

Błażej Cecota, Teresa Wolińska

"Konstantynopol – Nowy Rzym. Miasto i ludzie w okresie wczesnobizantyńskim"... : [recenzja]

Studia Ceranea : journal of the Waldemar Ceran Research Centre for the
History and Culture of the Mediterranean Area and South-East Europe 1,
230-232

2011

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, gromadzącej zawartość polskich czasopism humanistycznych i społecznych.

Tekst jest udostępniony do wykorzystania w ramach
dozwolonego użytku.

fortifications of the city.

In the third part of the monograph (*The inhabitants of Constantinople*, p. 178–233), which refers to the population of the city, Andrzej Kompa presents his research of the social structure of Constantinople (p. 178–226), focusing on a picture of the Constantinopolitan middle class and the significance of women in Byzantine society. Teresa Wolińska writes about Constantinopolitan circus factions and their members. She demonstrates their role during races and in unrests that occasionally burst out in the city.

In the chapter *The Emperor, the Court and the Subjects* (p. 234–269), M. J. Leszka and T. Wolińska write about the Byzantine concept of power, imperial symbolism in force throughout the period of early Byzantium and analyze the coronation ceremony. One should emphasize the importance of their conclusions concerning the significance of women at the imperial court and the relationship between the emperor and his subjects.

In the fifth chapter (*The Authorities of Constantinople*, p. 270–349) Paweł Filipczak makes a thorough analysis of the available sources concerning the office and activities of the *proconsul* of the city. He also presents a wealth of information on the distinctive Constantinopolitan system of fire protection, on the city police serving under the control of the *praetor plebis* and activities of the city's *quaesitor*, the counterpart of the modern immigration officer. The author also includes in the chapter an extensive fragment which consists of his research in the *prefect's* undertakings against any form of anti-government opposition, religious unrest or faction riots.

In the next chapter (*The Church and his Influence on the Life of the Inhabitants of Constantinople*, p. 350–400) Małgorzata B. Leszka discusses riots triggered off by the Christian population of the capital in a pro-

test against depositions of Constantinopolitan patriarchs (Joannites, Euphemius etc.) and attempts on the life of some bishops of Constantinople (John Chrysostom, Gregory of Nazianzus, Nectarius etc.). The author elaborates in detail charity work of the Church and various charitable foundations, like *xenodochia*, *orphanotrophia*, *brephotrophia*, *gerontokomia*, *ptochotrophia*, scattered all over the fourteen districts of the capital.

Various forms of religious cult are the topic of the sixth chapter (*Religious Life of the Inhabitants of Constantinople*, p. 401–432), in which S. Bralewski presents his outstanding expertise concerning religious ceremonies connected with the cult of the Saint Cross, the Mother of the God, various martyrs and their relics.

In the chapter *Supplying the City* (p. 433–470) T. Wolińska and Maciej Kokoszko write about the problem of providing Constantinople with adequate food and water supplies (especially the city's aqueducts and cisterns).

Although the chapter *The Tastes of Constantinople* (p. 471–475) could be a separate dissertation, it forms an integral part of the discussed monograph. Therein, M. Kokoszko, an authority on early Byzantine food, presents different dishes, which were prepared by the inhabitants of Constantinople. The scholar acquaints the reader with various typical cereal foods like *mádza*, meat dishes, fish delicacies (from *afye* to sharks) as well as with various soups, for instance *ptisáne*. He also presents a cornucopia of vegetables and fruits like mallow (*maláche*) or medlars (*méspilon*, *epimelís*), which are nowadays not as popular as they used to be in Byzantium. Additionally, he elaborates on a variety of herbs (pennyroyal, mint, coriander and others) and spices (like *asafetida*, which, in ancient times, was termed *silphion*), and other food additives determin-

ing the range of Constantinopolitan aromas (like famous fish sauce called *garum*). Last but not least, the author describes ancient and early Byzantine doctrines on healthy food and quotes Byzantine medical doctors on nutritional properties of various food-stuffs and dishes prepared from them.

In the tenth chapter (*The education in Constantinople*, p. 576–642) A. Kompa analyses the legal status of Constantinopolitan scholars. The author presents the history of the higher education system, which was established by Theodosius the Younger, and describes Constantinopolitan libraries, including that of Constantius II. A. Kompa's area of interest focuses not only on law and philosophy but also on medical and engineering teaching, which has not been researched into satisfactorily before.

In the last chapter of the discussed monograph (*The entertainment in Constantinople*, p. 643–669). T. Wolińska describes pantomime performances, imperial festivals (*brumalia*), chariot and runners races, animal fights, acrobatic shows and others.

The book is supplemented by a foreword (p. 9–11), detailed maps of early Byzantine Constantinople, several indices

(personal, geographical, Constantinopolitan names, p. 699–742), a selected bibliography and extensive illustrational material, collected during the trips to Istanbul.

Constantinople – New Rome. The City and the People in the Early Byzantine Period is certainly one of the most exhaustive monographs depicting the capital of Byzantine Empire at its earliest development stage. Despite the abundance of information included in the study, the authors managed to present a clear picture of all problems presented in the book, and the history of the city is only a background against which they analyze almost every aspect of the Constantinopolitans' life. Each and every individual chapter has been based on an ample body of sources and secondary literature. Particularly the chapters on the social history of the capital and Byzantine diet will contribute considerably to an increase of knowledge about the Byzantine Empire and consequently to a noteworthy progress in Byzantine studies. Let us hope that the monograph of the Łódź scholars will not pass unnoticed and that it will be an inspiration for further research.

Błażej Cecota (Łódź)

PIOTR ŁUKASZ GROTOWSKI, *Święci wojownicy w sztuce bizantyńskiej (843–1261). Studia nad ikonografią uzbrojenia i ubioru [Warrior Saints in Byzantine Art (843–1261). Studies of the Iconography of Arms and Armour]*, Wydawnictwo WAM, Kraków 2011, pp.492.

The book is a doctoral dissertation of an art historian from the Department of Ancient and Medieval Art of the Papal University of John Paul II in Cracow. The English version of the book was published

at about the same time as the Polish one.

The work is based on many sources, mostly iconographic ones from the Byzantine Empire, now scattered among different centers of scholarly study, and

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 13th 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 10th 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 (“muscled” 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