "Święci wojownicy w sztuce bizantyńskiej (843–1261). Studia nad ikonografią uzbrojenia i ubioru"... : [recenzja]

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Artykuł został opracowany do udostępnienia w internecie przez Muzeum Historii Polski w ramach prac podejmowanych na rzecz zapewnienia otwartego, powszechnego i trwałego dostępu do polskiego dorobku naukowego i kulturalnego. Artykuł jest umieszczony w kolekcji cyfrowej [bazhum.muzhp.pl](http://bazhum.muzhp.pl), gromadzącej zawartość polskich czasopism humanistycznych i społecznych.

Tekst jest udostępniony do wykorzystania w ramach dozwolonego użytku.

complemented by written sources.

In the first introductory chapter the author demonstrates the current state of research on the development of the cult and iconography of warrior saints, in particular on the arms and armour of the Middle Byzantine army. The time-frame covers the period between 843 and 1261, although it is highly conventional and the author not infrequently goes beyond it, e.g. to the pre-iconoclastic era or to the art of 13<sup>th</sup> century.

Chapter One presents the archaeological, iconographic and written sources, on which the research is based. The written sources include military treatises (*taktika* and *strategika*). The author did not limit his work to the artifacts from the Byzantine Empire but also from the area under its cultural influence (for example, Russia or Norman Sicily).

Chapter Two is discusses the origins of the image of a warrior saint. In his analysis of the problem of the Holy War in the Christian doctrine the author presents the early images of warriors, showing their two basic iconographic types (mounted and foot warrior). He pays attention to the influence of the cult of pagan gods on the development of the cult of Christian warriors. He notices the correlation with the images of Goddess Athena, and the gods of Syria and Egypt (p. 146–147). Another part of the book is devoted to the literary description of the influence of the army's heavenly supporters on the course of war; the author emphasizes that it began to appear as late as in the 10<sup>th</sup> century (p. 150–155). He sees the popularity of the cult in popular religiousness on the one hand and in the imperial patronage on the other (p. 160).

The main part of the book consists of three following chapters, dedicated to the costume and armour of warrior saints, their weapons and equestrian equipment respec-

tively. In the first of these chapters the author discusses the parts of the armour – different types of the corselet (“muscléd” cuirass, scale body armour, lamellar cuirass), “soft” armour (*neurika*, *lorikion psilos*) and the other parts – *kabadion* and *skaramangion*, shoulder-guards and sleeves (*manikia*), lower tunic (*himation*, *peristethidia*), shoulder pennants (*phlamuliskia*), *epilorikion*, protection for arms, legs and footwear.

The remaining parts of the book are devoted to the symbolism and customs regarding the armour, particularly the shields.

The author pays much attention to the warriors' cloaks (both those worn by officers as well as by ordinary soldiers, known as *sagion*). He takes a close look into the insignia worn by the military, such as *fibula* (*kornoukopion*, *porpe*), officer sash (*diadema*, *zone stratiotike*), *tablion* and symbolic insignia: *diadem* and *tiara*, the *torque* (*maniakion*).

Personal weapons of Byzantine soldiers shown on the images include different types of shafted weapons (lances, spears, javelins, heavy infantry pikes). The lances were also used as a symbol of status and a symbolic weapon. The images are sometimes accompanied by a *crux hastata*, i.e. a lance with a cross-shaped end and a military pennon (*phlamoulon*, *bandon*). As the edged weapons were often used in the Byzantine army, a sword (*spatha*, *xiphos*) often accompanies the images of warrior saints, also because of its symbolic role. A palash (proto-sabre), known as *paramerion* is less frequently seen.

The images of warrior saints include protective parts of the horse's armour as well. These are discussed in the book, too.

The author shares some interesting thoughts on the pages of his book. Given the lack of archaeological material it is very

difficult to reconstruct the original robes and arms used by the Byzantine army. The book demonstrates that the images of warrior saints can be useful in learning what they might have looked like. The creators of the images, despite the traditional form, usually followed the arms and armour known to themselves, which can be proven by depicting such novelties as stirrups or almond-shaped shields. The process of adjusting the images of warrior saints to the military details of the era could be observed much more often outside Constantinople, particularly in Nubia and Egypt, but also in Georgia. Substantial changes can be seen during the Crusades, thanks to the contact with Latin knights. Grotowski points out the adjustment of warrior saints to the standards of the knightly culture. He also makes the reader aware that the clothes and arms were also used to convey some political ideas, both by the newcomers from the West and by the Greeks themselves (p. 450–451). He also emphasizes that the model of the warrior saint formed in the middle Byzantine era survived and went on being used also later on, in the era of the Paleologues.

The fact that the warrior saints were depicted mostly with a spear and sword can be read as a continuation of the antique composition or an image modelled on that of the imperial guards. Both these hypotheses may well be true, as the uniform of the latter clearly referred to the ancient patterns.

The illustrative material is certainly

essential to this kind of work. The book contains more than one hundred illustrations of warrior saints on frescos, icons, coins, talismans, dishes and other daily use artifacts. The illustrative material certainly makes the book easier to use. Similarly, the indices at the end facilitate the work with it. In this case, however, the reader may have some doubts about their accuracy. To give an example, Demetrios of Thessalonica appears in the book more frequently than you can expect from the index only (the occurrences of his name on page 163, 165, 166–169, 193, 238, 254, 271 are omitted). The well developed footnotes provide information to individuals exploring a particular field of study, this however makes the book difficult to recommend to those who are not specialists.

In a work with a wealth of information like this, some errors appear inevitable. Also some opinions of the author may have gone too far, like the statement that a double-headed eagle was accepted as the official coat of arms of the Empire (p. 301).

Grotowski's book is without doubt a great reference book for historians, art historians and archaeologists. It would be of interest to the researchers of warrior saints' biographies and individuals interested in the Byzantine army in the early and middle Byzantine era. An extensive bibliography represents a great tool for further individual research on the subject.

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**RAFAŁ KOSIŃSKI, *The Emperor Zeno Religion and Politics*, Towarzystwo Wydawnicze „Historia Iagellonica”, Cracow 2010, pp. 289 [= *Byzantina et Slavica Cracoviensia*, 6]**

The reign of the emperor Zeno, although it has drawn the attention of scholars, has not yet been a subject of monographic works, with the exceptions of the written in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, difficult to get and rather general work by Wilhelm Barth<sup>1</sup> and the unpublished doctoral dissertation of Benno Schwark<sup>2</sup>. This gap is superbly filled by Rafał Kosiński, a young Polish byzantist who can already boast significant scholarly achievements<sup>3</sup>. While the work is primarily an attempt to show the religious policy of the ruler, it also sheds light on a number of other aspects of his reign.

The work is divided into eight main parts.

<sup>1</sup> *Kaiser Zeno*, Basel 1894.

<sup>2</sup> *Die kirchenpolitik Kaiser Zenos*, Würzburg 1950.

<sup>3</sup> He is the autor e.g.: ΑΓΙΩΣΥΝΗ ΚΑΙ ΕΞΟΥΣΙΑ. *Konstantynoplikańscy święci mężowie i władza w V wieku po Chr.* [*Constantinopolitan Holy Men and Authority in 5th Century*], Warszawa 2006 [= *ArF*, 56]; *The Life of Nestorius as seen in Greek and Oriental Sources*, [in:] *Continuity and Change. Studies in Late Antique Historiography*, ed. D. BRODKA, M. STACHURA, Cracow 2007, p. 155–170 [= *Ele*, 13]; *Początki kariery Tarasikodissy-Zenona* [*The Beginnings of Tarasikodissa-Zeno's Career*], [in:] *Byzantina Europaea. Księga jubileuszowa ofiarowana Profesorowi Waldemarowi Ceranowi*, ed. M. KOKOSZKO, M.J. LESZKA, Łódź 2007, p. 289–304 [= *BL*, 11]; *Izauria w orbicie wpływów rzymskich do połowy V wieku* [*Isauria in the Orbit of Roman Influence until the mid V Century*], *BTH* 8, 2010, p. 11–26; *Peter the Fuller, Patriarch of Antioch*, *Bsl* 68, 2010, p. 49–73; *Struktura społeczna* [*Social Structure*] and *Religie cesarstwa rzymskiego w V stuleciu* [*Religions of Roman Empire in the V Century*], [in:] *Świat rzymski w V wieku* [*Roman World in the V Century*], ed. IDEM, K. TWARDOŚKA, Kraków 2010, p. 278–297; 365–416.

In the first (*Introduction*, p. 13–29), the author presented the significance of Zeno's religious policy and characterized sources that formed the basis of his inquiry. In the second (*Decisions of the Council of Chalcedon: Acceptance and Opposition (451–471)*, p. 31–55) he showed the situation of the Byzantine Church during the two decades after the Council of Chalcedon. Part three (*Zeno*, p. 57–59) was devoted to the – hailing from Isauria – Tarasikodissa-Zeno's way to the imperial throne. Particular emphasis was placed on determining his religious views. The next part of the book (*Basiliskos' Usurpation*, p. 79–97) covers the usurpation of Basiliskos, brother of Verina, the widow of emperor Leo I. This event was an exceptionally important moment in the history of Zeno's reign. During the brief rule of the usurper, the debate over the provisions of Council of Chalcedon came back to life with great intensity. What is particularly significant, the groups hostile to this assembly of bishops gained strength thanks to the support of Basiliskos. After regaining power, Zeno was forced to work out the rules of conduct towards those of the clergy who associated themselves with the usurper and represented anti-Chalcedonian views. Part V (*The Chalcedonian Reaction*, p. 99–124) was devoted to this issue. Removal of the anti-Chalcedonian clergy from the most important positions within the Church and replacing them with supporters of the council and men loyal to both the emperor and Acacius, patriarch of Constantinople and Zeno's chief religious advisor, exacerbated the situation. This became apparent especially in Egypt. The development of *Henotikon*, the document that was to become a middle ground for an agreement with the Egyptian anti-Chalcedonians, was supposedly intended to calm down