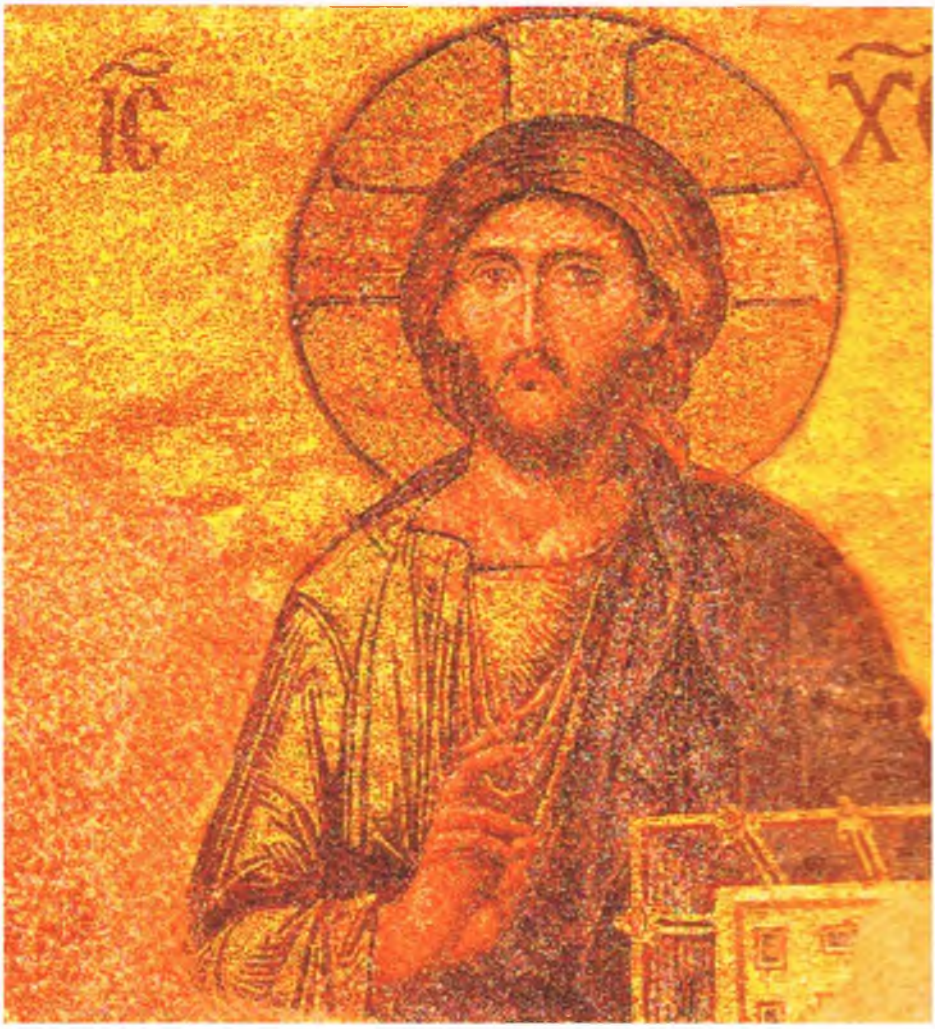


ZDENKO ZLATAR

GOLDEN BYZANTIUM

IMPERIAL POWER IN KOMNENIAN CONSTANTINOPLE (1081-1180)

THE ISIS PRESS
ISTANBUL

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IMPERIAL POWER IN KOMNENIAN CONSTANTINOPLE
(1081-1180)

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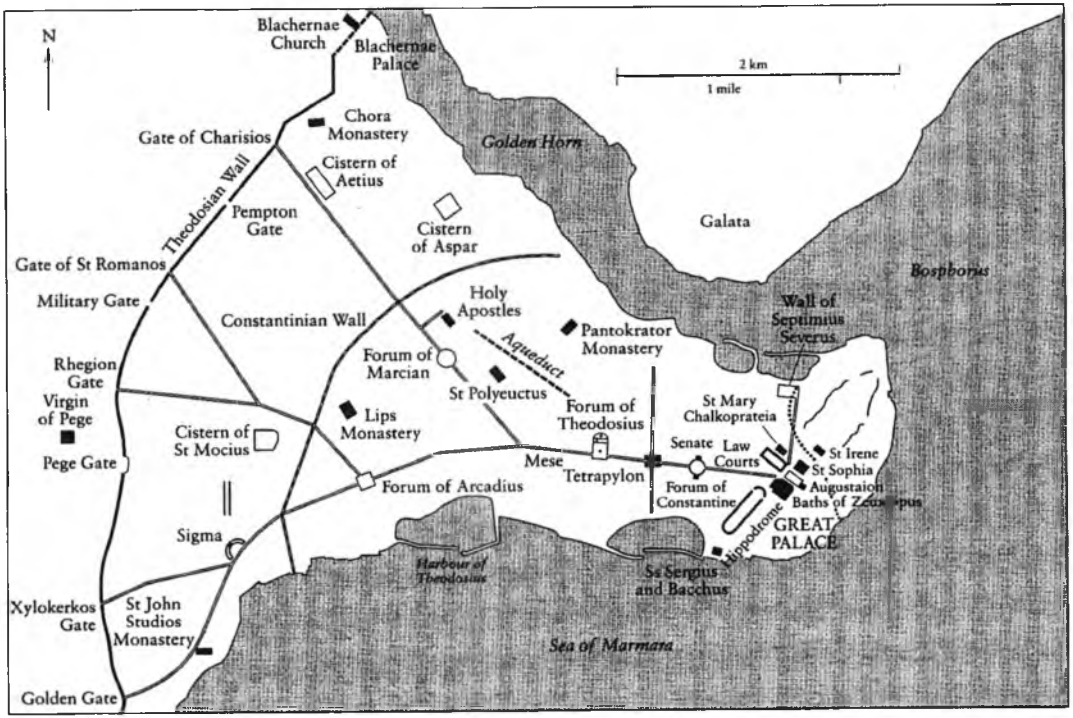
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ZDENKO ZLATAR was born in Dubrovnik and educated in Chicago. Since 1979 he has taught at The University of Sydney in Australia where he is now an Honorary Reader in History in the School of Philosophical and Historical Inquiry (SOPHI). He has taught Russian, East European, and Early Modern and Modern History, with special emphasis on social, intellectual, religious and cultural history. He is Vice President of the *Commission internationale des études historiques slaves* in Paris. He has published a number of monographs on the history of the Balkans in general, and of Dubrovnik in particular. His books include *Our Kingdom Come: The Counter-Reformation, the Republic of Dubrovnik, and the Liberation of the Balkan Slavs* (Boulder-New York, 1992), *The Slavic Epic: Gundulić's* Osman (New York, 1995), *Njegoš's Montenegro* (Boulder-New York, 2005), *The Poetics of Slavdom*, Vol. I: Mažuranić, Vol. II: Njegoš (New York, 2007) and *Dubrovnik's Merchants and Capital in the Ottoman Empire (1520-1620): A Quantitative Study* (Isis Press, Istanbul, 2011). He has published many articles in journals in Europe, America and Australia.

Though all other cities have their period of government, and are subject to the decay of time, Constantinople alone seems to claim to herself a kind of immortality and will continue a city, as long as the race of mankind shall live either to inhabit or rebuild her.

Pierre Gilles, *The Antiquities of Constantinople* [trans. John Ball]



Map: Plan of Constantinople. After John Haldon, Palgrave Atlas of Byzantine History (Basingstoke, 2005), p. 40

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AKA	Komnena, Anna, *The Alexiad* (trans. by E.R.A. Sewter, rev. by Peter Frankopan)
BC	Porphyrogennetos, Constantine, *The Book of Ceremonies* [trans. by Ann Moffatt & Maxeme Tall] (Canberra, 2012)
BMFD	Thomas, John & Angela Constantinides Hero, eds., *Byzantine Monastic Foundation Documents: A Complete Translation of the Surviving Founders' Typika and Testaments* (Dumbarton Oaks, Washington, D.C., 2000)
DOS	Dumbarton Oaks Seals: Nesbitt, John and Nicolas Oikonomides, eds., *Catalogue of Byzantine Seals at Dumbarton Oaks and in the Fogg Musem of Art*, 6 vols.
EPL	*Encycloplaedic Prosopographical Lexicon of Byzantine History and Civilization* (Leiden, in progress)
K	John Kinnamos, *Deeds of John and Manuel Comnenus* [trans. by Charles M. Brand] (New York, 1976)
Konstantopoulos	Konstantopoulos, K., *Vizantiaka Molibdoboulla* (Athens, 1930)
Laurent	*Les Corpus des sceaux de l'empire byzantin*, 5 vols. (Paris, 1963-1972)
NCH	Harry J. Magoulias, trans., *O City of Byzantium, Annals of Niketas Choniates* (Detroit. 1984)
PG	Migne, *Patrologia Graeca*
REB	*Revue des études byzantines*
Seibt	Seibt, W., *Die byzantinische Bleisiegel in Osterreich* Vol. I (Vienna, 1978)
T&M	*Travaux et mémoires*
Zacos	Zacos, G. & A. Vegléry, *Byzantine Lead Seals*, 3 vols. (Basel, 1972)
VARZOS	Varzos, Konstantinos, *He genealogia ton Komnenon*, 2 vols. (Thessaloniki, 1984)

FOREWORD

WHEN I WAS a little boy growing up in Tito's Yugoslavia I listened to a popular hit song "Istanbul—Constantinopolis" and I wondered at the time how any city could have two names. The song sings that "Istanbul was Constantinople/ Now it's Istanbul not Constantinople". Only recently did I discover that the song had lyrics by Jimmy Kennedy and music by Nat Simon, and that it was recorded by the Canadlan group The Four Lads in 1953 and released by Columbia Records, probably to coincide with the 500th Anniversary of the fall of the City on Tuesday, May 29th, 1453. I have always been intrigued by this superb city on the Bosphorus, and I hoped to be able to write a book some day on it. This study is such a book. It deals with the final heyday of the City while it was still Constantinople, the capital of the Byzantine Empire, and while it could still pretend reasonably to be a great if not world power. It impressed both Western and Eastern visitors immensely, and it stuck in their memories as a city awash with wealth and power. Above all, they saw it as golden, its churches and palaces full of mosaics which shone with pure gold. Golden Byzantium. It has continued to fascinate travellers down the centuries, echoing in such poems as William Butler Yeats's poem "Sailing to Byzantium" (1927): "...Or set upon a golden bough to sing/To lords and ladies of Byzantium/ Of what is past, or passing, or to come." It still offers magic enchantment to any visitor today, and as such it is without peer.

It is a pleasant duty to thank all those who made it possible for me to write what turned out to be a labor of love as well as a work of scholarship. First of all, I would like to thank my good friend colleague, Dr Alfred Vincent, of the Modern Greek Department at the University of Sydney, who helped me to discover my roots. He knows that without my interest in this part of the world this book would never have been conceived, much less written. We have shared the interest in this most turbulent of all of Europe's regions, the Balkans, for many decades, his interest being the Greek-speaking areas, and mine the Slavic-speaking ones. We have complemented each other very well, and developed a lasting friendship whose product is, among other things, this book. Next, I would like to thank Dr John O. Ward who has encouraged my interest in Byzantium at a stage in life when most scholars are merely content to stay 'in their rut' and churn out the same kind of a book over and over again or are eager to publish their collected articles in (among others) Variorum reprints. I chose not to do so, but to write a book that would be of use to Byzantinists and general readers alike. It may not be an easy reading for everyone, but s/he should remember that Byzantium was no simple civilization. The word 'Byzantine' says it all. As an Honorary Reader in History currently it was possible for me to devote myself to writing this book (among others) and I would like to express my gratitude to Professor Barbara

Caine as Head of the School of Philosophical and Historical Inquiry [SOPHI]. The Librarians and Staff of Fisher Library at the University of Sydney have been particularly helpful in providing books and articles at the time when Byzantine studies are not automatically acquired by libraries in Australia, and I would like to thank them all. I would also like to thank Dr Jadran Mimica of the Department of Anthropology at The University of Sydney who helped me develop a healthy interest in anthropological studies many years ago. Last but not least I am grateful to Professor Sinan Kuneralp of the Isis Press in Istanbul for publishing this book. He has been making a singular contribution by publishing studies in English and other Western languages, and all of us whose works in foreign languages are being published in Turkey owe him a very great debt indeed.

Dubrovnik, October 3, 2014

PROLEGOMENA

ISTANBUL is not just any city, it is The City. Its modern Turkish name is derived from the popular expression by the Byzantines: *is tin Polin*, meaning "going to the City". Its official name from its foundation by Constantine the Great in 324 to its ceasing being the capital in 1922 was Konstantinoupolis in Byzantine Greek, and Konstantinniyeh in Ottoman Turkish, i.e. Constantinople. But Constantinople, i.e. modern Istanbul, has a special historical claim: longer than any other city it was the capital of two empires that claimed a universal status. Both Byzantine and Ottoman empires saw themselves as *the divinely-protected* [in Ottoman, *memalik-i mahrüse*] possessions, each chosen by God [respectively Jesus Christ and Allah]. For thirteen hundred years, roughly from 324 to 1922, Constantinople was The Capital, successively, of these two great empires that saw themselves and were seen by others as world powers. Even in their decline both empires continued to subscribe to the same universalist and divinely-protected status. No other capital could make such a claim, for such a long period of time, for any other empire in world history.

Constantinople, of course, has been the center of two special branches of historiography, Byzantine [in German *Byzantinistik*] and Ottoman studies, and a very large number of books has been written, often of exceedingly high caliber, on the history, structure, and civilization of both empires whose capital was Istanbul. Most of these studies are those of the two empires respectively, paying due credit to the capital, but not specifically devoted to it. Of these there are three kinds: first, there are guides to the existing monuments and (even more numerous) ruins of Constantinople, making it possible for a modern traveller to present-day Istanbul to retrace the steps of the old capital mostly on foot; this book is not such a study. There are a number of very good (and even more not so good) guides, of which one of the best is Robert Ousterhout's *Walking thru Byzantium: Great Palace Region*, now in its second edition. The second kind is exemplified by a classic work by Alexander van Millingen, *Byzantine Constantinople*, which is not meant to be a walking guide but rather a scholarly treatment (not to say a catalogue) of whatever one can gather from the sources on Byzantine structures and ruins (still standing or not), with a companion volume on the Byzantine churches in Istanbul; this book is not such a scholarly monograph. The third kind is made up of topographical surveys and studies of the City taken as a whole, arranged either chronologically, as in Kuban's *Istanbul: An Urban History—Byzantion—Constantinopolis—Istanbul*, or topographically as in case of Janin's, Guilland's, Müller-Wiener's, and Magdalino's works. Again, this study does not

replicate this kind though it makes full use of them (and others). Needless to say, without these works (and many others) this study would not have been possible. But if it is none of the above kinds of works, what is it?

Though Istanbul, both in its previous incarnations as Konstantinoupolis and Konstantinniyeh, has been served by such (in many cases) very fine studies, there has been no attempt to write a study of what made this city supremely central and important to both the Byzantines and the Ottomans: i.e. the sources, claims, and exercise of its Imperial power. A number of studies of imperial power throughout the history of Byzantium, such as the extremely fine one of Gilbert Dagron, and a number of prosopographical studies of the various servants of the Ottoman sultans, in particular in the late 19th century, has opened this avenue of approach, but no synthesis as yet has been given either for the Byzantine or Ottoman Constantinople. This book is such a study: it takes Imperial power as the hub of both activities and representations in the period of the first three Komnenian emperors (1081-1180), Alexios I, John II, and Manuel I. In Byzantium power belonged exclusively to the emperor and to whom he (with a few women as exceptions) chose to delegate it or share it with. This is why to this day Istanbul literally oozes power: its structures, whether standing or crumbling, were built to express this Imperial grandeur. Both the Byzantines and Ottomans placed limits and restrictions on Imperial power in religious terms, and both the Orthodox Church and the *ulama*, exercised tangible powers in their own right. But secular power was overwhelmingly Imperial. Power in its very essence is intangible: it is expressed through both material objects and human agents. And that is why this study consists of two parts: the first is a detailed description of the *topography of power*, involving the examination of the status of the people in Constantinople, in particular the role of the factions both inside and outside of the Hippodrome, of the office of the emperor, of Hagia Sophia as the place where during the Middle Byzantine period the emperors were crowned and in which Imperial power came face to face with Divine Power of Jesus Christ as the Pantokrator, of the Great Palace where all Imperial administration was located until the Palace of Blachernae increasingly took over under the Komneni, and of the newly-founded Church of the Pantokrator, built by John II to serve as his and his Komnenian successors' and relatives' final resting place, thus establishing a new focus of Imperial worship. Thus it can be seen that this study makes no attempt to deal with all (or most) extant monuments of Constantinople, but only those which represented and acted as centers of Imperial power.

Monuments of whatever kind are built to either commemorate or serve men. Thus any examination of power must deal with three cardinal aspects of it: the venues where this power was represented, i.e. the buildings as outlined above; the agents who carried out and/or were supporters or opponents of this power; and the forms in which the representations of power were expressed, i.e. the ceremonies and rituals. We are extremely fortunate that Constantine

Porphyrogennetos (whether he himself actually did it, directed it, had it commissioned or whoever else) left us a detailed catalogue of ceremonies designed to express Imperial power during the period preceding the Komnenian dynasty which also included the previous ones. Despite many difficulties with such a composite text, the book *On Ceremonies*, now available in a fine English translation, makes it possible to examine and evaluate the existing ceremonies, and this has been duly done in the first part in connection with the topography.

But the third aspect is in many ways the most seminal: this study is the first to offer a comprehensive prosopographical treatment of those people who either belonged to the Komneni (super)clan as of birthright, or married into it. These are the people who were honored above all others in Constantinople, whom I have dubbed as 'Imperials' and who were trusted by and associated with the exercise of power in the Komnenian period. The second part on the *Prosopography of Power*, identifies these individuals (more than 200 of them) using all the available prosopographical sources, including the recent on-line one. According to Anna Komnena (who knew very well of what and whom she spoke), these were the people who mattered in Constantinople and whoever did not belong to this group was by definition a nobody in Byzantine Constantinopolitan terms.

It then places this privileged group within the context of two Imperial aristocracies: military and civil, basing itself on the extremely valuable but not sufficiently extrapolated prosopographical lists of the late Alexander Kazhdan. By using modern statistical methods, the full extent of the Komnenian revolution in government is laid out in detail.

Though modified in some details, the result of the Komnenian revolution was to place the military aristocracy firmly in control of all levers of power in the empire, and particularly in Constantinople, for the Komneni saw themselves and were seen by others as the pinnacle of this military establishment, and a chapter is devoted to the military structure. The final chapter deals with the central administration, with a particular reference to the role of the eunuchs.

The final, third part of the study consists of an illustrative dossier which reproduces the most important monuments and representations of both divine and Imperial power (two sides of the same coin). This is necessary in order to illustrate the absolutely cardinal role that the hierarchy of power played in Byzantium, expressed in terms of various colors. This study offers the first comprehensive treatment of the *hierarchy of colors* and their relationship to both Imperial and Divine cult.

The Byzantines saw their empire as the final one before the Second Coming of Christ, and they regarded their emperor as the Christ's regent on earth, ruling by right over the entire civilized world [the *oikoumene*]. As Christ was the Ruler of All [Pantokrator] in Heaven so the emperor was on this earth. Appropriately, the most precious element and the brightest color,

that of gold, was reserved for Christ and Emperor alone. That is why the Byzantine mosaics use gold extensively to surround both Jesus Christ and the emperors and emphasize their divine status.

There is a panel in the south gallery of Hagia Sophia on the west wall of the imperial enclosure, the area reserved for the emperors. This is the famous *Deesis* which, though only about a third of it has survived, shows Christ flanked by the Virgin and John the Baptist. It is a mosaic of overawing grandeur, its finest feature being Christ's face which is of incomparable beauty. But nothing is known of the master who painted this work.

All that is certain is that the unknown artist was among the greatest who ever lived.

INTRODUCTION

THE SYMBOLICS OF POWER

THERE WAS a ceremony in Byzantium which has intrigued historians for a very long time; it involved the putting on and taking off the Imperial crown. For Constantine Porphyrogennetos makes it quite clear repeatedly that under no circumstances was the Emperor "to be crowned in front of non-eunuchs. For this reason the archons of the *koubouklеion*...stand forming a circle...and the emperor goes into the middle of them and is crowned"[1] by the chief eunuch. Ringrose explains that non-eunuchs ['bearded men'] "could see the emperor with or without his crown; what they were not permitted to see was the transitional moment when the crown was actually taken off or placed on his head. This could only be witnessed by the eunuchs or the patriarch", though she adds that there was one exception which involves the elevation of an individual to the position of the head of the senate [*proedros*]: "[H]e was allowed to be present when the emperor's crown was put on or taken off."[2] Elisabeth Piltz argues that "[i]n this way the eunuchs were considered to protect the emperor from the evil eye."[3] Piltz points out that the Middle Byzantine crown was "an open stemma with a large precious stone on the diadem in front of the forehead in either of the four colors of the factions—red, white, blue, or green—placed over a silk calotte of the same color. During the Komnenian dynasty, the open stemma was replaced by a closed hemisphere, described by Anna Komnene."[4]

The question of crowns introduces us to what I call color-coding. By this I mean that a particular color was always symbolically associated with a particular institution, office, or rank and was *hierarchically* ordered, i.e. certain colors were deemed to be superior to others and were assigned to higher as opposed to lower entities. Let us stress right away that Byzantium was *an extremely color-coded* state in which a particular color instantly identified someone as a member of an institution, or an office, or as holding a particular title and/or rank. It was what epaulettes and stripes in the military stand for. As such, protocol was regulated to the point that every action, every gesture,

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[1] BC I, 109.

[2] Kathryn M. Ringrose, *The Perfect Servant: Eunuchs and the Social Construction of Gender in Byzantium* (Chicago, 2003), 175.

[3] Elisabeth Piltz, "Middle Byzantine Court Costume" in Henry Maguire, ed., *Byzantine Court Culture from 829 to 1204* (Washington, 1997), 40 though her reference to Fig. 2 is misleading: it does not represent the moment of putting on or taking off of the crown by the eunuchs, but the coronation of David, i.e. the selection of a Roman Emperor by putting him on a shield, see below.

[4] Ibid., 40-41 referring to Anne Comnène, *Alexiade* [Leib ed.](Paris, 1967), Vol. I, bk. 3, 113-114.

and every word was minutely related to persons who were color-coded from the Emperor down. With the (possible) exception of Imperial China Byzantium was the most color-coded and color-stratified civilization I know of. Yet, color has been rather baffling to Byzantinists because at first sight it seems that there is no particular order, no hierarchy among various colors. This is not true, but it is complicated. This study aims to solve this enigma.

Warren T. Woodfin's study of vestments, primarily liturgical, throws a good deal of light on Imperial vestments as well.[5] He argues that "one of the most obvious factors shaping the later Byzantine court was the transfer of its physical setting from the Great Palace in the heart of Constantinople to the Blachernai Palace near the Land Walls on the western outskirts of the city at the end of the eleventh century. The court was thus physically distant from the patriarchal establishment at Hagia Sophia and from the commercial centre of the capital. Nevertheless, major state ceremonies, along with a skeleton crew of officials in residence, seem to have been maintained at the Great Palace even after the Komnenoi made the Blachernai their primary seat. The most critical change affecting the court, however, was its make-up. The meritocracy of 'new men' that characterized the court of the Macedonian emperors gave way under the Komnenoi to a court dominated in its upper echelons by the members of a few powerful families related by blood or marriage to the imperial house. Office at court became not just a personal achievement but a way of creating long-term family alliances with the ruling dynasty. The increasingly grandiose titles of the twelfth through fourteenth centuries, marked by the inflationary prefixes *proto-*, *pan-*, and *hyper-*, show the pressure on the court for the creation of ever higher places of honour for those close to the throne. To judge from the Palaiologan sources, costume followed suit, being marked by an increasingly complex *system of colours, materials, and decoration in order to differentiate courtiers by rank*."[6] [my emphasis]

In Byzantium there was a whole range of colors, but only five were given special significance and prominence: gold, red, white, blue, and green, with gold being combined with all others, while black was being reserved almost exclusively for the church, in particular the monks. Five colors represented the symbolism of five, five being one of the most important numbers in Byzantium: it stood for the four corners of the earth plus the center. It was thus a symbolic representation of the earthly as opposed to the heavenly kingdom whose most important number, was, of course, three symbolizing the Trinity. The earthly four plus the heavenly three made up seven, another symbolically important number in Byzantium. Finally, there was twelve, the number of apostles, but also the number of Roman Senators transferred from

---

[5] Warren T. Woodfin, *The Embodied Icon: Liturgical Vestments and Sacramental Power in Byzantium* (Oxford, 2012).

[6] Ibid., 133-134.

Rome to Constantinople by Constantine the Great, as well as of the regions of the City of Constantinople *within the Walls of Constantine*.

The symbolism of numbers found its counterpart in the symbolism of colors. It is at the point of *stratification* of the main colors that scholars have had difficulties for the colors seem to change places in the symbolic hierarchy without any apparent reason. This is because scholars approached Byzantium from our own position of fixed places in a hierarchy that is one-sided. In Byzantium there was a double symbolism of colors, namely, colors assumed different places in symbolic hierarchy depending on whether they were seen from an earthly or heavenly *perspective*. This insight is based on Pavel Florensky's seminal study of the "Reverse Perspective":

> Those who become acquainted with Russian icons of the fourteenth, fifteenth and part of the sixteenth centuries for the first time are usually astonished by the unexpected perspectival relationships, especially in the depiction of objects with flat sides and rectilinear edges...These particular relationships stand in glaring contradiction to the rules of linear perspective, from whose view point they can only be considered examples of crudely illiterate drawing. On a close scrutiny of icons it is easy to note that bodies bounded by curved surfaces are also rendered with foreshortenings that are ruled out by the laws of perspectival representation. [...] [L]ines are parallel to it which should be shown converging on the horizon, are instead shown in an icon diverging from each other."[7]

I will not go into all the intricacies of this so-called 'reverse perspective', but will note only that it is called *reverse because it projects the linear perspective from the inside to the outside, i.e. it reverses the positions of the outside viewer and the inside object, e.g. Christ looking at a believer from the inside is the starting point of the perspective, not a believer*. Byzantium used both perspectives, both in the representations of earthly and heavenly objects. And the colors are used and stratified, i.e. color-coded *according to which perspective is used*.

This has not been noticed or explained so far.

The four basic colors, red, white, blue, and green are interpreted by Florensky in another of his crucial essays, "Celestial Signs"[8]. Appropriately, he points out that all the basic colors are derived from the spectre of light, and light has a special theological and symbolic meaning: "Those gorgeous colours that adorn the vault of heaven are none other than the *means by which*

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[7] Pavel Florensky, "Reverse Perspective" in Pavel Florensky, *Beyond Vision: Essays on the Perception of Art* [ed. and commented by Nicoletta Misler, trans. by Wendy Salmond] (London, 2002), 201-202.

[8] P. Florensky, "Celestial Signs (Reflections on the Symbolics of Colours)" in Pavel Florensky, op. cit., 119-122.

inseparable light and fragmented matter *interact*."[9] Starting from a basic premise that God is light, he points out that "in relation to colours we call light white. But white is not a positive definition, it refers only to its unalloyed nature, to the fact it is 'neither this, that, nor another colour', just that it is pure unalloyed light."[10] Florensky argues that colours are the result of the light working on a metaphysical dust called Sophia "which stands on an ideal border between divine energy and creature passivity. She is as much God as not God, as much creature as not creature... Light is the activity of God, while Sophia is the first thickening of this activity, its first and finest work..."[11] From this definition of Sophia Florensky then deduces the other colors:

> Contemplated as a work of divine creation, as the first clot of being, relatively independent of God...contemplated as moving from God towards nothing, Sophia appears as *blue* or *violet*. Conversely, when contemplated as the result of divine creation, as inseparable from the divine light...as the power of God moving to overcome darkness, i.e. when seen [moving] *from the world* towards God, Sophia appears as *pink* or *red*. She appears pink or red as God's image for his creature, as the manifestation of God on earth... Finally, there is also a third metaphysical direction, neither towards nor away from the light...It is that spiritual aspect of being, one might call it a *paradisaical* aspect, according to which there is as yet no knowledge of good and evil. There is not yet a direct aspiration either towards God or away from him, because these very orientations do not yet exist, neither the one nor the other, there is only movement around God.... And this is also Sophia, this aspect of Sophia appears golden-green and translucent emerald...The three principal aspects of [Sophia] are defined by the three primary colours of the symbolics of colours...[T]hese colours speak of the relationship...of one and the same Sophia to one and the same divine Light. The sun, the finest of fine dust, and the darkness of emptiness in the sensory world, are also God, Sophia and the infernal darkness, the darkness of metaphysical non being in the spiritual world. These are the principles on which the variety of colours depends, both here and there, always in perfect correlation to each other.[12]

The above description includes not just blue, red, and green, but white, gold and black. Black as a color had only one symbolic meaning in Byzantium (as in the Christian West): it was the color reserved for the monastic state symbolizing death to the world. Unlike the other basic colors it was used very sparingly if at all outside the Church and always had connotations of depriva-

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[9] Ibid., 119.
[10] Ibid., 121.
[11] Ibid., 121.
[12] Ibid., 122.

tion, of denial, of death to the world as such. As such, it is absolutely crucial to Byzantine culture which was inordinately respectful of the monks, but it was seen and rated *in opposition to other colors* which were seen as either heavenly or earthly.

Florensky establishes blue, red, and green as "the three primary colors of the symbolics of color." This is most important for this study, for it helps us to solve the problem of the hierarchy of colors in Byzantium. Before explaining their theological meaning, all normative in Byzantium, let us see how anthropologists have dealt with the question of colors and color-coding.

In a fundamental study Serge Tcherkézoff points out that the primary colors among many tribes are black, red, and white, and that, according to some tribal elders, there is no real distinction between red and white.[13] This is also significant for Byzantium as we shall see later. The fundamental distinction between white and black is based on the dichotomy between the day and the night. Robert Needham retains only the opposition between Meru's black clans and white clans.[14] Most importantly, Tcherkézoff argues that "red is the agent of the inversions of value which black and white may know."[15] [*Le rouge est le'opérateur des inversions de valeur que peuvent connaitre le noir et le blanc.*] Tcherkézoff also points out the fundamental dichotomy between politics and religion, politics being white, and religion being black. In the case of the Meru Bernardi has argued that the traditional superiority of white over black must be abandoned in view of the fact that among the Meru the reds were associated with the blacks and proceeded to defeat the whites and confine them to the north.[16]

Tcherkézoff's study enables me to see how the process of symbolic inversion affects the hierarchy of colors. When tribal men sacrifice to their ancestors they use the front of male animals, while women sacrifice to their ancestors by using the back of the female animals.[17] Tcherkézoff points out that this parallelism is superficial and will disappear in the royal sacrifice. Instead of the binary parallelism there will be the supremacy of the color black and/or of the combination of black/white.[18] We cannot go here into the reasons why in a royal ceremony black has supremacy over either white by itself or the combination of white and black, but it has to do with the control of the weather, in particular, rain. However, what this means is that in African tribal cultures a king is a composite person, being both a high priest who can offer a

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[13] Serge Tcherkézoff, *Le roi Nyamwezi, la droite et la gauche: Révision comparative des classifications dualists* (Cambridge-Paris, 1983), 15, ft. 3.

[14] Robert Needham, "The Left Hand of the Mugwe: An Analytical Note on the Structure of Meru Symbolism" *Africa* Vol. 30, No. 1 (1960), 22.

[15] Ibid., 19, ft. 1.

[16] Ibid., 18 citing B. Bernard, *The Mugwe, a Failing Prophet* (London, 1959), 9, n. 1.

[17] Ibid., 57.

[18] Ibid., 58.

royal sacrifice, and a commander-in-chief, so to speak. In his first role black, being the color of priests and religion, is superior, in the second, which is that, according to Tcherkézoff, of 'power' (this is his term), white is superior to black. The superiority of black overall comes from the superiority of the *level* [*niveau*] of sacrifice:

> Superior level: black > white
> Inferior level: white > black[19]

The composite person of the king includes that of a priest and of a king. Thus, according to Tcherkézoff, "royalty as a principle and as value is, in that order, black and white."[20] The royal number is five: it is a compound of two (for male) and three (for female). As Tcherkézoff points out, "Five is the image of the king."[21] [*Le 'cinq' est l'image du roi*] The royal ceremony on the superior level incorporates both the black and the white, both female and male, and this represents royal twins [*les jumeaux sont rois*], the king always being male and the child of a female. On the inferior level, i.e. that of family sacrifice, 3 for female or 2 for male correspond to black or white bracelets, sacrificing to the ancestors either 'front' or 'back'. In this sacrifice white is superior to black.[22]

The operational principle between the two levels [*niveaux*] is that of *inversion*. Tcherkézoff points out that as a priest a king is a *servant* of the gods and a *prisoner* (so to speak) of the court, surrounded and obeying the great courtiers: "At the time of his taking the throne [*intronisation*], the king is literally captured by the courtiers [*conseillers*]. Henceforth, for the rest of his existence, he will not be able to leave the court, except for ritual obligation and being totally encircled by his courtiers."[23] When the inversion takes place, a king is in the realm of 'power' and his position is totally changed: "The king is no longer the unique victim of the sanctions, but on the contrary the only person above the sanctions."[24] [*mais au contraire l'unique personage au-dessus des sanctions*] Thus, according to Tcherkézoff, while royalty is one and immutable in the chain of its successive representatives guaranteeing the cosmic order—the return of rains—*and* the political order—lordship over the right [to put to] death—the king is the servant of "black' and master of "white".[25] Though kingship is both "black and white", with a hierarchy of value of black > white, royal power finds its place only in the realm of

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[19] Ibid., 65.

[20] Ibid., 79.

[21] Ibid., 55.

[22] Ibid., 83 with a table.

[23] Ibid., 90.

[24] Ibid., 91.

[25] Ibid., 92.

"white". From the standpoint of the "white" the court is the place where one comes to "be eaten" [*se faire manger*] by the king for having broken an interdict.[26]

Tcherkézoff concludes that power "is neither 'black' nor 'white'. All one can say is that it is exercised in 'white' time [*dans le temps 'blanc'*]."[27] Yet, he also explains that red mediates between black and white: as brilliant sun its heat impedes the coming of the rains but the humidity it creates will bring the rains as well. Tcherkézoff notes that "the opposition Earth/Sky...is explicit."[28]

Tcherkézoff's study is primarily not about colors but about the relationship between the right and the left hands. The dichotomy between the right and the left hand is compared with those between women and men, back and front, even and odd, west and east, black and white.[29] Black is thus associated with the right hand, and white with the left. Bruce Lincoln argues that "within the various Indo-European languages, no particularly pejorative association is attached to the left hand, which is designated, rather, as the 'better' (Greek *aristerós*), 'choice' (Avestan *vairyastara*), 'friendlier' (Old High German *winistar*, Old Norse *vinstri*, Old English *winestra*), or 'more winning' (Latin *sinister*; cf. Sanskrit *sániyas*) hand, in contrast to the 'more skillful' right (Latin *dexter*, Greek *dexiterós*, Irish *dess*, Gothic *taihswo*, Sanskrit *dáksina-*, Avestan *dašina-*, etc.)."[30]

Analysing an Old Persian text in Pahlavi Bruce Lincoln uses it to provide social stratification on the basis of the four essential fluids in the body: Blood, Phlegm, Red Bile, and Black Bile.[31] The colors associated with them are red, white, yellow, and black. In terms of the body blood is associated with the head, phlegm with the lungs, red bile with gall bladder and black bile with the spleen in a descending order. The text goes on to make a parallel between these four essential fluids and the traditional Indo-European four classes: "These four elements... [are like] the four social classes, which are: the Priest, who is a teacher; the Warrior, who is a fighter; the Pastoralist and Agriculturalist, who is a table-servant; and the Artisan, who is a menial-

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[26] Ibid., 93 citing F. Bösch, *Les Banyamwezi* in *Bibliothèque Anthropos*, Vol. III, fasc. 2 (1930), 91.

[27] Ibid., 96.

[28] Ibid., 96, ft. 52.

[29] Ibid., 41.

[30] Bruce Lincoln, "Kings, Rebels, and the Left Hand" in Bruce Lincoln, *Death, War, and Sacrifice: Studies in Ideology and Practice* [with a foreword by Wendy Doniger] (Chicago, 1991), 256, n. 21.

[31] Bruce Lincoln, "Physiological Speculation and Social Patterning in a Pahlavi Text" in Bruce Lincoln, *Death, War, and Sacrifice*, 209-218.

servant."[32] There is thus a correlation between the four humors and the four social classes:

1st Rank: Blood—Priests—Teaching—Red
2nd Rank: Phlegm—Warriors—Fighting—White
3rd Rank: Red Bile—Pastoralists & Agriculturalists—Serving Food—Yellow
4th Rank: Black Bile—Artisans—Menial Service—Black

The fifth essential fluid, semen, "is above those four fluids as the king is above the [four] social classes."[33]

In both main Aryan civilizations, Pahlavi or Persian and Indian, the supreme position was arrogated by the priests, in India the Brahmins. In India the caste system is color-coded: "The colour-distinction between the castes—the slave being black; the people, yellow; the warrior, red; the priest, white..."[34] The four castes are *brahmana* ('priest'), *ksatriya* ('warrior', 'man of the ruling order'), *vaisya* ('inhabitant', 'man of the people'), and *sudra* ('slave').[35] Victor Turner's study, *The Forest of Symbols*, claims that the basic triad is white-red-black.[36] Clifford and Betty Jones have examined the colors in the dance-drama of Kathakali of Kerala and concluded that the basic triad is white-red-black, with other colors—especially green—in permutations.[37] This is also the situation in the epics, such as the Wayang Purva, where "red, black, white and gold predominate... Red symbolizes opposition to the cosmic order, black and white that the body is under the control of a mind which is reconciled with the universe, and gold stands for the splendour of youth... The difference between black and white seems to be that black, the color of the ascetics, indicates harmony with the other world while white, the color of noble warriors, expressed righteousness on earth."[38]

In his study of the Great Battle in *The Mahabharata* Al Hiltebeitel studied Krishna's colors in the various cycles of time or yugas. His color in the Kali yuga, the period of the battle of the Mahabharata is black, but previously he had assumed the colors white, red, and yellow. Another source, the *Vamana Purana*, tells how Sri-Laksmi was created in four colors—white, red,

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[32] Ibid., 214.

[33] Ibid., 214, ft. 28 which points out that in MS "TOHMAG ABAR" is written in red ink, that of a king.

[34] E.W. Hopkins, *The Social and Military Position of the Ruling Caste in Ancient India, as Represented by the Sanskrit Epic* (Varanasi, 1972; originally published in 1889), 17-18.

[35] Ibid., 18-19.

[36] Victor Turner, *The Forest of Symbols* (Ithaca, 1967), 90: "Since the experiences the three colors represent are common to all mankind..."

[37] Clifford R. Jones and Betty True Jones, *Kathakali: An Introduction to the Dance-Drama of Kerala* (San Francisco, 1970), 23-35.

[38] H. Ulbricht, *Wayang Purwa: Shadows of the Past* (Kuala Lumpur, 1970), 36.

yellow, and blue (*nila*), as Hiltebeitel explains, "mainly showing her connection with the four varnas"[39], meaning colors associated with the four castes. When interpreting the Great Battle Hiltebeitel associates each of the four marshals with a particular color: Bhisma with white, Drona with red, Karna with gold, and Salya with black.[40] In *The Mahabharata* the Great Battle is between the Pandavas, the five brothers, whose father is Pandu and whose name means 'Pale' or 'White' versus the Kauravas whose color is red: "With battle looming, Karna tells Krishna of a vision he has had in which he saw the Pandavas dressed in white turbans and white garments, and (in a Southern recension) all of Kauravas dressed in red turbans... Alfred Ludwig first suggested a red-white opposition, backing up his association of the Kurus with red by showing that the name *'kuru'* carries the connotation 'red'."[41] In the Critical Edition of *The Mahabharata*, published in Poona, the plate facing p. 121 of *Bhismaparvan* "depict[s] the *Bhagavad Gita* scene... between white- and red-clad armies."[42]

As Michael Jackson points out, "one of the oldest anthropological mysteries is the universality of the color triad—white, black, and red. Why it is that so many languages identify only three color terms, even though all colors of the spectrum are perceptually distinguished? More specifically, when a lexicon includes only two colors, why are these invariably white and black; and when it includes three, why is it that the third term is always red?"[43] According to Victor Turner, the three colors—white, black, red—"stand for basic human experiences of the body (associated with the gratification of libido, hunger, aggressive and excretory drives, and with fear, anxiety, and submissiveness."[44] Trying to explicate Ndembu color terms, Turner stated that "red is universally a symbol of blood, white a symbol of breast milk and semen, black the color of urine and feces".[45] Jackson shares Turner's view that "the human organism and its crucial experiences are the *fons et origo* of all classifications", but he accuses him of 'the Freudian bias in his interpretation [which] prevented Turner from exploring in depth the intersubjective character of these crucial experiences."[46] Using his example of the Kuranko tribe in Africa Jackson argues that "phenomenologically speaking, the color contrast

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[39] Alf Hiltebeitel, *The Ritual of Battle: Krishna in the Mahabharata* (Albany, 1990), 63.

[40] Ibid., 283.

[41] Ibid., 70 citing A. Ludwig, "Uber did mythische grundlage des Mahabharata" in *Sitzungsberichte der Königl. Böhmischen Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften* (1895), 4.

[42] Ibid., 71, n. 34.

[43] Michael Jackson, *Minima Ethnographica: Intersubjectivity and the Anthropological Project* (Chicago, 1998), 82-83 referring to Brent Berlin and Paul Kay, *Basic Color Terms: Their Universality and Evolution* (Berkeley, 1969), 17.

[44] Turner, op. cit., 89-90.

[45] Jackson, op. cit., 83 referring to Turner, op. cit., 88.

[46] Ibid., 83.

between white and black objectifies th[e] extreme case in which self and other are antagonistically polarized. Red would, according to this logic, signify the temporary dissolution of the boundary between self and other, a loss of identity in difference, an overlapping of domains, a merging of selves. Whether this is conceptually elaborated as an image of fire and flame (as in Hinduism) or as shed and mingled blood (as in Africa), the connotation is always of a dangerous yet potentially empowering fusion of separate identities. [...] Here red is the active agent. Associated with heat, it is the color of a troubled and contested relationship...As the Ndembu say, 'Redness acts both for good and ill.'"[47] Jackson concludes that "the triad may be said to objectify the relationship between *two relationships*, the first relatively ethereal, the second decidedly embodied: self in relation to self (white), and self in relation to other (black). The shadow (red) is where intrapsychic and inrersubjective domains overlap ambiguously and unpredictably."[48]

The above excursus should suffice to show that the binary oppositions between black and white and/or white and red carry great symbolic significance as well as social stratification in many Indo-European and African societies. The same is true of Byzantium. We are now in a position to offer a comprehensive analysis of the entire color-coded and color-ranked system. What we needed from Tcherkézoff, Bruce Lincoln, and others was the notion of the inversion of the two levels, heavenly and earthly. Without it we would not be in a position to explain the somewhat baffling, if not contradictory, evidence.

Let us proceed with the heavenly level first. In order to elucidate the symbolism of colors we will use the example of Andrei Rublev's famous painting of the Trinity as analysed in a very original study by Jean-Marie Floch and Jérome Collin.[49] First of all, let me explain that the choice is not fortuitous: Kievan Rus both before and during the Mongol or Tatar period stayed scrupulously loyal to Byzantine Orthodoxy and followed Byzantium in everything religious, including art, totally slavishly. The painting dating from the early 15th century is first of all, an excellent example of the reverse perspective: the painting faces the viewer rather than the other way around. The lines at the bottom of the table are the opposite of linear perspective: they are wider in the back and narrower in front. There is also another telling sign of the reverse perspective: in the painting the place of honor is on the left of a viewer, not on his right. This place of honor is given to God the Father who sits to the right of Jesus Christ in the middle, but on the left side from a viewer's perspective. God the Holy Ghost is to the left of Jesus Christ, i.e. God the

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[47] Ibid., 86.

[48] Ibid., 86 referring to Anita Jacobson-Widding, *Red-White-Black as a Mode of Thought: A Study of Triadic Classification by Colours in the Ritual Symbolism and Cognitive Thought of the Peoples of the Lower Congo* (Uppsala, 1979), 305-329.

[49] Jean-Marie Floch and Jérome Collin, *Lecture de la Trinité d'Andrei Roublev* (Paris, 2009).

Son, but on the right side from a viewer's perspective. The use of colors is extremely color-coded. The color common to all three persons of the Trinity is blue, symbolizing *divinity*. God the Father is depicted with an irised color, very difficult to describe, symbolizing a mystery, but which includes traces of red. Red or purple is used for Jesus Christ, i.e. God the Son, indicating his sacrifice on earth, i.e. the Incarnation; and green is used for God the Holy Ghost, symbolizing life. All three persons have halos which are white or gold.[50]

Both God the Son and God the Holy Ghost have their faces inclined toward God the Father as he faces them. This indicates their procession from God the Father (in Orthodoxy the Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father alone, not "and from the son" [*filioque*]. God the Son, i.e. Jesus Christ, shows his two natures, human and divine, by putting two fingers on the table, the same ones used for blessing, namely the second and third. The hierarchy of colors is thus the following: blue is the highest, followed by white, by the iris, then red, then green. Though all three persons of the Trinity are equal, the Father is the source of both, and Jesus Christ sits on the left side of the throne to the Father (in the painting he is in the middle, the mediating position). If we take blue, it belongs to every person of the Trinity (3), white also (3), but red only to Christ and God the Father (iris includes it) (2), and green only to the Holy Ghost and God the Father (2). Thus the classification from right to left is: blue (3), white (3), red (2), green (2). This is the color-code of the heavenly realm for Byzantium.

But Rublev's icon gives us another clue, this time crucial: his painting is that of the *Old Testament Trinity*. Not only does it refer to the Trinity but to the Old Testament as such. But where are the colors used by Rublev to depict the robes of the three angels representing three persons of the Trinity derived from? From the famous passage in the Book of Exodus [28] which describes priestly vestments to be worn by the High Priest Aaaron (only the relevant passages are quoted below):

> From among the sons of Israel summon your brother Aaron nd his sons to be priests in my service...For Aaron...you are to make sacred vestments to give dignity and magnificence. You are to instruct all the ablest craftsmen...to make Aaron's vestments for his consecration to my priesthood. These are the vestments they must make: pectoral, ephod, robe, embroidered tunic, turban and girdle. They are to make sacred vestments for your brother Aaron and his sons to be priests in my service. They must use *gold*, purple stuffs, *violet shade* and *red, crimson* stuffs, and fine twined linen. They are to make the phod of gold, purple stuffs, violet shade and red, crimson stuffs, and fine twined linen...The woven band...must be of *gold, purple* stuffs, *violet shade* and *red, crimson* stuffs, and fine twined linen. [...] You are to make the pectoral of

[50] Ibid., 56-57.

> judgement, finely brocaded...of *gold, purple* stuffs, *violet shade* and *red, crimson* stuffs, and fine twined linen...[...] You are to make the robe of the ephod entirely of *violet-purple*...The lower hem you are to decorate with *pomegranates* of purple stuffs, *violet shade* and *red, crimson* stuffs, and fine twined linen, with *golden* bells between: gold bells and pomegranates alternately all round the lower hem of the robe.[51]

From the above it is quite clear that the colors singled out are: gold, violet-purple, violet, and red/crimson. If we take purple to be a combination of red and blue, which is what it is (like the color of blood), and violet to stand for a deeper shade of *blue*, then the colors are: gold, purple, blue, and red. That is why I find Rick W. Byargeon's entry on 'Color' the authoritative *Eerdmans's Dictionary of the Bible* rather perplexing: he argues that

> Athalya Brenner identifies five basic colors mentioned in the Old Testament: 1) red (Heb. *Adom*); 2) white (*laban*); 3) black (*šahob*); 4) green (*yaroq*) and 5) yellow (*šahob*). Though other color terms also are found in Scripture (e.g., purple), they do not fit the criteria for basic colors. These terms meet three primary characteristics: 1) monolexemic (i.e., no expressions such as reddish); 2) exclusive signification (i.e., must not be a term that can be subsumed under a broader color) and 3) unrestricrted applicatibility (i.e. the color has a universal application; it is not restricted to a narrow class of objects). Of the five main colors, the dominant three are red, white, and black.
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> White is the term used most often, and it not only describes the color of an object...but also has a symbolic significance. It indicates wealth (Gen. 49:12; Esth. 1:6), joy (Eccl. 9:8), or purity (Rev. 3:4, 7-9, 13-14...Black is used to describe the color of objects...but it can also symbolize trouble... or judgment...Red is used to describe the color of skin..., stew, and blood. Red also is used symbolically to describe luxury... and... war. Tints of red include such color terms as purple, scarlet, and crimson...[52]

The above-quoted passage from the Book of Exodus provides argumentation for the basic colors being red, blue, and purple (the combination of the two). *These are precisely the colors found in Rublev's attribution to the Old Testament Trinity*. As Mary Petrina Boyd points out in her entry on "Purple" in the above-cited dictionary, "purple fabrics were associated with royalty and wealth..." and were used "along with *blue* and crimson...for Aaron's priestly vestments".[53] So there is no question that purple, *blue* and crimson

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51 *The Jerusalem Bible* (London, 1966), 112-113.

52 David Noel Freedman, ed.-in-chief, *Eerdmans Dictionary of the Bible* (Grand Rapids, 2000), 269 citing A. Brenner, "Colour Terms in the Old Testament" in *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 21 (1982).

53 Ibid., 1100.

(red) were the three colors associated with the High Priest. It is curious that green is *not* mentioned.

We know that Andrei Rublev was one of the principal pupils of Theophanes or Feofan 'the Greek'[54] before striking on his own. That the choice of colors was 'canonical' was best judged by none other than the Moscow Stoglav Council of 1551 when it ordered all future painters "to paint the Trinity according to (how) Greek painters and (*how*) *Andrei Rublev* and other famous painters".[55]

That the choice of colors for the robes of the three angels followed the strict Byzantine color-coded hierarchy can be deduced from the so-called Byzantine David Cycle. Gilbert Dagron's great study of the Imperial office in Byzantium[56] has established the highest importance of David as someone who was not born a king, but who nevertheless became one because he was God's choice—which explained very conveniently the frequent change of emperors in Byzantium, and the assumption of supreme power by those who were not 'born in purple' [*porphyrogennetoi*]. To the Byzantines David was a quintessential Old Testament king. Accordingly, his portrayal in various chronicles, psalters and other writings established the tradition which both was derived from the Roman Imperial past, and was used to render it in a suitably Christian garb. For, as Dagron points out, "in Byzantium, the Old Testament had a constitutional value; it had the same normative role in the political sphere as the New Testament in the moral sphere."[57]

The portrayal of David in Byzantine illustrated manuscripts has been studied exhaustively by Anthony Cutler. In a 13th-century Byzantine manuscript, the so-called the Spencer Psalter, "David wearing a nimbus, beard, and crown with prependulia is raised on a red suppedaneum. He wears a blue chlamys, with gold tablion, edged in gold over a long red tunic with tendril ornament at the hem. His shoes are drawn only in outline, so that they take the color of the stood beneath them... To his left, two figures in short green tunics with gold maniakia play the cymbals and a lute; their neighbour, in red, holds a square harp. To David's right, a figure in red blows a long, curved horn; the other, wearing a blue tunic, plays a cylindrical drum... The musicians stand at the edge of a terra-cotta path flecked with green, which diminishes towards David between two flanking areas of green ground. The uni-

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[54] On Maksim Grek see I.A. Kochetkov, ed., *Slovar russkikh ikonopistsev XI-XVII vekov* (Moscow, 2003), 153-158; on Andrei Rublev, ibid., 539-558.

[55] Ibid., 552 citing in the (exhaustive) bibliography B.M. Kloss, *Izbrann'ie trud'I* (3 vols.), Vol. I: *Zhitie Sergiia Radonezhskogo* (Moscow, 1998), 73-88.

[56] Gilbert Dagron, *Emperor and Priest: The Imperial Office in Byzantium* (Cambridge, 2003), in particular the epilogue: "The House of Judah and the House of Levi", 313-318.

[57] Ibid., 50.

form gold background above is reduced to a 'frame' in the lower half of the picture. The entire rectangle is surrounded by a blue line."[58]

In figure 5, "David Rebuked by Nathan", "David is bearded, wears a red crown with prependulia and is clad in a divitision of the same color ornamented with a rinceau pattern that recurs on the front of his throne. His cushion and footstool are also red and, as on fol. 1v, his shoes are unpainted and take on the color of the footstool...Above this, within a blue exedra, Bathsheba, wearing a stemma with prependulia and pearl-ornamented robe, witnesses the scene. The foreground is green; the background, again reduced to a frame on either side of the architectural structures, is gold."[59] In figure 7, "The Penitence of David", a full-page miniature facing the Penitential Psalm 50, "David, identified as *ho profetos David,* is clad in a red mantle trimmed with gold and gold crown. Behind him, a backless gold throne with red cushion and blue drape, set in front of a buff aedicula with gable and blue tiled roof. His white shoes rest on a dark red footstool..."[60]

In the Psalter Benaki (34.3) Nathan's rebuke and David's Penitence in figure 5 are facing the opening of Psalm 50: "The king, resplendent in a red tunic with gold collar, blue mantle and red boots, sits on a backless brick-red throne with a green cushion. Behind him is a three-storey structure with a green dome. Above, a three-quarter length angel, emerging left from a dark blue arc, directs a red spear towards David but looks towards the prophet. Nathan, standing before a taller structure than that of David, wears a long blue tunic beneath a magenta mantle..."[61] In another miniature from the Psalter Benaki there is "David, in a red tunic with gold collar and hem, and Goliath, in a gold breastplace over a short blue tunic, against each other on a green ground."[62]

Cutler summarizes the use of color in the Psalter Benaki thus: "Red, blue and a strident raspberry are played against salmon, orange, magenta and green."[63] Cutler's most exhaustive examination of the illuminated manuscripts is that of a psalter from Mar Saba.[64] In "David and Melodia" "the background is mostly gold in the upper portion of sky, pink below and on

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[58] Anthony Cutler, "The Spencer Psalter: A Thirteenth-Century Byzantine Manuscript in the New York Public Library" in Anthony Cutler, *Imagery and Ideology in Byzantine Art* (Variorum, 1992), I, 130 first published in *Cahiers Archéologiques* XXIII (Paris, 1974), 129-150. Figure 1 is *David and Musicians*, a full-page frontispiece.

[59] Ibid., 130 referring to fol. 126r.

[60] Ibid., 131-132 referring to 126v.

[61] Anthony Cutler and Annemarie Weyl Carr, "The Psalter Benaki 34.3: An Unpublished Illuminated Manuscript from the Family 2400" in A. Cutler, op. cit., II, 286-287 first published in *Revue des études Byzantines* XXXIV (Paris, 1976), 281-323.

[62] Ibid., 289.

[63] Ibid., 304.

[64] Anthony Cutler, "A Psalter from Mar Saba and the Evolution of the Byzantine David Cycle" in A. Cutler, op. cit., V first published in *Journal of Jewish Art* VI (Jerusalem, 1978), 39-63.

either side of the figures. David, in a short pink tunic with a red mantle over his left shoulder, plays a right-angled psaltery. His legs are bare, his boots and epaulettes gold. David's nimbus is blue, that of Melodia gold. She wears a parti-colored tunic, green above and purple below, a gold belt and long blue mantle reaching to her sandalled feet. They sit on a blue hillock rising above largely flaked green ground."[65]

In "David Beheads Goliath" "David wears a white chiton with gold bands, boots and a plying purple mantle; his nimbus has now flaked to white."[66] Particularly revealing is "The Coronation of David": "David in purple tunic and gold mantle is crowned by Saul wearing a purple mantle trimmed in gold. Both are nimbed—David's halo is gold, Saul's blue—and wear red boots. They stand on an oval shield, gold with a blue border, bearing a long pseudo-Kufic inscription. The shield is carried by four bearers, of whom the lateral figures dressed in blue, carry swords and are drawn in profile. The two middle bearers, seen from the rear, are similarly clad but lack swords. They stand on blue ground, rising through green and ochre to the pink-gold background."[67]

In another miniature, "David Enthroned Among Eight Musicians" David wears red boots and is enthroned in the middle of a 'Greek cross' in whose quadrants there is a pair of standing musicians in each quarter: "At upper left, a flute player in green and a cymbalist in deep blue; at top right, a tambourine-layer in blue and a drummer in green with a red and gold drum. At lower left, a figure in a short blue tunic...; and lower right, a figure inblue with a triangular harp, and another in dark blue holding a gold, viol-like instrument."[68] In another Vatican Psalter the Dance of Miriam is represented in a miniature as a circular dance made up of fourteen aristocratic women, four of whom wear a red, three white-and-red, four a blue, and three a green dress, with eight musicians inside the circle in red, blue, and green dress.[69] Brigitte Pitarakis explains that "their dresses, with pointed sleeves and slashes around the middle of the body, are derived from the colourful silk brocades worn by the Byzantine aristocracy during the period in which the manuscript was produced."[70]

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[65] Ibid., 44 referring to fol. 44v.

[66] Ibid., 44 referring to 45r.

[67] Ibid., 44 referring to 46r.

[68] Ibid., 45 referring to 46v.

[69] Reproduced in *Byzantium* [by Philip Sherrard and Time-Life Books](1967), 112 and in Ayla Ödckan, Nevra Necipoğlu and Engin Akyürek, eds., *The Byzantine Court: Sources of Power and Culture: Papers from the Second International Sevgi Gönül Byzantine Studies Symposium (Istanbul, 21-23 June, 2010)*(Istanbul, 2013), 135.

[70] Brigitte Pitarakis, "From the Hippodrome to the Reception Halls of the Great Palace: Acclamations and Dances in the Service of Imperial Ideology" in *Byzantine Court Culture*, 135 and figure 9.

The Dance of Miriam was based on the earthly analogy of the dances of factions for the emperor. As in the Hippodrome, these dances were intended to extal Imperial power. The so-called ceremony of 'great saximon', described by Philotheos, consisted of the dancers of the factions circling collectively the Imperial table and acclaiming the Emperor. In return they were given a purse with three gold pounds by the Emperor. According to Philotheos "the dancers of the saximon wore a full-length, slitted garment with short sleeves and gold stripes and had rings at their feet. The garments worn by the Blues wear blue and white, while those of the Greens wear green and red."[71] As Pitarakis points out, "as in the case of the Hippodrome games, the receptions and banquets at the palace were propagandistic in their exaltation of imperial power and victory. The praises and acclamations of the emperor and the dancers performing while holding hands may be viewed as symbols of consensus of the emperor's legitimacy."[72]

The Dance of Miriam had an obvious resonance in Byzantium as its ruler, like David, was not necessarily born to be emperor, but was chosen *by God* to be one just like David. Thus during the acclamations in the Hippodrome this God-elected aspect of Imperial power was shouted by the factions: "You are our David! Your city that flowers again—or Anthusa, the secret name of Constantinople—calls you another David [*David se anomazei*]...You are strong and you reign because you are anointed by the Lord."[73] This was reinforced by the demarch of the Blues stating that "having placed the power in your hands today, God has confirmed you as sovereign ruler. The great Archangel Michael, having come from heaven, has opened the doors of imperial power before your eyes; therefore the world falls down in obeisance before the sceptre in your right hand, giving thanks to the Lord who has thus determined. He was longing to have you as the pious emperor and ruler and shepherd, so-and-so sovereign."[74]

Byzantium was not only a new Rome, it was also a new Jerusalem. And as such it had to possess ancient, Biblical relics: the rod of Moses, kept in the chapel of St. Theodore next to the Chrysotriklinos, while the Church of New Ekklesia possessed the horn from which Samuel had anointed David. As Pitakis explains, "through the dance performances at the Hippodrome and receptions and banquets, the imperial ceremonial paid homage to the biblical ancestors of the Byzantine emperors. The association of the Byzantine emperor and David, the archetypal Old Testament king, was a means of legitimating his power. From Justinian I onward, Byzantine emperors considered

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71 Ibid., 132 summarizing BC I, 294-296 [65 R293-296].

72 Ibid., 132.

73 Ibid., 136 quoting from BC I 367-368 [73 R368].

74 BC I 294 [65 R294].

themselves anointed by God as representatives of the continuity of the biblical kings David and Moses."[75]

Let us now take its earthly counterpart. It was a feature of Byzantium which struck all foreign visitors that the officials wore robes of distinctive colors, and that the color of their dress indicated their rank and office. As late as 1389 Ignatii of Smolensk [*Smol'nianin*] asserted that at the Imperial coronation the courtiers "stood in two groups, some wearing purple velvet robes, the others cerise velvet."[76] Now, 'cerise' means vivid (cherry) red. In the second redaction of the same text this passage is amplified to read: "...for they stood in two groups, each wearing the costume and emblem of its native land, some wearing purple velvet robes, others cerise velvet, still others dark blue velvet or black velvet, and all were hatless, following the ancient custom. They all had emblems, and each group had its own device which was worn on the chest...Some had one emblem, still others had a different emblem, so that all in all, each group had its own device."[77]

In 938 Emperor Romanos I Lekapenos (920-944) sent an embassy to the Abbasid caliph al-Radi (934-940) at Baghdad, laden with gifts. Among many objects including those of gold, silver, precious stones, rock crystal, pearls, gems and silks there were over a hundred pieces of fine fabric and clothing. As Alicia Walker points out, "certain features of the gifts may have expressed more specific notions of the perception of the recipient's status vis-à-vis the Byzantine court. The comment that several of the cloaks were made of *siqlatum* cloth is significant because this fabric was commonly scarlet. Ten pieces of cloth in the gift from Romanos to al-Radi are explicitly made of 'red *siqlatun*', while other pieces of fabric and items of clothing are identified as 'violet-colored'...[R]ed and purple dyes were closely regulated and [were] reserved for the exclusive use of the emperor. [...] In sum, it is significant that cloth of this color range would be given to al-Radi, a foreign ruler, because purple and red cloth was typically limited to garments of the emperor and the elite ranks of Byzantine courtiers."[78]

The basic color-coding needs to be explained here. Let us start at the very top: color 'purple', which is a mixture of red and blue (just as blood is a mixture of 'red' and 'blue' blood, i.e. in the arteries and veins) was reserved

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[75] Pitakis, op.cit., 136 citing G. Dagron, *Emperor and Priest*, 98 and P. Magdalino, "Observations on the New Ekklesia of Basil I" in *Journal of Osterreichische Byzantininistik* 37 (1987), 58; and L. Brubaker, *Vision and Meaning in Ninth-Century Byzantium: Images as Exegesis in the homilies of Gregory of Nazianzus* (Cambridge, 1999), 188.

[76] Gail Lenhoff, "Ignatii Smol'nianin in Constantinople: A Lesson in Muscovite Literary Etiquette" in the Special issue of *Russian History/Histoire russe: Studies in Early and Modern Russian History and Literature in honor of the Sixtieth Birthday of H.W. Dewey* (ed. by John V.A. Fine, Jr. and A.M. Kleimola) Vol. VII, Parts 1-2 (1980), 45.

[77] Ibid., 45 referring to *Nikonovskaia letopis'* in *Polnoe sobranie russkikh letopisei* Vol. XI, 102.

[78] Alicia Walker, *The Emperor and the World: Exotic Elements and the Imaging of Middle Byzantine Imperial Power, Ninth to Thirteenth Centuries C.E.* (Cambridge, 2012), 89.

both in Imperial Rome and Byzantium to the emperor. To wear it was considered a *lèse majesté* and was to invite death. What creates some confusion is one and the same text often mixes the terms 'purple' with 'red' interchangeably. This is because, from all evidence both in Rome and in Byzantium, red was the Imperial color par excellence. Why is this so? The Roman Emperor was first and foremost an *imperator*, and this term designated a 'commander-in-chief', i.e. a supreme military position. The army officers, particularly the top brass, wore red tunics. Red was thus associated with the army, with the top brass of the military, and finally with the Imperial office itself. This continued in Byzantium which saw itself as the direct descendant of Rome.

Red was the color of one distinctive part of the emperor's wardrobe which only the senior emperor, i.e. the autocrat could wear: red shoes. Time and time again sources point out that when someone was elevated to the Imperial throne they put red shoes or buskins on his feet. This tradition continued until the fall of Constantinople in 1453: when the City fell Turkish soldiers were looking for the dead emperor, Constantine XI, by searching for red shoes. The emperor wore a variety of robes, including a cloak, the *chlamys*, over a richly decorated tunic or *divetesion*. The *divetesеion* is described as a long silk tunic of white or purple colour, often patterned and heavily embroidered with gold. Note, the colors: purple and gold. Gold was both the color and metal associated with Imperial robes as well as processions: thus the Arab Muslim authors, such as Harun, describe the Emperor's procession to the Great Church with the words such as "gold" and "golden".[79] As a color gold, however, was used in combination with others, so it did not carry precise semiological connotation beyond that of supreme splendor (though sometimes it was used interchangeably with white). A twelfth-century Byzantine writer, Theodore Balsamon, in his commentary on the rather faulty Greek translation of the forced *Donation of Constantine* lists the insignia that Constantine the Great supposedly gave to Pope Sylvester, including "the purple cloak and the crimson tunic...and the rest of the ornaments of the imperial grandeur and the glory of our authority."[80] Balsamon goes on to specify that Constantine gave the Pope what the Emperors wear: "he wears shoes of true purple and rides on horseback with true purple saddle and bridle just as the emperors do..."[81]

The Imperial insignia is clearly brought out in many Byzantine illuminated manuscripts: thus one of the most famous Paris MS Coislin 79 shows the Emperor's red shoes resting on a blue footstool. Woodfin repeats that "Byzantine sources indicate that the shoes of red or purple silk were among the chief signs of imperial rank."[82] It should be pointed out that the color-coded Imperial regalia were regarded in Byzantium as 'not made by human

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79 Nadia Maria El Cheikh, *Byzantium Viewed by the Arabs* (Cambridge, Mass., 2004), 156-157.

80 Quoted in Warren T. Woodfin, *The Embodied Icon*, 143 and ft. 23 for the Greek text.

81 Ibid., 144 and ft. 24 with the Greek text.

82 Ibid., 145.

hands' [*acheiropoietoi*] as Constantine Porphyrogennos states: "These robes of state and the diadems... were not fashioned by men, nor by human arts devised or elaborated, but...when God made emperor the former Constantine the Great, who was the first Christian emperor, He sent him these robes of state by the hand of His angel, and the diadems..., and charged him to lay them in the great and holy church of God which...is called St. Sophia..."[83] Though obviously a legend, it is most important in our context: the regalia for the coronation of the first Christian Emperor were God-sent and divinely-wrought: and this means that the primordial act of Creation accompanies both the coronation of every emperor, and is associated with his putting on and off both the imperial crowns and robes.

That the coronation has a deeper meaning of the primordial act of Creation is also attested by Constantine Porphyrogennetos. He is explicit that on the day of Christ's Resurrection, i.e. Easter, twelve *magistroi* and *patrikioi*, i.e. the highest officials of the Emperor should wear a *loros*[84]. This is an imperial scarf decorated with gems and pearls. The twelve highest officials are the counter-part to the four *magistroi* and eight *patrikioi* who were brought to Constantinople by Constantine the Great *at the primordial time of Creation of the City*. But Constantine Porphyrogennetos goes even further: he specifically compares the Imperial ceremony at Easter with Christ's Incarnation and his life on Earth. He emphasizes that "we think of the *magistroi* and patricians putting on *loroi* on the feast day of the Resurrection of Christ our God as representing his laying out for burial, and their being made of gold, for the splendour of this day as being struck by the rays from the sun at the Resurrection of Christ himself. We think of both the *magistroi* and patricians themselves as representing the Apostles, and the good emperor, insofar as is possible, *as being analogous to God. [ton te khreston vasilea kata to efikeon analogounta Theo]*."[85]

Though of a much later date (probably the mid-14th century) Pseudo-Kodinos also gives information on the dress of the Imperial court. As Warren T. Woodfin makes clear in his study of the liturgical vestments and sacramental power in Byzantium,

> [t]he study of dress in the imperial court across the period of the Komnenian and Palaiologan dynasties is faced with a number of formidable barriers. A gap of some four centuries separates the composition of the two ceremonial treatises that are the primary textual sources of information on costume. The former is the tenth century *Book of Ceremonies (De Ceremoniis)*, compiled by Emperor Constantine VII Porphyrogennetos (913-959), which is a kind of dossier

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[83] Constantine Porphyrogenitus, *De administrando imperio* [ed. by G. Moravcsik, Eng. Trans. by R.J.H. Jenkins](Washington, 1967), ch. 13, 67.

[84] BC I, 24.

[85] BC II, 637-638.

> containing a number of earlier documents supplemented with newly composed materials. Among the most important of its constituent parts is the *Kleterologion of Philotheos*, a book of court precedence of the late ninth century. The fourteenth century *De Officiis* of Pseudo-Kodinos is dated on internal evidence to the reign of John VI Kantakouzenos in Constantinople (1347-1354) or shortly thereafter. Like its tenth-century predecessor, it gives information about court precedence and correct forms of address as well as descriptions of the ceremonies to be observed at court on an annual or occasional basis. The absence of intervening sources creates serious difficulties when discussing, for example, court dress of the twelfth century.[86]

Woodfin points out that "it was not the exclusivity of his garments alone that defined the person of the emperor. Rather, it was the regulated usage and combination of items of dress, together with their colour and decoration, that served to distinguish him in court ceremony. Worn with regalia such as the crown and the distinctive red imperial shoes, these garments singled out the imperial personage on occasions of state."[87] The distinct red shoes worn by the emperor are also singled out in Dagron's book on the Imperial office in Byzantium: "Nikephoros Phokas, then *magistros and domestikos* of the *scholae* of the East, was proclaimed emperor... He was now emperor, but he still refused, out of calculated restraint, to wear the crown and the imperial robes, except for the red shoes."[88] Dagron points out that it was Keroularios [Caerularius], Patriarch of Constantinople, at the time of the Great Schism (1054) between the Eastern and Western Churches, that by wearing "purple, that is imperial, sandals, ...so offended Byzantine sensibilities..."[89] Constantine X Doukas (1059-1067), having been elected emperor, was seated on the imperial throne by Michael Psellus who put on his feet "the sandals of purple—the sandals hitherto denied him—and the Senate gave its unanimous approval."[90] Paris MS Coislin 79 shows clearly Nikephoros III Botaneiates' red shoes. The emperor wore a richly decorated long tunic, *divetesion*, made of silk and of white or purple color, heavily embroidered with gold. Quoting from the apocryphal *Donation of Constantine* in which Constantine the Great supposedly transferred wordly power over Rome and the western part of the Roman empire to the pope, the twelfth-century scholar and commentator on the forgery, Theodore Balsamon, points out that Constantine gave the pope "the purple

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86 Warren T. Woodfin, *The Embodied Icon: Liturgical Vestments and Sacramental Power in Byzantium* (Oxford, 2012), 135-136 with the recent works on costume in ft. 4.

87 Ibid., 137.

88 Gilbert Dagron, *Emperor and Priest: The Imperial Office in Byzantium* (Cambridge, 2003), 72-73.

89 Ibid., 238.

90 Michael Psellus, Fourteen Byzantine Rulers (Penguin, 1966), 336. In his *metaphrasis*, i.e. translation into modern Greek Vrasidas Karalis uses the term *ta porpura upodemata* (see Mikhail Psellos, *Khronografia*, tomos B (Athens, 1993), 359.

cloak and the crimson tunic...and the rest of the ornaments of the imperial grandeur..."[91] [*kai khitona kokkinon, kai panta ta vasilika endumata, ka ita aksiomata ton vasilikon*] That purple was associated with imperial power was attested by St. Ambrose who opposing Emperor Theodosius stated that "the purple makes emperors but not priests."[92] The same Constantine was given his own vestments and other Imperial regalia by an angel of God Himself, as Constantine Porphyrogennetos clearly explains: "These robes of state and the diadems, which you call 'kamelaukia' were not fashioned by men, nor by human arts devised or elaborated, but, as we find it written in secret stories of old history, when God made emperor the former Constantine the great, who was the first Christian emperor, He sent him these 'kamelaukia', and charged him to lay them in the great and holy church of God, which, after the name of that very wisdom which is the poperty of God, is called St. Sophia..."[93] A Catalan chronicler, Muntaner, confirmed that "the emperor wore a vermilion hat and all his robes [were] vermilion..."[94] According to *Oxford English Dictionary*, "vermilion [is] cinnabar or red crystalline mercuric sylphide... much valued on account of its brilliant scarlet colour...; the colour of this pigment: a bright red or scarlet."[95]

The highest dignitaries, as Woodfin points out, "were accorded many of the titles and attributes associated with the imperial office."[96] As a matter of fact, they were known collectively as *taksis*, i.e. the very term used to describe the universal order associated with the Imperial rule. Thus Anna Komnena describes "the whole administration" with the term *hama pases tes takseos*. [97] As Paul J. Alexander points out, "[...A]t Byzantium the exercise of imperial authority, the *basileia...*, was inconceivable without the officialdom to carry out the emperor's policies."[98]

We shall deal with them separately below. Outside of the circle of the so-called Imperials, dignitaries and officials were strictly graded according to

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[91] Woodfin, op. cit., 143, Greek text in ft. 23.

[92] Hèléne Ahrweiler, *L'idéologie polituqe de l'empire byzantin* (Paris, 1975), 131, ft. 2: "La pourpre fait des empereurs mais non des pretres."

[93] Constantine Porphyrogenitus, *De administrando imperio* [Greek text edited by Gy. Moravcsik, English translation by R.J.H. Jenkins](New revised ed., Washington, D.C., 1967), 67, Greek text on 66.

[94] Pseudo-Kodinos, op.cit., 149, ft. 1 quoting from *Crónica de Ramon Muntaner*, Vol. II, vi, 41-42: "...e l'emperador porta capell vermell e totes ses robes vermelles..."

[95] *The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary on Historical Principles* [prepared by William Little, H.W. Fowler and Jessie Coulson, rev. and ed. by C.T. Onions, 3rd ed. with etymologies revised by G.W.S. Friedrichsen] (Oxford,1973), Vol. II, 2465.

[96] Woodfin, op.cit., 151.

[97] Anna Comnena, *Alexias*, Book I, 13 (Leib ed.,), 47.

[98] Paul J. Alexander, "The Donation of Constantine at Byzantium and its Earliest Use Against the Western Empire" in *Zbornik radova Vizantološkog instituta* VIII/1 [*Mélanges Georges Ostrogorsky*](Belgrade, 1963), 17.

color: "[T]he order in which courtiers left imperial receptions on feast days was determined by the colour and decoration of their headgear."[99] Mindful of the differences between the Komnenian and Palaeologian times, we can see that the Palaeologian officials wore a kind of a hat or *skaranikon* (which must be seen as a headgear rather than a tunic[100]), as well as another, earlier version of headdress called *skiadion*, both of which were distinguished *by color*. Woodfin points out that "the pattern for the remaining imperial retainers is set by the costume of the *megas doux*, or Grand Duke, the title for the commander of the Imperial fleet. He has a gold-embroidered red *skiadon*..."[101]

In the afore-mentioned Paris MS Coislin 79 the emperor is seen flanked by four high ranking officials, the two on his left wearing the red caps, and two on his right wearing the white hats. These hats are are like skull cups (on his right) and with pendants (thus more elaborate, i.e. higher in status) on his left. All four courtiers wear red coats over blue tunics. To compare with the later Palaeologian fashion we have the Lincoln College Typikon, i.e. Lincoln College MS gr. 35, at Oxford which shows the various courtiers. The highest dignitary, sebastokrator Constantine Palaiologos, the younger half-brother of emperor Michael VIII, wears a red tunic ornamented with gold. As Woodfin makes clear, "the remaining high officials are variously distinguished by the changing colour of their tunics (red, apricot, and green), the embroidery of their *skaranika* with imperial portraits, or the total absence of headgear. The *megas stratopedarches* John Synadenos, for instance, wears a red tunic and a gold *skaranikon*...The slightly lower-ranking *Protosebastos* Constantine Raoul wears an identical costume save that his tunic is green rather than red."[102]

The often-reproduced and displayed MS Coislin 79 of the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris, one of the most beautiful Byzantine miniatures, clearly shows, as already pointed out, the officials on both side of the emperor whose headdress is white (to his right, but our left) and red (to his left, and our right). As Spatharakis explains, "the courtier closest to the throne is designated as *protoproedros kai protovestiarios*—a eunuch—and the other as *proedros kai epi tou kanikleiou*. The two figures on the right of the emperor, wearing red headdresses with a hanging tassel, are *proedros kai dekanos*, and *proedros kai megas primikerios*."[103] What is absolutely clear is that the color of the *pro-*

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[99] Ibid., 151.

[100] See the views on this by N.P. Kondakov, "Les costume orientaux à la cour Byzantine" *Byzantion* I (1924), 16; S.N. Caratzas, "Byzantinogermanica [karanos-skaranikos]" in *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 47 (1954), 320-321; N. Ševčenko, "Headgear" in *Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*, Vol. II, 904; E. Piltz, *Le costume official des dignitaries byzantins à l'époque Paléologue* Figura (n.s.) 26 (Uppsalla, 1994), 11; Verpeaux, op.cit., 145-146, n.2. A. Kazhdan, "skaranikon" in *Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*, Vol. III, 1908-1909; and Woodfin, op.cit., 151-152.

[101] Woodfin, op. cit., 153.

[102] Ibid., 156.

[103] Ibid., 110.

tovestiarios' kabbadion is not as red as that of the other three, but rather reddish or apricot. So Pseudo-Kodinos may be more accurate on this point. The MS Coislin 79, however, proves that the high officials in the 11th century, and this would have been the case also in the 12th, wore red or reddish robes over tunics which could be of different color (in this case blue). We have another miniature featuring a *proedros* in a Lectionary held by Speer Library of the Theological Seminary in Princeton. It shows certain John *proedros* who is clad in a blue chiton and a purple chlamys decorated with gold.[104] Unfortunately, his head is almost erased though it is just possible to see that he is wearing a cap similar to the one worn by the *proedros* surrounding Botaneiates above. The MS is dated (probably) to the second half of the eleventh century. What it confirms is that a *proedros* wore a blue tunic or chiton under a red chlamys decorated with gold. Another miniature found in the 12th-century Lectionary MS in the Lavra Monastery on Mt. Athos portrays "a high official clad in a white bonnet, mauve chiton and purple chlamys ornamented with gold squares."[105] This official is portrayed in *proskynesis*. His white cap or bonnet would put him in that middle range of high officials, possibly a *proedros*. In another miniature found in the Codex no. 61 in the Dionysiu Monastery on Mt. Athos. According to Spatharakis, "he is clad in a dark blue chiton decorated on the hem and the arms with a gold on brown abstracte motive which we see in the costumes of the figures in Coisl. 79...His chlamys is purple with a gold border..."[106] Spatharakis points out that "the identification of the secular figure is very difficult because we possess no indications which might be of help. The purple chlamys cannot be used to determine the rank of the person portrayed since it was worn by officials of different rank, (cf. for instance Vat. Reg 1 and Coisl. 79)."[107] This is quite true and shows that red chlamys was the distinguishing feature of high-ranking officials regardless of the actual rank.

Woodfin points out that the illustrations in the Lincoln College Typikon do not follow the *order* of Pseudo-Kodinos' explanation. In his explanation of the MS Hutter dates the illustrations to its second phase, circa 1330-1335. Now, Pseudo-Kodinos may or may not be twenty years later (as Woodfin points out), but the two works are nearly contemporaneous. So how do we explain this discrepancy? Woodfin argues that the original color of the *sebastokrator* was green, as indicated by Pseudo-Kodinos. But I think that, if the portraits in the Lincoln College Typikon are to be believed, his tunic was red like that of a kaisar. Woodfin is also puzzled by the fact that all the women in the Lincoln College Typikon wear dresses with patterns in red and gold. I think this is quite logical given the fact that all of them belonged to the 'Impe-

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104 Ibid., 75 pl. 42.

105 Ibid., 78, pl. 45.

106 Ibid., 119, pl. 77.

107 Ibid., 120-121.

rials', i.e. were the closest family to the emperor, symbolized by the fact that they wear *crowns*.

Though some high officials not related to the Komneni did bear a title higher than the grand duke [*megas doux*] in the first half of Alexios I's reign, i.e. roughly before 1100, in the twelfth century only persons belonging to the Komnenos-Doukas megaclan had titles higher: specifically, those of despot, sebastokrator, caesar [*kaisar*], and the various higher forms of sebastos, e.g. panhypersebastos, protosebastos, all the way down to sebastos. In one way of another they were all in-laws [*gambros*] of the emperor. Pseudo-Kodinos distinguishes clearly between the highest offices reserved basically for the imperial extended family, designated as *aksiomata*, which had no function but were court titles like despot, sebastokrator, and kaisar; and the offices below them which were known as *archontes*.[108] The *aksiomata* were associated with the emperor. Their robe [*rouhon*] was red [*kokkinon*], and Psedo-Kodinois adds that it was "like that of the emperor"[109] [*osper kai to vasilikon*]. I have accepted Božidar Ferjančić's view that there were no despots as such in Byzantium before 1163, i.e. before Manuel I Komnenos created it specifically for his son-in-law, the Hungarian prince Bela. As such Bela was the heir to the throne since at that time Manuel did not have any sons of his own.[110] When he did get one in 1169 he stripped Bela (who had meanwhile been divorced from his wife, Manuel's daughter) of the title of despot and gave him the lesser one of *kaisar* (caesar).[111] For the remaining period of this study there were no other despots. The first was created in 1200.[112] Under the previous Komneni, Alexios and John, the highest title was that of sebastokrator created specifically for Alexios' elder brother, Isakios, who had to be placed above the *kaisar*, the first of whom (under Alexios) was Nikephoros Melissenos in 1081, and later his son-in-law, the husband of Anna Komnena, Nikephoros Bryennios, as Anna Komnena explains: "The emperor had promised Nikephoros Melissenos (his brother-in-law) the title of *kaisar*. Isaac, the eldest of his brothers, therefore had to be honoured with some higher dignity, and as there was no such rank in existence, a new name was invented, a compound of *sebastos* and *autokrator*. Isaac was created *sebastokrator*, a kind of second emperor and senior to the *kaisar*, who received the acclamation in the third place. In addition, Alexios decreed that both *sebastokrator* and *kaisar* would wear crowns at public festivals, although they were much inferior to his own."[113]

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108 PSEUDO-KODINOS, *Traité des offices* [introduction, texte et traduction par Jean Verpeaux (Paris, 1976), 150, ft. 1.

109 Ibid., 143.

110 Božidar Ferjančić, *Despoti u Vizantiji i južnoslovenskim zemljama* (Belgrade, 1960), 27-28.

111 Ibid., 29.

112 Ibid., 29.

113 AK, 87.

Woodfin states that "the costume of a sebastokrator consisted of a highly decorated tunic, red in colour...."[114] Their mantle was likewise red. Their stockings were red. But, unlike the emperor's shoes which were red, those of the despot were violet and white with eagles. The cover of his horse was also violet and white, the cover of the saddle also white with little red eagles. His tent is also white with red eagles. His headdress, however, was either violet or red.[115] All the headdress of the imperial in-laws [*gambros*] who were despots were also red and gold.

So was the headdress of a sebastokrator. Like the emperor his robe was red [*kokkinon rouhon*].[116] Verpeaux points out that gold was embroidered into various colors and should not be treated as a separate color.[117] The shoes of the sebastokrator were blue, with eagles in gold on red, and the saddle is also blue with four red eagles. His tent is white with blue. The headdress of the caesar is red with gold, like that of the sebastokrator. His robe was red, and his stockings and shoes were blue. He had the saddle and the tent like the sebastokrator but without eagles.[118] Though they wore different colors, all the *axiomata* shared red with the emperor. It was *the* color of that extended Imperial family which I have dubbed 'the Imperials' (see Chapter Six). When a new emperor was being crowned in Hagia Sophia a platform was erected decorated entirely with red silk.[119]

The army, i.e. its elite regiments like the one that guarded the Imperial tent (the so-called *kortinaroi*) and the Imperial bodyguard made up of the so-called Vardarioti, were both dressed in *red*, with their commander also dressed in red.[120] Red was also the color of the grand dukes [*megas doux*], of the protostrator, stratopedarch and other high military commanders.[121] As its commander-in-chief the emperor (its Latin name *imperator* means literally commander-in-chief) when wearing a military costume was portrayed in red.

Let us summarize briefly the color-coding system:

1) all the highest officials, including the very highest created by Alexios I for his brother Isaac, that of *sebastokrator*, wore a red robe;
2) all the military officials, whether 'bearded men' or eunuchs, wore a red robe;

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114 Woodfin, op. cit., 151.

115 Ibid., 145-146.

116 Ibid., 147.

117 Ibid., 147, ft. 1.

118 Ibid., 149.

119 Ibid., 257.

120 Pseudo-Kodinos, op.cit., 181:

121 Ibid., 153-154.

3) according to the Lincoln College Typikon (mid-14th century) all the higher officials wore a red robe (though Pseudo-Kodinos, an early 14th-century source, has it apricot, i.e. between white and red, meaning pink)
4) though some of the middle Palace officials wear white or gold robes, their headdress is red;
5) the middle-ranked officials of the Palace wore violet, i.e. blue and white robes;
6) the low-ranking officials of the Palace all wore red and white headdress.

Red is thus the dominant color of the Imperial administration and bureaucracy, together with being the prescribed color for the military. In terms of ranking red is the dominant color, followed by blue. This is how the difference between the Emperor, in this case Alexios I, and his brother, the *sebastokrator*, was indicated: the Emperor had the exclusive right to use red ink for his charters, and in case of Manuel Komnenos, his tablets; the *sebastokrator* used the blue ink to sign his documents with a matching blue cord. His shoes also accurately betrayed his status: they were blue. Blue shoes were also worn by the next rank, that of *kaisar* or Caesar. The shoes of *panhypersebastos* wore yellow shoes, and *protovestiarios* green.

Woodfin points out that the color of the robes of a *sebastokrator* is a red tunic, and "that the remaining high officials are variously distinguished by the changing colour of their tunics (red, apricot, and green)...The megas *stratopedarches* John Synadenos .... wears a red tunic and a gold *skaranikon* ... The slightly-lower ranking *Protosebastos* Constantine Raoul wears an identical costume save that his tunic is green rather than red."[122] All the Grand Dukes or *megas doux* wear a gold-embroidered red hat or *skiadion*.[123] In addition, in the Lincoln College Typikon all the women, i.e. spouses of these top officials, wear a red robe embroidered with gold.

In the Coislin 79 illuminated Manuscript four officials stand, two on both sides of the Imperial throne. The two officials to the right of the emperor wear white headdresses, the other two to the left of the emperor red ones. The two courtiers wearing white caps are beardless and thus eunuchs, those wearing red ones have beards and are thus 'bearded men', i.e. non-eunuchs. The eunuch on the right side of the emperor closest to him is identified as *protoproedros kai protovestiarios*, while the other three are 'mere' *proedroi*. As such note that all wear a red robe over a blue tunic, symbolizing their office and rank: they are Imperial courtiers of the highest rank (blue). The eunuchs wear white caps, the color almost exclusively worn by eunuchs, comparable to the white robes of the angels; the 'bearded' officials, on the contrary, wear

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122 Woodfin, op. 156.

123 Ibid., 153.

red ones. The two are identified as a *proedros kai dekanos* and *a proedros kai megas primikerios*. Ringrose states that "the *primikerios* [is] literally the first eunuch within a given category of eunuch servants."[124] This gives a wrong impression that the rank of *primikerios* was reserved for the eunuchs. It was not: as Moffatt and Tall explain: "Primikerios (Latin *primicerius*) [is] the senior member of any group of functionaries."[125] All wear red for that is the common color of all Imperial officials. We have a precious testimony from an Arab visitor to Byzantium, Sharaf al-zaman Tahir al-Marwazi, who lived around 1100, who was a court-physician of the great Saljuqid Sultan Malikshah (who died in 1092). In his work there is a chapter on the *Rum*, i.e. Byzantium which contains a description of the hippodrome which says that when the king, i.e. the Emperor attends it he comes "with his intimates and servants, all of them dressed in red."[126]

The hierarchical order of colors is thus: gold, red, blue, yellow or white, green. And it has to do with Jesus Christ and the emperor. By stating that the emperor is analogous to God (with all qualifications) Constantine Porphyrogennetos had two things in mind: first, the position of the Byzantine Emperor on earth is analogous to that of Christ the Pantokrator, the Ruler of the Universe in Heaven. That much is clear. But he also had something else in mind. The Emperor was *not* analogous to God the Father or God the Holy Ghost. He was analogous *only* to Jesus Christ, insofar as Jesus was both a man and Christos, the Lord God. Jesus Christ has two natures, human and divine. The relationship between the two is the central point of this study. But the emperor can be analogous to God only insofar as he is both fully human (as Jesus was) and up to a point divine (unlike Christ who is fully divine). The emperor thus shares with Christ an intertwined nature in which being fully human he is a mere mortal and totally subject to the Lord of Lords, meaning Christ, but having divine attributes of office *through God's investiture of his divinely-given and -protected office he is (quasi) divine*. The normative person of the Trinity for the Emperor is not God the Father or, for that matter, God the Holy Ghost. It is God the Son, Jesus Christ. And that means that the latter's Incarnation, when he became fully human, i.e. man, and yet remained fully divine, i.e. God, is absolutely central to the office, dignity, and symbolic importance of the Imperial office. Without Jesus Christ there would be no *Christian* Emperor, no Vicar of Christ on this earth.

As an Emperor Constantine the Great and his successors on the throne of Byzantium exercised an office which was made up of a *dual* role: that of a priest and that of an emperor. This is the title of Dagron's fine study of the

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[124] Ringrose, op.cit., 168.

[125] BC II, 833.

[126] Vladimir Minorsky, "Marvazi on the Byzantines" in *Annuaire de l'Institut de phiulologie et d'histoire orientales et slaves* X [*Mélanges Henri Grégoire* II](Brussels, 1950) reprinted in his *Medieval Iran and Its Neighbours* (London, 1982), 461 [Arabic text on the left, English translation on the right page].

Imperial office in Byzantium.[127] Dagron follows Georges Dumézil in seeing the Imperial office as a compound of these two roles. Dumézil argues that "[i]n India, in the very earliest times, *raj* (or *rajan*) and *Brahman* existed in a true symbiosis in which the latter protected the former against the magio-religious risks inherent in the exercise of the royal function, while the former maintained the latter in a place equal to or above his own."[128] In Byzantium the Imperial office was made up of two functions: that of a king [*basileus* can be translated as both king and emperor] and of a priest. He was the only layman who could enter the bema, the sacred sanctuary off limits to all others. It is not necessary for me to go over all the details of his special privileges inside the Church; that has been done by Dagron. But it is important to note that as such the Emperor was a hybrid: he had a military role, i.e. of the commander-in-chief (which is what *imperator* originally meant), and a priestly role. Again, he was *like* Christ who also had two natures, human and divine. Now, as the military commander-in-chief his color was red; but as a priest his color was blue, partaking of divinity. The compound of the two colors is purple, the color reserved for the Emperor.

The Emperor, in his dual role as both king and priest, attended two kinds of ceremonies: secular and religious. Of the secular ones none was more impressive than his attendance at the Hippodrome. According to Ringrose, Constantinople "was spatially divided into three realms: the world of the church, centered on the great church of Hagia Sophia and controlled by the patriarch of Constantinople and his staff, the world of the imperial palace controlled by the emperor and his staff of eunuchs, and the world of the city, controlled by the city *eparch*."[129] The venue where the last two-mentioned came together was the Hippodrome. It was the place for chariot races, and it was here that the emperor and his officials met face to face with the people of Constantinople organized into two City sections, the Reds and the Whites, of the two factions, the Greens and the Blues, respectively. The Emperor could reach his Imperial box, *kathisma*, without leaving the Great Palace. The Arabic source of Marwazi makes it clear that the Emperor "comes with his intimates and servants, all of them dressed in *red*. He sits on an eminence overlooking the place and *there* appears his wife called *dizbuna* with her servants and intimates, all of them dressed in *green*, and she sits *in a place opposite the king*."[130] [my emphasis] Now, this passage has created problems for historians: they simply misinterpreted it. They thought that the so-called *dizbuna* (which is the Arabic misnaming of *despoina*, meaning the Empress) *sat on the opposite side, i.e. on the western side across the spina*. This is, however, non-

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127 Gilbert Dagron, *Emperor and Priest: The Imperial Office in Byzantium* (Cambridge, 2003).

128 Georges Dumézil, *Mitra-Varuna: An Essay on Two Indo-European Representations of Sovereignty* (New York, 1988), 22.

129 Ringrose, op.cit., 164.

130 Minorsky, op.cit., 461.

sense: first of all, in that case she would be sitting *with the people for we know that the Western side was reserved for the factions*. Moreover, the text makes it clear that she sat "*there*" meaning in "an eminence overlooking the place", i.e. the Imperial box or *kathisma*. Marwazi (in another paragraph) specifically mentions that "the king's wife sits with the king on the royal throne".[131] But if she sat in the same box with the Emperor as expected, what does the phrase "in a place opposite the king" mean? I think it means next to rather than on the opposite side—besides she could not be sitting *opposite the Emperor in the kathisma for she would be facing the wrong way*. Now what about all of her servants and intimates being dressed "in green"?

We know from the arrangement in Hagia Sophia that the southern upper gallery was reserved for the Empress. The spot where she stood for the liturgy was *green* and so were the pillars. In other words *green* was used for the Empress and for her officials. Her officials, though honoured, would have ranked *far below those of the Emperor, the co-emperor, and the other highest titles like despot, sebastokrator and kaisar, all of whom were color-coded with higher colors of red and blue*. Since white seems to have been reserved for the eunuchs (as for angels) the next color in the hierarchy was *green*.

We are told by Malalas that Emperor Theodosius changed the seating arrangements of the factions, moving the Greens to *the left of him*, while keeping the Blues *to the right of him*. When they protested, he assured them that he wanted to give them the place of honor. How can *the left* side (seen from the emperor's point of view) be the privileged one? Since the ceremony in question was a secular rather than a religious one, the *left* hand was the privileged one; for we are told that, at the banquets held in the Hall of Chrysotriklinos *the seat of honor was on the Emperor's left*.[132] This is now, however, how Moffatt and Tall interpret it: "Left is seen here from the point of view of the *atriklines*, whose role in directing the patriarch is especially emphasized. However, in *Cer.* generally and in the *Kletoro-logion* left and right are usually seen *from the point of view of the emperor, whereas in a church they are seen from the point of view of one facing east*."[133] This means simply from the point of view of a believer. Moffatt and Tall point out that "the patriarch is honoured by being seated on the emperor's right. Then the Caesar would appear on the emperor's left, as he does on coins, thus honouring the emperor."[134] This is not, however, how I interpret it for Constantine Porphrogennetos makes it clear that when the Patriarch is received by the Emperor in the Chrysotriklinos, as Moffatt and Tall translate, "[t]he emperor sits on a gold chair in front of the *pentapyrgion*, and the patriarch likewise sits

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[131] Ibid., 459-460.

[132] BC 726.

[133] BC 726, ft. 3.

[134] BC 726, ft. 3.

on a chair *to the left of the emperor*, not, however, on the same level...."[135] [my emphasis] This is also emphasized in another passage where the seating is always specified "on the left" for various ranks.[136] From the above, it is clear that in the Imperial sacred space, a place of honor is *to the left of the Emperor, not to the right, and this is proved by Caesar, i.e., according to Marwazi, 'half-a-king' (co-emperor) being to the left of the Emperor on coins, a place of honor.* This is indeed, consistent with everything we have outlined above. Accordingly, the Greens would have been put in *a place of honor by being to the left of the Emperor but* it was *seen as the right one* from the Greens' sitting point of view. This followed the normal perspective from the viewer to the viewed, i.e. from the factions (in this case the Greens) to the Emperor. This is the case in the Orthodox Churches: Christ is portrayed on the iconostasis to the right of the doors *seen from the believers' point of view*. He is actually *to the left* as seen from the inside of the bema. Since we know that the emperors favored the Blues from the time of Justinian, the position of the Blues *to the right of the emperor* (seen from the emperor's point of view) symbolized the *reverse perspective* from the emperor's view. The order of colors was thus: from the western point of view, from left to right: blue, white, red, green; from the eastern point of view, from left to right: green, red, white, blue. The dominant color on the western side was green, the color of the major faction of the people of Constantinople (we are told there were more Green than Blue followers. For when the Emperor entered his box he stood up and blessed the people on the other side three times: first, he blessed the *combined colors of red and white* opposite in front of him, then he blessed the Blues to his right, and the Greens to his left. This transformed the quaternary of the colors on the opposite side into a triad: red/white, blue, and green. It is quite clear that by this religious gesture of blessing the Emperor transformed the secular into a sacred space—a space in which red/white was given *precedence over both Blue and Green*. What is the symbolism of this?

Of course, it is quite obvious that the Emperor made a Trinitarian gesture: he was transforming *earthly into heavenly* matter. The three blessings start from the center which has a *dual* nature: red and white. Now we know that in Rublev's painting of the Trinity Jesus Christ's colors are red and white as opposed to the iris of God the Father and green of God the Holy Ghost. Since the iris contained the blue, *the* color of divinity, blue was applied to God the Father (it makes sense for He is the source of all divinity, including the Son and the Holy Ghost). The triad of colors is then: red—blue—green in that order. But why is red/white given precedence? Because it stands for Jesus Christ: his human nature, i.e. the Incarnation, is color-coded red (appropriately); his divine nature is color-coded white (appropriately). By blessing three times the audience the Emperor not only *spiritualized* a very earthly perfor-

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[135] BC 92.

[136] BC 739.

mance (chariot races), but acknowledged his analogy with Jesus Christ. As Dean Miller remarks, "The stance is *Christomimetic*, reflecting on earth the character and—within obvious limitations—the powers of Christ...: '[H]e imitates Christ himself, who is our true God.'"[137] The whole Hippodrome with this triple gesture of the Emperor's blessing becomes nothing else but the earthly reflection of the Trinity: red for the Emperor and his courtiers (Jesus Christ as God the Son), the Blue faction for God the Father, and the Green faction for God the Holy Ghost.

In the Great Palace the color-coded hierarchy of court officials reflected the proximity to the throne, i.e. the Emperor. The space of the Great Palace was sacred. The space of the Hippodrome was not sacred, but the Emperor's gesture imposed a sacred character upon a basically secular, not to say, pagan activity. In his study of the Hippodrome of Constantinople Dagron that the Emperor "transforms with this most solemn gesture, a subject of multiple and minute descriptions in the ceremonial, the rectangular space and a square of tiers [*gradins*] into a cosmic space, concentric and triple, of which he [the Emperor] occupies the centre."[138]

Before dealing with the relationship of the Emperor to the Great Church, let us see how an Arabic visitor to Byzantium described the Emperor's procession to Hagia Sophia. Harun-Ibn-Yahya who visited Constantinople after 881 according to Vasiliev (though Yahya himself dates it in the middle of the 10th century!), left the following description:

> Then he [the Emperor] is preceded by 10,000 elders wearing-clothes of *red* brockade...Then behind them come 10,000 young men wearing clothes of *white* brockade. All go on foot. Then come 10,000 boys wearing clothes of *green* brocade. Then come 10,000 servants wearing clothes of brocade of the color of the *blue* sky; in their hands they hold axes covered with gold. Behind them follow 5,000 chosen eunuchs wearing white Khorasanian clothes of half silk; in their hands they hold golden crosses. Then after them come 10,000 Turkish and Khorasanian pages (*ghulam*) wearing striped breast-plates; in their hands they hold spears and shields wholly covered with *gold*. Then come a hundred most dignified patricians wearing clothes of colored brocade; in their hands they have gold censers perfumed with aloes. Then come twelve chief patricians wearing clothes of woven with gold; each of them holds a golden rod. The come a hundred pages (ghulam) wearing clothes trimmed with borders and adorned with pearls; they carry a golden case in which is the Imperial robe for the Emperor's prayer. Then before the Emperor comes a man...who makes

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[137] Dean A. Miller, "The Emperor and Ritual: Magic and Harmony" in *Byzantine Studies* VI 1/2 (1979) [Special Issue: Essays in Honor of Peter Charanis], 127 quoting Nicephoros Blemmydes, *Andrias Basilikos*, ch. 6 in E. Barker, *Social and Political Thought in Byzantium: From Justinian I to the Last Paleologus* (Oxford, 1957), 157.

[138] Gilbert Dagron, *L'Hippodrome de Constantinople: Jeux, people et politique* (Paris, 2011), 206-207.

> the people be silent and says, "Be silent." Then comes an old man holding in his hand a golden wash-basin and a golden jug adorned with pearls and rubies. The comes the Emperor wearing his festival clothes, that is silk clothes woven with jewels; on his head there is a crown; he wears two shoes, one of them black, the other red.[139]

For our purpose this is a most precious source, though not without difficulties: first of all, it confirms that in *religious processions if not in the Hippodrome* the members of the *four factions, i.e. the Reds, the Whites, the Greens, and the Blues wore their colors—not just green and blue as in the Hippodrome*. Second, and this is very important, the place of the Emperor was at the end of the procession, not at the very beginning. Contrary to Western practice, the Emperor in the Great Palace or in the Hippodrome, i.e. in non-religious places always *entered first*. Here the order is *reversed: he comes last*. This is the most important clue: it tells us that the hierarchical order of colors represented by the four factions is *reversed*: red—white—green—blue, not as in the Hippodrome red/white—blue—green. Why is blue privileged? Because it is, as we have demonstrated, *the* color of divinity, i.e. of Heaven, and the procession is going to Hagia Sophia, the Abode of God. Third, and most difficult, is the question of the two shoes, one black, the other red. Minorsky comments that Harun-ibn-Yahya got it wrong: he was describing the shoes of the *kaisar* or Caesar. This is indeed how Marwazi explains it in paragraph 9: "The distinctive sign of the king (*malik*) is that his shoes are red, while of those of the *qaysar* (Caesar), who in rank is half-a-king, one is black and one is red."[140]

But Yahya calls the wearer of two shoes *malik*, i.e. king. Now, I have not come across any reference in Byzantine sources to a *kaisar* wearing one black and one red shoe. It is true that before the introduction of the *sebastokrator* title under Alexios I Komnenos the title of *kaisar* was the highest after the Emperor, but does Yahya refer to the *kaisar* rather than to the *autokrator*, i.e. the Emperor?

In the first paragraph of his travel account on Constantinople Yahya states that "their [Byzantine] chief is he whom we call Qaysar and they call him Basileus (*basilus*)."[141] In another paragraph (No. 11) the king is identified with 'Basileus'.[142] This would suggest that the *kaisar* indeed had two different shoes as all Byzantine sources insist on the senior Emperor wearing both red shoes. If so, why black?

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[139] A.A. Vasiliev, "Harun-Ibn-Yahya and His Description of Constantinople" in *Seminarium Kondakovianum* 5 (1932), 158-159.

[140] Ibid., 460.

[141] Ibid., 457.

[142] Ibid., 461.

Pseudo-Kodinos, though a later source of early 14th century, nevertheless preserves the earlier state of ceremonial. It points out that the shoes of the highest rank, that of despot, introduced by Manuel Komnenos for his son-in-law and Hungarian Prince, Bela, were bicolour: of violet and white (with pearl eagles).[143] The rank of despot, however, was not that of the co-emperor: the latter was higher in dignity (what Marwazi called half-a-king). If so, the proper bicolour for the latter was red and violet. Marwazi would have mistaken deep violet for black which, as we know, in Byzantium was *reserved for the monks*. Of course, it is well known that by the time of Komneni (and certainly much earlier), all the metropolitans, archbishops and bishops were monks, and most of the patriarchs. Marwazi picked that up: "[They]...dress in black and yellow" [literally "colour of honey") "and do not approach women."[144] The editor of Pseudo-Kodinos, Verpeaux, explains that the term used for this violet color in case of despot is *oxys* which, he explains, is "nuance of color purple" [*une des nuances de couleur pourpre*]. Being deep blue it would have seemed to Marwazi from afar as black.

There is also another telling clue in Yahya's account: he mentioned specifically 5,000 chosen *eunuchs* wearing white Khorasanian clothes of half silk."[145] This confirms information from other sources that being comparable to angels (both being sexless beings) the eunuchs' color was *white*. This is confirmed by the color of the headdress they wear in Coslin 79 illustrated Manuscript: white. There is one more precious clue in Yahya's account, corroborated from other Arab sources: a heavy emphasis on *gold*. My view is that gold was not regarded as a distinct color by the Byzantines but as an ornamentation: it is combined with all the other colors, particularly red, blue, and green. But even if we see it as a separate color there is no question that gold was right at the very top of the hierarchy of colors: it was reserved exclusively for those very highest officials around the Emperor. The importance of gold was not lost on the Arabic visitors: "Indeed, judging by their descriptions of Byzantine ceremonial and imperial audiences, it seems that this aspect made the deepest impression on the Arab Muslim authors. In Harun's [-Ibn-Yahya] description of the emperor's procession to the Great Church, the words most frequently encountered are 'gold', and 'golden': 'the hand axes were gilded...golden crosses... lances and shields made entirely of gold...golden censers... golden sceptre...golden box."[146] As El Cheikh comments, "[t]he theatricality of this public ritual ceremony with its costumes, staging, stylization of action, and sequential processional organization

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[143] J. Verpeaux, ed., *Pseudo-Codinus: Traité des offices* (Paris, 1966), 143-144, n. 1.

[144] Minorsky, op.cit., 458.

[145] Vasiliev, op.cit., 158.

[146] El Cheikh, *Byzantium Viewed by the Arabs*, 156-157.

was intended to emphasize the qualities and functions of the emperor and the power of his empire above all else."[147]

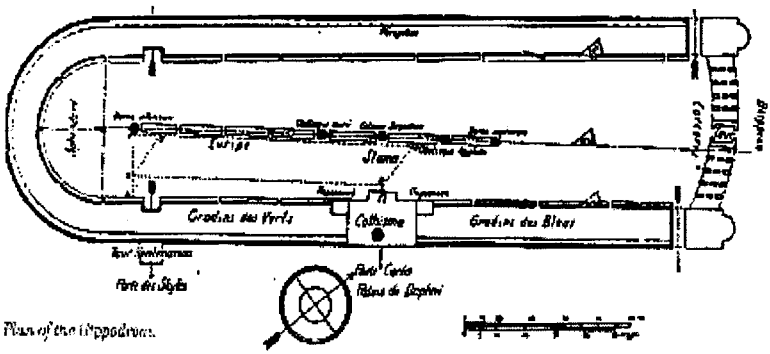


ILLUSTRATION ONE: THE HIPPODROME OF CONSTANTINOPLE

147 Ibid., 156.

PART ONE
THE TOPOGRAPHY OF POWER

1

THE TOPOGRAPHY OF IMPERIAL CONSTANTINOPLE:

I. THE PEOPLE

IMPERIAL CONSTANTINOPLE was not just a city, a capital of an empire, but THE CITY, and THE CAPITAL OF THE DIVINELY-PROTECTED EMPIRE whose head, THE EMPEROR OF THE ROMANS (for no other ruler was given that title), was appointed by Jesus Christ Himself. Constantinople was thus the Emperor's city, and this is indeed how the Slavs call it: Caesar's City [*Tsargrad, Carigrad]* since Caesar is considered to have been the first Roman emperor (in fact if not in title). By ordinary Byzantines it was called 'the Queen of Cities' [*basileousa*] or the 'Great City' [*megalopolis*] or just 'The City' [*I polis*] from which the later Turkish popular name of Istanbul was derived [to go to the City = *is tin polin*]. During the heyday of the Byzantine Empire and during the period of the Komneni as well it was unaparalled in the whole world: though there were magnificent cities like Baghdad and Cairo in the Muslim world, its envoys were as impressed by it as the so-called 'primitives' who came from the pagan Russes or Varangians or Bulgarians. Imperial Constantinople failed not to impress anyone.

Though it was the Emperor's City Constantinople was also God's City. When the emperor had to leave Constantinople he entrusted it not only to his military and public service that were supposed to take care of it in his absence, but to God Himself, as Constantine Porphyrogennetos makes clear:

> When the emperor is a sufficient distance from the imperial harbour, so that he can look upon the city, he rises from his couch and stands looking eastwards with his hands raised to heaven; and making the sign of the cross three times with his hand ove the city, he prays to God and says: 'Lord Jesus Christ, my God, I place in Your Hands this Your city.'[1]

The principle of *mimesis*, the foundation of Byzantium as a *theatre* state, here and elsewhere rested on the *recreation of Heaven on Earth*, and as there was the Heavenly City whose head was Christ so there was the Imperial City whose head was the 'emperor and autocrat of the Romans'. The notion of Rome as the divinely-ordained and –protected empire was taken extremely

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[1] Constantine VII Porhyrogenitos, *Three Treatises on Imperial Military Expeditions* [trans. & ed. by John F. Haldon](Vienna, 1990), 114-115 citing Liutprand of Cremona, *Historia*, v, 21.

seriously both by the Byzantines and by the people in the medieval West. The latter's finest formulation in a highly poetic form was given by Dante in his *Divine Comedy*. The Byzantines, however, took a different view: they stressed the doctrine of the *translatio imperii* which was based on Constantine's transfer of the capital of the Roman Empire from Rome to a new Rome [*nea Rome*], the city bearing his name. For the Byzantines as true Romans Western claims were empty since the Western Roman Empire ceased to exist in 476 and its subsequent incarnations were mere latecomers and upstarts at best, fraudulent claimants at worst.

The idea, already discussed, of the imitation of the Kingdom of Heaven on this Earth, was not only the central *myth* of Byzantium (without which it not only did not make sense, it could not have existed), but physically incarnated in its *sacred* topography. As Dagron points out, "Constantinople had three great institutions: the imperial power, the people and the Church. Each occupied its own space, and relations between them—simple or complex—were expressed in topography and ceremonial by communications—easy or difficult—and by stages, halts and transitions. The Great Palace was closely connected to the two main sources of legitimacy: the Great Hippodrome, where the emperor was confronted with the *populus romanus* in a ritual of horse races that renewed his *tyche*, and the Great Church, where he encountered the patriarch and Christ in another ritual of confirmation."[2] Of its three focal points, the Great Palace, the Great Church, and the Hippodrome, the very center of earthly and thus imperial power was the Great Palace.

If the Great Church, i.e. Hagia Sophia, was the place where divine worship was the ritual of *praising God in the right way* [*orthodoxa*], i.e. glorifying Jesus Christ as the Pantokrator, the Ruler of the Universe, the Great Palace was the place where the ritual was that of *praising the Emperor in the right way* [this is the meaning of *ceremony*], i.e. of glorifying the ruler as the Emperor and Autocrat of the Romans [*basileus autokrator Romaion*]. In theory, the *mimesis was complete, the analogy was overwhelming.*

But what about the Hippodrome? If Hagia Sophia was the abode of divine power, and the Great Palace was the place where Imperial power was located, the Hippodrome represented the place where popular power was displayed. It was the central gathering place for the people of Constantinople who were one of the constituent elements in the making, and breaking, of emperors. Norman Baynes remarked that the Byzantine people venerated two heroes: "the winner in the chariot race and the ascetic saint."[3] Though a lot has been written about ascetic saints, the heroes of the Hippodrome are less well known. Cameron's book on Porphyrius the charioteer concludes with a telling remark that "chariot-racing flourished at Constantinople for more than

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[2] Gilbert Dagron, *Emperor and Priest: The Imperial Office in Byzantium* (Cambridge, 2003), 95.

[3] Norman Baynes, *The Byzantine Empire* (London, 1925), 33.

1000 years."[4] The Hippodrome was the place where not only races took place, but where the people could express their approval of or anger at the emperor. The Nika riots under Justinian in 532 are the best case of the latter. But leaving this aside, the Hippodrome was principally where winning took place. As Cameron points out, "the sole function and only goal of the charioteer was victory. Now victory happened also to be the pre-eminent attribute of the Emperor. The most essential feature in the imperial ideology of Byzantium as it had been of Rome was that the Emperor was victorious: *victor ac triumphator semper Augustus... Auguste, tu vincas* was his standard greeting from his subjects, civilians and soldiers alike... [T]he charioteer too was greeted with the cry *tu vincas*. The parallelism was in fact quite explicitly drawn."[5] According to Cameron, "when the victorious charioteer mounts his chariot to do a lap of honour, his faction addresses him with the words *agallou, Venete* (or *Prasine*), *oi despotai enikesan*: 'Rejoice, Blue (Green), your Lords have conquered."[6]

As Alan Cameron points out, "there had always been four factions in the circuses and hippodromes of the Roman Empire: Reds, Whites, Blues, and Greens. But by the late Empire we hear almost exclusively of Blues and Greens... Not unnaturally, it has often been assumed or implied that Reds and Whites disappeared altogether. This is certainly not so. Right up till at least the twelfth century there was always a Red and White team in every race, and no doubt they often won."[7] He then quotes Christopher of Mytilene's poem 'For those away in the country on race day' in which the Reds [*Rousios*] and the Whites [*Leukos*] are mentioned together with the Greens [*Prasinos*] and the Blues [*Venetos*]. The first six lines make it possible to date it to February 1, 1168, i.e. during the reign of Manuel Komnenos (1143-1180). Cameron points out that in Constantine Porphyrogennitus' *De ceremoniis* all four teams are constantly mentioned, but otherwise only the Greens and the Blues are found in the sources. As Cameron explains, "most scholars have evidently considered it irrelevant to the 'problem' of the factions as they see it. Manojlović alone both considered it and proposed a solution, one with wide implications. He postulated two entirely different organizations: the mere 'sporting associations' that existed to cheer on the *four* teams in the hippodrome, and the *two* (as he thought) social, political and religious parties that divided the entire population of Constantinople... That is to say, whenever we find Reds and Whites mentioned together with Blues and Greens, all four colours, these are just the fans who cheer on their respective teams in the hippodrome. But when we read of the Blues and Greens alone doing things *outside* the hippodrome, whether defending the walls of the city in a moment of

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[4] Alan Cameron, *Porphyrius the Charioteer* (Oxford, 1973), 223.

[5] Ibid., 248-249.

[6] Ibid., 249 citing BC I, 357.

[7] Alan Cameron, *Circus Factions: Blues and Greens at Rome and Byzantium* (Oxford, 1976), 45.

crisis or (more frequently) simply causing trouble, these are something else altogether: two massive political parties, organized on a regional basis with officially recognised and elected leaders—far removed from the frivolities of the racetrack."[8]

Cameron is referring to a ground-breaking series of articles written by G. Manojlović and published under the revealing title of "The People of Constantinople ('demos') from 400 to 800 A.D. (with special reference to its military power, constitutive sections and its constitutional role during this period)".[9] Manojlović noted the prominent, not to say great role, that the circus factions played in the history of both ancient Rome and Byzantium, and was not satisfied with the explanations offered by scholars up to that time including that of the great French Byzantinist, Rambaud, in his dissertation published in Latin on Byzantine hippodrome and its circus factions.[10]

Rambaud had already believed that the Byzantine four factions were more than just circus factions as such, as he put it expressly: "Non regiones tantum urbane, aut suburbanae, sed opificium aut mercatorum collegia, haec illi, huic illa, factioni favisse videntur. Hujusmodi Byzantii collegia fuisse, ut in Occidentalibus partibus 'les corporations' aut 'die Zünfte', nemo dubitat: suum cuique collegio vicum aut urbis regionem adtributum fuisse credere licet."[11] Manojlović spends a lot of space trying to prove that the two main factions, the Blues and the Greens, outside of the hippodrome provided Constantinople's civic militia, and that this militia had a very large role in the making and unmaking, i.e. overthrowing the emperors. His conclusion is that the word *demos*, which is usually translated into English as the *people*, has three different connotations: 1) in the widest sense of the people as opposed to the magnates, aristocrats, bureaucrats, and the regular military; 2) in a narrower sense as the two factions in the hippodrome, i.e. the Greens and the Blues; and 3) in the narrowest sense as the *population of a city district (and to an extent even the very city district) in a civilian sense, and in the military the same as a military civil regiment.*[12]

This is a very important insight that Manojlović had derived from Rambaud. And I am quite convinced that both were right and that Cameron is not when he states that he does not "accept this distinction between sporting associations and political parties. It can (I believe) be proved beyond question that the Blues and the Greens who roamed the streets, defended the walls, and (occasionally) proclaimed the emperors of Constantinople were none other than the Blues and Greens who sat with the Reds and Whites in the hippo-

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[8] Ibid., 46.

[9] G. Manojlović, "Carigradski narod ('demos') od god. 400. do 800. po Is. (s osobitim obzirom na njegove vojne sile, elemente njegove i njegova ustavna prava u ovoj periodi)".

[10] A. Rambaud, *De Byzantino Hippodromo et circensibus factionibus* (Paris, 1870).

[11] Manojlović, op. cit., 159 quoting Rambaud, op. cit., 31.

[12] Ibid., 169.

drome".[13] Because he was basing his understanding of Manojlović on an abbreviated French translation by Gregoire published in *Byzantion* he often imparts to Manojlović views that the latter does not express: the original version does not make it appear as though Manojlović thought the two, i.e. the sporting associations and political parties, *consisted of* different Blues and Greens or were manned by different participants. As a matter of fact, Manojlović states that "if it is a question of games only, that among the spectators as well, there are four color names after the four colors of the racers: *Venetoi* (the Blues), *Leukoi* (the Whites), *Prasinoi* (the Greens), *Rousioi* (the Reds). Everywhere, except at the races, the Whites go together with the Blues, and the Reds with the Greens, moreover the Whites and the Reds do not exist, even though 'the demarch of the Blues is also the demarch of the Whites, and the the demarch of the Greens is also the the demarch of the Reds."[14] Manojlović thus does accept the traditional view, but he is insistent that the role as militias which the Blues and the Greens have exercised in Byzantine history can only be explained in *extra-racing* terms: "those of the city districts or occupations". In other words, the four circus (or hippodrome) factions are identical with the (consolidated) two factions of the Blues and the Greens outside of the racetrack, but *both* are based on wider foundations. And it is these foundations that are important.

How else are we to interpret Theodosius II's decision to allot more space to the Greens because they were *more numerous*?[15] But if the spectators too belonged to the two colors why would one faction, the Greens, be given more seats in the hippodrome *in perpetuity* unless they had more members *outside as well as inside the hippodrome*, in other words, unless they *represented a greater part of the population?* What I think Cameron misses, and Manojlović and Rambaud have perceived rightly, is that not only are two factions inside and outside of the hippodrome the *same*, they reflect accurately the wider territorial coverage of the City. In short, they *are* indeed the circus factions, and they are also the city militias, but they are also *district-based* organizations. Any other explanation simply does not do justice to them.

Manojlović went further and claimed that "the Greens (together with the Reds) were mostly lower social tiers, while the Blues (with the Whites) were higher."[16] He emphasized that "the constituent elements of the very racing associations provided the crystallization of the parties, so that in these parties there found expression and media those socio-political interests and

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[13] Cameron, op. cit., 46.

[14] Manojlović, op. cit., 180.

[15] John Malalas, *The Chronicle of John Malalas*, trans. by Elizabeth Jeffreys, Michael Jeffreys and Roger Scott (Byzantina Australiensia 4) (Melbourne, 1986), 191.

[16] Manojlović, op. cit., 183.

socio-political tendencies of the whole population."[17] Now this is a tall claim indeed!

In the fifth section of his study, titled revealingly 'The Prasini and the Veneti live in various districts of the City and its surrounding area; the Prasini are from the lower and the Veneti from the higher estate', Manojlović proceeded to apply his thesis to the City and its suburbs, both in Europe and in Asia. I think Manojlović makes a mistake when he argues that because a Green was murdered in the area of the City fronting the Golden Horn called Zeugma, this was a *Green* district. The very fact that a Green was murdered and this led to the complaints of the Greens that this was the sixth murder in Zeugma meant that they *did not control that district, in other words that the district was Blue*. This is very important for subsequent discussion. Manojlović wants to prove that the mercantile districts along the Golden Horn were Green because the merchants belonged (in his erroneous opinion) to the lower classes. Nothing could be further from the truth: the merchants were *not* the dominant estate in Byzantium, but they were far from being considered a lower class, more like the upper middle. Manojlović rightly dismisses Bury's deduction that this incident of a murder in Zeugma proves that the Greens could not live in the City proper but were confined to Pera and Galata, on the other side of the Golden Horn. All of this is a prelude to one of the favorite explanations of the main difference between the Greens and the Blues, namely, that the Greens were Monophysites and the Blues were Chalcedonians, i.e. Orthodox. This view has been repeated endlessly by so many Byzantinists that until Cameron (rightly) put his hatchet to it, it became a staple of Byzantine specialists and non-specialists alike. There is no question, however, that the Monophysites did not simply disappear from the City, and that there were members among the Greens. But Manojlović's attempt to sketch this 'Green, Monophysite, poor' stretch of City districts from the Mese *in an arc* from the *forum Constantini* and *forum Tauri* through the Chakoprateia to the Golden Horn is nothing but a sheer conjecture. It rests on nothing.

But the next one does not. Malalas reports that in 562, during Justinian's reign, there was fighting *within* the Blues in the district of Pittakia, and a year later a Green who was paraded for raping a girl was freed by the Blues in the same district and given sanctuary in Hagia Sophia.[18] It is quite clear that had the Greens been dominant or in charge they would have simply freed the man, and not bothered to put him in the Great Church for added protection. The Blues were not involved in a struggle with the Greens this time, for the girl was a daughter of a high government official. The Blues thus displayed a sense of solidarity with the Greens. Both prove that Pittakia was dominated by the Blues, and Manojlović is right in claiming that it was a Blue district.

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[17] Ibid., 184.

[18] Malalas, op. cit., 301, 305.

Manojlović also cites evidence to the effect that the central avenue of Imperial Constantinople, the *Mese*, was the dividing line between the two factions.[19] Manojlović concludes his topographical setting of the two factions thus: "The *Veneti*" (i.e. the Blues) "lived in the lordly and non-commercial districts of the City and the suburb of Blachernae, and were connected with the population of the hinterland; they would be the upper social class... and were found in the minority in the City. The *Prasini*" (i.e. the Greens) "were the working, maritime and artisan population, and their districts were in the opposite center of the City, in particular the ports and maritime districts of Constantinople and the similar districts in Chalcedon and 'over'."[20] In my opinion Manojlović is both right and not correct: he is right to identify the Blues with the more affluent population of the City, and the Greens with the lower elements, but his topography is wrong because he had the wrong idea that the area around the shores of the Golden Horn was somehow poor and belonged thus to the Greens. In effect, the whole area was one of the most prosperous and this is the reason why it was later given by Alexios I and his successors on the throne to the Italian resident merchants from Venice, Pisa, Amalfi etc. The poor maritime areas with ports were found on the south side, and the area south of the Mese was generally worse off than the one north of it. Manojlović concluded by stating that "only the racing personnel needed four colors; the population did not need to be included in four, or if it did for games, it could not continue as such in real life. Real life always knows only of the higher and lower tiers of the population. And thus only two civic parties emerged, of the higher and lower reaches, the Veneti and the Prasini."[21]

As Cameron points out, "whether Green or Blue is named first, the order of the other two is adjusted accordingly, so as always to imply the Red/Green and White/Blue pairings. (...) In 520 the factions clamour for dancers in the same order: Green, Blue, Red, White."[22] Cameron then gets to the point about what is valuable in Manojlović's thesis: "Manojlović himself rested his case on a minute topographical analysis designed to show that the Blues lived in the central areas of the city and the fashionable suburbs, while the Greens lived in the poor areas and outside the city. This, perhaps the most valuable and constructive part of his study, has been elaborated (seldom for the better) by D'jakonov, Gregoire, and now Jarry. As formulated the case is certainly unacceptable. It is not and cannot be true that the whole of Constantinople was divided into Blue and Green areas. There may have been one or two areas where partisans tended to live, though even this must remain very doubtful."[23] Now, in my opinion, this is nonsense: why it is *unacceptable* that

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[19] Manojlović, op. cit., 328.

[20] Ibid., 331.

[21] Ibid., 643.

[22] Cameron, op. cit., 66.

[23] Ibid., 86.

the City such as Constantinople could not possibly be divided into two or even more areas? First of all, let us explain what I would propose to cali a Blue or a Green district: it was an area of the City, or outside of it, in which there was a heavy concentration of one of the factions. Not necessarily (though probably) a majority of the district population: Byzantium was not a democracy and nobody bothered to count the votes. Still a district would be similar to, say, a Labor district in Sydney: the bulk of the population would be either Blue or Green, and this would stay (in a conservative society like Byzantine) the same for generations. I think Manojlović and Rambaud who provided the first pointer in that direction are certainly right when they claim that the City was divided into factional districts. The trouble is that both Manojlović and those who followed him did not know how to *divide* the city *topographically* in the right fashion. They got too many localities wrong. Nevetheless, they were right in claiming that Constantinople and its environs *were* divided, and that this division is very important.

That Manojlović was wrong when he tried to locate a Green district in the area near the Golden Horn is pointed out by Cameron. He cites John of Ephesus to the effect that Emperor Maurice gave his sister a mansion " 'in the suburb called Zeugma'—one of a series of splendid dwellings belonging to the Crown that Maurice gave to his relatives. Hardly then a poor area."[24] Exactly: Cameron is absolutely right that Zeugma was *not* a poor, but rather a rich area. It belonged to the Blues, not the Greens. Cameron cites Stephen, the poet of the Blues early in the seventh century who lived in the Oxeia district, not far from the forum of Constantine. He is right in pointing out that Manojlović forgot that both the Monophysites and Chalcedonians protested in the forum. But he is not right is concluding that "there is not the slightest reason for supposing that the neighbourhood of the forum of Constantine was predominantly poor, Green, or monophysite."[25] The next piece of evidence he cites explicitly associates a neighbourhood with one color: Theophanes mentions a Green attack on the Blue area in an area just off the Mese, "not far from its starting-point in the Augustaeum square between Saint Sophia and the imperial palace. (...) This Blue neighbourhood was evidently very close both to the hippodrome and to the Mese. Reference to a map will show that the area between the hippodrome and the Mese was occupied by the so-called Dihippion. Now the Dihippion was an area which embraced the stables of the factions, a courtyard (*exaeron*) where the partisans could gather for ceremonial purposes...Theodore Balsamon refers to Blue and Green 'houses' (*oikoi*)."[26] Contrary to Cameron's assertion that "there is scarcely room for a residential quarter as well where Theophanes has so carefully directed us"[27],

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[24] Ibid., 87.

[25] Ibid., 88.

[26] Ibid., 90-91.

[27] Ibid., 92.

the mention of both factions and their houses means that they lived on opposite sides. We shall see that this is exactly the case.

Wielding his hatchet Cameron was too hasty in dismissing Manojlović's thesis and denying its applicability to the City. His conclusion is that "thus the topography of Constantinople is not guide to the social distinctions which may or may not have existed between the Blues and the Greens."[28] For in the very next paragraph he brings up the very reason why the topography has not provided this guide so far: "Neither Manojlović himself nor any of his followers seriously faced up to the topographical information implicit in countless passages of the *Book of Ceremonies*. It is clear that, by the tenth century, for ceremonial purposes each major colour consisted of two parts: the 'politic' (*politikos*) and the 'peratic' (*peratikos*). That is to say, those from the city proper, and those from 'the other side' (*peran*), whether from Galata (Sycae) or Chalcedon."[29] Aye, and herein lies the rub. For the *Book of Ceremonies* is the most detailed and the most valuable (though not always the most accurate) guide we have to the topographical settings of the demes in Imperial Constantinople.

To begin with, one must admit that information contained in it is often garbled, laconic, and sometimes contradictory. Having said that, it is a pity that scholars have not combed it for whatever pointers it can give (and it gives plenty) to the Imperial processions that took place outside the Great Palace and into the outer reaches of the City. Of these two are of paramount importance: the procession to the Church of the Theotokos of the Spring (*Pege*), just outside the Theodosian Walls, on the Ascension Day; and the procession to the Church of the Holy Apostles on Easter Monday. Between them they cover the northern and southern halves and outlying districts of Constantinople. At the outset it should be pointed out that, contrary to some scholars, information found in various chapters is not *contradictory* in the main, but rather just in a couple of details where it is obvious that the later scribe who was copying an earlier manuscript got confused, particularly when it came to distinguishing between the peratic and politic demes, i.e. between the major and minor colors. Otherwise, there is consistency which enables us to establish not just the routes of the processions, but the districts they went through and the topographical settings of the buildings they visited and avenues they traversed. When we put these topographical settings on a detailed map, an astonishing pattern emerges.

Let us look at the procession to the Mother of God of the Spring (*Theotokos en te Pege*). The text of the *Book of Ceremonies* is in italics[30]:

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[28] Ibid., 93.

[29] Ibid., 93-94.

[30] BC I, 55-56.

Note that for this feast the receptions take place as follows.
Reception 1, outside the vault of the colonnade, just where the column stands.
Moffatt and Tall comment that this column is "possibly of a stylite in the vicinity of the Church of the Theotokos of the Spring", citing Vogt, Vol. I, 88 on the basis of Antony of Novgorod's travel account.
The demokrates of the Blues, that is, the domestikos of the scholari, with the Peratic deme of the Blues, receives them there.
Reception 2, at the Aqueduct, where the water flows out.
This is the most obscure reference to all of the stations. Moffatt and Tall think that this is "possibly a branch off the long-distance Thracian line (the Aqueduct of Valens) from near the Cistern of Aetios to feed the Cistern of Mokios", citing Crow et al, *The Water Supply*, 122-123 and Map 12. We will return to it.
The demokrates of the Greens, that is, exkoubitos, receives them there.
Reception 3, at the Church of St. Mokios.
Again, we do not really know the exact location of this church, though everybody (with good reason) supposes that it was close to the Cistern of St. Mokios.
The demarch of the Blues, with the White deme, receives them there.
This is important: while the first two stations may (or may not) be considered peratic (*Pege* certainly would be as it lay outside the City walls), the Church of St. Mokios was inside the Theodosian walls, and the Whites receive the Imperial procession.
Reception 4, in the Exokionion.
According to Janin, the etymology of the name of this district is derived from 'the exterior colonnade' (*exokionia*). According to him, Exokionion as a district embraced almost the entire area between the Theodosian and Constantinian walls. He cites Pseudo-Kodinos to the effect that the Church of the Holy Apostles which was also known as that of the Trinity was situated in the Exokionion.[31]
The demarch of the Greens with the Red deme receives them there.
Again this is important: for the first time the Reds appear, and they are in the area inside the walls. It is also the area that is traversed by the great central avenue or Mese, i.e. its southern branch going to the Golden Gate.
Reception 5, at the Xerolophos, opposite the Chapel of St. Kallinikos.
Janin derives the etymology of this locality from 'the parched hill'. He identifies it with the seventh hill of the City.[32]
The demarch of the Blues, along with the White deme, receives them there.
This district borders the forum of Arcadius to the south and is found north of the Mese. The forum of Arcadius was constructed on the slopes of the Xerolophos.[33]

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[31] Janin, *Constantinople Byzantine*, 327.
[32] Ibid., 402.

Reception 6, at the Forum of the Ox.

The Byzantines called this forum simply *ho Bous*. Most historians identify with the modern Aksaray, Turkish for the White Palace.[34]

The Demokrates of the Greens, that is, the domestikos of the exkoubitoi, receives them there.

Reception 7, at the Forum of Amastrianos.

As Janin points out, there is no expressed statement that Amastrianon was a forum, but it can be inferred from the sources. It was located between the forum of the Ox and Philadelphion.[35]

The demokrates of the Blues, that is, the domestikos of the scholai, receives them there.

Reception 8, at the Philadelphion.

According to Janin, Philadelphion was not a public square (forum), but the part of the branch of the Mese that went to the Church of the Holy Apostles, i.e. its northern branch. It was at the Philadelphion that the southern (i.e. western) branch of the Mese started.[36]

Coming on back, the demarch of the Blues, with White deme, holds a reception there.

Reception 9, the Forum of the Bull.

This Forum Tauri or Forum of Theodosius was one of the principal squares through which the main Mese went. This forum was to the north of the Mese.[37]

The demarch of the Greens, with the Red deme, receives them there.

This is the first of the three contiguous Red districts.

Reception 10, in the Arch of the Bakers.

This confirms Manojlović's thesis that the Greens, in this case the Reds, were made up of the lower classes. Bakers certainly cannot be seen as anything but.

Reception 11, in the Forum of Constantine.

This was *the* Forum of Byzantine Constantinople. Created by Constantine it boasted one of the two Palaces of the Senate. The Mese went right through it.[38] It corresponds more or less with the present Çemberlitaş.

Continuing on back, the demarch of the Greens, with the Red deme, holds a reception there.

Reception 12, in the Praetorium.

According to Janin, Praetorion was situated *on but north* of the Mese.[39]

Reception 13, in the Arch of the Milion.

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[33] Ibid., 75.

[34] Ibid., 75.

[35] Ibid., 72-73.

[36] Ibid., 377.

[37] Ibid., 69-72.

[38] Ibid., 67-69.

[39] Ibid., 382.

This places was located northwest of the Hagia Sophia. From it all roads in the European part of the Empire started and were counted.[40]

Continuing on back, the demarch of the Blues, with the White deme, holds a reception there.

Again, a little later, (14), the demokrates of the Greens, that is, the exkoubitos, with the peratic deme of the Greens, receives them.

At this point the procession wound south of the line that the Mese would project eastward.

Again, after a little, (15), continuing on back, the demarch of the Greens, with the Red deme, hold a reception there opposite the Achilles, near the Gate of Melete.

Moffatt and Tall identify this Gate of Melete or of Meletios as "the great gate on the north side of the Mese, leading into the Augoustation which lay to the north of the Mese".[41] Janin adds that it was a gate on the northeast of the Great Palace which gave access to the passage called Achilleus between the bath of Zeuxippos and the Palace.[42]

Again a little after this reception, the demokrates of the Blues, that is, the domestikos of the scholai, with the Peratic deme of the Blues, receives them at the barrier of the Chalke.

Chalke was the main gate into the Great Palace. It was surmounted by a great mosaic of Christ the Pantokrator which was effaced by the Iconoclasts and restored after the triumph of the icon worshippers. Its likeness can be seen in the Church of Chora where Christ is wearing a spectacular *blue* dress.[43]

If we take a close look at the localities, an astonishing pattern emerges: just about all of the Green/Red ones are from the southwest to the southeast, i.e. in the southern half of the City, and almost all of the Blue/White ones are from the northwest to the northeast, i.e. in the northern half of the City. Let us look at the Green/Red localities first: starting from the Great Palace, the Green stations are the Gate of Melete (which, however, to another passage is Red!), then the Forum of Constantine (Red), the Arch of the Bakers (Red), the Forum of the Bull (Red), Forum of the Ox (Green, but according to another passage Red), and Exokionion (Red). All these stations are *south of the Mese, and from Philadelphion westward south of the southern branch of the Mese.* The only problem is Exokionion and we will address it shortly. It should be pointed out that all of the stations south of the central Mese, i.e. from the Gate of Melete to Philadelphion are RED, and not Green. How is it possible, nevertheless, that a couple of stations, namely, the Gate of Melete (according to one itinerary) and the Cistern of Mokios are GREEN, when the Greens are sup-

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[40] Ibid., 104-105.

[41] BC I, 38.

[42] Janin, op. cit., 360.

[43] Ibid., 110-112.

posed to be Peratic that is OUTSIDE OF THE CITY? The answer lies in the original topographical layout of Constantinople.

As Janin points out, Constaninople as the New Rome was closely modelled on Rome. It thus had seven hills, just like the old capital, and twelve districts or regions WITHIN the old walls of Constantine. The area between the old walls of Constantine and the new walls of Theodosius was never fully settled and right to the end of Byzantine Constantinople it had large tracts of agricultural land, woods, and sparsely settled pockets. The region of Galata called Sykae by the Byzantines was across (*pera*) the Golden Horde, from which its modern name of Pera was derived. It made up the 13th district. The area between the upper part of the Golden Horn and the northernmost limits of the Theodosian walls was incorporated late and a new wall had to be built to enclose it within the City. Nevertheless, this area, known as Blachernae, was considered throughout Byzantine history as outside of the city, and thus Peratic. It made up the final, 14th district of Constantinople. It is thus clear that the Byzantines *did not consider* the entire area enclosed by the Theodosian walls as, in fact, *within the City*, but only the area up to the old Constantinian walls.

If this is indeed so, then the problem of the region of Exokionion presents a problem. It was clearly (at least partly) outside the walls of Constantine. But we must recall that Janin pointed out that "it seems that Exokionion comprised almost the entire part of the city between the wall of Constantine and that of Theodosius."[44] This would mean that at least SOME of the area between the two walls was considered INSIDE the walls, i.e. Politic rather than Peratic. Janin goes on to explain that "Exokionion corresponds to Deuteron".[45] Janin also explains that the name Deuteron, meaning 'the second', indicates that it was the second area (*secunda parte urbis*) incorporated into the City after the first area enclosed within the walls of Constantine.[46]

Van Millingen started the controversy over the location and extent of Deuteron by claiming that it comprised the area between the Golden Gate, at the extreme southwestern extremity of the Theodosian walls, and the Gate of Pege, present-day Silivrikapı.[47] This would mean that Deuteron would include not only Exokionion to the north of the southern branch of the Mese, but Kyparission, Psamathia, and ta Katakalon districts. Ducange thought that Deuteron comprised the 12th district and included the Cistern of Mokius.[48] J.B. Papadopoulos, on the other hand, threw a cat among the pigeons, so to speak, by claiming that Deuteron was not located in the area of the 7th hill, but

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[44] Janin, op. cit., 327.

[45] Ibid., 328.

[46] Ibid., 314.

[47] A. van Milligen, *Byzantine Constantinople*, 74-78.

[48] Janin, op. cit., 315.

of the 4th, *north of the Church of the Holy Apostles.*[49] Deuteron as a district certainly included the area between the Gate of Adrianople and the Church of the Holy Apostles as when Justinian made his entry into the City in 524 through the Gate of Adrianople known as the Gate of Chrisius.[50] Janin makes clear, however, that it did not include the Blachernae district. Deuteron is also known as having a gate of entry known as *Melantiados* or *Melandesia.* Van Millingen identified it as the Gate of Pege.[51] This means that according to Millingen Deuteron *did not* comprise the area south of the cistern of Mokios, i.e. his location of Exokionion. Janin is right in my opinion when he asks whether the Gate of Melantiados should not be related to the district west of the Cistern of Mokios called *Meltiadou.*[52] He insists that the Gate of Melantiados should be located within the *walls of Constantine, and not those of Theodosius.*[53]

I think the whole controversy is based on the false assumption that Exokionion and Deuteron are identical and coterminous. I accept van Millingen's view that Exokionion was the area between the Gate of Pege in the west (in the Theodosian wall), the Cistern of Mokios in the north, the Golden Gate in the south, and the walls of Constantine in the east where the Gate of Melantiados gave access to the inner city.

How does this relate to the colors? If indeed the above is correct, then Exokionion as a RED district is OK *because the last station on the via Egnatia on the way to the city was Melantias, i.e. the Gate of Melantiados.*[54] This would mean that the area south of the line Gate of Pege—Cistern of Mokios was seen as INSIDE the City, but the area north of it would be seen as OUTSIDE the city (*peran*). I think this is the only plausible conclusion: it is inconceivable that the area from the Golden Gate to the walls of Constantine through which the triumphal processions went would be regarded as outside the City, but north of the Gate of Pege—Cistern of Mokios line this was indeed the case. And it was this area, which in my opinion, made up the western part of Deuteron, but not the area south of the Cistern of Mokios.

Out topographical survey for the southern part of the City can now be presented as such: everything west of the Gate of Melete, and south of the main Mese to Philadelphion, and hence south of the southern branch of the Mese to the Constantinian walls was GREEN, and most of it was RED. The ONLY Green areas south of this line were Modion, Forum of the Ox (according to one version, but the other puts it as Red), and the Cistern of Mokios.

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[49] J.B. Papadopoulos, "Le Deutéron, étude topographique" in *Neos Poimen* (March, 1921), 142-149.

[50] Janin, op. cit., 316.

[51] Van Millingen, *Byzantine Constantinople*, 77.

[52] Janin, op. cit., 316-317.

[53] Ibid., 360.

[54] Ibid., 316.

Now, if the Cistern of Mokios was in the area not comprised by Exokionion, it was then in the Deuteron, and thus effectively extra-walls, and Green rather than Red should be represented. We can assume that a scribal error is responsible for turning the Forum of the Ox into a Green rather than Red district. But the Modion presents a problem.

The itinerary of the Imperial procession on the Monday of Renewal Week may look at first garbled, but it contains precious information otherwise. First of all, it should be explained that when it specifies the position of the "City body of the Greens" (*ton Prasinon tes politikes*) only two explanations can be offered: *either* there were City (i.e. Politic) branches of the Greens, which then overthrows the entire theory that the Greens and the Blues were *Peratic* demes *or* there were indeed City branches of the Greens, but they were Reds. This then would result in ALL FOUR COLORS being represented INSIDE the City, which would make a mockery of the distinction between the Peratic and Politic demes IF EXTENDED TO THE WHOLE CITY rather than to its outlying areas. In either case, it is specified that the City body of the Greens, i.e. the Reds, greeted the Emperor at the Modion: "and they accompany him up to the Modion, [position] of the City body of the Greens."[55]

We are now in a position to survey the northern half of the City. For this we will use precious information in the *Book of Ceremonies* for the Imperial procession as it returned from the Church of the Holy Apostles to the Great Palace[56]:

Reception 1, at the Lions.
These marble lions must have stood right outside the Church of the Holy Apostles.
The demokrates of the Blues, that is, the domestikos of the scholai, receives them there along with the Peratic deme of the Blues...
If, as Janin and others insist (basing their theory on Pseudo-Kodinos) the Church of the Holy Apostles was in Deuteron, and the latter was considered *extra muros*, then it makes sense that the Peratic Blues should receive the Emperor.
Reception 2, at the Church of St. Polyeuktos.
This church stood *north* of the northern branch of the Mese which veered off from its southern branch at Philadelphion.
The demarch of the Blues with the White deme receives them there...
If, as I maintain, the northern branch of the Mese was the boundary, then it is appropriate that once INSIDE THE CITY the reception would be held by the Whites, not the Blues.
Reception 3, at the Church of St. Euphemia in the district of Olybrios.

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[55] BC I, 83.
[56] BC I, 49-51.

The Church of St. Euphemia was *north and east of the Mese.*[57]
The demokrates of the Greens, that is, the exkoubitos, along with the Peratic deme of the Greens, receives them there.
This information is not so much contradicted as corrected and supplanted with one found under the Monday of the Renewal Week. This is what it specifies:
The people of the Peratic Green factions (peratikon meron Prasinon ho laos) receive the emperor in the district of Olybrios...
I think Moffatt and Tall are entirely correct in commenting that this passage, being in the plural, i.e. two factions, means "the Peratic faction of the Greens and that of the Reds".[58]
Reception 4, at the Philadelphion.
According to Janin, Philadelphion was not a public space, but a colonnaded portion of the Mese leading from the Forum of the Bull to the Church of the Holy Apostles.[59]
The demokrates of the Blues, that is, the domestikos of the scholai, along with the Peratic deme of the Blues, receives them there.
The information contained under the Monday of Renewal Week is more specific:
...and they accompany the emperor as far as the Philadelphion, [position] of the Peratic factions of the Blues [peratikon meron ton Veneton]
Again, Moffatt and Tall comment that this should be understood "as that of the Blues and that of the Whites".
Reception 5, at the Forum of the Bull.
We have already explained that the Forum of the Bull was one of the Red stations. This is confirmed:
The demarch of the Greens with the Red deme receives them there.
Reception 6, the Bakers. Continuing on back, the said demarch, with the Red deme, holds a reception there.
Reception 7, in the Forum of Constantine. The demokrates of the Greens, that is, the exkoubitos, with the peratic deme of the Greens, receives them there.
Reception 8, in the Praetorium.
This edifice, originally the office of the praetorian prefect, was transformed into the Church of the Holy Martyrs. It was situated on the Mese.[60]
The demarch of the Blues, with the White deme, receives them there.
Reception 9, in the Arch of the Milion. Continuing on back, the said demarch of the Blues, with the White deme, holds a reception there.
Again, after this reception, [10] the demokrates of the [Peratic] Greens, that is, the domestikos of the exkoubitoi, receives them.

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[57] Janin, op. cit., 368-369.
[58] BC I, 83, ft. 2.
[59] Janin, op. cit., 377.
[60] Ibid., 382.

According to another description in the *Book of Ceremonies* this took place in Zeuxippon. This was a bath next to the entrance to the Great Palace on its northern side.[61]

Again, a little after this reception, [11] the demokrates of the [Peratic] Blues, that is, the domestikos of the scholai, receives them at the barrier of the Chalke.

Chalke, which means of the bronze, was the big bronze door that led into the Great Palace. It was across from St. Sophia.[62]

We are now in a position to determine the topographical layout of the northern and northwestern part of the City, i.e. north and northwest of the northern branch of the Mese. It is quite clear that all of the stations from "at the lions" to Philadelphon (where the northern branch of the Mese split from its southern part) were either Blue or White *with the exception of the Church of St. Euphemia at Olybrios which was Green.* The position of this church is absolutely crucial for the topographical division of the City as is that of the Virgin of the Diakonissa. The latter has been assigned by Paul Magdalino to the Greens: "...[O]ne may note that the two chief factions, the Blues and the Greens, each had 'their' church in the centre of the commercial district. The Diakonissa was the Greens' church, while the Blues' church was...probably the church of St. Anastasia..."[63] However, no lesser an authority than Alexander Kazhdan identifies the Diakonissa with the Blues: "Blues were particularly associated with the Virgin of the Diakonissa church."[64] In this he follows Rodolphe Guilland who states that "it is without doubt an error when Chapter 71 [of the *Book of Ceremonies*] attributes this church to the Greens."[65] How is this discrepancy possible? It is because the text in the *Book of Ceremonies* is not clear: "For the display of the Saracen guests, it was ordered that the demesmen and the scene-painters and the craftsmen of the other faction should also escort them. The old format does not have this, but has only the demesmen and the scene-painters and the craftsmen of the victorious faction escorting them. The charioteers and the demarch and the demesmen and the scene-painters and craftsmen, after dancing as prescribed, stood and cheered at the Pi, and went along the Mese and went away to their own church, to the All-holy Theotokos in the district of Diakonissa..."[66] The con-

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61 Ibid., 404-405.

62 Ibid., 307.

63 Paul Magdalino, "Medieval Constantinople" in *Studies on the History and Topography of Byzantine Constantinople* [Variorum Reprints, 2007], I, 43, ft. 151, the map of Constantinople on p. 2 and list of churches and monasteries on pp. 2-4.

64 Alexander Kazhdan, entry "Factions" in ODB, II, 774.

65 R. Guilland, *Etudes de topographie de Constantinople Byzantine* (Berlin-Amsterdam, 1969), Vol. I, 493, endnote 76.

66 BC I, 590.

fusion is created because it is not clear whether "the charioteers and the demarch and the demesmen and the scene-painters and craftsmen" refers to the *victorious* faction only since in the preceding paragraph we are told that the Blues were victorious. This is how Kazhdan obviously interpreted it, and I am inclined to go along. For what is meant by that phrase is that *both factions, i.e. the Greens as well as the Blues, could not have both gone to the same church. In that case Diakonissa belonged to BOTH, but could not in any case belong to the Greens alone.* If this interpretation is correct than the Diakonissa which stood to the north of the central Mese was Blue. But what about St. Euphemia in Olybrios?

From what we know it stood on the *eastern side* of the northern branch of the Mese. This area is supposed to be Blue if the Mese separated the two main factions. We know that St. Polyeuktos, slightly north of it, was White, while the Philadelphion had both the Blues and the Whites. The exact position of St. Euphemia is highly conjectural as Magdalino explains: "...St. Euphemia [ta Olybriou] was the first stop after St. Polyeuktos on the processional route returning from the Holy Apostles to the Great Palace. However, the two properties do not seem to have adjoined, because the *De cerimoniis* also specifies that when the emperor goes up to the Holy Apostles on Easter Monday, the cortège, after bearing right at the Philadelphion, proceeds 'by way of *ta Olybrious* and the Constantianae to St. Polyeuktos'... Unless this itinerary involved a detour from the Mese, which is unlikely, the description seems to indicate that between St. Euphemia and St. Polyeuktos, the avenue traversed or, more probably, flanked a section of the Constantianae. Whether this refers specifically to the Baths of Constantius or, more generally, to the neighborhood, is not clear, but it is conceivable that the two churches, and therefore the residences which preceded them, were separated by a space large enough to accommodate a major structure... This can only be conjecture..."[67] Indeed, and thus it is quite possible that *ta Olybriou* was that detour. It is a moot question.

The presence of *both* factions, the Whites and the Blues at the Philadelphion, makes it possible to allot the area between the two branches of the Mese. It is quite clear that the White areas stretched from St. Polyeuktos to Philadelphion, and then followed the main Mese from Praetorium to the Arch of Milion. But west of Philadelphion, i.e. in the area between the northern and southern branches of the Mese, there were White areas: Xerolophos and the Church of St. Mokios (which was probably treated *extra muros*, being outside the walls of Constantine). All the White areas west of Philadelphion were thus in a triangle between Xerolophos in the southwest, St. Polyeuktos in the northwest, and Philadelphion. What about the Blue areas? We know that the Theotokos of the Spring [*Pege*] was outside of the Theodosian walls and thus treated *extra muros*, and that the Church of the Holy Apostles was a Blue sta-

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[67] Magdalino, "Aristocratic *Oikoi*" in op. cit., II, 60-61 and the map on p. 55.

tion. Now, the Church of St. Polyeuktos was named Blue and White in different passages, but Amastrianon is definitely labelled Blue, and Philadelphion is labelled both Blue and White. So what does this double labelling mean? It can only mean one thing: that the station was the border between two areas and that it was one color on one side, and the other on the other side. Let us see if this makes sense.

The central dividing point of the Mese was Philadelphion. It is labelled both Blue and White. It is labelled White when the Imperial procession returned from the Pege via the southern branch of the Mese. In that case Philadelphion would be separating the two branches of the Mese, but also the two sides of the northern Mese: south of the northern branch the White areas stretching from Philadelphion all the way to Xerolophos, but also the Amastrianon area which was Blue. The Amastrianon area thus must be included with St. Polyeuktos as belonging to the Blues, though the latter was 'shared' with the Whites. It should be pointed out that the Blachernae area, to the far northwest of the City, was Blue, and thus the Blue areas from Amastrianon via the Church of the Holy Apostles to Blachernae made one band of neighbourhoods. The Blue areas were also found at the Praetorium ('shared' between the Blues and Whites), the Arch of Milion (shared by the Blues, Whites, and Reds), Zeuxippon, and Chalke, all in the vicinity of the Great Palace.

This leads to the conclusion that (so far) there were three large bands of neighbourhoods across the City: the Red ones from the Golden Gate, through Exokionion, Forum of the Bull (shared with Whites, as it should be as the Whites were north of it), the Bakers, Forum of Constantine (shared with the Greens), to the Arch of Milion (shared with Blues and Whites), and the station at the Gate of Melete (shared with the Greens). This means that the entire southern shore area, southwest and south of the Mese, i.e. south of the southern branch of the Mese, and south of the central Mese, was RED. The second broad band was WHITE and it stretched from the area between the two walls (very sparsely populated), through Xerolophos north of the southern branch of the Mese, to the Church of St. Polyeuktos (shared with the Blues), and then following the northern side of the northern branch of the Mese from St. Polyeuktos down to Philadelphion (shared with the Blues), then eastward north of the central Mese through Praetorium, the Arch of Milion (shared with the Blues and Reds, the latter being directly south from it). The third broad band was BLUE, and it started in the very east of the City, in the vicinity of Hagia Sophia where the area of Pittakia was Blue, then Chalke, Zeuxippou to Milion. This band was then interrupted by another, and the Blue area starts again from Philadelphion (shared with the Whites as they were directly north and northwest from it), includes the Amastrianon or Kapitolion (quite a large area), the region of the Church of the Holy Apostles, and in the northwest the very large, but sparsely populated area of the Blachernae. These three bands seem to take care of just about all the areas of the City certainly up to the

walls of Constantine and beyond in the Blachernae and Exokionion. But where are the GREENS? Of course, we could take the distinction between the *peratic* (i.e. those outside the City) and the *politic* (i.e. those belonging to the City) demes literally, and argue that the Greens did not live in the City. But in that case the Blues should not be living either, for they were a *peratic* theme as well? Some have seen the Greens chased out of the City and relegated to the outlying areas of Galata [*Sykae*] and Chalcedon. But the stations in the *Book of Ceremonies* specifically mention both the Green and the Blue stations: should these be simply treated as errors whereby these are actually Red and White areas of the City? I do not think so.

But where are the Green areas? It was Manojlović who argued quite strongly that the Greens were the most unruly, lower-class element of the City, which also included the Monophysites, and who happened to be mostly seafaring, artisan, and merchant groups. In his demolition job Cameron has gone to great lengths to discredit every scrap of evidence that would support Manojlović's thesis, and often his criticism is very appropriate. But he goes too far: Manojlović is correct on one point beyond a shadow of a doubt: the stations are places where the Emperor visits the territories of the demes, i.e. their neighbours, which explains why some stations can be labelled two or even three colors: it is where the entrance to the neighbourhood, so to speak, was found, and thus was opposite the *other* neighbourhood of sometimes the *other* color. Cameron is absolutely adamant that "it is not and cannot be true that the whole of Constantinople was divided in to Blue and Green areas."[68] He is both technically right and wrong: he is right because ALL OF CONSTANTINOPLE was divided into FOUR broad bands, not TWO. And he is wrong because ALL of Constantinople was indeed divided. For if the demes were something MORE than mere groups of supporters and fans of the four racing factions in the hippodrome, if they had a *constitutional* role to play (and the evidence on the latter point is incontrovertible), then they were supposed to live INSIDE as well as OUTSIDE of the City, and be prevalent in certain districts. Now, Cameron makes a concession that "there may have been one or two areas where partisans tended to live, though even this must remain very doubtful."[69] Again, Cameron is going too far: of course, then as now certain like-minded people tend to congregate in the same area. But this is not the point: we can call a district 'Red' or 'Blue' not because everybody who lived in it was a Red or Blue, but because they either made a majority or were the most influential part of that district (the notion of automatic majority determining everything in Byzantium must be discounted). This is similar to the electoral districts say in Sydney where the majority of the voters may be Labor or Liberal, but it does not mean that everybody belongs to the same party or even the majority.

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[68] Alan Cameron, *Circus Factions: Blues and Greens at Rome and Byzantium*, 86.

[69] Ibid., 86.

Having said all that, let us return to our original question: where are the Greens? As Cameron points out, "Manojlović himself rested his case on a minute topographical analysis designed to show that the Blues lived in the central areas of the city and the fashionable suburbs, while the Greens lived in the poor areas and outside the city. This [is] perhaps the most valuable and constructive part of his study", and, according to Cameron, "has been elaborated (seldom for the better) by Đjakonov, Gregoire, and now Jarry."[70] I totally agree with him except to point out that Manojlović hardly offered *a minute topographical analysis*; what he did was to string together a number of passages in which there were indications of the presence of either the Greens or the Blues, or both, in certain areas. This is not to diminish the pioneering quality and imaginative power of his analysis, simply to state that Manojlović was more interested in proving the case that the TWO (he argued that only TWO factions were found off the hippodrome) lived in certain areas of the City. He only dealt with the Blues and the Greens, never with the Reds or the Whites (as though the *Book of Ceremonies never listed them*). But Manojlović certainly spent most of his effort on the Greens. And this part is extremely valuable.

Manojlović argued that the area of the City fronting the Golden Horde was Green, in particular the Zeugma district. Cameron rejects this and offers a proof that Zeugma was a Blue district: "the Emperor Maurice gave his sister a mansion 'in the suburb called Zeugma'...Hardly then a poor area."[71] I think Cameron has a point: Zeugma is not necessarily a Green area. But the area next to it certainly is a Blue one: "And the only individual partisan for whom we have a precise address, a *Blue*—Stephen, poet of the Blues early in the seventh century—lived in the Oxeia district..."[72] Accordingly, I do not think that Manojlović proved his point at all that "the port districts on the Golden Horn were of the Greens (*prasinski*)."[73] So where are the Green districts? If we take a look at the stations in the *Book of Ceremonies* we notice that there are none from the aqueduct near the Cistern of Mokios in the Deuteron, i.e. the area between the walls of Theodosius and those of Constantine, and the Forum of the Ox. At the Forum of the Ox the Green area starts and stretches to the district of Olybrios in the northwest to the Forum of Constantine in the south and the Milion in the east. All these areas are north of the southern branch of the Mese and north of the central Mese. These are some of the most heavily populated areas of the City embracing the parts of the 10th, 7th, 6th, and (possibly) of the 5th and 4th as well. The area belonging to the Greens is thus

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[70] Ibid., 86 citing Alexander P. Đjakonov, "Vizantinskie dim'i i fakcii v V-VII vv.", *Vizantinskii sbornik* (1945), 144-227, Henri Grégoire, "Le people de Constantinople, ou les Bleus et les Verts", in CRAI [*Comtes rendus de l'Academie des inscriptions et belles-lettres*](1946), 568-578; and Jarry, *Hérésies et factions* (1968), 157f.

[71] Cameron, op. cit., 87.

[72] Ibid., 87-88.

[73] Manojlović, op.cit., 330.

bounded on the west (if we treat the aqueduct as *extra muros*) by the Whites controlling Xerolophos and the 11th district east of the Constantinian walls to the Forum of the Ox where they faced the Greens, from the north in the district of the Constantinianae in the 10th district belonging to the Blues and the Church of St. Polyeuktos of the Whites, to the Forum of Constantine between the 6th district in the north and the 8th (Red) district south of the central Mese. This area of the Greens is what Manojlović refers to as the semi-arc between the Mese and the Golden Horn. If it seems that the Green area, and for that matter the Blue areas within the City were not as large and/or populous as the extensive Red area to the south of the Mese, and the Blue north and west of the Mese, it worth noting that even Cameron admitted that "the peratic demes were apparently bigger and certainly more important than the others, thus implying that *more* partisans of *both* colours lived outside the city than it."[74] Exactly, and this means that the Greens and the Blues as such did not have to occupy as much space within the City as the Reds and the Whites.

On the Blues, it should be pointed out that the Blachernae area was definitely a Blue area. The *Patria* records that when the Great Earthquake of 447-448 destroyed a part of the Theodosian walls, the two factions of the demes (*ta duo mere ton demon*) rebuilt it in sixty days. The Blues started from the region of Blachernae, and the Greens from the Golden Gate. They met at the Port of Rhesiou or Polyandriou. This Gate was from then on popularly known as the Red Gate because supposedly the Red faction of the Green built it. Stephen Turnbull, one of the foremost military historians of the Middle Ages, claims that "in Byzantium it was called the Gate of Rhegium, and sometimes also the Gate of the Reds after the circus faction that built it."[75] Gilbert Dagron, on the other hand, dismisses this interpretation out of hand, arguing that "no text says that the Reds had worked with the other factions at the construction of the gate; the words which are missing in the inscription *Nika he tikhe* on the north side of the southern tower are not necessarily *kai Rousion*, this filling-in being entirely arbitrary; finally, one should not take seriously the argument derived from the red color of the elements of construction."[76] On the contrary, I think the latter *should be* taken seriously, knowing as we do the deep importance of and attachment to the so-called sacred colors in Byzantium. Also could not the wording 'the two factions of the demes' refer to the Whites and the Reds rather than the Blues and the Greens? I think this is the case, for the Gate of Polyandriou was in the 12th district which was heavily Red. We know that this area included the Mint which was specifically identified as "the faction of the Greens of the City body", a euphemism for the Reds.[77]

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[74] Cameron, *Circus factions*, 94.

[75] Stephen Turnbull, *The Walls of Constantinople AD 324-1453* (London, 2004), 25.

[76] R. Dagron, *Constantinople byzantine*, 260.

[77] BC I, 105.

There is one more piece of evidence suggesting the presence of the Greens: when the two factions clashed in the City in 562, the Blues fled to Blachernae, naturally their stronghold, and the Greens fled to the church of Saint Euphemia at Chalcedon. Now, whoever reported this piece of nonsense really got mixed up: there was no way that the Greens could make it *across the City, over the Bosphorus either via Pera or directly to Chancedon with imperial troops around to stop them.* All they could do was to flee to the closest stronghold they had: and this was the Church of St. Euphemia *at Olybriou* which we know was their stronghold. Cameron is entirely right in questioning *not the location of the church* but the fact that the Greens would have gone there *because they came from there*: "And Chalcedon was a completely separate city, with at least one theatre and hippodrome of its own."[78] I fully agree.

So now we have ALL four factions living WITHIN THE CITY. They occupied very distinct and different areas of the City, mostly and particularly within the walls of Constantine. Is there any piece of evidence to corroborate the general topographical layout of these four areas and relate them to what was going on in the one place they ALL got together, namely, the Hippodrome?

On this point, we know that the central wall called spina around which the races took place was facing on the eastern side (i.e. facing the Grand Palace) the Kathisma, i.e. the box of the Emperor, his family, and highest disgnitaries both inside and around it; and on the western side, i.e. facing the City, the grandstands of the FOUR factions, arranged from south to north in this way: GREEN, RED, WHITE, AND BLUE.

But this was not the *original* layout of the grandstands. And this provides a crucial clue to the topographical direction of the various bands of City territory controlled by the factions.

Let us recall that Constantinople was made the capital under Constantine and that the factions were transported (so to speak) to the New Rome from the old capital together with the Senate and everything else. Naturally, whatever seating arrangement was in place in Rome would have been copied religiously in Constantinople. Malalas tells us that Theodosius the Younger "favoured the Green faction and took their side in each city. In Constantinople, where they had formerly watched the races *from the section on his right*, he moved them and made them watch from the seats *on the left, and he transferred the garrison troops who used to watch from opposite the kathisma to the Blue section, and he gave these seats, which extended over six column spaces, to the members of the Green faction.* He told the prefect Kyros, 'Those whom I support I wish to watch opposite me.' Then the members of the Green faction chanted in Constantinople to the emperor, 'To each his own!' He sent them proclamations by his chief courier, saying, 'It was to honour you that I moved you to the left of the kathisma from which I watch

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[78] Cameron, *Circus factions*, 90.

the races', and they acclaimed him. He gave orders that in each city the Greens should watch on the left of the officials."[79] We know that throughout later Byzantine history the seating in the Hippodrome adhered strictly to *the Greens on the left, and the Blues on the right*. Malalas does not say whether he moved the Blue section at all, and so it can be inferred that he did not. But Malalas' s text creates more problems.

In his study of the urban development of Constantinople Cyril Mango, one of the best connoisseurs of Byzantine Constantinople, included a diagram which shows the tribunes of the Greens and of the Blues respectively NOT ACROSS on the opposite (Western) stand, i.e. facing the Kathisma ACROSS the Spina, but TO THE LEFT AND RIGHT of the Kathisma, on the same, i.e. Eastern stand. This correlates perfectly to the Malalas' text: "In Constantinople, where they had formerly watched the races *from the section on his right*, he moved them and made them watch from the seats *on the left, and he transferred the garrison troops who used to watch from opposite the kathisma to the Blue section, and he gave these seats, which extended over six column spaces, to the members of the Green faction*." If he moved them from HIS right to HIS left on the same side, how are we to understand the next statement: "He told the prefect Kyros, 'Those whom I support I wish to watch opposite me.'" Now, to HIS left is not OPPOSITE HIM. And he specified in his message to the Greens that "'It was to honour you that I moved you to the left of the kathisma from which I watch the races', and they acclaimed him. He gave orders that in each city the Greens should watch on the left of the officials." The last phrase means that between the newly-placed Greens TO THE LEFT of the Emperor there were officials, presumably the palace officials. Malalas further specifies that "*he transferred the garrison troops who used to watch from opposite the kathisma to the Blue section*", and that means that he shifted the military to the Blue Section ON HIS RIGHT. But what does the next phrase mean: "*and he gave these seats, which extended over six column spaces, to the members of the Green faction*?" It means that the City Greens, i.e. the Reds, were now given the seats formerly occupied by the garrison troops. But who are the 'garrison troops... opposite the kathisma'?

Manojlović, following Rambaud, argued that the factions formed the citizen militia of Constantinople, and that the whole City was divided into military districts of this militia. Most scholars accept this without opposition. Cameron, of course, cannot accept this, for to him the demes represent no territorial unit, and therefore he rejects out of hand a locally enrolled militia.[80] But even he has great difficulty with the "countless passages in the *Book of Ceremonies*, (with) one division each of the Blues and Greens led for ceremonial purposes by, respectively, the domestic of the *scholae* and the domes-

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[79] *The Chronicle of John Malalas*, trans. by Elizabeth Jeffreys, Michael Jeffreys and Roger Scott (Byzantina Australiensia 4, Melbourne, 1986), 191, Book 14, 351.

[80] Cameron, *Circus factions*, 105.

tic of the excubitors."[81] After basically trying to call into question the relevance if not veracity of the *Book of Ceremonies* (as though any other Byzantine source of this period was that much better, if anyting), "it does not necessarily follow that this link between the factions and the *tagmata* reflects a genuine military association. First the Greens and the excubitors. The excubitors were the emperor's most trusted and efficient guards. When... the factions got out of hand, it was always the excubitors who were sent in to restore order...Is it credible that the Greens were actually a part of the excubitors, armed and trained by their officers? Now the Blues and the *scholae*. It is clear from the contemptuous accounts of Procopius and Agathias that by the late fifth century the *scholae* had degenerated into a purely parade-ground regiment, 'city dandies with fine clothes, fit only for processions' in Agathias' phrase... By the tenth century they had become a crack corps again..."[82]

Despite Cameron's reservations all other historians accept that the Greens and the Blues were closely associated with the military commanders, i.e. the *domestikoi*. This association could not have been accidental. But the association with the military also reveals a deeper problem: are all historians right in labelling ONLY the Greens and the Blues as *peratic*, i.e. as OUTSIDE OF THE CITY, and ONLY the Whites and the Reds as *politic*, i.e. as INSIDE THE CITY? We have already seen that there were Green and Blue stations within the City, and historians have argued that everything between the two walls, i.e. the Deuteron, must be treated as *extra muros*, i.e. outside of the City. But the *Book of Ceremonies* does specify that there were *Peratic* factions of both the Whites and the Reds as well, though they are mentioned as taking part in the ceremony of a procession to the Great Church, i.e. Hagia Sophia: "Then a third reception takes place inside the Chalke beside the door which leads to the Scholai, and the *demokrates* of the Blues, that is, the *domestikos* of the *scholai*, along with his Peratic White deme, receives them there...After this a fourth reception takes place at the porch at the entrance to the Church of the Holy Apostles, that is, at the Scholai, and the *demokrates* of the Greens, that is, the *exkoubitos*, with his Peratic Red deme, receives them there...A final reception takes place at the Tribunal, that is, in front of the Lamps, and the *demokrates* of the Blues, that is, the *domestikos*, along with his Peratic White deme, receives them there."[83] Let us look closely at the Greek original:

The relevant terms are *ho demokrates ton Veneton, egoun ho domestikos ton skholon, meta kai tou peratikou autou demou tou leukou, ho demokrates ton Prasinon, egoun ho ekskhoubitos, meta tou peratikou autou demou tou rousiou, ho demokrates ton Veneton, egoun ho domestikos, meta kai per-*

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[81] Ibid., 116.

[82] Ibid. 116-117.

[83] BC I, 19-20.

atikou autou demou tou leoukou.[84] What are we to make of this? One could argue that the *domestikoi* are merely presiding over the Whites or Reds in their capacity as *overall* officers in charge of the major-cum-minor factions. So far, so good. But *why are the Whites and Reds labelled explicitly as PERATIC*? They are not supposed to exist OUTSIDE of the City, after all, they are CITY factions of the Blues and the Greens. Now, it could be argued that the *Book of Ceremonies* got confused, but I quoted it in full on purpose to show that the label PERATIC is attributed BOTH to the Whites and the Reds, and to the former twice, which could not be a mere slip of a pen.

What I would like to argue here is that the division between the Greens and the Blues as solely PERATIC, and the Whites and the Reds as solely POLITIC, i.e. belonging to the City only, is untenable. Once it is abandoned, it makes a lot more sense: not only can we attribute to ALL FOUR FACTIONS their legitimate stations INSIDE the City, it would naturally follow that there were Red and White factions OUTSIDE of the City as well, though for my purpose this is not important. After all, I am dealing with the population OF THE CITY, not of the Empire as such.

It can only follow as a conclusion from above, that the City population did contain ALL FOUR FACTIONS which are specifically mentioned at the various stations INSIDE the City. Attempts to explain the presence of the Greens and the Blues (who, we should recall, are supposed to be ONLY Peratic factions), by arguing that certain areas INSIDE the Theodosian walls, specifically the Blachernae district and the Deuteron, must be regarded as *extra muros*, is in my opinion, just a lame attempt to save the distinction which simply is not tenable. Otherwise, why does the *Book of Ceremonies* specify that the Blues were a *Peratic* faction, if they could be nothing else but: *ho demokrates ton Veneton, egoun ho domestikos ton skholon, meta kai tou peratikou demou ton Veneton*? Now Moffatt and Tall explain the following passage along the lines I have suggested above: "The people of the Peratic Green factions receive the emperor in the district of Olybrios..." as "the Peratic faction of the Greens and that of the Reds...that of the Blues and that of the Whites", namely, *ton peratikon meron Prasinon ho laos... ton peratikon meron ton Veneton*.[85] Though it could be argued that Moffatt and Tall mean that the *Peratic* faction of the Blues and the Greens were combined with the (City) factions of the Whites and the Reds, the original does not specify: *peratikon meron ton Prasinon*, means literally the Peratic factions IN THE PLURAL of the Greens, and the *peratikon meron ton Veneton* means the Peratic factions IN THE PLURAL of the Blues. So either there was more than ONE faction of the Peratic Blues, and ONE of the Peratic Greens, or ALL FOUR FACTIONS WERE regarded as Peratic. In which case the whole argument about the neat distinction between the Peratic and Politic factions goes back to square one.

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[84] Ibid., 19-20 [R19-R20, V1,15]

[85] Ibid., 83 [R83.21, V1,75]

Now, the *Book of Ceremonies* clearly specifies that when the Imperial procession goes to the Church of the Holy Apostles (the one that Constantine built) it is met at the Modion by "the City body of the Greens" [*ton Prasinon tes politikes*], and at the the Forum of the Bull it is met by "the City body of the faction of the Blues" [*tes politikes tou merous ton Veneton*].[86] Of course, the Politic factions of the Greens were the Reds, and of the Blues, Whites, and thus there were NO distinct Green and Blue sections INSIDE at least the Constantinian walls. But in that case, what are we to do with the Peratic factions of the Whites and the Reds which are not supposed to exist at all?

In his admirable study of the topography of Byzantine Constantinople Rodolphe Guilland deals precisely with this problem. First of all, he points out that "the Peratic and Urban sections of the factions are neatly distinguished by the texts."[87] As we have seen above, this is not at all the case. Guilland explains that "one distinguishes by the word *peratikos*, of *pera*, 'over there' (au-delà), the suburbs of Byzantium located either on the other side of the Golden Horn or on the Asiatic coast facing the capital."[88] He goes on to claim that "the identification [*l'identité*] of the City Blues with the Whites and of the City Greens with the Reds is beyond doubt [*hors de doute*]."[89] According to Guilland, "when the *Book of Ceremonies* recapitulates the receptions made by the City Blues and Greens, it attributes them to the White and Reds. The *Book of Ceremonies* opposes, besides, to the Blues and Greens of Pera, now the City Blues and Greens, now the Whites and the Reds."[90] Guilland argues that there were only two demarchs who were the real heads (*chefs*) of the factions, nominated by the emperor and counted among the great officials: "There were only two demarchs: the demarch of the Blues, *ho demarchos ton Veneton*, and the demarch of the Greens, *ho demarchos ton Prasinon*...The demarch was without question [*incontestablement*] the head of the entire faction, composed of two sections, who... had a common organization."[91] He is adamant that "between the Blues and the Whites, on one hand, and between the Greens and the Reds, on the other, there is not simply an alliance, but a complete union. Without a doubt, in the Hippodrome, the Blues, the Whites, the Greens and the Reds had their special tribunes, called demes, *oi demoi*. The Blues and the Greens were more numerous than the Whites and the Reds and they occupied a greater part of the tribunes... The Whites and the Reds occupy the smaller tribunes...It is for this reason that the Blues and the Greens are designated by the name of the 'major

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86 Ibid., 38-84 [R83-84]

87 Rodolphe Guilland, *Etudes de topographie de Constantinople Byzantine*, Vol. I (Berlin, 1969), 420.

88 Ibid., 436, n. 18.

89 Ibid., 420.

90 Ibid., 420.

91 Ibid., 421.

factions' [*factions majeures*], and the Whites and the Reds by the name of 'the minor factions' [*factions mineures*]."[92] But he adds that "the sources, in any case, do not refer at all to a parallel [*paraille*] distinction."[93]

This is a damning admission indeed: in other words, all historians have concluded, on the basis that the Greens and the Blues, had more seats on the tribunes of the Hippodrome that they were bigger than the Whites and the Reds OUTSIDE of the Hippodrome as well. Now, this is a mute question: they may or may not be. Guilland points out that in the Hippodrome the four factions wore their respective colors: their scarves [*écharpe*] were blue, white, green or red.[94] Guilland claims that "the sections of the Whites and the Reds or the City Blues and Greens were always considered subordinate to the sections of the Blues and the Greens properly speaking or the Blues and Greens of Pera. The latter are always mentioned first, before the Whites and the Reds."[95]

Guilland explains that for the whole [*l'ensemble*] factions of the Blues and the Greens, the distinctive color was Blue and Green; white and red colors seem not to have been used *except for the races*. The demarchs of the Blues and the Greens wore blue or green chlamys, even when they found themselves at the head of the City Blues or Greens, put another way, the Whites and the Reds for the reception at the stations, *testifying to the unity of the factions under the same color*."[96] He points out that the two domestics of the scholai and of the excubitors who commanded the Blues and Greens of Pera, wore blue and green, but the domestics of the Noumera and of the Walls, replacing the domestics of the scholai and of the excoubitors and sitting in the tribunes of the major factions, wore the same. At the Court, when the factions were asked to stage ballets for the emperor, the tribunes wore blue and white for the combined Blue and White faction, and Green and Red for the combined Green faction: "The costume of the tribunes and vicars recall the colors of the two sections of the factions."[97] It seems beyond a doubt that the Whites and the Reds were considered a part of the Blues and the Greens, and were known as the City Blues (Whites) and Greens (Reds) INSIDE the City.

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92 Ibid., 421.

93 Ibid., 421.

94 Ibid., 422 citing BC 1, 336.

95 Ibid., 422 citing BC I, 311, 324, 326 and 338. The last-mentioned reads: "one horse from the Blue faction, one horse from the Green, one horse from the White, and one horse from the Red."

96 Ibid., 422 citing BC 1, 17, 105-106: "The demarch of the Greens of the City body" (=the Reds) "receives the emperor at the Mint, and the demarch hands a document to the emperor...The demarch wears a green chlamys. The faction of the Blues of the City body" (=the Whites) "receives the emperor...and the demarch, wearing a blue chlamys..."

97 Ibid., 422, citing BC I, 294: "...the tribunes and the lieutenants wear the blue and white short-sleeved tunics with gold appliqués..." and 296: "...the tribunes and the lieutenants wear the green and red short-sleeved tunics with gold appliqués."

Of the two major factions the Blues always had precedence: "The *Book of Ceremonies* orders invariably the official ceremonies as though the Blues always had precedence [*préséance*]."[98] Guilland's other claim that the Blues "possessed a greater number of stations stretched along the public road and which offered the satisfaction of acclaiming the sovereign more frequently than the their rivals, the Greens"[99] is open to question though.

First of ali, it should be pointed out that the stations, called *topoi* or *stasei*[100], did not change hands, so to speak, throughout Byzantine history (at least until 1204), as Leslie Brubaker points out: "In fact, the nodal points that crop up again and again in the earliest sources are essentially the same as those that appear in the ninth- and tenth-century documents, suggesting that the processional routes were basically set by the sixth or seventh century."[101] Brubaker emphasizes that while "walking the same processional route presumably meant something different in the twelfth century from what it had meant in the seventh... the continuity is nonetheless worth remarking."[102]

Retracing the imperial procession to the Church of St. Mokios, between the two city walls, Guilland notices that of 17 stations the Blues of Pera held 3, the Greens of Pera 2, the Whites or the City Blues 7, the Reds of the City Greens 5. He comments that "the figures which seem correct, do not correspond with the figures given in the text of the chapter where, of the 17 receptions, 3 are attributed to the Blues of Pera, 3 to the Greens or Pera, 5 to the City Blues, and 6 to the City Greens. There is certainly an error in attributing the stations, for, generally, the Blues of Pera and of the City made a greater number of receptions than the Greens of Pera and of the City."[103]

I do not agree: I think there is a propensity among Byzantinists to proclaim a text corrupt or in error whenever their assumptions are challenged. They are also prone to jump to a conclusion as Guilland does in the very next paragraph. After noting that the democrats and the demarchs of the factions accompanied the emperor along the entire route of his journey[104], he goes on to speculate that "possibly each faction did not have to furnish more than two pickets of honor, one for the peratic and one for the City faction. After its first

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98 Ibid., 424.

99 Ibid., 423-424.

100 BC I, 38.

101 Leslie Brubaker, "Topography and the Creation of Public Space in Early Medieval Constantinople" in Mayke de Jong and Frans Theuws with Carine van Rhijn, eds., *Topographies of Power in the Early Middle Ages* (Leiden, 2001), 39.

102 Ibid., 39.

103 Guilland, I, 427.

104 Ibid., 427-428 quoting: "*hipostrefomenos ho demarkho..meta tou demou... poiei ekeise dokhen...*"

reception each picket would have rejoined the cortege in order to make following reception at the various stations where it had to hold them."[105]

He then admits that it is possible that "the picket of honor after holding a reception, accompanied the emperor to the following station, and then, having accomplished its mission, went away."[106] I think that it would be a mockery to assume that the factions staged a reception by jumping from an imperial band wagon or cortege at each station and then rejoining it after it was finished, and thus the same picket would be wheeled in and out for each of their respective stations. I think his second alternative is valid. And it squares better with what he has to claim next: "There is only one absolute rule: *each station is the property of a faction,* which occupies it on the basis of law grounded in tradition and irrevocable. [emphasis in the original: "*chaque station est la propriété d'une faction*]"[107] He emphasizes that "for all itineraries, one can state that a great number of stations are invariably occupied by the same faction."[108]

He then tackles the next question: is there a *Peratic* deme of the Whites [*meta tou peratikou autou demou tou Leukou*]? His answer: "The error is evident. The Peratic deme of the Whites did not exist; the White faction was an urban faction. It should read: *meta tou peratikou autou demou ton Veneton,* as corrected by Vogt."[109] He also corrects the text to read: *meta tou peratikou autou demou ton Prassinon* instead of *ton Roussion.* I am inclined to go along with his emendations because it makes sense that a faction which was identified as that of the City [*tou politikou*] could by definition have no extra-City [*tou peratikou*] branch or counterpart.

Guilland's conclusion is that "1. that factions have an absolute right of property of the stations which tradition has assigned them. 2. This right of property pertains to the whole faction and not to a single one of its sections. Without doubt, in a general way, it is the same section which occupies the same section" (I think he meant to say the same 'station'), "but the rule is not absolute and could be flexible on certain occasions."[110]

There was no such confusion in the Hippodrome. There were to be found the tribunes of all four sections, two from each faction. The seating on both sides of the Imperial box or *kathisma* mattered enormously to all factions. We have seen how Theodosius II changed the seating arrangement of the Greens justifying it on the grounds that he wanted to see them and thus 'honor' them. My reconstruction of the *original* seating facing the Emperor is confirmed by Guilland: "Before the change brought by Theodosius II, the

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[105] Ibid., 428.

[106] Ibid., 428.

[107] Ibid., 428.

[108] Ibid., 429.

[109] Ibid., 430.

[110] Ibid., 430.

Greens sat well in facing [*bien en face*] of the Kathisma, but *very far on the right, following the Blues*; from his throne the emperor could see them but with difficulty. Moved to their station, the Greens found themselves *much closer to the emperor, for they were placed facing him* [*en face de lui*] *and very close to his left* [*assez près sa gauche*]."[111] Guilland's explanation creates problems though: it is quite clear that before the change the Greens occupied the seats to the right of the Blues so that the Blues were closest to the emperor's right. He then moved the Greens to the seats occupied by the military "that were facing the *kathisma* and moved them close to the faction of the Blues, *allotting their tiers* [*gradins*] to the Green faction."[112] This makes sense only if we understand by the factions of the Greens and Blues their entire faction: in that case the Blues very close to the emperor would have been the Whites, and the Greens, following the change, closest to the emperor, would be the Reds. In that case, the seating arrangement before the change by Theodosius II seen from the *kathisma* was: facing the emperor the military, then WHITE, BLUE, GREEN, RED.

After the change, the seating was GREEN, RED, WHITE, BLUE. The Greens opposite the emperor [*en face de lui*] would be the Reds as the Blues opposite him would be the Whites. The Peratic Greens were now to the extreme left of the emperor, and the Peratic Blues were to the extreme right of the emperor. This was the seating arrangement in the Hippodrome under the Komneni.

Guilland's comment makes sense *if* we take into account the removal of the military from the center opposite the *kathisma* and closer to the faction of the Blues. Now who were these military? They were imperial guards. We have noted already that a faction of the Blues and the Greens belonging to *extra muros* [*peratic*] was led by the domestic of the scholae and the domestic of the excubitors. Now the excubitors were the emperor's most trusted guards. So were the *scholae* regiment which, as Alan Cameron points out, "had become a crack corps again"[113] by the tenth century. If not actually the part of the two City factions, the Reds and the Whites, they would have been closely allied with them. Thus they sat next to the City sections.

Much of Cameron's work is devoted to a painstaking hatchet work of demolishing any real role that factions of the Greens and the Blues had in politics. In fact, outside of the games in the Hippodrome they just about ceased to exist if we believe Cameron. I think this is throwing the baby together with the bathwater. During the Macedonian dynasty and that of the Komneni the factions may not have been as active or important as during the period of Justinian, Heraclius, and the Iconoclastic period, but they could be absolutely vital when the dynastic succession was in question. For the factions

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[111] Ibid., 413.

[112] Ibid., 412.

[113] Cameron, *Circus Factions*, 117.

representing broadly the people of Constantinople, and, thus more specifically, the Red and White sections of them, were crucial in the ritual of succession and imperial coronations, as Cameron himself points out.

Cameron claims that "a great stir was caused in Byzantine studies a quarter of a century ago by the discovery of two chronicle entries mentioning the Blues and Greens respectively in connection with the proclamations of Leontius (695) and Tiberius III Apsimar (698). Unexpected by unquestionable proof, so it was claimed, that the political activity of the factions did not cease under Heraclius (as had generally been supposed), but continued into at least the eighth century. No attempt was made to explain how this extension of the political role of the factions into a period when on any hypothesis they certainly dominated imperial ceremonial was to be reconciled with the hypothesis that ceremonial *succeeded* political role...This is simply the clearest and most striking illustration of ceremonial turning into politics. The mistake that previous inquiries have made is to assume that the factions were responsible for the actual coup that raised the usurper to the throne; that is to say that he was in almost the modern sense their candidate, representing their policies and interests. The truth is that their contribution was restricted to the *proclamation* of the new emperor."[114]

It seems to me that Cameron is purposely setting up a strawman only to bring it down: there is no question that the factions did not have their own candidates in the so-called Middle Byzantine period. Cameron, however, points out that the act of proclamation was itself a late Roman/early Byzantine innovation: "This too was a new development of the late fifth century. No emperor before then, whatever pains he took to appear the *civilis princeps*, had formally deferred to popular approbation before considering himself legally constituted emperor."[115] According to Cameron, "this was the normal pattern at the fall of a dynasty in the early Empire; proclamation by the military (whether palace guards or provincial army) and subsequent formal recognition by the Senate...By the late fifth century...the situation changed. But it is not simply a matter (as has often been assumed) of the people asserting its independence. For it is not the people alone who begin to play *a role in the transmission of power*, but even more so the Senate."[116] [my emphasis]

It is worth repeating that constitutionally speaking supreme power was vested in an emperor by four factors: the army (to be sure, the leadership but with the *support* of the troops), the Senate, the people, and the Church represented by the patriarch. As Cameron points out, "though many of the elements were traditional, the ceremony as a whole represents a mixture of the civil, military, and religious that is certainly new. We need not here concern ourselves with the perhaps over-legalistically conceived debate about which of

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[114] Ibid., 261.

[115] Ibid., 261-262.

[116] Ibid., 262.

these elements was truly 'constitutive': the raising on the shield and crowning with the military *torques*, the acclamation by army and people, or the coronation with the diadem by the patriarch. More probably it was the ceremony as a whole that made a man emperor. For our present purpose it is enough that *the role of the people was a central (if not invariable) part of the ceremony*."[117] [my emphasis]

As in the case of Anastasius whose choice was that of the senate and the senior officials, "the people were prepared to let the senate and officials make the decision, *but it had to be a decision they approved of*."[118] [my emphasis] As Cameron points out, "the proclamation of Justin I in 518 follows the same pattern with some interesting refirenements—including the earliest definite reference to the factions in this connection...Here at least it is possible to arrive at a fairly exact definition of the contribution of the factions. Not in any sense political parties pulling the strings behind the scenes, since Peter's very full account details all those who played any part in the actual selection of the emperor: the senate, the officials, the scholae, and the excubitors."[119] This means that the senate, the highest dignitaries of the Grand Palace, and the army in the City, i.e. the Imperial guards regiments, decided on Justin. But the factions nevertheless had a clear role to play: "All that the Blues and Greens did when Justin was finally raised on the shield was what they had conspicuously refused to do for John: *utter the necessary loyal acclamations acknowledging him as emperor*."[120] [my emphasis] Now I think that Cameron is purposely minimizing their role: if, as he himself acknowledges, the factions could *refuse* to have somebody who had been selected by the senate, the army, and the officials of the Palace, then this is no small role to play: they held a kind of a veto. As Cameron himself points out, their role was *necessary*: in other words, the population of Constantinople represented by the Blues and the Greens had a clear and necessary part in the making of an emperor. This much is clear.

So it is difficult to agree with Cameron that, though their role was *necessary*, they had *no special power*: "And they did this, not in virtue of any special power they possessed, but simply and solely because it was their normal function to lead the people in ceremonial acclamations at circus and theatre. Normally, of course, the presence of a small trained body to lead the acclamations merely ensured that they were well done. But when those acclamations were destined to constitute recognition of a new emperor, then the body that had the power to lead (or withhold) them became potentially important."[121] At this point Cameron gets as close as he ever does to identifying

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[117] Ibid., 262.

[118] Ibid., 263.

[119] Ibid., 264-264.

[120] Ibid., 264.

[121] Ibid., 264.

the Blues and the Greens as *the leaders* of the people at circus and theatre. Now, these were the two principal venues where the people met in large numbers to participate in what was after all *their City*. So if the factions led the people in these two venues, it stands to reason that the people saw them as their vanguard, so to speak, if not their actual leaders.

Cameron is determined to minimize their role in line with his overall thesis that the factions were *not* representative of the *population* of the City: "Of course when the power was transmitted peacefully or only shared, that is to say when a reigning emperor crowned his son or some other popular or obvious successor in his own lifetime (the normal practice whenever possible), the approval of the factions will have been purely formal. Their potential power only became actual when there was any question about who was to be crowned. *And even then it was only a very short-lived importance they enjoyed, vanishing the moment they had played their part.*"[122] [my emphasis] Now, what are we to do of this: Cameron is in fact implying that they did not play the role of some sort of the Constantinopolitan parliament, but rather of a popular assembly which everywhere, in Byzantium as well as in medieval Western Europe, merely rubber-stamped the decision of their superiors? But then, Cameron himself admitted that they could *refuse an emperor selected by their superiors*. Well, clearly, their role was not just that of a rubber-stamp: for in that case, they could *not refuse what others had already done*.

Cameron himself discusses at length the selection of Phocas as emperor in 602. Following the flight of Maurice the Danube army backed Germanus, a rich senator. Germanus had the backing of the army. As Cameron points out, "the Greens debated the matter—and turned him down, on the grounds that he was too partisan a Blue. The only plausible candidate left was now Phocas, and a Green deputation left the city 'to glorify the tyrant with their acclamations' at the suburb of Rhegion, and urged him to move up to the Hebdomon, site of many a coronation in earlier days. Phocas took the hint and sent to the city, requesting the presence of patriarch, senate and people at the Hebdomon, where he was dully proclaimed emperor and crowned. It is quite wrong to see this as a Green coup. Phocas was already master of the situation. All the Greens did, all they could do, was to indicate to Phocas that if he decided to seize the supreme power for himself, they would support him rather than Germanus. They could not and did not proclaim him themselves. Indeed, at the ceremony itself he was proclaimed by Blues and Greens *together*."[123] It is quite clear from the above that, come what may, Cameron is absolutely determined in minimizing the role of either or both factions: his statement that Phocas was already master of the situation is at best a mute question, at worst purely an assumption. He is right in disputing Phocas' election as solely due to the Greens. But his own admission that *the support of both factions was*

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[122] Ibid., 264-265.

[123] Ibid., 265-266.

aimed at: "Germanus was aiming at what Phocas obtained—proclamation by *both* colours."[124] This is indeed how John of Antioch quoted by Cameron himself in a footnotes, interpreted the situation.[125]

Cameron's conclusion is that "the Greens certainly played an important part, but it is the wildest exaggeration to say that they 'offered Phocas the throne'. In the last analysis they had only acclamations to offer."[126] He is technically right, of course: but the acclamations were *necessary* if a new emperor was to be accepted. To put it bluntly, the factions *together*, the Blues and the Greens, had a power of *veto* of who was to become emperor. And that is no small part to play.

A century later, when Leontius was being raised to the throne George the Monk in his chronicle offered this additional information that Leontius "was proclaimed emperor at night by the deme of the Blues"[127] [*stasiasas Leontios ho patrikios anagoreutai nuktos upo tou demou ton Veneton vasileus*]. Cameron adds that "Leo Grammaticus says that Leontius was proclaimed in the hippodrome."[128] Now both of these pieces of information strengthen my view that either or *both* factions were necessary in order to get an emperor *accepted by the people*. If Leontius was indeed 'proclaimed' (for Cameron argues that the verb *anagoreutai* means 'proclaimed', not 'raised to the throne' as Ostrogorsky put it in his *History of the Byzantine State*, [2nd ed., 1968], 140), he was neither the first nor the last: Cameron states that "Leontius' successor Apsimar seized Constantinople 'thanks to the city militia belonging to the faction of the Greens.'"[129] All this makes me side with Ostrogorsky rather than with Cameron when the former states that "the Byzantine factions of the Blues and the Greens were organizations *for political purposes and not merely for sports*. It is true that they associated themselves with the old Circus parties and took over their names and colours, but *the Hippodrome of Constantinople, like the Forum of Rome and the Agora of Athens, was also the place where the political views of the people were voiced. The popular parties of the Greens and the Blues, whose leaders were appointed by the government, had important public functions*, for they served as the city guard and they took part in repairing the city walls. *Strictly speaking, the demes were that section of the urban population which organized as the city militia*."[130] We have already discussed their role in this regard, but let us recall that one of military gates in the Theodosian walls was (according to at least some sources) called that of the Reds. Ostrogorsky admits that Theophylact

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[124] Ibid., 266.

[125] Ibid., 266, ft. 1: *proserruesan oun kai ta B mere, Prasinoi kai Venetoi, kai pantes...*

[126] Ibid., 266.

[127] Ibid., 267, ft. 3.

[128] Ibid., 267, ft. 3.

[129] Ibid., 267 and ft. 6 citing Ostrogorsky, *History of the Byzantine State* [2nd ed., 1968], 141.

[130] G. Ostrogorsky, *History of the Byzantine State* [2nd ed., 1968], 66.

Simocatta gave numbers for both factions based on official statistics: 1,500 Greens and 900 Blues in Constantinople, while at the time of Theodosius II both factions numbered 8,000 men, and that both are "only a very small proportion of the population of Constantinople".[131] This is, of course, true since Constantinople would have contained around half a million people. But it should be remembered that, if the Blues and the Greens, were *parties,* as Ostrogorsky insists, then both then and later, in Byzantium and elsewhere, the parties are always a very small part of the whole population (though in modern, industrial democracies they are very large in numbers if not in percentage!). This is indeed how Ostrogorsky wants us to understand their role: "The rest of the people ranged themselves behind these factions, joining either the Greens or the Blues, supporting the one and attacking the other."[132] Now this is exactly how modern parties behave, and this was very much their *political role*: "[T]he Greens and the Blues played a very important part, since it was through them that the people voices their political opinions."[133] Ostrogorsky rejects the view that "the Blues were the aristocratic faction and the Greens the faction supported by the lower social classes", thereby specifically alluding to Manojlović.[134] But he does go along with a somewhat diluted view of the latter that "on the whole the general masses were to be found in both parties, though the Blues tended to draw their leaders from members of the great landowners, the Graeco-Roman senatorial aristocracy, and the Greens from the representatives of trade and industry, as well as from those in court service or financial administration who often originated in the eastern lands of the Empire."[135] Curiously, Ostrogorsky does support the view that "the Blues usually supported Greek orthodoxy and the Greens favoured monophysitism and other eastern heresies."[136]

It is not necessary for me to chronicle the role of the factions through the early and middle Byzantine periods for this is well known to specialists as well as general readers. I will only add that contemporary and later sources were well-aware of the far-reaching and disastrous struggle not only between the two factions but between them united and supreme power. Here is a well-known passage from *Miracula S. Demetrii,* quoted by Ostrogorsky: "[T]he demes, not satisfied with shedding the blood of their fellow demesmen in the streets, have forced their way into each others' houses and mercilessly murdered those within, throwing down alive from the upper stories women and children, young and old, who were too weak to save themselves by flight; in

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131 Ibid., 66, ft. 2.

132 Ibid., 66.

133 Ibid., 66-67.

134 Ibid., 67, ft. 1: "This is the view of Manojilović [sic!], 'Peuple de Constantinople'".

135 Ibid., 67 citing M. Levčenko, "Venety i prasiny v Vizantii v V-VII vv." *Vizantinskii vremennik* 26 (1947), 164ff.

136 Ibid., 67.

barbarian fashion they have plundered their fellow-citizens, their acquaintances and relations, and have set fire to their houses..."[137] All this confirms the view that the two factions were more than just circus or hippodrome groupings. In his book on Porphyrius the Charioteer Alan Cameron argues that "as *Circus Factions* will illustrate in detail, almost all the terminology of the Byzantine hippodrome is drawn from the circus of Rome, often by straightforward transliteration... It is the *populus*... or (no less commonly and with no difference in meaning) *populi* in the plural, that gave rise to the use of *demos* and *demoi* to denote the circus factions in Byzantine usage. Not realizing this, modern students of the factions call them 'demes', relating them to a postulated 'deme-structure' of their cities, champions of municipal independence, against the encroachment of imperial absolutism—all in vain. *Demos/-oi*, like *populus/-i* simply means 'people'. *Demos Venetou*, like *populus Veneti*, of which it is a straightforward calque, means no more than the people, or the fans, of the Blues."[138] Yes and no: no more than the people is correct in a sense that the part of the population of Constantinople which supported the Blues made a part of the City populalation as a whole; but no: because the people was not made up merely of the fans of the races in the Hippodrome, but of all those who supported the Blues.

I think that Dagron is absolutely correct in seeing the *two* factions as a *duality* inherited from ancient Rome where the city bore the memory and the organization of the original dual kingship of Romulus and Remus.[139] Additionally, this means that Cameron is right in seeing the demes, i.e. the factions, as representing the *people*, i.e. *populus* (in ancient Rome), *demos* (in Imperial Constantinople). But we know by now that Byzantium was a *symbolic and semiotic* polity *par excellence*. What are, in addition to historical lore, the *symbolic* signs of the colors?

First of all, I agree with Cameron that Manojlović's "distinction between the demes *qua* circus factions and the demes *qua* militiamen is untenable."[140] In addition, Cameron insists that "it is by no means the case that all four colours *must* be mentioned in sporting contexts. Indeed, it is more usual for the Blues and Greens alone to be singled out in this sphere as in others."[141] Now, this may be so, but the provision was made from the very beginning in the seating of the Hippodrome for *four*, not *two*, factions. And it seems that Cameron gives unwittingly a proof of *all four factions* acclaiming a winning charioteer in the epigram which he claims "has yet to be properly interpreted" of which the first line concerns us here: "*tetrakha men to*

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137 Ibid., 84-85, ft. 4.

138 Alan Cameron, *Porphyrius the Charioteer* (Oxford, 1973), 71.

139 G. Dagron, *L'hippodrome de Constantinople: Jeux, peuple et politique* (Paris, 2011), 225-226.

140 Cameron, *Circus Factions*, 47.

141 Ibid., 47.

paroithe diakridon iakhe demos..."[142] As Cameron points out, it does not take an expert in Greek to disagree with the translation offered in the Loeb edition as "four times before did the people shout distinctly"; for *tetrakha* does not mean "four times", but "in four parts", as Liddell and Scott's dictionary explains (and this is the *only meaning* they give!).[143] In Roman and early Byzantine history this is where the notion of *tetrarchy*, i.e. the rule in four parts over the Roman Empire, came from. And this means that this epigram refers to the *four* factions, all four of them acclaiming the winning charioteer. As Cameron remarks slyly, "presumably it was thought that the nicety of the distinction between *tetrakha* and *tetrakis* was beyond a Byzantine..."[144]

The four factions of the Blues, Greens, Whites, and Reds, moreover, represented symbolically the four constituent elements of Byzantium. As a leading dictionary of the symbols puts It: "Blue is a color of heaven, ... of the divine, of truth and of fidelity (in the sense of clinging to truth, as well as with reference to the fixed firmament of heaven)..."[145] It then adds this information very important for this study: "In Christian painting the battle between heaven and earth was frequently imaged in the opposition of blue and white against red and green (e.g., the battle of St. George and the dragon)."[146] Blue was the color of Christ's robe and as such symbolized His divinity (as opposed to his humanity). It was the color Jesus shared with the other two persons of the Trinity. On this there is a fine study by Floch and Collin to be examined later. Green, on the other hand, "is the color of water, life, and freshness. It mediates between the Red of Hellfire and the Blue of Heaven. Often green is the opponent of red, but sometimes as the color of life it also represents red. [...] The Christian artists of the Middle Ages sometimes painted Christ's cross green as a sign of the renewal brought about by Christ and as an expression of humanity's hope of return to paradise."[147] In Andrei Rublev's great portrayal of Old Testament Trinity (the three angels), Green is the color of the Holy Ghost[148], i.e. of the terrestrial Church (explained above). We can see how Green is the color of the earth (of the plant kingdom) *par excellence* and thus of humanity. White is "the color of light, purity, and perfection."[149] And Red "is the color of fire and blood, and like these symbolically ambivalent. In a positive sense it is a color of life, love, warmth, inspired passion, and fertility; in a negative sense it was a color of war, the destructive power of

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142 Ibid., 48.

143 *An Intermediate Greek-English Lexicon founded upon the Seventh Edition of Liddell and Scott's Greek-English Lexicon* (1st ed., Oxford, 1899, 1997 impression), 803.

144 Cameron, *Circus Factions*, 49.

145 *The Herder Symbol Dictionary* [trans. by Boris Matthews] (Chiron, Wilmette, 1990), 25.

146 Ibid., 25.

147 Ibid., 91-92.

148 C.G. Jung, *Psychology and Alchemy* (London, 1989), 212-213.

149 Ibid., 214.

fire, loss of blood, and hate. [...] For the Romans, red, *also symbolic of power, was the color of the emperor, the nobility, and the generals*."[150] [my emphasis] As already mentioned, Red was also the color of Jesus Christ's robe (together with the Blue) as the Pantokrator, i.e. Ruler of the Universe.

As it is known, the individual colors were those of factions associated with the following: the Blues were associated with the Imperial guard regiments, led by the *domestikos* of the *scholae*; the Greens were associated with the Imperial guard regiments, led by the *domestikos* of the *exkoubitoi*; the Whites, i.e. the politic Blues, were associated with the Senate (the Senators wore a white dress, sometimes with a red hem); the Reds were associated with the military leadership: the color of the generals, *strategoi*, was red (and thus by extension of the military aristocracy under the Komnenoi). As we shall see, the FOUR crowns that the emperors could choose to wear were WHITE, RED, BLUE, AND GREEN. It is thus quite clear that the four colors of the four factions stood for the quaternary. The quaternary, as Cirlot's dictionary of symbols explains, is based upon the four elements: Air, Fire, Water, and Earth.[151] The respective colors of these are White, Red, Blue, and Green. It should be pointed out that, according to Jung, of the elements, two are active—fire and air, and two are passive—earth and water. That means that White and Red are active, and Green and Blue are passive. This is, of course, true of Imperial Constantinople: the elements that were involved in the numerous riots and many depositions as well as acclamations of emperors were the *politic* factions, the Reds and the Whites. The quaternary was, of course, represented by the quadriga, as Cirlot explains: "It carries the inherent symbolism of the quaternary, here implied in the four horses drawing the chariot. With this in mind, Dio Chrysostom worked out the following analogies: the charioteer corresponds to the Pantokrator and the chariot to the halo (indicating two different levels of the manifest world through the intersection of the circles of heaven and earth); and the four horses relate to the four Elements... The four horses correspond to fire, air, water and earth respectively... The quadriga, then, becomes a symbol of the universe of space-time."[152]

In his book on Porphyrius the Charioteer Alan Cameron states that

> the spina of the hippodrome of Constantinople has caused scholars a certain amount of trouble. The Byzantines called it *euripos*, *krepis*, or *toikhos*, the latter two terms clearly implying that it was a wall of some sort. But the excavations of 1927 revealed no trace of a wall, and the excavators went so far as to conclude that the spina was separated from the surrounding arena by nothing more than a wooden fence. This is implausible in itself (the chariots would have been constantly crashing into the statues and clumns, damaging priceless

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150 Ibid., 157.

151 J.E. Cirlot, *A Dictionary of Symbols* [2nd ed., London, 1990], 269.

152 Ibid., 268 citing C.G. Jung, *Symbols of Transformation* (London, 1956).

> works of art as well as themselves), and contradicted by a text to which attention was first drawn by R. Byron.
> Robert of Clari, who visited Constantinople in 1204, describes the spina as 'a wall which was a good fifteen feet high and ten feet wide' ('une masiere qui bien avoit quinze pies de haut et dis de lé'). [...] On the analogy of the hippodromes of Toledo, Mérida, and Thessalonica, which have the same over-all proportions as the Constantinopolitan hippodrome, one would expect the length of the spina to have been approximately 230 metres.
> On this high wall Robert saw (without unfortunately giving any details) 'statues of men and women and horses and oxen and camels...all made of copper'. [...] Charioteer statues were erected in the 'ground' (*khoros*) of their respective colours.[153]

Cameron's book is a very valuable study In identifying and placing the various statues, above all those of Porphyrius the Charioteer, in their historical context as well as on the spina, and he produced a diagram which he warns is purely "schematic: properly the spina should be oblique to the main axis of the hippodrome".[154] Now the last remark creates an additional problem: what does he mean by "oblique to the main axis of the hippodrome"? If the main axis of the hippodrome is northeast to the south west, then the spina could bend (i.e. be oblique) either to the west side or to the east side. This is very important in connection with Niketas Choniates' statement that "very close to the eastern turn of the four-horse chariot course called Rousion [Red], statues of charioteers were set up with inscriptions of their chariot-drlving skill; by the mere disposition of their hands, they exhorted the charioteers, as they approached the turning post, not to relax the reins but to hold the horses in check and to use the goad continuously and more forcefully, so that, as they wheeled round the turning post in close quarters, they should compel their rival, even though his horses were faster and he a skilled competitor, to drive on the outside of the turn and come in last."[155]

On the basis of this precious and very precise information Cameron hypothesizes that "if there was a Red turning-post, presumably there was a White one too, but where were they and what was their purpose?"[156] First of all, it does not follow at all that since (not if) there was a Red turning post there *has* to be a White one too. As for its location, Choniates makes it clear that it was on the *eastern* side of the spina, thus on the same side of the race course as the Imperial box or *kathisma*. I would suggest that it was facing directly not the *kathisma* itself, but the tribunes of the Red faction which were to be found, however, on the other side of the spina, on the southwestern side.

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153 Alan Cameron, *Porphyrius the Charioteer* (Oxford, 1973), 180-182 citing R. Byron, *The Byzantine Achievement* (1929), 72, n. 1.

154 Ibid., 182 and Fig. 2.

155 *O City of Byzantium Annals of Niketas Choniates* [trans. by Harry J. Magoulias] (Detroit, 1984), 361.

156 Cameron, *Porphyrius*, 183.

That is why it was called Red. If that is the case, what did it look like? Cameron thought that the turning posts was "usually represented as semi-circles. Sometimes slightly detached from the main body of the spina."[157] Rejecting his hypothesis that there were *two* additional turning posts, that of the Reds and Whites, in favor of the historically attested one, i.e. of the Reds, we are now in a position to offer a new interpretation.

We know that the four racing teams raced seven laps around the spina. We know that they always started from the north (actually the northwest) at the so-called Carceres. We also know that they finished on the *western* course just below and opposite the judges' box on the *northwest side*. The extra turning post of the Reds as they entered the *eastern* course was used by charioteers to force their opponents to the outer as opposed to the inner position, i.e. away from the spina rather than next to the spina, thus making their finish slightly longer and more exposed to clashes. The Red turning post was thus of great importance and in particular for the finishing a lap and a half between it and the finishing line. There was no need whatsoever for an additional hypothetical White turning post.

We have already noted above how the Greens ended sitting *to the left* of the Emperor when he faced them from the *kathisma*. But how could have Greens been fooled in believing that they were being honoured by Theodosius II by being moved *to the left*? Again, the Byzantine symbolic way of looking is important: to the Emperor looking from the *east to the west* where all the factions sat, the new seating of the Greens was *on his left*. Since they were on the Emperor's left how could Theodosius II claim that he gave them [the position of] honor?

It all depends on the position of the *kathisma*, i.e. the Imperial box in the hippodrome. Earlier scholars have argued that its location was either toward the southeastern end of the eastern seats or (quite absurd) on top of the Carceres (see "The Great Palace of Constantinople and Adjacent Buildings"). Modern scholars have opted for either the northeastern position of the eastern seats (Miranda 1968 and Dagron 2003) or in the middle of the eastern wall (Dagron 2011). It is thus quite clear that all this is mere guessing: we really cannot establish from the sources the exact location of the *kathisma*. I think, though, that Niketas Choniates' information is revealing: he says that "very close to the eastern turn of the four-horse chariot course [there was a turning post] called Rousion [Red]". I suggested that it was could only be called that because it was related to the Red section. The problem is whether "by eastern turn" Choniates means that the races 'turned east' in which case they could only do that at the Spendone, i.e. the semicircular end of the hippodrome on its southwest side. That leaves the only possibility of the Red post being somehow in the vicinity of the seating of the Red section. Cameron has placed hypothetically the Red post on the eastern track facing his location of the *ka-*

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[157] Ibid., 184.

thisma. This is not correct if the Red post was somehow related to the Red section was it was on the other side and to the left of the Emperor (viewed from the *kathisma*). Which brings us to the original question: how could Theodosius II claim that he was giving the Greens the position of honor when he moved them from the *right to the left*? And moreover, how could he claim that he "wished to watch opposite" him the Greens? An additional problem is whether by 'the Greens' he meant only the Peratic faction or the combined Green/Red faction? And who are the 'garrison troops' that he moved toward the *right*, i.e. to the Blue section? There is no question that by saying that he transferred the "garrison troops who used to watch from opposite the *kathisma* to the Blue faction" Theodosius II meant the Scholai, i.e. the Whites. Now, what point would there be in transferring the Greens from the *extreme* right on his side to the *extreme* left unless he was now able to see them whereas previously he could not "watch [the Greens] opposite him"? And that means that the *kathisma WAS NOT* perfectly centered mid-court, i.e. halfway of the spina, but that it was *to the south of it*? For by moving the Whites to the right into the Blue section he vacated their seats and gave them to the Red section of the Greens. The turning post would have been then *not in the middle of the eastern course* (as depicted by Cameron) but more to the south directly opposite the Red seats. And this means that, as the earlier scholars suggested, the *kathisma* was not located *halfway* along the spina but rather to the south of it.

We know that the judges' box was *directly opposite the kathisma*. Since it was located on the northwest side of the western course but *not north of the midsection of the spina, but south of it*, we know that the *kathisma* must have been *south of the mid-section of the spina*. Now, it ali makes sense: by moving the Scholai to the Blue section, he moved the Exkoubitoi, i.e. the Reds (the Politic Greens) directly facing him, and the Peratic Greens were now on the Emperor's LEFT and visible to the Emperor whereas previously they were not.

We have thus made it possible to make sense out of Choniates' information, but there is still the question of why did Theodosius II regard his transfer of the Greens *to the left* as [a position of] honor? It all depends on the left and the right arm. This has been a favorite topic of (at least some) anthropologists. It is not necessary to go through all of the debates to realize that *both* the right *and* the left hands are important in some cultures, and in some *interchangeably so*. Bruce Lincoln points out that "one should stress...that within the various Indo-European languages, no particularly pejorative association is attached to the left hand, which is designated, rather, as the 'better' (Greek *aristeros*), 'choice' (Avestan *vairyastara*), 'friendlier' (Old High German *winistar*, Old Norse *vinstri*, Old English *winestra*), or 'more winning'

(Latin *sinister*; cf. Sanskrit *saniyas*) hand".[158] To the Byzantines both the meaning of *aristeros* as 'better' and *sinister* as 'more winning' would have been understandable all the more since the original move dates to around 400 A.D., i.e. at the time when Latin was still in use in Constantinople. So the position on the left was indeed one of honor, and the Greens saw it and accepted it as such.

But the notion of the left and right hand had an additional symbolic significance in the context of the hippodrome. In his ground-breaking study of the dualist classifications based on African kingship ceremonies, Serge Tcherkézoff[159] has argued that all dualist systems are not symmetrical, as assumed by other scholars, but asymmetrical. Starting with colors, he noted that, as far as African ceremonies are concerned, black is 'more powerful' than white generally speaking, all the more since red is associated with black, and, moreover, "red is the maker [*opérateur*] of the inversions of value that can affect black and white".[160] He adds that the opposition 'politic/religious' is based on all other dualisms".[161] By examining the dualist classifications of 'left/right', 'male/female', 'patrilinear/matri-linear', 'even/odd', 'east/west', 'front/back', 'black/white', Tcherkézoff points out that they are all the same kind of dualist opposition. As far as royal ceremonies are concerned, there are *two different levels*: the so-called ordinary ones relating to the ancestors, and the so-called royal ones of a superior type. What is important is that what prevails in the ordinary ones is often a combination of both opposing terms, such as black and white, or the superiority of the opposite term from the one that is superior in the royal ceremonies, e.g. either black and white or white superior in the ancestors cult, and *only* black in the royal cults.

This means that the two dualist terms undergo an *inversion not just of a position but of value as well, i.e. they become superior to the other, but the opposite one in each case*.[162] He shows that not only is black superior to white on its own, but that it actually combines with white, and this means that "the black prevails over white in the divinations for the choice of the king".[163]

Tcherkézoff is particularly important for this study because he points out that in *cosmological* terms black is superior to white in the hierarchy of values, but on another level, what he calls that of 'power', white is superior to

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158 Bruce Lincoln, "Kings, Rebels, and the Left Hand" in *Death, War, and Sacrifice: Studies in Ideology and Practice* (Chicago, 1991), 256, ft. 21.

159 Serge Tcherkézoff, *Le roi Nyamwezi, la droite et la gauche: révision comparative des classifications dualists* (Cambridge-Paris, 1983).

160 Ibid., 19, ft. 1: "Le rouge est l'opérateur des inversions de valeur que peuvent connaitre le noir et le blanc."

161 Ibid., 19.

162 See his table on p. 47 and in particular 74-75.

163 Ibid., 58.

black.[164] Thus he argues that there is an *inversion* of the hierarchy of values: on the superior level black is greater than white; on the inferior level white is greater than black.[165] But this dualist classification is only ostensibly dualist. As Tcherkézoff points out, there are three serpents of different colors, red, white and black symbolizing the dawn, the dry season, and the wet season respectively in Nyamwezi cosmology.[166] He then categorizes all the dualist classifications and points out that "'five' is the image of the king."[167] On both the inferior and superior levels '5' is the compound of 2 which stands for 'man' and 3 which represents 'woman', clearly asymmetrical. This is reflected in the rites which accords the greater status to black on the superior level, and white on the inferior level.[168]

Particularly valuable for this study is Tcherkézoff's analysis of the dual nature of kingly authority, i.e. that of king and priest (I think this part influenced Dagron's analysis of Byzantine Imperial office, and provided for the title of his book). He argues that "kingship as a *principle* and as *value* is in the order of 'black and white'."[169] But he adds that on the inferior level it is "black or white" [*noir ou blanc*].[170] If the hierarchical (superior) level is characterized by both black and white, but black is superior, the (inferior) level of power is the one where *either black or white* is located, but white is regarded as superior. According to Tcherkézoff this is because on the *superior level* the king is a priest and thus a *servant* of the court, while on the *inferior* level he is properly speaking a king and thus a *master*.

This characterization fits Byzantium admirably: and I think Dagron realized this and used it as a paradigm for his book. For a Byzantine emperor was both a sole ruler [*autokrator*] and a servant of "the Emperor of emperors and Autocrat of the autocrats" [*vasileus vasileon kai autokrator autokratoron*], i.e. Christ Pantokrator. Tcherkézoff makes it quite clear that the nyamwezi king is made up of two "different royal images, a servant of 'black' and a master of 'white."[171] According to Tcherkézoff, if kingship is 'black and white' with a hierarchy of black > white on the plain of values, royal power takes place on the slope of 'white'."[172] But, as Tcherkézoff points out, "power is neither 'black' nor 'white'. All one can say is that it operates during

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[164] Ibid., 63.

[165] Ibid., 65.

[166] Ibid., 72.

[167] Ibid., 55: "Le 'cinq' est l'image du roi..."

[168] Ibid., 74-75.

[169] Ibid., 79.

[170] Ibid., 89.

[171] Ibid., 92.

[172] Ibid., 93.

the 'white' times."[173] He further explains that 'red' is the color of the morning sun which under different circumstances can either delay or speed up the coming of the rains. Thus 'red' mediates between the black and white. Power is principally constructed in the time dimension [*dimension temporelle*].[174] Hierarchy on this earth is predicated *by analogy* [*per analogiam*] from the heavenly hierarchy whose apex is Christ Pantokrator. The Byzantine emperor was the mediator between the heavenly and earthly spheres, he was the lynchpin between the Kingdom of Heaven and the universal empire symbolized by the power of Rome [*the oikoumene*]. As a servant of the Kingdom of Heaven his was an inferior status: it was symbolized by black, in Byzantium reserved for those servants of God, namely the monks, who sacrificed their own pursuit of pleasure for serving God on this earth. But in addition to being a servant the Byzantine emperor was also a priest, and as such he was allowed into the Holy of Holies, i.e. in the bema, the only layman thus privileged. And this priestly office was symbolized by white, the color of the priestly hierarchy. But the color that mediated between Heaven and Earth was red, the color of the Roman emperors.

Albrecht Berger points out that "Imperial ceremonies were of extreme importance for the Roman and Byzantine state ideology, since they functioned, in a certain sense, as a substitute for an inexistent constitution. Whenever the emperor appeared in public in the city, this was always staged in a ceremonial fashion, and mostly with great sumptuousness. Even the short way from the Great Palace to a service in Hagia Sophia was used to display an impressive ceremony. Such an event has been recorded in 912 by Harun ibn-Yahya, an Arab prisoner of war. At this time only the southern part of the Great Palace was still inhabited, and the usual way from there to Hagia Sophia did not lead through the slowly decaying parts in the north and the old imperial gate of Chalke, but through ha gate under the emperor's box into the Hippodrome and through it to the north."[175] After noting the men in their red, white, green, and blue vestments who are, as Berger rightly explains, representatives of the four circus factions, Yahya noticed that the emperor wore "two shoes, one of them black, the other red."[176] Berger follows Minorsky in 'correcting' Yahya by arguing that the man in question was not the emperor since he "had the right to wear two red boots", so both Berger and Minorsky argue, "it seems that he was represented on this occasion by a Caesar, a 'half-emperor', as he is called in an earlier parallel tradition of the same report", i.e.

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[173] Ibid., 96.

[174] Ibid., 98.

[175] Albrecht Berger, "Imperial and Ecclesiastical Processions in Constantinople" in Nevra Necipoğlu, ed., *Byzantine Constantinople: Monuments, Topography, and Every day Life* (Leiden, 2001), 77 citing P. Speck, *Kaiser Konstantin VI* (Munich, 1978), 89.

[176] Ibid., 78.

Marvazi's account found in Minorsky.[177] Minorsky quotes Marvazi's statement that "the distinctive sign of the king is that his shoes ared, while of those of *quaisar* (Caesar), who in rank is half-a-king, one is black and one is red."[178]

Though of a much later date (middle of the 14th century) the so-called Pseudo-Kodinos in his *Treatise on the Offices* gives the shoes of a Caesar [*kaisar*] as the same as that of a sebastokrator who wore *blue* shoes. So it could not have been a caesar unless the later higher title of a despot, created in the 12th century, appropriated the earlier symbols of a caesar. For it was a despot who wore shoes of two colors, violet and white [*okseos kai leukou*].[179] Verpeaux explains that *okseos* stood for one of the nuances of the purple, but adds that both Nicole[180] and Du Cange[181] translated *oksis* as *violet*. Unfortunately in her book on the Byzantine use of light and color Liz James does not list this term.[182] It is quite clear, nevertheless, that Jahya mistook violet for black being so similar. If this is indeed the case, then it is quite possible that originally the emperor himself wore one black and one red shoe, for, as Minorsky points out, "very curiously in Harun's account of the procession the king (*malik*) is said to wear one red and one black shoe."[183] Marvazi states that "their chief is he whom we call Qaysar" [*kaisar* in Greek, i.e. Caesar] "and they call him Basileus (*basilus*)."[184] Minorsky comments that "some confusion is created by the fact that the Islamic term *qaysar* is here applied to the emperor (*basileus*), whereas... elsewhere the emperor is called *malik* and *qaysar* is the name given to the 'half-a-king' caesar."[185] Of course, the emperor was called *car*, an abbreviation of *Caesar*, in all Slavic lands and languages, and *Kaiser* in German.

The binary structure does not end there, for the same Marvazi provides a short description of the hippodrome:

> By the king's castle there is a spacious square, one of the greatest of its kind, surrounded on all its sides by stone buildings...This square is in the middle of the town and on its western side, towards the Golden Gate, there are two gates, and they call this place the Hippodrome... One day before the day of assembly, a proclamation is made in the town that the Basileus intends to visit the

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177 Ibid., 78-79 citing in ft. 20 V. Minorsky, "Marvazi on the Byzantines" in *Mélanges Henri Grégoire*, Vol. II (Brussels, 1950), 459.

178 Ibid., 460, Arabic text on the opposite.

179 Pseudo-Kodinos, *Traité des offices* [trans. Jean Verpeaux] (Paris, 1976), 143-144.

180 J. Nicole, *Le Livre du Préfet ou l'Edit de l'empereur Léon le Sage sur les corporations de Constantinople* (Geneva, 1893, trans. into French, Geneva, 1894).

181 Du Cange, *Glossarium ad Scriptores mediae et infimae graecitatis* (1688).

182 Liz James, *Light and Colour in Byzantine Art* (Oxford, 1996).

183 Minorsky, op. cit., 467.

184 Ibid., 457.

185 Ibid., 464.

> Hippodrome. The people hasten thither for the spectacle and jostle in throngs and in the morning the king comes with his intimates and servants, all of them dressed in red. He sits on an eminence overlooking the place and there appears his wife called *dizbuna* with her servants and intimates, all of them dressed in green, and she sits in a place opposite the king.[186]

Minorsky comments that "possibly in the eyes of the author the colour *red* (more than the colour *blue*) contrasted with the colour *green*. In point of fact the red (*rusii*) sided with the green, and the white with the blue."[187] Marvazi was *correct* as far as the binary opposition of red and green was applied to the highest dignitaries, ranks, and officials of the empire. I think he correctly gave the Empress's common appellation *despoina*, i.e. mistress, in a garbled form (*dizbuna*).

What this means is that the binary structure of the hippodrome was mirrored by that of the Great Palace, i.e. its officials, to the point that Marvazi and Yahya could not fail to notice it. Marvazi correctly noted that the so-called *dizbuna* with her servants and intimates, all of them dressed in green...sits in a place *opposite the king*."[188] As Minorsky points out, Marvazi probably did not notice or was not struck by the presence of the Blues together with the Greens. But what we have (and this is a precious piece of information) is his remark that *all of the emperor's men wore red*.

If this is accepted, then we have the imposition of the triad on the dualist division of the factions and the people of Constantinople behind them: this is how the seating arrangement in the hippodrome reflected it. The seats were allocated to the Blues on the Emperor's *right* side, and to the Greens on the Emperor's *left* side. On the opposite side the two City factions of the Reds and the Whites sat *together* in the middle rows called *mesodemion*, literally the seats of the middle demes or factions.[189] When the Emperor appeared in the *kathisma* he blessed the people in the hippodrome *three times*: first the *combined* Reds and Whites (representing the City, i.e. Constantinople) sitting on the opposite stand ACROSS from him, second, the Blues sitting to HIS RIGHT, and third, the Greens sitting to HIS LEFT. Thus Cyril Mango's diagram makes perfect sense.

In his classic account of the hippodrome in Constantinople Gilbert Dagron noted the relevance of anthropological research on, in particular, African royalty, and its symbolic nature. Dagron argues that the *dualist* structure of the factions is based on the fact that the two minor factions are parts of the larger ones, i.e. the Whites belong to the Blues, and the Reds to the Greens, and that this means that we have the following system: 2 + 2 = 4. But when

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[186] Ibid., 461.

[187] Ibid., 468.

[188] Ibid., 461.

[189] Gilbert Dagron, *Constantinople imaginaire: Etudes sur le recueil des* Patria (Paris, 1984), 181, ft. 92.

the Emperor faces the factions he *transforms* this *dualist* structure into a *triad*: he acknowledges the *superior position of the two City factions*, the Whites and the Reds, by *combining them and thus making them equal if not superior in symbolic weight to the other two factions, and blessing them first. He then accords greater honor to the Blues by blessing them second, and finally the Greens who are blessed last.*[190]

The triple benediction of the Emperor *transforms* the *terrestrial* dualism into a *celestial* triad, symbolizing the Trinity. At this point let us note the colors: in Roublev's celebrated icon, that most Byzantine of all Russian representations of the Trinity, the colors reflect *accurately* the respective symbolism of the three Persons: blue is the color which the God the Father shares with the other two persons, but it his properly his own: the color of divinity; Red is the color of Jesus Christ as God the Son symbolizing His sacrifice, i.e., the shedding of his blood for the redemption of mankind; and Green is the color of God the Holy Spirit, i.e. vivifying Grace and his role in protecting and inspiriting His Church. Looking back at the factions we can see that the three colors correspond to the triad: Blue to the right and in the direction of Hagia Sophia, Red (White is subsumed in Red) standing for the military, and Green. And if my explanation of the third, i.e. Red turning point (which is specifically attested by Niketas Choniates) is correct, then this is reflected in the structure of the race course itself.

We must remember that after the closure of many other venues of public life, such as public baths, theatres etc., the hippodrome remained the most important venue in the City where the Emperor came face to face with the factions representing the population of Constantinople as a *constitutional* factor. The hippodrome, whose gates were open twenty-four hours, was *their venue*, not his. The seating of this venue symbolized the *dualist nature* of the City, both in terms of the major factions, the Blues and the Greens, and more specifically, their City sections, the Whites and the Reds. Though it was a dualist structure, it nevertheless represented the *three* constitutional factors: the two major factions, the Greens and the Blues taken as a unit, the Reds representing the Military, and the Whites, the Senate. As Dagron points out, this is symbolism pure and simple: "il s'agit de 'une symbolique sociale."[191] But constituted as such, the hippodrome was *the* place where the Emperor, whether yet to be crowned or already reigning, came face to face with those forces that were responsible for putting him there in the first place: the military, the Senate, and the people. The fourth factor, the Church, could not participate in such a wordly activity. As we saw in the Introduction, the constitution of Imperial Byzantium was a quaternary with the Emperor in the center as the fifth element. By transforming him into a triad through his blessing

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[190] Gilbert Dagron, *L'hippodrome de Constantinople: Jeux, people et politique* (Paris, 2011), 204-207.

[191] Dagron, *Constantinople imaginaire*, 181, ft. 92.

(being both the commander-in-chief *and* a priest), the Emperor transposed its earthly into a heavenly structure in which *he* stood as Christ's regent on earth symbolized by a hierarchical order, *taxis*, divinely instituted by Christ, realized first by Constantine the Great, and upheld by every one of his successors on the throne of Imperial Constantinople. But coming face to face with those who, directly or indirectly, had put him in such an exalted position, the Emperor was made to understand all too painfully how *dependent* he was for his continued rule on their support and acquiescence, and how precarious each step he took was. It is worth repeating Paul Heatherington's remark:

> [F]or all the God-given power with which the emperor was endowed, if by his actions he forfeited the basic goodwill and respect for the people, his fall could be more dramatic and complete than that of one of lesser rank. Indeed, of the eighty-eight Byzantine emperors, no fewer than twenty-nine died violent deaths. [T]he people of Constantinople... [a]lthough a huge and amorphous body, ...did collectively hold very great power, and on many occasions an emperor had to trim his policies to keep their favour.[192]

In the hippodrome the Emperor was forced to acknowledge that he could alienate the forces assembled there only at his own peril.

[192]Heatherington, *Byzantium*, 28, 30.



ILLUSTRATION TWO : CHRIST CROWNING CONSTANTINE PORPHYROGENNETOS

2

THE TOPOGRAPHY OF IMPERIAL CONSTANTINOPLE:

II. THE EMPEROR

BYZANTIUM was an empire from Constantine the Great to Constantine XI between 330 and 1453, but it was not like any other empire. It was THE Empire, the only Christian and Orthodox Empire in the world, a continuation of the Roman Empire which in the time of Augustus had, according to Christian apologians, been selected by God to receive his only Son, Jesus Christ, as the Savior of Mankind, and which was as such a divinely-chosen and –protected Empire, destined to endure until the Second Coming. While many states claimed to be divinely-protected (such as the Ottoman Empire in its phrase *memaliki mahrüse*) Byzantium, like the Chinese Empire, considered itself very special: it was the Middle Kingdom, surrounded on all sides by barbarians and unbelievers who did not belong to the civilized world [*oikoumene*] and who thus had to be converted to Jesus's message either by preaching, i.e. by persuasion or by extension of the empire through conquest, i.e. by force. Like Dante in medieval Florence, Byzantium saw itself as the Roman Empire chosen and set up by God to accomplish the greatest of all tasks: the salvation of mankind. It was the incarnation of that AMOR, that Divine Love, as Dante puts it, as the obverse of ROMA, i.e. the Roman Empire, whose force made the universe literally turn around.

That most Byzantine of Russian writers, Fedor Dostoevskii, put it best thus: "Every great people believes and must believe, if it wants to survive long, that in it and in it alone is contained the means to save the world; that it lives in order to stand at the head of the nations, to bring them all to communion with it and to lead them, in a harmonious choir, toward the ultimate goal for which they are destined."[1] This suits the Byzantine Empire perfectly: it believed that in it and in it alone was contained the means to man's salvation; that it endures in order to stand at the head of all nations, to bring them all to communion with Jesus Christ, and to lead them, in a harmonious choir, toward the ultimate goal for which they are destined, namely, the conversion, salvation and resurrection, at the Second Coming, of all mankind. The means to this glorious end were two: the right way of praising God or Orthodoxy in

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[1] F.M. Dostoevskii, *The Diary of a Writer* [trans. & annotated by Kenneth Lantz] (London, 1995), Vol. II, 826.

Greek, and the divinely-chosen institution of the empire embodied in the emperor whose position and power in this world were comparable, in many ways identical, to that of Christ as the Lord of the Universe [*pantokrator*] in the universe. The Byzantines believed wholeheartedly, to paraphrase Boniface VIII, *extra imperium nulla salus*, and that it was absolutely indispensable for the salvation of every human being to be subject ultimately to the Roman Emperor.

The Roman Emperor who made all of this possible was, of course, Constantine the Great. It has been a subject of many debates as to whether his conversion to Christianity was genuine or feigned, early or late, sincere or calculated, authentic or fake. It matters a lot for how Constantine the Great and his fateful decisions should be seen in the context of his time, but for the Byzantine Empire as such it did not matter. The fact that he did inaugurate a totally new era for the Roman Empire was all that mattered. As far as future Byzantium was concerned Constantine made three fateful decisions: he legalized, protected and then favored Christianity; second, he founded the new capital at the old place of Byzantium and named it after himself, the City of Constantine, Constantinople; and he determined the outcome and definition of the major Christian theological doctrine, the relationship between God and Jesus Christ, in the first of a long series of Trinitarian and Christological dogmas from his time to Manuel I Komnenos in the 12th century. These three decisions *defined* Byzantium: it was first and foremost and above all [*überhaupt*] a Christian Empire, and without Constantine's conversion there would have been none; second, the new empire was centered at Constantinople, The City, which not only replaced Rome as the new capital, but claimed all of the latter's privileges and standing in history as the New or Second Rome, better and greater than the first because it was Christian from its foundation; as such the Byzantines believed it to be the *only* center of the Christian *oikoumene*, thus taking the place of Jerusalem as the center of the world; like Beijing in modern China, Constantinople was the navel of the world. Like the Cosmic Mountain, the Center of the world has these three characteristics, according to Mircea Eliade:

1) The Sacred Mountain where heaven and earth meet—is situated at the center of the world.
2) Every temple or palace—and, by extension every sacred city or royal residence—is a Sacred Mountain, thus becoming a Center.
3) Being an *axus mundi*, the axis of the world, the sacred city or temple is regarded as the meeting point of heaven, earth and hell.[2]

From the very beginning the new city of Constantine was regarded as the navel, *omphalos* in Greek. It was a new Mount Tabor, in Palestine, for,

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[2] Mircea Eliade, *The Myth of the Eternal Return (Cosmos and History)* (London, 1954), 12.

according to Eliade, *tabbur* could mean navel. Thus Mount Gerizim, in the center of Palestine is called "navel of the earth" [*tabbur eres*]. In the Middle Ages Peter Comestor claimed that "there are those who say that the so-called 'Fountain of Jacob' (near Gerizim) is the navel of our inhabited earth. [*sunt qui dicunt locum illum esse umbilicum terrae nostrae habitabilis*]."[3]

The Center or navel of the world is not just that, it is the place where primordial Creation takes place, according to Eliade: "If the act of Creation realizes the passage from the nonmanifest to the manifest or, to speak cosmologically, from chaos to cosmos; if the Creation took place from the Center...all this beautifully illuminates for us the symbolism of sacred cities (centers of the world), the geomantic theories that govern the foundation of towns, the conceptions that justify the rites accompanying their building...:

1) Every creation repeats the pre-eminent cosmogonic act, the Creation of the world.
2) Consequently, whatever is founded has its foundation at the center of the world.[4]

Jacob Burckhardt put his finger on the whole question of the choice for the new capital:

> The entire question concerning the choice of place is made extremely difficult, however, by our uncertainty concerning Constantine's deepest political plans. [...] Geographical considerations, which are usually regarded as paramount, must not be overrated. Byzantium, it is true, lay much nearer the threatened frontiers than Rome; the Goths of the Danube and the Pontus and the Persians could be far better observed here...It is a question...whether the capital properly belonged in one of the most perilous regions of the Empire, where only a few decades before Gothic pirate fleets had plied their business. Now, it is true, the city was so fortified that for nine centuries the storms of invaders raged against walls in vain.
>
> But Byzantium has another geographic significance besides its impregnable military location. Let us recall the role which the so-called Illyrian trianble—that is, the land mass between the Black, Aegean, and Adriatic Seas—played in the third century. Its generals and soldiers, among them the family of Constantine himself, had saved and ruled the Empire. That triangle could not demand the imperial residence for itself, and so Constantinople is in the first instance the affirmation and the crowning honor of Illyricum. This interpretation is justified by a statement in Zonaras, who tells us that Constantine had originally thought of a city deep in the interior, namely, Sardica (modern Sofia, in

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[3] Ibid., 13.

[4] Ibid., 18.

> Bulgaria); only consideration for a privileged people within the Empire could have suggested such a choice.
>
> But Constantinople...was to be not merely the imperial residence but the expression of new conditions in the state, in religion, and in life. Its founder was doubtless perfectly conscious of this fact; he must needs choose a neutral location, unhampered by traditions. Deservedly or not, history has endowed his deed with the stamp of greatness; in the City of Constantine history developed a peculiar spirit compounded of Church and politics, and a separate category of culture, to wit *the Byzantine, which, whether a man love or hate it, must nevertheless be recognized as a world force*.[5] [my emphasis]

Byzantium was not, it must be pointed out, Constantine's first choice. He considered Sardica, i.e. Sofia, Salonica, and Chalcedon before settling on Ilium, the ancient site of Troy. The gates had already been built for the new capital when, according to a legend, "one night God appeared to him and admonished him to select another and thereupon he determined upon Byzantium."[6] Legend or not, it does not matter: Byzantium was in the eyes of all its inhabitants, from Constantine onwards, the divinely-chosen City: God Himself chose it for Constantine.

This was not an end for divine intervention in the cosmogonic act of Creation of the City. Constantine insisted on determining the positions of the encircling walls. According to Burckhardt, "a legend...may have a kernel of truth. His attendants found that he was walking in too wide a sweep, and one ventured the question, 'How much further, Sire?' Thereupon he replied, 'Until he who walks before me stops walking', as if he saw some superhuman being moving before him."[7] As Burckhardt remarks, it does not matter whether he believed he saw God or an angel walking in front of him, or whether he pretended to believe in such an apparition. The birth of Constantinople, the defining moment of its creation, when its walls were determined, was a divinely-instituted and –guided Cosmogonic act.

Later generations of Byzantines believed that Constantine had dedicated the City to Virgin Mary, the Mother of God [*Theotokos*]. This is most likely a later invention. He dedicated it to himself: a colossal statue of himself at the top of the pillar of Constantine, with his right hand outstretched as if to pointing to the extension of the new Christian Roman Empire from its new center, the City of Constantine. Having been regarded as a god before he converted he could hardly dispense with all aspects of ruler's divinity. And when he demanded that future emperors or caesars prostrate themselves before his statue in an Orientalized gesture of *proskinesis*, he surely demanded at least quasi-divine worship.

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[5] Jacob Burckhardt, *The Age of Constantine the Great* (Berkeley, 1983), 344-345.

[6] Ibid., 346-347.

[7] Ibid., 348.

Having founded the City Constantine wanted to give it the legitimacy of New Rome. He, therefore, brought from Rome four magistroi or magistri and eight patricians or patrikioi, patricii, for whom he built exactly the same houses as they had in Rome on beautiful locations.[8] Like Rome Constantinople was built on seven hills. It was not Constantine but his successor who built the Church of the Holy Apostles, but it was widely believed in Byzantine times that the founder himself built the first great basilica, the Church of the Holy Apostles, to serve as his mausoleum, his final resting place, like the one Diocletian built in Split. It was a basilica with five domes, replicated many times both in Constantinople itself and in the corners of the Empire, as San Marco in Venice. It was to be the burial ground of all the emperors until the Komneni. As *the* sacred space of Byzantium it was razed by Mehmed the Conqueror and on top of its ground he built the Mosque of the Conqueror [*Fetihiye Camii*].

The most important structure inside the new City was the Great Palace which went through many modifications and phases but which, together with Hagia Sophia and the Hippodrome, was the center of power in Byzantium. The Great Palace was a sacred space within the City walls which did not belong to the City proper, but was an enclosure, comparable to the Forbidden City in Beijing. All secular power centered on the Emperor was located within its walls: for it was separated from the rest of the City as such. If Hagia Sophia was the Abode of God inside the City, and the Hippodrome the place where the Emperor and his subjects met, the Great Palace belonged to the Emperor alone.

The Great Palace was the sacred place or *topos* where the Emperor held his court and ruled the rest of the Empire from his throne by analogy with Christ the Pantokrator, i.e. the ruler of the universe, and his Kingdom of Heaven. Despite his being no longer a god, as in pagan Roman times, the Emperor was considered like god, i.e. divine in addition to being fully human. It is indeed this position of sharing both divine and human aspects that made the Emperor the exact replica of Christ in Heaven—up to a point. For though having divine attributes of kingship the Emperor was just a mere servant if not a slave of the Emperor of Emperors and Lord of Lords in Byzantine formula [*vasileus ton vasileuonton kai kyrios ton kyrieuonton*]. The Byzantines saw the Emperor as the Vicar of Christ the Pantokrator, the Ruler of the Universe, on this earth, thus having all the divine attributes of power that Christ had in Heaven. Accordingly, the Emperor's court was an earthly replica of the Kingdom of Heaven in which the Emperor held the center-stage, just as did Christ in Heaven.

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[8] Albrecht Berger (trans. & ed.), *Accounts of Medieval Constantinople: The Patria* (Cambridge, Mass., 2013), Book I, 39.

Christian apologians provided the model for this Christomimetic aspect of imperial worship, above all Dionysius the Areopagite. We shall examine in detail his view of heavenly hierarchy in the chapter on Hagia Sophia, but here let us just point out that "the visible is truly the plain image of the invisible"[9] and that the structure of Heavenly Kingdom, with Christ at its center, is "hierarchically directed by the source of all perfection, because of its own capacity to be raised up directly to this source. It is filled with its due measure of utter purification, of infinite light, of complete perfection."[10] The circular motion is that of the "first rank of heavenly beings [who circle] in the immediate proximity to God. Simply and ceaselessy it dances around an eternal knowledge of him [God]. It is forever and totally thus, as befits angels. [...] It imitates, as far as possible, the beauty of God's condition and activity."[11] This divine hierarchy, according to Pseudo-Dionysius, "is a sacred order, a state of understanding and an activity approximating as closely as possible to the divine. [...]"[12]

> The goal of a hierarchy...is to enable beings to be as like as possible to God and to be at one with him. A hierarchy has God as its leader of all understanding and action. It is forever looking directly at the comeliness of God. A hierarchy bears in itself the mark of God. Hierarchy causes is members to be images of God in all respects, to be clear and spotless mirrors reflecting the glow of primordial light and indeed of God himself. It ensures that when its members have received this full and divine splendor they can then pass on this light generously and in accordance with God's will to beings further down the scale. If one talks then of hierarchy, what is meant is a certain perfect arrangement, an image of the beauty of God which sacredly works out the mysteries of its own enlightenment in the orders and levels of understanding of the hierarchy, and which is likened toward its own source as much as is permitted. Indeed for every member of the hierarchy, perfection consists in this, that it is uplifted to imitate God as far as possible and, more wonderful still, that it becomes what scripture calls "a fellow workman for God" and a reflection of the workings of God. Therefore...[w]hat we humans call the beatitude of God is something uncontaminated by dissimilarities. It is full of a continuous light and is perfect, indeed it lacks no perfection whatsoever. [...] *It is also the cause of every hierarchy and yet it surpasses by far every sacred thing.*[13]

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[9] *Pseudo-Dionysius: The Complete Works* [trans. Colm Luibheid](New York, 1987), 289 in his "Letter Ten to John the Evangelist" (supposedly the John of the Fourth Gospel) "on the island of Patmos".

[10] Ibid., "The Celestial Hierarchy", 165.

[11] Ibid., 165.

[12] Ibid., 153.

[13] Ibid., 153-154.

In his *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy* Pseudo-Dionysius makes it absolutely clear that the source of ali hierarchies is the divine prototype, but that the earthly ones are derived from and are modelled on it *because of Christ's Incarnation*: "The source of this hierarchy is the font of life..., the one cause of everything, namely, the Trinity...Now this blessed Deity which transcends everything and which is one and also triune has resolved, for reasons unclear to us but obvious to itself, to ensure the salvation of rational beings...This can only happen with the divinization of the saved. And divinisation consists of being as much as possible like and in union with God."[14] This reveals to us the profound theological underpinning of the Byzantine Empire: that it was structured according to, because of imitation of, the hierarchy of the Heavenly Kingdom.

Pseudo-Dionysius was the architect of the theory of nine ranks of angels, all hierarchically arranged, and all ranked *according to their proximity to Christ: the closer they circled, the greater in rank they were*. This is exactly how the Imperial court was fashioned in the Great Palace. From its beginning to its end, it was as closely as possible a replica of the higher court in Heaven.

The servants of God in Heaven were, of course, angels. The nine ranks of angels, according to Pseudo-Dionysius, were perfect servants for they had no other desire but to eternally see, serve and praise God. Their earthly counterpart in the Great Palace were the *eunuchs*. The parallel was obvious and inescapable: both were *sexless* beings whose only purpose was to serve their master. Eunuchs were a feature of Middle Eastern and even Greek societies long before Constantine and the Empire he founded, and in both the Arab and later in the Ottoman empire they achieved quite a prominence. But it can be argued that in Byzantium their role, if anything, was greater. For he eunuchs were specifically compared to angels, both because their castration ensured their sexless lives and preserved their early good looks (though both are highly debatable). They have been studied in detail by Kathryn M. Ringrose.

In her book, *The Perfect Servant*, she argues that "despite first impressions, eunuchs were not marginal to society in economic, spiritual, or political terms. Rather, they were marginal in the sense that they did not fit easily into a bipolar gender structure...They made their contemporaries uneasy because they were seen to move too readily between the worlds of men and women, between earthly sensuality and heavenly spirituality, between imperial presence and ordinary space, and between the church and the secular world. [...] Their ambiguity allowed them to be identified simultaneously with the grossest of sexual excess and with the angels."[15] I will not try to go through the history of eunuchs in either the wider Mediterranean world or in Byzantium, but merely to point out that, with the triumph of Christianity in both, the eu-

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[14] Ibid., "The Ecclesiastical Hierarchy", 198.

[15] Kathryn M. Ringrose, *The Perfect Servant: Eunuchs and the Social Construction of Gender in Byzantium* (Chicago, 2003), 7.

nuchs were seen very ambiguously: on one hand, "the eunuch was scorned as shameful, neither man nor woman, a monstrosity, an outsider, and pitifully womanlike", according to Ringrose.[16] Yet, because of the spread of monasticism and a tremendous prestige which the monks, and in particular, the hermits, enjoyed in Byzantium throughout its centuries, *celibacy* became almost a sacred state which, perforce, the eunuchs shared. The eunuchs could thus serve both the empire and the church, and were regularly compared with angels.

Unlike the angels eunuchs were seen ambivalently by others. They were both admired and loathed, both despised and feared. Their appearance was the object of both scorn and veneration: "The gait of eunuchs was criticized as similar to that of women. Compared with the controlled stiffness of a proper adult male, a eunuch's walk was considered to be rather slack and loose-limbed. Eunuchs are described (or accused) of holding their hands away from the body with palms lifted, in an 'unmasculine' manner."[17] And yet people often admired their youthful, 'angel-like' appearance: "A young eunuch...was the chamberlain of one of the nobles. His face was like a rose, the skin of his body white as snow, he was well shaped, fair-haired, possessing an unusual softness, and smelling of musk from afar."[18] Ringrose concludes that the eunuchs "represented a very special 'other'. They exhibited traits of both men and women. They were 'unnatural' (in the sense that they were artificially, culturally created); they existed outside of what was perceived to be the natural order of the biological world... [E]unuchs, because of their special gender status, were associated with preternatural realms. This made them fascinating, dangerous, and desirable in ways that are hard for the modern reader to grasp."[19] Ringrose states that "of all the situations wherein eunuchs were perceived as having readier access to spiritual matters than ordinary men, the most striking involve the perennial confusion between eunuchs and angels. André Grabar has suggested that the portraiture of the heavenly court is based on the portraiture of the imperial family."[20] This is also Cyril Mango's view: "[T]he Byzantines imagined God and the Heavenly Kingdom as a vastly enlarged replica of the imperial court at Constantinople. If questioned on this point, they would probably have expressed the relation in the reverse order by saying that the emperor's court was a diminished reflection of the heavenly court. Whichever of the two was the 'archetype' and whichever the copy, their mutual resemblance was taken for granted and it explains many manifes-

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[16] Ibid., 12.

[17] Ibid., 75.

[18] Ibid., 76 quoting from Nikephoros, *The Life of St. Andrew the Fool* [ed. and trans. Lennart Rydén](Uppsala, 1995), Vol. II, ch. 2, 28.

[19] Ibid., 83.

[20] Ibid., 143 referring to André Grabar, *Christian Iconography: A Study of the Origins* (Princeton, 1986), 79.

tations of Byzantine religiosity."[21] Ringrose combines Grabar's and Mango's views thus: "I would like to suggest that, in a reciprocal way, patterns of visualizing heaven became the model for the Byzantine imperial court, and that each image reinforced the other. This may give us at least part of an explanation for the associations between eunuchs and angels that we find throughout Byzantine sources."[22]

When an 11th-century man of letters, John Mavropous, was trying to gain access to the court of Michael IV (1034-1041), he wrote a poem in which he expressed his fear that he would be turned away at the gates of the Great Palace by the emperor's 'winged angels'.[23] Obviously, he was referring to the eunuchs. As Mango points out, "God's retinue consisted...of the angelic host which was...rigorously stratified and differentiated. The angels, infinite in number, constituted God's army or regulars, officers and generals; they also served as special emissaries...in addition to forming the heavenly *cubiculum* or body of chamberlains. On earth they performed various functions according to their rank: they guarded individuals, churches, altars, cities, even nations. [...] St Michael was the commander-in-chief, the *archistrategos*, of the celestial host..."[24] When Justinian was building Hagia Sophia a fourteen-year old son of the main architect was guarding the tools during the lunch break and was visited by "a eunuch clad in a white garment, beautiful of appearance, like one who had been sent from the palace." This turned out to be an angel sent by God to guard the church. He told the boy that he could take a break for he would guard the church in his absence. The boy reported this to Justinian who concluded that this eunuch was an angel, and that he should be trapped inside the church so that he should never cease guarding it. So the boy was sent into an honorable exile, and never returned. And the angel remained there until the end of time.[25] Perhaps this is the angel Mandelstam mentions in his poem, "Hagia Sophia" as "the full-voiced sobbing of the Seraphim".[26] Elsewhere, an angel is described as "a beautiful youth, wonderfully tall, his face shining brighter than the sun, clad in divine garments—white blended with gold from his neck down to his breast, and from his breast down to his hips and his knees shining like green grass and citron."[27] It should come as no surprise that in another source Archangel Michael appears "with a numerous

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[21] Cyril Mango, *Byzantium: The Empire of New Rome* (New York, 1980), 151.

[22] Ringrose, op.cit., 143.

[23] Mango, op. cit., 153.

[24] Ibid., 153-154.

[25] Ibid., 155 citing Th. Preger, ed., *Scriptores originum Constantinopolitanarum* (Leipzig, 1901), Vol. I, 86.

[26] Osip Mandelstam, *50 Poems* [trans. by Bernard Meares, with an introductory essay by Joseph Brodsky](New York, 1977), "Hagia Sophia", 33.

[27] Mango, op. cit., 155.

retinue, himself clad in the garments of a *praepositus*",[28] a eunuch of a high rank.

Thus, according to Mango, "all of this makes perfect sense. The angels, being sexless and acting as God's attendants, had their closest earthly analogy in the eunuchs of the imperial palace. The chief of the eunuchs was the *praepositus sacri cubiculi*, whose position was, therefore, analogous to that of St. Michael."[29]

Judith Herrin has argued that "eunuchs were central to the maintenance of the symbolic tradition of imperial power. They oversaw court dress and ritual... Consequently the imperial corps of eunuchs was crucial to the perpetuation of the ceremonial that helped stage imperial authority."[30] Though they were present within the Great Palace from its very beginning, by the Middle Byzantine period, i.e. between the 9th and 12th centuries, they had emerged as important holders of power in the Byzantine Empire. Though as early as in the time of Justinian, his other great general, Narses, was a eunuch, by the time of the Macedonian dynasty some of them became generals and admirals in addition to the important court offices they monopolized. Their roles were constantly increasing until the coming to power of the Komneni in 1081, so much so that the period between the death of Basil II the Bulgar-Slayer [*Bulgarooktonos*] and the accession of Alexios I Komnenos in 1081 can be seen as their apogee. Certain important offices were reserved for them until the 12th century and formed the basis of their power. Kathryn Ringrose summarizes them thus:

> They are arranged in ascending order of prestige. The lowest class of eunuch titles were held by the holders of the washing bowl, the *nipsistiarioi*. These eunuchs held the bowl when the emperor washed his hands, and, at banquets, they ceremonially purified the emperor's food with drops of water. Next came the *koubikoularioi*, who served the emperor in his private quarters and attended him on ceremonial occasions... The third title was that of *spatharokoubikoularioi* (*koubikoularioi* armed with swords). Their insignia was a sword that was awarded from the emperor's own hand. These eunuchs escorted the emperor on horseback on ceremonial occasions and had the right to be armed in the emperor's presence. The next title was that of *ostiarios*, a term that originally meant doorkeeper. The *ostiarios* ritually introduced individuals to the emperor as a part of the imperial ceremonial... Next came the *primikerios*, literally the first eunuch...Above him in rank was the *protospatharios* or commander of the eunuch *spatharioi* or spear-carriers... The most important eu-

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[28] Ibid., 155 quoting Pantoleon diaconus, *Miracula S. Michaelis* in F. Halkin, ed., *Inédits byzantins d'Ochrida, Candie et Moscou* (Brussels, 1963), 150.

[29] Ibid., 155.

[30] Ringrose, op.cit., 85 referring to Judith Herrin, *Women in Purple: Rulers of Medieval Byzantium* (London, 2001), 18.

> nuchs were the *praepositoi*. The *praepositos* was the chief of the corps of eunuch household servants. [...] There were also clearly functional offices reserved to eunuchs...These included, in ascending order, the *papiai*...The *papias* and his assistants functioned as guardians of the doorway and thus were eunuchs who controlled access to imperial space. This meant that they controlled the division between the emperor's sacred space and the city outside the palace doors. [...] Next in importance is the first dresser, the *protovestiarios*. He was in charge of the imperial wardrobe... The *protovestiarios* supervised the emperor's dresses, slept in the imperial chamber, carried the holy icons of Christ in religious processions, signalled the emperor's presence at ceremonies, gave the signal for the opening of the curtain that hid the emperor from view, and received the imperial vestments that the emperor was to wear. He was the only person allowed to touch the imperial vestments without permission. His sign of office was a golden baton.
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> The most important eunuch official became the *parakoimomenos*, "one who sleeps beside the bed." The lesser bedchamber attendants under his supervision were called the *koitonitai*... [The latter] terms seem to have replaced the terms *koubikoularios* and *praepositus sacri cubiculi*.[31]

The eunuchs not only served and guarded the emperor inside the Great Palace (and other ones as well); they surrounded him either on foot or on horseback when he ventured outside of it: "Thus, the emperor was always escorted by the *praepositus sacri cubiculi*, the eunuch *koubikoularioi*, and the *proto-spatharioi*, all of whom were eunuchs."[32] Furthermore, Ringrose explains that, even though non-eunuchs, known in Byzantium as 'bearded men' (meaning that they could grow a beard, something castrated eunuchs could not) sometimes escorted the emperor as well as part of the procession they "usually walked or rode outside the screen of eunuch escorts."[33] Thus, "when he ceremonially proceeded to the hippodrome the *spatharokandidatoi*, *spatharioi*, and *patrikioi* formed a line on one side of him; and the most important members of the *cubiculum* on the other...When the emperor processed to the Church of St. Mokios, he was initially accompanied by a variety of palace officials, but when he reached the church he was ringed by his *koubikoularioi*."[34] Ringrose cites Constantine Porphyro-gennetos on the arrangement of persons around the imperial throne: "[E]unuch *protospatharioi* stand behind the emperor near the throne... Behind the said *protospatharioi*... stand the non-eunuch *protospatharioi*... Likewise, too, the *spatharioi*, wearing their swords and carrying their shields and battle-axes, stand to either side of the

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[31] Ibid., 167-169.

[32] Ibid., 171.

[33] Ibid., 171.

[34] Ibid., 171.

spatharokandidatoi, and similarly City *spatharioi* also... The archons of the *koubouklеion* and patricians stand erect to either side of the barriers..."[35]

There is no question that only the eunuchs could see the emperor *naked*. Thus when the latter took his bath at Blachernae the eunuchs closed the doors with the saying: "Bearded men cannot enter here, only *koubikoularioi*."[36] Above all, what only the eunuchs could witness was the moment when the emperor put on or took off his crown, the highest symbol of his imperial power. Though the emperor wore a variety of headgear, there were, according to Constantine Porphyrogennetos, only four crowns: red, blue, white, and green. As we shall see, this is symbolically very important and is color-coded. As Ringrose points out, "whatever the time, place, or type of headgear, it is clear that no bearded man was allowed to see the emperor's crown actually being put on or taken off except at the imperial coronation. Thus, when the emperor went to the shrine of the Virgin of Pege, outside the City walls, he usually went by sea, disembarked, and then "the eunuchs of the *cubiculum*, wearing purple cloaks, stood in a circle. The emperor entered the center of the circle and was crowned by the chief eunuch. The text tells us specifically that this was 'because the emperor cannot be crowned before the faces of the bearded men'. The emperor was then robed and escorted to the baptistery of the church of the Virgin of Pege. He then passed through the church to the adjacent palace, where the chief eunuch removed the emperor's crown, again in a private *cubuculum*. The crown remained off, and later his nobles saw him without it. Bearded men could see the emperor with or without his crown; what they were not permitted to see was the transitional moment when the crown was actually taken off or placed on his head. This could only be witnessed by the eunuchs or the patriarch."[37] The only exception to this rule was the ceremony of the investiture of the head of the senate [*proedros*]. The latter was allowed to see when the emperor's crown was put on or taken off."[38] Ringrose argues that this had to do with the investiture of eunuch Basil Lekapenos with the position of the head of the Senate. She thinks that "there is really no other way to explain these rather singular... prerogatives normally granted to the head of the Senate."[39] I think there is.

Both the patriarch and the head of the Senate were the highest officials of the two institutions that *were involved in the legitimisation and crowning of an emperor*. In Byzantium there were four factors involved in imperial investiture: first, the election mostly by the army (meaning the army top brass, but with the ranks going along) but sometimes (in early Byzantium) by the Senate; the ratification of the election by the Senate; the acclamation of the peo-

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[35] BC I, 301-302.

[36] Ringrose, op. cit., 171 quoting BC II, ch. 12, 552.

[37] Ibid., 175 quoting BC I, ch. 18, 109.

[38] Ibid., 175 citing BC I, ch. 97.

[39] Ibid., 175.

ple of Constantinople either in the hippodrome or elsewhere; and the crowning by the patriarch, almost invariably in Hagia Sophia after Justinian. Of the four steps, the election and acclamation amounted to (as we shall see) the exercise of *power*, the ratification and crowning, the exercise of legitimation and sanctification. The two officials, the patriarch and the head of the Senate, were the highest representatives of the two institutions that bestowed upon the emperor the legitimacy which power alone (symbolized by the army and the people) could never do. They made an emperor out of a pretender or a contender. As such they could witness what all others, with the exception of the eunuchs, could not. Ringrose is right when she claims that "the rituals and regularities that surrounded the crown and its handling replicate the same hierarchies of space and contact that we saw in other aspects of court ceremonial. Commoners and bearded, male aristocrats could have nothing to do with the crown, which was closely linked to the imperial numen. This was a spiritually charged domain reserved to the court eunuchs and, at the highest level, to the patriarch."[40]

The latter was in charge of Hagia Sophia. Hagia Sophia was constructed in such a way that it was a quincunx: the colossal dome rests on four huge pillars. Paul the Silentiary's poem on Hagia Sophia celebrates Justinian who "on four arches... raised the fine-crested, deep-bosomed dome. You might says that the wandering eye reaches up to the great circle of heaven itself."[41] The inside of the gold-covered dome in Justinian's time was, says Paul, "like looking at the noonday sun in springtime."[42] Paul singles out light in Hagia Sophia both during day and night and Justinian himself is hailed as a light for east and west.[43] Especially at night, "the lights around the cornice of the 'deep-bosomed dome' are compared to a necklace of glowing rubies set in gold which a king might place around the neck of his cherished virgin daughter."[44] There is no question that this is reminiscent of Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite and Maximos the Confessor, for his hymn composed for the rebuilt dome in 562 hails the Great Church as a heaven on earth. As Macrides and Magdalino put it so beautifully, "it shows the great Byzantine optical illusion under construction. It shows the lengths to which Byzantines would go to blind the Evil Eye of Time, even when they half believed that the Second Coming was at hand."[45]

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[40] Ibid., 175-176.

[41] Ruth Macrides and Paul Magdalino, "The Architecture of Ekphrasis: Construction and Context of Paul the Silentiary's Poem on Hagia Sophia" in *Byzantine and Modern Green Studies* 12 (1988), 57.

[42] Ibid., 60.

[43] Ibid., 64.

[44] Ibid., 70.

[45] Ibid., 82.

Such a view of Byzantium rests on a certain analogy between Heaven and Earth which is best exemplified by Cosmas Indicopleustes. He claims that the Old Testament Tabernacle was an image of the universe: "The outer part of the Tabernacle stood for this lower earth, its inner part for heaven, and when the veil which separated the two was torn asunder when Christ died on the Cross, a passage was opened from earth to heaven."[46] The shape of the universe is thus the exact replica of the Tabernacle. But not only space is bipartite, so is time: before and after Incarnation of Christ. Cosmas dismissed the four kingdom theory found in Daniel as *passé*: the Roman, i.e. Byzantine Empire is not one of the four kingdom, i.e. the last, but totally new is thus eternal: it is "the minister of the dispensations of Christ" which "participates in the dignity of the empire of the Lord Christ".[47] The Roman, i.e. Byzantine Empire is now the kingship of Christ which will last until and beyond the last Judgment. According to Cosmas, "the Roman Empire thus stands at the climax where prophecy and history have joined...[T]herefore, nothing new can happen in history henceforth, and... there is no room for political protest... [T]o protest against the empire which is the minister of Christ's dispensations would be impious."[48] MaCormack concludes that "Byzantine political theory had no room for a fully worked out theory of resistance to political authority".[49]

They may not have had a theory of resistance to political authority but that does not mean that there was no resistance. It is worth recalling that Engels said that in the Middle Ages, and this includes Byzantium, all forms of social protest had of necessity to be ostensibly religious. Ostensibly: I do not agree. But he is right that any form of social protest had to be couched primarily if not exclusively in a religious garb, and in Byzantium that meant in theological terms. It is quite clear to me that Engels' saying is equally valid for the many disputes which necessarily involved social protest throughout Byzantine history. Barker is absolutely right when he claims that "the Byzantine Church as a Church [was] essentially and fundamentally... the Church of the people for the one compelling reason tht it was the great interest which lay at the heart of the people. They felt and thought, they debated and they disagreed, in terms of religion rather than in terms of politics: each of them was 'an ecclesiastical animal' [*zoon eklesiastikon*], as well as, and more than, 'the political animal' which Aristotle had defined the Greeks of his time as being..."[50]

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[46] Sabine MacCormack, "Christ and Empire, Time and Ceremonial in Sixth-Century Byzantium and Beyond" in *Byzantion* 52 (1982), 291 quoting from Cosmas Indicopleustes, *Christian Topography* [ed. W. Wolska-Conus in *Sources Chrétiennes* 141, 159, 197](Paris, 1968, 1970, 1973), II, 35, V, 24.

[47] Ibid., 295 quoting Cosmas, *Christian Topography*, II, 75.

[48] Ibid., 297.

[49] Ibid., 297 referring to E. Barker, *Social and Political Thought in Byzantium* (Oxford, 1957), Introduction.

[50] Barker, op.cit., 41.

In the medieval West the two powers of *regnum* and *sacerdotium* faced each other, and, as in the Investiture Controversy, fought each other. In Byzantium "the balance in favour of the Empire always tended to remain a characteristic of Byzantium... One reason... is the fact that the emperor was never conceived as a separate secular power divorced from the Church—a 'civil' power distinct and different from the spiritual: on the contrary he was regarded as in, and of, the Church, standing at its centre, a part (and indeed the heart) of its life. If the balance was in his favour, that was only because he was an officer in, and of, the Church, acting for the Church and within the Church, and not because he was the officer of a civil order outside and superior to the Church."[51] In other words, "it did not mean that the lay power, *as such*, was supreme in and over the Church. It meant that the emperor, as an *integral part* of the Church, had rights and duties in the Church...: he appointed the patriarchs; and he could—and on occasion did—remove [them]. [But] the emperor is bound and limited by the Church at the head of which he stands. He is bound by the holy Scriptures: he is bound by the rules and canons of the Seven Ecumenical Councils...Because he is *in* the Church, and *of* the Church, he is limited by its life and by the movement of its spirit. He has no infallibility."[52]

Precisely because he was *not* a Byzantine version of a pope he could not decide unilaterally on the matters that in terms of the Orthodox faith mattered most to ordinary Byzantines: the dogma. Thus during the Komneni (1081-1180), faced with a resurgent new dynasty that monopolized all powers within its extended clan, both Alexios I and Manuel I, his grandson, sought to impose their dominance over the Church by tackling and imposing their solutions to two religious movements which, in addition to involving the Christological dogma, represented genuine and widespread social protest. These were Bogomilism, a dualist heresy, and the Christological debate over the vexed question of Jesus's saying, "My Father is Greater than I". Both lay at the heart of the Christological dogma: the Bogomils denied that Jesus Christ assumed real, bodily Incarnation, and the opponents of Manuel's solution that in his physical nature only is Jesus inferior to God the Father, sought to deny Jesus as fully human. Both touched on the central pillar of Imperial authority: the Emperor as the Vicar of Christ who, like his heavenly prototype, had two natures, so to speak: that of the commander-in-chief of the faithful, and that of the divinely-instituted, divinely-protected, and divinely-guided king. Paraphrasing Boniface VIII it can be said that without the Emperor there could be no salvation, for the Roman, i.e. Byzantine Empire was divinely instituted for the purpose of carrying out Christ's economy of salvation. These two challenges in religious and dogmatic terms were not, as most Byzantinists inter-

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[51] Ibid., 37.

[52] Ibid., 8.

pret them, mere side-shows: they were central to the Komneni. And they struck at the very heart of their right to rule.

In this respect MacCormarck's observation hits the nail right on its head:

> The [Byzantine] empire is the minister of the dispensations of Christ, and it is eternal—in effect, it is already the kingdom of Christ. In this empire, the annual celebration of the resurrection of Christ and of the resurrection of prophets and patriarchs 'today' anticipates the last judgment, when all of us will rise. And the last judgement will bring about the final migration of all of us from this earth below to heaven above...[I]t is crucial to understand that the kingship of Christ is operative throughout this period, as is visibly expressed by the existence of the Byzantine empire, *which is itself the kingdom of Christ.*"[53]

This was heavily emphasized by the ritual acclamations at, for instance, the festival of Pentecost:

> [Our emperors], crowned by God, *the Trinity which has no beginning*, manifestly and undividedly consents to your coronation. For *on this day* the Father gave the Tables of the Law to Moses, the Son bestowed the Holy Spirit on the disciples, and the Holy Spirit himself is manifest under the form of tongues of fire. *Threefold* is your festival, and today the consubstantial [*homoousion*] *Trinity* which has crowned you is professed. God the Holy Spirit *today* was manifest in tongues of fire, and, having regarded you, Benefactors crowned by God, as worthy of the purple and crown, has judged by his divine counsel that you should rightly rule over the Romans.[54] [my emphasis]

When the Emperor got ready to go to the Great Church, he sat on his throne in the Chrysotriklinium which had the image of Christ the Pantokrator behind it, and there he received the *proskynesis* of the *praepositi* of the Great Place. As MacCormack points out, "[t]his ritual not only expressed the familiar hierarchy between Christ and emperor, but also the overlap in their dominion. As an acclamation for the imperial triumph expresses it: 'Son of God, rule with them'."[55] Like all the acclamations this was repeated *three times*, a clear allusion to the Trinity.

As Dean Miller points out, "the stance is *Christomimetic*, reflecting on earth the character—and within obvious limitations—the powers of the

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[53] MacCormack, op. cit., 301-302 citing P. Beskow, *Rex Gloriae. The Kingship of Christ in the Early Church* (Stockholm, 1962); F. Dvornik, *Early Christian and Byzantine Political Philosophy. Origins and Background*, Vol. II (Washington, 1966), 712-715.

[54] Ibid., 302-303 quoting BC I, 6.

[55] Ibid., 303 quoting BC II, 612.

Christ."[56] When the cheerleaders addressed the Emperor at the Great Clock as "thou born of a Virgin", as Miller explains, "[t]his is a metaphor, but very powerful metaphor. It goes beyond the figural identification of the king-emperor...; it goes beyond the orthodox theological implications of the iconic approximation or representation—it goes, one must say, into the zone of the forbidden. *Christomimesis* is one thing, but the ritual in question identifies the emperor as Christ. To do so is to put the human emperor into the category of divinity, and *this* perpetrates an anomaly of the highest order, the final anomaly beside which all others pale into insignificance. And we should note that we are here speaking of a Christian civilization which maintained...a strong bias toward monophysitism, toward the denial of the human in the *ousia* of Christ."[57] I share with Miller his belief that "monophysitism as a mental set or inclination, i.e. defined as a disinterest in the 'historical' Christ and as a suspicion of the possibility of 'bodying' the Divine, is clearly visible in the Byzantine thought-world. Iconoclasm was not an interruption or an aberration, but an intellectual position visible for a century-and-half; thereafter, a current running toward desubstantializing or 'debodying' is clearly seen in Byzantine mystical thought."[58]

At the very core of Byzantine Imperial ritual is the Byzantine perception that "the emperor as an absolute master of anomaly, [is] the possessor—in ritual—of a clearly indicated non-human potency. The theological application of Christomimesis can and does give way, or lead to, a terminal statement of the ritual reflex of absolute (and by definition anomalous) power: of Man become God."[59] Just as Jesus Christ has two natures, human and divine *without separation* so does the Emperor. His dual nature, so to speak, is, according to Mircea Eliade, both *religious* and *political*, i.e. that of the magician-king [*raj, rex*] and of the jurist-priest [*Brahman, flamen*]. In Indian religion Mitra is the essence of the brahmans, and Varuna is the essence of the rajanya or *kshatriya*:

> Mitra is the sovereign under his reasoning aspect, luminous, ordered, calm, benevolent, priestly; Varuna is the sovereign under his attacking aspect, dark, inspired, violent, terrible, warlike. Some of these expressions have been subjected to much commentary, in particular those that assimilatred "this world" to

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[56] Dean A. Miller, "The Emperor and Ritual: Magic and Harmony" in *Byzantine Studies/Etudes Byzantines* VI, 1-2 (1979), Special issue: Essays in Honor of Peter Charanis Offered by his Students on the Occasion of his Seventieth Birthday, 127.

[57] Ibid., 128.

[58] Ibid., 128, ft. 43.

[59] Ibid., 128.

> Mitra and "the other world" to Varuna...[...] Mitra as Brahman, Varuna as king...: we could hardly have wished for a more suggestive formula.[60]

Every Byzantinist knows that the title of the Byzantine emperors was *dual*: so and so (his first name) then EN CHRISTO THEO followed from the time of the Komneni onwards almost invariably as PISTOS BASILEUS KAI AUTOKRATOR ROMAION followed by the name of his family or clan (e.g. ho Komnenos). The very titulature stresses that the Emperor is faithful to Christ and thus (so to speak) *embedded in Christ* [*en Christo theo*]. The word 'pious' or 'faithful', PISTOS, goes together almost invariably with BASILEUS, not with AUTOKRATOR ROMAION. Thus, if we apply Dumézil's formula to the title of the Byzantine emperors, the epithet PISTOS with BASILEUS stands for the Varunal aspect, and AUTOKRATOR ROMAION, i.e. Emperor of the Romans, for Mithra's. Though Ostrogorsky has rejected the traditional argument that the Byzantine Emperor Heraclius assumed the new title of BASILEUS following the definitive defeat of Sassanid Persian Empire in 629 A.D., thus arrogating to himself the equivalent of the Persian title of The Great King with magical and priestly powers, not everybody has been convinced.[61] There is no question, however, that the title of BASILEUS which the ancient and Byzantine Greeks associated traditionally with The Great King of Persia [MEGAS BASILEUS] was the one that carried this Varunal aspect, not the other.

It is also clear that this Varunal aspect corresponds to the Emperor's Left Hand as opposed to his Mithral Right Hand. This is not something specific to Byzantium: as Tcherkézoff points out, this is a traditional division in African royalties. For instance, in Akuapem, a small Akan kingdom in south-eastern Ghana, Michelle Gilbert found out that the seating ceremony around the king [*Omanhene*] literally symbolizes this division between Varunal and Mithral aspects of kingship:

> Most Akuropon people rather simplistically categorise palace officials into three main groups, *Ankobea, Okoman* and *Akyaeme*; the relations between them and the king are represented spatially in the palace seating patterns. Those known as *Ankobea* ('they do not go anywhere') comprise trusted advisors and *powerful ritual specialists*; they are sons and grandsons of former kings and are closely and personally identified with the king and his ancestors. *They are seated to the left of the king*. Those known as *Okoman* ('defenders of the state') include the heads of the seven non-royal Asona lineages whose members originally came from Akyem Abuakwa as well as the *Kurontihene*, who is the head of the *Okoman*, the Senior Divisional Chief of the state and the regent when the king is absent from the capital; this group may be said to rep-

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[60] Georges Dumézil, *Mitra-Varuna: An Essay on Two Indo-European Representations of Sovereignty* (New York, 1988), 72-73.

[61] G. Ostrogorsky, *History of the Byzantine State* (New Brunswick, 1957), 95, n. 2.

> resent 'the state'. *Its members are seated to the right of the king. There is thus represented a dichotomy between the basically mystical or religious and the political realms:* the *Okoman* represent the concept of matriline (or political), the *Ankobea* that of patriline (of mystical); and the king refers to the *Ankobea* as his 'sons' and to the *Okoman* as his 'mothers' brothers'. [...] There are also less important officials, called *gyaasefo* ('people of the household'), who look after the king's physical body and the palace itself, and belong collectively to the Ankobea.[62]

The so-called *gyaasefo* would be the Ghanaian equivalent of the Byzantine corps of eunuchs analysed above. It should be pointed out that in this as in many other African kingdoms it was the matrilineal line that conferred power, for, it was the Queen Mother who was asked whom she favored as candidate. Though this was a custom, she consulted with other powerful women, the so-called eldest women of a 'house' or lineage.[63]

As Dean Miller emphasizes, "it is the King's Left Hand which is in... the zone of dark potentiality; ritual into the zone of controlled or harmonized force—exemplifying control, but still mysterious or concerned with mysteries, with the irrational and the miraculous. [...] So such great ritual statements and events as the imperial coronation necessarily draw on the symbols of both 'Hands': the extensive-aggressive symbols of Sword, Sceptre, Lance, and the elevated stance; the containing-incorporative symbols of Throne, Ring, Crown, Robe, and the seated posture."[64]

In the Great Church, the Abode of Christ the Pantokrator on this Earth, the mosaics are *in the reverse perspective: that means that what is to the left of the viewer is on the right of the central figure*. If we take the mosaic showing Christ with Emperor Constantine IX Monomachos and Empress Zoe, the former is on Christ's right side but a viewer's left, and Zoe is on Christ's left side and on a viewer's right—as it should be for the place of honor is on Christ's right and the Emperor is higher than the Empress. The titulature above Constantine IX is also adjusted to reflect the fact that his Left Hand is on the right and his Right Hand on the left: KONSTANTINOS EN HO CHRISTO TO THEO AUTOKRATOR PISTOS BASILEUS ROMAION. Since, as we know, this mosaic has been retouched to change the face of the Emperor, this may account for a strange order within the titulature: almost always the phrase EN HO CHRISTO THEO goes together with PISTOS BASILEUS, and AUTOKRATOR with ROMAION. The proper order is given in the scroll held

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62 Michelle Gilbert, "The Person of the King: Ritual and Power in a Ghanaian State" in David Cannadine and Simon Price, eds., *Rituals of Royalty: Power and Ceremonial in Traditional Societies* (Cambridge, 1987), 310-312.

63 Ibid., 313.

64 Miller, op.cit., 125.

by Empress Zoe: HO KONSTANTINOS EN CHRISTO TO THEO PISTOS BASILEUS ROMAION.

There is no such confusion in the fine mosaic showing the Virgin with child Jesus between John II Komnenos and his wife Eirene: the title above his head is adjusted to read: IOANNES EN CHRISTO TO THEO PISTOS BASILEUS PROPHYROGENNETOS KAI AUTOKRATOR ROMAION HO KOMNENOS. What is very revealing is that the part of the titulature is appropriately written downwards first to his left [his LEFT Hand]: BASILEUS PORPHYROGENNETOS following EN TO CHRISTO TO THEO PISTOS, and the rest of his title is to his right [his RIGHT hand]: KAI AUTOKRATOR ROMAION HO KOMNENOS. Again, it must be emphasized it is *the reverse perspective that holds, i.e. from the standpoint of the figures, not that of a viewer.* Thus the titulature is *reversed spatially* to show this for it winds from the top to the right (i.e. the Emperor's left) and then to the left (i.e. the Emperor's right) connected with the copula KAI [and] in order to read correctly as above. This is a telling proof that in Hagia Sophia's mosaics the reverse perspective holds.

It also holds in other monuments of Byzantium: thus in the ivory plaque showing the Emperor (most probably Constantine Porphyrogennetos) being crowned by Christ. In order to indicate the proper relationship between the Emperor and Christ the Pantokrator the latter is placed on a higher stool or platform and is visually taller while the former bows his head in deference. The titulature around the Emperor reads: above him: KONSTANTINOS EN THEO, then to the left, i.e. on his RIGHT side: AUTOKRATOR and then to the right, i.e. on his LEFT side: BASILEUS ROMAION. Again, the title had to be adjusted to show that AUTOKRATOR belongs to his RIGHT and BASILEUS to his LEFT Hand. This meant putting ROMAION (of the Romans) together with BASILEUS rather than AUTOKRATOR with which it usually goes together.

Nicolas Oikonomides has argued that the title: EN CHRISTO THEO AUTOKRATOR, PISTOS BASILEUS ROMAION is the proper one for it is confirmed by Zoe's scroll in the above-discussed mosaic in Hagia Sophia: KONSTANTINOS EN CHRISTO TO THEO PISTOS BASILEUS ROMAION. This seems to suggest that the title AUTOKRATOR [ROMAION] was somehow not used in the 11th century: "[T] scroll held by Zoe... bears an imperial signature in the form of an inscription IN RED, the appropriate colour in such cases. The formula used complies completely with the usage of the imperial chancery at that time: EN CHRISTO TO THEO PISTOS BASILEUS ROMAION; it is attested in the signature of John Tzimisces in 972, and again in that of Constantine Monomachos in 1052. *It was modified after that date by the introduction of the word* AUTOKRATOR; the new formula (BASILEUS AUTOKRATOR ROMAION) appears for the first time in 1057."[65] [my emphasis] This would

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[65] Nicolas Oikonomides, "The Mosaic Panel of Constantine IX and Zoe in Saint Sophia" *Revue des études Byzantines* 36 (1978), 223 [reprinted in his *Byzantium from the Ninth to the Fourth Crusade: Studies, Texts, Monuments*], citing F. Dölger, "Die Entwicklung der byzantinischen

place it at the beginning of the reign of Isaac Komnenos (1057-1059), the first of the clan of Komneni to hold Imperial power: "The Comneni came originally from Comne, near Hadrianople, and had estates in the Castamon district of Asia Minor. Isaac was the son of Manuel Eroticus, a distinguished prefect under Basil II. He had married the daughter of a king of Bulgaria and had a son who died young and a daughter who became a nun some time after 1057. Both Isaac and his brother John had already held high office."[66] When he came to the throne at the age of fifty he represented the triumph of the military aristocracy: "Essentially a soldier-emperor, he had little respect for courtiers."[67] The 'courtiers' are, of course, the civil aristocracy ensconced in Constantinople. It is thus entirely appropriate that he, as the epitome of the military aristocracy, would revive the use of the title AUTOKRATOR which was basically a *military* term equivalent to Latin *imperator*, i.e. 'the sole ruler'. Under the later Komneni (1081-1185) it was always a part of the Imperial title.

Yet one should not assume that the title AUTOKRATOR was either new, i.e. not used before 1057, which is patently wrong appearing as it does around Constantine Porphyro-gennetos' head in circa 944 (as explained above), or somehow being the younger of the two. For it was *demonstrably older*. As Constantin Zuckerman points out, in the Egyptian papyri dating from the reign of Heraclius, the title is always AUTOKRATOR, and the first that includes BASILEUS is in October or November of 641.[68] A Latin inscription from Algeria dated March 636, i.e. before Heraklios's adoption of the title BASILEUS calls him: ERACLI PISSIMI IMPERATORIS.[69] Zuckerman argues that the title BASILEUS was added in order to create a rank above AUGUSTUS which could now be given to junior or co-emperors as well.[70] During this period of the Late Roman/Early Byzantine Empire it was possible for more than one person to be titled AUTOKRATOR, and the Latin title of MAIOR IMPERATOR was invented to indicate the senior Emperor, as was the title of MEGAS BASILEUS [Great King] as found in, for instance, Constantine IV's letter to the pope of August 678 where he calls himself AUTOKRATOR... PISTOS MEGAS BASILEUS.[71] This title goes back to Heraklios: in the *Acts* of

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Kaisertitulatur und die Datierung von Kaiserdarstellungen in der byzantinischen Kleinkunst" in *Studies presented to D.M. Robinson* Vol. II (1953), 1000-1001 [also as F. Dölger, *Byzantinische Diplomatik* (Ettal, 1956), 147].

66 Michael Psellus, *Fourteen Byzantine Rulers* (Penguin, 1966), 276, ft. 3.

67 Ibid., 302, ft. 2.

68 Constantine Zuckerman, "On the Titles and Office of the Byzantine BASILEUS" in *Mélanges Cécile Morrisson* [Travaux et Mémoires 16] (2010), 866.

69 Ibid., 877.

70 Ibid., 877.

71 Ibid., 878.

the Lateran Council of 649 he is described as MEGAS BASILEUS.[72] Later, in the second half of the 7th century, the title of MEGAS BASILEUS was used sparingly and in the most solemn contexts: "In the singular, MEGAS BASILEUS meant 'the major Emperor' as early as the seventh century."[73] The term could be applied to more than one emperor if they were joint rulers.[74] Zuckerman points out that the title BASILEUS or even MEGAS BASILEUS which was "the key Roman term designating the bearer of sovereign power, *imperator*, survived to the end of the Byzantine Empire as the most essential imperial title, AUTOKRATOR."[75] Zuckerman argues, however, that it could be shared by more than one person, against Ostrogorsky and *i tutti quanti*.[76] That may be so, but it does not invalidate the thesis that of the two the title AUTOKRATOR [ROMAION] was *the older and more important.*

We should be reminded that when Constantinople was founded by Constantine the Great the latter's title was *imperator, not basileus,* and this title was rendered into Greek as *autokrator* followed by 'Romaion', i.e. the Emperor of the Romans. All subsequent Byzantine emperors were thus descendants of this 'Founding Father'. This is nothing new. As John Perry points out,

> The king was the embodiment of or the son of the First Ancestor-Founding King...This ancestral forebear was divine...and was the mediator of the vital principle, in keeping with the archaic view that life emerges out of death... *At the same time the sacral king held a special relation to the Sky God, whether of identity or of sonship by adoption, and was this god's special representative on earth. He then held the same relation to the society of men that this deity did to the company of the gods—the one was the reflected image of the other.* We may thus think of a typical dual potency of the sacral kingship, with a dual sonship, the one dark, mysterious and earthy, the other light, bright, and celestial—the chthonic derived from below, the spiritual from above.[77] [my emphasis]

Taking into account that, before converting to Christianity, Constantine himself was a god, this puts the Byzantine emperor in the same category. And Constantinople was, accordingly, absolutely indispensable for Constantine the Great and his successors on the throne of Byzantium to play such a role: "Typically, in the symbolic cosmos, the locus of the most supreme and

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[72] Ibid., 879.

[73] Ibid., 884.

[74] Ibid., 884.

[75] Ibid., 885.

[76] Ibid., 885.

[77] John Weir Perry, *Lord of the Four Quarters: The Mythology of Kingship* (New York, 1991), 18.

intense powerfulness was the axial center, and any figure or object occupying this position became thereby highly numinous and evoked feelings of awe and reverence. [...] The sacral kingship of archaic times was the expression of this dynamis of the center, and its various functions are to be most clearly understood in that light."[78] The Roman concept of the commander-in-chief was thus sacralized when Heraklios, having defeated the latest incarnation of the Great King, the Persian emperor, assumed the title of *basileus*.

It was this sacral aspect of kingship that the newly-assumed title was to fulfil: its purpose was not to command and coerce (this was the role of the AUTOKRATOR), but to renew and reinvigorate: "[W]here there is numen, there must be devices to keep it invigorated. It is part of the order of nature, after which the ways of kingship were patterned, that it waxes and wanes, that it is phasic in its depletions and repletions, its endings and new beginnings, in the cycles of the years. [...] Renewal of the year..., of the kingdom and is kingship, were all one, all enacted in the person of the king in combat with his enemies. This propensity of the archaic era to establish the entire world in the form of the myth led naturally...into symbolic activities of a ritual cast."[79] This means, according to Perry, that "[r]enewal...alongside that of the giving of order and the giving of life, was a major function of the center and a most essential rite of the kingship. Not only is it the point at which the practices of ceremonial and the telling of myth met each other most closely, but it also presents the key questions about the mythology of the Royal Father..."[80]

Now, we have understood why all subsequent Byzantine emperors who were in a position to do so, either because they could spare enough time from fighting the numerous enemies around them or were on the throne long enough to indulge in it, were absolutely obsessed with 'Imperial renewal'. Of course, it had everything to do with the low fortunes of the Byzantine Empire after the Arabs took two thirds of the Eastern Roman Empire away from it, but it went further and deeper than that: it meant that the only way to reverse the low fortunes of the empire was to literally 'renew' it through the recreation of the original cosmogonic act: in the case of Byzantium the foundation of the City. As Perry explains, "[t]he restoration or reinvigoration of the numen of the center, of the kingly potency, must involve a refreshing of his vital connection with its ancestral source. The most powerful means of effecting this were by calling to life the stupendous first times of the first beginnings, when those primordial great acts of the heroic first king gods were accomplished. These were re-enacted in dramatic form, yet not in the sense of being mimicked or represented as in a stage drama as we know it; they were being

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78 Ibid., 18-19.

79 Ibid., 20-21.

80 Ibid., 21.

re-created, called into being and lived again as they had been in the first of times."[81]

In the case of Byzantium Constantine the Great was such a 'Founding Father': "[H]e was the first Christian emperor; he founded Constantinople; he called and chaired the first ecumenical council of the church; he provided a paradigm of successful holy war; and he was written up as a model of Christian monarchy by a highly skilled publicist, Eusebius of Caesarea."[82] Though Constantine the Great was the first and certainly the greatest of these 'Founding Fathers' Justinian was next in importance: he built an unequalled Church, *the* Church (as Constantine had build *the* City) which was in subsequent centuries to be not only the place of imperial coronations, but the very Abode of God on Earth. That is why both Constantine, presenting a model of the City, and Justinian, presenting a model of his Church, are portrayed in the latter's Hagia Sophia. Subsequent emperors could imitate but not equal, much less surpass, such stupendous cosmogonic first acts—until the Komneni.

Though Alexios I started the trend it was his grandson Manuel (1143-1180) who was to try to equal if not surpass these stupendous acts of the 'Founding Fathers': he not only beautified the Palace of Blachernae, he also built a new mausoleum for himself and his clan: the Church of Christ the Pantokrator. That he saw himself as a direct descendant of these semi-divine emperors was made clear when he hosted King Amalric of Jerusalem and his entourage when they visited Constantinople in 1171. He showed them the relics of Christ's Passion, and then, in the words of William of Tyre, "there was no arcane and mystic object from the times of the blessed Augusti Constantine, Theodosius and Justinian lying in the sacred bedchamber, which was not familiarly revealed to them."[83]

Jerusalem, of course, was the place where not only Jesus Christ suffered, died, and rose from the dead, but where the Second Coming was to take place. The Byzantines never put that away from their minds: as Paul Magdalino points out, "there was an apocryphal belief that the Second Coming and Last Judgement would take place in Jerusalem. But what if Jerusalem had been superseded by Constantinople?"[84] For, if a popular (but apocryphal) belief was to be taken into account, at the Second Coming Christ would be wearing the Crown of Thorns which, however, was kept with other relics in

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[81] Ibid., 22.

[82] Paul Magdalino, "Introduction" to P. Magdalino, ed., *New Constantines: The Rhythm of Imperial Renewal in Byzantium, 4th-13th Centuries* (London, 1994), 3.

[83] Ibid., 5, quoting from William of Tyre, *Chronicon* XX.23, ed. by R.B.C. Huygens in *Corpus Christianorum, Continuatio medievalis* 63-63A (Turnholt, 1986), 944-945.

[84] Paul Magdalino, "The History of the Future and its Uses: Prophecy, Policy and Propaganda" in Roderick Beaton and Charlotte Roueché, eds., *The Making of Byzantine History: Studies Dedicated to Donald M. Nicol* (London, 1993), 12.

the Great Palace and was shown to the King of Jerusalem by Manuel I.[85] Presumably that would take Him to Constantinople to get it: but then what better abode for Him then Hagia Sophia could one imagine?

To Constantine the Great and Justinian Heraklios should be added as well: as Cyril Mango points out, he celebrated his great and final victory over his Persian opponent in a 'deliberately apocalyptic' style.[86] After capturing it from the Persians Heraklios returned the piece of the True Cross to Jerusalem. We cannot be certain whether he had heard of and been influenced by the Legend of the Last Roman Emperor who was supposed to lay down his crown just before the Second Coming.[87] Anyway, he did not lay down his crown, but, according to Magdalino, "he did the next best thing: he changed his imperial title from *autokrator* to *basileus*—the title by which not only the Persian king, but also the ancient kings of Israel, and Christ himself, were known. From 629 the Roman emperor signed himself 'faithful *basileus* in Christ.' The merger between the empire and the Kingdom of Heaven was now official."[88]

After Heraklios the Byzantine Empire went through a prolonged series of crises, from the loss of all its territory in Africa and the Near East south of the Taurus range (which meant the Palestine and Syria in particular), the invasions of the Balkans by the Slavs, the Iconoclastic Controversy etc. More than ever it needed an Imperial ideology which could be understood in cosmic terms: "The assimilation of the earthly empire to the Kingdom of Heaven. The Idea that the Roman Empire was a pale imitation of heaven, and that the heavenly order could be described in terms of imperial court procedure, was not new in the sixth century. It had been adumbrated in the 330s by Eusebius of Caesarea in his writings in praise of Constantine, and had been elaborated by later writers, notably St John Chrusostom. But in writings of the seventh century, the analogy appears in a much less qualified form: it is simply assumed that angels can be mistaken for eunuchs, that a saint will appear in the guise of an imperial dignitary..., that the liturgy is attended by angels keeping a roll-call."[89]

It was in the very late seventh century, following the Arab conquests of the whole Near East, that the most powerful and enduring of Byzantine apocalyptic prophecies, was written: The Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius:

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[85] Ibid., 12, ft. 35 citing P.E.D. Riant, *Exuviae sacrae Constantinopolitanae* (Geneva, 1877), I, 51.

[86] C. Mango, *Byzantium*, 205.

[87] Paul Alexander, *Byzantine Apocalyptic Tradition* (Berkeley, 1985), 62-64, n. 44.

[88] Magdalino in *The Making of Byzantine History*, 19 citing in ft. 66: I. Shahid, "The Iranian Factor in Byzantium during the Reign of Heraclius" DOP 26 (1972), 293-320, esp. 308, n. 56; idem, "Heraclius PISTOS EN CHRISTO BASILEUS" DOP 34-35 (1980-1981), 225-237; E. Chrysos, "The Title BASILEUS in Early Byzantine International Relations" DOP 32 (1978), 29-75 against I. Shahid, "On the Titulature of the Emperor Heraclius" *Byzantion* 51 (1981), 28-36.

[89] Ibid., 14.

"[I]t was composed in Syriac by an unknown author in response to the first Arab invasions and the establishment of the caliphate. Internal evidence has recently allowed scholars to fix the date of composition very close to 692. [...] Reinink refines this date by linking the focus in the *Apocalypse* on Jerusalem to the building of the Dome of the Rock on the Temple Mount by the caliph 'Abd al-Malik in 691. This construction was supposed to supplant the Christian presence in the Holy City by appropriating a shrine for Islam and to indicate the stability and permanence of Muslim rule. Considering the prominence in Pseudo-Methodius's composition of the themes of the immanent demise of Arab rule and the redemption of Jerusalem by the Roman emperor, he may well have written in response to the building of the Dome of The Rock and the message it was intended to convey. At any rate, the *Apocalypse* could not have been written later than 694, when its influence is first to be seen in other Syriac works."[90]

As Garstad points out, "[t]he influence of the *Apocalypse* of Pseudo-Methodius throughout the Christian world was immense....The Byzantine apocalyptic tradition was irrevocably transformed by Pseudo-Methodius, and practically all subsequent Greek apocalypses found their themes and motifs in this work."[91] The central motif of this work is the deliverance of Jerusalem from the Infidel, i.e. Muslim, hands into the Christian ones:

> And when the son of perdition will be revealed, the king of the Romans will go up to Golgotha, where the wood of the cross was fixed at the place in which Christ our God endured death. And the king of the Romans will take his wreath and place it on the cross and spread out his hands to heaven and deliver the kingdom of the Christians to God, even the Father.
>
> And the cross will be taken up to heaven along with the wreath of the king because the cross, on which Our Lord Jesus Christ was hanged for the sake of the common salvation of all, itself is destined to appear in front of him at his coming as a refutation of unbelievers.
>
> [...] And as soon as the cross is lifted up to heaven, the king of the Romans will surrender his spirit; then all rule and authority will be abolished.[92]

Garstad explains that "the crown of the Roman emperor is called a *stemma*, 'a wreath or chaplet', rather than a *stephanos*, the more common word for a crown and the one used throughout the Greek Testament. The Latin translation has *corona*, the simple word for a crown. The word choice is

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[90] *Apocalypse Pseudo-Methodius & An Alexandrian World Chronicle* [edited and translated by Benjamin Garstad](Cambridge, Mass., 2012), vii-viii citing G. Reinink, "Pseudo-Methodius: A Concept of History in Response to the Rise of Islam" in A. Cameron and L. Conrad, eds., *The Byzantine and Early Islamic Near East:* I. *Problems in the Literary Source Material* (Princeton, 1992), 178-186.

[91] Ibid., ix-x.

[92] Ibid., 65.

hard to explain. Perhaps the translator intended to distinguish the impermanent crown (*stemma*) of the ruler of the earthly kingdom from the incorruptible and unfading crown (*stephanos*) promised to the faithful in the New Testament (1st Corinthians 9:25, 1st Peter 5:4)."[93]

Obviously, the most important question left unanswered by Pseudo-Methodius (whoever he was) was the dating of the above event: and so speculation was rife throughout the so-called Middle Byzantine period, i.e. from the 7th to the 12th century. Patriarch Germanos, in his *On the Divine Liturgy*, offered his answer: "When the bishop blesses the people, it indicates the second coming of Christ in 6500 years, as shown by the fingers 'σφ'".[94] All sorts of projections were made during this period in order to account for the inevitable postponement of the Great Expectation: "The year 6500 came and went without major incident. This did not immediately put an end to hopes and fears of an imminent Second Coming."[95] For though the Byzantine Empire came perilously close to demise after Manzikert, it staged a remarkable recovery under Alexios I Komnenos (1081-1118). And Jerusalem itself was liberated in 1099:

> The emperor at the time, Alexios I Komnenos—who commissioned a mosaic of the Last Judgement for the imperial palace—was not slow to grasp the apocalyptic potential of these sensational events, for according to the historian Zonaras[96] he took seriously the prophecy of certain monks that he would not die before he had gone to Jerusalem, where he would lay down his crown. Zonaras does not attribute any eschatological significance to this prophecy, and modern historians have failed to comment on it, but the motif is easily recognizable from apocalyptic literature: Alexios was being cast in the role of the Last Emperor. Since Alexios' successors were determined to succeed where he had failed in his dealings with the crusader states, and since, moreover, the Last Emperor prophecy was an important part of the ideology of French and German monarchs who took the cross, we can assume that it was never far from the minds of Byzantine emperor and imperial propagandists throughout the twelfth century. In passing, we may recall that 1128 was one terminus suggested by Niketas the Paphlagonian, and we may note that when the emperor John II suffered his fatal hunting accident early in 1143, he was preparing not only to reconquer Antioch from the Latins but also to lead his army on to Jerusalem.[97]

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[93] Ibid., 343, ft. 74.

[94] St Germanus of Constantinople, *On Divine Liturgy* [the Greek text with translation, introduction and commentary by Paul Meyendorff] (Crestwood, 1984), 83.

[95] P. Magdalino, "The History of the Future...", 26.

[96] John Zonaras, *Epitomae historiarum* [ed. M. Pinder & Th. Büttner-Wobst](Bonn, 1897), Vol. III, 760.

[97] Magdalino, "The History of the Future...", 26-27.

John's son and successor, Manuel I (1143-1180) and his cousin Andronikos who succeeded him after having Manuel's son and successor, Alexios, murdered, both believed in the AIMA prophecy:

> The emperor Manuel I Komnenos (1143-1180) asked a certain fortune teller, how long the dynasty of Alexios I Komnenos (1081-1118) would reign. The prophetic response was the word αιμα (blood), the first three letters designating the first initials of the Komnenian emperors in the order of succession, namely, Alexios I, John II (1118-1143), Manuel I, the last alpha for the name of Manuel's future successor. The AIMA oracle probably appeared in the late 1150s or in the early 1160s. In 1169 Manuel named his only legitimate son Alexios. According to Niketas Choniates, the emperor chose this name not in honour of his celebrated ancestor Alexios I but following the AIMA sequence. Some time later (1171) the infant was designated his official heir.[98]

According to Peter Frankopan, it was Alexios I Komnenos who should be given credit for initiating the idea of the crusade to liberate Jerusalem: if he is right, it was Alexios's calls for help against the Seljuk Turks who had extended their sway over Anatolia to the very vicinity of Constantinople on the Asian side, to Nikomedia, that set in motion the First Crusade.[99] His call came at the time when Byzantium's fortune in Asia Minor reached its nadir in the mid-1090s. It was at this stage that Alexios was threatened with a conspiracy that involved both the closest members of his own family, and the leading figures in the Senate and the Army: led by Nikephoros Diogenes, the son of Romanos IV Diogenes, the Emperor defeated at Manzikert in 1071, and brought up by Alexios himself as his own son, Nikephoros Diogenes conspired against his benefactor:

> When he discovered exactly who had been implicated in the conspiracy, Alexios was dumbfounded. They included both the former empress Maria, ex-wife of Michael VII and Nikephoros III Botaneiates, who had once been so close to Alexios, and Michael Taronites, the husband of his sister Maria Komnene. Nikephoros had also won the support of leading members of the senate, senior army officers and influential aristocrats. They are not identified by name in the *Alexiad*, which provides the main account for this period...[but not] recording the embarrassing extent of the plot. Nevertheless, it is possible to establish some of the conspiracy's leading supporters. Chief amongst them was Alexios' brother Adrian.[100]

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[98] Rustam Shukurov, "AIMA: The Blood of the Grand Komnenoi" in *Byzantine and Medieval Greek Studies* 19 (1995), 161 citing Niketas Choniates, *Historia*, [ed. J.L. van Dieten], Vol. I (Berlin-New York, 1975), 169; English translation in H.J. Magoulias, *O City of Byzantium: Annals of Niketas Choniates* (Detroit, 1984), 96.

[99] Peter Frankopan, *The First Crusade: The Call from the East* (London, 2011), 7-8.

[100] Ibid., 81.

The papal response, according to one version of Urban's speech at Clermont in 1095, that of Guibert of Nogent, had apocalyptic overtones:

> For it is clear that Antichrist is to do battle not with the Jews, not with the Gentiles; but, according to the etymology of his name, He will attack Christians. And if Antichrist finds there no Christians (just as at present when scarcely any dwell there), no one will be there to oppose him, or whom he may rightly overcome. According to Daniel and Jerome, the interpreter of Daniel, he is to fix his tents on the Mount of Olives; and it is certain, for the apostle teaches it, that *he will sit at Jerusalem in the Temple of the Lord, as though he were God.* And according to the same prophet, he will first kill three kings of Egypt, Africa, and Ethiopia, without doubt for their Christian faith. This, indeed, could not at all be done unless Christianity was established where now is paganism. [...] And the man of sin, the son of perdition, will find some to oppose him. Behold, the Gospel cries out, 'Jerusalem shall be trodden down by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled. [...] 'The times of the Gentiles' are the fullness of time for those Gentiles who shall have entered secretly before Israel shall be saved. These times, most beloved brothers, will now, forsooth, be fulfilled, provided the might of the pagans be repulsed through you, with the co-operation of God. *With the end of the world already near*, even though the Gentiles fail to be converted to the Lord (since according to the apostle there must be a withdrawal from the faith), it is first necessary, according to the prophecy, that the Christian sway be renewed in those regions, either through you, or others, whom it shall please God to send *before the coming of Antichrist*, so that the head of all evil, who is to occupy there the throne of the kingdom, shall find some support of the faith to fight against him.[101] [my emphasis]

The prophecy that "'the son of perdition' will go to Jerusalem and sit in the temple of God, equal to God" is found in Pseudo-Methodius.[102]

As it turned out, Alexios I chose wisely not to act out the role of the Last Roman Emperor by not heading the crusader army through Asia Minor to Antioch and hence to Jerusalem. But he as well as his son Joannes and grandson Manuel would have known how transitory their hold on power was, and that sooner or later they would have to give the account of their deeds to the King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

Nothing emphasized this aspect of Imperial power better than the final act: the funeral and entombment of a deceased emperor:

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101 "The Speech of Urban: The Version of Guibert of Nogent" in Edward Peters, ed., *The First Crusade: The Chronicle of Fulcher of Chartres and Other Source Materials* (Philadelphia, 1971), 35-36.

102 *Apocalypse Pseudo-Methodius*, 67-69.

> The body goes out through the Kavallarios and the gold bier, called "the bier of grief", is placed in the Hall of the Nineteen Couches, and the said body lies there, crowned, in *divetesion* and gold chlamys and sandals. The guildsmen and the clergy from Hagia Sophia go in, and likewise the whole senate in *skaramangia*, and they sing in accordance with ritual. Then the *praipositos* signals to the master of ceremonies and he recites there, "Go out, emperor, the Emperor of Emperors and Lord of Lords [*basileus ton basileuonton kai kyrios ton kyrieuonton*] summons you." He recites this three times, and straighaway the body is taken up by the emperor's men, and they carry it back inside the Chalke and place it there and do what is usual. When the body is about to be taken away the *praipositos* signals to the master of ceremonies, and he begins to recite three times the, "Go out, emperor," and what follows. Then the body goes out from the Chalke carried by the imperial *protospatharoi* and goes along the Mese, and when they arrive at the place where it will be buried, the ritual of psalm-singing takes place and what is customary. Then the *praipositos* again signals to the master of ceremonies, and he makes the proclamation as follows: "Go in, emperor, the Emperor of Emperors and Lord of Lords summons you," three times. Then: "Take the imperial crown from your head," and immediately it is removed by the *praipositos* and a band of plain purple is set in place, and he is put in the tomb.[103]

As Dagron aptly comments, "[t]he crown was only on loan".[104]

Thus from their election to their death the emperors were fully conscious of not only Flavius Corippus's well-known saying: "Christ gave earthly lords power over all: He is omnipotent, and the earthly king is the image of the omnipotent"[105], but that at any moment, peacefully or violently, they might be summoned to the Heavenly Throne of the Almighty Lord, Christ the Pantokrator, the Ruler of the Universe. A final judgment on Imperial power was best summed up by Bury:

> The limitations tended to maintain the conservative character for which Byzantium is often reproached, and were in fact one of the results of that conservatism. They were efficacious, because the autocrat himself was usually imbued deeply with this conservative spirit, being a child of his age and civilisation; whilst the complex and elaborate machinery, furnishing the channels through which he had to act, was a powerful check on his freedom. It must, I think, be admitted that the autocracy of the Eastern Empire suited the given conditions, and probably worked better than any other system that could have been devised. The government was not arbitrary, and the evils from which the subjects

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[103] BC I, 275-276.

[104] G. Dagron, *Emperor and Priest*, 82.

[105] Flavius Cresconius Corippus, *In laudem Iustini Augusti minoris Libri IV* [ed. by Averil Cameron] (London, 1976, Book II, 428.

of the Empire suffered were due (apart from the calamities of war) to economic ignorance and bad finance, such as prevailed everywhere alike in the ancient and middle ages, and would have pressed as heavily under any other form of government. The freedom and absence of formality in the method of appointing the sovran [sic] made it possible to meet different situations in different ways; and if we examine the roll of Emperors from Constantine the Great in the fourth to Manuel Comnenus in the twelfth century, we must admit that the constitution secured, with a few dark but short intervals, succession of able and hard-working rulers such as cannot, I think, be paralleled in the annals of any other state during so long a period.[106]

[106] J.V. Bury, *A Supplement to the History of the Later Roman Empire (976-1057 A.D.): A Supplement Containing the Emperors from Basil II to Isaac Komnenos [A.D. 976-1057] And Other Essays on Byzantine History* (Chicago, 1974), 55-56.

3

THE GREAT CHURCH

HAGIA SOPHIA, the Church of Holy Wisdom or, as the Byzantines called it, the Great Church, was one of the seven wonders of the medieval world. There was nothing like it anywhere else. As a Spanish visitor visiting it when the Byzantine Empire was deep in its decline noted: "The church is so immense in size, and so wonderful are the sights to be seen there that, spending many hours of time it were impossible to make a complete examination. Even though the visitor should day by day return seeing all he could, yet always on the morrow there would be new sights to view."[1]

Before proceeding to analyze its religious symbolism, let us briefly describe it.

The Great Church was built on the sight occupied by a former Theodosian church of Hagia Sophia which was gutted by the rioters in the Nika Revolt of 532 and its remains razed by Emperor Justinian. In his book on *Edifices* Procopius narrates how:

> The Emperor Justinian built not long afterwards a church so finely shaped, that if anyone had enquired of the Christians before the burning, if it would be their wish that the church should be destroyed and one like this should take its place, showing them some sort of model of the building we now see, it seems to me that they would have prayed that they might see their church destroyed forthwith, in order that the building might be converted to its present form. At any rate the Emperor, disregarding all questions of expense, eagerly pressed on to begin the work of construction, and began to gather artisans from the whole world. And Anthemius of Tralles, the most learned man in the skilled craft which is known as the art building, not only of his contemporaries, but also when compared with those who had lived long before him, ministered to the Emperor's enthusiasm, duly regulating the tasks of the various artisans, and preparing in advance designs of the future construction; and associated with him was another master-builder, Isidorus of Miletus, a Milesian by birth, a man who was intelligent and worthy to assist the Emperor Justinian.[2]

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[1] R.G. Clavijo, *Embassy to Tamerlane* [trans. G. Le Strange] (London, 1928), 76 quoted by J. Harris, *Constantinople: Capital of Byzantium* (London, 2007), 14.

[2] Procopius, *Edifices* [trans. by H.B. Dewing & Glanville Downey] (Cambridge, Mass. 1950) quoted by John Freely & Ahmet S. Çakmak, *Byzantine Monuments of Istanbul* (Cambridge, 2004), 91.

From its very beginning the Great Church dominated the skyline of Constantinople as Procopius makes clear:

> So the church has become a spectacle of marvellous beauty, overwhelming to those who see it, but to those who know it by hearsay altogether incredible. For it soars to a height to match the sky, and as if surging up from amongst the other buildings it stands on high and looks down upon the remainder of the city, adorning it, because it is a part of it, but glorifying in its own beauty, because, though a part of the city and dominating it, it at the same time towers above it to such a height that the whole city is viewed from there as from a watch-tower. Both its breadth and its length have been so carefully proportioned, that it may not improperly be said to be exceedingly long and at the same time unusually broad. And it exults in an indescribable beauty. For it proudly reveals its mass and the harmony of its proportions, having neither any excess nor deficiency, since it is more pretentious than the buildings to which we are accustomed, and considerably more noble than buildings which are merely huge, and it abounds exceedingly in sunlight and the reflection of the sun's rays from the marble. Indeed one might say that its interior is not illuminated without by the sun, but that its radiance comes into being within it, such an abundance of light bathes this shrine.[3]

According to Richard Krautheimer, "the structural system of the Hagia Sophia is bold but simple. A huge rectangle was laid out, measuring 71 by 77 m. (230 by 250 ft), equalling roughly 225 by 240 Byzantine feet. Inside it, four huge piers, running north and south, rise at the corners of a square, 100 Byzantine feet on each side. Seventy feet from the ground, four arches swing across, those to the east and west free-standing, those north and south embedded in the side walls of the nave and hardly noticeable inside, but strongly projecting above the roof on the outside. Four pendentives, slightly irregular in shape, link the arches. From the apex of the arches and the four connecting pendentives rises the main dome, a shell scalloped by forty ribs and forty curved webs. It is buttressed on the outside by forty closely-spaced short ribs which frame small windows."[4] Procopius described the inner shape of the Great Church thus:

> And in the center of the church stand four man-made eminences which they call piers, two on the north side and two on the south, opposite and equal to each other, each pair having between them just four columns... From these spring four arches which rise over the four sides of a square, and their ends come together in pairs and are made fast to each other on top of these piers,

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[3] Ibid., 90.

[4] R. Krautheimer, *Early Christian and Byzantine Architecture* [rev. by R. Krautheimer and Slobodan Ćurčić], 206, 209.

> while the other portions rise and soar to an infinite height. And while two of the arches rise over empty air, those namely on the east and west sides, the other two have columns. Upon the crowns of the arches rests a circular structure, cylindrical in shape; it is through this that the light of day always first smiles. And since the arches where they are joined together are so constructed as to form a four-cornered plan, the stonework between the arches produces four triangles [the pendentives]. And while each supporting end of a triangle, having been contracted to a point by the coming together of each pair of arches, makes the lower point an acute angle, yet as the triangle rises and its width is extended by the intermediate surface, it ends in the segment of a circle which it support [i.e. at the cornice of the drum], and forms the remaining angles at that level. And upon this circles rests the huge spherical dome which makes the structure exceptionally beautiful. Yet it seems not to rest upon solid masonry, but to cover the space with its golden dome suspended from heaven.[5]

As one approaches the Great Church from the outside one notices the outer main entrance or narthex. There are two other narthexes. The central narthex in the southwest leads to the porch which is roofed. Above the south door of the narthex there is a mosaic showing Justinian on the left and Constantine on the right presenting models of the church and of the city respectively to the Virgin and Child on the throne. The inner narthex is a very impressive, huge corridor with its vaults and walls richly decorated. Its length is much greater than its width. This makes it look smaller, particularly because the doors inside it are so big. All the walls are of marble in various colors and decorated with crosses, stars and geometrical patterns. Light comes from windows of the outer narthex and falls on the triple sets of three doors. The three central doors leading into the interior of the Church are made up of the central door called the Imperial door and one on each side. Going through the Imperial door one enters the nave and is immediately struck by the richness of the interior which, however, is not immediately fully visible. As one walks through the Church one becomes more and more aware of the vastness of the structure until one stands in the middle and raises one's eyes upward. The central dome seems like a vision of enormous size:

> Only now does the full extent of the completely open central space become apparent. Its length from west to east is more than twice its width, even ignoring the narrower barrel-vaulted extensions between the secondary piers in front of the apse at the east and inside the Imperial door at the west. Its width, about 30 m, is about three times that of the typical Gothic cathedral nave. And the dome, rising to about 56 m above floor level, would overtop the tallest Gothic vault. Equally striking, if not more so, is the character of this space. The nearest comparable space at the time the church was built, and for long afterwards,

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[5] Procopius, *Edificies* quoted in *Byzantine Monuments of Istanbul*, 95.

> was that of the Pantheon. But that of Hagia Sophia is far more complex and subtle. The Pantheon interior is completely centralized—a hemispherical dome set on a cylindrical drum—and its enfolding boundaries are simply and clearly defined and immediately comprehensible. The interior of Hagia Sophia combines the centrality of a dome with the axiality typical of a normal basilica, and its true boundaries are elusive. They alternately advance and recede, sometimes solid though faced in insubstantial-looking marble, and sometimes no more than open screens. Never being fully visible at one time, they appear continuously to change as one moves around, and there are ever-changing partial glimpses of the peripheral spaces of aisles and galleries.[6]

This elusive vision is mostly due to two semidomes, aisles and galleries on the sides of the Church which captivate one's attention momentarily. But the real moment comes when one becomes aware of the central dome:

> The dome itself is hardly seen at first. But the eye is irresistibly drawn up to it by the brighter light coming through tis windows, and by the upward movement of semidomes, arches and pendentives. It appears surprisingly shallow for its great span. Ribs between the windows die out towards the crown, where another, even larger, circular plaque with Arabic inscription hides the central feature of the gold mosaic that covers the rest of the surface.[7]

Procopius who wrote (among other things) a book of buildings pointed out the uniqueness of the central dome: "Rising above this circle is an enormous spherical dome, which makes the building exceptionally beautiful. It seems not to be founded on solid masonry, but to be suspended from heaven *by that golden chain* and so to cover the space.[8] [my emphasis] The interior of the Great Church was richly decorated (this is an understatement) with the most precious marble of all kinds available in the entire empire, to be used particularly for the walls and pavements":

> ...the fresh green from Carystus, and many-coloured marble from the Phrygian range, in which a rosy blush mingles with white or shines bright with flowers of deep red and silver. There is a wealth of porphyry too, powdered with brilliant stars, that once weighed down the boats of the broad Nile. You may see an emerald green from Sparta, and the glittering marble with the undulating veins which the tool has worked from the deep bosom of the Iassian hills, showing slanting streaks of blood-red and livid white... Stone too there is that

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[6] R.J. Mainstone, *Hagia Sophia: Architecture, Structure and Liturgy of Justinian's Great Church* (Thames & Hudson, 1988), 37.

[7] Ibid., 37.

[8] Procopius, *The Buildings* [trans. H.B. Dewing & Glanville Downey] (Cambridge, Mass., 1940), 21.

> the Lybian sun, warming with his golden light, has nurtured from the dark clefts of the Moorish hills, of crocus colour sparkling like gold; and that product of the Celtic rags, a wealth of crystals, like milk splashed over a surface of shining black. There is the precious onyx, looking as if gold were glowing through it, and the marble that the land of Atrax yields... in parts a fresh green like the sea or emerald stone, or again like blue cornflowers in grass, with here and there a drift of fallen snow...[9]

These marbles of various colors are carefully inlaid in a preordained pattern:

> From the dark grey marble plaques of the pavement rise high grey marble pedestals carrying columns of green marble with large white veins—both on the ground floor and in the gallery arcades. Reddish porphyry columns stand in the conchs that flank apse and entrance. The piers and walls in the nave are covered by marble plaques in three zones: first, green marble slabs flanked by grey-yellowish plaques with purplish veins; above, porphyry slabs enclosed by dark bluish marble with yellow veins, finally, a third tier repeating the first. Slabs have been sliced in two and the sections fitted together so that the veins form a symmetrical pattern along a central axis.[10]

In the above description of the columns four colors are dominant: in addition to purple (which is a combination of red and deep blue), red, blue, and green. These colors are also represented in "the pavement toward the southeast of the nave...[I]t is chiefly composed of circles of granite, red and green porphyry, and verd [green] antique. According to Antony, archbishop of Novgorod, who visited Hagia Sophia in 1200, the emperor's throne stood on the square and was surrounded by a bronze enclosure."[11] The paving in the nave contains four bands of green Thessalian marble which, according to Pseudo-Codinus, represent the four rivers that flowed from paradise.[12] Why were these particular colors, purple, red, blue, and green singled out and privileged in Hagia Sophia and (as we shall see) elsewhere in Byzantium?

In his study of the symbolics of colors Pavel Florensky offers this interpretation of the above colors which, according to him, are those of light as:

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[9] J.J. Norwich, *Byzantium: The Early Centuries* (Penguin, 1990), 202 quoting Paul the Silentiary.

[10] Krautheimer, op. cit., 214.

[11] Freely & Çakmak, op. cit., 112. Antony's (i.e. Antonii's) account was published as *Puteshestvie novgorodskogo arkhiepiskopa Antoniia v Tsar'grad v kontse 12-go stoletiia* [edited with notes by F.A. Savvaitov (St. Petersburg, 1872). See Theofanis G. Stavrou & Peter R. Weisensel, *Russian Travellers to the Christian East from the Twelfth to the Twentieth Century* (Columbus, 1986), 5-8.

[12] G.P. Majeska, "Notes on the Archaeology of St. Sophia at Constantinople: The Green Marble Bands on the Floor" *DOP* 32 (1978), 299-308.

> The activity of the Divine, and Sophia as the ur-creature or the ur-mother. Only from the *correlation* of the two principles do we establish that Sophia is not light, but a passive supplement, while light is not Sophia, but illumines her. This correlation defines colouring. Contemplated as a work of divine creation, s the first clot of being, relatively independent of God as the darkness of nothingness moving forward to meet the light, i.e. contemplated as moving from God towards nothing, Sophia appears as *blue* or *violet*. Conversely, when contemplated as the result of divine creation, as inseparable from the divine light, as the foremost wave of divine energy, as the power of God moving to overcome darkness, i.e. when seen [moving] *from the world* towards God, Sophia appears as *pink* or *red*. She appears pink or red as God's image for his creature, as the manifestation of God on earth... Conversely, she is seen as blue or violet as the world soul, as the spiritual essence of the world, as a blue veil that curtains off nature...Finally, there is also a third metaphysical direction, neither towards nor away from the light, Sophia outside of her definition or self-definition towards God. It is that spiritual aspect of being, one might call it a *paradisaical* aspect, according to which there is as yet no knowledge of good and evil. There is not yet a direct aspiration either towards God or away from him, because these very orientations do not yet exist, neither the one nor the other, there is only movement around God, a free playing in the presence of God... And this is also Sophia, this aspect of Sophia appears golden-green and translucent emerald... The three principal aspects of the *Urkreatur* are defined by the three primary colours of the symbolics of colours, while the meaning of the others is established as being intermediary. But no matter how diverse, these colours speak of the relationship, however, different, of one and the same Sophia to one and the same divine Light... These are the principles on which the variety of colours depends, both here and there, always in perfect correlation to each other.[13]

At first it may seem strange to go a Russian, and the one who was influenced by great Symbolist poets, Aleksandr Blok and Andrei Belii [Bely].[14] But both pre-Muscovite and Muscovite Russia retained a greater fidelity to the Byzantine liturgical tradition and symbolics than any other place (including the Greek-speaking lands after the fall of Constantinople in 1453). This is

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[13] Pavel Florensky, "Celestial Signs: Reflections on the Symbolics of Colours" in N. Misler, ed., *Pavel Florensky: Beyond Vision—Essays on the Perception of Art* (London, 2002), 121-122. On Florensky see Robert Slesinski, *Pavel Florensky: A Metaphysics of Love* (Crestwood, 1984); Victor Bychkov, *The Aesthetic Face of Being: Art in the Theology of Pavel Florensky* (Crestwood, 1993); Fritz & Sigliende Mierau, eds., *Pawel Florensky. Leben und Denken*, 2 vols. (Ostfildern, 1995-1996); Konstantin Usupov & Svetlana Lukomskaia, eds., *P.A. Florensky: Pro et Contra. Lichnost' i tvorchestvo Pavla Florenskogo v otsenke russkih m'islitelei i issledovatelei. Antologia* (St. Petersburg, 1996); and Avril Pyman, *Pavel Florensky: A Quiet Genius: The Tragic and Extraordinary Life of Russia's Unknown da Vinci* (New York-London, 2010).

[14] Misler, *Pavel Florensky*, 117.

particularly true of icon painting which followed rigidly and canonically the Byzantine models. In default of any specific treatises on the symbolics of colors in the Great Church, we have to rely on what we can gather from the Russian, but still Byzantine, works, above all, Andrei Rublev's great icon, *The Trinity* [*Troitsa*]. Jean-Marie Floch worked on it for his entire life and his work was completed and published by Jérome Collin. Titled appropriately, *Lecture on the Trinity of Andrei Rublev*[15], it deals with the portrayal of the Trinity in Rublev's great icon. We cannot go into the whole discussion of the various semiotic codes found in this great Russian work of art, the apogee of medieval (i.e. Byzantine) Russian culture, but what is important is the treatment of colors in which the three persons of the Trinity are clothed. The color blue which, by the way is almost purple, is common to all three persons of the Trinity, and symbolizes the divine in all three of them. The color of iris is used for God the Father which contains red, symbolizing mystery, red for God the Son, i.e. Christ, symbolizing his sacrifice on the cross (i.e. blood), and green for God the Holy Ghost, symbolizing life.[16] Moreover, each of the three persons' heads is surrounded by a halo in white which does not correspond to anything in the material world.[17]

Let us now apply the above to the interior of the Great Church. Starting from the floor of the nave one notices four bands of green marble. These have been described as "the earth depicted...with 'green marble in the likeness ofrivers flowing into the sea'. There are four green rivers representing the rivers which flowed from paradise...; for he [Emperor Justinian] called the four borders of the church the four rivers which went out of paradise."[18] Anyone wanting to know the exact location of the four green marble bands on the floor of the nave should read carefully Majeska's article. What concerns us here is that they divided the nave into five areas clearly demarcated by these four lines. Of the four three are straight from one end of the gallery to the opposite one, while the fourth, closest to the holy sanctuary, is uneven as his diagram shows. There can be no doubt that green was chosen as the color not only because it is that of the rivers of paradise, but because it stands for the Holy Ghost who in turn stands for the Church, i.e. the Ecclesia, the gathering of the faithful or as the Russians call the cathedral to this day, *sobor*, 'gathering'. The four rivers of paradise are also symbolic of the four gospels, and there are four colored bands on the bishop's cloak also called rivers.[19] Further

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[15] J.-M. Floch & J. Collin, *Lecture de la Trinité d'Andrei Roublev* (Paris, 2009).

[16] Ibid., 56-57.

[17] Ibid., 25.

[18] Majeska, "Notes...", 299 quoting *Diegesis peri tes Agias Sofias* in *Scriptores originum constantinopolitanarum* I [ed. Th. Preger] (Leipzig, 1901), 107-108, 102-103; and Pseudo-Codinus, *De S. Sophia* [Bonn ed.] (1843), 144-145. Also see E. Kitzinger, "Studies on Late Antique and Early Byzantine Floor Mosaics. I. Mosaics at Nikopolis" *DOP* 6 (1951), 100-108.

[19] Majeska, op. cit., 303, n. 13.

symbolism is revealed by Theodore of Andida who states that "the strips of dark marble spaced at moderate intervals from each other like ruled lines on the floor of the Great Church are called rivers" because the bishop represents Christ at the Jordan River.[20] The fourth marble band was winding and, according to Majeska, "seems to confirm our interpretation of archaeological evidence, and suggests that the fourth river marked off an area of the nave restricted to the clergy."[21]

When the Patriarch took part in St. Sophia he entered the nave from the narthex through the Imperial door (just as the Emperor did), and upon reaching the first 'river' turned to venerate the mosaic of Christ which Majeska claims was that "of the Chalke Gate".[22] Majeska then rightly concludes that "like the lines on a stage prepared for ballet, the rivers served as indications of stopping places for the various magnificent processions which played such an important part in the ritual of the imperial cathedral...[T]he choreography of the various imperial-patriarchal services in the major church of the Eastern Christian capital demanded four 'stop markings' to guide the clergy in their ritual movements."[23]

I think Majeska is quite right, but I also think that the four lines demarcated not just the 'stop markings' to guide the clergy in their ritual movements, but above all as the demarcation points for the various groups taking place in these magnificent rituals. There is no problem with the fourth 'green river': "its location at the eastern end of the building immediately suggests that it marked off an area of the church normally restricted to the clergy. The marked off area would include not only the ambo and the bema, but also the area where Paulus Silentiarius tells us the choirs sang 'enfolded in the arms of the columns,' that is the eastern exedrae."[24] The area reserved for the clergy was separated from the rest of the nave not only by this rectangular fourth 'green river' but by twelve columns which formed the chancel barrier. The symbolism of these is obvious: the twelve apostles. But the opening to the bema is inlaid with *red* marble: "The rectangular pattern of red marble strips that... mark[ing] the central entrance of the sanctuary..."[25] What is the significance of this?

As one looks to the sanctuary to the right is the spot where the Emperor's throne stood. As Majeska points out, the strip of the fourth river which runs north-south "and is imbedded in the pavement of the Byzantine platform exactly on the east-west axis of the church. This strip is part of a Byzantine

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[20] Ibid., 303 quoting Theodore of Andida, *Commentario liturgica* in PG 140, col. 436.

[21] Ibid., 303.

[22] Ibid., 303 citing P. Majeska, "The Image of the Chalke Savior in St. Sophia" in *Byzantinoslavica* 32 (1971), 284-295.

[23] Ibid., 304.

[24] Ibid., 304 quoting Paul the Silentiary, "De S. Sophia", 237 lines 374-375.

[25] Ibid., 308.

pattern which includes similar porphyry strips running west at each end of the north-south strip; together they form three sides of a rectangle on the main longitudinal axis of the church...This pavement pattern, lying on the main axis of the church, with its eastern end close to the projected line of the western side of the chancel barrier, quite likely represents the central opening of the chancel barrier."[26] It is thus quite clear that as both emperor and high priest, the reigning ruler had the right and privilege of crossing the fourth 'green river' reserved otherwise exclusively for the clergy, and this was indicated appropriately by the red color, for the emperor was Christ's (i.e. the second person's of the Trinity) representative on earth, and red symbolized this relationship.

For it should be made clear that the Great Church was dedicated to the Holy Wisdom [*HAGIA SOPHIA*] and thus to Christ as Wisdom of God, for as St. Paul says Christ is the true "Power and Wisdom of God" [*Christon theou dinamin kai Theou sofian*][27] As John Meyendorff points out, "the identification of Wisdom with Christ, Son of God, is rooted in the basic Greek Christian understanding of the Trinity. The classical scheme developed by the Cappadocian fathers in the fourth century, which affirmed that God is one single—totally transcendent and unknowable—*essence* [*ousia*] and three distinguishable persons [*upostaseis*], implied an objective personalization of that which was seen, in ancient Greek philosophy, as an impersonal divine attribute. Thus the Jewish tendency to personalize Wisdom in Proverbs led directly to the doctrine of the Logos in the Prologue of the Gospel of John."[28]

The complex symbolism of the interior of the Great Church was influenced by the concept of *analogy*: the Great Church was modelled on Christ's Abode in Heaven. This powerful symbolism was based on the works of Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite, a fourth- of fifth-century writer whose treatise on *The Celestial Hierarchy* proved a model for such thinking in both the Byzantine Empire and in the medieval West where none other than Thomas Aquinas, according to Jaroslav Pelikan, quoted this writer's works no less than about 1,700 times![29] In his letter to John the Theologian, supposedly the same as the Evangelist, Dionysius lay down the cardinal principle of *mimesis*: "The visible is truly the plain image of the invisible."[30] Dionysius made it quite plain that this *mimesis* or imitation is what angels in their celestial hierarchy do as their activities of glorifying God: "It imitates, as far as possible,

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[26] Ibid., 305.

[27] I Cor. 1:24.

[28] J. Meyendorff, "Wisdom—Sophia: Contrasting Approaches to a Complex Theme" *DOP* 41 (1987), 392.

[29] J. Pelikan, "The Odyssey of Dionysian Spirituality" in *Pseudo-Dionysius: The Complete Works* [trans. by Colm Luibheid] (New York, 1987), 21.

[30] *Pseudo-Dionysius*, 289, Letter X.

the *beauty* of God's condition and activity."[31] In his work on *The Divine Names* Pseudo-Dionysius makes it clear that Beauty is the source which "gathers all into one... Beauty 'bids' all things to itself (whence it is called 'beauty') and gathers everything into itself. And they name it beautiful since it is the all-beautiful and the beautiful beyond all. [...] From this beauty comes the existence of everything, each being exhibiting its own way of beauty. For beauty is the cause of harmony, of sympathy, of community. Beauty unites all things and is the source of all things. It is the great creating cause which bestirs the world and holds all things in existence by the longing inside them to have beauty. And there it is ahead of all as Goal, as the Beloved, as the Cause toward which all things move, since it is the longing for beauty which actually brings them into being. *It is a model to which they conform.*"[32] [my emphasis]

According to this model Beauty is the chain of beings which share to a lesser or greater extent this all-embracing and all-powerful essence:

> The Beautiful is therefore the same as the Good, for everything looks to the Beautiful and the Good as the cause of being, and there is nothing in the world without a share of the Beautiful and the Good...This—the One, the Good, the Beautiful—is in its uniqueness the Cause of the multitudes of the good and the beautiful. From it derives the existence of everything as beings, what they have in common and what differentiates them, their identicalness and differences, their similarities and dissimilarities, their sharing of opposites, they way in which their ingredients maintain identity, the providence of the higher ranks of beings, the interrelationship of those of the rank, the return upward by those of lower status, the protecting and unchanged remaining and foundations of all things amid themselves. Hence, the interrelationship of all things in accordance with capacity. Hence, the harmony and the love which are formed between them but which do not obliterate identity. Hence, the innate togetherness of everything. Hence, too, the intermingling of everything, the persistence of things, the unceasing emergence of things.[33]

What is particularly important is that Beauty itself is *cause* of both *divine* and *terrestrial hierarchy*: "And so it is that all things must desire, must yearn for, must love, the Beautiful and the Good. *Because of it and for its sake, subordinate is returned to superior, equal keeps company with equal, superior turns providentially to subordinate*, each bestirs itself and all are stirred to do and to will whatever it is they do and will because of the yearning for the Beautiful and the Good."[34] He then goes on to posit what to every

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[31] Ibid., 165 in *The Celestial Hierarchy*, 212A.

[32] Ibid., 76-77 in *The Divine Names*, 701-704B.

[33] Ibid., 77-78 in *The Divine Names*, 704C.

[34] Ibid., 79 in *The Divine Names*, 708B.

Byzantine would have made sense immediately, what with so many Christological controversies that polarized the whole Byzantine Empire for centuries (and was to do so again under the Komneni: "The source of this hierarchy is the font of life, the being of goodness, the one cause of everything, namely, the Trinity...Now this blessed Deity which transcends everything and which is one and also triune has resolved, for reasons unclear to us but obvious to itself, to ensure the salvation of rational beings, both ourselves and those beings who are our superiors. This can only happen with the divinisation of the saved. *And divinisation consists of being as much as possible like and in union with God.*"[35] [my emphasis] Pseudo-Dionysius is quite adamant that "the reasons for such symbolism were revealed to the divine sacred-initiators [who] understood quite well that those empowered by God lay down sacred norms went about organizing the hierarchy into fixed and unconfused orders, giving each, as was due, its appropriate allotment."[36]

The sheer obsession with ritual which most outsiders to Byzantium see as one of its quintessential qualities, is thus nothing but a reflection of *the right way of praising God* [the meaning of *Orthodoxa*] but *in a hierarchical manner*: "...[I]ntelligent beings are granted the immutable *capacity to mold themselves completely on the form of the divine*...Indeed one must ceaselessly and prayerfully be raised up as much as one can toward it and strive always to be uplifted in a sacred fashion toward the ultimate perfection of the Deity. You can see that *the hierarchic rites are the precise images* of these realities."[37] [my emphasis] In his work, *The Celestial Hierarchy* Pseudo-Dionysius established the nine ranks of angels, namely, the seraphims, the cherubims, and the thrones in the first triad, dominions, powers, and authorities in the second, and principalities, archangels and angels in the third triad. The last-mentioned triad interacts closely with human beings: "The revealing ranks of principalities, archangels, and angels presides among themselves *over the human hierarchies* in order that the uplifting and return toward God, and the communion and union, might occur *according to proper order*, and indeed so that the procession might be benignly given by God *to all hierarchies and might arrive at each one in a shared way in sacred harmony.*"[38] [my emphasis] He goes so far as to argue that "it is the angels who take care of our own hierarchy, or so the Word of God tells. Michael is called the ruler of the Jewish people, and other angels are described as rulers of other nations..."[39]

When discussing the heavenly hierarchy Pseudo-Dionysius repeats his maxim that "the aim of every hierarchy is always to imitate God so as to take

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[35] Ibid., 198 in *The Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*, 373D.

[36] Ibid., 199 in *The Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*, 377A.

[37] Ibid., 207 in *The Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*, 401C.

[38] Ibid., 171 in *The Celestial Hierarchy*, 260B.

[39] Ibid., 171 in *The Celestial Hierarchy*, 260B.

on his form, that the task of every hierarchy is to receive and to pass on undiluted purification, the divine light, and the understanding which brings perfection."[40] He then explains fully why the concept of *hierarchy* is such an important one: "In my opinion a hierarchy is a sacred order, a state of understanding and an activity approximating as closely as possible to the divine. And it is uplifted to the imitation of God in proportion to the enlightenments divinely give to it. The beauty of God—so simple, so good, so much the source of perfection—is completely uncontaminated by *dissimilarity*. It reaches out to grant every being, according to merit, a share of light and then through a divine sacrament, in harmony and in peace, it bestows on each of those being perfected its own form. The goal of a hierarchy, then, is to *enable beings to be as like as possible to God and to be at one with him.* A hierarchy has God as its leader of all understanding and action. It is forever looking directly at the comeliness of God. A hierarchy bears in itself the mark of God. *Hierarchy causes its members to be images of God in all respects*, to be clear and spotless mirrors reflecting the glow of primordial light and indeed of God himself. It ensures that when its members have received this full and divine splendor they can then pass on this light generously and in accordance with God's will to beings further down the scale."[41]

It is unfortunate that Pseudo-Dionysius does not give us a complete range of colors in which the angels are clothed (presuming that they wear clothes), but there is a very important clue. Talking of the highest order, he has them ask the intermediate order the following question: "Why are your garments red?"[42] The translator points out that "Pseudo-Dionysius apparently sees Isaiah 63:1f as a conversation between Jesus and the highest angelic beings."[43] If the garments of the middle-ranked angels is *red* we also find out that the cherubims wear sapphire which is a deep blue color: "The one first initiated in this, after the cherubim, was the one whose loins were girt in sapphire and who wore a full-length cloak as a symbol of the hierarch."[44] So we can presume that the symbolism of colors already discussed is reflected in the divine hierarchy of angels, and this would explain why Rublev's Trinity which represents Godhead with three angels has these colors. The four cardinal colors: blue, red, green, and white (with the purple a combination of red and blue) are thus used by analogy in all aspects of Byzantine ritual, adminis-

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[40] Ibid., 162 in *The Celestial Hierarchy*, 208A.

[41] Ibid., 153-154 in *The Celestial Hierarchy*, 164D, 165A. For a discussion of this notion of hierarchy see R. Roques, *L'Univers Dionysien, Structure hiérarchique du monde selon pseudo-Denys* (Paris, 1954).

[42] Ibid., 164 in *The Celestial Hierarchy*, 209C quoting Is. 63:2.

[43] Ibid., 164 f. 78.

[44] Ibid., 169 in *The Celestial Hierarchy*, 241B referring to Ez. 9:2. The *Jerusalem Bible* says: "In the middle of them was a man in white, with a scribe's ink horn in his belt." *The Jerusalem Bible* (London, 1966), 1369.

trative and military apparel. They are also the colors of the *deme*, of the circus factions which we examined in the first chapter.

These four cardinal colors were also displayed in the Imperial ceremony which entailed the Emperor's procession from the Great Palace to the Great Church. One witness of such a ceremony was Harun ibn-Yahya, an Arab prisoner of war, whorecorded it in 912. Though the numbers of participants might have been exaggerated, the main point is not:

> The Emperor commands that on his way from the Gate of the Palace to the Church for the common people, which is in the middle of the city, be spread mats and upon them there be strewn aromatic plants and green foliage, and that on the right and left of his passage the walls be adorned with brocade. Then he is preceded by 10,000 elders *wearing clothes of red brocade*; their hair reaches their shoulders, and they wear no upper-cloak. Then behind them come 10,000 young men *wearing clothes of white brocade*. All go on foot. Then come 10,000 boys *wearing clothes of green brocade*. Then come 10,000 servants *wearing clothes of brocade of the color of the sky* [=blue]; in their hands they hold axes covered with gold.[45] [my emphasis]

The four cardinal colors were also worn by both the administrative and military personnel, including the Senate, and we have pictorial representations of them. Since Byzantium was such a conservative state and society, tradition in apparel was preserved until the Palaeologan times. Thus the members of the Senate surrounding Justinian in the mosaic on the walls of San Vitale in Ravenna wear white with a purple band. The top courtiers, presumably belonging to the Imperial bureaucracy, in the potrayal of Nikephoros III Botaneiates on the throne wear red cloaks over blue dresses. And we have the testimony of another Arab observer, Marwazi, that the courtiers surrounding the Emperor when attending the games in the Hippodrome were: "all of them dressed in red" while those surrounding the Empress "all of them dressed in green".[46] We know that a strategos, i.e. a military commander whether of an army or a *theme* wears "a true-purple *sagion*" which is explained as "the deep-red *sagion*"[47]. Finally, it should be pointed out that the Emperor wore red shoes. Some sources describe these shoes as *purple* but they are not: as

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[45] Albrecht Berger, "Imperial and Ecclesiastical Processions in Constantinople" in Nevra Necipoglu, ed., *Byzantine Constantinople: Monuments, Topography and Everyday Life* (Leyden, 2001), 77-78 translating from A. Vasiliev, "Harun ibn-Yahya and his Description of Constantinople" in *Seminarium Kondakovianum* 5 (1932), 158.

[46] V. Minorsky, "Marvazi on the Byzantines" in *Annuaire de l'Institut de philologie et d'histoire orientales et slaves* X [*Mélanges Henri Grégoire* II] (Brussels, 1950), 461 reprinted in V. Minorsky, *Medieval Iran and its Neighbours* [Variourum Reprints] (London, 1982).

[47] BC 242, 243.

Constantine Porphyrogennetos makes clear they were "the red, that is, the scarlet shoes" [*upodemata enallaxas rousea, etoi kokkina*].[48]

A major portion of Constantine Porphyrogennetos's work, *The Book of Ceremonies*, deals with the various Imperial processions to the Great Church. Gilbert Dagron points out that "it was not...by chance that Constantine Porphyrogenitus put first among all the court ceremonies the one which solemnly conducted the emperor to St. Sophia and then back to his palace after the service."[49] The Imperial company is made up of the emperor, co-emperor or junior emperor (if there is one), and the empress (included for some occasions), surrounded by his bodyguard, and then followed by "the *magistroi*, proconsuls, patricians, *strategoi*, holders of high office and frontier commanders..."[50] They all go through the various halls of the Great Palace, including the Hall of the Exkoubitoi where they are greeted by the *demokrates*, i.e. the head of the Blues who is the *domestikos* of the *scholai*, along with the Peratic deme of the Blues. After the next Hall of the Scholai they go to the Church of the Holy Apostles where they are greeted by the *demokrates* of the Greens. At the door of the Scholai which leads to Chalke, the Great Door, they are greeted by the *demokrates* of the Blues. Outside the Chalke the demarch of the Blues with the White deme receives the company: "The fifth reception takes place in front of the great gate which leads into the Augoustation, and the demarch of the Greens, along with the Red deme, receives them there...After this a sixth reception takes place at the Horologion of Hagia Sophia, and there, too, the demarch of the Blues with the White deme receives them...From there the rulers go in through the Beautiful Door, and their crowns are removed... The patriarch waits at the door of the narthex with his customary support staff and retinue, and after the rulers' crowns have been removed they go in to the patriarch. Firstly they make obeisance before the holy Gospels held by the archdeacon, and then they greet the patriarch and kiss him, and they go away up to the imperial doors, and there with triple obeisance with candles they give thanks to God...The *magistroi* and proconsuls and the rest of the senators, along with the emperor's men, also stand on the right-hand of the church in their particular places, and the rulers go through there."[51]

In both the Great Palace and in the Hippodrome the Emperor *was* the center, but in the House of God, in the Great Church, Hagia Sophia, he was not. His position inside the Great Church was far from peripheral or marginal, but from the moment he stepped into the narthex he was made to feel inferior to "the King of Kings and Lord of Lords", i.e. Christ the Pantokrator. First, his power, i.e. military power, was taken away from him: his armed body-

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[48] BC 434.

[49] G. Dagron, *Emperor and Priest: The Imperial Office in Byzantium* (Cambridge, 2003), 84.

[50] BC, 10.

[51] BC, 14-15.

guard had to wait outside the Bronze doors, and he was accompanied by an unarmed retinue. Second, he and his wife and/or co-emperors or junior emperors, the so-called princes, had to take off their crowns and go into the Great Church without the foremost symbol of their imperial dignity. Third, the real master of ceremony in the Great Church was the Patriarch and his staff, not the Emperor or his retinue: the latter were guests so to speak. Again, Marwazi noticed this: "And over ali the Rum is a man called Patriarch [*batirirkh*] who is the Lord of the religion. The king exalts him and humiliates himself before him and does not oppose him in any of his affairs.... When he calls on the king, the latter rises for him from his seat and sits below him..."[52] As we have seen, Constantine Porphyrogennetos does not go so far, but there is no question that, at least inside the Great Church, the boss was the Patriarch, not the Emperor.

At this point we have to deal with the positioning of the Imperial company in the nave of the Great Church. This is a very tricky question, but I think those bands of green marble on the floor can be of help. First of all, we know that the Patriarch and the clergy stand in the area around the solea and ambo and do not cross initially the fourth, rectangular green line. The Emperor, his bodyguard (without their weapons which they left in the narthex at the point of entering the Church), and his closest men would be in the area between the fourth and the third line where later stood the Imperial throne on the southwest side. We can only speculate but since the senate is mentioned before the military commanders [*strategoi*] it can be assumed that they would occupy the space on the right hand side, as would the military. Constantine Porphyrogennetos specifies that the Imperial dignitaries, both civil and military, stand on the right-hand side while the banners and tablets stands on either side of the solea both right and left.

The interaction between the clergy led by the Patriarch and the Imperial company led by the Emperor was the very visual representation of the *harmonia*, of the coming together or concordance of the ecclesiastical and secular powers:

> This ceremonial is closely linked to the exalted place which sixth-century thought assigned on one hand to the clergy, on the other to the Emperor. The clergy—so say the writings of the Pseudo-Areopagite about 500—reflects the nine celestial hierarchies of the angels; indeed, the hierarch, that is the patriarch, is actually close to the angels. The visible ceremonies he performs with the assistance of the clergy are intended to evoke the image of the invisible world which centres around the divinity. Similarly, the Emperor...had his assigned place in the celestial hierarchy as mirrored on Earth. Since Constantine's time he had been considered equal to the apostles, and perhaps more than equal. Certainly in the tenth century he acted the part of Christ on solemn

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[52] Minorsky, op. cit., 458.

> occasions—breaking and blessing the bread and raising the cup of wine to his lips after state dinners; swathed in white bands as Christ resurrected and surrounded by twelve apostles on Easter Sunday. And if the patriarch reflected the religious aspects of the Godhead, the Emperor mirrored the secular aspects, power and justice. The interaction of Emperor and priesthood was essential for establishing and maintaining a Christian Empire, and their meeting under the great dome of the H. Sophia becomes a symbol of the interaction. Both the ecclesiastical and secular hierarchies were permeated by the light of the Divinity which emanated from the centre of heaven and spread to the angels, patriarch, clergy, and Emperor. Thus in the H. Sophia the spatial shapes, the light, and the colours all emanate from the centre dome. The ordinary people in the aisles and galleries remained hidden in the shadows. Only from afar were they allowed to see the light, the colours, and the glory that streamed from the centre, the seat of the Godhead.[53]

Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite (whoever he was) put his indelible stamp on all the Byzantine (and medieval Western) speculations about the angels by providing the celestial hierarchy with nine orders in three groups: in the first group are the thrones, the cherubim and the seraphim: the latter possess many eyes (Ez 1:18) and many wings (six in Is 6:2 and four in Ez 1:6). In the second are the so-called 'authorities', 'dominions' and 'powers'. In the third, are angels, archangels, and principalities.[54] Such a tripartite division is obviously Trinitarian. It is represented graphically in a most beautiful form in the outer container of a tenth-century reliquary of the true cross, called a *staurothekos*. It was made for a *proedros* Basil who was exiled in 985 and his possessions were confiscated. It was taken from Constantinople in 1207, in the aftermath of the capture and sack of the City by the Fourth Crusade in 1204, and taken to Germany.[55] It shows clearly the nine orders of angels, some with many eyes and wings arrayed in a hierarchy around the true cross. It also includes a magnificent portrait of Christ in enamel and gold. What is important is that his robes are purple-reddish, his halo is blue with a white cross, his feet are standing on a green stool (a part of his throne) and the whole picture is surrounded with gems in red and green. The arms of his throne are blue with inlaid red and green gems. Thus all four cardinal colors are carefully integrated into this picture of Christ on His Throne.

The four cardinal colors, red, blue, green, and white were also those of the factions, *demes*. They are found in many combinations on the Emperor's route between the Great Palace and the Great Church. The problem is that, according to Constantine Porphyrogennetos, there are multiple stations where

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[53] Krautheimer, *Early Christian and Byzantine Architecture*, 218-219.

[54] *Pseudo-Dionysius*, 160-161 in *The Celestial Hierarchy*, 201A.

[55] See its reproduction in Paul Hetherington, *Byzantium: City of God, City of Faith* (London, 1983), 101-105.

the representatives of the two demes and four sections greeted the Emperor: they range from as few as two to as many as 16! We have to take a closer look at them.

In his procession to the Great Church the first stop was in the Tribunal where the *demokrates* of the Blues (the *domestikos* of the *scholai*) greets the Emperor; this is followed by the second stop at the entrance to the Church of the Holy Apostle where the *demokrates* of the Greens (the *exkoubitos*) takes his turn; within the Chalke the third reception with the Blues takes place, and outisde the Chalke the fourth with the *demarch* of the Blues with the White deme receives the Emperor. In front of the great gate that leads into the square of the Augoustaion, the demarch of the Greens, along with the Red deme, greets the Emperor. The sixth reception takes place at the Horologion of the Hagia Sophia where the demarch of the Blues with the White deme receives the Emperor and his company. The ratio is thus: Blues 2, Whites 2, Greens 1, Reds 1. If we combine the Blues with Whites, and Greens with Reds we get 3:3.

On their way back from the Great Church the receptions are: 1. Outside the Chapel of the Holy Well—the Blues; 2. Outside the Iron Gate of the Chalke—the Greens; 3. Inside the Chalke—the Whites; 4. Entrance to the Church of the Holy Apostles—the Reds; 5. At the Tribunal—the Whites. This gives us: Blues 1, Reds 1, Whites 2, Greens 1.

On Christmas day the procession to the Great Church involves the following greetings: 1. At the Tribunal—the Blues; 2. At the Scholai—the Greens; 3. Inside the Chalke—the Blues; 4. Outside the Chalke—the Whites; 5. Near the Great Gate of Melete—the Reds; 6. At the Horologion of Hagia Sophia—the Whites. Thus we have 2 Blues, 2 Whites, 1 Green, and 1 Red. On return the stops are at: 1. Outside the Iron Gate—the Whites; 2. Inside the Chalk—the Blues; 3. At the Church of the Holy Apostles—the Greens; 4. At the Lamps—the Blues. It should be pointed out there is another reception in the Chapel of the Holy Well at the beginning of the return journey, but it does not tell us of any reception by the demes. So we have: 2 Blues, 1 Green, and 1 White, and no Reds.

For the Feat of Epiphany, i.e. the Baptism of Christ by John the Baptist in the River Jordan the acclamations of the two factions are: 1. The Blues; 2. The Greens; 3. The Blues; 4. The Blues; 5. The Greens; 6. The Blues. This gives us 4 Blues, and 2 Greens. On the return journey: 1. The Blues; 2. The Greens; 3. The Blues; 4. The Greens; 5. The Blues. The Blues 3, the Greens 2. Altogether 7 Blues and 4 Greens.

For the Feast of the Holy Easter the acclamations of the two demes are as follows: 1. The Blues; 2. The Greens; 3. The Blues; 4. The Blues; 5. The Greens; 6. The Blues. This gives us 4 Blues, and 2 Greens. On the return from the Great Church: 1. The Blues; 2. The Greens; 3. The Blues; 4. The Greens; 5. The Blues. Thus, 3 Blues and 2 Greens, altogether, 7 Blues and 4 Greens.

For the feast of the Easter Monday we have the following list of colors: 1. The Blues; 2. The Whites; 3. The Greens; 4. The Blues; 5. The Reds; 6. The Reds; 7. The Greens; 8. The White; 9. The White; 10. The Greens; 11. The Blues. The total is: 3 Blues, 3 Whites, 2 Reds, and 3 Greens. On the Feast of the Ascension, i.e. the feast for Christ's ascent into heaven, which takes place on the Thursday 40 days after Easter, celebrated at the Church of the Theotokos of the Spring, the following stops took place: 1. The Blues; 2. The Greens; 3. The Whites; 4. The Reds; 5. The Whites; 6. The Greens; 7. The Blues; 8. The Whites; 9. The Reds; 10. The Reds; 11. The Reds; 12. The Whites; 13. The Whites, 14. The Greens; 15. The Reds; 16. The Blues. The total is: 3 Blues, 5 Whites, 5 Reds, and 3 Greens. That is Blues + Whites 8, Reds + Greens 8.

Dagron argues that

> we should note the military setting of the 'peratic' factions (in principle recruited 'from the other side' of the Bosphorus, 'outside the city'), who played their part in the military quarter of the palace, and the civil setting of the 'politic' colours (recruited 'in the city'), who were involved in the section of the route corresponding to the Augustation, a square supposedly 'public' but more or less annexed to the palace. The 'crossing of the city' was thus wholly symbolic. We may also note the slightly more prominent role of the 'Blues', colour of the imperial 'preference' whose reception straddled those of the reputedly more turbulent 'Greens'. The schema suggests a rite of crossing triply interlocking:
>
> 1. Tribunal—democrat of the Blues—peratic Blues;
> 2. Triklinos of the *scholae*—democrat of the Greens—peratic Greens;
> 3. Inside the gate—democrat of the Blues—peratic Blues passing through the Chalke;
> 4. Outside the gate—demarch of the Blues—politic Blues (=Whites);
> 5. Augustation—demarch of the Greens—politic Greens (=Reds)
> 6. Horologion—demarch of the Blues—politic Blues (=Whites)[56]

In view of everything said in Chapter One, it is quite clear that the Blues are preferred because the route from the Great Palace to the Great Church passes through the area where the Whites were in control: together with the Blues they account for 4 out of 6 stations, only 1 being allotted to the Greens, and 1 to the Reds.

Once they had reached Hagia Sophia Constantine Porphyrogennetos gave a very meticulous account of what happened next:

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[56] Dagron, *Emperor and Priest*, 98-99.

From there the rulers go in through the Beautiful Door, and *their crowns are removed* by the *praipositoi* inside the curtain hanging in the vault, that is, in the porch at the entrance to the narthex. The patriarch waits at the door of the narthex with his customary support staff and retinue, *and after the rulers' crowns have been removed* they go in to the patriarch. Firstly they make obeisance before the holy Gospels held by the archdeacon, and then they greet the patriarch and kiss him, and they go away up to the imperial doors, and there with triple obeisance with candles they give thanks to God. The prayer is conducted by the patriarch, and the Entrance takes place. The sceptres and all the insignia previously referred to go in and stand in the church to right and left in their particular places. The Roman banners and the tablets stand on either side of the solea, and the cross of St. Constantine on the right-hand side of the bema. *The magistroi and proconsuls and the rest of the senators, along with the emperor's men, also stand on the right-hand side of the church in their particular places*, and the rulers go through there.

When the rulers arrive at the holy doors, *at the circular porphyry slab*, the patriarch goes in alone inside the chancel barrier and holds the left-hand holy door. The rulers give thanks to God with triple obeisance with candles and go in, making obeisance before the holy door which is held by the patriarch. When they are at the holy altar they kiss the *tablion* of the holy altar-cloth, that is to say, when this has been lifted up by the patriarch and held out to the rulers for kissing. Then they spread out the two white veils on top of the holy altar as usual, and they make obeisance before the two holy chalices which are presented to them by the hand of the patriarch and the two holy patens and the holy swaddling-clothes. Then the rulers, with the patriarch, go through the right-hand side of the said holy bema, into the ambulatory where the gilded holy Crucifixion is set up. Again there as usual they give thanks to God with triple obeisance with the candles, and the patriarch hands the censer to the senior emperor and he censes the said holy Crucifixion. Then, kissing the patriarch, they take leave of him and go into the chapel which is in front of the robing-room. There with triple obeisance with candles, they give thanks to God, and kissing the precious cross containing all the tokens of the passion of our Lord and God, they go into the robing-room.

When the holy gifts are about to be brought in for the holy altar, the *praipositoi* go in and advise the rulers and put their chlamyses on them, and the rulers go out in their chlamyses, *without their crowns*. They go through the right-hand sidde of the said church *with the koubouklеion and the senate*, escorted by the sceptres and the rest of the insignia, and they go away behind the ambo. The sacred vessels stand there ready and the rulers' large candles stand there alight. When the rulers arrive there, the *praipositoi* lift up the candles and place them in the hands of the rulers, and the rulers escort the holy gifts with the candles, *along with the senate and the koubouklеion*.The sceptres and the rest of the insignia stand in their particular orders, and the rulers, going away through the solea, stand outside the holy doors, the senior ruler on the right and

the junior on the left, and they place their candles on the rails on the holy doors. The holy gifts go in and stand in the solea and the archdeacon goes and censes the rulers and then the patriarch, and after him the holy altar. Then all the holy gifts go in, and after they have all gone in, the rulers take their leave of the patriarch and go outside through the right-hand side of the bema and go into their robing-room.

After this the rulers go out again in the same manner for the kiss. The patriarch stands inside the chancel barrier on the right-hand side of the bema towards the robing-room. The rulers, who stand outside the chancel screen, first kiss the patriarch, and after him the *synkellos* and the metropolitans and archbishops and the protopapas of the Great Church and the archons of the patriarch. All those kissing the rulers are led up by the hand of the referendary. Then the rulers kiss the patriarch again and stand a little way below the chancel barrier and kiss all the members of the senate. All of these are led up by the hand of the master of ceremonies. Then, taking leave of the patriarch, the rulers go into the robing-room.

When it is time for the communion, the rulers again go out, in the manner previously described, and go way to the right-hand side of the bema and there receive the holy communion and, as usual, kiss the patriarch. Then they go into the robing-room and have breakfast there *with the chief men and more intimate members of the senate*. After the rulers have breakfasted the *praipositoi* go in, along with those in charge of the ceremonial dres, and they put the rulers' chlamyses on them, and then the said *praipositoi* lead in the patriarch and he kisses the rulers and goes out with them as far as the small door which leads to the Chapel of the Holy Well.[57] [my emphasis]

After giving gifts to the staff of the Great Church, "the rulers go out with the patriarch and go in through the curtain which hangs at the Chapel of the Holy Well, and *the patriarch crowns them*. After their crowning they take the oblations from the patriarch's hand, that is, the offerings, and they in turn give them to the *praipositoi*, and after this the patriarch gives the rulers the unguents, and in return he receives the purses from the rulers and the rulers kiss him and leave the Chapel of the Holy Well."[58] [my emphasis]

It is quite clear from the account above that the whole ceremony involved not just the Emperor, his bodyguard, and his retinue, i.e. his closest courtiers [*kouboukleion*], or, as Constantine puts it, all "the emperor's men", but the senate [*synkletos*] as well, particularly its leadership. It is also quite clear that Hagia Sophia, as previously explained, did not belong to the Emperor, it was not *his* church, but the Church that belonged to God, i.e. to Christ as Pantokrator. That is why the emperor and those associated with him in majesty [*basileia*] had to remove their crowns in recognition of their au-

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[57] BC I, 14-18.

[58] BC I, 18-19.

thority ceasing to exist the moment they stepped over the threshold. It was the patriarch who restored, so to speak, the Imperial authority [*basileia*] to the emperor when the latter was leaving the Church. It is thus clear that the Great Church, like the Great Hippodrome, *did not belong to the Emperor*, and that he was a guest of the Church as he was, in a certain sense, of the people in the Hippodrome.

This is brought out beautifully in the ceremony of the coronation. Dagron has emphasized in his book on the Imperial office in Byzantium that Constantine Porhyrogennetos "when he came to the chapter on coronation, was reduced to banalities."[59] This is rather difficult to accept. I fully agree with him that

> In the religious part of the ceremonial, the removal of the crown was more important than the coronation. By removing then resuming the crown at each entry into a sacred place, the emperor was recognising that the delegated power which he had personally received from God ceased wherever God had his residence on earth, just as it would cease when Christ returned, on the Last Day, the Day of Judgment. *The crown was only on loan.*"[60] [my emphasis]

Dagron's next comment makes it clear that he is not happy with what Constantine Porphyrogennetos did in his chapter on coronation: *to provide a template*. It is, as Dragon himself calls it, a 'model coronation'. Let the Emperor Scholar himself describe it:

> Everyone goes along in ceremonial dress—all of the senate and the titled ranks of the *scholai* and of the rest of the regiments change—and they receive in advance their insignia for escorting the rulers. When everything has been got ready, the emperor goes out from the Hall of the Augousteus wearing his *skaramangion* and purple *sagion*, escorted by the *kouboukleion*. He goes out as far as the Onopodion and the first receptions by the patricians takes place in the Onopodlon, and the master of ceremonies says, "If you please", and they pray, "For many good years." They go down as far as the Large Consistory where the consuls and the rest of the senators stand assembled, and the rulers stand at the baldachin, and all the senators, together with the patricians, fall down in obeisance. When they have stood up, the rulers signal to the *praipositos* and the silentiary says, "If you please," and they pray, "For many good years." Then they move away to the church through the Scholai, and the factions stand in their places, having changed into ceremonial dress, and make the sign of the cross, and only that.
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> When the emperor has gone into the Horologion, the curtain is raised and he goes into the roblng-room and changes into the *divetesion* and *tzitzakion* and

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[59] Dagron, *Emperor and Priest*, 83.

[60] Ibid., 82.

> puts on top the *sagion*. He passes inside with the patriarch and lights candles at the silver doors, and he passes into the nave and goes into the solea and prays at the holy doors, having lit candles, and he goes up into the ambo together with the patriarch. The patriarch says the prayer over the chlamys, and when he has completed the prayer the members of the *koubouklеion* lift it up and put it on the ruler. In turn, he says a prayer over the ruler's imperial crown, and having completed it, the patriarch himself takes the crown and places it on the ruler's head.[61]

This is followed by the acclamations by the people (three times), and obeisance shown by the highest dignitaries in this order: Group 1: the *magistroi*; Group 2: the patricians and *strategoi*; Group 3: *protospatharioi*; Group 4: the head of the *stratiotikon*, that of the *exkoubitoi*, of the *hikanatoi* and of the *noumera*, senatorial *spatharioi* and consuls; Group 5: *spatharioi*; Group 6: grooms; Group 7: *kometes* of the *scholai*; Group 8: *kandidatoi* of the cavalry; Group 9: *skribones* and *domestikoi*; Group 10: imperial secretaries, *vestetores* and silentiaries; Group 11: imperial *mandatores* and infantry *kandidatoi*; Group 12: *kometes* of the *arithmos* and of the *hikanatoi*, tribunes, and *kometes* of the fleet.[62]

According to Dagron, "it is all rather disappointing. Where one had hoped for a fine historical evocation, there is only a museum piece."[63] Now this is to be expected of Byzantium as a 'theatre state': what mattered was the *timeless* aspect of the ceremony, i.e. the template. Thus Dagron's comment that one might have expected to find "the description of a truly royal ritual with a route, participants, significant gestures and words" is a *historicist attitude* which does not recognize the priority that the Byzantines themselves allotted to the *changeless and immemorial* nature of the ceremony. Dagron's comment that "it is not dated, and cannot be dated with confidence" is not apposite: if it is a template, then it can apply to any period *because it does not change*. In a footnote Dagron gives all the various attempts to date it, mostly hinging on the expression 'emperor of the Romans' found in it.[64] It is quite clear to me that the account given above must *predate* the Komnenian period when the highest titles based on the *sebastos* were introduced by Alexios I. The fact that the highest dignitaries are the *magistroi*, the patricians, and the *strategoi* would indicate that the template is quite old: no mention of a *kaisar* or *nobelissimos*, for instance. And yet, the emperor's crowning by the patriarch means that it could not belong to the earliest centuries of Byzantium: as Dagron points out, "historians have long debated which emperor was the first to be crowned by the patriarch. The question is difficult to answer for a num-

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[61] BC I, 191-193.

[62] BC I, 193.

[63] Dagron, *Emperor and Priest*, 55.

[64] Ibid., 56, ft. 9.

ber of reasons. The rather later sources, beginning with Theophanes (early ninth century), are guilty of anticipation and project on to the fifth century the customs of their own day; also, they often use the verb 'to crown' metaphorically in the sense of 'proclaim emperor', or with constructions which leave it unclear whose was the principal role in the coronation. ... Above all, the process of enthronement, which in principle involved a choice by the senate, a proclamation by the army and/or the people, with 'raising' and 'acclamations', and a religious confirmation with coronation, can be summarised by a variety of formulae which preserve only a part of the whole."[65]

I think one should distinguish four (again a very important number!) parts of the whole when it came to the making of a new emperor: 1) the selection, usually by either the army (i.e. its leadership, the *strategoi*, but with the support of the troops) and/or the Senate; 2) the acclamation by the people of Constantinople represented by the factions; 3) the ratification by the Senate; and 4) the sanctification by the Patriarch. The first step made an ordinary man a *tyrannos*, i.e. a ruler who was not legitimate; 2) the second made him acceptable to the people; 3) the third made him *legitimate*; and 4) the fourth made him holy [*pistos*], i.e. 'chosen', i.e. preordained by God. It was the last step that gave the emperor the standing in both the Church and the Christian world [*oikoumene*] 'equal to the apostles'. It was thus the Patriarch on behalf of the Church, i.e. of the authority left by Jesus Christ Himself on this earth to act in His name, that an emperor assumed *quasi-divine* status. This was done through two prayers said by the Patriarch over a new emperor just before the crown was put on the latter's head:

> Before the *vestitores* invest the emperor with the *chlamys*: 'Lord our God, King of kings and Lord of lords, You who, through the intermediary of your prophet Samuel, chose your servant David and, by unction, made him king of your people of Israel, hear also today our supplication, look down from your holy dwelling on high on we who are unworthy, deign to anoint with the oil of gladness your faithful servant, a man it has pleased you to establish as emperor over the holy nation which you have made your own by the blood of your only Son. Endow him with power from on high, put on his head a crown of precious stones, bless him with a long life, place in his right hand the sceptre of salvation, establish him on the throne of righteousness, subject to him all the barbarous nations, instil into his heart fear of you and compassion towards his subjects, preserve him in an unspotted faith, make him a scrupulous defender of the teaching of the holy catholic Church: so that he may judge your people fairly and the poor with justice, defend the children of the poor and inherit thy heavenly kingdom. For yours is the power, the kingdom and the glory.'
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> Before placing the crown, or causing it to be placed, on the head of the new emperor and proceeding to the liturgy of the presanctified, the patriarch says a

[65] Ibid., 81.

second prayer: 'Before you, the only King of men, he to whom you have entrusted the earthly kingdom bows down the neck, with us. And we beseech you, Master of all, keep him under your protection, strengthen his kingdom, grant that he does your will in all things, make justice and an abundance of peace flourish during his lifetime; may the peace of his reign enable us to lead a sweet and tranquil existence in all piety and honesty. For you are the King of peace and the Saviour of our souls and bodies, and we glorify you.'[66]

It is quite clear from the above text that the Patriarch is acting solely on behalf of Christ, the Pantokrator, but that without this sanctification a newly-chosen emperor is not Christ's regent on earth, for he lacks, so to speak, the latter's consent which only the Patriarch representing both Christ and His Church can provide. And it is the crown that symbolizes this all-highest authority invested in an emperor. As already quoted, Constantine Porphyrogennetos claims that it was the Patriarch who decided which crown, together with the appropriate robes, the emperor should wear on great state occasions when he had to visit the Great Church. According to Constantine, his namesake, Constantine the Great, received these crowns and robes from an angel sent by God

and charged him to lay them in the great and holy church of God, which...is called St. Sophia; and not to clothe himself in them every day, but *only* when it is a great public festival of the Lord. And so by God's command he laid them up, and they hang above the holy table in the sanctuary of this same church, and are for the ornament of the church. And the rest of the imperial vestments and cloaks lie spread out upon this holy table. And when a festival of our Lord and god Jesus Christ comes round, the patriarch takes up such of these robes of state and diadems as are suitable and appropriated to that occasion, and sends them to the emperor, and he wears them in the procession, and only in it, as the servant and minister of God, and after use returns them again to the church, and they are laid up in it. Moreover, there is a curse of the holy and great emperor Constantine engraved upon this holy table of the church of God, according as he was charged by God through the angel, that if an emperor for any use or occasion or unreasonable desire be minded to take of them and either himself misuse them or give them to others, he shall be anathematised as the foe and enemy of the commands of God, and shall be excommunicated from the church; moreover, if he himself be minded to make others like them, these too the church of God must take, with the freely expressed approval of all the archbishops and of the senate; and it shall not be in the authority either of the emperor, or of the patriarch, or of any other, to take these robes of state or the diadems from the holy church of God. And mighty dread hangs over them who

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[66] Ibid., 58-59 quoting from J. Goar, *Euchologion, sive Rituale Graecorum* (Venice, 1730; reprint Graz, 1960), 726-727 which is based on the oldest text found in MS Barberini 336 (Vatican Library).

> are minded to transgress any of these divine ordinances. For one of the emperors, Leo by name, who also married a wife from Chazaria, out of his folly and rashness took up one of these diadems when no festival of the Lord was toward, and without the approval of the patriarch put it about his head. And straightway a carbuncle came forth upon his forehead so that in torment at the pains of it he evilly departed his evil life, and ran upon death untimely. And this rash act being summarily avenged, thereafter a rule was made, that when he is about to be crowned the emperor must first swear and give surety that he will neither do nor conceive anything against what has been ordained and kept from ancient times, and then may he be crowned by the patriarch and perform and execute the rites appropriate to the established festival.[67]

As Dagron explains this oath was "not the oath and profession of faith which preceded the enthronement and coronation of an emperor; it was rather an oath sworn each time that the patriarch crowned the emperor for a feast of the Lord."[68] Dagron is absolutely correct in arguing that there was no real curse by Constantine the Great, that the altar in Hagia Sophia did not contain robes or the anathema on its altar, or that the emperors needed the Patriarch's permission to wear particular crowns and robes. But he misses the point: the emperor may not have needed a formal permission, but the point was that he was a guest of the Patriarch in the Great Church which truly belonged neither to a patriarch nor to an emperor but to Christ the Pantokrator Himself. As Dagron encapsulated it, "everything was decided in St Sophia."[69] But the real crowns, rather than legendary ones, were held in various places: "In the eight vaults of the Chrysotriklinos were hung the imperial crowns from the Church of the Most Holy Theotokos of the Pharos and the other churches of the palace...In the eastern conch [of the Chrysotriklinos]...three imperial crowns were hung: in front was the green crown from the Church of the glorious Holy Apostles..., while on the right was the blue crown from the Church of the Most Holy Theotokos of the Pharos..., and on the left the blue crown from the Church of St Demetrios the Great Martyr..."[70] "A great white imperial crown"[71] and "red imperial crown"[72]. Book I, Chapter 37 is all about which crown and appropriate robe and other regalia the emperor should wear.

Dagron notes that the Church of the Holy Apostles was not the great Church built by Constantine the Great to be his mausoleum, but rather the one in the Great Palace, and that since it was a meeting place of the faction of the

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[67] Constantine Porphyrogenitus, *De administrando imperio* [Greek text ed. by Gyula Moravcsik; English trans. by R.J.H. Jenkins] (Dumbarton Oaks, 1967), 67, 69.

[68] Dagron, *Emperor and Priest*, 214, ft. 97.

[69] Ibid., 217.

[70] BC II, 580-581, repeated 586-587.

[71] BC I, 189, II, 587.

[72] BC I, 187, 188, 189.

Greens its crown was green. He also points out that the four colors of the crowns "are those of the demes of the Hippodrome which also had their own symbolism".[73] But he is at a loss to explain it: "The symbolism and the criteria for choice are not clear."[74] Let us take a closer look.

For Easter the emperor has a choice of either white or red: on the way to Hagia Sophia white in the morning, red on their return, but if red in the morning, white on their return. On Monday of the Renewal week the emperor puts on green imperial crown, but on the return he puts on the white crown. For the Pentecost he wears red imperial crown on the way to the Hagia Sophia, white on his return. On the Transfiguration green and white. For the Nativity of Christ green and white, for Holy Epiphany blue and white.[75] If we summarize the above, there is no question that a pride of place belonged to the Great Church: as such, *all four crowns, i.e. red, white, green, and blue*, were worn alternately to and from it. This is to be expected: it was a sacred space that belonged neither to the Emperor nor to the people of Constantinople, but to God alone. Yet, it should be noted that for the greatest feast in the Christian calendar, that of Easter Sunday when Jesus rose from the dead, red and white crowns were the only ones specified. The colors of the crowns are those of the four factions, and thus the two politic, i.e. City factions, are the ones whose crowns the Emperor (and his consort) wears. For the feast of Nativity, i.e. Christmas, the crowns are green and white, standing for the Peratic faction of the Greens, and the politic section of the Blues. And, alternately, for Holy Epiphany the Peratic Blues share the crowns with their politic section (Blue—White).

The ceremonial procession to the Church of the Holy Apostles (the one built for Constantine the Great) on Monday of the Renewal Week involves the wearing of green and white crowns only. When the Emperor visited the Holy Source of Pege outside the City walls he wore the green and white crowns for both the feast of Annunciation and Ascension. Inside the Great Palace for the Feast of the Pentecost he wore both red and white crowns. It seems, therefore, that when he was traversing the City space outside of the Great Palace (which belonged properly to him, not to the City) and of the Great Church (which belonged properly to God, not to him or to the City) he was acknowledging the City areas associated with the factions: on the way to the Holy Apostles he was going through both Green (Green and Red) and White (but not Blue) areas north and northwest of the Mese; on the way to Pege he was going through Green (both Green and Red) areas and White (but not Blue) areas. There is no question that the various crowns, as already noted, were kept in churches associated with the various factions: the Church of the Holy Apostles inside the Great Palace "was a meeting place of the deme of the Greens, and...the crown

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[73] Dagron, *Emperor and Priest*, 217, n. 107.

[74] Ibid., 217.

[75] BC I, 187-190.

kept in this church was green".[76] The crown kept at the churches of St. Demetrios and Theotokos of the Pharos must have been red and blue, and the remaining white was kept in the Magnaura.

Why was there no imperial procession outside the Great Palace and Hagia Sophia which involved the Emperor wearing the *blue* crown (the only one not specified for a particular City route)? The principal Blue area in the City was (outside of the Acropolis) that of Blachernae. Though enclosed by later walls it was still considered outside of the City itself. But by the time of the Komneni the emperors no longer staged elaborate ceremonial processions to Blachernae:

> We do not know what happened later to the procession. According to the *Book of Ceremonies*, the feast of Hypapante was celebrated in the palace and church at the Blachernai, where the emperor would have already arrived the evening before, and in some special cases the ceremonies were preceded by a procession from the Great Palace to Hagia Sophia. In any case, the emperor travelled to the Blachernai by horse, on the same route which the procession had once followed.[77]

But already by the time of Constantine Porphyrogennetos, if not earlier, the emperor and his suite did not hold a procession, but instead they went "into a dromon", i.e. a war galley in the Golden Horn, and hence were taken to Blachernae.[78] This is also the point of the somewhat fanciful story told by *Patria Konstantinoupoleos*.[79] That is the reason why no blue crown was associated with any imperial procession outside of that to Hagia Sophia.

The reason why Green and not Red crown was specifically mentioned for the procession to Pege was that by the time of the Komneni the imperial procession to it was by boat to the Golden Gate and from there on land to the church outside the walls. The areas of Hebdomon were closely associated with the army, and being outside the walls, like Pege itself, would have been considered Green.[80]

Everything changed under the Komneni, as Berger explains:

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[76] Dagron, *Emperor and Priest*, 217, n. 110.

[77] Albrecht Berger, "Imperial and Ecclesiastical Processions in Constantinople" in Nevra Necipoğlu, ed., *Byzantine Constantinople: Monuments, Topography and Everyday Life [Papers from the International Workshop held at Boğaziçi University, Istanbul, 7-10 April 1999]* (Leiden, 2001), 82 citing BC I, Ch. 27, 147-156.

[78] BC I, 191. On the dromon see John Pryor and Elizabeth M. Jeffreys, *The Age of the DROMON. The Byzantine Navy ca 500-1204* (Leiden, 2006).

[79] *Accounts of Medieval Constantinople: The Patria* [trans. by Albrecht Berger] (Cambridge, Mass., 2013), 95-97.

[80] BC I, 18, 108-109.

> When the Komnenos family decided to make the Blachernai palace their main residence in the late eleventh century, one of the results was that the traditional routes used for imperial processions had to be abandoned. Imperial triumphs were not staged anymore on the traditional way that proceeded from the Golden Gate along the Mese, touching the public squares and monuments. Instead, the emperor landed in the eastern part of the city close to the promontory which is now called the Seraglio Point (Sarayburnu), and paraded from there to Hagia Sophia, the Hippodrome, and the old palace. This way of about 1,200 meters, which is less than half the length of the old route, allowed for a more impressive concentration of decorations and cheering crowds, but it was rather uncomfortable to walk or ride on because it went steeply uphill at the beginning. It should be noted that at one triumph in 1133 not only the Turkish prisoners of war and mules bearing the booty, but also representatives of the circus factions took part in the procession in front of the emperor. This suggests that the traditional receptions performed on the way by the circus factions had been given up by this time, although the distance was certainly long enough to accommodate them.[81]

I do not think this is the reason: the area from the Seraglio Point to Hagia Sophia was within the palace area of the Magnaura, and Hagia Sophia, of course, did not belong to any faction. So it would have been impossible for the factions to claim as their posts the stops on such a route.

Right until the Latin conquest of the City (1204) Hagia Sophia retained its central importance as the place where the emperors were crowned. While still disputed, there is reason to believe that their golden throne was placed on the so-called omphalos or omphalion, a still visible square made up of a very large central and 31 smaller circles or *rotae*.[82] Though late there is a testimony to that effect: "In the church of Hagia Sophia, near the altar, on the right, there is a red marble stone with a golden throne placed on it. On this throne the emperors were crowned. This place is bounded by a copper (border?) in order to keep the people off."[83] If this was the indeed the area where an emperor was crowned, then the various circles of red, green, and black color are still a mystery that needs to be explained.

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81 Berger, op.cit., 83.

82 The porphyry slab is mentioned in BC I, 73 and 163.

83 Alfons Maria Schneider, *Byzanz: Vorarbeiten zur Topographie und Archäologie der Stadt* (Berlin, 1936), 36 quoting from Khitrowo, *Itinéraires Russes* I, 95: "A Ste Sophie, près de l'autel, à droite, se trouve un marbre rouge sur lequel on met un trone en or; sur ce trone on couronne l'empereur. Cet endroit est entouré de cuivre, afin que personne ne puisse marcher dessus, mais le people le baise." See a detailed narrative of the coronation of Manuel II Palaeologus in "Journey to Constantinople of Ignatius of Smolensk" in George P. Majeska, *Russian Travelers to Constantinople in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries* (Washington, D.C., 1984), 48-113. Also in "Hochzeit und Krönung Kaiser Manuels II im Jahre 1392." in *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 60 (1967), 79-85.

The big red rota in the middle, the so-called porphyry slab, was obviously where the emperor's throne was: this is what Constantine Porphyrogennetos himself calls it: *to porphyroun omphalion*.[84] But what are the other circles for? They cannot be just decoration, for they are placed unevenly and yet there is a certain pattern to it. I would suggest that its circles indicate where the highest dignitaries *stood* surrounding the emperor's throne on which he sat, the color indicating their status. We know from Constantine Porhyrogennetos that when the emperor is being crowned *not for the first time, but during a procession*, as in the case of his having arrived at the harbour of the Golden Gate to go to the Church of Pege, "the archons of the *koubouk leion*, wearing true-purple *sagia*, stand in the form of a circle and the emperor goes in to the middle of them and is crowned by the *praipositos*, so as not, as previously mentioned, in any circumstances to be crowned in front of non-eunuchs. For this reason the archons of the *koubouk leion* previously mentioned stand forming a circle."[85] We know already that "the *magistroi* and proconsuls and the rest of the senators, along with the emperor's men, also stand on the right-hand side of the church in their particular places."[86] This means that they would not be surrounding the emperor's throne.

It has been established that the two pulpits found in the San Marco Church in Venice came originally from Hagia Sophia. As Thomas Dale points out,

> Among the most conspicuous Byzantine artefacts displayed on the interior of San Marco in the thirteenth century are the carved transom slabs incorporated into the two pulpits that stand in front of the late fourteenth-century choir screen. Elevated high above the nave on precious marble columns, both structures provide platforms for liturgy and ducal ceremonial.
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> The pulpit on the south side, known as the *bigonzo*, is a polygonal structure comprising six porphyry slabs, two of which are early Byzantine transom reliefs, carved with crosses projecting from circular shields. The second, two-tiered pulpit, on the north side of the sanctuary comprises a similar combination of early Byzantine transom slabs and later Venetian framework. The polygonal lower storey of the pulpit resembles the *bigonzo* in plan, but is joined to a monumental ramp which rises from the pavement on two levels of blind arcades. The lower section of the pulpit comprises early Byzantine transom slabs in Thessalian green marble, inscribed with crosses. The upper level, reached by its own ramp, rises from the middle of the lower pulpit on a four-lobed plan with six slender colonnettes sustaining a small cupola sheathed in silver gilt.

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[84] BC I, 15.

[85] BC I, 109.

[86] BC I, 15.

It is generally accepted that both pulpits were assembled from early Byzantine spolia imported from Constantinople after the Fourth Crusade. The red porphyry panels of the *bigonzo*, for example, are closely related to sixth-century panels still *in situ* in Hagia Sophia in Istanbul. [...] A significant motivation for the Venetian reuse of the Byzantine panels lay in the material's imperial resonances. Porphyry was the material of choice for imperial columns from the time of Constantine, and, as early as the eighth century, the Byzantine empress gave birth to future emperors in a porphyry-lined chamber. *Porphyry was also frequently used to mark thresholds of significant ritual spaces within the Great Palace and Hagia Sophia, where the emperor and his retinue stood.* [my emphasis] Thessalian marble or "green porphyry" likewise had imperial associations due to its colour, but within the context of Hagia Sophia, it was more specifically deployed to enclose the sacred space of sanctuary and solea, to represent the rivers of paradise on the nave floor and to mark stations where processions stopped during festal liturgies. The choice of this stone to enclose the sanctuary also reflects the widespread association of green stones with a verdant meadow of paradise.

[...] The red porphyry *bigonzo*...provided a raised throne platform for the doge when he participated in the most important liturgical feasts including Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, Palm Sunday, Easter, Christmas and the Ascension... [Martino da] Canal records that it was also from this "percle" that the doge heard the mass on Easter Day and, from the accession of Lorenzo Tiepolo in 1268 onward, was acclaimed to the people following his election.

The doge's porphyry enclosure resembles in function, and probably material, the Byzantine emperor's metatorion in Hagia Sophia. According to Paul the Silentiary and Constantine VII Porphyrogenitos, the emperor attended the Eucharist on major feast-days from an enclosure, containing his throne, located in the south aisle...Although the early textual sources are silent about the material, red porphyry is the most likely candidate given the imperial uses discussed above.[...] That the sixth-century transom slabs now incorporated into the pulpits of San Marco came to Venice as spolia from Constantinople is suggested by chronicles which assert that Enrico Dandolo himself had already sent "many marble panels and columns of porphyry and marble with much mosaic to adorn the church of San Marco. [...] What is more, an examination of the pavement in the probable locations of imperial metatoria on the ground floor as well as the site in the south gallery reveals positions of the original postholes for the enclosure, and confirms that the San Marco slabs reused in the *bigonzo* coincide closely with the length of the original slabs at Hagia Sophia.[87]

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87 Thomas E.A. Dale, "Sacred Space from Constantinople to Venice" in Paul Stephenson, ed., *The Byzantine World* (London, 2012), 407-411 citing S. Minguzzi, "Elementi di scultura tardoantica a Venezia: glia amboni di San Marco", *Felix Ravenna* 141:2 (1991-1992), 7-79; G. Lorenzoni, "Le vie del porfido a Venezia: gli amboni di San Marco" in A.C. Quintavalle, ed., *Le vie del Medioevo, Atti del Convegno internazionale di studi* (Parma, 1998), 125-129; C. Mango, "Con-

The omphalon with the colored circles of red and green porphyry was thus an appropriate place for the coronation of the emperor. This is indeed how Dale interprets it as well: "Matthews [1971: 96, 132-134] has proposed a second location for an 'imperial loge' within the first inter-columniation of the south aisle from the apse but this seems to have been connected with the coronation ceremony."[88]

Constantine Porphyrogennetos tells us that when "the emperor sits on his throne, crowned and wearing his chlamys, ...the archons of the *koubouklеion* stand in their order. The *spatharokoubikoularioi* and the *koubikoularioi* stand behind the emperor all around the semi-circle, while the eunuch *protospatharioi* stand near the throne wearing their linen mantles and carrying their sword-tipped batons...Then the *praipositos*, having received a sign from the emperor, goes in and stands in the middle between the archons..."[89]

During the ceremony in Hagia Sophia commemorating the feast of the Exaltation of the Cross "the archons of the *koubouklеion* stand in the solea facing the emperor, and the eunuch *protospathario* stand to the left of the ambo towards the bench, and the members of the *manglabion*, further back than the eunuch *protospatharioi*, likewise on the right side of the ambo, so that no one may cross in front of the emperor..."[90]

During the procession and feast for the Incarnation, "going inside the curtain with the archons of the *koubouklеion*, the *praipositos* hands the imperial crown to the patriarch and he crowns the emperor..."[91] For the feast of Hypapante "the archons of the *koubouklеion* stand to either side [of the emperor], and the *spatharokoubikoularioi* and the *koubiloularioi* behind them, and the eunuch *protospatharioi* stand behind the emperor."[92]

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stantine's Porphyry Column and the Chapel of Constantine", *Deltion tes Hristianikes Arhaiologikes Etairias* 3(4), 103-110; BC I, 90, 58, 11; C. Mango, *The Brazen House: A Study of the Vestibule of the Imperial Palace of Constantinople* (Copenhagen, 1959); I. Kalavrezou, *Byzantine Icons in Steatite* 2 vols. (Vienna, 1985), I, 84; C. Mango, *Byzantine Architecture* (London, 1986), 91-96; T. Matthews, *The Early Church of Constantinople: Architecture and Liturgy* (University Park, 1971), 98, 101 n. 81; G.P. Majeska, "Notes on the Archaeology of St Sophia at Constantinople: The Green Marble Bands on the Floor" *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 32 (1978), 299-308; A. Limentani, ed., *Martino da Canal, les Estoires de Venise* (Florence, 1972), II, 246-249, 280-283; G.P. Majeska, "The Emperor in his Church: Imperial Ritual in the Church of Hagia Sophia" in H. Maguire, ed., *Byzantine Court Culture, 829-1204* (Washington, D.C., 1997), 1-11; R.J. Mainstone, *Hagia Sophia: Architecture, Structure and Liturgy of Justinian's Great Church* (New York, 1988), 223-226; F. Ongania, ed., *Documenti per la storia dell'augusta ducale Basilica di San Marco in Venezia* (Venice, 1886), no. 87: "Enrico Dandolo mandò da Costanti-nopoli molte tavole de marmo et colonne de porfido e marmoro con molto mosaico per adornar la giexia de S. Marco."; and T. Dale, "Reading the Stones of Venice: Material and Functions of the San Marco Pulpits" in A. Beliaev, ed., *Archaeologica Abrahamica. Festschrift for Leonid Beliaev* (Moscow, 2009), 115-134.

88 Dale, "Sacred Space from Constantinople to Venice", 424, n. 23.

89 BC I, 255.

90 BC I, 126-127.

91 BC I, 135.

92 BC I, 148.

Once inside the Great Church the Emperor was given the place of honor *to the right of the bema facing east, i.e. from the viewpoint of an onlooker*. The place where he either stood or sat is still indicated by the *omphalos*, i.e. a multi-colored square containing many circles. This is usually referred to as the *opus sectile*. In his comparative study of them in Byzantium, southern Italy, Rome and Sicily William Tronzo has argued very persuasively that "[t]here is a body of evidence to suggest...that they could also shape, and sometimes quite decisively, the meaning and functions of ecclesiastical space by means of the very patterns with which they were so conspicuously endowed, and primarily by the manipulations of the form and placement of elements."[93] In Hagia Sophia the opus sectile, i.e. an *omphalos* "has often been seen in the light of a remark by the Russian pilgrim of ca. 1200, Anthony of Novgorod, that a large *purple disk* to the *right* of the altar marked the location in the church where the Byzantine emperor was crowned."[94] According to Schreiner, this must be wrong: "Sources from the Middle and Late Byzantine periods consistently place the coronation of the emperor at the ambo of the church."[95]

Tronzo, nevertheless, rightly points out that "Constantine VII's [Porphyrogennetos] Book of Ceremonies, speaks of a disk, a purple *omphalion*, as the marker of the place where the emperor, as he processed with the patriarch, stood before the sanctuary enclosure, on the feasts of the Epiphay, the Pentecost, and others."[96] He further explains that "*Omphalion* is the diminutive of *omphalos*, a term used for navel or center, as well as the center of a shield, hence the meaning of its diminutive, the center of a shield, or boss, as defined in the Souda Lexikon. As Schreiner argues, and quite convincingly, the *omphalion* mentioned in the text must be none other than the disk now in Hagia Sophia, or rather the disk as it was in its original manifestation: in *porphyry*. Schreiner reckons that the original disk was shattered in the partial collapse of the dome in the fourteenth century, at a time when porphyry had become a rare commodity in Byzantium, and hence its replacement in gray granite. Schreiner relates the original disk to porphyry disks in the Great Palace, in the Consistorium, and in front of the Chalke; he dates it to the post-Justinianic period, but before the middle of the tenth century."[97] Tronzo's argument is that the central porphyry (i.e. red) rota represents the shield on which the emperor was elevated by his soldiers in the field when he was elected. This is

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[93] William Tronzo, "Shield, Cross, and Meadow in the Opus Sectile Pavements of Byzantium, Southern Italy, Rome, and Sicily" in *O italiotes ellenismos apo ton Z' ston IB' aiona [Mneme Nikou Panagiotaki]*(Athens, 2001), 242.

[94] P. Schreiner, "Omphalion und Rota Porphyretica. Zum Kaiserzeremoniell in Konstantinopel und Rom" in *Byzance et les slaves. Mélanges Ivan Dujčev* (Paris, 1979), 404.

[95] Ibid., 401ff.

[96] Tronzo, op.cit., 243.

[97] Ibid., 243.

specifically shown in one of the miniatures in the Madrid Skylizes illustrated manuscript.[98] Though the actual raising of a newly-elected emperor onto a shield was a rare occurrence between the seventh and thirteenth centuries[99], Tronzo is absolutely right in claiming that "[w]hen the emperor took up his place on the shield in the floor, this quintessential honor must have been reiterated."[100] This is precisely how I interpret it: it was the repetition of the primordial act of Creation—in this case that of an emperor. Though in Hagia Sophia the place was not in the center and thus directly under the center of the vast dome—which in the middle Byzantine and later period had a huge mosaic of Christ the Pantokrator—it was still the navel of the (earthly) universe which had its analogy in "the very spot on Mount Tabor where Christ stood, transfigured...marked with the center of a shield "of exceeding whiteness": an *omphalion*" according to the twelfth century traveller from Byzantium Phokas.[101]

Additional supporting evidence comes from the West, that is from the old St Peter's basilica in Rome (replaced in the Renaissance by the present structure). Tronzo states that several "monumental disks lined the main axis of the church from narthex to altar, including *rotae in porphyry* just outside the main entrance and about one-quarter of the way along the nave. According to *Ordo Romanus* XLV, of the late-ninth century, these rotae also marked stops in the coronation ceremony of the emperor...[102] Schreiner argues "that rotae may have been added to the church for the ceremony of coronation."[103] Other churches in Rome had a set of rotae or circular disks in terms of a large central disk, and four smaller disks, i.e. a quincunx. But Tronzo remarks that "the porphyry disk was located in the nave of St Peter's, the disk that corresponds approximately to the quincunx panel often found in other Roman

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[98] Ada Bruhn Hoffmeyer, *Military Equipment in the Byzantine Manuscript of Scylitzes in Biblioteca Nacional in Madrid* (= *Gladius* 5, 1966) (Granada, 1966), 84ff., fig. 14; T.G. Kolias, *Byzantinische Waffen: ein Beitrag zur byzantinischen Waffenkunde von den Anfängen bis zur lateinischen Eroberung* (Vienna, 1988), 88ff., plates I, VI, VII, XIV, XXIVff, et passim.

[99] Chr. Walter, "Raising on a Shield in Byzantine Iconography" *Revue des Etudes Byzantines* 33 (1975), 157ff.

[100] Tronzo, op.cit., 245.

[101] Ibid., 245 citing Phokas in J. Froitskii, *Pravoslavnii Palestinskii Sbornik* 8. 2 [Vol. 23](St. Petersburg, 1889), 9; English translation by Aubrey Stewart, *The Pilgrimage of Joannes Phocas in the Holy Land (in the year 1185 AD)* (London, 1896), 14.

[102] Tronzo, op.cit., 246 referring to Sible de Blaauw, "Papst und Purpur: Porphyr in frühen Kirchenausstattungen in Rom" in *Tesserae: Festschrift für Josef Engemann* (Münster, 1991), 36ff; idem, *Cultus et Décor. Liturgia e architettura nella Roma tardoantica e medievale: Basilica Salvatoris, Sanctae Mariae, Sancti Petri* (Vatican City, 1994), 2 vols., 1:524f, 551ff, 611ff, 733ff., et passim, and fig. 26.

[103] Schreiner, op.cit., 405ff.

churches, in which it is called 'ad quatuor rotas', or the place of the four disks, presumably around the porphyry disk, or a quincunx."[104]

There is no doubt in my mind that the porphyry circle in the middle of the *omphalion* was the place reserved for the Emperor. Now it is true that he was crowned by the Patriarch on the ambo, but *he did not stay there either before or after the putting of the crown.* We know that he stood on that place *before the act of putting on the crown, and it can be presumed that he went back to that place after the crown had been put on his head.* If this is indeed so, then, *whether or not the actual throne was put on top of the central porphyry disk or not* (I am inclined to believe Anthony of Novgorod) this place of honor was reserved for the emperor both during the coronation ceremony itself and during his regular visits to the Great Church[105]. If so, then the circles around it must have some symbolic significance.

I agree with Schneider's criticism of Unger's far-fetched theories of the presumed identification of the lesser disks with the signs of the Zodiac corresponding to the letter of the Greek alphabet in a Gnostic tradition.[106] But I think Schneider throws the baby out with the bathwater when he rejects Unger's view that the three interlaced disks on the east side of the panel represent the Holy Trinity.[107] Coming soon after Justinian's Council of Constantinople in 553 which dealt with the Trinity, it makes sense. There are altogether 32 disks, including the three interlocking ones. The remaining 28 (i.e., minus the central disk) are color-coded thus: four biggest ones at each corner are red porphyry (except for the one, no. 27, which is an obvious much later replacement with pink granite, i.e. an approximation to red); there are altogether 10 red disks (including the four corner ones) plus 12 green ones and ten other ones.

In her study of the omphalos Silvia Pedone gives a very description of the *Opus sectile*, i.e. the marble pavement.[108] She starts by explaining the terms: "The words *omphalos* and *omphalion* are often used as synonyms, but they have different meanings. The first term simply refers to the central point of a space or surface, in an anthropomorphic vein it could be translated with 'navel'—within Mediterranean cultures the centre-navel of the world coin-

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[104] Tronzo, op.cit., 246 referring to his "The Prestige of Saint Peter's: Observations on the Function of Monumental Narrative Cycles in Italy" in *Studies in the History of Art of the National Gallery of Art* 16 (1985), 102f., n. 64.

[105] BC 15: *eis to porphyroun omphalion* translated as "the circular porphyry slab".

[106] Alfons Maria Schneider, *Byzanz: Vorarbeiten zur Topographie und Archäologie der Stadt* (Berlin, 1936), 34-35.

[107] E. Unger, "Das Weltbild-Mosaik der Sophienkirche in Konstantinopel" in *Forschungen und Fortschritte* II (1935), 445-447.

[108] Silvia Pedone, "The Marble *Omphalos* of Saint Sophia in Constantinople: An Analysis of an *Opus sectile* Pavement of Middle Byzantine Age" in Mustafa Şahin, ed., *Mosaics of Turkey and Parallel Developments in the Rest of the Ancient and Medieval World: Questions of Iconography, Style and Technique from the Beginnings of Mosaic until the Late Byzantine Era* [11th International Colloquium on Ancient Mosaics, October 16th-20th, 2009, Bursa] (Istanbul, 2011), 749-768.

cides with a sacral place or object (for instance the Delphi *omphalos*). As a point in a space the term is employed by Paulus Silentiarius [the Silentiary] in his well-known description of the *Megale Ekklesia* [the Great Church] to designate the central zone of the building. *Omphalion,* however, literally means 'little *omphalos*'. It was employed in ancient Greek world to designate the central element of the shield of the warriors (*Aspis*) and hence, in a metaphorical sense, all material objects with a generically round form. The same analogy explains why the term is adopted to describe the *rotae* of marble pavements, that therefore are not necessarily located in the middle of the building floor, as in the case at hand [i.e. Hagia Sophia]."[109] She points out that "several different interpretations have been suggested about the functional meaning of this decorative element, explained, for example, somehow fancifully, as the place from which the emperor and his family attended the liturgy, or, more reasonably, as a visual reference point for the imperial crowning rite."[110] She is perplexed by the lack of its mention in Paul Silentiary's detailed account of the Great Church.[111] There is a simple explanation: it did not exist in Justinian's time or that of his immediate successors. The reason is obvious: Justinian did not need Hagia Sophia as the place of his coronation, he had already been crowned before he built the Great Church. His successors would not have altered anything left by him. As Schreiner points out, the mention of the porphyry slab in the *Book of Ceremonies,* dated circa 945, makes it a *terminus post quem non* for the dating of the *omphalos*. But when was the original *omphalos* inserted? I agree with Pedone that it is datable to the 9th century, during the reign of Basil I (867-886), following the defeat of Iconoclasm and the victory of Orthodoxy.[112] Since the victory of Orthodoxy was primarily due to the Iconodulic emperors, such as Basil I, their enhanced position within the Church (and within the Great Church, i.e. Hagia Sophia) would have been emphasized. Pedone points out that the *omphalos's* place within the ground floor is *eccentric*, i.e. it is not in the center directly underneath the central point of the great dome, but then remarks that "the position of the *omphalos* is not so random as it may seem at first sight, but it is exactly in the middle of the south-eastern quarter of the great square space under the dome, and so marking the diagonal crossing the square."[113]

Silvia Pedone points out that "it is now widely assumed by scholars that the original Porphyry slab in the middle of the *sectile*, to which the documentary sources refer, was probably destroyed by the collapse of the eastern portion of the dome in 1346 and was then replaced with the Gray Granite *rota*

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[109] Ibid., 749, n. 1.

[110] Ibid., 749-750.

[111] Ibid., 750, n.2.

[112] Ibid., 763.

[113] Ibid., 751.

that we can see today."[114] This present-day Gray Granite disk was originally porphyry, i.e. red. Porphyry is defined by *Oxford English Dictionary* as "a beautiful and very hard rock quarried anciently in Egypt, composed of crystals of white or red ...embedded in a fine red groundmass."[115] Despite Pedone's claim that "the *omphalos* has *not* a 'red' marble disc"[116], porphyry is synonymous with 'purple', and purple is a variety of the red color: it is the color of blood.[117] That is why her assertion that "the text of Anthony from Novgorod has brought more confusion that clarity on the question of the function of the *omphalion*, not only because the records of the pilgrim don't match the actual features of the panel, but also because it's (sic) not so obvious from documentary sources that the imperial coronation took place on the *omphalion*, as Anthony's account tell (sic) us."[118]

This is not how I see: the *omphalion* was the reserved place for the Emperor where he either stood or sat on the throne surrounded with his courtiers. Now since this porphyry slab dated back centuries before the Komneni revolution in titulature which necessitated an extended color-coded system including blue, two colors predominate: red and green. Red is the color of the bigger, and green of the smaller disks which would indicate the standing position of the servitors. The very small discs right at the outer rim of the central porphyry disc would indicate the position of the *koubouklеion* that always surrounded the Emperor.

Pedone has reservations about Antony of Novgorod's testimony dated circa 1200. After quoting his reference to "a red marble stone with a golden throne placed on it [on which] the emperors were crowned" she dismisses it somewhat summarily and unjustly by arguing that "it's not so obvious from documentary sources that the imperial coronation took place on the *omphalion*, as Anthony's account tell us. In reality, the Emperor received the crown from the Patriarch on the ambo or in bema space...after descending from a wooden *podium* (*anabathra*) that perhaps was erected near the *omphalion*."[119] I would argue that confusion was brought about not by Anthony but by Pedone. First of all, and she quotes this crucial piece of evidence herself, the emperors *did not receive their crowns from the Patriarch on the red porphyry slab, they went to get it from it and they returned to it*, as Constantine Porphyrogennetos makes absolutely clear: "When the sovereigns have approached the holy doors and reached the place where the *round porphyry*

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[114] Silvia Pedone, op. cit., 757.

[115] *The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary on Historical Principles* [rev. & ed. by C.T. Onions, 3rd ed., Oxford, 1973), 1631.

[116] Pedone, op.cit., 753.

[117] *The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary*, 1712: "The name of the colour..., that of the dye obtained from species of molluscs...commonly called *Tyrian purple*, which was a crimson."

[118] Pedone, op.cit., 753.

[119] Ibid., 752, n. 8.

slab lies, the patriarch enters alone into the area within the screen, halting beside the holy doors on the left."[120] The Scholar Emperor makes it crystal-clear that the emperor *together with his entourage, i.e. the koubouklеion*, stand on the porphyry slab (earlier identified as circular) under the baldachin", but that "the patricians and *strategoi* together with the senate receive him again in the Consistory"[121], i.e. do not stand together with him and his entourage on the porphyry slab. Thus there is no doubt in my mind that the circular porphyry slab is in the position where the present one is in Hagia Sophia. But is it identical to the original one?

It is not because the original would have been damaged or destroyed when eastern portion of the main dome collapsed in 1346 and, as Pedone points out herself, "it is now widely ssumed by scholars that the original Porphyry slab in the middle of the *sectile*, to which the documentary sources refer...was then replaced with the Gray Granite *rota* that we can see today".[122] This would explain it why Anthony saw a *red porphyry* because the original would have been red: it was *the* color of the emperors.

As Schreiner suggests[123], the close association of the terms *omphalion* and porphyry for the cult of the emperor can be corroborated by the already-mentioned shield of the warrior on which the newly-elected emperor were raised, as portrayed in the famous *Skylitzes* Codex in Madrid. The raising on the shield was the old army ceremony of proclaiming a new emperor that went back to Imperial Rome. This is also the view of Tronzo who argues that the shield was the symbol of the emperor.[124] Note that the color of the shield is *red, and that there is a little central circular part bordered with blue*. The actual ceremony portrays the proclamation of Leo V the Armenian as co-emperor with Michael I Rhangabe in the early 9th century (811-813, 813-820).

The large central red porphyry slab is surrounded with 31 marble *rotae*. There are 9 *red*, 12 *green* (I am counting both Thessalian green and green porphyry together), 4 are the so-called *Marmor Iassensis* which is described as "slanting veins of blood-red on livid white" (nos. 7, 9, 11 and 32), there is one black and white from Aquitaine (which is probably a late replacement), one pink porphyry which I believe to be a later replacement for red porphyry since all the other three biggest outermost rotae are of red porphyry, 3 Sagarian (6, 18, 29), 1 without marble (No. 8). It is thus quite clear that the two colors that absolutely dominate the *omphalos* are red (9+3 = 12) and green (12),

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[120] BC I, 15.

[121] BC I, 73, 163.

[122] Pedone, op. cit., 757, n. 21.

[123] P. Schreiner, "Omphalion und Rota Porphyretica: zum Kaiserzeremoniell in Konstantinopel und Rom" in *Byzance et les Slaves: etudes de civilisation. Mélanges Ivan Dujčev* (Paris, 1979), 402-403.

[124] W. Tronzo, "Shield, Cross and Meadow in the Opus Sectile Pavements of Byzantium, Southern Italy, Rome and Sicily" in *O Italiotes Ellenismos: apo ton Z'ston IB' aiona Mneme Nikou Panagiotake* (Athens, 2001), 241-260.

i.e. 24 (and possibly 25 if we count the pink porphyry) out of 31 rotae (the central being red as explained).

What do the rotae and their colors symbolize? In my opinion there is no question that it has to do with the Imperial coronation: the testimony of Anthony of Novgorod, once properly explained, is too strong and too close to the period of this study, to deprecate or reject. The central red porphyry slab was where the emperor sat (it was big enough to accommodate a throne: 3.19 meters in diameter!). It is quite clear that the other two biggest *rotae*, nos. 27 and 20 (assuming that 27 was originally *red* and was replaced with pink, the closest equivalent) would have been reserved for either the empress or the heir to the throne (*kaisar*) or the co-emperor: they were large enough to accommodate them (1.18 and 1.11 meters in diameter). Perhaps they also had chairs, small thrones, to enable these highest to sit down: note that Constantine Porphyrogennetos refers to *rulers* arriving at the circular porphyry slab. They are also *in front but on the sides of the Imperial throne, as befits people associated with the senior emperor, but inferior in status to him.* It is quite obvious that no other *rota* was big enough to accommodate a chair (the next two biggest ones, nos. 2 and 14, both of red porphyry, were 0.80 and 0.74 meters respectively), thus courtiers and dignitaries would be standing in these places. As we have already established, red and green being *the colors* of the highest officials, including the members of the emperor's *kouboukleion*, they would have taken their place *in a circle around the emperor according to their title and rank.* I agree with Pedone's view that the original *omphalos* had fewer surrounding *rotae* than today, and that it lacked the little discs without border which "now seem rather to fill the background spaces decorated with tessellated elements."[125] Certainly, if, as I suggested, the *omphalos* included a number of courtiers around the seated emperor these little discs of 17 cm or thereabouts could not indicate place for them. In that case we would have only 15 in addition to the central *rota*.

Once having been established as *the* Church for Imperial coronations (it remained so until 1204, and from after 1261 until 1448: the last emperor, Constantine XI was crowned in Mistra) there was no need to duplicate this *omphalon* anywhere else. This explains why it is not found elsewhere. For if the emperors were only crowned in Hagia Sophia almost to the very end, then the sacred space could not be replicated anywhere else.

The Emperor's place of honor on the ground floor of the Great Church was dwarfed both in size and significance by the great dome: under Justinian it was covered inside with shining gold, and later, after the triumph of Orthodoxy over Iconoclasm, a huge mosaic of Christ the Pantokrator was placed inside it, looking down majestically upon all. Unfortunately, we do not know what color His robe was.

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[125] Ibid., 763.

We do know, however, what the colors of Christ's robe are in the famous Deesis in the south gallery of Hagia Sophia: it is blue and red with gold—appropriately so. For gold is reserved for God and Emperor alike, and red is the color of his DIVINE nature. That is why the Mother of God in the same south gallery wears a blue robe, but her child, infant Jesus, wears a *red* robe with gold. The same combination of colors is in the mosaic of Virgin and Christ-Child in the central apse of Hagia Sophia: Blue for Virgin Mary, with an appropriate golden halo, but red/purple for infant Jesus with gold.

Once again it should be emphasized, as Robin Cormack points out, that "S. Sophia, with its interior space covered by a vast dome and with its decorations, represented for the Byzantines the paradigm of a church, what was seen in the inner eye when asked to describe the ideal Christian church".[126] Otto Demus, in his pioneering and seminal work on Byzantine mosaic decoration reduced his observations to a simple but powerful conclusion: "A majestic singleness of purpose runs right through the Byzantine schemes. Their authors seem to have had as their main aim to represent the central formula of Byzantine theology, the Christological dogma, together with its implications in the organization and the ritual of the Byzantine church."[127]

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The Great Church was not only, *the church* in which emperors were crowned during most of Byzantine history; it was also the abode of God. In his path-breaking work, *The Myth of the Eternal Return*, Mircea Eliade pointed out that the architectonic symbolism of the Center of the Universe can be formulated as follows:

1. The Sacred Mountain—where heaven and earth meet—is situated at the center of the world.
2. Every temple or palace—and, by extension, every sacred city or royal residence—is a Sacred Mountain, thus becoming a Center.
3. Being an *axis mundi*, the sacred city or temple is regarded as the meeting point of heaven, earth, and hell.[128]

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[126] Robin Cormack, "Interpreting the Mosaics of S. Sophia at Istanbul" in Robin Cormack, *The Byzantine Eye: Studies in Art and Patronage* (London, 1989), 132.

[127] Otto Demus, *Byzantine Mosaic Decoration: Aspects of Monumental Art in Byzantium* (London, 1947), 5.

[128] Mircea Eliade, *The Myth of the Eternal Return: Cosmos and History* (London, 1989), 12.

Eliade explains that "Mount Tabor, in Palestine, could mean *tabbur*, i.e. navel, *omphalos*. Mount Gerizim, in the center of Palestine, was undoubtedly invested with the prestige of the Center, for it is called 'navel of the earth' (*tabbur eres;* cf. Judges 9: 37: '...See there come people down by the middle [Hebrew, navel] of the land...'). A tradition preserved by Peter Comestor related that at the summer solstice the sun casts no shadow on the 'Fountain of Jacob' (near Gerizim). And indeed, Peter continues, 'sunt qui dicunt locum illum esse umbilicum terrae nostrae habitabilis.'"["there are those who say that this place is the navel of our inhabitable earth"][129]

The Byzantine theology is centred on Christ's Transfiguration on Mount Tabor. As Eric D. Perl points out,

> for the Byzantines this is not, so to speak, "just another" of Christ's many miracles. It is rather a central act in God's plan of salvation, and the feast of the Transfiguration (August 6), like that of Theophany, is one of the great feasts in the Byzantine calendar. The event has a twofold significance, but the two aspects are in truth one. It is, first, the revelation of God, for what the disciples see is the *divinity* of Christ, the light of his Godhead; second, it is the deification of man, for it is the *human* body of Christ, that human body which is God, that shines with this divine light. In the Byzantine view, deification is transfiguration. For man, and for the whole world, to be deified is to shine with that light which is the presence of God, which indeed is God himself...Those who are saved, the Byzantines say, shall see light and be light, see God and be God. The hymns for the feast of the Transfiguration clearly set out this twofold aspect of the event:
>
> Today Christ on Mount Tabor has changed the darkened nature of Adam, and filling it with brightness He has made it godlike.
>
> Christ has shone as lightning with glory upon the mountain and has filled the world with light.
>
> Now the invisible has become visible to the apostles; on Mount Tabor the Godhead has shone forth before them in the flesh.
>
> Today on Tabor in the manifestation of Thy Light, O Word, Thou unaltered Light from the Light of the unbegotten Father, we have seen the Father as Light and the Spirit as Light, guiding with light the whole creation.[130]

This infinite Light that knows no evening [and that] ineffably appeared in unapproachable glory on Mount Tabor is

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[129] Ibid., 13.

[130] Eric D. Perl, "... 'That Man Might Become God': Central Themes in Byzantine Theology" in Linda Safran, ed., *Heaven on Earth: Art and the Church in Byzantium* (University Park, 2009), 50-51 quoting *The Festal Menaion* [trans. by Mother Mary and Archimandrite Kallistos Ware] (London, 1969), 469, 486, 490, 491, 495.

> the reason, at the theological level, for the magnificent adornments of Byzantine churches...[T]he church is the place where the revelation of God and the deification of man really occurs. The Church, living in her liturgy, *is* the revelation, the realization of the Kingdom of God, the world united to and filled with God. The Church is the body of Christ, and we must remember that, as Saint John of Damascus says, the body of God is God, the world deified. The church building, then, is the image, and therefore the presence and manifestation of this reality. Indeed, the Byzantines believed...that in celebrating the liturgy they were taking a step outside of time into the eternal Kingdom of God. Thus the prayers in the Divine Liturgy give thanks to God for "*having bestowed* upon us Thy Kingdom *which is to come*", for in the liturgy the Kingdom to come is already present.[131] [my emphasis]

This Kingdom which is to come will be presided by Christ as the Pantokrator, the Ruler of the Universe, as the Emperor of Emperors and Lord of Lords [*ho basileus ton basileuonton kai kirios ton kirieuonton*].[132] And that is the reason why "the Byzantines always envisioned Christ in glory, as the King of the Universe, the Pantokrator or Almighty: not because they denied or ignored his humanity, but because it is *deified* humanity, the humanity that is God."[133]

We know that a huge mosaic of Christ the Pantokrator was placed inside the central dome during the tenth-century restoration and would have been in place during the reign of the Komneni. It thus dominated His Church. And it was a preview of that Second Coming when "on that day, the righteous will shine with one brightness and glory. They will become bright by receiving that light..."[134]

No one described that day better than John Donne, that most 'Byzantine' of all the English metaphorical poets; and no description fits better the timelessness and unsurpassing beauty of Hagia Sophia as the Abode of God:

> In heaven the righteous... shall awake... And into that gate they shall enter, and in that house they shall dwell, where there shall be no Cloud nor Sun, no darknesse nor dazzling but one equall light, no noyse nor silence but one equall musick, no fears nor hopes but one equall possession, no foes nor friends but one equall communion and Identity, no ends nor beginnings but one equall eternity.[135]

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131 Ibid., 53, 55.

132 BC 1, 276.

133 Perl, op. cit., 43.

134 Ibid., 55 quoting Nicholas Cabasils, *The Life in Christ* [trans. by C.J. de Catanzaro] (Crestwood, New York, 1974), 146.

135 David L. Edwards, *John Donne: Man of Flesh and Spirit* (Grand Rapids, 2001), 350 quoting from George Potter and Evelyn Simpson, eds., *The Sermons of John Donne* (U. of California, 1953-1962, 10 vols.), Vol. 8, 191.

4

THE GREAT PALACE

IT IS unfortunate that the Great Palace itself, as a complex of buildings, has not survived the Ottoman conquest: whatever is left of it lies buried under the rubble and foundations of the later city. So we can only reconstruct it. Any reconstruction is, of course, only an *approximation*: we cannot be absolutely sure, but we have to work with what we can reconstruct. According to Paspates and Metcalfe,

> the Palace of the Byzantine Emperors was not a single building like those of modern European rulers, but consisted of a number of different structures originally founded by Constantine the Great. Others were subsequently added by successive Emperors, or built on the foundations of palaces which had either fallen in ruins, or been pulled down to build larger ones. Hence the many passages or galleries which connected the various parts of the Palace. Luitprand praises not only the splendour, but also the number of the palaces. Within the Palace precincts, the Emperors also built many churches and chapels, where the majority of the ceremonies detailed by Constantine Porphyrogennetos were performed. These palaces are often referred to collectively as *to palation*. For a clearer understanding of them I shall divide the palaces into two classes: 1. Those which were connected together, and 2. Those which were detached. The first class I subdivide as follows: 1. The Palace of the Chrysotriklinos. 2. The Palace of the Triconchos. 3. The Palace of the Daphne.[1]

According to Paspates & Metcalfe, the Chrysotriklinos was "the most magnificent of the Imperial buildings...Constantine Porphyrogennetos mentions this hall more frequently than any other of the Imperial buildings, and...often refers to it as 'the palace.' It was built from the foundation by Justin II nephew of Justinian (d. 578). It had eight chambers communicating with a central hall, which was domed, and lighted by sixteen windows. Here stood the throne of the Emperor..."[2] This throne was most impressive:

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[1] A.G. Paspates & W. Metcalfe, *The Great Palace of Constantinople* (London, 1893), 180-181.
[2] Ibid., 181-182.

> The emperor himself was seated on a couch decorated with two head rests. The couch was raised on a high platform and overlaid with gold. Under his feet was a stool. A magnificent robe gave him an air of great distinction. Very proudly he held up his head and puffed out his chest (an effort that caused his cheeks to take on a deep red tinge), while his eyes with their faraway gaze, showed plainly that he was thinking profoundly and wholly given up to his own meditations.[3]

No other place is mentioned quite as often as Chrysotriklinos: 105 times (with additional 8 mentions of its porches etc.), more often than even Hagia Sophia (90 times)! Its central hall was used to receive the foreign princes:

> On either side of the Emperor sat any princes who might be present. The north side of the Chrusotriklinos was called the left, and the south the right, because at ceremonies and banquets the Emperor always stood or sat facing the East. At the east end of the left hand side of the Chrysotriklinos was the Chamber or Chapel of S. Theodore, where the Emperors robed on the occasion of a reception. A curtain was hung before this chamber. Here the Emperor's crown was kept, and Moses' rod was preserved along with many vessels of gold and other precious materials, which Constantine Porphyrogennetos enumerates. The Emperor's mantle, and all the rest of his imperial robes were kept in the Chrysotriklinos.[4]

Liutprand of Cremona who was in Constantinople on official business in 949 added this to the above description:

> Before the emperor's throne stood a tree; it was made of bronze and gilded all over. There were birds of different kinds in its branches, and they also were made of gilded bronze; each sang its own kind of song, and together they formed a chorus. The emperor's throne was made with such skill that at one time it was level with the ground, and at another it was raised high up. It was guarded by what seemed enormous lions; it was not possible to say if they were of bronze or wood, but they were gilded all over. These opened their mouths and roared, moving their tongues and beating the ground with their tails. Here I was brought into the emperor's presence, leaning on the shoulders of two eunuchs. The lions roared when I appeared, and the birds sang according to their kind...Three times I lay prone at full length on the ground in the act of homage, and then I raised my head. Behold, the emperor, whom I had

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[3] J. Harris, *Constantinople: Capital of Byzantium* (London, 2007), 67.

[4] Paspates & Metcalfe, op. cit., 182-183.

just seen before seated at ground level, now appeared to me dressed in different robes and raised almost to the ceiling of the palace.[5]

Heatherington comments that "this description also demonstrates the extent to which Byzantium had by the tenth century become Orientalized."[6] This is true but not because, as Heatherington argues, the Byzantines had been living by that time with Arabs as next door neighbours, but because already by the time of Constantine the Great the Roman Empire itself had undergone Orientalization which was symbolized most of all by the exaltation of the emperor as almost divine. It is true that since the time of Augustus emperors were divine, but with the adoption of Christianity such a divine status was formerly incompatible with Christian belief: after all thousands of Christians gave up their lives willingly rather than worship Roman emperors as gods.

This divinisation of the emperor was above all of Persian provenance as well as the practice of prostrating oneself on the ground before the emperor, the *proskinesis*, which suggested the relationship between the master and the slave: "The act of prostration...involved falling to the knees, touching the ground with the forehead, and stretching out the arms in supplication and adoration."[7]

In Chrysotriklinos, "the centrality of the image of Christ for imperial ideology...is conveyed by the pun on the name of the hall: *Chryso*triklinos, or Golden Hall, becomes *Christo*triklinos, or Christ's Hall. When the emperor sat on the throne in the Chrysotriklinos, he assumed a position directly below the image of Christ. This arrangement established a visual parallel between Christ as emperor of Heaven and the emperor as Christ's representative on earth...[I]n Byzantine political theory, the earthly and heavenly courts were understood as 'interpenetrating' realms: The emperor was second in rank below Christ in the heavenly court, but first within the earthly court; the emperor ruled below as Christ ruled above. When the emperor mounted the throne beneath the image of Christ in the Chrysotriklinos, he became the earthly reflection of the true emperor in Heaven...Accounts of middle Byzantine court ceremonial make clear the essential role that this performative juxtaposition of Christ and emperor played in rituals conducted in the throne room. The Christomimetic scene [was made up of] high-ranking courtiers [who] constituted the primary audience for these imperial displays."[8]

Though it was used to receive foreign guests and envoys in diplomatic audiences the Golden Hall was primarily used for entertaining. In Chrysotriklinos

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[5] P. Hetherington, *Byzantium: City of Gold, City of Faith* [with photographs by Werner Forman](London, 1983), 36-37.

[6] Ibid., 37.

[7] Robin Cormack, *Writing in Gold: Byzantine Society and Its Icons* (London, 1985), 259.

[8] Alicia Walker, op.cit., 161.

> the great golden table...was oblong. The Emperor and Patriarch had their places at the upper end of the table looking to the East, at the other end the guests gathered in a body as for instance, at the banquet on Easter Monday. The Patriarch usually waited for the Emperor in the chamber next to the Pantheon. When the courtiers banqueted with the Emperor in the Chrysotriklinos, they sat at separate tables, while the Emperor sat at the golden table...[...] Only five dignitaries had the right of dining with the Emperor at his own table in Chrysotriklinos—the Patriarch, the Caesar, the Nobilissimus, the Kourapalates and the Zosta Patricia. The seat of honor was on the Emperor's left. The same order was observed in the Hall of Justinian. The Patriarch, however, sat with the Emperor at his table on all occasions. Theophilos made a silver table, which C. Porhyrogennetos often mentions, 'for the accomodation of the guests and the adornment of the Palace,' in which so many foreigners and courtiers feasted with the Emperor. A great chandelier hung from the centre of Hall over the table.[9]

The second most important structure was the Triklinos of the 19 Couches or 19 Akkoubita. Unlike the Chrysotriklinos which was situated in the southeastern end of the Palace complex, close to the Sea of Marmara, the latter was next to the outer walls separating the Palace complex from the Hippodrome. It was the principal hall for the banquets taking place during the major feasts. It name is derived from the 19 couches [*akkoubita*] used for the banquets. Philotheos, in his *Kterologion* [incorporated into Constantine Porhyrogennetos' *Book of Ceremonies*], gives a complete description of such a feast, including the list of those who were invited to dine with the Emperor:

> [O]n this splendid and glorious day of the Nativity of Christ, when it is necessary for you to summon to the imperial table...to dine with our Christ-loving emperors, the chief members of the imperial senate, 12 in number, namely the *magistroi, praipositoi*, proconsuls, patricians, *strategoi* and holders of high office...If *strategoi* happen to have been invited, let them be led in in their particular *skaramangia* with the *droungarios* of the Watch. It is necessary for you to summon to the most precious table of the Hall of the Ninteen Couches two *magistroi,* six proconsuls, patricians and *strategoi*, two Bulgarian guests, and two holders of high office from the rank of the logothete of the *stratiotikon* and below, to dine together with the emperor, 12 guests in number, after the pattern of the apostolic twelve. It is necessary to form them in a line as a procession in the order of the title of each, having put on their particular chlamyses fastened at the front, and having put on their sandals, and to lead them in after the arrival of both the imperial household staff who will stand in attendance and chanters. [...][I]t is necessary for you to summon to the couches on both sides all the senate who wear the sandal, that is to say, imperial secretaries, chartu-

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[9] Ibid., 185-187.

laries of the great bureaux, imperial notaries of the said bureaux, provided they are from the *patharokandidatoi* and below, consuls, twice-serving consuls, *kometes* of the *scholia*, silentiaries, *protiktores*, *tyche*-bearers, sceptre-bearers, and title-holders of the various regiments, 168 in number, and 24 of the Hagarenes in the Praetorium, 12 from among the Bulgarian guests, and poor brethren, 12 in number...[A]fter the arrival of the guests who are summoned first for the imperial table to lead in everyone as follows: all the title-holders in their ceremonial dress, chlamyses and sandals, in a line according to their rank and office...[10]

On the second through the tenth day the number of invited guests is 216 (as emended by Oikonomides[11] who changes 240 in the Bury edition of 1911[12]). It should be pointed out that ali the guests invited on the second day onwards belonged to the lower ranks and offices of the bureaucracy (mostly, without invited Bulgarian guests and 'the poor' etc.), with the exception of those invited to the imperial table itself (already mentioned) on the second day: "*magistroi*, proconsuls, patricians, holders of high office and household *protospathario*, 12 in number, with the *domestikos* of the *scholia* especially being counted among them as prescribed, and to lead them all in to their couch dressed in their specific apparel and wearing chlamyses, and the household *protospatharioi* in their particular *spekia* and deep-red *sagia* fastened at the front..."[13] On the sixth day the Archbishop of Constantinople with twelve abbots of the monasteries were invited. Likewise, on the seventh day, in addition to the proconsuls, patricians, *strategoi*, and holders of high office, the eparch of the City and the *droungarios* of the fleet were invited. On the ninth day, in addition to the holders of high office mentioned above the chiefs [*demarchs*] of the two factions (the Blues and the Greens) were invited, together with "all the senators who wear the sandal..."[14]

The above information gives us a precious clue that the number of the so-called 'sandalled' Senate, i.e. the middle-tiered bureaucracy, was 168, which is more realistic than previous estimate in the hundreds if not thousands. Kazhdan and McCormick have identified the 'sandalled' Senate as "middle-ranking bureaucrats" and "civil servants".[15] The Senatorial ranks proper start with the title of *protospatharios*, and thus it seems that all those below are, to use Neville's remark, "the references to the people of senatorial

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[10] BC, 741-743.

[11] N. Oikonomidès, *Les Listes de Préséance Byzantines des IXe et Xe Siècles. Introduction, texte, traduction et commentaire* (Paris, 1972), 174, n. 160.

[12] J.B. Bury, *The Imperial Administrative System in the Ninth Century* (London, 1911).

[13] BC, 744-745.

[14] BC, 751-752.

[15] Kazhdan & McCormick, "Social Composition of the Byzantine Court" in Henry McGuire, ed., *Byzantine Court Culture from 8219-1204* (Washington, D.C., 1997), 180.

rank and to those participating in the senatorial company do not seem clearly to distinguish one subset among the title-holders."[16] Neville then quotes Kazhdan and McCormick to point out, that "in the *Ceremony Book,* the terms for the senate and senators 'seem sometimes to encompass all ranking members of court; at others they seem to designate non-military officials."[17]

The Hall of the Nineteen Couches was a place where elaborate banquets were held during the twelve days from Christmas Day through to and including the Epiphany itself, "but excluding Day 11, usually the eve of Epiphany, when there was a supper in the Hall of Justinian."[18] On Christmas Day "the chief members of the imperial senate, 12 in number, namely the *magistroi, praipositoi,* proconsuls, patricians, *strategoi* and holders of high office"[19] were invited. Again, it is made clear that the *strategoi* are set apart: "If *strategoi* happen to have been invited, let them be led in in their particular *skaramangia*[20] with the *droungarios* of the Watch."[21]

The nineteen couches were set in such a way that nine were on each side with the head table, the nineteenth, being reserved for the emperor and his guests. Now we come to the crucial but very tangled statement: "[I]t is necessary...to summon...all the senate who wear the sandal, that is to say, imperial secretaries, chartularies of the great bureaux, imperial notaries of the said bureaux, provided they are from the *spatharokandidatoi* and below, consuls, twice-serving consuls, *kometes* of the *scholai,* silentiaries, *protiktores, tyche*-bearers, sceptre-bearers, and title-holders of the various regiments, 168 in number..."[22] The number of senate members, 168, thus would fill 14 tables (with 12 guests each). The text is clear that the whole senate is being meant [*sinkleton pasan*]. Yet, it is also clear that what we have in this so-called sandalled senate is the middle and lower part of this body. The top tier of the Senate was indicated above as "the chief members of the imperial senate[23], 12 in number, namely the *magistroi, praipositoi,* proconsuls, patricians, *strategoi* and holders of high office.

What should be made clear to a reader is that these serried ranks of invited guests, carefully ushered according to their status, to the Imperial banquets were the equivalent of a large corporation's Christmas party for its employees: they had to be made to feel important, not just mere cogs in the ma-

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16 L. Neville, *Authority in Byzantine Provincial Society, 950-1100,* 15.

17 Ibid., 15 quoting Kazhdan & McCormick, op. cit., 174 n. 37.

18 BC, 744, n. 3.

19 BC, 741.

20 BC, 834: "Skaramangion: a belted tunic with long full sleeves and with slits up the front and back or sides, a caftan; often worn under the *sagion*; it was a less ceremonial dress than the *chlamys*."

21 BC, 741.

22 BC, 742-743.

23 The Greek reads: "*megistanas ek tes vasilikes sinkletou ton arithmon ib*".

chine (which is what they essentially were). But there was another, much more important aspect to these annual feasts in the Hall of the 19 Couches: they were a ritual recreating Christ's role on earth as both Man and God: a banquet was reminiscent of the Last Supper, and thus of Christ's time on earth as man, but it was even more illustrative of the coming Kingdom of Heaven where Christ as God presided over a thousand years of *parousia*, of a millennium. The feasts in this and other halls were the pinnacle of ritual which emphasized the emperor's quasi-divine, Christ-like position and role. Together with the processions and public appearances, above all in the Hippodrome, they were not a mere ritual, but the very core of Byzantium: an elaborate attempt to recreate the Kingdom of God on earth as a (pale) copy of the one in Heaven. To many Western and even Eastern (such as Arabic) visitors it might have seemed endless, boring, tedious, and, not fully comprehending its nature and significance, even pointless. But to the Byzantines it was the essence of their lives.

It was all there was to be in a deeper sense.

The Hall of the Nineteen Couches caught the attention of all visitors more than anything else:

> no spot in the Palace precincts is mentioned so often...[I]t is frequently called the Great Hall. According to Kodinos, it was built by Constantine the Great. [...] At the Imperial table the chiefs of the Blue and Green factions stood on the right and left respectively, along with many of the members. [...] The deceased Emperors lay in state in this Hall; and here the clergy of S. Sophia and the Senate met together. All the Emperors were interred in churches or monasteries outside the Palace, with the exception of John Tzimiskes, who was buried at the Bronze Gate. The writers of the Continuation of Theophanes thus narrate the ceremonies at the interment of Constantine VII Porphyrogennetos: "Having washed the body, they set it in the Hall of the Nineteen Couches, and honouring it with psalms, straightway bore it out, and placed at the Bronze Gate, where the arch priest and priests, the magistrates, patricians, and the whole Senate exchanged a final embrace. Then the Master of Ceremonies, as was his wont, called out, 'Come forth, O King. The King of Kings and Lord of Lords summons thee.' Whereupon the great multitude raised shouts and shrieks and lamentations. When he had called this three times, they raised the prince, and bore him from the Imperial house to the Thoroughfare (Mese), and so to the church of the Holy Apostles.'"[24]

Those emperors, like Constantine Porphyrogennetos, who were born in the Great Palace, were known as *porphyrogennetos* (or *porphyrogenneta* as in case of Anna Komnena). Their birth took place in a place called Porphyra. Anna Komnena explains: "This *porphyra* is a room in the palace built in the

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[24] Paspates & Metcalfe, *The Great Palace of Constantinople*, 249-250, 253-254.

form of a complete square from floor to ceiling, but the latter ends in a pyramid. The room affords a view of the sea and harbour where the stone oxen and the lions stand. Its floor is paved with marble and the walls are covered with marble panels. The stone used was not of the ordinary kind, nor marble which can be more easily obtained but at greater expense; it was in fact casually acquired in Rome by former emperors. This particular marble is generally of a purple colour throughout, but with white spots like sand sprinkled over it. It was for this, I suppose, that our forefathers called the room *porphyra*."[25]

Being born in a purple chamber gave a male child a head start, but it did not guarantee his succession as emperor. For Byzantium was not (in theory) a *dynastic* empire in which a system of primogeniture (or something similar) held sway. It was in theory (and more often than in practice) an *elective* monarchy as already explained.

Gilbert Dagron, who had investigated the imperial office in Byzantium in greater detail than anyone else, points this out very vividly:

> Foreigners who visited Constantinople or who observed Byzantium from afar were no doubt impressed by the pomp that surrounded the imperial office, but also surprised by its chronic instability. A Chinese traveller of the seventh-eighth century noted: "Their kings are not men who last. They choose the most capable and they put him on the throne; but if a misfortune or something out of the ordinary happens in the Empire, or if the wind or the rain arrive at the wrong season, then they at once depose the emperor and put another in his place." In the middle of the ninth century, the Khazars dispatched an envoy to Constantine/Cyril, who was arriving in their country to evangelise it, and this 'astute and clever' man asked the missionary, 'Why do you persist in the bad habit of always taking as your emperors different person, coming from different families? We, for our part, do it according to family." Cyril replied by quoting the example of David, who succeeded to Saul, though not of his family but chosen by God."[26]

Byzantium's next-door neighbours, the Arabs, noted this as well. Thus Marwazi says that "when (the king) has fought an enemy and come back in triumph and victory, his rank and position in the kingdom grow. If, however, he has been defeated and proved too weak, he is dismissed from kingship and has no share in it and someone else is appointed in his stead."[27]

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[25] AK, 188.

[26] G. Dagron, *Emperor and Priest: The Imperial Office in Byzantium* (Cambridge, 2003), 13-14 quoting *Xin T'ang shu*, ch. 198, ed. Zhonghua shuju (Beijing, 1975, 5313-14 quoted in F. Hirth, *China and the Roman Orient* (Hong Kong, 1985), 52; "Life of Constantine-Cyril" 9 in F. Dvornik, *Les Légendes de Constantin et de Méthode vues de Byzance* (Prague, 1933), 360.

[27] V. Minorsky, "Marvazi on the Byzantines" in *Annuaire de l'Institut de philologie et d'histoire orientales et slaves* X [*Mélanges Henri Grégoire* II](Brussels, 1950), 460 reprinted in Vladimir Minorsky, *Medievan Iran and its Neighbours* (Variorum, London, 1982), VIII, 460.

Because the Imperial office was at least in theory *elective* being born in the Purple Chamber did not automatically guarantee a smooth succession to the throne. Under the first three Komneni (1081-1180) of the four constituent elements that made up Imperial power [*basileia*], by far the strongest was the military aristocracy which totally surpassed and supplanted the civilian one:

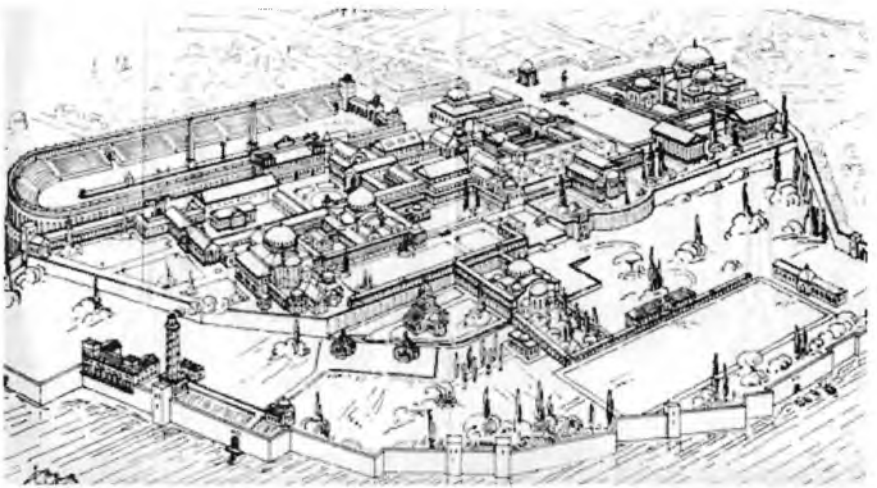


ILLUSTRATION THREE: THE RECONSTRUCTION
OF THE ORIGINAL GREAT PALACE

> In theory at least, the Byzantine emperor was elected; his electors were the Senate, the Army, and the Byzantine people, and before he could be crowned these three bodies all had to acclaim him as their new emperor. Although this was largely a formality, it was this concept that lay behind the 'palace revolutions' that played such a large part in Byzantine history. Of the three elective bodies, the Senate was the weakest. [...] Of far more importance was the Army. In the tenth century, as in the twentieth, any ruler had to be supported by the military before he could reign with confidence. [...] The pre-eminence of the Army was also embedded in the system of government; for example, the Army was one of three bodies that acclaimed a new emperor—the Navy had no such voice in official state practice. Even the Byzantine civil service was organized to some extent along military lines; civil servants wore a form of dress that could almost be called a uniform, and their 'badge of office' was a rather military looking belt. Indeed, entering the civil service was called 'taking the belt'.[28]

It was a very delicate balancing act.

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[28] Heatherington, *Byzantium*, 28, 63.

5

CHRIST THE PANTOKRATOR:

A MAUSOLEUM FOR THE KOMNENI

EUSTATHIOS OF THESSALONIKA accused the monks of despising the bishops and claiming that "if there were no bishops, they would be everything in the world and the only people to whom churches would be subject would be *those dressed all over in black*."[1] [my emphasis] It is not possible to exaggerate the importance of monks and monasticism in the history of Byzantium. As Paul Hetherington put it so well:

> To establish a true picture of life in Constantinople it is important to realize how greatly monks—and indeed all those whose lives were clearly dominated by religious ideals—were respected. The hundreds of monasteries which are known to have existed in the city held at any one time scores of thousands of monks. While this was symptomatic of the importance of religion throughout Europe during the medieval period, monasteries eree much more in evidence for a much longer period in Constantinople than in Western Europe, where the numerical expansion of the monasteries was considerably later. The popularity of monks and monastic life showed itself in a number of ways. All the Church leaders of higher rank were drawn from the monasteries... The advice of senior clergy was usually valued, and an emperor would only ignore it at his peril. In this respect the Byzantine tradition is closely related to...Palestine [where] the prophets of the Old Testament could use the weight of their moral authority to oppose the king. But besides being valued for both theological and political wisdom, the company of monks was often sought by rich and cultured members of Byzantine society for the intellectual pleasures of conversation and discussion that it provided. Monastic life offered one of the principal career openings for any well-educated man...The intellectual resources of the major monasteries of Constantinople—in terms of their libraries—would have been supe-

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[1] M. Angold, "Church and Society: Iconoclasm and After" in John Haldon, ed., *A Social History of Byzantium* (Oxford, 2009), 243 quoting from T.L.F. Tafel, *Eustathii opuscula* (Frankfurt am Main, 1832)[reprint Amsterdam, 1964], 262. 12-15.

rior to any other of the city's institutions except, perhaps the library of the Patriarchate.[2]

But, as Hetherington points out, monasticism also represented the highest aspiration and fulfilment of Byzantine society and one of the two or three cardinal aspects of its millennial civilization:

> The popularity of the monastic life was doubtless partly due to the security it provided, but probably even more to the Byzantine view of existence in this world. A person's earthly life was regarded by the Byzantines as important only to the extent that it provided the chance to prepare for life beyond the grave; to pass one's years as a monk or nun, or even as a hermit, would provide a framework for existence likely to ensure the passage of the soul to heaven after death. Indeed, a Greek phrase for embracing the religious life in any form is 'leaving the world', as if the final transition from life to death were already made. The Orthodox Church has a special order of service for the burial of priests and monks, which is much longer and more discursive than that for laymen; frequently during the service reference is made to the imminence of death...: 'We are all constrained to come to that same abode, and shall hide ourselves beneath a gravestone...For such is our life here...a mockery upon the earth...We are a fleeting dream, a breath which endures for no time, the flight of a passing bird, a ship which leaves no trace of its path upon the sea...'[3]

This is echoed by Mircea Eliade: "In the Eastern Church, one finds two complementary tendencies, apparently opposed, which become accentuated with time: on the one hand, the role and *ecclesial* value of the community of the faithful; on the other, the prestigious authority of the ascetic monks and contemplatives. While in the West the hierarchy will show a certain reserve with regard to the contemplatives and the mystics, in the East these latter will enjoy a great respect in the eyes of the faithful and the ecclesiastical authorities."[4]

In his brilliant account of Byzantium Cyril Mango brings to the fore the central paradox for any researcher trying to define Byzantine monasticism: "No other aspect of Byzantine life is as amply documented as monasticism. We possess hundreds of biographies of holy monks, countless meditations, epistles, sermons, exhortations and justifications dealing with monastic condition. We have, in addition, a number of rules, disciplinary canons, imperial edicts, even a considerable body of archival material. Yet, in spite of this overabundant harvest of literature, it is no easy matter to give an account of

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[2] P. Hetherington, *Byzantium: City of Gold, City of Faith*, 99.

[3] Ibid., 99-100.

[4] Mircea Eliade, *A History of Religious Ideas*, Vol. 3: *From Muhammad to the Age of Reforms* [trans. by Alf Hiltebeitel and Diane Apostolos-Cappadona](Chicago, 1985), 57-58.

Byzantine monasticism in terms that would be understandable to us today."[5] He starts by pointing out what it really was: "[M]onasticism was a lay movement."[6] In this study I will not attempt either to trace the origins and rise of monasticism from Egypt (presumably, though Syria has been suggested as well), nor its overwhelming role in the political, social, and ecclesiastical history of Byzantium from Constantine the Great to the Komneni. This is a story that must be told in terms of not only Byzantium alone, but of all of the Middle East, whether under Byzantine (until c. 641) or Arab control. But there is no question that monastic input into the great controversies, Trinitarian and above all Christological, which rocked the whole area from Constantinople in the north to Alexandria in the south, from Rome in the west to Antioch in the east, was overwhelming and in many (if not most) cases decisive. For it could not be otherwise: by the time these controversies came to dominate the history of the Christian East the monks already established the control over all the higher offices of the Church, and imposed its outlook on the rest. To write the history of the Christian Church in the East between Constantine and Alexios I Komnenos without the monks would be not just a gross distortion, but nonsense above all.

Mango states that early monasticism was expected to be an extramunicipal affair, and indeed there were early prohibitions (ineffectual as it proved) to keep the monks outside of the (particularly major) cities. But the monks would be kept at a leash: they came to the cities, and established themselves in a big way. In doing so they became particularly close to the lowest and poorest classes of the cities, and this popular alliance proved to be one of considerable not just moral, but physical strength. It meant that the monks, whenever they felt that one of their favored theological issues was at stake, could mobilize popular support, particularly in the large cities, like Alexandria, Antioch, and, of course, Constantinople. This alliance between the monks and the city populace was something of a permanent feature in middle-period Byzantium, including the Komneni period, and was of great importance for both the political and ecclesiastical affairs of the empire.

For monasteries were much more than just oases of piety in the otherwise imperfectly Christian world; they were also major centers of learning, secular as well as religious. It is true that they put their own indelible stamp on whatever they did, and their libraries and monastic holdings reflected this monastic preference. As such they were pivotal in transmitting the Christian lore to converts to Orthodoxy, such as Kievan Russia, and the Byzantine heritage Russia received at its baptism and thereafter was overwhelmingly (al-

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[5] C. Mango, *Byzantium: The Empire of New Rome* (New York, 1980), 105.

[6] Ibid., 105.

most exclusively) monastic in origin and orientation.[7] Monasteries were one of the two foci of learning in Byzantium (the other being the major cities, above all Constantinople, but also Thessalonika and Adrianople in the Balkans, and Trebizond and Antioch in Asia Minor). The monks were responsible for copying and thus preserving manuscripts that otherwise may not have survived from classical times. In his statistical study of the social status of Byzantine scribes between 800 and 1500[8], Cutler used the information on Byzantine scribes to arrive at some statistical conclusions. He emphasized that his findings are based on the number of calligraphers and not the number of manuscripts known to Vogel. A. Dain, on the other hand, suggested that "a relatively restricted number of manuscripts—about 55,000, including modern examples—survive".[9] In my opinion, this is just an estimate, an educated guess, but it will have to do. The term *kalligraphos* as calculated by Vogel is used by clergy, monks as well as laymen. Vogel recorded 4,752 manuscripts (though the new edition of this work is probably going to include more), but since some scribes are responsible for copying more than one work, the actual sample consists of 1,817. As Cutler says, "this...is the size of my data base."[10]

All those who want to check the calculations done by Cutler should read his brief article, and such strictures as he warns of are quite familiar to statisticians. The important qualification he makes is this: "What errors may exist...derive from my intention to record the *minimally* certain number of individuals in the columns devoted to a specific status. To this end I have placed under the rubric Uncertain all those subscriptions that do not justify inclusion in the 'certain' columns... It will be evident that the potential for inaccureacy is greater for the ninth and tenth century than for later periods."[11] Thus, it does not affect our treatment, limited to the period of the 11th and 12th centuries. Comparing his findings with those of K. and S. Lake[12] it is clear that, if anything, the Lakes give an even greater prominence to monks, as the comparative table shows:

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[7] Z. Zlatar, "The Transmission of Texts and Byzantine Legacy to Kievan Rus' (A Re-examination of the Typology of Culture)" in *Australian Slavonic and East European Studies* Vol. 2, No. 2 (Melbourne, 1988), 1-27.

[8] A. Cutler, "The Social Status of Byzantine Scribes, 800-1500: A Statistical Analysis based on Vogel-Gardthausen" in *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 74 (1981), 328-334 basing his calculations on Marie Vogel and V. Gardthausen, *Die griechischen Schreiber des Mittelalters und der Renaissance* (1909).

[9] A. Dain, *Les manuscripts* [2nd ed.](Paris, 1964), 77.

[10] Cutler, op. cit., 329.

[11] Ibid., 329-330.

[12] K. and S. Lake, *Dated Greek Minuscule Manuscripts to the Year 1200*, Index Volume (Boston, 1945).

TABLE 1: NUMBER OF BYZANTINE SCRIBES, CLASSIFIED BY STATUS

Vogel/Lakes	No. Scribes	ECC*	Monks	Lay	Uncertain
9th Century	31	9	10	4	8
10th Century	107	13	55	10	29
11th Century	219	34	111	32	42
12th Century	214	45	90	40	39
13th Century	278	82	80	64	52
14TH Century	445	115	115	112	103
15th Century	523	140	86	205	92
Total Vogel	1817	438	547	467	365
% Vogel	100	24	30	26	20
Lakes %		8.8	64.7	8.8	17.6
Difference		-15	35	-17	-2

SOURCE: A. Cutler, "The Social Status of Byzantine Scribes, 800-1500: A Statistical Analysis based on Vogel-Gardthausen" in *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 74 (1981), 330, 333.
*ECC = Ecclesiastics

The above figures have been corrected by Vogel and the percentages he gives are a better indication of the role of the monks:

TABLE 2: PERCENTAGES OF TOTAL NUMBER OF BYZANTINE SCRIBES

Vogel Century	Ecclesiastics and Monks	Monks Alone	Lay Persons (Inc. Unknown)
9th Century	61.29	32.26	12.90
10th Century	63.55	51.40	9.35
11th Century	66.21	50.68	14.61
12th Century	63.08	42.06	18.69
13th Century	58.27	28.78	23.02
14th Century	51.69	25.84	25.17
15th Century	43.21	16.44	39.20

SOURCE: A. Cutler, "The Social Status of Byzantine Scribes, 800-1500: A Statistical Analysis based on Vogel-Gardthausen" in *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 74 (1981), 334.

Basing our conclusion on the above figures, it is clear that the monks provided a half of all scribes in the 11th century, and over 40% in the 12th century, and that the role of the religious establishment was responsible for 2/3 of all scribes in the 11th, and 63% in the 12th century. The role of secular writers, such as Anna Komnena (though she could be seen as a religious and even monastic, to be exact as a nun, writer since she wrote *The Alexiad* when in

monastic retirement), was rather limited until after the fall of Constantinople in 1204 and particularly in the 15th century. During the period of this study the monks were the dominant group among the Byzantine scribes: "First, the dominance of the profession by ecclesiastics and monks is quite evident: not until the fifteenth century do these groups, taken together, cease to make up a majority of scribes. They preponderated in the Macedonian era...although the bulk of this contribution was made by monks who in both the tenth and eleventh centuries, represent more than half of all calligraphers. *Grosso modo*, this confirms the Lakes' view that 'the majority of scribes state that they are monks.'[13] Yet it is remarkable that within the period covered by the Lakes' survey the proportion of monastic calligraphers begins to slide. Already in the twelfth century they constitute less than a majority of the total number of scribes..."[14]

Though there were great regional centers of monasticism in the provinces, like Mt. Athos and Mt. Olympus in Bythinia, the leading, the wealthiest and the most prestigious (if that is the right word) of all were in the capital. It is not possible to make an estimate as to how many monasteries (and nunneries) existed in the Byzantine Empire as a whole under the Komneni, but we can try to estimate their number in Constantinople. This is not quite so simple, and there may be some errors, but it is worth a try. First of all, we shall limit the number to those which still existed in c. 1181 when Alexios I came to power, and to those that survived to or were founded before 1180. During this century of Komnenian rule we can try to come up with a list of monasteries in the capital. A detailed study of all churches and monasteries of Constantinople has been made by Janin.[15] The table below gives the list of those monasteries that could be identified as extant between 1081 and 1180:

TABLE 3: LIST OF MONASTERIES IN CONSTANTINOPLE DURING THE KOMNENI (1081-1180)

No	Name	Page in Janin	Imperial/Aristocratic Donation
1	Abramiton	8	
2	Athenogenous	15	
3	Akoimeton	20	
4	Alexious	22	
5	Ananiou	24	
6	Anastaseos	24	

[13] Lakes, op. cit., xviii. This is confirmed by R. Devreese, *Introduction à l'étude des manuscripts grecs* (Paris, 1954), 47.

[14] Cutler, op. cit., 331.

[15] R. Janin, *La géographie ecclésiastique de l'empire byzantin*, Vol. III: *Le Siège de Constantinople et le patriarcat oecuménique, Les églises et les monastères* (Paris, 1953).

7	Andreou en te Krisei	32	
8	Andreou to Salou	36	
9	Antoniou	44	
10	Apologotheteon	46	
11	Basileou	64	Lekapenos
12	Bassianou	65	
13	Bassou	66	
14	Gastrion	72	
15	Georgiou ton Manganon	75	Monomachos
16	Gerokomeiou	83	
17	Dalmatou	86	Angelos
18	Daniel en to Stilo	90	
19	Demetriou ton Palaiologon	96	Palaiologos
20	Diomedous [Nea Ierousalem]	100	
21	Diou	103	
22	Euthimiou	122	
22	Eforou	138	Dukas?
24	Theodosias en tois Dexiokratous	150	
25	Theodosiou [9 Choirs of Angels)	153	Cerularios
26	Theodorous en to Resio	157	
27	Theotokou tes Evergetidos	186	
28	Theotokou tes Kecharitomenes	196	Doukas/Komnenos
29	Theotokou ton Kirou	201	
30	Theotokou ton Hodegon	208	
31	Theotokou tes Pammakaristou	217	Doukas/Komnenos
32	Theotokou tes Panachrantou	223	
33	Theotokou tes Peribleptou	227	Botaneiates
34	Theotokou tes Peges	232	
35	Theodokou tes Chrisokamariotisses	251	Roger[ios]
36	Theotokou tes Psychosostidos [Psychosostrias]	252	
37	Iasitou	264	
38	Ioannou en to Ebdomo	275	
39	Kallistratou	285	
40	Kanikleiou	286	
41	Karpou Kai Papilou	288	
42	Kellaraias	290	Komnenos
43	Kosma Kai Damianou	296	
44	Kosmidion	296	
45	Konstantinou	307	
46	Lazarou	309	
47	Libos [Lips]	318	
48	Mamas	326	Kappadokes
49	Manouel	331	
50	Michael tes Kataskepes	354	Komnenos
51	Michael en to Sostemo	359	
52	Mirelaiou	364	Dalassenos/Komnenos
53	Mokiou	367	
54	Mosele	371	Mosele
55	Narsou	373	
56	Nikolaou tou Mobilotou	386	
57	Nikolaou	387	Doukas
58	Oikoproasteia	394	
59	Oikoproterou	395	
60	Olobobon	395	
61	Panagiou	399	

62	Polielaiou [Epi tou Kanikleiou]	419	
63	Prasinou	421	
64	Probou, Trachou Kai Andronikou en tois Narsou	422	
65	Prodromos tes Mones tou Libos [Lips]	431	
66	Prodromou en Ta Petra	435	
67	Prodromou en Tois Stoudiou	444	
68	Pterigiou	460	
69	Sergiou Kai Bachou	466	
70	Steirou [St. Michael]	487	
71	Tarasiou	497	
72	Philotheou	510	
73	Phocas	514	
74	Christou tou Aktaleptou	518	
75	Christou tou Evergetou	522	
76	Christou tou Panoiktirmonos	526	Attaleiates
77	Christou tou Pantepoptou	527	Dalassenos
78	Christou tou Pantokratoros	529	Komnenos
79	Christou tou Polielaiou	538	
80	Christou tou Philanthropou	539	Doukas/Komnenos

SOURCE: R. Janin, *La géographie ecclésiastique de l'empire byzantin*, Vol. III: *Le Siège de Constantinople et le patriarcat oecuménique, Les églises et les monastères* (Paris, 1953)

Even if there may be a couple of dubious ones that I am unsure of, this is a very impressive number of monasteries in the capital: with only 10 monks each the number would be 720 monks, but many monasteries had more than a hundred monks, and this means that there were thousands of monks in Constantinople. This has been noted by scholars: "Constantinople is an anomaly for its overrepresentation of the monks in the population, a predominance made possible by this direct drawing of revenues from the provinces by the monasteries."[16] During the rule of the Komneni the old, i.e. existing monasteries were overtaken by the rise of the so-called great independent monasteries, of imperial and aristocratic provenance.

There was nothing new about these imperial and aristocratic monasteries: they had existed throughout the history of the Byzantine Empire. What was new was the new spirit that brought these imposing institutions into being, and this spirit was very much moulded by the victory of the Chalcedonians and monks who stood behind them. Leaders in applying this new spirit were the Imperials, the members and in-laws of the Komnenian emperors. It started with Empress Eirene, a staunch supporter of Leo of Chalcedon, who founded, endowed and adopted a new form of organization for her nunnery of Theotokos Kecharitomene in Constantinople. It reached its zenith under the Komneni with the foundation by her son and Alexios's successor, John (1118-1143) of the great monastery of Pantokrator (ruler of the universe) in Con-

[16] V. Déroche, S. Métivier, V. Puech, G. Saint-Guillain, *Le monde byzantin 750-1204: Economie et société* (Tournai, 2007), 552: "Constantinople est une anomalie par la surrépresentation des moines dans la population, predominance tendue possible par cet accaprement direct des revenues provinciaux par les monastères."

stantinople in 1136. These two monastic institutions set the tone for all lesser ones, both in the capital and in the provinces, such as the Monastery of the Mother of God Kosmosoteira near Bera in Thrace around 1152.[17] We will examine the first two.

All three monasteries' foundation charters were influenced (to a greater or lesser degree) by the *typikon* (foundation charter)[18] of the Monastery of the Theotokos Evergetis (Benefactress) founded in 1048/1049 just outside the city walls of Constantinople.[19] This monastery, founded as it was before the victory of the Chalcedonians, cannot be seen as the embodiment of the new reform party led by the monks[20], but its association with the Imperials after Alexios I came to the throne made it the model for the *typika* of Imperial monasteries of the Komneni. The Evergetis Monastery rose in prominence under the Komneni due to the fact that it is almost certain that its monk Anthony is to be identified with John Doukas, the brother of Empress Eirene, wife of Alexios I, who retired to it.[21] We are told that "[i]n the list of commemorations in the *Typikon* of Kecharitomene...both John Doukas and his father Andronikos had become monks, interestingly both the same monastic name, Anthony, but the text does not specify where."[22] Thomas and Morris argue that "if the monk Anthony of the Evergetis is indeed this John Doukas, we know that he was an important military figure at the time of the First Crusade, but he disappears from the historical record in 1097."[23] He held the titles of *sebastos* (and thus an Imperial), *protosebastos* and *megas doux*.[24] Kouroupou and Vannier have identified *kyr* Anthony with John Doukas without any doubt in the marginal note on f. 56v of MS Istanbul Panagia Kamariotissa 29 as "Te aute emeira ekoimethe o monachos kyr Antonios sebastos kai auta-

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[17] For all three see John Thomas & Angela Constantinides Hero, eds., *Byzantine Monastic Foundation Documents: A Complete Translation of the Surviving Founders'* Typika *and Testaments* [BMFD] (Dumbarton Oaks, Washington, D.C., 2000), Vol. 2, 649-724 (Kecharitomene), 725-781 (Pantokrator) and 782-858 (Kosmosoteira).

[18] Ibid., 454-506.

[19] R.H. Jordan and Rosemary Morris [introduction, translation and commentary], *The Hypotyposis of the Monastery of the Theotokos Evergetis, Constantinople (11th-12th Centuries)* (Ashgate, 2012).

[20] D. Krausmüller, "Abbots and Monks in Eleventh-Century Stoudios: An Analysis of Rituals of Installation and their Depicition in Illuminated Manuscripts" in *Revue des études Byzantines* 64-66 (2007), 255-282.

[21] P. Gautier, "Le typikon de la Théotokos Evergétis" in *Revues des études Byzantines* 40 (1982), 10-11, 92, n. 75.

[22] Jordan and Morris, op. cit., Appendix 4: "The Identity of the Monk *kyr* Anthony", 253.

[23] Ibid., 253 citing Polemis, *The Doukai*, No. 25, 66-70 and Skoulatos, *Les personages byzantins de l'Alexiade*, No. 89, 145-150.

[24] Polemis, op. cit., 69.

delphos tes agias emon despoines o Doukas".[25] I agree with Thomas and Morris that "it seems almost certain, therefore, that the monk *kyr* Anthony was indeed John Doukas."[26]

This Imperial connection would have made the so-called Evergetis module much more attractive to the Imperials. The latter were enthusiastic about building new monasteries and repairing and/or restoring the old ones, but they balked at the severity of monastic life, having been spoiled all of their lives with luxuries and amenities provided by the court. In founding and endowing these new monasteries and nunneries the Imperials wrote into their charters the preferential treatment to be given to themselves, i.e. the Imperials, whenever they joined these institutions, and just about all of this preferential treatment has to do with better (or separate) lodgings, food and drink, and servants, i.e. those luxuries they expected to be given at the court, though within reasonable bounds. This is how Empress Eirene spelled out these preferences:

> If any of the daughters of my dearly beloved Lady Anna Born-in-the-Purple [*porphyrogennita*] or of dearly beloved Layd Maria Born-in-the Purple wish to have her wordly hair cut in this convent or even enters after having her hair cut somewhere else, she will have to be accepted... But if perhaps as a result of her customary very luxurious way of life she were not able to change to one too harsh, she herself will communicate her own thought and actions to the common father of the nuns, confessing to him in the same way as the rest of the nuns, but she will follow the diet and the singing of psalms as far as she is able in the cell that will be given to her, that is the small *tropike* built behind the apse of the nuns' refectory close to their enclosure together with its lavatory and the rest of the necessary attendance that goes with this room. She will live on her own and eat more food than the usual diet of the other nuns, as both the situation of the tonsured [lady] demands and the discretion of the superior direct, and she will be permitted to have also two free women or even slaves acting as her servants, and they must be maintained by the convent.[27]

Building monasteries and endowing existing ones was a part of the monastic revival which Alexios I now embraced and made his own, albeit with important qualifications. Michael Angold brings out this essentially imperial strategy to harness for the Komneni the new monastic movement:

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[25] M. Kouroupou and J.-F. Vannier, "Commémoraisons des Comnènes dans le typikon liturgique du monastère du Christ Philanthrope (*Ms. Panghia Kamariotissa 29)*" in *Revues des études Byzantines* 63 (2005), No. 13, 53.

[26] Thomas & Morris, op. cit., 255.

[27] BMFD 2, 670.

> This was best seen in Alexios' patronage of monks and monasteries... Alexios was the heir of his mother's careful cultivation of monks and holy men, and their support had been useful during his difficult early years as emperor. He and members of his family supported the work of monastic figures, such as Christodoulos of Patmos, Meletios and Cyril Phileotes in the provinces. They also founded and refounded monasteries in the capital. Constantinople had been the scene of a strong current of monastic revival from the middle of the eleventh century, associated with the monastery of the Theotokos Evergetis. Its *typikon* or rule provided a guide to a series of Komnenian foundations. Monastic order also provided the inspiration for the reform of imperial court life begun by Anna Dalassena and continued by Alexios' empress Irene Doukaina. Anna Komnena noted that under their guidance 'the palace assumed the appearance of a monastery'. Alexios and his family became exemplars of a piety that drew its inspiration from the monastic revival that gathered strength at Constantinople from the mid-eleventh century. This went a long way towards reconciling the church to the Komnenian ascendancy and gave the new dynasty a moral standing which the emperors of the eleventh century had lacked. The monastic revival continued, but under Komnenian auspices. This was typical of Alexios' church settlement. His main purpose was to assert imperial control, harnessing new forces and ideas that surfaced in the eleventh century and putting them at the disposal of the imperial dynasty.[28]

The crowning achievement and expression of this new Imperial control over the monastic revival was the great Pantokrator monastery [present-day Zeyrek Camii]: "It was begun by the Empress Irene and Emperor John II Komnenos in 1118 as a large cross-in-square church with a broad narthex and at least one lateral aisle, the present south church. When completed, the exterior surfaces were plastered. Before 1136, however, it was augmented by two separate expansions. In the second phase, a smaller cross-in-square church was added to the north, connecting to the original church only by the narthex. In the third phase, a twin-domed funeral chapel was sandwiched between the two churches, and an outer narthex and an adjoining courtyard were added to the south church."[29] Ousterhout points out that these later additions "resulted in a church complex that is distinguished by its complexity—with an asymmetrical array of apses along the east façade and a hodgepodge of domes marking the functional spaces."[30] This may be so, but the completed complex still has *five* though asymmetrically located domes. The south church was dedicated to Christ the Pantokrator while the north church was dedicated to Virgin Ele-

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[28] Michael Angold, "Belle Epoque or Crisis? (1025-1118)" in Jonathan Shepard, ed., *The Cambridge History of the Byzantine Empire c. 500–1492* (Cambridge, 2008), 618 quoting AKA 96 [Book III.8].

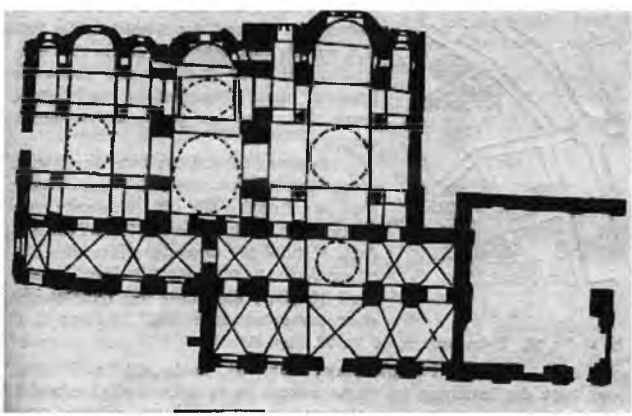
[29] Robert Ousterhout, *Master Builders of Byzantium* (Princeton, 1999), 104-107.

[30] Ibid., 107. See Fig. 78 on p. 106.

ousa. The Pantokrator church belonged to the monastery while the north church was open to the laity and was served by lay clergy. But it was the middle church which was the heart of the complex: it was the imperial mausoleum, or *heroon*, dedicated to St. Michael.

The Komneni might have appeared as upstarts to those few Imperial clans like the Doukas who had been around in Constantinople much longer (though not on the throne), but they took their mission to revive the flogging fortunes of the Byzantine Empire after Manzikert (1071), the loss of Italy with the fall of Bari (in 1081), and the loss of most the Anatolian hinterland to the Seljuks, very seriously. As the foremost representatives of the resurgent and triumphant military aristocracy the Komneni saw themselves as warriors of Christ, and the fact that the Crusades were taking place at the same time would not have been lost on them. Their mission as emperors was basically military in a double sense: on the battlefield against the external foes of Byzantium, such as the Turks, the Normans, and the various northern tribes like

GRAPH 1
THE PLAN OF THE PANTOKRATOR MONASTERY



the Pechenegs; and against the internal enemies, those who gave them opposition on either principled or unprincipled ground, on both economic and doctrinal accounts. As such they saw themselves as champions of Orthodoxy and commanders-in-chief both militarily and spiritually. They shared with the rest of the military aristocracy their deep attachment to the veneration of Archangel Michael, the commander-in-chief [*arhistrategos*] of heavenly forces in the fight against Satan[ael], and they saw themselves and their divinely-protected empire as particularly favored by this militant archangel. In his book on the changing cult of Archangel Michael in Byzantium Johannes Peter Rohland emphasized the surge in Michael's popularity following the defeat of Iconoclasm. As early as the 9th century Pantaleon, the Deacon and Chartophylax of

the Great Church, i.e. of Hagia Sophia, wrote an "Encomium in maximum et gloriosissimum Michaelem coelestis militiae principem".[31]

The cult of Archangel Michael kept steadily increasing in popularity and importance until it reached its crescendo under the Komneni. Rohland came up with some statistics: of 116 churches in Constantinople dedicated to the Mother of God, only 12.8% (15) were founded by emperors; of 33 to John the Baptist only 27.2% (9), and of 27 to Christ only 3 (11.1%) by the emperors. But of the 24 churches built to honor Archangel Michael the whopping 11 or 45.8% were built by emperors alone.[32] There is thus no question that the militant archangel appealed to the emperors as basically military commander-in-chief [*arhistrategos*] on earth as he was in Heaven.

It should come as no surprise that Archangel Michael was so honoured by being put in charge, so to speak, of guarding the tombs of the emperors of the Komneni dynasty, John and Manuel. As already explained in the Introduction, the Komeni wanted to both imitate and surpass the achievements of Constantine the Great and Justinian, and what better way than to build a church which would rival in its opulence if not in size both the Holy Apostles and Hagia Sophia?

Ousterhout has argued that, though a lot has been written about its archaeological layout, "there has been little attempt to interpret the meaning of the building and its decoration. What were the messages it was meant to convey to its twelfth-century audience?"[33] What its Imperial founders would have liked its messages to convey not just to its twelfth-century audience but for all eternity was spelled out in the *typikon*, the founding charter of the monastery.

The *typikon* starts in mid-sentence (its very opening is missing) with a ringing, triumphal voice of its dominant founder, Emperor John II, proclaiming how Christ Himself as Pantokrator

> raised me above all treachery and plotting and at the right time painlessly set me at the position of absolute power in the ancestral empire of the Ausones [Romans], agreeing, as one might say, with the final command and wish of my late father's divine soul. Then after that extraordinary elevation it also destroyed the cunning plots of my visible and invisible enemies and rescued me from every trap subjecting all my enemies under my feet. How will I recount in full the wonders that God's right arm achieved for me against Persians, Scythians, Dalmatians, Dacians, and Paeonians, the many unspeakable victo-

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[31] Johannes Peter Rohland, *Der Erzengel Michael: Arzt und Feldherr: Zwei Aspekte des vor- und frühbyzantinischen Michaelskultes* (Leiden, 1977), 128, n. 80 citing PG 98, 1265.

[32] Ibid., 133 with a table.

[33] Robert Ousterhout, "Architecture, Art and Komnenian Ideology at the Pantokrator Monastery" in Nevra Neçipoglu, ed., *Byzantine Constantinople: Monuments, Topography and Everyday Life* [Papers from the International Workshop held at Boğaziçi University, Istanbul, 7-10 April, 1999] (Leiden, 2001), 133.

> ries that it often wondrously wrought with me on them all, making me stronger than all the invaders, dispersing and scattering the ambushes of those within and those without, destroying and binding hand and foot those of my friends and relations who stood against me and wickedly distanced themselves from brotherly concord? So, what might I offer to the All-Merciful One for such great favors? [...] [A]t last according to my capabilities I unveil my enterprise bringing there a band of ascetics, a precious gathering of monks, whose duty it is to devote themselves to the monastery...To these I add another holy group, a chosen band, a precious portion, a very fine company of dedicated men—priests, deacons, and as large a number as is necessary for the church and the sanctuary.[34]

The founding document thus gives an anguished allusion to the attempt on the part of his elder sister, none other than Anna Komnena acting on behalf of her husband, Nikephoros Bryennios, to prevent Alexios from passing the throne to John. Anna Komnena was supported in this attempted coup by Irene Doukaina, the wife of Alexios I Komnenos, and John's own mother. This attempted coup is brilliantly narrated by Niketas Choniates at the opening of his history:

> John's mother, Empress Irene, was taken by surprise by the turn of events. She summoned her son and exhorted him to desist from his actions. As John was in complete charge of events and paid no attention whatsoever to his mother, she incited Bryennios to seize the throne with her support. But when she saw that Bryennios did nothing, she approached her husband who lay prostrate on his bend and whose only sign of life was his gasping for breath. She threw herself over his body and cried aloud against their son, shedding tears even as a fountain of dark water, that while Alexios was still among the living, John was stealing the throne with acts of rebellion.
>
> Alexios, however, did not respond to her accusations...[but] briefly forced a smile and raised his hands to heaven..., saying that it was but to mock and laugh at him that his wife should rant about his successor as a time his soul was taking leave of the body and when he should be atoning before God for whatever sins he may have committed. The woman, convinced that her husband was gloating over her protestations, with all her hope denied, the victim of false promises, sighed deeply and spoke: "O husband, in life you excelled in all kinds of deceits, gilding your tongue with contradictory meaning, and even now as you are departing this life you remain unchanged from your former ways."[35]

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[34] BMFD, II, 737-738. The typikon was first published by P. Gautier, "Le typikon du Christ Sauveur Pantocrator" *Revue des études Byzantines* 32 (1974), 1-145.

[35] *O City of Byzantium: Annals of Niketas Choniates*, 6.

This was not the end of his troubles, however: Anna Komnena was determined to put her husband on the throne, and thus to rule empire behind his back, and she hatched another plot: but it failed again through "Bryennios's customary sluggishness and languor [which] forestalled any attempt to gain the throne, and compelled him to remain immobilized, ignoring his compacts, and thus extinguishing the zeal of his partisans."[36]

John's recollection of these events must have been still vivid and rankled at the time he wrote the *typikon* in 1136. He endowed the new monasteries with a long string of properties outside of Constantinople[37] and fixed the number of monks to live in it to no less than 80.[38] We do not have to go into meticulous detail about how the memory of him and his immediate family was to be remembered and celebrated[39] to realize that the Pantokrator was built to reflect as much the majesty of Christ the Ruler of the Universe [Pantokrator] as the power of the emperor [autokrator]. John attached a hospital and a leprosarium to it, and thus followed in the footsteps of his father who had established a great charitable institution of Orphanage.

The south church contains a unique work of art: nothing like the Pantokrator floor is preserved elsewhere. Ousterhout mentions that "there are nine squares with large panels and disks of porphyry and verde antique framed by an interlocking triple band of colored marbles. The large disks have been removed for use elsewhere, but they were arranged in a quincunx pattern..."[40] This quincunx pattern was found on the floors of many monasteries built during the pre-Komnenian and Komnenian period, including the Katholikon of Iveron Monastery on Mount Athos.[41] According to Prokopiou, the *mesomphalon* (i.e. the *omphalos* situated in the middle of the floor) lies directly beneath the central dome with the image of Pantokrator in order to emphasize the correspondence between earthly and celestial world.[42] Accord-

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[36] Ibid., 8. Niketas Choniates added that "Kaisarissa Anna [i.e. Anna Komnena], disgusted with her husband's frivolous behavior and distraught in her anger, and being a shrew by nature, felt justified in strongly contracting her vagina when Bryennios's penis entered deep insider her, thus causing him great pain."

[37] BMFD II, 768-772.

[38] Ibid., 749.

[39] E. Congdon, "Imperial Commemoration and Ritual in the *Typikon* of the Monastery of Christ Pantokrator", *Revue des études Byzantines* 54 (1996), 161-199.

[40] Ousterhout, "The Pantokrator Monastery", 134. The mosaic floor was first brought to attention by A.H.S. Megaw, "Notes on Recent Work of the Byzantine Institute in Istanbul", *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 17 (1963), 333-364. An extensive bibliography is found in Wolfgang Müller-Wiener, *Bildlexikon zur Topographie Istanbuls* (Tübingen, 1977), 209-215; and R. Janin, *La géographie ecclésiastique de l'empire byzantin*. I: *Le siege de Constantinople et le patriarcat oecuménique*, 3: *Les églises et les monastères* (2nd ed., Paris, 1969), 515-523.

[41] Dimitrios A. Liakos, "The Byzantine *Opus Sectile* Floor in the Katholikon of Iveron Monastery on Mount Athos" *Zograf* 32 (2008), 37-44.

[42] G.A. Prokopiou, *O kosmologikos simbolismos sten arhitektonike tou Bizantinou naou* (2nd ed., Athens, 1980), 130.

ing to Cosmas Indicopleustes, "the four parts of the interior of the church symbolize the four cardinal directions. The interior of the church is the universe. The altar is paradise, which is located to the east. The Imperial door of the sanctuary, as it was properly called, was also called the 'Gate of Paradise'. During Easter week, this door remains open throughout the entire service; the meaning of this custom is explained clearly in the Paschal Canon: Christ is risen from the tomb and has opened to us the gates of Paradise. By contrast, the west is the region of the shadows of affliction, of death, of the eternal residence of the dead, who await the resurrection of the body and the last judgment. The middle of the edifice is the earth. According to the understanding of Cosmas Indicopleustes, the earth is rectangular and limited by four walls, which are surmounted by one cupola. The four parts of the interior of the church symbolize the four cardinal directions."[43]

The central *omphalion* is of red marble. As Liakos points out, "the use of red marble points to the *purple omphalion* in the accounts of Constantine VII Porphyrogennetos on which stood the emperor in certain official ceremonies (Epiphany, Pentecost etc.)...as attested to by the Russian pilgrim and later Archbishop of Novgorod Antony's description (ca. 1200) of St. Sophia in Constantinople."[44] In my opinion, the *omphalion when placed in the center of the floor* (i.e. as *mesomphalon*) represents symbolically "an imaginary axis that goes through that point to join the sky (dome) with the earth (floor), recalling the familiar symbol of the archetypal image of *Axis Mundi*."[45] It is worth recalling that, according to Mircea Eliade, "the Sacred Mountain—where heaven and earth meet—is situated at the center of the world. Every temple or palace...is a Sacred Mountain, thus becoming a Center."[46]

This quincunx pattern was central to the expression of the new Imperial ideology under the Komneni. As I suggested in the Introduction, it is symbolic of Imperial power which is derived from four sources: people of Constantinople, the army, the Senate, and the Church but whose fifth and ultimate source of power is God Himself, i.e. Christ as Pantokrator. Both in the Great Palace and in the Pantokrator Monastery there is also a floor mosaic depicting an eagle clutching a snake with its talons, symbolizing the victory of Roman power (the eagle) over the forces of Evil.[47]

In addition to the *opus sectile* using the symbols of Biblical and early Christian provenance, the Pantokrator floor had allusions to the zodiac. This

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[43] Mircea Eliade, *A History of Religious Ideas*, Vol. 3: *From Muhammad to the Age of Reforms* [trans. by Alf Hiltebeitel and Diane Apostolos-Cappadona] (Chicago, 1985), 56 quoting Hans Sedlmayr, *Die Entstehung der Kathedrale* (Zurich, 1950), 119; and W. Wolska, *La topographie chrétienne de Cosmas Indicopleustès* (Paris, 1962), 131.

[44] Ibid., 129.

[45] Liakos, op. cit., 43 citing Prokopiou, op.cit., 130-131.

[46] M. Eliade, *The Myth of the Eternal Return*, 12.

[47] J. Trilling, "The Soul of the Empire: Style and Meaning in the Mosaic Pavement of the Byzantine Imperial Palace in Constantinople" *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 43 (1989), 27-72.

may be an aspect of the Komenian fascination with astrology, though Manuel, John's son and successor, was much more into it than his father.[48] Ousterhout also points out that in the 12th-century romance epic, *Digenes Akrites,* the floor of the dining room in his palace had the same scenes from the life of Samson as in the Pantokrator floor.[49]

It was not John, but his son and successor, Manuel, who further transformed the Pantokrator complex and made it *the central expression of the Komnenian Imperial ideology*. Though the funeral chapel or *heroon* was built by John II, and was used to contain the imperial tombs of John, Irene and (possibly) their son Alexios before Manuel came to the throne in 1143, it was the latter who (as is well known) made an express comparison between himself and Christ. Starting with his name, Emmanuel, as referring to Christ, Manuel consciously played on this implied relationship. He had the so-called Stone of the Unction, a relic on which, it was said, Christ's body lay in entombment, brought from Ephesus to Constantinople, and he carried it himself from the Boukoleon harbor to the church on his shoulders.[50] When Manuel died in 1180 this stone was set up next to his tomb, thus invoking this comparison between the emperor and Christ. On the base of the Stone of the Unction a lengthy poem was engraved comparing the mourning of the women over deceased Christ to the empress's laments over her dead husband, Manuel I.

As Papalexandrou points out, "although the inscription itself has disappeared, its text and the approximate location of its instalment are known. [...] It is also prolix, running at least forty-four lines in length."[51] The inscription is directed at the viewer: "Admire these strange things as thou seest them, O stranger..."[52] The great pathos that is expressed in the empress's grief over her dead husband is beautifully captured in the last lines:

> Break, O my heart, and receive my master within my much-sighing bosom—
> Him whom I did love in my heart. Now that he has died and hidden himself in a stone,
> I too have turned to stone with sorrow and I am deadened as much as the stone tomb,
> For my spirit has been rent and my breath has flown away!

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48 Ousterhout, "The Pantokrator Monastery", 145.

49 Ibid., 147.

50 C. Mango, "Three Imperial Byzantine Sarcophagi Discovered in 1750" *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962), 398-399.

51 Amy Papalexandrou, "Echoes of Orality in the Monumental Inscriptions of Byzantium" in Liz James, ed., *Art and Text in Byzantine Culture* (Cambridge, 2007), 169.

52 Ibid., 169; the Greek text is on p. 211 reproduced from C. Mango, "Notes on Byzantine Monuments" *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 23/24 (1970-1971), 372-375.

Ousterhout claims that

> the setting for the ensemble of tombs, relic, and images was a unique, twin-domed church. I suspect here a special symbolic relationship between the *heroon* and a second great Constantinian foundation, the church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem...In fact, the church of the Holy Sepulchre was being rebuilt by the Crusaders simultaneously with the construction of the Pantokrator church in the early twelfth century, and it also took a twin-domed form. [...] But most importantly, the Holy Sepulchre was a foundation strongly associated with Constantine the Great; it thus could also be regarded as a *heroon*, and it also had immense ideological significance. In the final analysis, the message of the Pantokrator was... evoking the greatness of both the Byzantine past and the Komnenian present. Important for both was the allusion to Constantine I's two great foundations in the East, the Holy Apostles and the Holy Sepulchre. In fact, the comparison of Manuel with Christ at the Pantokrator parallels in a way the message of Constantine's original burial, surrounded by the cenotaphs of the twelve Apostles in his mausoleum. In their mausoleum at the Pantokrator, the valiant Komnenian emperors could be lauded as... new Constantines. If there was ever a question about the legitimacy of the Komnenian succession—and there was—it was put to rest where the Komnenoi were put to rest... at the Pantokrator.[53]

We should be reminded that, according to Constantine Porphyrogennetos, the emperor's body "goes out from the Chalke carried by the imperial *protospatharioi* and goes along the Mese, and when they arrive at the place where it will be buried...the *praipositos*...signals to the master of ceremonies, and he makes the proclamation as follows: 'Go in, emperor, the Emperor of Emperors and Lord of Lords summons you," three times. Then: 'Take the imperial crown from your head,' and immediately it is removed by the *praipositos* and a band of plain purple is set in place, and he is put in the tomb."[54]

We know from Antiochos' funeral oration on the death of Manuel I in 1180 that Manuel took on a monastic habit as his end approached, and thus, Antiochos says, he went to Heaven to join the monastic saints. He then made a specific reference to Manuel's carrying the marble slab on which Jesus's body rested in the tomb: "O day of salvation, on which, as you carried this Cross, we—in complete contrast to the crucifiers of Christ—competed with each other according to the laws of good will for your warrior robes and di-

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[53] Ousterhout, "The Pantokrator Monastery", 149-150.

[54] BC I, 276. The Greek text hails Christ Pantokrator as "*ho basileus ton basileunton kai kirios ton kirieuonton*".

vided your battle clothes, each of us taking one of them as the subject for a speech..."[55]

According to Niketas Choniates, when Manuel decided to turn monk before his death, his servants "managed to procure from somewhere a black threadbare cloak. They removed his soft royal vestments and dressed him in the coarse habit of the life in God, converting him into a spiritual soldier with a more divine helmet and a more holy breastplate, and enrolled him in the army of the Heavenly Ruler. The tattered garment, which neither reached to the feet nor covered the whole body, left the knees bare so that no one who witnessed the scene remained without fear as he reflected on human frailty at the end of life and the wretchedness of the body cast around us like an oyster shell and united with the soul."[56]

This disrobing of Manuel, this *Espolio* (to use El Greco's painting as a simile) reveals the overwhelming power of monasticism. In harnessing it for the Komnenian Imperial ideal Manuel not only enshrined it in his great Monastery of Pantokrator but ultimately paid it the highest compliment by joining it.

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[55] Quoted in Paul Magdalino, *The Empire of Manuel I Komnenos*, 488.

[56] Niketas Choniates, *O City of Byzantium*, 125.

PART TWO
THE PROSOPOGRAPHY OF POWER

6

THE EMPERORS

Alexios I (1081-1118)

Alexios was born between 1048 and 1057, and died in Constantinople on August 15, 1118. He was the third son of John Komnenos and Anna Dalassena and nephew of the Emperor Isaac I Komnenos (1057-1059). He joined the army in 1071, the year of the Battle of Manzikert, and became a general under Michael VII and Nikephoros III. He allied himself with the powerful Doukas family. With its support it revolted against Nikephoros III Botaneiates on February 14, 1081, and entered Constantinople on April 1st. After having married a daughter of the Argyros noble family, he remarried after her death and took as his second wife Eirene Doukas (Doukaina), daughter of Andronikos Doukas. She bore him nine children: five daughters (Anna, the historian, Mary, Eudokia, Theodora and Zoe) and four sons (John, Andronikos, Isaac and Manuel). His eldest son, John, succeeded him despite the machinations of Anna Komnena who, supported by Eirene Doukas, wanted to put her husband, Nikephoros Bryennios, on the throne instead.

Despite his military successes against both the Normans and the Pechenegs, the first half of Alexios' reign was not spectacularly successful in restoring the Byzantine Empire to the height it occupied before Manzikert in 1071. He did, however, stabilize the military situation and proceeded to institute a number of internal reforms, including the *pronoia* system which gave land and (qualified) tenure over it to soldiers in lieu of cash payment, thereby shoring up the financial affairs of the empire to some extent. But his extensive privileges granted to Venice in return for its support against the Normans in 1082, which resulted in the Venetians trading freely all over the Byzantine Empire, was extremely costly and unwise in the long term: it deprived Byzantium both of a great source of revenue, and put its merchants at a great disadvantage. It can be argued that Alexios had no choice, but he could have granted less extensive and more qualified privileges than he did. His taking of Church treasure for financing his military campaigns in the early 1090s provoked a serious opposition, and led to the Synod of Blachernae in 1094/5.[1] It is now well established that a series of spectacular trials against both the dissident philosophers, above all John Italos, and dualist heretics led by Basil the

[1] According to P. Gautier, "Le synode de Blachernes (fin 1094): Etude prosopographique" in *Revue des études Byzantines* 29 (1971), 213-284.

Bogomil, took place in the later 1090s, and, in the case of the latter, around 1099/1100, and not, as Anna Komnena puts it in her *The Alexiad*, at the end of Alexios' reign.[2] There is no question that Alexios' saw himself as the champion of Orthodoxy from the very beginning, and tried to act as both a protector of the Church, and a restorer of Imperial grandeur.

Peter Frankopan has now argued that Alexios' role in the origins of the First Crusade (1095-1099) has not been adequately assessed by historians:

> And yet, in spite of our perennial fascination with the First Crusade, remarkably little attention has ever been paid to its real origins. For nearly ten centuries, the focus of writers and scholars has been on Pope Urban II, his rousing speech at Clermont and the galvanising of the knighthood of Europe. However, the catalyst for the expedition to Jerusalem was not the Pope, but another figure entirely: the call to arms issued by Urban was the result of a direct appeal for help from the emperor of Constantinople, Alexios I Komnenos, in the east. [...] In 1095, Alexios sent envoys to Urban II, with an urgent message. Finding the Pope at Piacenza, they 'implored his lordship and all the faithful of Christ to bring assistance against the heathen for the defence of this holy church, which had now been nearly annihilated in that region by the infidels, who had conquered her as far as the walls of Constantinople'. Urban reacted immediately, declaring that he would head north, to France, to gather together forces to aid the emperor. It was this appeal from Alexios that triggered the First Crusade.
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> Although the arrival of Byzantine ambassadors is regularly noted in modern histories of the First Crusade, what the emperor was asking for—and why—has been glossed over. As a result, the Crusade is commonly seen as the Pope's call to arms; as Christian soldiers fighting their way to Jerusalem in the name of the Lord. This, certainly, is what the story became, almost as soon as the knights stood on the walls of the city in 1099, and it has been almost uniformly adopted by writers, artists, film-makers and others ever since. But the true origins of the First Crusade lie in what was happening in and around Constantinople at the end of the eleventh century.[3]

I think this is absolutely correct, and restores to Byzantium and its emperor the true role in the creation of the First Crusade. The reasons for a centuries-long suppression of Byzantium's role are two, according to Frankopan:

> There are two reasons why the history of the Crusade has been so distorted. First, after the capture of Jerusalem a powerful school of history writing in western Europe, dominated almost exclusively by monks and clerics, went to

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[2] D.U. Papachryssanthou, "La date de la mort du sébastokrator Isaac Komnène et de quelque événements contemporains" in *Revue des études Byzantines* 21 (1963), 250-255.

[3] Peter Frankopan, *The First Crusade: The Call from the East* (London, 2012), 6-8.

great lengths to stress the centrality of the role played by the Pope in conceiving the expedition. This was in turn reinforced by the creation of a string of Crusader states in the Levant based on Jeruslaem, Edessa, Tripoli, and above all on Antioch. These new states needed stories that explained how they came to be under the control of western knights. In the case of both the origins of the Crusade and its aftermath, the role of Byzantium and of Alexios I Komnenos were extremely inconvenient—not least since many successes of the Crusaders came at the Eastern Roman empire's expense. It suited western historians to explain the expedition from the perspective of the papacy and the Christian knighthood, and to leave the eastern emperor to one side.

The second reason for the heavy focus on the west stems from the problems of the historical sources. The Latin sources for the First Crusade are well known—and are wonderfully juicy. Narrative accounts such as the anonymous *Gesta Francorum* provide one-sided reports of the personal bravery of individuals such as the heroic Bohemond on the one hand, and the skulduggery of the 'wretched' Emperor Alexios, scheming to outdo the Crusaders with his cunning and fraud on the other. [...] The primary sources from the east, by contrast, are more complex. The problem is not the quantity of material, for there are a great many accounts...; the issue, rather, is that these have been much more poorly exploited than their Latin counterparts.[4]

Frankopan singles out Anna Komnena's account in *The Alexiad*: after pointing out that the sequence of events narrated in this work is out of joint, something that has been known by historians for a long time, he stresses Anna's deliberate distortion of the true state of the empire in Asia Minor on the eve of Alexios' call for help:

While some problems of the *Alexiad*'s chronology have been identified by scholars, a great many have not. This in turn has led to major errors in the commonly accepted sequence of events that took place in the reign of Alexios I Komnenos. The most significant of these concerns is the state of Asia Minor on the eve of the Crusade. The picture presented by Anna Komnene's account is misleading; in fact, careful re-evaluation of the *Alexiad*—taken together with other source material—reveals startling conclusions, sharply at odds with long established views. In the past, it has been assumed that the Byzantine emperor sought military assistance from the west to undertake an ambitious and opportunistic reconquest of Asia Minor from the position of strength. The reality was very different. His call for help was a desperate last roll of the dice for a ruler whose regime and empire was teeering on the brink of collapse.

[...] By the time of Urban's speech at Clermont, the Turks had demolished the provincial and military administration of Anatolia that had stood intact for centuries and captured some of the most important towns of early Christianity:

[4] Ibid., 8-9.

> places like Ephesus, home of St. John the Evangelist, Nicaea, the location of the famous early church council, and Antioch, the original see of St. Peter himself, were all lost to the Turks in the years before the Crusade.[5]

This is in stark contrast to Jean-Claude Cheynet who claims that though the Turks had indeed reached the other shore of the Dardanelles and were in sight of Constantinople, their hold on these recently-conquered provinces was very tenuous.[6] Yet, Frankopan's claim is absolutely correct when he claims that "nowhere were Alexios' limitations clearer than in Asia Minor, where the emperor's attempts to reverse Turkish advances had proved woeful. Attempts to recover the coast had failed completely and efforts against Nicaea had been embarrassingly ineffective. As Alexios' reign began to look like a disaster, minds inevitably turned to the alternatives."[7] In the first half of the 1090s a number of conspiracies against Alexios took place, two of them being noteworthy of specific mention: sometime between 1091 and 1093 (according to Cheynet) John, *sebastos* and *doux* of Dyrrakhion, conspired against the Emperor. He was denounced by Theophylact of Ochrid, and it provoked a family row of the first order. This affair shows clearly both the strengths and above all limitations of relying on family support for Imperial rule. Anna Komnena is very revealing about the whole episode:

> [Alexios] received letters from the then archbishop of Bulgaria who gave him advice about his nephew John, son of the *Sebastokrator* Isaac and *doux* of Dyrrakhion. He was accused of plotting a revolt. All that night and all day long the emperor was tormented by this news. Because of John's father he was for putting off the inquiry into the affair; on the other hand, he feared that the rumour was true. John was only a youth, and the emperor knew that such persons are usually the victims of overwhelming impulses, so that he had reason to suspect some revolt.[8]

The Emperor then sent two letters, one to John, ordering him to come to render an account of his governorship to him in person, and the other to the magistrates of Dyrrakhion who were to accept the messanger, Argyros Karatzas, as their next *doux*. These news came to the ears of *sebastokrator* Isaac:

> As soon as the *Sebastokrator* Isaac heard these things while in Constantinople, he left the city in haste and after a journey of two days and two nights arrived

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[5] Ibid., 10-11.

[6] Jean-Claude Cheynet, "La résistance au Turcs en Asie Mineure entre Mantzikert et la première croisade" in *Eupsychia: Mélanges offerts à Hélène Ahrweiler* (Paris, 1998), republished in his *The Byzantine Aristocracy and its Military Function* (Variorum, 2006), XIV, 147.

[7] Frankopan, op. cit., 78-79.

[8] AKA, 229-230.

at Philippopolis. The emperor was sleeping in his imperial tent, but Isaac went in noiselessly and lay down on the second of his brother's beds, and after making a sign with his hand to the chamberlains to be quiet, he fell asleep too. When the emperor awoke, he was surprised to see his brother, but said nothing for a while and ordered the others who had happened to be there to do likewise. Later Isaac woke up, to find his brother the emperor had already risen and was watching him. They embraced and greeted one another. The emperor asked what on earth he wanted and why he had come. "You", he replied, "are the reason for my visit." "You had worn yourself out with all this exertion to no purpose," said Alexios.

The *sebastokrator* had no aswer to this for some time—he was deep in thought about information he expected from Dyrrakhion. As soon as he had heard the rumors about his son, he had sent a messenger with a short note urging him to visit the emperor soon; he himself had left the capital at the same time as this envoy and was hurrying to Philippopolis to refute the accusations made against John; he intended to talk with the emperor and suggest likely reasons for them; meanwhile he would await John's arrival there. Isaac took his leave of the emperor and wlthdrew to the tent specially assigned to himself. But not long afterwards the messenger arrived from Dyrrakhion in haste with the news that John was on his way.

The *sebastokrator*, relieved at once of his suspicions, recovered his self-confidence. Full of anger with those who had first denounced his son, he appeared before the emperor in a highly agitated frame of mind. The moment he saw him Alexios knew the cause of it, but merely asked him how he was. "Rotten!", replied Isaac. "And it's your fault." The truth is that he was boiling over with uncontrollable anger, misled by a chance phrase unsupported by evidence. "I'm not so much hurt by Your Majesty as by him," he said, pointing at Adrian, "and by his barefaced lies." The emperor, a mild and gentle man, made no reply whatever to this, for he knew a better way to check his brother's seething rage. Both of them sat down together with Nikephoros Melissenos and certain other close relatives, and had a private conversation about the charges brought against John. But when Isaac saw Melissenos and his own brother Adrian attacking his son in a sly, affected way, he was once again unable to restrain his boiling rage. Fixing a furious gaze on Adrian, he threatened to tear out his beard: he would teach him not to try to drive a wedge between the emperor and his family by such unpleasant fabrications.

In the midst of this John arrived and was straightway ushered into the imperial tent. He heard all the accusations made against him. However, he was not subjected to any inquiry at all. The accused stood free while the emperor addressed him: "In consideration of your father, my brother, I cannot bring myself to listen to these rumors. Consider this all in the past as from now on." All this was said inside the imperial tent; only relatives were present, no strangers. What was said, therefore, or what maybe was intended, was hushed up, but the emperor certainly did send for his brother, by whom I mean Isaac the *sebas-*

> *tokrator*, and his nephew John. After a long conversation, he said to Isaac, "Go in peace now to the capital and tell your mother what has passed between us. As for this young man (and here he pointed to John), I shall again, as you see, send him to Dyrrakhion, to devote his energies faithfully to the affairs of his own province." So they parted, Isaac leaving for Byzantion on the next day, and John being sent to Dyrrakhion.[9]

In 1094 disappointment with Alexios' rule coalesced into the opposition and conspiracy led by Nikephoros Diogenes, *doux* of Crete, who was the son of Romanos IV Diogenes, the emperor defeated at Manzikert in 1071, and was *porphyrogennitos*. His claim to the throne of Byzantium was supported by some of the closest relatives of the ruling Emperor, including Maria of Alania, former *basilissa* (as wife of both Michael VII and Nikephoros III Botaneiates), Michael Taronites, *panhyper-sebastos*, brother-in-law to Alexios, Kekaumenos Katakalon together with a large group of army officers, a host of army soldiers, and some of the most influential Senators. Alexios was supported by Manuel Philokales, *protonobelissimos* and *epi tou kanikleiou* [the keeper of the Imperial inkwell], Tatikios, *protoproedros and primicius of internal vestiaries*, Adrianos Komnenos, Alexios' brother, Grand Domestic, and Gregory Kamateros, *hypogrammateus* [higher secretary] of the Emperor. While Nikephoros Diogenes was blinded, and Michael Taronites lost his possessions, the rest were pardoned.

Most of the scholarly work on this emperor deals with his foreign affairs, including his military alliances and deeds, and very little on his internal affairs, above all, religious. This study will consciously eschew much of the treatment of his foreign and above all military affairs (though keeping them firmly in mind and using them when necessary), and will give primacy to its inner policy [*innere politik*]. Since his religious policy, above all, his dealings with the Bogomils will be the core of another study, at this point we will not discuss it. What needs to be discussed at this point, is the *human Portrait* of this Komnenian emperor, and on this point there is quite a debate among scholars, and not just Byzantinists.

It all goes back to those closest to his own time: Anna Komnena and John Zonaras. There is no need to dwell on Anna's judgment on Alexios' reign: in brief, he was the restorer of Byzantine power and glory, head and shoulders above all other emperors before (at least since Basil II Bulgaroktonos) and since (and this includes, in particular, his own son and her own brother, John): "I would say confidently of this great man that in him and in him alone the true character of an emperor was seen again at the Roman court—after a long interval; it was as if then, for the first time, the imperial dignity dwelt like some guest in the empire of the Romans."[10] The whole of

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[9] Ibid., 231-232.

[10] AKA, 344.

The Alexiad is, *stricto sensu*, a panegyric to her father, and as such it abounds with hyperbole, a literary device and genre that the Byzantines excelled in above all. Nevertheless, it should be emphasized that it does contain more than a grain of truth: given who were available for the Imperial office [*basileia*] Alexios was most likely the best of the candidates. He was also very successful in keeping in power for thirty seven years, despite these twenty contentions, and he passed the empire to his son in an enlarged and much stronger state. Having said that, the *means* he used to accomplish this far from insignificant accomplishment were not always what his contemporaries and future historians approve of. Reading Anna Komnena one does not realize the precarious position Alexios was in throughout the first part of his reign despite her repeated emphasis on his military campaigns: for all practical purposes, with the exception of few isolated towns and fortresses, the *whole* of Asia Minor, including just about all the coasts, were not under his control; in the Balkans everything west of Dyrrakhium was extremely shaky and subject to Serbian attacks. He, therefore, as she is the first to point out, had to devote most of his time during the first part of his reign to military campaigns. This necessitated prolonged stay away from the capital, and forced him to delegate power, mostly to his mother, Anna Dalassena, in the 1090s, but also to his elder brother, Isaac (particularly in religious affairs). To make his position secure he not only delegated formal power to his closest family members, but tried to bribe the rest of the Komnenos-Doukas relatives and in-laws to the point unprecedented in the history of Byzantium. At least this is how Zonaras saw it:

> He was undeniably full of good qualities, but such as are praiseworthy in a private person, not those that make a good emperor. For the qualities required in private life are not the same as for an emperor. Moderation, equity, being slow to anger, a temperate way of life—these suffice for a private person. An emperor, in addition, must pursue justice, care for his subjects' [well-being] and preserve the ancient customs of the commonwealth. He was, on the contrary, out to change the ancient ways, and in his most earnest pursuit, to alter them; he handled affairs, not as public and belonging to the common interest, nor did he see himself as a trustee [*oikonomos*] but as master, considering and terming the *basileia* his private house. To the members of the senate he did not allow due honour, nor care for them suitably, but rather was at pains to humble them. Nor yet was justice the same for all, justice whose characteristic is to give to each according to his deserts. But he, when it came to his relations or some of those who served him, distributed the public monies by the cartload. They received fat yearly donations, and enjoyed such wealth that they could have at their service a following appropriate, not to private persons but to emperors, and buy houses the size of cities, indistinguishable, for their luxury, from palaces. To the rest of the nobility he did not show the same generosity—to say

> no worse, and spare the man. All this forbids considering him an emperor, in the strict sense of the word.[11]

We shall come to his treatment of both the military and civil, i.e. senatorial aristocracy in a later chapter, but at this point we have to come to the thorny question of his deceit and/or treachery. This goes back to his own reign or shortly thereafter and is attested in most Western sources of the First Crusade. It has to do with his refusal to lead the Byzantine army and the Crusader forces across Asia Minor to Antioch and beyond. Western sources have interpreted this as a betrayal of his oath to the Crusaders to help them against the Turks; but Peter Frankopan emphasizes that Alexios' decision was both necessary and at least in a short term very successful: "Alexios, forced by political instability to remain at the heart of the empire rather than venture out on expedition, sought to manage the campaign from afar. It was a high-risk approach, but, for the first year or so of the Crusade, a triumphant one."[12] The high risk was that the Crusaders would break their oaths to the Emperor and keep the conquered territories, formerly Byzantine, as their own, carving out a series of independent states in the West. This is exactly what happened, but I think the Emperor had no choice: the risk within his own capital was much greater. It could have ended with his losing the throne. For we have to situate the First Crusade of 1096-1099 within the culmination of *religious* opposition to the Emperor culminating in the trial of Basil the Bogomil sometime between 1098 and 1100. This was followed by one of the biggest challenges [*contestation*] in the course of Alexios' reign, that of Anemas. We do not know when this conspiracy was actually taking place, Cheynet dating it in 1100-1101, Frankopan 1102-1103 'most likely'. What we know is that *sebastokrator* Isaac was still alive, and he was dead by either 1102 or 1104. He was present at the time of the conspiracy, and thus, in my opinion, Cheynet's dating is probably closer to the truth. If (and only if) Basil the Bogomil's trial took place in 1100, then the two challenges were intertwined. This throws a considerably new light on the situation in Constantinople during and shortly after the First Crusade. Neither the Bogomil presence nor the Anemas Conspiracy could have taken place overnight: they must have taken years, probably several. It would have presented a nightmare to the Emperor: a *religious* opposition coupled with a *military* conspiracy.

Anna Komnena did not name all four ringleaders apart from mentioning Michael and Leo, and stating that they were brothers by birth. According to Anna, "all had the same object in view—to murder the emperor and seize the throne. Other nobles had lent their support: the Antiokhoi, who were of an illustrious family; those known as Exazenos Doukas and Hyaleas—extremely

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[11] Zonaras XVIII,29.19-27 (ed. T. Büttner-Wobst) translated by Patricia Karlin-Hayter, "Alexios Komnenos: 'not in the strict sense of the word an emperor'" in Margaret Mullett and Dion Smythe, eds., *Alexios I Komnenos: I Papers* (Belfast, 1996), 133-134.

[12] Frankopan, *The First Crusade*, 138.

courageous fighters if ever there were; Niketas Kastamonites, a certain Kourtikios and George Basilakios. These men were leading figures in the army, but another conspirator, John Solomon, was a distinguished senator. Because of his great wealth and noble birth, Michael, the foremost of the Anemas tetrachy, had deceitfully promised to install the latter as emperor. In the senatorial order Solomon might have been a member of the first rank...He was aiming wholeheartedly at the throne, helped by the Anemas brothers. They were, without question, utter rascals. In fact Michael and his followers did not propose to raise him to imperial power—far from it. They were instead using the man's folly and his wealth to pursue their own intentions. [...] Anyway, they took this Solomon to their arms, as if he were indeed head of the conspiracy. Others were drawn into it—Skleros and Xerox, who had just completed his term of office as *eparkhos* of Constantinople."[13]

The Anemas Conspiracy was certainly one of the most extensive and dangerous challenges to Alexios' rule: it involved the leading members of prominent aristocratic houses of both the military AND the Senatorial aristocracies. It aimed at killing Alexios, not just deposing him (though the outcome would have been the same). And it came at the time, around 1100-1101, i.e. immediately after and if not at the time of the discovery of Basil the Bogomil's circle. In my opinion, this is far from coincidental, and it betrays the widespread opposition to Alexios' rule which involved both secular and religious establishments.

The leading role in uncovering the conspiracy, as in unmasking Basil the Bogomil, was taken by *sebastokrator* Isaac. He persuaded John Solomon to betray his fellow conspirators in return for clemency: "As they [the conspirators] repeatedly denied any knowledge of the plot when questioned, the *Sebastokrator* Isaac went out and spoke to Solomon: 'You are well aware, Solomon, of the goodness of my brother the emperor. If you give us all the details of the plot, you will be granted an immediate pardon. If not, you will be subjected to unbearable tortures.' Solomon stared at him. Then, seeing the barbarians who surrounded the *Sebastokrator*, with one-edged swords on their shoulders, he began to tremble and without more ado told him everything. He denounced his fellow conspirators but insisted that he himself knew nothing about the murder."[14]

The first half of Alexios' reign, i.e. from his accession in 1081 until the death of *sebastokrator* Isaac either in 1102 or 1104, i.e. immediately or shortly after the Anemas Conspiracy, saw Alexios share power (to a certain extent) with both his elder brother and with his mother, Anna Dalassena. Anna Komnena, her granddaughter, is explicit that Alexios *wanted* to share power with his mother whom he respected and revered beyond anyone: "It was his desire that his mother should govern rather than himself, but so far had concealed

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[13] AKA, 344-345.

[14] Ibid., 346-347.

the plan from her for fear that she might leave the palace if she knew about it, since he knew after all that she was aiming for a more rewarding spiritual life. Nevertheless, in all matters however ordinary he did nothing without her advice: she became his confidante and co-partner in government. [...] The truth is that Anna Dalassene was blessed with a fine intellect and possessed besides a fine aptitude for governing. On the other hand, she was distracted from it by her love of God. When in the month of August [of 1081]...Robert's crossing compelled Alexios to leave the capital, the latter brought to light and put into operation his cherished plan: the whole executive power was entrusted to his mother alone and the decision was confirmed publicly in a chrysobull."[15]

Anna Komnena makes it clear that Anna Dalassena, as the Emperor's mother, "had a place in the Senate in her own right", which means that Alexios staffed the latter not only with the members of the military aristocracy, victorious with him at their head, over their Senatorial counterparts, the civil aristocracy, but that the top members of the Imperial family were given positions in the Senate *in their own right*, as Anna Dalassena's case proves. In the chrysobull, i.e. a charter with a gold seal appended to it symbolizing that it was the Emperor's own will, he went on to say:

> 'I, your emperor, therefore decree explicitly in this present chrysobull the following: because of her vast experience of secular affairs...whatever she decrees in writing—whether the case be referred to her by the *logothete of the sekreta*, by his subordinate officers or by any other person who prepares memoranda or requests or judgments concerning remissions of public debts—shall have permanent validity as if I myself, your Serene Emperor, had issued them or after dictating them had had them committed to writing. Whatever decisions or orders are made by her, written or unwritten, reasonable or unreasonable, provided that they bear her seal...shall be regarded as coming from myself, by the fact that they carry the dating of day and month in the current form of the current head of the *sekreta*.
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> 'Moreover, with regard to promotions and appointments to the tribunals and themes, and in the matter of honours, offices and donations of property, my saintly mother shall have full power to take whatever action shall seem appropriate to her. Further, whoever is promoted to the tribunals or to the themes and is honoured with dignities, whether higher or lower, they shall thereafter retain these positions on a permanent basis. Again, increases of salary, additional gifts, reductions of tax, economies and diminution of payments shall be settled by her without question. In brief, nothing shall be reckoned invalid that she commands either in writing or by word of mouth, for her words and her decisions shall be reckoned as my own and none of them shall be annulled. In years to come they shall have the force of law permanently. Neither now nor in the future shall such decision be subjected to inquiry or undergo any examina-

[15] Ibid., 91-92.

> tion whatsoever at the hands of anybody, whoever he may be. The same provision shall also hold good for ministers and the *logothetes* of the *sekreta* of the time, whether their actions seem to be reasonable or otherwise. It shall be absolutely impossible in the future to demand account of any action taken by them under the terms of this present chrysobull.'[16]

It is quite clear from the above that in the beginning of his reign Alexios made his mother, Anna Dalassena, a *regent* while he was away from the capital on military campaigns. Anna is at pains to stress that Alexios did it willingly since he honoured his mother so much:

> The reader may be surprised by the honour conferred on his mother by the emperor in this matter, since he yielded her precedence in everything, relinquishing the reins of government. It was as though she drove the imperial chariot while he ran alongside, sharing only the title of emperor with her. [...] He made her his own sovereign and like a slave said and did whatever she commanded. He loved her exceedingly and depended on her for advice (such was his affection for her). His right hand he devoted to her service; his ears listened for her bidding. In alll things he was entirely subservient, in fact, to her wishes. I can sum up the whole situation thus: he was in theory the emperor, but she had real power. She was the legislator, the complete organizer and governor, while he confirmed her arrangements, written and unwritten, the former by his signature, the latter by his spoken approval. One might say that he was indeed the instrument of her power—he was not emperor, for all the decision and ordinances of his mother satisfied him, not merely as an obedient son, but as an attentive listener to her instruction in the art of ruling. He was convinced that she had attained perfection in everything and easily excelled all men of that generation in prudence and understanding of affairs. Such were the events that marked the beginning of the reign. One could barely at that stage call Alexios emperor given that he had entrusted supreme authority to his mother.[17]

Though Anna Komnena's work is a panegyric to her father, and Zonaras' account is highly critical of him, they both agree that he took his kin into the government. Both suggest that what government Byzantium had under Alexios was 'Komneni, Inc.', if I can put it in modern terms. Patricia Karlin-Hayter goes so far, in the title of her article, to agree with Zonaras, that Alexios was 'not in the strict sense of the word an emperor': "When we reach Alexios' day, the 'power at the centre' is no longer at the centre, but depends on being *gambros* with the whole aristocracy, and paying the price this im-

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[16] Ibid., 93-94.

[17] Ibid., 94-95.

plies."[18] The statement is imprecise: not on being *gambros* [in laws] of the whole aristocracy, but of the Emperor and his family. That is quite a different thing, as we shall demonstrate below.

Margaret Mullett has argued that legitimisation in Byzantium, i.e. making the new emperor *legitimate* from being just a usurper who toppled the previous one, could be done either through a male or a female method. The female method meant getting the support of the empress, and this was the case in the case of quite a few usurpers turned emperors in the 11th century. Under the Komneni, according to Mullett, the female method failed, and the male method, i.e. getting the backing of the ruling emperor, became the norm. Thus all three emperors, Alexios, John, and Manuel, associated their chosen sons as successors during their rules, and thus indicated whom they wanted to succeed them. The attempt on the part of the Empress, Eirene Doukaina, supported by the Emperor's daughter, Anna Komnena, to prevent John, the former's son, to prevent the latter from ascending to the throne upon Alexios's death in 1018, and to put Nikephoros Bryennios, Anna's husband, to the throne, was spectacularly unsuccessful. Mullett thus challenged the view established among the Byzantinists ever since Paul Lemerle stated that Alexios was "weak in front of women" [*faible devant les femmes*], particularly in regards to his mother, Anna Dalassena, and his wife, Eirene Doukaina.[19] Paradoxically, Barbara Hill argues that it was the establishment of the Komnenian system that weakened the female and restored the male form of legitimisation: "One possible way of explaining the development is to relate it to the implementation and consolidation of the Komnenian system first set up by Alexios Komnenos. Although it developed further under John and Manuel and produced other consequences than the decline of women's power, Alexios must bear the responsibility for initiating it in the first place. This is not to accuse Alexios of misogyny, but to assert that, far from being weak before women, he succeeded in re-establishing the male authority which had been under attack for the bulk of the eleventh century: the victory of the male method of legitimisation at the end of his reign is one more demonstration of the measure of his success."[20]

Barbara Hill argues that instead of emphasizing the role of individual women as somehow exclusive to their gender role one should stress the so-called 'aristocratic principle': "The use of marriage alliance as a method has been seen as gender-related, but to reach such a conclusion is to fall into the trap of biological determinism. Not only women at this time were convinced of the potential of marriage as a method: the caesar John Doukas was also. A

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[18] Patricia Karlin-Hayter, "Alexios Komnenos: 'not in the strict sense of the word an emperor'" in Margaret Mullett and Dion Smythe, eds., *Alexios I Komnenos: I Papers* (Belfast, 1996), 145.

[19] P. Lemerle, *Cinq études sur le XIe siècle byzantin* (Paris, 1977), 298.

[20] Barbara Hill, "Alexios I Komnenos and the imperial women" in Margaret Mullett and Dion Smythe, eds., *Alexios I Komnenos: I Papers*, 38.

glance back in time reveals the root of the phenomenon. It is striking that there are greater numbers of visible women in the histories of the time; this reflects the heightened profile of 'aristocratic' women. Women, as well as men, understood how kinship worked, and can be seen operating networks to extend their repertoire of kin. This has been described as the 'aristocratic principle'. [...] Constantine Doukas, the youngest son of Constantine X and Eudokia Makrembolitissa, was equally determined to ally his family with the best, wanting Alexios for his sister, rather than his cousin. An accident of death has given Anna Dalassene too much credit, concentrating attention on her sex rather than her society, adducing biological rather than social causes."[21] Standing the argument that Imperial women after Alexios I did not have a deciding influence on its head, Hill argues that the empresses under John and Manuel "hardly figure in the sources in contrast to Anna Dalassene and Eirene Doukaina, but this is not necessarily support for the argument about Alexios's weakness before the two who are more visible. An alternative theory is that only women with a kin group could operate at a power when it was required. [...] Eirene Doukaina had the powerful family of Doukas behind her, ready to see and complain about any insult. Their value had been proved at the very beginning of the reign when it was Eirene's family who ensured her coronation. [...] A geographically close kin network provided more than protection: it conferred power. The Doukas family was more part of the core of the Komnenian network that of the periphery, and a Doukas woman had powerful relatives to influence."[22]

Byzantium being an empire whose very foundations (in its all-powerful capital of Constantinople) were religious, foundation and endowment of new centers of Orthodoxy was a potent symbol of one's powerful position in its hierarchy and society. As Barbara Hill points out, "the changing role of imperial women as patrons also merits consideration. Anna Dalassene founded the monastery of Pantepoptes and Eirene Doukaina that of Kecharitomene. Eirene of Hungary co-founded Patokrator with John Komnenos" [her husband, the emperor], "but after that the patronage of monasteries by imperial women declines, mostly as a result of Manuel Komenos's deliberate policy of preventing his relatives from exercising this type of patronage."[23]

But Hill goes further than this by standing the argument of Alexios' weakness toward women, his mother included, on its head:

> The visible and prominent role which was played by Anna Dalassene has been one of the mainstays of the argument about Alexios's weakness, but it can be shown that her position does not support such an argument. Alexios did invent a place for her in the court hierarchy by ensuring that she was addressed by the

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[21] Ibid., 44-45.

[22] Ibid., 46-47.

[23] Ibid., 48.

title of *despoina* by the court. Her sphere of authority was wide: the entire civil government was in her hands, and in the chrysobull by which Alexios made her regent, he declared her decisions to be above all present and future criticism, an effective *carte blanche* normally only applicable to emperors. Anna's authority was tantamount to that of an emperor: she included herself in the imperial formula of *he basileia hemon* when granting property to Christodoulos as well as having her own formula of *despoinike* for signalling that a document was her own. Yet such a complete division of authority between two people, described by Theophylact of Ochrid as a perfect division between two suns, does not imply weakness on the part of the emperor. As regent Anna had immense power and was not averse to using it against Alexios's inclinations in order to aid causes and people she particularly favored, like the monks of Docheiariou and especially the monk Christodoulos, but she used it primarily to keep the throne safe for the son on whose behalf she had already expended her energies for years. There is no doubt that Anna Dalassene was ambitious, but the salient point is that her ambition was not personal, but for her family. Such ambition is not any less strong or ruthless, but it is ambition that the family can trust. In the context of the time, given the dangers Alexios faced and the insecurity of his grasp on the throne particularly in the eighties and early nineties, entrusting supreme authority to a mother he knew on past record that he could trust was the height of good sense. The result proves it: Alexios Komnenos remained emperor until he died despite criticism which would have brought any other emperor down.[24]

I would go even further and argue that, given the degree of repeated opposition to his rule Alexios was extraordinarily lucky not to have been killed or deposed. But Hill has a clincher for her argument that goes right to the core of the thesis of this study (as will be shown below): "The fate of Anna Dalassene is another pointer to the decisive character of her son. Her authority had been given to her by Alexios, and when he no longer wanted her in the position to which he had raised her, her end was swift. Alexios did not face any resistance in displacing the *despoina*, for his was the ultimate authority, and her position depended on his will. She is the woman *par excellence* to whom Alexios is supposed to have deferred. Yet the year of her death is unknown and the circumstances of her retirement obscure. Alexios of course admired and respected his mother, but this should be seen as a virtue rather than a weakness. Admiration and respect are not the same as submission, and it is clear that Alexios was never the tool of his mother. The only near contemporary who mentions her retirement is Zonaras, who alleges that Anna realised that Alexios was becoming tired of her and so retired before she could be removed, to live in honourable and imperial state for the rest of her

[24] Ibid., 50-51.

life. From another source comes a whiff of heresy."[25] I would argue that it is more than a whiff: I am inclined to regard it as almost certainly true. The problem lies not with the source, but the modern interpretation of the source. Let us take a closer look at this crucial piece of evidence.

Hill cites in her footnote no. 55 Matthew of Edessa's Chronicle and then explains: "Matthew of Edessa states in his *Chronicle* that the mother of the emperor was a disciple of a heretic who worshipped Satan and that she was stripped of her rank and driven from court by her son."[26] So far so good: this is indeed what Matthew of Edessa claims. Hill then refers (quite rightly) to Steven Runciman's article, "The End of Anna Dalassena"[27] and then follows Runciman in identifying this heretic as 'Blachernites'. This is where the problem lies: for it is NOT Blachernites. Let us look at Runciman's claim.

Runciman starts by pointing out that "the last time that she [Anna Komnena] refers to the old lady is in her description of the revolt of the psedo-Diogenes, in 1095. Anna Dalassena was at that moment staying in the Palace and used the powers given her in the Golden Bull to order the rebel's arrest and blinding. But that is the only time that Anna Comnena mentions her grandmother since the early years of Alexius' reign; and the wording suggests that Anna Dalassena was visiting the Palace but was no longer resident. Anna Comnena was herself born in 1084. If her grandmother had remained in the Palace till 1105 she would have known her for a long time. It seems clear from the words of the Alexiad that Anna Dalassena must have left the Palace before her grandchildren were grown-up and that she only saw them at rare intervals."[28] Runciman is quite right in maintaining that Zonaras confused the date of Anna Dalassena's death with that of her retirement which is of great importance for this study. For the Armenian sources accuse both Alexios and his mother of not being "Christian". Samuel of Ani, writing toward the end of the 12th century, was the first to formulate the charge of heresy. This was taken by the so-called 'Doctor Deacon' who was John the Deacon, writing his history about the year 1140. In the 13th century the historian Kirakos of Qantzak repeats the charge of heresy *verbatim*: "He [Alexios] was not a Christian, neither was his mother."[29]

Runciman then tackles the crucial piece of evidence: Matthew of Edessa's statement. Runciman emphasizes that "his story must be quoted in full. Just after he [Matthew] has described the victory of Alexius over the Petchenegs, which occurred in April 1091, and just before he describes the visit of the Armenian Patriarch Basil to Malik Shah, which took place in 1090, he

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[25] Ibid., 51-52.

[26] Ibid., 52, ft. 55.

[27] S. Runciman, "The End of Anna Dalassena" in *Mélanges H. Grégoire: Annuaire de l'institut de philologie et d'histoire occidentales et slaves* 9 (1949), 517-524.

[28] Ibid., 519.

[29] Ibid., 520.

says: "At this time there appeared in Constantinople an infamous heretic, who was a monk of Roman origin. He worshipped Satan as his god, and was followed by a black dog, to whom he addressed his prayers. He involved in his abominable errors a number of men and women in the pious city of Constantinople. Amongst his proselytes was the mother of the Emperor Alexius. This princess carried her outrageous perversity so far that she took a piece of the Holy Cross and hid it in one of he son's sandals, in the sole, so that he should tread on it as he walked. God showed up this accursed heretic through his accomplices, who denounced him to Alexius. The pious Emperor condemned him to be burnt alive and had ten thousand of his followers cast into the sea. He deprived his mother of her rank and drove her from the Court. These measures restored the tranquillity of the Empire."[30]

At first sight it seems that Matthew of Edessa got it all wrong: obviously if she was around in 1095 to order the chief rebel's blinding she still had viceregal powers granted to her by Alexios. So the dating of 1090-1091 is patently wrong. Runciman is right in claiming that Matthew of Edessa's "attitude as regards internal affairs is not unfriendly towards Alexius; and except where Armenians and Franks are directly concerned, he shows no malice against the Greeks. His general knowledge of events at the capital is not bad, though he is occasionally inaccurate in detail."[31] Precisely: and Runciman adds that "Edessa, at the time at which he wrote, still had direct though occasionally interrupted communications with Constantinople; and Matthew must have had some informant who was in touch with affairs there, though the information often reached Matthew after a considerable delay."[32] Runciman then states that "the heresiarch whom this passage fits best is Basil the Bogomil. Basil, whose doctrines definitely discouraged the veneration of the Cross, was the only heretic who was burnt by order of the Emperor and whose followers were all punished--but by imprisonment for life and not by drowning--, but Matthew is writing of an event that occurred about the year 1091; whereas Basil was condemned towards the very end of Alexius's reign, after 1110, when Anna Dalassena was certainly dead."[33] This is where Runciman is wrong: he did not know of more recent findings which put Basil the Bogomil's trial around 1100, not after 1110, or even at the end of Alexios' reign as Anna Komnena does. Once we accept that Anna Dalassena was stili around until the end of the 12th, and Basil's interrogation and trial took place just after the passage of the First Crusade, everything makes sense all of a sudden. And thus Runciman is wrong when he claims that "it is clearly Blachernites to whom Matthew in fact refers."[34] For Runciman himself is puzzled "about

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[30] Ibid., 520-521.

[31] Ibid., 522.

[32] Ibid., 522.

[33] Ibid., 522.

[34] Ibid., 523.

Anna Comnena's complete silence about her grandmother's later career. We may note that when she deals with other heresiarchs in her book, whether John Italus or Nilus or Basil, she plunges into details and gives full play to the theological education of which she was so proud. But Blachernites is dismissed in four sentences; and the only theological detail given is that he consorted with Enthusiasts."[35]

The reason why Anna Komnena dismisses Blachernites in four sentences may be because his theology was not so outrageous; Basil the Bogomil's was. But it is also not true to claim that Anna plunges into details about Basil the Bogomil's doctrines. Apart for a few details about Basil's condemnation as worthless of the doctrine of the consecration of the body and blood of Christ, there is no specific detail. What Anna does is to refer the reader to Zigabenus' *Dogmatika Panoplia*, as she titles it [usually called *Panoplia Dogmatika*], "a book compiled on my father's orders. [...] The emperor sent for him and commanded him to compile a list of all heresies, covering each separately and appending in each case a refutation, using the texts of the holy fathers. The Bogomilian heresy was included, *just as the impious Basil had interpreted it*".[36] [my emphasis] Barbara Hill suspected that Anna Dalassena was involved in heresy: "Anna Komnene carefully does not relate the circumstances surrounding her grandmother's disappearance from the court, but merely mentions her death as part of another story. This silence on her part lends weight to the suspicion of heresy, for it would have been very embarrassing for Anna to have had to admit that her pious grandmother had become involved in heresy. The fact that Zonaras gives no hint of heresy is a point in Anna's favour but not a conclusive one, since relating such a story about the great-grandmother of the reigning emperor might have had grave consequences."[37] Indeed: and if the rumors reported by Matthew of Edessa are indeed to be taken as true, then it would have been impossible for Anna Komnena to write about it for obvious reasons: she would have had to denounce her favorite grandmother as a *heretic*. Yet this charge is the only one that would have precipitated her immediate disgrace, fall and retirement: and Alexios would have been compelled, much against his will and inclination, to get rid of his mother and consign her to political oblivion. Papachryssanthou has argued that Anna Dalassena died circa 1100-1101, followed shortly afterward by her eldest son, *sebastokrator* Isaac, circa 1102, and not later than 1104, and therefore concluded that the Anemas Conspiracy and the trial of Basil the Bogomil, the uncovering of both being partly Isaac's work and thus while he was still alive, must be placed "before that date".[38]

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[35] Ibid., 523.

[36] AKA, 459.

[37] Hill, op. cit., 52.

[38] Denise Uranie Papachyssanthou, "La date de la mort du sébastocrator Isaac Comnène et de quelques événements contemporains" in *Revue des etudes Byzantines* XXI (1963), 255.

What a reader should keep in mind is that as far as Alexios was concerned the situation in his Imperial capital around 1100 was a true nighmare: there were conspiracies afoot (Anemas must be dated shortly after 1100) coupled with religious opposition which included Bogomil heresy. Anna Komnena is quite explicit that the Bogomil heresy "had deep roots: *it had penetrated even the greatest households and had had an impact on an enormous number of people*."[39] [my emphasis] Unfortunately, she did not spell out (for obvious reasons) who these greatest households were, and how many people were involved. But the phrase "greatest households" can only refer to the aristocratic clans, and we do know who they were. In the next chapter we shall deal with them individually, but here let me hasten to point out that Dalasseni were among the top households—but so were the Doukas and others. Also note that Anna Komnena indicates that "this evil" has been affecting these greatest households for some time for she used the past perfect tense. Thus the redating of Basil the Bogomil's trial has enabled us to solve the dilemma of Matthew of Edessa's charge of heresy and makes the fate of Anna Dalassena for the first time plausible.

John II (1118-1143)

When Alexios was dying his wife Eirene conspired with Anna and Nikephoros Bryennios to prevent John, Alexios's favorite son, from succeeding to the throne. This episode has been given a lot of coverage by all historians, but it must be dealt with carefully. First, here is Niketas Choniates' account:

> Emperor Alexios Komnenos begat three sons and four daughters. John the oldest of the sons; the firstborn from the loins of Alexios was Anna, who was wedded to Nikephoros Bryennios and honoured with the dignity of *kaisarissa*. Of all his children, Emperor Alexios favored John. Determined that John should succeed him to the throne, he gave him the red buskins[40] and allowed him to be proclaimed emperor. The mother, Empress Irene, in opposition, threw her full influence on the side of her daughter Anna and lost no opportunity to calumniate their son John Before her husband Alexios, mocking him as rash, pleasure loving, and weak in character. She continuously attempted to persuade the emperor to change his mind. Whenever the occasion allowed, she would heap extravagant praise on Bryennios, lauding him profusely as the most eloquent and no less capable of getting things done, as learned in liberal

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[39] AKA, 458.

[40] These are the red shoes traditionally reserved for the senior emperor.

> arts which develop moral character and greatly assist those who are about to assume the reins of government in preserving the empire intact.[41]

Alexios pretended not to understand or hear these remarks, but when he had enough he would upbraid his wife thus:

> O woman, sharer of my bed and empire, will you not desist from admonishing me on behalf of your daughter, attempting thereby to dissolve praiseworthy harmony and good order as though you had been stricken by some God-sent madness? Put your trust in good fortune. Or rather come, let us take counsel together and see which of the former Roman emperors who had a son suited to take over the reins of government set him aside and chose instead his son-in-law? And even should this have happened at sometime in the past, we still ought not to recognize rare precedent as binding law. All the Romans would laugh aloud at me and conclude that I had lost my senses should I, who gained the throne in an unpraiseworthy manner by denying the rights of consanguinity and the principles of Christian law, when it came time to leave a succession, replace the child of my loins with the Macedonian—calling Bryennios by that name as he came from Orestias [Adrianople], one of the great and prosperous cities of Macedonia.[42]

Faced with his father's approaching death and his mother's opposition John, supported by his brother Isaakios, went to the Monastery of Mangana and "undetected by his mother, he entered his father's bedchamber and, while embracing him as though in mourning, secretly removed the signet ring from his finger. Some say that he did so at his father's behest... Immediately thereafter John gathered together his counsellors, and announcing the action taken, took up arms, mounted his charger, and hastened toward the Great Palace. Both the Monastery of Mangana and the streets of the City were crowded with his supporters, and the assembled citizenry... acclaimed him emperor."[43] The empress tried to persuade John to give up his ambition, but he paid no heed to her and the former then tried to persuade her dying husband to do her bidding. When he just ignored her, "forced a smile and raised his hands to heaven, perhaps rejoicing over the news and offering thanks to God, saying that it was but to mock and laugh at him that his wife should rant about his successor at a time his soul was taking leave of the body and when he should be toning before God for whatever sins he may have committed", the Empress, thinking he was mocking her, said in desperation: "O husband, in life you excelled in all kinds of deceits, gilding your tongue with contradictory

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[41] Harry J. Magoulias, trans., *O City of Byzantium, Annals of Niketas Choniates* [NCH] (Detroit, 1984), 5.

[42] Ibid., 5.

[43] Ibid., 6.

meaning, and even now as you are departing this life you remain unchanged from your former ways."[44] This was paraphrased famously by none other than Gibbon: "In his last hours, when he was pressed by his wife Irene to alter the succession, he raised his head, and breathed a pious ejaculation on the vanity of this world. The indignant reply of the empress may be inscribed as an epitaph on his tomb, 'You die, as you have lived—A HYPOCRITE!"[45]

Though he had difficulty entering the Great Palace once inside John, "like an octopus clinging to the rocks", in Choniates's famous phrase, hugged the palace. Once in control of the Palace, the City, and by extension the empire, John "showed himself to be one in body and mind with his brother Isaakios, to whom he was devoted. Isaakios had proved his love beyond all others, having contributed the most to John's accession to power. Once the empire had been set in order, John received him as an equal partner of his throne and table and allowed him to share in the public proclamation befitting the rank of *sebastokrator*, with which Isaakios had been honoured by his father Alexios. *John appointed the administrators of public affairs from among his blood relatives*: John Komnenos he honoured with the office of *parakoimomenos*, and Gregory Taronites as *protovestiarios*. John Komnenos, who administered his office without restraint, behaving pompously and with singular presumptuousness, was quickly relieved of his responsibility as administrator. Gregory, on the other hand, did not exceed or overstep the limits of his authority and thus remained in power much longer. Later, another Gregory, by the name of Kamateros, was associated in office with him. Kamateros was a learned man, and although he was not descended from a very distinguished or noble family, his services were enlisted by Emperor Alexios. Enrolled among the under secretaries, he made the rounds of the provinces, where he amassed a great wealth derived frm the taxers he assessed. *He longed to be connected to the emperor by marriage, and when he wedded one of his kinswomen, he was promoted logothete of the sekreta*. However, John Axuch was one who prevailed above all others in gaining the favor of the emperor and received the highest honors. He was a Turk by race, taken captive and offered as a gift to Emperor Alexios when Nicaea, the capital of Bithynia, was taken by the Western armies on their way to Palestine. Of the same age as Emperor John, he served as his playmate and became his dearest friend from among the domestics and chamberlains. When John ascended the throne, Axuch was awarded the office of grand domestic, and his influence was greatly increased; consequently, many of the emperor's distinguished relatives, on meeting him by chance, would dismunt from their horses and make obeisance."[46]

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[44] Ibid., 6.

[45] E. Gibbon, *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* Vol. II, 911.

[46] NCH, 7.

The opposition to John by his sister and her husband did not end there. Choniates narrates a renewed attempt shortly after John's accession to power to deprive him of the throne:

> A band of evil-working men, pledging good faith, rallied around Bryennios; because he had been educated in the liberal arts, displayed royal bearing, and was the most outstanding of those connected to the imperial family by marriage, they handed over the royal power to him...They probably would have struck quickly at night with murderous weapons while the emperor was encamped at Philopation, a place...situated a little distance from the land walls, since they had previously plied the keeper of the gates with lavish bribes, had not Bryennios's customary sluggishness and languor forestalled any attempt to gain the throne and compelled him to remain immobilized, ignoring his compacts, and thus extinguishing the zeal of his partisans. [...] When the conspirators were found out the next day, they were not maimed or flagellated, but they were deprived of their possessions which, after some time, were returned to most of them.[47]

For such treatment he became known to his contemporaries as *Kaloioannes*, i.e. John the Good. The main aim of his reign was to restore the Byzantine control of the Anatolian hinterland, but he could concentrate on this task only after 1130, having had to deal with the invasions of the Hungarians, Petchenegs, and the Serbian uprising, all of which he defeated. Though he had some successes in Asia Minor, he did not extend Byzantine control much beyond Lesser Armenia, though he forced Raymond of Poitiers to acknowledge Byzantine suzerainty over Antioch. He died prematurely, by his own hand, having cut himself by a poisoned arrow. Unlike his father and son he did not engage in religious trials.[48]

Manuel I (1143-1180)

John I (1118-1143), Alexios's son and successor, of the two remaining sons, Isaac and Manuel, chose the younger to succeed him. Niketas Choniates, in his history, gives the following reason by inserting this speech by the emperor to the troops:

> Even though my two sons were begotten of the same father, each differs in temperament. They are both virtuous, excelling in robustness of body, nobility of form, and profundity of intellect; it is perfectly obvious to me that my last-born son Manuel would be the better administrator of the empire. Isaakios has often appeared to me as being irascible; provoked by some cause he flies into a

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[47] Ibid., 8.

[48] EPL Vol. III, 356-360 with a full bibliography.

> towering rage, a fault which ruins the wise and because of which the majority of men act thoughtlessly. Manuel, on the other hand, together with the cluster of virtues shared by Isaakios, is not a stranger to meekness, readily yielding to what is useful and willing to listen to reason. Since, like David the king and prophet, he, too, is adorned with innocence of heart, and we humans, furthermore, prefer to be led by a hand clasping the sword and by a temperament which subtly searches out the trespasses of subjects, I have chosen Manuel to be emperor.[49]

Manuel chose to follow the example of both his father and grandfather: as far as John was concerned Manuel continued his policy of the *reconquista* of the Anatolian lands occupied by the Seljuk Turks; and as far as Alexios was concerned, he followed the latter in giving enormous emphasis to religious, and above, all dogmatic and theological issues. Like Alexios Manuel too was involved with the Bogomils. But it is his role in the Christological controversy of "My Father is Greater than I" that is of primary importance.

Manuel's emphasis on Church matters in general, and religious controversies in particular, was a part and parcel of his view of himself as the continuator of his grandfather's role in not only controlling the Church but in guarding and where necessary *defining* Orthodoxy in conjunction with the highest body of the Church, the synod. In convening councils to deal with and define the dogmatic solutions Manuel was following in the footsteps of not only his grandfather, but many previous emperors, particularly, the great ones like, above all, Justinian and Constantine the Great. Both had presided over major councils; and both had enshrined Orthodoxy in stone (so to speak) by building major edifices as eternal testaments to their religious faith and zeal: Hagia Sophia, the Great Church, the biggest and greatest church in Christendom, and the city of Constantinople itself, built as the new and divinely-appointed and –protected capital of the Christianized Roman Empire. Manuel, like Alexios before him, saw himself as not only following in their footsteps, of being a continuator of their religious involvement in Church affairs, but as the restorer of the purity of Orthodoxy and the unity of the Church which were the only valid guarantees of the empire's eternal endurance.

As Paul Magdalino has demonstrated in his fine study of Manuel's reign, there is no question that Manuel saw himself as both the new Justinian and the new Constantine: the former in building a magnificent Church of the Pantokrator [ruler of the universe], the most impressive edifice built in the Komnenian period (and there were quite a few), and as the convenor and presiding judge (just like Constantine) of church councils of 1166 and later which dealt with the dual nature of Christ, the thorniest and most contentious (and acrimonious) of all dogmatic issues that ever rocked Byzantium. Manuel wanted to be seen as *succeeding* where all others, all previous great emperors, had *failed*: to finally *define* the exact *relationship* between the two natures of

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[49] Ibid., 26.

Christ, human and divine, and thus to put an end, once and for all, to the religious splits and heresies that have largely accompanied the history of the empire. As Justinian said (probably apocryphally): "Solomon, I have surpassed thee" when he saw Hagia Sophia from the inside, so Manuel wanted to be able to say: "I have surpassed thee, Constantine for I have finally solved the riddle of Christ's dual nature." This was indeed a supreme ambition of any Byzantine emperor, and to be seen as the second Constantine or greater was the very summit of glory and eternal memory in the annals of mankind that a Roman ruler could aspire to. Nothing less would do: and Manuel's zeal and persistence in the face of considerable opposition, both during his time and later, can only be understood in the context of his passionate belief and untiring energy in pushing others to accept his solution literally. Manuel truly believed of himself that he was (what his name means), 'a gift of God'.

This is precisely what Niketas Choniates thought was wrong with Manuel and he pours bitter criticism on his vainglory:

> Hence the emperor [=Manuel], gifted with a silver tongue and an innate grace of expression, not only wrote letters of great charm but also labored over catechetical sermons, called *selentia*, which he delivered before public audiences. In speaking, he would touch upon sacred doctrines and expand on questions pertaining to God. Often he would pretend to be puzzled and initiate inquiries into the Scriptures; then to resolve such questions he would assemble all the scholars. All this would have been praiseworthy if in extending his inquisitiveness to these matters he had not disputed the doctrines which were beyond human understanding, or if in fixing his mind on these things he had not been so obstinate, or if he had not distorted the meaning of the written word, as he often did, to accord with his own intent, providing definitions and giving exegeses of doctrines whose correct meaning the Fathers had formulated as though he fully comprehended Christ due to his having received from the Divine the most lucid instructions pertaining to the mysteries of his person.[50]

Manuel had the first taste of Bogomilism at the very beginning of his reign: Bogomilism could and was condemned as a notorious *heresy*, and this would have sufficed for his role as the guardian of the Church for Alexios; but it was definitely not enough for his grandson: though there were huge doctrinal issues in Bogomilism it was treated as anathema, and therefore not subject to disputation. And that is what Manuel wanted above all: to be seen in the forefront of debates on the *orthodox* dogma which all before him, no matter how great otherwise, had failed to solve. He cut his teeth on the first theological issues, Trinitarian at that, which arose in 1156-1157 as John Kinnamos relates:

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[50] Ibid., 119-120.

> There was one of the Levites whom we call deacons whose name was Basil. As he had been entrusted to unfold the Holy Scriptures to the multitude at religious services anywhere, he desired openly and covertly to abuse in these sermons some of those who had lately quarrelled with him, especially Michael [of Thessalonica] and Nicephorus, by surname Basilakios [or Basilakes]. One of these Michael, was at that time professor of rhetoric and expounded the holy words of the Evangelists at the church of Hagia Sophia; the other was generally esteemed by men of letters, especially as an excellent author of speeches. Indeed, he was very skilfully trained in many parts of rhetoric. These men labored at these things and took it ill if, being so far advanced in scientific knowledge, they were sneered at by such a man, whereby they became the causes of irremediable disasters to themselves and many others.
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> For when Basil was celebrating his usual liturgy at the church of the Apostle John the Theologian outside the city, they went to listen, yet with treacherous attention, filled with malice. For as he was going through a Gospel passage someplace, I think, he declared the Son of God and the Spirit were one and the same and received the Sacrifice [of the Eucharist] along with the Father; they forthwith seized on the expression and going up and down, mocked at it, saying that Basil thereby introduced two hypostases [forms of Christ's being], if one was sacrificed, the other received the sacrifice. Others of those esteemed for learning agreed with this teaching, especially Soterichos, whose surname was Panteugenos, a man who excelled others at that period in knowledge and cleverness of speech, who had obtained the [patriarchal] throne of Antioch but had not yet been consecrated. Soterichos defended their doctrine not only by tongue and mouth, but also arraying a formidable amount of logic, which, in dialogue form, possessed an extraordinary similarity to Plato; in this composition he united many absurd things, on account of which he submitted to removal from the [patriarchal] throne, as well as whoever was associated with him, *when the emperor made an arbitration on the points in question*.[51] [my emphasis]

Kinnamos is in effect conflating the whole affair for, as Paul Magdalino points out, "the controversy became public, and the Metropolitan of Russia, who was about to leave for his see, requested an urgent meeting of the Synod. The Synod, attended by three civil judges, met on 26 January 1156. The Metropolitan of Russia began the proceedings by affirming his belief that the 'life-giving sacrifice' was offered to all three Persons of the Trinity. One metropolitan after another followed suit, as did the civil officials and the clergy of the Great Church, including Michael... who merely admitted that he had formerly held a different opinion. [...] This, however, was by no means the end of the affair. Basilakes had not recanted, and he was joined by formidable ally, the learned patriarch-elect of Antioch, Soterichos Panteugenos... The upshot was that the emperor called a meeting of the Synod at the Blachernae Palace on 12 May 1157."[52] This Synod was attended by the top

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[51] John Kinnamos, *Deeds of John and Manuel Comnenus* [trans. by Charles M. Brand] (New York, 1976), 135-136.

[52] P. Magdalino, *The Empire of Manuel I Komnenos 1143-1180* (Cambridge, 1993), 279-280.

Imperials and unlike Alexios' own Synod of the Blachernae in c. 1094-1095, the relationship (read the proximity) of them to the emperor is the main designation of their importance, though the new sebastos-based titles are duly recorded. Here is the list:

TABLE 4: LAY OFFICIALS AT THE SYNOD OF 1157

Name & Varzos No.	Title	Kinship	Office
John Kommenos 128	Protosebastos	Nephew	Protovestiarios
Alexios Komnenos 132		Brother of John 128	
Alexios Kontostephanos 134	Sebastos		Nephew
John Kantakouzenos 129	Pansebastos	Gambros*	
John Angelos 146	Pansebastos Sebastos	Gambros of Theodora Komnenos 79	
Constantine Palaiologos 192	Pansebastos Sebastos		
Alexios Palaiologos	Pansebastos Sebastos		
Andronikos Kamateros	Pansebastos Sebastos		Eparchos
John of Poutza	Megalodoxotatos		Megas Logariastes of the Sekreta+Protonotarios
Theodore Styppeiotes	Megalodoxotatos+Nobelissimos		Epi tou Kanikleiou
Nikephoros Borbenos	Megalodoxotatos		Mystikos
John Makrembolites	Megalodoxotatos		Megas Droungarios
Nicholas Zonaras	Megalepiphanestatos		Protasekretis
Michael Kamateros	Megalepiphanestatos +Protokouropalates		Epi ton Deeseon
Theodore Pantechnes	Megalepiphanestatos		Nomophylax+Epi ton Oikeiakon
Elias Bourtzes	Megalepiphanestatos+Protokouropalates		Phylax

*GAMBROS is a son-in-law to the emperor (or to an Imperial, see No. 79 above)
SOURCE: P. MAGDALINO, *The Empire of Manuel I Komnenos*, Appendix 2, No. 3

It is quite clear from the above that this was a very staged affair designed to give Manuel maximum exposure: it was he as *epistemonarches*, i.e. 'chief scientific expert' (as Magdalino renders it) in Church affairs who tackled Panteugenos personally by countering the latter's arguments. We should, however, be careful in backdating Manuel's high-profile involvement in subsequent trials as a proof of his having come to the throne determined to cut a grand figure in church affairs. Paul Magdalino argues that

> The events of 1147 and 1156 can easily be seen as rehearsals for the grand assemblies and pronouncements of 1166 which represent the high point of Byzantine caesaropapism. However, Manuel's early ecclesiastical policies must be examined on their own merits, and it is not helpful to explain them in terms either of Alexian precedents or of later developments. Above all, it is a mistake

> to assume that he came to the throne with a developed sense of his own expertise in theology and canon law. It is just as likely that he discovered his talent, and his interest, as a result of repeated involvement in ecclesiastical affairs which he may well have regarded, at the time, as unwelcome distractions from his main business of war and diplomacy.[53]

Niketas Choniates explains that at least Patriarch Kosmas was removed by Manuel because he suspected him of plotting with his elder brother, Isaakios, to put the latter on the throne.[54] So Manuel may not have been initially as 'zealous' in ecclesiastical affairs as he gave the impression later. But as his 'performance' at the Synod of 1157 showed he was learning fast and enjoying it immensely.

Manuel was eager to show his support for the Church in general, and the monasteries of Constantinople in particular in the period between 1143 and 1158. In a number of golden charters [*chrysobulls*] of 1144, 1146, 1148, 1153 and 1158 he showered the Church, and the monasteries in the capital in particular, with privileges and exemptions. He was also trying to win the patriarchs of this period to his side: all four of them were monks between 1143 and 1158: Michael II, Nicholas IV, Theodotos, Luke Chrysoberges. The monasteries of Constantinople were thus crucial to Manuel's control of the Church as well as to his role as *epistemonarches*. Above all, he tried to buy the monasteries' support by issuing the chrysobull of 1158 which declared that "it was an offence to quibble with a monastery's right to a property that it held, *with or without written title*...[T]he holy monasteries...are not to be investigated by any agent of the fisc, *whether his justification is right or wrong*."[55] [my emphasis] Magdalino cautions that Manuel was not unaware that the monasteries were not above fraud, but it is unfortunate that we cannot date precisely his chrysobull of September 7th outlawing the giving of imperial grants of immovable property, "except to persons from the senate or the military register."[56] The last phrase makes it clear that throughout Manuel's reign, as heretofore, a careful distinction was made between the senate, as the stronghold of the senatorial aristocracy, and the military elite (since, obviously, the register was kept only of the so-called top brass). I do not see his later decrees as anti-charters, as Magdalino calls it, for though Manuel made it clear that he put Justice above his predilection for the monasteries and churches, I do not share Magdalino's point that "the document represents a clear shift in ideological standpoint: whereas the earlier chrysobulls start from the principle that the emperor will win divine favour by favouring the priests and monks who are his mediators with God, the 'Novel' of 1158 takes the line that the emperor's

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[53] Ibid., 281.

[54] N. Choniates, op. cit., 47.

[55] Magdalino, op. cit., 285.

[56] Ibid., 286.

divine duty is to put Justice above all else."[57] I think he continued with both, but curbed the most flagrant abuses such as the asylum to murderers given in the Church of Hagia Sophia.

The greatest theological debate and dogmatic issue of Manuel's reign (and one of the greatest and most vexatious of all in Byzantine history) was over the interpretation of Jesus's words: "My Father is greater than I".[58] This is purely a Christological issue, but it has very far-ranging ramifications in particular with the status of the emperor, as will be shown later. It is also symptomatic of Manuel's increasing dealings with and dependence on the Latins, i.e. the Westerners, during the period of the early Crusades. It started around 1165 when a Byzantine diplomat, Demetrios of Lampe, who had travelled widely in the West, started preaching that Christ could not be considered at the same time as both equal to and less than God the Father. Lampe had engaged in a polemic with the Archbishop of Vienna. Lampe's position was that Jesus's saying cannot be understood as Christ's humanity, for His humanity is equal in glory to God the Father. Lampe was widely supported in Constantinople where many people were more than eager to accuse the Latins of heresy.

Though Manuel tried to diffuse the situation by calling Lampe into an audience, the latter stuck to his guns. When asked by the emperor as to what the whole matter was all about Demetrios said: "There dare to say that the same Person [Christ] is inferior and equal to the God who engendered him." Manuel replied that he too subscribed to the same view: "But why? Do we not call Him God and Man? Then we agree that He is inferior as regards His Manhood, but equal as regards His Divinity. We hear the Saviour saying this same thing, for He says someplace, 'My Father is greater than I.' And if we must not apply this to the one [divine] nature (for it would be most unsuitable), then necessarily we must apply the statement to the other [human] one. That it was said of neither is unthinkable. Therefore mankind's doctrine is sound, as our majesty has long known."[59]

According to Hugh Eteriano, "almost the whole body of bishops, clerics, monks and people had slipped into holding the opposite position"[60], and Demetrios was emboldened and then published a treatise in which he attacked the emperor's 'pro-Latin' view. The uproar embraced the whole City, so much so that Manuel decided to call a public debate on the issue. Hugh Eteriano (Hugo Aetherianus) who had been Manuel's close friend and adviser, but was a Roman Catholic bishop living in Constantinople, was asked by Manuel

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[57] Ibid., 286.

[58] John 14:28.

[59] K 189.

[60] Hugh Eteriano, *Contra Patarenos* [ed. and trans. with a commentary by Janet Hamilton, and with an historical introduction by Bernard Hamilton](Leiden, 2004), 119 and Latin text on 152: "nam episcoporum, clericorum, monachorum plebisque universa fere concio in contrariae dictionis sententiam prolapsa est."

to represent the Western position. In a public debate Eteriano was able to defeat the now vociferous and widespread opposition rather easily by arguing that the humanity of Christ was less than His divinity, precisely *as* humanity.[61]

The Emperor was persuaded of Eteriano's correctness and started to work on converting to what now became *his* position. As John Kinnamos narrates,

> Although he had not experienced training in logic, by the acuteness of his mind and the breadth of this intellect he [Manuel] surpassed everyone who lived in our times. There was no one who denied this, not only of those who dwelt much in the emperor's presence..., but even of those who were unknown to him. Should he desire to explain something, he set it forth with extraordinary wisdom and clarity and simplicity of expression. And it did not matter which type of philosophy the problem under investigation depended on, natural or theological or any of the rest...Thus by the keenness of his natural ability... he won over to his own opinion many of those whom he met.
> At first there was no one who was not of the faction opposing him except Loukas who was then in charge of ecclesiastical matters, who himself did not dare to speak freely, and no more than six of the deacons. All the rest, as they observed many abandoning their [theological] position by private discussion with the emperor, anticipating that by the excellence of his mind and his tongue's cleverness he would attract many of them to himself in private meetings, established a rule among themselves that no one of them would ever meet the emperor individually and privily. "For not now, but later, after his death, he shall be absolutely subjected to anathema." They spoke thus while they were holding meetings at each others' houses, especially those of prominent persons.[62]

In an audience the Metropolitan of New Patras [Hypati, near Lamia] disagreed with the emperor's view. This prompted an outburst of outrage from Manuel:

> "So that you will first perceive who you are and how you think about God, you who cast jibes at me (but although insulted I am restraining myself, lest by wilful action I should impugn orthodoxy; [...] arm yourself so that you will be able to combat me, who alone of all the rest will oppose you, not by force of arms, but by action of words. For it is hateful to me to overcome an inferior, and this action is witness. While I have clearly been insulted, as you see, I am holding back my vengeance; yet you must not ridicule these matters in corners. For who constrains you? Or who removes your freedom of speech? When have you been expelled by me as you spoke before the pulpit? What will I profit, should I defend an absurd doctrine? Then lest I disagrace my doctrine in words, something which happened to many among you (indeed I have never

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[61] Gregory Thetford, "The Christological Councils of 1166 and 1170 in Constantinople" in *St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly* 31 (1987), 144.

[62] K 190-191.

professed such things), it absolutely remains that I should not betray doctrine regarding God. Yet if someone speaking in accordance with Holy Scriptures were able to alter my opinion, it would be no shame at all for me to change to them; let this one thing only be guarded against, that God be not impugned. For this [purpose] I myself have many times endured being affronted."[63]

There can be little doubt that the popular opposition to the emperor's position was led by the monks, for not only the patriarch but most of the hierarchy came from their ranks. Faced with such a formidable opposition Manuel was forced to call a Church Council in which three patriarchs, of Constantinople, Antioch and Jerusalem, and forty-six hierarchs, including 30 metropolitans, 12 archbishops, and 4 bishops attended. The Imperial side was represented by the following:

TABLE 5: LAY OFFICIALS AT THE COUNCIL OF 1166

Name and Barzos No.	Title	Kinship to the Emperor/Office
John Komnenos (128)	Protosebastos	Nephew, son of Sebastokrator Andronikos Protovestiarios
Alexios Komnenos (132)		Nephew, son of Sebastokrator Andronikos
Andronikos Komnenos (148)		Nephew, son of Pansebastohypertatos Theodore Batatzes
Alexios Komnenos (152)		Nephew, Brother of the above
John Doukas (90)		Cousin, son of Pansebastohypertatos Constantine Angelos, Manuel's Uncle
Andronikos Doukas (93)		Cousin, Brother of the Above
John Kantakouzenos (129)	Sebastos	Gambros
Constantine Doukas (140)	Sebastos	Gambros
Goudelios Tzikandiles (94)	Sebastos	Gambros
George Palaiologos (191)	Sebastos	Megas Hetaireiarches
John Doukas	Sebastos	
Alexios Petraliphas (126)	Sebastos	Oikeios Vestiarites
Alexios Rogeres	Sebastos	Oikeios Vestiarites
Andronikos Lampardas (234)	Sebastos	Oikeios Vestiarites+Chartoularios
Basil Kamateros	Protonobelissimos	
Isaac (Aaron)	Protonobelissimos	Akolouthos
Basil Thipsychos	Nobelissimos	Primmikerios ton Vardarioton

SOURCE: P. MAGDALINO, *The Empire of Manuel I Komnenos*, 504-505 based on *Ekthesis ton prahthenton epi te zetesei tes exegeseos tou en to agio Euaggelio retou tou alethinou Theou kai Soteros emon Iesou Hristou, tou "O Pater mou meizon mou esti" erides kai sinodoi kata ton ib' aiona* (Thessaloniki, 1968), 141-142.

63 K 191-192.

It is worth recalling that the above list consists of three layers: the very top membership of the Komneni-Doukas Imperial superclan (up to and including Andronikos Doukas No. 93); the middle-tiered *sebastoi* who are *gambroi* to Manuel (from No. 129 to No. 234); and a few high officials (all at or below the *protonobelissimos* level). It is quite clear that under Manuel the Komenian revolution reached its peak with *proximity by blood or marriage into the Komnenian clan* counting most of all.

These seventeen dignitaries are the Imperial party; the list of attending Church dignitaries is given by Sakkos:

TABLE 6: CHURCH DIGNITARIES AT THE COUNCIL OF 1166

Rank	See	Name
Patriarch	Constantinople	Loucas
Patriarch	Antioch	Athanasius
Patriarch	Jerusalem	Nikephoros
Metropolitan	Heraclea	Michael
Metropolitan	Cyzikos	Basil
Metropolitan	Nikomedia	Michael
Metropolitan	Nicaea	George
Metropolitan	Amasia	Niketas
Metropolitan	Melitene	Niketas
Metropolitan	Gangra	John
Metropolitan	Mira	Christophor
Archbishop	Corinth	Theodore
Bishop	Athens	Nicholas
Metropolitan	Mokesa	Luke
Archbishop	Crete	John
Metropolitan	Trapezunt	Michael
Metropolitan	Larissa	John
Metropolitan	Philippopolis	Basil
Metropolitan	Rhodes	Leon
Metropolitan	Philippi	John
Bishop	Adrianople	Leo
Metropolitan	Ierapolis	George
Metropolitan	Mythilene	Potos
Bishop	New Patras	Euthimios
Metropolitan	Euchaiton	Constantine
Metropolitan	Amastria	John
Metropolitan	Thebes	John
Bishop	Serres	Theodore
Bishop	Ainos	John
Metropolitan	Dristra	Leo
Metropolitan	Corfu	Constantine
Metropolitan	Abydos	Michael
Metropolitan	Methymene	Nicholas
Metropolitan	Lacaedemonia	Niketas

Metropolitan	Mesembria	Theodore
Metropolitan	Miletus	Niketas
Archbishop	Bizye	Theodore
Archbishop	Maroneia	Niketas
Archbishop	Arkadiopolis	Constantine
Archbishop	Parios	Nicholas
Archbishop	Proikonnesis	Isaac
Archbishop	Selybria	Theodoulos
Archbishop	Derka	John
Archbishop	Anghialos	Stephen

SOURCE: SAKKOS, *O Pater Mou meizon Mou esti*, 142-143.

The Council of 1166 was held *not at the Blachernae Palace* (as some scholars have asserted), but at the Great Palace in the new Triklinos built by Manuel.[64] This proves that for special occasions the Great Palace was deemed the more appropriate venue than that of Blachernae where Manuel resided, following the example of his predecessors, Alexios and John. At this point one should emphasize that what Manuel and the Council wanted to assert was anything but a new, that is, original interpretation of the proper relationship between God the Father and God the Son which hinged on the proper relationship between the two natures of Christ, human and divine. For, as Eliade warns, "every doctor strove to save, protect, and defend the doctrine transmitted by the Fathers. Theology was immutable. Novelties belonged to heresies; the words 'innovation' and 'blasphemy' were nearly synonyms. This apparent monotony (in the repetition of the ideas elaborated by the Fathers) could be considered—as it has been for centuries—as a sign of sclerosis and sterility."[65] Thus we should not expect to find any new arguments beyond some of the ones already advanced at the Ecumenical Councils, above all at Chalcedon. For what happened at the Council of 1166 is the repetition at what happened at Chalcedon and before and after: proponents came armed with texts of the fathers, councils, and whatever else they could present as 'tradition' in order to discredit the views of their opponents. It also smacks very much of the battle of quotations from Marx, Engels and Lenin that Stalin and his opponents used to establish Marxist 'orthodoxy' and discredit the 'opposition'. After all, Stalin was, at least in this respect, a good Orthodox seminarian.

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64 P. Magdalino, "Manuel Komnenos and the Great Palace" *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 4: *Essays Presented to Sir Steven Runciman* (1978), 101-114. On the Great Palace see A.G. Paspates & W. Metcalfe, *The Great Palace of Constantinople* (London, 1893). For the modern reconstruction of it see *Walking thru Byzantium: Great Palace Region* [text by Jan Kostenec, 3D modelling and illustrations by A. Tayfun ¨Oner] (2nd ed., Istanbul, 2008) and J. Kostenec, "The Heart of the Empire: The Great Palace of the Byzantine Emperors Reconsidered" in K.R. Dark, ed., *Secular Buildings and the Archaeology of Everyday Life in the Byzantine Empire* (Oxford, 2004), 5-36.

65 Eliade, *A History of Religious Ideas*, Vol. 3, 57.

Whatever our view of Manuel, he should be given credit for realizing that what was at stake was nothing less than the central tenet of Eastern Orthodoxy: "[T]he central doctrine of Eastern theology, notably the idea of the deification (*theosis*) of man, is of great originality, even though it depends on Saint Paul, the Gospel of John, and other biblical texts. The equivalence between salvation and deification derived from the mystery of the Incarnation."[66] The problem, as Manuel and the Council saw it, is whether while he was walking on this earth, i.e. while he was a *man* Jesus was *inferior to His Father because of this human nature*. Now, this is indeed the crux of the matter; otherwise Jesus's saying, "My Father is greater than I" makes no sense.

That is why I do not agree with Mircea Eliade that the Council of Chalcedon's formula "completed the classical Christology", though he does admit that "certain difficulties raised by the Monophysites were left unanswered: The Monophysites held that if Jesus Christ was formed 'from two natures' (divine and human), there subsisted no more than one of them in the union; consequently, 'unique is the nature of the Word Incarnate'."[67] As Thetford argues, "the Fathers of the Council of 1166 would agree with Demetrios [of Lampe] that the flesh of Christ, because it is joined to God through the hypostatic union, is equally divine and worthy of the same honor (*homoeheos kai homotimos*) as his Divinity. The problem with Demetrios' thought was that he failed to recognize that, although 'enriched with the prerogatives of the divinity', the humanity of Christ remains essentially human."[68] As Tretford puts it, "Christ is not a *mere* man, to be sure; yet he *is* a man."[69] If this were otherwise, Christ would not be *fully human as well as fully divine*. This would mean that he could not achieve our salvation, for as Saint Gregory the Theologian put it: "What has not been assumed is not healed."[70]

The controversy over "My Father is Greater than I" was not solely over Demetrios of Lampe's view; there were others' circulating at the time and wreaking havoc in the streets. It is therefore correct to assert that whether he had held it independently before he consulted Hugo or came to be converted by the latter Manuel held exactly the same position. Since Hugo's view was publicly known this would have made the emperor look like the stooge of the Latins, i.e. of the Westerners. Manuel faced opposition even at the council, and in order to override it he dragged to the second session of March 6 everybody who was anybody at the Imperial court, i.e. as many Imperials as he could. This is the longest list of the Imperials found at any council during

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66 Ibid., Vol. 3, 57.

67 Ibid., Vol. 3, 55 and ft. 31.

68 G. Thetford, "The Christological Councils of 1166 and 1170 in Constantinople" in *St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly* 31 (1987), 148.

69 Ibid., 148, ft. 24.

70 Ibid., 149, ft. 25 quoting Gregory the Theologian, *Epistle* 101 in PG 37, 83D.

the period of the Komneni, i.e. from the synod of Blachernae of 1094-1095 to the synod of 1170. Here is the list of the Imperials:

TABLE 7: THE IMPERIALS AT THE SECOND COUNCIL OF 1166

Name & No. in Varzos	Title	Kinship to the Emperor/Office
Alexios Bela (153)	Despot	Gambros
John Komnenos (128)	Protosebastos	Nephew, son of Sebastokrator Andronikos Protovestiarios
Alexios Komnenos (132)		Nephew, son of Sebastokrator Andronikos
John Doukas (83)		Cousin, son of Sebastokrator Andronikos, Manuel's uncle
Andronikos (124)		Nephew, son of Ceasar John Roger [Dalassenos]
John Kontostephanos (133)		Nephew
Alexios Kontostephanos (134)		Nephew
Andronikos Batatzes (148)		Nephew, son of Gambros, Theodore Batatzes, Pansebastohypertatos
Alexios Batatzes (152)		Nephew, son of Gambros, Theodore Batatzes, Pansebastohypertatos
John Doukas (66)		Cousin, son of late Caesar Bryennios
Alexios Komnenos (69)		Cousin, son of Panhypersebastos
John Angelos (90)		Cousin, son of Emperor's uncle, Constantine Angelos, Pansebastohypertatos
Alexios Angelos (92)		Cousin, son of Emperor's uncle, Constantine Angelos Pansebastohyperatatos
Andronikos Angelos (93)		Cousin, son of Emperor's Uncle, Constantine Angelos Pansebastohypertatos
Isaac Angelos (96)		Cousin, son of Emperor's Uncle, Constantine Angelos Pansebastohypertatos
John Kantakouzenos (129)	Pansebastos Sebastos	Gambros
Constantine Doukas (140)	Pansebastos Sebastos	Gambros
Joseph Bryennios (85)	Pansebastos Sebastos	Gambros
John Arbantenos (85)	Pansebastos Sebastos	Gambros
Leo Kamyteros	Pansebastos Sebastos	
Nikephoros Bryennios (136)	Pansebastos Sebastos	
Goudelios Tzikandiles (94)	Pansebastos Sebastos	
Alexios Komnenos (117)	Pansebastos Sebastos	
George Palaiologos (191)	Pansebastos Sebastos	Megas Hetaireiarches
Constantine Palaiologos (192)	Pansebastos Sebastos	
Alexios Palaiologos	Pansebastos Sebastos	
Andronikos Kamateros	Pansebastos Sebastos	Megas Droungarios
John Kontostephanos	Pansebastos Sebastos	
Basil Kamateros	Pansebastos Sebastos	Protonotarios
Michael Angelos	Protonobelissimohypertatos	
Michael Hagiotheodorites	Protonobelissimohypertatos	Logothetes tou

		Dromou+Orhanotropos
John Kamateros	Protonobelissimohypertatos	Epi tou Kanikleiou
John (?) Makrembolites	Megalepiphanestatos	Protasekretis
Basil Kamateros	Protonobelissimos	Eparch
Michael Kamateros	Protonobelissimos	Epi ton Deeseon+Phylax
Isaac Aaron	Protonobelissimos	Akolouthos
Basil Trypsychos	Nobelissimos	Primmikerios ton Vardarioton
George Manganes	Nobelissimos	Koiastor
Theodore Pantechnes	Megalepiphanestatos	Dikaiodotes+Epi ton Oikeiakon
George Skylitzes	Protokouropalates	
John Karianites	Protokouropalates	Epi ton Kriseon
George Spleniarios	Kouropalates	Kirai tou Velou+Epi Tou Hippo-dromou
Constantine Mesarites	Kouropalates	Kritai Tou Velou+Epi Tou Hip-podromou
Thomas Haploucheir		Kritai Tou Velou+Epi Tou Hip-podromou
Leo Monasteriotes		Kritai Tou Velou+Epi Tou Hip-podromou

SOURCE: P. MAGDALINO, *The Empire of Manuel I Komnenos*, 505-507 based on *Ekthesis ton prahthenton epi te zetesei tes exegeseos tou en to agio Euaggelio retou tou alethinou Theou kai Soteros emon Iesou Hristou, tou "O Pater mou meizon mou esti" erides kai sinodoi kata ton ib' aiona* (Thessaloniki, 1968), 153-155.

Manuel made certain that a full complement of ecclesiastical dignitaries was present as well:

TABLE 8: CHURCH DIGNITARIES AT THE SECOND COUNCIL OF 1166

Rank	See	Name
Patriarch	Constantinople	Loucas
Patriarch	Antioch	Athanasius
Patriarch	Jerusalem	Nikephoros
Metropolitan	Caesaria, Cappadocia	Stephen
Metropolitan	Heraclea	Michael
Metropolitan	Cyzikos	Basil
Metropolitan	Nikomedia	Michael
Metropolitan	Nicaea	George
Metropolitan	Chalcedon	Constantine
Metropolitan	Amasia	Niketas
Metropolitan	Helitene	Niketas
Metropolitan	Gangra	John
Metropolitan	Mira	Christophor
Metropolitan	Karia	Leon
Archbishop	Corinth	Theodore
Bishop	Athens	Nicholas
Metropolitan	Mokesa	Luke
Archbishop	Crete	John
Metropolitan	Trapezunt	Michael
Metropolitan	Larissa	John
Metropolitan	Philippopolis	Basil
Metropolitan	Rhodes	Leon

Metropolitan	Philippi	John
Bishop	Adrianople	Leo
Metropolitan	Ierapolis	George
Metropolitan	Dyrrhakion	Michael
Metropolitan	Smyrna	Constantine
Metropolitan	Mythilene	Potos
Bishop	New Patras	Euthimios
Metropolitan	Amastria	John
Metropolitan	Thebes	John
Bishop	Serres	Theodore
Metropolitan	Dristra	Leo
Metropolitan	Corfu	Constantine
Metropolitan	Abydos	Michael
Metropolitan	Lacaedemonia	Niketas
Metropolitan	Paronaxia	Constantine
Metropolitan	Miletus	Niketas
Archbishop	Bizye	Theodore
Archbishop	Maroneia	Niketas
Archbishop	Arkadiopolis	Constantine
Archbishop	Parios	Nicholas
Archbishop	Proikonnesis	Isaac
Archbishop	Selymbria	Theodoulos
Archbishop	Nike	Dimitry
Archbishop	Derka	John
Archbishop	Gothia	John
Archbishop	Anghialos	Stephen
Metropolitan	New Caesareia	Basil
Metropolitan	Ikonium	John

SOURCE: SAKKOS, *O Pater Mou meizon Mou esti*, 157-159.

At the end of the second and final session Manuel imposed his own version as the solution to the Christological dispute. The very framing of the decision stressed the central and overwhelming, virtually divine, role of the emperor in the whole affair:

> That which was long ago written and handed down by the Holy and God-bearing Fathers, Preachers of the truth, and Teachers of God's most Holy Church—which also now has been clearly articulated and defined by the holy and divine Council which was gathered by the command, issued in accordance with divine inspiration and godly concern for our 'crowned-by-God' powerful, divinely-wise, Orthodox, triumphant, holy, great King and Autocrat Manuel Comnenos, Prphuyrogennetos—is on this venerable day openly proclaimed: [...] To those who acknowledge that the saying of our True God and Savior Jesus Christ, "My Father is greater than I," can be interpreted, together with the other interpretations of the Holy Fathers, as also referring to His humanity—by which He suffered (as the Holy Fathers explicitly proclaimed in many

> of their God-inspired writings) and say that the same Christ suffers according to His flesh: Memory Eternal![71]

The council ensured that its decision would be seen as proceeding from the previous ones, in particular Chalcedon, and framed the following explanation of Christ's humanity:

> To those who say that the flesh of the Lord, because of this union, is exalted and placed above all honor, and from the point of the union becomes equal to God, *without change, without alteration, without confusion, without mutation* (because of the hypostatic union) and remains indivisible and inseparable from God the Word, and is enthroned on the royal and divine throne on the right hand of the Father, being enriched with the prerogatives of the divinity, the properties of the two natures [thus] being preserved: Memory Eternal![72]

The italicised words by me above point out the exact quotation from the Council of Chalcedon's formula.

The Council of 1166 and its formulation of the Christological dogma was above all else a personal triumph for Michael as emperor. This is indeed how Magdalino sees it:

> [T]he famous 'Conciliar Edict' in which he decreed his solution to the...most vexed doctrinal controversy of his reign, that over the interpretation of Christ's statement 'The Father is greater than I'...was circulated widely throughout the empire and writ large on the wall of Hagia Sophia, in red letters on white marble plaques, is well known for its pretensions to old imperial grandeur. Less attention has been paid to the fact that its promulgation, which marked a significant departure from Manuel's practice in the previous Christological controversy, when he had been content to leave the official pronouncement to the patriarch and Synod. For, despite superficial similarities, the controversy of 1166 was of a very different order from its predecessor. From Kinnamos and the Latin sources it emerges that the dispute started not in the Church but in the palace, and that Manuel brought it before the Synod in order to vindicate his own contentious point of view, or rather that of his friend Hugo Eteriano. It was a question not of breaking a recalcitrant clerical minority, but of converting a reluctant majority, including, at one point, the patriarch; there were unofficial meetings in private houses, some of them belonging to court magnates, and there was even talk of subjecting the emperor to anathema. *Naturally, the official synodal record, the Ekthesis, does not reveal the full extent of the opposition.* But reading between its lines, one realizes that the emperor had to work hard to impose his idea of Orthodoxy, and he imposed it by legislation because two synodal sessions in his new throne room in the Great Palace, the first (2 March) attended by over twenty secular dignitaries and the second (6 March) by no less than forty-seven, failed to produce the unanimity he re-

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[71] Thetford, op. cit., Appendix, 157 (472), 158 (482).

[72] Ibid., Appendix, 158 (498).

> quired. And there is no need to read between the lines in order to appreciate that Manuel initiated and dominated the proceedings to a much greater extent than in his encounter with Soterichos Panteugenos. [In] the *Ekthesis* imperial panegyric is not merely an element but the very framework of the documentation. Manuel is repeatedly and extravagantly lauded for his divinely inspired wisdom. He formulates Orthodox doctrine; he prepares the dossier of Patristic citations; he frames the legislation...The triumph was the emperor's. The formula agreed by the Synod was solemnly added to the Synodikon of the Great Church; on the Sunday of Orthodoxy, the emperor, wearing his crown, entered the sanctuary of Hagia Sophia in the company of the three patriarchs, and laid the tome containing the additions on the altar. It was then read out, and all the bishops elect had to add the following words to their profession of faith:
> I embrace and I confess concerning our Lord's statement in the Holy Gospels that "The Father is greater than I" teaching handed down by the holy Fathers, and clarified by the pious Tome issued at the divinely inspired consent of our powerful and holy basileus and emperor, the Purple-born Manuel Komnenos: that is, that our Lord Jesus Christ made this statement with respect to His created and circumscribed nature, in which He suffered.[73]

As already mentioned, Manuel not only imposed his own doctrine[74] he had it inscribed and placed on the wall of Hagia Sophia:

> Emblazing this doctrine in red letters, as though with a flaming sword, Manuel threatened anyone who impulsively dared to scrutinize it with expulsion from the faith and death, especially anyone who grumblingly attacked it. He had the decree inscribed on tablets of stones, on the advice of certain men and set them up in the Great Church.[75]

Note, of course, in RED letters—in Imperial letters! However, it did not end the whole affair right then and there. In the words of Theodore Balsamon, "many monks and clerics were punished for their opposition."[76] One of the church dignitaries present at the Council of 1166, Constantine, Metropolitan of Corfu, a prominent member of the opposition at that gathering who had retracted, came out against the recently-deceased patriarch of Constantinople, Luke Chrysoberges, denouncing him as a heretic. The Council of 1170 had to be convened to deal with him.

The Council which convened on January 30th, 1170 at the Great Palace (again proving that Manuel preferred it to his permanent residence at

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[73] Magdalino, *The Empire of Manuel Komnenos*, 287-288. The *Synodikon* of Orthodoxy has been published and translated into French by Jean Gouillard, "Le Synodikon de l'Orthodoxie: Edition et commentaire" in *Travaux et memoires* 2 (Paris, 1967), 1-316.

[74] Niketas Choniates claims explicitly: "Manuel, I know not on what grounds, rejected these [other interpretations] as not adequately addressing the issue and gave his own definition." Niketas Choniates, op. cit., 120.

[75] Ibid., 121.

[76] Magdalino, op. cit., 288.

Blachernae) was a much smaller affair. It was designed to "destroy the deadly sting in the tail of the poisonous reptile which the God-crowned emperor had previously slain", as the official record put it so colourfully.[77] Manuel obviously felt that the main battle was behind him and that he had won a singular victory: both the Imperial and ecclesiastical members were fewer and handpicked by the emperor:

TABLE 9: LAY OFFICIALS AT THE COUNCIL OF 1170

Name & Bartzos No.	Title	Kinship to the Emperor/Office
John Komnenos (128)	Protosebastos	Nephew, son of Sebastokrator Andronikos Protovestiarios
Alexios Kontostephanos		Nephew, son of Panhypersebastos Stephen Kontostephanos
Andronikos Komnenos (148)		Nephew, son of Pansebastos Sebastos Theodore Batatzes
John Kantakouzenos (129)	Pansebastos Sebastos	Gambros
Constantine Doukas (140)	Pansebastos Sebastos	Gambros
John Doukas	Pansebastos Sebastos	Megas Hetaireiarches
Andronikos Kamateros	Pansebastos Sebastos	Megas Droungarios
Michael Hagiotheodorites	Protonobelissimos Hypertatos	Logothetes tou Dromou +Orphanotropos
Basil Kamateros	Megalepiphanestatos Protonobelissimos Hypertatos	Eparch
Theodore Pantechnes	Megalepiphanestatos Protonobelissimos Hypertatos	Dikaiodotes+Epi ton Oikeiakon
Andronikos Kappadox	Megalepiphanestatos	Megas Logariastes
George Manganes	Nobelissimos	Koiastor
Basil Tripsychos	Protonobelissimos	Primikkerios ton Vardariotneon

SOURCE: P. MAGDALINO, *The Empire of Manuel Komnenos*, 508 based on S.N. Sakkos, "He en Konstantinoupolei Synodos tou 1170", 327.

The ecclesiastical group was made up of 43 bishops and 21 officials. The bishops were:

TABLE 10: CHURCH DIGNITARIES AT THE COUNCIL OF 1170

Name	Bishop of See
Michael III Patriarch	of Constantinople
Nikephoros Patriarch	of Jerusalem
Constantine	of Bulgaria
John	Cyprus
Stephen	Caesarea
Nicholas	Ephesus
Michael	Heraclaea

[77] Ibid., 289.

John	Cyzikus
Michael	Nikomedia
Constantinone	Chalcaedon
Niketas	Melitene
John	Claudiopolis
Basil	New Caesarea
Christophor	Myron
John	Laodicaea
John	Ikonium
Constantine	Pamphylos and Perge
Lucas	Mokesos
John	Crete
Constantine	Smyrna
Pathos	Mytilene
Constantine	Euchaites
John	Amastridos
George	Alania
Basil	Apameia
Leon	Dristra
Nikephoros	Nazianzes
Michael	Abidos
Theodor	Methymne
Basil	Mesembria
Niketas	Miletus
Theodoulos	Selybria
John	Bizye
Constantine	Arkadiopolis
Michael	Kios
Romanos	Apros
John	Kypselles
Constantine	Bryseis
Theodore	Lempos
Constantine	Gotthia
John	Herakleios
Setphen	Anchialos

SOURCE: S.N. Sakkos, "He en Konstantinoupolei Synodos tou 1170", 326.

Having condemned Constantine, Metropolitan of Corfu, the second Council of February 18, 1170 was convened, again in the Great Palace, to examine John Eirenikos, abbot of the monastery of Batalas on the mountain of Boradion near the Bosphorus. He opposed the new Christological formulation from the very beginning, and wrote a tract entitled "Apology to the Synod on the Gospel statement 'The Father is greater than I'", a copy of which was found when his cell was searched. In the tract he attacked the emperor: "What could be more reprobate or insolent? Who did he think he was, and whence did he teach and write these things, stupidly indeed appointing himself a self-ordained teacher? Did he perhaps think of himself as a New Moses, supposedly sent ... as God's latest spokesman?"[78] Eirenikos too was con-

[78] Ibid., 289 citing Sakkos, op.cit., 341-344.

demned and deposed. As Magdalino points out, "they were not as isolated as the synodal record makes them appear. Balsamon later noted that the Synod 'lawfully deposed various men in holy orders who had merely seen the writings of the late heretic Eirenikos, and neither proclaimed them nor condemned them."[79] Though the Great Church, i.e. Hagia Sophia, continued to be *the center* of religious life in the capital, with 700 members of clergy being attached to it in the beginning of the 12th century and 500 towards the end of it, monasticism continued to offer the real alternative to it. It should also be noted that six of the nine patriarchs of Constantinople during Manuel's reign were abbots of monasteries. [80]

There is no question that the opposition to Manuel's high-handed policy came from the monks. They enjoyed wide popular support and they could mobilize it if needed. No emperor could afford to ignore this potential alliance between the monastic opposition and the people of Constantinople. What could and did bring the two together was their common opposition to what they regarded as 'pro-Latin' view of Manuel on the question of "My Father is greater than I". No other single theological issue was more explosive in 12th-century Byzantium than this one. Whether rightly or wrongly Manuel was perceived widely by the populace as having fallen under the Latin influence. His imposition of his own Imperial solution to the most vexed Christological question of all was seen as not only highly interventionist but bordering (if not actually) on heresy.

As Paul Magdalino argues, "there is a case for arguing that Alexios and Manuel between them reversed or at least arrested the progress towards greater self-determination which the Church of Constantinople had made in the course of the eleventh century. Their constant intervention reaffirmed the Church's dependence on, identification with, and subservience to the state, in ways which recalled, or even surpassed, Justinian I, Leo VI and Basil II."[81]

Of all the theological issues it was "My Father is greater than I" than was central to Manuel's view of himself and his empire. For in tackling the dual nature of Christ, it raised the issue of the emperor's own hybrid role: as both the supreme commander [*arhistrategos*] and a supreme teacher of faith [*epistemonarches*] or 'chief scientific expert in Church government' as Magdalino puts it.[82] But it also had to do with the fact that, right from the very beginning of his reign (and in some way even before he became emperor) Manuel was regarded as 'divine' because of his name 'Emmanuel' standing for 'the Lord', i.e. God. As Magdalino points out, "in his image, the Byzantine cult of the emperor's divinity seems to reach its logical conclusion, and this impression seems confirmed by contemporary western reactions. Odo of

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[79] Ibid., 289.

[80] Ibid., 300.

[81] Ibid., 303.

[82] Ibid., 281.

Deuil wrote contemptuously of the Greeks worshipping their 'idol', and in the purported letter to Manuel from Prester John, the legendary priest-king is made to remind Manuel that they were both ordinary mortals, 'even though your Greeklings think that you are God.'"[83] As is known, Manuel's coins bore the icon of the young Christ Emmanuel. And I already quoted Antiochos' oration in which he compared Manuel's travails as emperor with none other (and no one less than) Christ Himself: "O how the whole drama of Christ's Passion was planned for you, and a Cross was set up for you, the pain of battle on our behalf!...O how from that moment until your last gasp you kept the form of the Crucified, stretched to right and left, reaching your hands to east and west, sharing your palms between the rising and the setting sun..."[84] And yet, as Prester John reminded Manuel in his purported letter to the emperor, he was also an ordinary mortal. Both divine and human—in a certain sense, just like Christ. And that is why any formulation that denied or denigrated or diminished Jesus's human nature struck *per analogiam* at the emperor's human nature as well. Being Christ's Vicegerent on earth the emperor was both human and divine, just like Christ. And that is why it was important to stress and enshrine for ages to come Christ's *full human nature*.

When Manuel Komnenos had his edict of 1166 written in red, imperial letters on marble tablets, and placed in the narthex of Hagia Sophia, he was not only proclaiming his triumph over any present or future opposition to his view of Christ's two natures, but was proclaiming himself as the one who had succeeded where his predecessors on the throne, no matter how great they had been, had failed: both Constantine the Great at Nicaea in 325, and Justinian had not solved the riddle of Christ's saying "My Father is greater than I". Manuel was absolutely convinced that he had. And by building the magnificent church of Christ the Pantokrator (symbolically naming it after the divine counterpart of his own office of autokrator) he had equalled if not surpassed Constantine's Holy Apostles and Justinian's Hagia Sophia. Placing the tablets in the vestibule of Justinian's Church proclaimed to everyone that he had surpassed both the founder of the City and the founder of the Great Church, both portrayed in golden mosaics in Hagia Sophia.Well could he have imitated Justinian in saying: Justinian, I have surpassed thee!

No other emperor of Byzantium had greater pretensions to grandeur than Manuel; and none went to such lengths to proclaim it. With him Byzantium reached the apogee of self-praise.

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[83] Ibid., 480, quoting Odo of Deuil, *De profectione Ludovici VII in orientem* [ed. and trans. V.G. Berry](New York, 1948), 76 and 90 and M. Gosmann, *La letter du Pretre Jean* (Groningen, 1982). On the letter see V. Slessarev, *Prester John: The Letter and the Legend* (Minneapolis, 1959) and B. Hamilton, "Prester John and the Three Kings of Cologne" *Studies in Medieval History Presented to R.H.C. Davis* [ed. H. Mayr-Harting and R.I. Moore] (London, 1985), 177-191.

[84] Ibid., 487 quoting from W. Regel, ed., *Fontes rerum Byzantinarum, fasciculi 1 et 2: rhetorum saeculi XII orationes politicae* (St. Petersburg, 1892-1917; reprint Leipzig, 1982, 212-213.

7

THE IMPERIALS: THE LORDS AND LADIES OF BYZANTIUM*

POWER was vested in the emperors-autocrats in Komnenian Byzantium (as before and after) but it was delegated and (to a certain extent) shared with a large number of people very close to the ruling emperor. While those who had access to the emperor could always demand attention and command the obedience of those below them, contemporaries (such as, most famously, John Zonaras) were under no illusion that Alexios I changed the nature of Byzantine government. Hitherto (with some exceptions) Byzantium was governed by a well-entrenched bureaucracy, not related by blood to the emperor, and this bureaucratic elite was made up of professionals who had risen in service through a well-known series of ranks and dignities going back to late Roman times. This bureaucracy was centered in Constantinople and governed the rest of the empire from it. There were provincial officials who carried out the administration of the provinces, but with the exception of the governors and military commanders, they hardly counted at all. The military, both in the capital and in the provinces, was directly appointed by and responsible to the autocrat, and this put the military beyond the scope of the central bureaucracy's control in theory. But in a half century or so between the death of Basil II in 1025 and the accession of Alexios I Komnenos in 1081 the civil bureaucracy from Constantinople tried to control the military as well with disastrous effect. The struggle of the two ruling elites, the civil bureaucracy centered in Constanti-nople with its stronghold in the Senate [*sinkletos*], and the military establishment dominated by the commanders of the armies in the East [*anatoli*] and the West [*disis*] and provincial generals [*doux*] and governors [*strategos*] was the dominant feature of Byzantine political and social history between these two emperors, Basil II and Alexios I. This is well attested by Michael Psellos.

It is true that some historians have questioned this rigid distinction between what may be termed the bureaucracy with its stronghold in the Senate [the *politikon*] which made up the civil aristocracy (centered in Constantinople) and the military [the *stratiotikon*] dominated by the great aristocratic houses from both the East (Anatolia, Syria, mostly Antioch, and Armenia)

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* The phrase comes from William Butler Yeats's poem "Sailing to Byzantium" (1927):... Or set upon a golden bough to sing/To lords and ladies of Byzantium/ Of what is past, or passing, or to come.

and (to a lesser extent, but increasingly so) in the Balkans (mostly from Thrace and centered in Adrianople). The argument put forward is that they were not only intermarried (which has been known for some time) but that members of each supposedly watertight group performed both civil and military functions, and thus the two camps cannot be neatly divided. There is some truth to this, but it misses the point: whether a member or two 'crossed the lines' (so to speak) and performed the functions of the other group is not indicative of the position and status of the individual aristocratic clan as such: they continued to view themselves and were seen by others in both camps as either belonging to the one or the other. A member of the Doukas clan, whether he pushed a pen or wielded a sword, was ALWAYS seen by his contemporaries as belonging to one of the greatest MILITARY clans. And a Skylitzes or a Psellos was seen as belonging to a CIVIL clan regardless of his actual position or function. We shall see that this rigid distinction was obliterated to a certain extent by the so-called Komnenian revolution, but the latter was seen as so radical precisely because it radically changed both the nature of government and the personnel (especially at the top) that served it. In my opinion, we are justified in seeing these two groups as the TWIN ARISTOCRACIES that governed Byzantium prior to the accession of the Komneni in 1081 and continued to exist but in a different relationship under the Komneni (1081-1180). Since the civil bureaucracy was entrenched in the Senate until Alexios I came to power, I will call this aristocracy SENATORIAL. Of course, there is no other appropriate name for the group of military clans that contested the absolute power [*autokratoria*], led by the Doukas and Komnenos clans, than MILITARY.

The Senatorial aristocracy was humiliated and stripped of most of its power (if not prestige) by the victorious Military aristocracy under the leadership of Alexios I Komnenos. The victorious latter led by the young usurper Alexios sought out and purposely and publicly humiliated the former during the first couple of days of the looting of the capital in 1081. During his long reign (1081-1118) the Senate, as the stronghold of the civil aristocracy, was invaded and inundated, so to speak, with the members of the Military aristocracy who now took over many important positions in the administration of the government itself. The vast majority of the Senatorial aristocracy was excluded from any participation in the administration, much less power, of the empire. And the Military aristocracy, triumphant under the double hegemony of the Doukas and Komnenos superclans, established an absolute domination over the entire government of the Byzantine Empire. This is well-known, and need hardly be emphasized here except to demonstrate statistically how EXTENSIVE and RADICAL this change was: it was a veritable revolution which may shock even some specialists who, of course, are familiar with this phenomenon, but may not be aware of how ENORMOUS it actually was. For the first time, on the basis of statistical data, we can show just how THOROUGH and epoch-changing this veritable revolution was.

What has been established by Byzantinists for quite some time is the NATURE of this revolution: it substituted PERSONAL relationship to the emperor for the ADMINISTRATIVE position and competence of the bureaucracy. Offices and dignities no longer mattered IN THEMSELVES except as the personal favors of the ruling emperor who thereby signalled his trust in these persons to the rest of the governing elite, and to the population at large. He also thereby indicated the degree to which a particular person was permitted (not entitled) to PARTICIPATE in making decisions, but not SHARE in power as such. During the half century of so between the death of Basil II in 1025 and the accession of Alexios I emperors were constantly and repeatedly betrayed by those who were closest to them, had sworn allegiance to them, and had been entrusted with confidence, particularly in high military matters. These acts of high treason led to the rapid changeover of emperors between 1025 and 1081 and a constant instability which reduced Byzantium's ability to defend itself against the enemies both in the East (the Seljuk Turks) and the West (the Normans).

This situation culminated with the crushing defeat of the Byzantine army at Manzikert in 1071 when one of the generals belonging to the powerful Doukas clan, spread the false rumors that Romanos IV Diogenes had fallen in battle, and then left the field with his forces, thereby betraying the emperor, and causing his army to be destroyed, and he himself to be captured and humiliated by Alp Arslan. It was thus betrayal based on the personal animosity between the Doukas and Diogenes clans that led to treachery on the field of battle, and to the greatest defeat in all of Byzantine history.

Faced with such a prevalent attitude of absolute lack of trust young Alexios entrusted important aspects of his government to his closest family members, his mother Anna Dalassena, and his elder brother, Isaac, who had stepped aside to make Alexios emperor. Both his mother and brother had prepared the terrain for his accession, Isaac in the army and Anna in the capital itself, so that, to a certain degree, Alexios, was in debt to both. There were precedents in earlier Byzantine history of emperors sharing power with members of their family, but what Alexios did went much further than that. He chose to make first his elder brother and then his mother as rulers in their own right, intimately associated with him in the entire government of the empire, particularly when he was on numerous campaigns fighting his enemies. This made them almost regents (and his mother was indeed seen as such) and thus public impression was made that they SHARED the supreme power with him because he LET them participate in the government of the empire.

As I said, there were precedents for this: but what *was* unprecedented was that Alexios went further than this: he trusted and included in his so to speak inner circle only the members of his family, those who married into it, and those who were related in one way or another to both. Conversely, EVERYBODY else, i.e. members of both the SENATORIAL aristocracy (to a very large degree) and of the MILITARY aristocracy (to a lesser degree) were

SYSTEMATICALLY EXCLUDED from all participation in the government of Byzantium. This trend gained momentum in the second half of Alexios's reign, i.e. after the death of his elder brother Isaac in 1002/4 and his mother around that time, and became an entrenched part of the system of government under John (1118-1043). Under Manuel (1143-1180) it reached the extreme when even the highest titles no longer indicated adequately the closeness to the emperor, but the highest indicator of one's personal standing was that he was a 'relative' [*gambros*] to the emperor. The Komnenian system of government reached thus its apogee under Alexios's grandson, but it owed everything and could not have taken place but for the radical changes introduced and sweepingly enforced under the first Komnenos.

In a very perceptive article Peter Frankopan has challenged this thesis to a certain extent. He starts by stating that "Alexios' reign...is commonly seen to represent a decisive change in the system of government and in the nature of what Byzantium and Byzantiness meant both on the domestic level and in the international arena..."[1] He then outlines what we have just discussed above:

> The accession of Alexios I Komnenos is often if not invariably seen by modern historians as marking a decisive change in the cult of Emperorship, in the way in which the government in Byzantium behaved and in the domestic politics of the Empire as a whole. Above all, the way in which Alexios came to dominate the state is seen to be of crucial importance, with particular emphasis placed on the fact that the new Emperor imposed a stranglehold on Byzantium not only by appointing his confidants and supporters to the highest positions (which may have been normal) but also by selecting and nominating members of his immediate family—such as his brothers, mother, nephews, brothers-in-law—to these offices (which was not).[2]

Frankopan then rightly points out that "the use of the family to reenforce and protect Alexios' own position as Emperor was not something entirely out of the ordinary in Byzantium in the tenth and eleventh centuries...[W]hat made Alexios different was the extent to which his kinship group was able to establish a monopoly over the apparatus of the state. The level of supremacy of the Komnenoi and of the wider kinship groups which took in families such as Palaiologos, Doukas, Melissenos, Taronites, Bryennios—to name just a few—is implicit in the principal source for this period, namely, the *Alexiad* of Anna Komnene, and where individuals related by marriage to the Emperor feature heavily during the course of this lengthy text."[3]

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[1] Peter Frankopan, "Kinship and the Distribution of Power in Komnenian Byzantium", *English Historical Review* CXXII No. 495 (Feb. 2007), 1

[2] Ibid., 2.

[3] Ibid., 2-3.

Frankopan then introduces the principal source for the charge against Alexios I, namely the *Epitome Historion* of John Zonaras. Summarizing the key passage in Zonaras' chronicle, Frankopan bares Zonaras' charge: "On his usurpation of the throne, Alexios had deliberately and carefully chosen to ignore the senators and the other members of the aristocracy..., instead looking after only his own family and those who served them... The result was that those associated with Alexios became fabulously wealthy and were able to live in houses and palaces the size of towns."[4] After pointing out that the crucial support of the Doukas clan, arguably the most powerful and certainly and the most prestigious clan in the Military aristocracy, was secured principally because Alexios was married to Eirene Doukas [*Doukaina*] which also made him a preferred candidate to the Doukas as opposed to his elder brother, Frankopan admits that

> there is a good deal of evidence to support the claim made by Zonaras—which is at least echoed if not taken as read in the *Alexiad*—that Alexios' relatives dominated Byzantium from the start of his reign. Even the most cursory look at those closest to the Emperor, or for that matter an overview of the principal positions in the civil and military administrations, reveals the extent to which the Komnenoi and their kinship group embedded themselves into the machinery of the state. Moreover, the vice-like grip appears to have strengthened exponentially during the period between 1018 and 1118, as the kinship group expanded to take in more members as a result of what is often described as a concerted and careful marriage policy by which young members of the principal family were married to grandees in order to harness their support for the regime.[5]

Frankopan gives as evidence Alexios' investment of power in the first half of his reign (up to c. 1104) to his elder brother Isaac: "On more than one occasion, Isaac was left in charge of affairs in Constantinople while the Emperor was away campaigning, and, to judge from the *Alexiad*, had an uncompromising brief to deal with any trouble that might arise in a decisive manner."[6] Alexios entrusted his other brothers with considerable powers as well: "Nor was Isaac the only sibling whom Alexios relied on heavily. One brother, Adrian, was placed in charge of the military, being given the rank of *megas domestikos* some time after the death of Gregory Pakourianos in the mid-

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[4] Ibid., 3 quoting Zonaras, *Epitome historiarum* [M. Pinder and T. Büttner-Wobst, eds.](Berlin, 1897), Vol. III, 766-7 [18.29].

[5] Ibid., 4 citing P. Magdalino, *The Empire of Manuel Komnenos*, 202-206, Cheynet, *Pouvoir et contestations*, 369-377 and others.

[6] Ibid., 4 citing Anna Komnene, *Alexias*, 4.4.1, 126.

1080s[7]... Yet another, Nikephoros, was put in charge of the imperial navy, though it is difficult to establish when this happened."[8] Alexios also put his brother-in-law, George Palaiologos, as governor of the most important and sensitive theme in the Balkans, that of Dyrrakhion (modern Dürres in Albania). John Doukas, brother of Empress Eirene was also a *doux* of Dyrrakhion and was put in charge of later military operations to recover the Aegean coast of Asia Minor. He was also the Grand Duke of the Fleet [*megas doux tou stolou*] and restored order in Crete and Cyprus when the two rebelled in the 1090s. Frankopan then sums up the prevalent view of Byzantine scholarship:

> Many more examples can be noted of positions given to Alexios' immediate family and which provide ample and seemingly unequivocal evidence to support Zonaras' statement that the Komnenoi were responsible for establishing and maintaining an inner sanctum, a tier of individuals whose rank and status were determined by their familial and kinship relation with the Emperor. For during the period between 1081 and 1118, it seems that the highest ranking positions in Byzantium were reserved almost exclusively for the Komnenoi themselves or for members of their immediate family. The first three positions in the Empire were divided between Alexios, his brother Isaac and their brother-in-law, Nikephoros Melissenos. All four of the individuals known to have held the title of *kaisar* (Caesar) in this period were close relatives of the Emperor; one his son, one a son-in-law, one a brother-in-law and one a grandfather-in-law. Another brother-in-law, Michael Doukas, brother of the Empress Eirene, performed resolutely on the battlefield on more than one occasion, evidently in a senior command position indeed.[9]

As though this was not enough Frankopan goes on to admit that "members of the family held suitably exalted titles, such as another of Alexios' brother-in-law, Michael Taronites, whom we know held the rank of *protosebastos*, *protovestiarios* and eventually *panhypersebastos*, although little is known about what (if any) executive, administrative or military responsibilities this individual had. Those of others are better known, and the picture that we can build up certainly provides compelling material to support Zonaras' comments. Sensitive positions, such as the governorship of Dyrrakhion—whose significance and importance if anything rose further still with the passage of the First Crusade through Byzantium—were essentially reserved for close family members alone with the exclusion of all others. In this period, therefore, apart from Alexios' brothers-in-law Palaiologos and Doukas, the

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[7] In his "Dévaluation des dignités et dévaluation monétaire dans la seconde moitié du XIe siècle" Jean-Claude Cheynet gives the title of sebastos to Gregory Pakourianos for the period 1081-1086 (in his *The Byzantine Aristocracy and its Military Function*, VI, 465).

[8] Frankopan, op. cit., 5 citing *Alexias* 3.4.2, Zonaras 18.21 Vol. III, 732.

[9] Ibid., 6.

position was also held by the Emperor's father-in-law, Nikephoros Bryennios, as well as by his nephews, John and Alexios Komnenos..."[10] After bringing up Nikephoros Bryennios, who married Anna Komnena, and Alexios' mother, Anna Dalassena, as further evidence of what we may call the Zonaras Thesis, Frankopan sums up thus:

> Indeed, time and again, we find key duties being discharged by Alexios' intimates, with this being reflected in titles and ranks which they carried. One result was the devising and development of a new nomenclature based on the rank of *sebastos* and soon proliferating through what one modern historian has aptly called 'the inflation of titles'. Moreover, as Alexios' reign went on, and as the size of the Komnenian kinship group grew through marriage, the Emperor also came to rely on those further away from him than his brothers, brothers-in-law and father-in-law and his nephews. In particular, Alexios tapped in to the nexus of aristocratic families who formed part of the Bryennios family grouping in the western part of the Empire, and who were either directly or indirectly linked with the Komnenoi. Individuals from families such as Kourtikios, Mavrokatakalon, Tarkhaneiotes and Euphorbenos Katakalon all fell into this category, and can repeatedly be found in important command positions or carrying out sensitive tasks for which reliability and trustworthiness were evidently paramount.[11]

Having established the nature and perimeters of the Komnenian system Peter Frankopan then proceeds to question and modify it:

> If this paints a compelling picture of the extent and nature of Komnenian power and of the way in which one individual and his family was able to establish a stranglehold over the machinery of state, then it is also worth stressing that the view of kinship being the basis for power in late eleventh and early twelfth centuries [*sic*] Byzantium needs to be qualified, if not corrected. For while it is certainly striking that two of Alexios' sibllngs were in command of the imperial army and of the Empire's navy, respectively, it is important to note that these two positions were not reserved solely for those closest by blood to the Emperor or even for members of his family at all. Indeed, the first occupant of the position of *megas domestikos* was not a Komnenos or one of Alexios' relatives, but in fact Gregory Pakourianos, an Individual who as far as we can tell had no connection at all to Alexios or to his immediate family, but who nevertheless served the Emperor as head of the armed forces with some distinction from 1081 until his death in the mid-1080s.

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[10] Ibid., 6-7.

[11] Ibid., 7-8 citing *Alexias* 2.7.1, 72-3; 3.1.5, 89, 7.3.6, 211, 8.1.1., 236, 8.6.2., 250, 10.2.4, 285, 15.6.4, 477.

> Nor was the case of Gregory Pakourianos by any means unique. For while both the *Alexiad* and the *Epitome Historion* record Alexios' younger brother, Nikephoros, as Admiral of the Fleet [*megas droungarios tou stolou*], we know of at least one other individual who held this position during this period. Again, this individual, Eustathios Kymineianos, had no family connection with the Emperor, and appears to have earned his appointment on merit and on a loyalty to Alexios, which presumably had been proved over the years.
> Likewise, while John Doukas and no fewer than four others who held the title of *doux* of the fleet [*doux tou stolou*] during this period were related to the Emperor in one way of another, at least two others were not. One of these was Manuel Boutoumites, who enjoyed an illustrious career under Alexios and was evidently a highly trusted and much respected confidant to the Emperor, in spite of having no relationship by blood or marriage with him. The other occupant of this position, one Landulph (most likely Butrumile), not only found his lack of familial relations with Alexios no hindrance to his progression to one of the highest positions in the Empire but also was able to reach his rank in spite of the fact that he was not even Greek by birth.[12]

It seems to me that there are very good explanations in each case why these 'outsiders' were included in the inner circle of Byzantium: take the case of Gregory Pakourianos. He was the occupant of that high position at the very beginning of Alexios' reign when the new Emperor was fearful of antagonizing his supporters and creating potential enemies. In case of Eustathios Kymineianos Anna Komnena makes it very clear that he was a eunuch[13] and thus could not be a real threat to Alexios [eunuchs were barred from the imperial offices for obvious reasons, but they were promoted to the highest positions only in exceptional circumstances]. As for both Boutoumites and Landolph they were both given special commissions on numerous occasions, but that does not mean that they automatically belonged to the inner sanctum of the Byzantine system. For the distinction between the *office* and the *dignity* must be taken into account. All the positions Frankopan cites as examples are *offices*; they are *not ranks* or dignities. It is my contention that not the *office* but the *ranked title* betokens the membership of the inner circle. Under the Komneni this can be very precisely delimited: it was the rank of *sebastos and above, including all the various modifications and gradations of it.* This is particularly true of the second half of Alexios' reign, i.e. after 1004, and John's (1118-1143). Under Manuel (1143-1180) the *sebastos* system of the government started to break down, but it was still visible and powerful.

Before proceeding to deal with the second half of Frankopan's article let us take a look at the highest ranks (not offices) of the Byzantine Empire under each of the three emperors, Alexios (1081-1118), John (1118-1143) and

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[12] Ibid., 8-9.

[13] AKA 271.

Manuel (1143-1180). We are able to establish the highest echelons of ranks on the basis of three synodal lists, of the Blachernae in 1094-95, of the Blachernae of 1157, and of the Great Palace of 1166 (supplemented with that of 1170). Let us take each in turn.

Gautier has established the date of the Synod of the Blachernae, which dealt with Alexios' seizure of church wealth for his campaign funds, at 1094/5. Coming about fifteen years after Alexios seized power, but while he was still very insecure because his inability to solve the foreign threats to his empire both in the East (against the Turks) and in the West (against the Pechenegs, and Normans), Alexios was still in the process of consolidating what I have called the *sebastos* system. Though he is not included in the list as printed in Appendix 2 of Magdalino's book on Manuel Komnenos' Empire[14] Alexios' elder brother, Isaac, was the judge with the highest title of all (after the Emperor), of *sebastokrator*, created by his younger brother especially for him. He was followed by his younger brother Adrian as *protosebastos* and *megas domestikos* (i.e. the commander of the army), then by eight (not seven as in Appendix 2![15]) people with the rank of *sebastos*: Michael Doukas, John Doukas, *megas doux*, George Palaiologos, John Taronites, Michael (we do not know his family name), Constantine Maniakes, Marinos Neapolites, and Constantine Houmbertos (or Oumpertos). The first six are designated as *kyr* (lord) and are set apart from the two who are either from the erstwhile Byzantine possession of Naples, or a foreigner. Each of the six was related by blood to Alexios' including the mysterious Michael who was "a relative [*gambros*] of the emperor through a niece".[16] All the rest carry inferior titles (very degraded under Alexios and more so under his heirs) of *protonobelissimos, nobelissimos, protokouropalates, kouro-palates, protoproedros, proedros, raiktor and vestarches*. It should be pointed out that all of these titles belong to (put it unkindly) pen pushers: they are all dignitaries of the Imperial administration from Manuel Philokales who as *epi tou kanikleiou* carried the title of *protonobelissimos*, down to Leo and Michael Opheomaches who as *vestarches* were mere scribes [*grammatikos*]. Within the charming *sebastos* circle only this mysterious Michael was a *logothete* with a title of *sebastos*. Now as the Secretary of Imperial Chancery this Michael was not entitled to a *sebastos* rank automatically (so to speak), for all the other logothetes [*epi tou kanikleiou, tou dromou, epi ton deeseon*] had lower ranks of *protonobelissimos* and *protokouropalates*. But as a blood relation to the Emperor he was: which proves the point. Already mid-way through Alexios' reign marrying into the (extended) Imperial family was a prerequisite for the

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[14] Magdalino, *The Empire*, 501-502 on the basis of P. Gautier, "Synode des Blachernes", 216-220.

[15] Ibid., 501.

[16] AKA 79 and n. 1.

highest titles. Both Marinos Neapolites and Constantine Maniakes seemed to have married into the Imperial family, but we lack confirmation.[17]

Though not perfect, the *sebastos* system was already in place and indicative who belonged to the circle closest to the Emperor. Unfortunately, we do not have a Synodal list for John's reign, but the earliest one under Manuel (1147), coming only four years after Manuel's accession will have to do. Again, unfortunately, it is a very short list, but very indicative: all the top rank holders belong to the Imperial family! Let us look at them: John Roger who is the same as Dalassenos[18] with the title of Caesar [*kaisar*], Stephen Kontostephanos with the title of *panhypersebastos*, Constantine Angelos as *sebastohypertatos*, Alexios Komnenos, Alexios and Andronikos Euphorbenos who carry no title (at least in the list), but who are designated as "cousins of the Emperor"!

The list then includes Constantine Komnenos and John Taronites as *pansebastos sebastos*. The very bottom is made up of Basil Pekoules and John Alopas as *krites* [judges]. Thus already by the beginning of Manuel's reign if not certainly earlier the proximity to the Emperor through blood ties was more important than any title as such which means that while in place and indicative of one's importance the *sebastos* system as such was already under attack. It should be pointed out that ALL of the members of the above list, minus the two judges, were related to the Komneni as the numbers in the Vartzos' genealogy prove.[19]

Ten years later, in 1157, at the Synod of Blachernae, the *sebastos* system is still in place, but it is supplemented for the topmost ranks by relation to the Emperor. It is topped by John Komnenos as *protosebastos* and nephew to Manuel, followed by Alexios, Manuel's brother (with no title!), Alexios Konto-stephanos as *sebastos* and nephew, John Kantakouzenos with the title of *pansebastos sebastos* and relative [*gambros*] to the Emperor, John Angelos as *pansebastos sebastos* and *gambros* to Theodora Komnenos, Constantine and Alexios Palaiologos as *pansebastos sebastos*, and Andronikos Kamateros as *pan-sebastos sebastos*. Below them all are high functionaries, i.e. bureaucrats and NONE belong to the Imperial family. At the successive synods held at the Great Palace under Manuel in 1166 there is a great inflation of honors so that titles no longer set the members of the Imperial family clearly apart. Let us take a look at the list of March 2, 1166:

John Komnenos as *protosebastos* leads the list together with his brother Alexios Komnenos, sons of *sebastokrator* Andronikos. Then comes Andronikos Komnenos as nephew to the Emperor and son of *pansebastohyper-*

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[17] See B. Skoulatos, Les personages byzantins de l'Alexiade: Analyse prosopographique et synthèse (Louvain, 1980), 195-196.

[18] L. Stiernon, "Notes de titulature et de prosopographie byzantines: a propos de trois membres de la famille Rogérios (XIIe siecle)" *Revue des études byzantines* 22 (1964), 197-198; Cheynet & Vannier, *Etudes prosopographique*, 112.

[19] Magdalino, *Empire*, 504-505.

tatos Theodore Vatatzes (Batatzes), followed by Alexios Komnenos, a nephew to the Emperor and brother of the above, then John Doukas, a cousin to the Emperor and son of *pansebastohypertatos* Constantine Angelos, and followed by Andronikos Doukas as cousin to Manuel and brother of the above. This is followed by eight *sebastos* rank holders, from John Kantakouzenos, Constantine Doukas and Goudelios Tzikandiles whose kinship relation is indicated as *gambros*, down to George Palaiologos, John Doukas, Alexios Petraliphas, Alexios Rogeres and Andronikos Lampardas. All of them with the exception of Alexios Rogeres is related to the Komneni, as numbers in Vartzos' genealogy indicate.[20] However, it should be pointed out that above and including the three *gambros* to the Emperor, apart from John Komnenos as *protovestiarios* [with the rank of *protosebastos*] NONE were given any specific functions. The lower five *sebastos* holders were. Four days later, at the sitting of the Synod on March 6, 1166 the new constellation of power is more visible:

The highest rank holder is now Alexios (Bela) as *despotes*, but the top-heavy list is now headed by John Komnenos as *protosebastos*, with Alexios Komnenos, John Doukas, Andronikos, son of *kaisar* Roger [Dalassenos], John and Alexios Kontostephanos, Andronikos and Alexios Vatatzes, John Doukas, cousin to the Emperor, son of late *kaisar* Nikephoros Bryennios, Alexios Komnenos, and ending with the four Angeli: John, Alexios, Andronikos and Isaac. All these had no rank or title indicated. This is followed by four *pansebastos sebastos* holders: John Kantakouzenos, Constantine Doukas, Joseph Bryennios, and John Arbantenos who are indicated as relatives [*gambros*] to Emperor Manuel. They are placed squarely above the rest of those holding the *pansebastos sebastos* rank: Leo Kamyteros, Nikephoros Bryennios, Goudelios Tzikandiles, Alexios Komnenos, George, Constantine and Alexios Palaiologos, Andronikos Kamateros, John Kontostephanos, Basil Kamateros. Below the *pansebastos sebastos* rank NONE were related to the Emperor despite their holding inflated ranks like *protonobelissimohypertatos*. It is quite clear that by already 1166 relationship to the Emperor was becoming more important than any rank as such, and had inflated the *sebastos* rank to the point that a mere rank of *sebastos* was no longer sufficient to indicate one's proximity to Manuel.

It should be pointed out that the Synod of 1166 was in many ways the high point of Manuel's reign (1143-1180) when it tackled and proclaimed the Emperor's solution to the vexing theological question of Christ's saying: "My Father is greater than I." Everybody who counted in the Emperor's inner circle (women excluded) was pressed if not literally dragged into it.

The Synod in the Great Palace in 1170, with its two sessions of January 30 and February 18, is a sort of a shortened list of who is who in Manuel's Byzantium. Again, on January 30th, John Komnenos as *protosebastos* tops the

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[20] Ibid., 505-507.

list, followed by Alexios Kontostephanos as nephew to Manuel and son of *panhypersebastos* Stephen, then Andronikos Komnenos, and four *pansebastos sebastos*: John Kantakouzenos, Constantine and John Doukas, and Andronikos Kamateros. The list of February 18th is much shorter: Again John Komnenos tops it, followed by Alexios Komnenos as *protostrator* [office, not rank], and three *pansebastos sebastos*: John Kantakouzenos, Michael Gabras and Joseph Bryennios. All three are indicated as relatives [*gambros*] to Emperor Maniuel. By this time the inner circle contained only seven relatives or less, and the rest clearly were not deemed important enough to be consulted. This is what is usually taken to indicate Manuel's taking down of the *sebastos* system which no longer clearly indicated who was the closest of the close. The Komnenian revolution had been completed. As Peter Frankopan points out,

> there are two competing images of power and control in the Byzantium of Alexios I Komnenos. On the one hand, power was concentrated in the hands of the Emperor's immediate family, with many of his closest relatives being given the very highest positions of all within the state. In this model, physical proximity to the Emperor himself, whether by blood or marriage, was the key driver for prestige as well as for influence and responsibility in real terms. On the other hand, however, is a considerable body of evidence which suggests that while the Emperor may indeed have entrusted many of the top rankings and titles to his brothers, to his in-laws and to his relatives, the Komnenoi did not exercise an exclusive grip on the reigns of power in the late eleventh and early twelfth centuries, with those outside the imperial family, and indeed even those originating outside the Empire, being able to find a place at or near the very summit of the social, political and military hierarchies in Byzantium.
>
> In one way, of course, it is not hard to reconcile these two images, for the real point here is that Alexios was able to impose a stranglehold by excluding all those whom he did not want to have a share in the power, the administration—military and civilian—or the government of Byzantium. In this respect, then, the fact that many members of his family were put in key positions is less relevant that the fact that Alexios sought to impose, and succeeded in imposing, his own candidates and supporters in these positions in the first place. That is to say, the point is not so much that the Komnenoi and the wider family were able to spread their tentacles right the way through the apparatus of state in this period, but that Alexios was able to include who he wanted in the distribution of power during the course of his reign.
>
> That this was the case can be best demonstrated by highlighting the fact that while the list of positions enjoyed by the Emperor's relatives certainly makes for impressive reading, the allocation of honours and ranks was by no means even, nor for that matter was it consistent. Some members even of Alexios' immediate family, for example, seem to have slipped by the wayside, for no obvious or apparent reason, in spite of their relationship to the Emperor. For

example, while two of the sons of Isaac Komnenos had important positions (as governors of Dyrrakhion) during their uncle's reign, his two other sons do not appear to have been so highly favoured by the Emperor in this period. Nevertheless, all four of Isaac's sons enjoyed the Emperor's favour more than Alexios' three other nephews, the only sons of his brother Adrian Komnenos and Nikephoros Komnenos and that of his elder sister, Eudokia, who was married to the *kaisar* Nikephoros Melissenos. So little is known about these individuals that one might reasonably question whether any survived infancy. In fact, we can be sure that at least two of them outlived the Emperor. While there may be a explanation for why one of these nephews was kept at a distance and excluded from the centre of power, there seems no good explanation for why the others were so treated—other than that Alexios chose to ignore them, for one reason or another.

In other words, then, it is more fruitful and above all more realistic to see the nexus of power in the Byzantium of Alexios Komnenos as being distributed not evenly among all who were related to the Emperor, but to those individuals who—whether related or not—would not only prove to be reliable but also, perhaps no less importantly, be capable and proficient at discharging whatever duties they were delegated by the Emperor, and as such, moving away from seeing Alexios' immediate and wider family as the base of his power, and rather as an expression of this.[21]

This is undoubtedly true as far as it goes, but it makes no distinction between *titles, i.e. dignities* (such as *sebastos*) and *offices* (such as *doux* of Dyrrakhion). Outsiders could and were given extremely important posts, such as the military governors of the most sensitive themes (at times), and commands of the part (or exceptionally the whole) of the army and the navy, and particularly in the civil administration. As a rule, *unless they were related by blood or marriage to the Emperor,* they were not given the top ranks or titles from *sebastos* upwards. This has been known for quite some time among the Byzantinists: L. Stiernon, in his highly influential and path-breaking article on the *sebastos and gambros*, has shown conclusively that the *sebastos* system, i.e. very top ranks were ALL reserved from the Emperor's extended family, with relatives and in-laws. As a matter of fact, he established beyond any doubt that the position within the *sebastos* system depended on the *degree of proximity to the Emperor based on two criteria: blood and marriage*, and that the former was given higher status (and titles within the *sebastos* system) than the latter.[22]

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21 P. Frankopan, "Kinship and the Distribution of Power...", 10-12.

22 L. Stiernon, "Notes de titulature et de prosopographie byzantines: sébaste et gambros" in *Revue des études Byzantines* XXIII (1965), 222-243.

778 P. Frankopan, op. cit., 13.

779 Ibid., 13.

Frankopan argues that "it stands to reason that there would and must have been important distinctions between members of the Emperor's kinship group, and, furthermore, that these distinctions would not have remained consistent and uniform throughout the period in question. Evidently, the stock of some relatives must have fallen, while that of others rose. In this way, therefore, it can be stressed that while it was Alexios' brothers and brothers-in-law who dominated the first two decades of this Emperor's reign, by the start of the twelfth century many had either been removed from their positions, retreated to the monastic life or passed away. Little is known, therefore, about the lives, duties and responsibilities of Isaac, Adrian and Nikephoros Komnenos after the passage of the First Crusade or, for that matter, about those of Nikephoros Melissenos, Michael Taronites, George Palaiologos or Michael and John Doukas after the 1090s."[23] As Frankopan makes clear, "the fact that the *Alexiad*, which provides the fullest and most detailed coverage of Alexios' reign by some considerable margin, says little about the author's many cousins and relatives, for example, not only deprives us of an obvious source of information about this matter but also threatens to mislead us by playing up the positions and titles enjoyed by some members of the family, but not by others."[24] In other words, Anna Komnena is purposely *silent* about their literally consignment to oblivion: nothing but a sympathy for if not charge of heresy can account for this.

Frankopan concludes by warning that "there is a danger of taking the comments of John Zonaras and those of Anna Komnene too literally in an assessment of Komnenian politics—at least for the period between 1081 and 1118. The presentation of the Emperor... as a ruler surrounding himself with a bloc of supporters made up exclusively of his own family and in-laws masks the fact that outsiders could and often did find their way into high-level positions in spite of having no blood or marital relationship with Alexios or with the imperial family. Meanwhile, the repetition by the author of the *Alexiad* of the sovereign's reliance on an undefined and amorphous group referred to repeatedly as being made up of those related to the Emperor by blood and marriage...is also not helpful in so far as it both conceals the tensions and fluidity within this collection of individuals, and also overemphasises the fact that Alexios had around him a reliable set of family members who could be trusted to help and advise him when and where necessary."[25]

Frankopan's view demands thorough investigation. We can determine whether or not Alexios relied inordinately on his relatives to the exclusion of others if we ascertain a network of his relatives correlated with titles and then related to power. We also have to do this for John and Manuel, to see how the

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780 Ibid., 13-14.

system fared under the later Komneni. Let us start with Alexios I with top down.

We have already discussed Anna Dalassena's enormous participation in power during the first half of her son's reign, i.e. until her disgrace and relegation to obscurity. She was truly a regent: a person who could authorize the blinding of a rebel leader without consulting the reigning Emperor did not need any additional powers. As I already pointed out, she was given the rank of *despoina*, a female version of the despot [*despotes*] title. This was the very highest title and befitted her role. We also know that while exercising these Imperial powers Anna Dalassena used the Imperial title of *basileia mou*, i.e. My Impertial Majesty. Stiernon determined that this highest class belonged to the Emperor, his Empress, sons associated with the Emperor designated to succeed him, or, if the Emperor did not have any sons, the daughter born in purple [*porphyrogenneta*]. It also included the Dowager Empress of both the Emperor and the Empress.

Next in importance was his elder brother, Isaac, for whom, as we know, Alexios created a special title of *sebastokrator*. This title was higher than any other including *kaisar*, but not higher than *despot* (which at the time did not exist). The *sebastokrator* was not just a higher title than *sebastos*, it was the head of the whole *sebastos* system. Stiernon determined that the class of the *sebastokrator* included the sons, the brothers, paternal uncles and grand uncles and their respective spouses.

The third class was made up of the *gambroi*, i.e. the in-laws of the Emperor: his sons-in-law (husbands of his daughters), brothers-in-law (husbands of his sisters and brothers of his wife), uncles by alliance (husbands of his many relatives). What is important is that these persons are honoured by various titles *according to the order of birth of their wives*: *kaisar*, i.e. the husband of the eldest daughter, *panhypersebastos* for the husband of the younger daughter, *protosebastohypertatos* for the husband of the third daughter, and *sebastohypertatos* for the husband of the youngest daughter. According to Stiernon, these three uppermost classes form the group of the despots.

The fourth class is made up of the nephews and cousins of the Emperor. During Manuel's reign (1143-1180) these persons do not have a specific titles except for the eldest sons of the *sebastokrators* who carry the title of *protosebastos*. In this class everything is regulated according to the proximity to the Emperor: a nephew precedes the sons of an uncle or an aunt, i.e. a cousin, and the sons of the paternal uncle precede the son of a sister, i.e. a nephew. They all carry the designation of "son of" but a son of a *sebastokrator* takes precedence over that of a *kaisar*, of *panhypersebastos* etc.[26]

The fifth class is made up of the *sebastos* subdivided into *sebastos and gambros category*, and plain *sebastos* with or without a function. The second

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[26] Stiernon, op. cit., 224-225.

through the fifth class make up what I have called in this study the *sebastos system.*

All the lower classes are *administrative* and as such are not given to the Imperial relatives and in-laws. They are mostly bureaucratic and therefore are the equivalent of a *function* or office, not a court title. The sixth class is that of *nobelissimos,* once the highest *title* after the *kaisar* but now pretty degraded: in this class are included the *protonobelissimohypertatos, protonobelissimos and nobelissimos.* In the list of the various synods the title of *protonobelissimohypertatos* carries the honorary title of *Kyr* (lord), and is the only title lower than *sebastos* to incorporate this designation.

The seventh class of the *kuropalates* and the eighth of *proedros* are reserved, as Stiernon makes clear, to the bureaucrats [*sekreta*] in the central administration. None of the Imperial relatives and/or in-laws carry them—they are too low for them. The still lower classes are made up of mere pen-pushers: the *raiktor* and *vestarches* and those lower.

Of course, it should be emphasized that many of these officials exercise quite a lot of power due to their *office,* but not due to their *title* at the court. They have *delegated power inherent in their office, or in the case of the armed forces, in their commission.* The highest positions in the civil administration and the armed forces, the army and the navy, are reserved for those who belong to the Imperial circle, and carry a corresponding title.

We know that his elder brother, Isaac, had the highest title among these men, that of the *sebastokrator.* We also know that his role in the first half of Alexios' reign, prior to his death (which I am inclined to date) in 1102 was extraordinary, though it is difficult to describe it precisely. Many historians have called him 'the Inquisitor General' or even 'the Grand Inquisitor'. Given his crucial role in uncovering both the Anemas Conspiracy and above all the Bogomil network headed by Basil the Bogomil, this is very apt indeed. But I do not think it does him justice: he was more than that. He was, in effect, the successor to his mother, Anna Dalassena, in being a sort of a regent when Alexios was not in Constantinople (and he frequently was not for long periods of time). Thus he had extensive powers, though (as far as we know) was never given these power formally, i.e. a chrysobull.

But there is no question that his exalted title was given to him not just as a recompense for not being elected Emperor instead of Alexios (being the eldest son), but because he was seen to be the head of the new college of *sebastos* who were now seen as the highest group of court dignitaries around the Emperor. Like his mother he too was associated with his younger brother in the government of the empire.

Alexios' two other brothers, Adrianos and Nikephoros were made *protosebastos* and *sebastos* respectively. Adrianos Komnenos was given the most important post of the Grand Domestic of the West, i.e. the commander-in-chief of the Byzantine Army in the Balkans, after the death of Gregory Pakourianos in 1086. Pakourianos was given this most important post for his

support of Alexios' candidacy for the Emperor, in other words, as a bribe to get him on the side of the young usurper. As the commander of the army Adrianos was present in a number of battles, including that of Dristra (spring of 1087) against the Pechenegs, and at the Battle of Lebounion (April 29, 1091). In 1092, as already presented, Adrianos was accused by his elder brother, Isaac, as the principal accuser against the latter's son John, *doux* of Dyrrakhion, probably denounced to the Emperor by Thophylact of Ohrid. During the Diogenes Conspiracy, Adrianos was charged by the Emperor to find out the plans and accomplices of the chief conspirator, but he was not successful. But, as Frankopan points out,

> Adrian knew more about Diogenes' plans than the emperor realised and returned claiming to have found out nothing about the supposed conspiracy. The emperor now resorted to more blunt measures and after arrested and tortured, Nikephoros confessed all. When he discovered exactly who had been implicated in conspiracy, Alexios was dumbfounded. They included both the former empress Maria, ex-wife of Michael VII and Nikephoros III Botaneiates, who had once been so close to Alexios, and Michael Taronites, the husband of his sister Maria Komnene. Nikephoros had also won the support of leading members of the senate, senior army officers and influential aristocrats. They are not identified by name in the *Alexiad*, which provides the main account for this period, curtailing the list of conspirators in a diplomatic lacuna rather than recording the embarrassing extent of the plot.
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> Nevertheless, it is possible to establish some of the conspiracy's leading supporters. Chief among them was Alexios' brother Adrian. The commander of the empire's western armies was a prize asset for Nikephoros. The men were brothers-in-law through Adrian's marriage to Nikephoros' half-sister, and the fact that Adrian appears to have known the details of a previous attempt against the emperor suggests that he may have been involved. But something else reveals that he was implicated in the plot against Alexios: after it was uncovered, the vanished. Adrian played no role during the First Crusade, neither supervising contingents of westerners across Byzantine territory on their way towards Constantinople, nor receiving them in the capital when they arrived. When disputes and misunderstandings spilled over into violence and left the emperor with little option but to use force against the knights, Adrian was invisible, with others appointed to lead the counter-attacks of the imperial forces. He was not present at Nicaea before, during or after the siege of the town in 1097. In spite of his being the highest-ranked officer in the imperial army, it was not Adrian who was sent with imperial troops across Asia Minor to accompany and guide the Crusaders to Antioch. Not one of the many primary sources for the Crusade mentions his name or alludes to his existence. In fact, he had been disgraced; this was why he lived out his last years in a monastery,

his name excised from imperial propaganda, and why his children were excluded from power in the twelfth century."[27]

He took part in the Council of Blachernae in 1094/1095, and corresponded with Theophylact of Ohrid. Adrianos was married to Zoe, the daughter of the ex-basilissa Eudokia Makrembolitissa. The latter was the mother of the chief conspirator, Nikephoros Diogenes, whose father was Romanos Diogenes. As already mentioned, Adrianos totally disappears after 1095, so much so that Bohemond, one of the leaders of the First Crusade, wanted Alexios to give him the title of the Grand Domestic in 1097.[28] Frankopan is right in using Adrianos and others as an example of Alexios' own kin betraying him, and thus exposing the fallacy of relying exclusively on one's family for the governing of the empire, but it does mean, nevertheless, that until his disgrace Adrianos was given not just the highest position in the army, but a lot of power and influence that went with it.

There is no question that one of the most influential and powerful of his in-laws was Alexios's son-in-law, husband of his first and beloved daughter Anna, the historian, Nikephoros Bryennios. He was a grandson (not a son as previously thought by some historians) of the usurper Nikephoros Bryennios the Elder who rose to be a *magistros* and *doux* of the West under Romanos Diogenes and participated in the Battle of Manzikert in 1071, having command of the left flank. He became the *doux* of Dyrrakhion under Michael VII. Bryennios the Elder was proclaimed emperor in Traianopoulos in November of 1077. In the spring of 1078 Nikephoros Botaneiates revolted, came to Constantinople and became emperor. He then dispatched Alexios Komnenos, the future emperor, to put Bryennios's revolt down. Alexios defeated Bryennios and captured him. He was then blinded. With Bryennios out of the picture the way was open for Alexios to make a bid for the throne. In 1081 he became Emperor. Though defeated and blinded Nikephoros Bryennios the Elder had his property restored and lived until at least 1095.[29] Alexios gave his young daughter Anna as an infant to Konstantinos Doukas, the son of Michael VII, thus cementing the ruling alliance between the Komnenos and Doukas clans which started with his taking Eirene Doukas as his wife. Konstantinos, however, died young in 1094, and Alexios then gave Anna to Nikephoros Bryennios (the Younger), thus eliminating the potential threat and incorporating a very distinguished clan of military aristocracy into his own. Nikephoros was then given the title of *kaisar*, the second highest title after *sebastokrator* Isaac, the elder brother of the emperor, at his marriage in 1097.

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[27] P. Frankopan, *The First Crusade: The Call from the East*, 81-82.

[28] Ibid., 133-134.

[29] Cheynet, *Pouvoir et contestations*, 99; A. Carile, "Il cesare Niceforo Briennio" in *Aevum* 42 (1968), 432-436.

In 1108 Nikephoros was given one of the new titles, *panhypersebastos*, and continued serving Alexios in military affairs.

The rest of the so-called Imperials can be divided according to their proximity to one of the three successive ruling Komneni emperors. We will present them separately for each reign. Here we give the Imperials under Alexios I (1081-1118). In the tables below the first row includes the carrier of the rank (male) followed by his wife in the second row. The couple is indicated by +. Number refers to Varzos followed by "/" to Polemis for Doukas. The full list of all is found in Index One.

TABLE 11: THE IMPERIALS UNDER ALEXIOS I

EMPEROR

No.	Name	Clan	Date Born	Date Died
15	Alexios I	Komnenos	1057	1118
+/26	Eirene	Doukas	1066	1123?

JUNIOR EMPEROR [BASILEUS]

No.	Name	Clan	Born	Date Died
34	Ioannes	Komnenos	1087	1143
+	Piriska	of Hungary		

SEBASTOKRATOR

No.	Name	Clan	Born	Died
12	Isakios	Komnenos	1050	1102/1104
+	Irene	of Alania	?	
	Nikephoros	Bryennios*		c. 1136
+32	Anna	Komnenos	1083	1148/1155

*Sebstokrator after the death of Isakios Komnenos (1102/1104)

KAISAR [CAESAR]

No.	Name	Clan	Born	Date Died
32/13	Ioannes	Doukas	?	1087/1088
+	Eirene	Pegones		
	Nikephoros	Melissenos		
+13	Eudokia	Komnenos	1052	1136
	Nikephoros	Bryennios		1136/1137
+32	Anna*	Komnenos	1083	1148/1155

*This is the famous author of *The Alexiad.*

PROTOSEBASTOS

No.	Name	Clan	Born	Date
16	Adrianos	Komnenos	1060	1105
+/20	Zoe	Doukas	1062	Bef.1136

PANHYPERSEBASTOS

No.	Name	Clan	Born	Died
+ 11	Michael Maria	Taronites Komnenos	c. 1047	c. 1136
	Nikephoros	Katakalon	?	Bef. 1130
+ 33	Maria	Komnenos	1085	c. 1136

SEBASTOHYPERTATOS

No.	Name	Clan	Born	Died
+ 38	Konstantinos Theodora	Kourtikios Komnenos	1096	c. 1136
+ 37	Michael Eudokia	Iasites Komnenos	1095	c. 1129

PANSEBASTOS SEBASTOS

No.	Name	Clan	Born	Died
28 +	Andrianos Anonymous	Komnenos Komnenos	1088	1157/1164
+44	Gregorios Anna	Pakourianos Komnenos	c. 1085	?
/25	Ioannes	Doukas	c. 1064	After 1116
55 +	Ioannes Eudokia	Komnenos Komnenos	1096	c. 1116
21	Ioannes	Taronites		
48 +	Manuel Eirene	Botaneiates Synadenos	1090	?
46 + 29	Theodoros Sophia	Dokeianos Komnenos	1090 1094	1111 1130
+ 19	Nikephoros Anna	Botaneiates Komnenos	c. 1069	?
+ 30	Nikephoros Eudokia	Botaneiates Komnenos		
+ 26	Gregorios Maria	Gabras Komnenos	c. 1080	?

SEBASTOS

No.	Name	Clan	Born	Died
+ 20	Konstantinos Anna	Cerullarius Komnenos*	1063/64	?
+	Georgios Anna	Palaiologos Doukas	c. 1057 c. 1068	1119/1136 Bef. 1036
	Marinos	Neopolites		
	Konstantinos	Maniakes		
	Konstantinos	Houmbertos		

*Komnenos Taronites, daughter of Maria Komnenos 11 and Michael Taronites, panhypersebastos above.

To show how all the Imperials were intermarried either with the Komnenos or the Doukas clans (or between the two) we shall arrange the above to show the intermarriage pattern and the descent of the couples below:

TABLE 12: INTERMARRIAGES WITH KOMNENOS/DOUKAS

KOMNENOS

Name	Relation	Name/Clan	Title
Adrianos	4th S. of John K. & Anna Dalassena	Zoe Doukas	Protosebastos
Adrianos	4th S. Of Isakios K. 12 & Eirene of Alania		Pansebastos Sebastos
Alexios I	3rd S. of John K. & Anna Dalassena	Eirene Doukas	Basileus Autokrator
Andronikos	2nd S. of Alexios I & Eirene Doukas	Eirene Princess of Rus	Sebastokrator A. 1102/4
Anna	1st D. of Alexios I& Eirene Doukas	Nikephoros Bryennios	Kaisar
Eudokia	2nd D. Ioannes K 6 + Anna Dalassena	Nikephoros Melissenos	Kaisar
Ioannes	S. of Alexios K. 25 & Zoe Kouropalates, Meg Dom	Eudokia Komnenos	Pansebastos Sebastos
Isakios	2nd S. of John K. 6 & Anna Dalassena	Irene Princess of Alania	Sebastokrator
Maria	1st D. Isakios K 6 & Anna Dalassena	Michael Taronites	
Maria	2nd D. Alexios I & Eirene Doukaina	Nikephoros Katakalon	
Sophia	3rd D. Isakios K 12 + Eirene of Alania	Theodoros Dokeianos	Pansebastos Sebastos
Ioannes II	Basileus	Piriska Princess of Hungary	
Maria	2nd D. Isakios K. 12 + Eirene Of Alania	Gregorios Gabras	
Anna	D. Maria K20 + Michael Taronites	Konstantinos Cerullarius	Sebastos

DOUKAS

Name	Relation	Name/Clan	Title
Anna Doukas	D. Andronikos Doukas & Maria of Bulgaria	George Palaiologos	Sebastos
Eirene	1st D. of Andronikos 21 & Maria of Bulgaria	Alexios I Komnenos	Basileus Autokrator

Ioannes	S. Andronikos Doukas, Br. Emperor Constantine X	Eirene Pegonites	Kaisar
Ioannes	2nd S. Andronikos Doukas & Maria of Bulgaria		Pensebastos Sebastos
Konstantinos	S. Of Emp Constantine X Doukas		
Konstantinos	S. Of Emperor Michael VII		
Michael	S. Of Andronikos Doukas, Protostrator		Protostrator
Zoe	3rd D. Konstantinos 12 & Eudokia	Adrianos Komnenos	Protesebastos

TABLE 13: IN-LAWS
[MARRYING INTO THE KOMNENOS AND DOUKAS CLANS]

Name	Relation	Name	Clan	Title
Anna	Dalassenos	Ioannes	Kom 6	Kouropalates
Constantine	Houmbertos [Poulos]			
Constantine	Maniakes			
Georgios	Palaiologos	Anna Douk Kom 26	Douk	
Gregorios	Gabras	Maria	Kom 26	
Gregorios	Kamateros	Eirene	Douk 32	
Gregorios	Pakourianos	Anna	Kom 44	Pansebastos Sebastos
Ioannes	Taronites	Eudokia	Kom	Pansebastos Sebastos
Irene	Of Alania	Isakios	Kom 20	Sebastokrator
Konstantinos	Cerullarius	Anna	Kom Tar	Sebastos
Konstantinos	Kourtikios	Theodora	Kom 38	
Maria	Of Alania	Michael VII	Douk	Basileus Autokrator
Maria	Of Bulgaria	Andronikos	Douk	Sebastokrator
Marinos	Neapolites			Sebastos
Michael	Iasites	Eudokia	Kom 37	Sebastohypertatos
Michael	Taronites	Maria	Kom 11	Panhypersebastos
Nikephoros	Bryennios	Anna	Kom 32	Kaisar
Nikephoros	Katakalon	Maria	Kom 33	Panhypersebastos
Nikephoros	Melissenos	Eudokia	Kom 13	Kaisar
Theodoros	Dokeianos	Sophia	Kom 29	Pansebastos Sebastos
Manuel	Botaneiates	Eirene	Synad	Pansebastos Sebastos
Nikephoros	Botaneiates	Anna	Kom 19	Pansebastos Sebastos
Nikephoros	Botaneiates	Eudokia	Kom 30	Pansebastos Sebastos

ABBREVIATIONS: KOM[NENOS], DOUK[AS], TAR[ONITES], SYNAD[ENOS]

TABLE 14: THE IMPERIALS UNDER JOHN II (1118-1143)

BASILEUS AUTOKRATOR

No.	Name	Clan	Date Born	Date Died
34	Ioannes II	Komnenos	1087	1143
+	Eirene/Piriska	of Hungary		

JUNIOR EMPEROR [BASILEUS]

No.	Name	Clan	Date Born	Date Died
81	Alexios	Komnenos	1106/07	1142
+	Manuel (I)	Komnenos	1118	1180
	Bertha	Sulzach		

SEBASTOKRATOR

No.	Name	Clan	Date Born	Date Died
76	Andronikos	Komnenos	1108/1109	1142
35	Andronikos	Komnenos	1091	1130/31
36	Isakios	Komnenos	1093	1152
78	Isakios	Komnenos	1113	1154

KAISAR [CAESAR]

No.	Name	Clan	Date Born	Date Died
	Nikephoros	Bryennios		
+ 32	Anna	Komnenos	1083	1148/1155
	Nikephoros	Melissenos		
+ 13	Eudokia	Komnenos	1052	1136
	Ioannes	Dalassenos*		
+ 75	Maria	Komnenos	1106/1107	1144/1145

*ROGER DALASSENOS

PROTOSEBASTOHYPERTATOS

No.	Name	Clan	Date Born	Date Died
	Manuel	Anemas		
+ 79	Theodora	Komnenos	1115	1157

PROTOSEBASTOS

No.	Name	Clan	Date Born	Date Died
132	Alexios	Komnenos	1135	1182
+ /223	Maria	Doukas		
128	Ioannes	Komnenos	1126	1176

PANHYPERSEBASTOS

No.	Name	Clan	Date Born	Date Died
	Michael	Taronites		
+ 11	Maria	Komnenos	1047	1136
	Nikephoros	Katakalon		be. 1130
+ 33	Maria	Komnenos	1085	1136

PANSEBASTOHYPERTATOS

No.	Name	Clan	Date Born	Date Died
90	Ioannes	Doukas	1125/1127	1200

PANSEBASTOS SEBASTOS

No.	Name	Clan	Date Born	Date Died
28	Adrianos	Komnenos	1088	1157/1164
119	Alexios	Doukas	1120/1121	?
53	Alexios	Komnenos	1115	1136
+	Eirene	Axouchos		
	Alexios	Kontostephanos	1130	1176
113	Andronikos	Komnenos	1137	1201/1202
	Nikephoros	Synadenos		
+ 149	Anna	Komnenos**	1136	1186
	Anonymous			
+ 61	Eirene	Doukas	1110	1143
	Anonymous	Doukas Kamateros		
+ 138	Eirene	Komnenos	1133	1183
	Nikephoros	Botaneiates		
+ 30	Eudokia	Komnenos	1096	1150
191	Georgios	Palaiologos***	1125/1126	1168/1170
55	Ioannes	Komnenos	1096	1120/1122
+	Eudokia	Komnenos		
133	Ioannes	Kontostephanos ***	1128	1176/1182
	Isakios	Dokeianos	1109	1127
49	Isakios	Komnenos	1095	1136
+	Anna	Doukas		
160	Isakios	Komnenos	1140	1190
27	Konstantinos	Komnenos	1085	1147
	Alexios	Axouchos		
+ 123	Maria	Komnenos	1125	1167
	Konstantinos	Kamytzes		
+ 91	Maria	Komnenos	1128/30	?
17	Nikephoros	Komnenos	1062	1136
	Theodoros	Dokeianos		
+ 29	Sophia	Komnenos	1094	1130
57	Stephanos	Komnenos	1127/1131	?
+	Eudokia	Axouchos		
	Ioannes	Arbantenos		
+ 86	Anna	Komnenos	1116	?

*KOMNENOS
**VATATZES
***DOUKAS KOMNENOS
****KOMNENOS

SEBASTOS

No.	Name	Clan	Date Born	Date Died
	Stephanos			
+ 77	Anna	Kontostephanos	1110/10	1149/1176

We will now group the above according to their relationships to the dominant clans of Komnenos and Doukas:

TABLE 15: INTERMARRIAGES WITH KOMNENOS/ DOUKAS

Name	Relation	Name	Clan
Adrianos	4th S. of Isakios K. 12 & Eirene Alania		
Alexios	5th s. Ioannes K. 23 & Maria Doukas	Eirene	Axouchos
Alexios	2nd S. of Andronikos K76 & Eirene	Maria	Doukas 223
Alexios	1st S. of Isakios K78 & Theodora		
Alexios	2nd S. Roger Dalassen & Maria K 75	Eirene	Petraliphas
Alexios	1st S. of Andronikos K35 & Eirene		
Alexios	S. of Manuel Anemas & Theodora K79	Anna	Kom Douk 230
Alexios I	3rd S. of John K. & Anna Dalassen	Eirene	Doukas
Andronikos	2nd S. of Nikephoros. Katakalon Euph. Mar. 33		
Andronikos	2nd S. John II K. 34 & Eirene of Hun		
Andronikos	2nd S. of Alexios I & Eirene Doukas	Eirene	
Andronikos	S. of Alexios K 45 & Kataes Georgia		
Andronikos I	2nd D. Nik Katakalon Euph. & Mar. 33		
Anna	2nd D. Nik. Katakalon Euph. & Mar. 33		
Anna	2nd D. John II K. 34 & Eirene of Hungary	Stephanos	Kontostephanos
Anna	1st D. of Alexios I & Eirene Doukas	Nikephoros	Bryennios
Anna	2nd D. Isakios K. 36 & Eirene	Ioannes	Arbantenos
David	S. Alexios K65 & Kataes Georgia		
Eirene	1st D. Isakios K78 & Theodora	Anonymous	Doukas Kamateros
Eudokia	2nd D. of John K. 68 & Anna Dalassena	Nikephoros	Melissenos
Eudokia	4th D. of Isakios K. 12 & Eirene Alan	Nikephoros	Botaneiates
Eudokia	3rd D. of Alexios I & Eirene Doukas	Michael	Iasites
Eudokia	4th D. John II K. 34 & Eirene of Hun	Theodoros	Vatatzes
Eudokia	3rd D. Nik. Katakalon Euph & Mar. 33		
Ioannes	1st S. Andronikos K 76 & Eirene		
Ioannes	2nd S. Isakios K 78 & Theodora		
Ioannes	S. of Alexios K. 25 & Zoe	Eudokia	Komnenos

Ioannes II	1st S. of Alexios I & Eirene Doukas		
Isakios	3rd S. of Alexios I & Eirene Doukas	Eirene	
Isakios	1st S. Ioannes K. 23 & Maria Doukas	Anna	Doukas
Isakios	S. Nikeph Botaneiates & Eudokia K		
Isakios	3rd S. John II K. 34 & Eirene of Hun		
Isakios	S. Ioannes Arbantenos & Anna K86		
Konstantinos	3rd S. of Isakios K. 12 & Eirene of Alania		
Manuel I	4th S. of John K. 34 & Eirene of Hun.		
Maria	1st D. of John K. 6 & Anna Dalassena	Michael	Taronites
Maria	2nd D. of Alexios I & Eirene Doukas	Nikephoros	Katakalon
Maria	D. of Alexios K.74 & Pr. Of Kiev	Alexios	Axouchos
Maria	1st D. John II K. 34 & Eirene of Hun	Ioannes	Roger/-Dalassenos
Maria	1st D. Konstant Angelos & Theod K38	Konstantinos	Kamytzes
Nikephoros	5th S. of John K. & Anna Dalassena		
Nikephoros	S. Ioannes Doukas 66 & Theodora		
Sophia	3rd D. of Isakios K. 12 & Eirene Alania	Theodoros	Dokeianos
Stephanos	S. of Konstantinos K. 27	Eudokia	Axouchos
Theodora	3rd D. of John K. & Anna Dalassena	Konstantinos	Diogenes
Theodora	4th D. of Alexios I & Eirene Doukas	Konstantinos	Kourtikios
Theodora	3rd D. John II K. 34 & Eirene of Hun	Manuel	Anemas
Theodora	3rd D. Andronikos K76 & Eirene		
Theodora	D. Theodore Batatzes & Eudokia K80		

DOUKAS

Name	Relation	Name	Clan
Alexios	S. of Eirene Doukas 67& Anon		
Anna	D. Andronikos Doukas & Mar of Bul	George	Palaiologos
Eirene	D. of Theodore D. 46 & Sophia K. 29		
Eirene	1st D. Nik. Katakalon Euph. & Mar. 33		
Eirene	D. Andronikos Doukas &	Alexios I	Kommenos 15

	Mar of Bul		
Eirene	D. Michael 24?	Gregorios	Kamateros
Ioannes	1st S. Konstant. Angelos & Theod K 38	Zeo	Doukas
Ioannes	2nd S. of Andronikos K 35 & Eirene		
Ioannes	S. of Nik. Bryennios & Anna K. 32	Theodora	Of Caucasus
Zoe	3rd D. of constant. X Doukas+ Eudokia Marrembolites	Adrianos	Komnenos

TABLE 16: IN-LAWS [MARRYING INTO THE KOMNENOS AND DOUKAS CLANS]

IN-LAWS

Name	Relation	Name	Clan
Alexios	Angelos Komnenos		
Alexios	Kontostephanos	Maria	Doukas 218
Alexios	Kontostephanos Komnenos		
Andronikos	Angelos Doukas 39	Euphrosyne	Kastamonites
Andronikos	Kontostephanos Komnenos		
Anna	Botaneiates Doukas	Coloman	K. of Hungary
Georgios	Palaiologos	Anna	Doukas
Georgios	Palaiologos Doukas Komnenos		
Gregory	Taronites Bryennios Komn		
Ioannes	Katakalon		
Ioannes	Kontostephanos Komnenos		
Isakios	Dokeianos		
Nikephoros	Katakalon	Maria	Komnenos 33
Theodoros	Vatatzes	Eudokia	Komnenos 80
Ioannes	Arbantenos	Anna	Komnenos 86

TABLE 17: THE IMPERIALS UNDER MANUEL I (1143-1180)

BASILEUS AUTOKRATOR

No.	Name	Clan	Date Born	Date Died
81 +	Manuel I Komnenos 1st wife Bertha 2nd wife Maria	 of Sulzbach of Antioch	1118	1143

JUNIOR EMPEROR [BASILEUS]

No.	Name	Clan	Date Born	Date Died
155	Alexios	Komnenos	1168/1169	1183

DESPOT

No.	Name	Clan	Date Born	Date Died
+ 153	Alexios Bela* Maria	Komnenos	1152	1182

*ALEXIOS BELA was a Hungarian Prince.

SEBASTOKRATOR

No.	Name	Clan	Date Born	Date Died
180	Alexios (III) Euphrosy-	Angelos	1153	1211

+	ne	Doukas Kamateros		
87	Andronikos (I)	Komnenos	1118	1185
78	Isakios	Komnenos	1113	1154
178	Konstantinos	Angelos	1151	1199

KAISAR [CAESAR]

No.	Name	Clan	Date Born	Date Died
179	Ioannes	Angelos	1152	1222
+	Eirene	Komnenos		
+	Ioannes	Dalassenos*		
75	Maria	Komnenos	1106/1107	1144/1145
182	Theodoros	Angelos	1155	1199

*ROGER DALASSENOS

PROTOPANSEBASTOHYPERTATOS

No.	Name	Clan	Date Born	Date Died
183	Isakios (II)	Angelos	1156	1204

PROTOSEBASTOHYPERTATOS

No.	Name	Clan	Date Born	Date Died
	Manuel	Anemas		
+ 79	Theodora	Komnenos	1115	1157

PROTOSEBASTOS

No.	Name	Clan	Date Born	Date Died
132	Alexios	Komnenos	1135	1182
+/223	Maria	Doukas		
128	Ioannes	Komnenos	1126	1176

PANSEBASTOHYPERTATOS

No.	Name	Clan	Date Born	Date Died
90	Ioannes	Doukas	1125/1127	1200
+	Zoe	Doukas		

SEBASTOHYPERTATOS

No.	Name	Clan	Date Born	Date Died
	Theodoros	Vatatzes		
+ 80	Eudokia	Komnenos	1116	1166
	Konstantinos	Angelos		
+	Theodora	Komnenos		

SEBASTOS

No.	Name	Clan	Date Born	Date Died
	Stephanos	Kontostephanos	1110/1111	1149/1176
+ 77	Anna	Komnenos		

We are now going to show the relationship between the Komnenos superclan and all the others (the Doukas have fallen far behind the ruling clan):

TABLE: 18 INTERMARRIAGES WITH KOMNENOS CLAN

Name	Relation	Name	Clan
Adrianos	4th S. of Isakios K. 12 & Eirene of Alania		
Alexios	1st S. of Nik. Bryennios & Anna K. 32		
Alexios	2nd S. of Andronikos K 76 & Eirene	Maria	Doukas 223
Alexios	S. of Manuel Anemas & Theodora K79	Anna	Komn Doukas 230
Alexios	Bastard son of Andronikos I K87		
Alexios II	Only S. Manuel I & 2nd W. Maria Antioch		
Andronikos	S. of Alexios K45 & Kataes of Georgia		
Andronikos	S. Theodore Batatzes & Eudokia K 80		
Andronikos I	2nd S. Isakios K. 36 & Eirene		
Anna	1st D. of Alexios I & Eirene Doukas	Nikephoros	Bryennios
Anna	2nd D. John II K. 34 & Eirene of Hun	Stephanos	Kontostephanos
Anna	2nd D. Isakios K. 36 & Eirene	Ioannes	Arbantenos
Anna	2nd D. Manuel I K 81 & Eirene of Germany		
Anna	d. of Ioannes Roger Dalassenos	Alexios	Petraliphas
Anna	d. of Isakios K.78 and Theodora	Konstantinos	Doukas [Makro]
Anna	D. Theodore Batatzes & Eudokia K80	Nikephoros	Synadenos
David	S. Alexios K65 & Kataes of Georgia		
Eirene	1st D. Isakios K78 & Theodora	Anonymous	Doukas Kamateros
Eudokia	4th D. of Isakios K.12 & Eirene of Alania	Nikephoros	Botaneiates
Eudokia	4th D. John II K. 34 & Eirene of Hun	Theodoros	Vatatzes
Eudokia	5th D. Isakios K78 & Eirene Dyplosynadenos		
Eudokia	D. Manuel Anemas & Theodora K79	Theodoros	Styppeiotes
Eudokia	Angelos	Goudelios	Tsykandiles
Ioannes	1st S. Andronikos K76 & Eirene		
Ioannes	2nd S. Andronikos IK87 & Anonymous F.W.		
Ioannes	S. Theodore Batatzes & Eudokia K80	Maria	Doukas
Ioannes I	1st S. of Alexios I & Eirene Doukas		
Isakios	3rd S. of Alexios I & Eirene	Eirene	

	Doukas		
Isakios	S. Nikephoros Botaneiates & Eudokia K		
Isakios	3rd S. John II K. 34 & Eirene of Hun		
Isakios	S. Ioannes Arbantenos & Anna K 86		
Konstantinos	3rd S. Of Isakios K. 12 & Eirene Alania		
Manuel	1st S. Andronikos I K87 & Anon F.W.		
Manuel I	4th S. of John K. 34 & Eirene of Hungary		
Maria	1st D. John II K. 34 & Eirene of Hungary	Ioannes	Roger/Dalassenos
Maria	D. Of Alexios K. 74 & Pr. of Kiev	Alexios	Axouchos
Maria	1st D. Manuel I K.81 & Eirene of Germany	Alexios	Bela
Maria	1st D. of Andronikos K.76 and Eirene	Ioannes	Kantakouzenos
Maria	D. of Manuel Anemas and Theodora K.79	Ioannes	Angelos
Maria	1st D. of Isakios 436 and Eirene	Ioseph	Bryennios
Nikephoros	S. Ioannes Doukas 66 & Theodora		
Nikephoros	1st S. of Ioannes Doukas 66 & Sec. W.		
Theodora	3rd D. John II K. 34 & Eirene of Hungary	Manuel	Anemas
Theodora	3rd D. Andronikos K76 & Eirene		
Theodora	4th D. Isakios K78 & Eirene Dyplosynadenos		
Theodora 150	D. Theodore Batatzes & Eudokia K80	Nikephoros	Chalouphes
Theodora	Angelos	Alexios	Branas Komnenos

TABLE 19: IN-LAWS [MARRYING INTO THE KOMNENI]

Name	**Relation**	**Name**	**Clan**
Alexios	Axouchos	Maria	Komnenos
Alexios	Bela	Maria	Komnenos
Alexios	Kontostephanos	Maria	Doukas 218
Alexios	Kontostephanos Komn		
Alexios	Petraliphas	Anna	Komnenos 126
Alexios	Roger Dalassenos		
Alexios III	Angelos	Euphrosyne	Doukas Kamateros
Andronikos	Angelos Doukas 39	Euphrosyne	Kastamonites
Andronikos	Kamateros Kontostephanos		
Andronikos	Komnenos		
Andronikos	Lampardas		

Anna	Botaneiates Doukas	Coloman	K. of Hungary
Anonymous	Doukas Kamateros	Eirene	Komnenos
Basil	Kamateros [Doukas 100]		
Constantine	Angelos	Theodora	Komnenos
Eirene	Doukas		
Eirene	Kontostephanos	Nikephoros	Bryennios
Euphrosyne	Doukas Kamateros	Alexios III	Angelos
Euphrosyne	Kastamonites	Andronikos	Angelos Doukas 39
Georgios	Palaiologos Doukas Komnenos		
Goudelios	Tsykandiles	Eudokia	Angelos K 94
Ioannes	Angelos	Maria	Komnenos 146
Ioannes	Angelos	Eirene	Komnenos
Ioannes	Bryennios Komn. Katakalon		
Ioannes	Doukas	Zoe	Doukas
Ioannes	Doukas 109		
Ioannes	Doukas 78	Anonymous	Hagiotheodorites
Ioannes	Doukas Kamateros 99		
Ioannes	Kantakouzenos	Maria	Komnenos 129
Ioannes	Kontostephanos Komnenos		
Ioannes	Roger Dalassenos	Maria	Komnenos 75
Joseph	Bryennios	Maria	Komnenos 85
Isakios	Angelos		
Isakios II	Angelos		
Konstantinos	Angelos		
Konstantinos	Doukas [Makro]	Anna	Komnenos 140
Leo	Kamyteros		
Manuel	Anemas	Theodora	Komnenos 79
Manuel	Kamytzes Komn Doukas Ang		
Maria	Doukas	Ioannes	Komnenos Vatatzes
Maria	Doukas 218	Alexios	Kontostephanos
Maria	Doukas 223	Alexios	Komnenos
Michael	Doukas Komnenos		
Michael	Gabras		
Nikephoros	Botaneiates	Eudokia	Komnenos 30
Nikophoros	Bryennios	Anna	Komnenos 32
Nikephoros	Bryennios	Eirene	Kontoste K 136
Nikephoros	Synadenos	Anna	Komnenos Vatatzes
Stephanos	Kontostephanos	Anna	Komnenos 77
Theodoros	Angelos		
Theodoros	Styppeiotes	Eudokia	Komnenos 146A
Theodoros	Vatatzes	Eudokia	Komnenos 80
Zoe	Doukas	Georgios	Botanneiates
Zoe	Doukas	Adrianos	Komnenos
Ioannes	Arbantenos	Anna	Komnenos 86
Nikephoros	Chalouphes	Theodora	Komnenos 150

We can summarize the above by giving a total picture of the Komneni and their in-laws during a hundred years of their rule between 1081 and 1180: out of 217 Imperials, 87 belonged to the Komnenos clan, i.e. 40%, but another 19 were Komneni on their mother's side, i.e. 9%. Thus almost half of all the Imperials belonged to the Komnenos clan.

8

THE ARISTOCRACY

BYZANTIUM as a legal and unbroken continuator of the Roman Empire (albeit in a Christian garb) saw itself primarily as a *military* state: the very notion of empire, *imperium,* was derived from the word for the military commander-in-chief, *imperator.* And, yet, while the Byzantine Empire remained a military state until its last emperor died in battle defending Constantinople from the Ottomans in 1453, it went through different phases during which its military forces went up and down together with the fortunes of the empire itself. For our purposes, it is enough to point out the great military triumph of Basil II (976-1025) who broke the might of the Bulgarian Empire under Simeon and earned the somewhat unsavoury title of 'the Bulgar Slayer' [*bulgarooktonos*]. Yet, following his death a series of incompetent emperors systematically reduced and degraded the military structure of the empire until it was no longer capable of fending off the marauding raids of the Seljuk Turks. The disaster at Manzikert in 1071 (though it has been exaggerated in the past) was both a symptom and a result of this degradation of the military forces. This policy was primarily due to the tug-of-war between the all-powerful central bureaucracy in the capital, and the rise of new military aristocratic clans, principally based in Asia Minor in the 9th and 10th centuries, but increasingly so also in the Balkans in the 11th century. The civil administration [*politikos*] was concentrated in Constantinople, though it spread its tentacles into the provincial administration as well, while the military elite [*stratiotikos*] was dominated by many, both old and new, clans which opposed both the control and ethos of the civil aristocracy. The latter controlled the central government of the empire throughout the 11th century until the accession of Alexios I in 1081. The military aristocracy, on the other hand, tried to undermine the civil aristocracy, going so far as to sabotage the war effort against the Turks, including a wholesale desertion of military forces during Manzikert where one of the commanders, belonging to the powerful Doukas military clan, spread the false rumor that the Emperor, Romanos Diogenes, had fallen, thus precipitating a disaster.

All of this is well known to Byzantinists, and received its formulation in the great work of synthesis, George Ostrogorsky's *The History of the Byzantine State,* a classic in the field of Byzantine studies: "At first sight Byzantine history during the following years" [i.e. following Basil II's death in 1025] "appears to be merely a confused chaos of court intrigue, but in reality its course was determined by the clash between the rival forces of the civil nobility of the capital and the military aristocracy of the provinces. The latter

was the stronger party, but it lost ground to begin with, owing to the way in which it had been crushed by Basil II, and the civil aristocracy in Constantinople therefore gained control. Their supremacy set the tone for the coming years: unending court intrigues were merely an external manifestation of their regime, and characteristic developments of the period were the intellectual renaissance in the capital and the collapse of the military power of the Empire."[1]

There have been attempts to deny the neat division between the two. Thus Leonora Neville states that "in the middle of the twentieth century it was widely believed that eleventh-century politics were dominated by competition between the civil aristocracy and military aristocracy. The civil aristocracy owed its existence to its members' service in the imperial bureaucracy. It was Constantinopolitan, educated, and to some extent based on merit. The military aristocracy was provincial, was landed, and adhered to a system of nobility based on blood lines. In that narrative the accession of Alexios Komnenos marked the triumph of the military aristocracy, and the decline of the civil aristocracy and with it the bureaucratic forms of government that it had maintained since the age of Justinian."[2] She then proceeds to claim that "when the discussion turns to specific families, however, the distinction between a civil aristocracy and military aristocracy cannot be maintained because all major aristocratic families had members serving in both military and civil capacities. Actual families cannot be put into one camp or the other."[3] Now Cheynet starts his discussion of the two aristocracies by admitting that contemporaries themselves and the chroniclers closest to the events, Michael Psellos, and John Zonaras, both used these two terms to describe the nature of the conflict in the 11th century. Cheynet also points out that the civil aristocracy also provided the highest dignitaries and officials of the Church, including the Patriarch. He gives the example of the Doukas family which, according to some, has been seen as civil. Yet, there is no question that the Doukas family was one of the principal, if not principal, military clans and its hatred of the other aristocracy went beyond the limit of treason. Most historians are under no illusion that the Doukas were the pre-eminent military clan, and *it was because of their enormous prestige on these grounds that the Komneni, mere upstarts compared to the Doukas, sought and were successful in integrating with them,* thus creating the Komneni/Doukas superclan, providing (together

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[1] G. Ostrogorsky, *The History of the Byzantine State*, 320-321.

[2] L. Neville, *Authority in Byzantine Provincial Society, 950-1100*, 37 citing in ft. 134: A.A. Vasiliev, *A History of the Byzantine Empire* (Madison, 1928), 426; G. Ostrogorsky, op. cit., rev.ed. (New Brunswick, 1969), 320; and for a discussion of historiographical changes Michael Angold, *The Byzantine Empire, 1025-1204: A Political History*, 2nd ed. (London and New York, 1997), 15-18.

[3] Neville, op. cit., 37-38 citing in ft. 135 J.-C. Cheynet, *Pouvoir et contestations à Byzance (963-1210)*, 191-198.

with their in-laws) the Imperials [*basilikoi*][4] during the reigns of the three Komnenian emperors (1081-1180). Cheynet is more interested in contesting the view that the period between 1025 and 1181 saw the relative decline and the relegation to the background of the military aristocracy. He cites the example of Michael VII Doukas (1071-1078) who became Emperor in the wake of Manzikert to argue that there was even a slight resurgence of the *stratiotikon*.[5] Cheynet concludes that "the 11th century does not mark a notable decline of the military except under the brief reign of Michael VI. Thus in the 11th century, the opposition between the *stratiotikon* and the *politikon* does not constitute the field of struggle for the influence in controlling imperial power, *because many families passed from one group to the other due to their financial interests, or they counted their members in both.*"[6] [my emphasis]

It seems to me that while it is not possible to determine what these unspecified financial interests might have led to, the fact that many aristocratic houses had members in both is the key assertion. In my opinion, the mere existence of one or two members of, say, military aristocracy, performing functions and holding offices pertaining to central bureaucracy, particularly under the Komneni, does not constitute proof that they belonged to both. Alexander Kazhdan has shown quite convincingly that there were military houses that 'went civil' whereas one or two individuals do not necessarily mean that we can talk of, for example, the Doukas being or becoming a *civil* clan: to the very end they remained staunchly *military*. Despite 'revolutionary' changes that befell the two aristocracies, particularly the civil one, during the Komneni, the two elites remained distinct, not just in their power base (the provinces vs. the capital), but in their ethos as well: the old military elite was steeped in the hybrid tradition of Asia Minor, immortalized in song in *Digenes Akritas*, whereas the Constantinopolitan civil elite was grounded in the classics, both of pagan, and of early Christian origin (patrology etc.). The Komneni, who came from Komne in Thrace (according to Michael Psellos' account)[7], upstaged the old military aristocracy led by the Botaneiates, Dalassenos and Doukas clans, by favoring the Balkan provenance of the new families, mostly from the second most important military center, Adrianople, such as the Bryennios, Katakalon, and Angelos clans. To suggest that the two aristocracies somehow cannot be distinguished simply because some of their members crossed the boundary between the two is going too far. Throughout the period dealt with by this book the two groups remained not just *mostly* separate, but conscious of great differences between the two. To take one well-known example, already known to us from the previous chapter: the

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[4] H. Ahrweiler, "Recherches su la société Byzantine au XIe siècle: nouvelles hierarchies et nouvelles solidarities" in T&M 6 (1976), 105.

[5] Cheynet, op. cit., 198.

[6] Ibid., 198.

[7] Michael Psellus, *Fourteen Byzantine Rulers*, 276, ft. 3.

Komneni intermarried *almost exclusively with the military aristocracy*, and those few civil aristocrats who married into the Komenos clan were given distinctly inferior ranks. The Komnenos/Doukas Imperial alliance was that of the military aristocracy *par excellence*.

As already pointed out several times, throughout this study I have relied on the data base provided by Alexander Kazhdan in his classic account of the 'ruling class' of the Byzantine Empire, both in his Russian and later (somewhat emended) Italian edition (together with Silvia Ronchey). All the calculations in this and next chapter are based on his list and categorization of aristocratic families. Wherever possible I have supplemented and corrected, in a few instances, his findings due principally to new sigillographic evidence which he was aware of but did not always incorporate into the newer version. Though known to the Byzantinists, Kazhdan's study and his data base have been more frequently referred to in passing rather than used to derive important findings from. That is why he complained before his premature death that his account had not been appreciated enough. To determine the validity or not of the existence of and conflict between the two aristocracies we have to turn to his findings.

The first important fact is that Kazhdan was able to pinpoint the number of aristocratic houses (they were not families: *they were clans due to the absence of primogeniture*): in the first edition there were 340 to which he appended another 33 to make 373 in the second, Italian, edition. This is a very large number of houses or clans, but being an empire with already more than 700 years behind it by the time the Komneni came to power this is not extraordinary. What is is how uneven the participation of this number in the machinery of the state, both civil and military was. Kazhdan created his data base in a very pre-quantitative period: as far as I can teli, while he was influenced by the rise of the Annales school in France he did not emulate, perhaps did not even know of, the new quantitative, basically statistical methodology. Admittedly, it would have been extremely difficult, if not impossible, to apply it to his mostly literary and scattered data. When he collected his sources, he was aware of their partial nature: he went through ali the known sources and noted down (on note cards in those days, of course!) all the holders of particular offices, dignities and titles.

He did not, however, for some unknown reason, proceed to publish this data base so we have no way of knowing, for instance, WHO the seventy six Komneni he culled from Bartzos were. This is a very serious methodological omission, not to say weakness. Publishing just a list of these families would have been a contribution to Byzantine historiography, but clearly Kazhdan felt that he ought to DO something with it. He then tried to give it some quantitative feature by assigning points to the LEVEL of TITLES, not offices, that the HIGHEST member of that house held during the five periods he divided his data base into: 976-1025, 1025-1181, 1181-1118, 1118-1180, and 1180-1204, i.e. from the accession of Basil II to the fall of Constantinople to

the Latin forces. The five levels correspond to the known ladder of honors [*cursus honorum*], but VARY according to the period, e.g. the SEBASTOS title is included in the highest level under Alexios I, but in the second under John II and Manuel I as it became degraded. Of the 373 houses 283 (76%) held at least one point or above, and the remaining 90 (24%) did not contribute any titleholder (as far as can be determined by literary and/or sigillographic sources). Thus a quarter of the known aristocratic houses did not include members with any rank or title and three quarters did.

An objection could be raised that had Kazhdan recorded ALL the titles held by ALL the members of these houses making up his data base this would have allowed us to give a more rigorous computation of the entire 'ruling class', as he dubbs it. This would have necessitated assigning a specific point to every title in a hierarchical order which would then give an elementary curriculum vitae and thus present the entire career of that particular titleholder. This may appear so, but there is a grave danger which works differently at the level of a house and an individual. Say, Konstantinos Komnenos received a title of SEBASTOKRATOR and held it throughout his life, and let us say that this title carried 27 points. On the other hand, Michael Psellos accumulated a number of much lower offices whose SUM TOTAL would far exceed 27 points allotted to the SEBASTOKRATOR. Yet, the title of Sebastokrator denoted somebody extremely close to the Emperor, while holding a number of administrative offices gave no AUTOMATIC access to the Emperor. It must be always born in mind that what counted in Byzantium was THE PROXIMITY TO THE SOURCE OF ALL POWER, namely THE AUTOCRAT. We would thus give a correct estimate of the accumulated offices in a particular house but a wrong impression of the importance and place of that member in the Imperial hierarchy. I think Kazhdan realized this, and chose the only possible solution: to list for each house during a particular period the HIGHEST title held by their members. Yet, one can see the limitations of such an approach: if THREE members of the Komneni clan held the highest title (below the Emperor) of SEBASTOKRATOR, the TOTAL for the Komneni would be the same as for ONE member of the VATATZES house, i.e. in both cases 5. Fortunately, in case of the highest titles, i.e. those making up what I call the SEBASTOS system, we DO know ALL the holders (with one or two dubious cases), so we CAN quantify it at the highest level. At the lower levels IT DOES NOT MATTER as ANYONE below the SEBASTOS (and later under John and Manuel PANSEBASTOS SEBASTOS) did not matter at all, as far as the Imperials were concerned: they were out. A multiplicity of lower offices is very important for the study of the central Imperial bureaucracy: it does not matter at all once Alexios I assumed power. One finds confirmation of that in the various lists of the title holders present at the councils of Blachernae: with the exception of the highest administrative officials who were there EX OFFICIO, ALL the rest were there BECAUSE THEY BELONGED TO THE KOMNENOS/DOUKAS alliance (with its in-laws), i.e. they were IMPERIALS.

Despite the indubitable fact that there are families that escaped Kazhdan's (and Ronchey's) listing and even with occasional corrections we can still rely on it simply because we have nothing better (and we are not likely to have it). Even Cheynet who is rightly somewhat sceptical of the *completeness* of Kazhdan's list, nevertheless, agrees that "none of the main conclusions reached by A[lexander] K[azhdan] will have to undergo substantial changes, even if details concerning certain categories will be subjected to numerous and important modifications."[8] Cheynet then states the nature of the problem very clearly: "The authors recognize the existence of an aristocracy and reject the opinions of those few who have denied it. In her translation, S. Ronchey has distinguished 'nobiltà', a term she applies more precisely to the feudal aristocracy of soldiers, and 'aristocrazia', which designates the bureaucracy. This separation is, in my view, difficult to sustain in reality, because the same families are to be found in both groups and land tenure is of the same type in each of them. What differs is just the nature of their relations with the rural population. The use of the term 'aristocracy' seems more justified, since the Byzantine sources do not provide a juridical definition of this group, even if emperors repeatedly tried to do so in some of their novels. Despite this juridical uncertainty, it is now clear that this aristocracy can be distinguished by its birth, its wealth and its responsibilities in running the state; the entire question lies in discovering what the dominant factor was."[9] Cheyet then puts his finger on the very core of the problem: "The various subdivisions proposed by the author, just like any attempt to classify individuals, can be a source of contention. It is legitimate to contrast families with a history in the military with those in civilian officialdom, notwithstanding all the caveats we have previously mentioned; or to distinguish the high aristocracy in charge of the empire's highest responsibilities, and also systematically related to the imperial family in the times of the Komnenian dynasty, from the lower nobility filling the ranks of Constantinople's bureaucracy or the officers' corps. One can also oppose the capital's elites to those of the provinces. But families could belong to several of these categories and move from one to another in accordance with their capacity to establish powerful marriage alliances and to choose the right side during civil wars."[10]

Before we can investigate what happened during the Komneni we have to take a closer look at the military aristocracy as a group, and at the leading houses in particular. Kazhdan (as already noted) has identified 373 aristocratic houses of which 90 did not provide a single member with a title or rank. So

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[8] J.-C. Cheynet, "The Byzantine Aristocracy in the 10th-12th Centuries: A Review of the Book by A. Kazhdan and S. Ronchey" in his *The Byzantine Aristocracy and its Military Function*, II, 28. The review is of A.P. Kazhdan & S. Ronchey, *L'aristocrazia bizantina dal principio dell XI alla fine del XII secolo* (Palermo, 1997); this is the first Italian edition. The second edition of 1999 is used for this book.

[9] Ibid., 2.

[10] Ibid., 23.

they are out (for we cannot identify them as belonging to either military or civil without a title), and the remaining 283 are in. Of these, I have been able (on the basis of indications given by Kazhdan) to count 90 as belonging to the military [*stratiotikos*] plus 16 that switched from being military to civil aristocracy during the period of the Komneni (overwhelmingly in the 12th century). Altogether, therefore, 106, i.e. 37% of the houses that provided members with titles (283) or 28% of all the houses (373). When we look at the known number of the male members of these 106 houses we get 905 for the 'purely' military houses and 243 for those that switched from the military to the civilian aristocracy under the Komneni, for the total of 1150. This represents 49%, i.e. roughly half of all the known male members of the Byzantine aristocracy, military and civil combined, which stands at 2335. The latter number should be taken as an approximation, for Kazhdan took only those houses that included at least two male members. This means that his claim that his list contains "the total of about 2500 persons"[11] should be treated as conservative at best. Keeping in mind that this overall total of two and a half thousand (male) members covers the period from 976 to 1204 this is a very reasonable estimate. Reverting to the military houses (and noting that only the houses that recorded at least one office member or official were counted) we can see that the military houses dominated the upper tier of the Byzantine aristocracy as far as the (known) membership is concerned.

The Military Aristocracy

The military aristocracy is very uneven: 44 top houses which counted ten or more male members each account for 839 out of 1150 for all the military houses, i.e. 73% while the very top 20 houses had 551 members, i.e. 48% of the total for the military aristocracy. Of the 34 aristocratic houses who intermarried with the Komneni 30 came from the ranks of the military aristocracy, i.e. a whopping 88%. Only four, Cerullarius, Chalouphes, Hagio-theodorites and Kamateros came from civil aristocracy. These 30 military houses that intermarried with the Komneni number 562 male members, i.e. 49% of the total membership of the military aristocracy. The Komneni not only were principally a military house, they chose to intermarry also with the most distinguished clans of the military aristocracy. Under the Komneni dynasty the military aristocracy, led by the Komnenos clan, reached its apogee. The military arlstocracy is discussed in detail in Chapter Nine.

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[11] A.P. Kazhdan & S. Ronchey, *L'aristocrazia bizantina dal principio dell XI alla fine del XII secolo* (Palermo, 1997), 220.

The Civil Aristocracy [politikos]

The civil aristocracy was exclusively the aristocracy of the capital, of Constantinople. Though its members served in the provincial administration of the empire, and many might have originated in the provinces, they strongly identified with the Imperial City. Despite attempts to minimize it, there were strong differences both in the composition and the outlook of the civil aristocracy: it was centered in the capital as opposed to the military aristocracy which until it assumed power was associated with the provinces both in Asia Minor and in the Balkans; it staffed almost exclusively the lower and middle rungs of the central bureaucracy located in the so-called departments [*sekreta*]; it was steeped in the Hellenic preservation of ancient Greek literature and science and valued classic learning while the military aristocracy was largely ignorant of it if it did not despise it; and it looked down upon the provinces and provincials as more or less country bumpkins who lacked the polish, sophistication, and prestige of culture located in the Imperial capital. I do not agree with those who argue that just because some members of one aristocracy chose to carry out duties and hold offices associated with the other we can treat the two aristocracies as somehow one. If we do, the whole protracted struggle for power between the provincial houses dominated by military upstarts such as the Komnenos, and the civil officialdom in Constantinople exemplified by Michael Psellos, makes absolutely no sense. This struggle was not only designated specifically as one between the two elements: thus, in his *Chronographia* Psellos points out that in the middle of the 11th century "the last few emperors were convinced that they were firmly established once the civil element" [*politikon genos*] "acclaimed them. Indeed, their close relations with these persons were such that the emperors believed the throne was sagely ensured beyond all dispute if the civilians were well-disposed."[12] Psellos then went on to state the classic 'Roman', i.e. Byzantine theory that the power of the emperors rested "on three factors: the people, the Senate, and the army", and chose to emphasize that the emperors backed by the civil [*politikon*] aristocracy "minimized the influence of the military"[13] [*stratiotiko*].

For the composition of the civic aristocracy we will again use Kazhdan's data base though, in my opinion, it is less reliable than for the military aristocracy. This is somewhat due to the fact that the number of houses belonging to the civil aristocracy is so much greater: 267 or thereabouts (a few are not quite distinct). That is 72% of the number of known houses as opposed to 28% for the military ones. The known male membership of this civil aristocracy is about equal to the military: 1185. Of course, one should keep in mind that

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[12] Michael Psellus, *Fourteen Byzantine Rulers: The* Chronographia *of Michael Psellus* [trans. E.R.A. Sewter], 275. For the Greek text see Michael Psellos, *Chronographia* [edition and trans. into modern Greek by Vrasidas Karalis](Athens, 1993), 208.

[13] Ibid., 275 and Karalis edition, 208 (original Greek text).

the military aristocracy as such, and particularly those houses that intermarried with the Komneni, were showered with titles and offices whose record has survived the demise of the empire while the civil aristocracy was increasingly limited to the lower and middle rungs of the central administration with few exceptions at the top. So these numbers should be treated with caution due to the vagaries of what survived and the propensity of the lead seals to belong to provincial military officials and the 'Imperials'. Having said that, in the period before the coming to power of the Komneni dynasty, i.e. before 1081, the military aristocracy was numerically and in terms of its access to power definitely at a disadvantage: it literally had to wrest power from its rival, and to do so it had to secure the possession of the capital, the very stronghold of the civil aristocracy.

The civil aristocracy (almost) monopolized all the offices of the central administration in the capital though it never controlled the military forces for obvious reasons. Yet it consistently interfered with military appointments, particularly during the reigns of the emperors belonging to it or favourable to it, with disastrous results. In order to keep the military aristocracy from assuming power and dominating the empire, it systematically weakened the military structure of the empire in a half century or so between the death of Basil II in 1025 and the Battle of Manzikert in 1071, with catastrophic consequences. It is, of course, appropriate to treat Manzikert as a symptom rather than the cause of the military decline and crisis of the empire, but its aftermath showed that it alone cannot account for Byzantine life crisis: in the ten years between 1071 and 1081 the two factions fought each other bitterly, and one ambitious general after another seized the throne until Alexios Komnenos made a number of deals both outside and inside his family to win and secure power. The principal victim of Alexios' coming to power, and his subsequent 'revolution' discussed in the next chapter was the civil aristocracy which was not only stripped of all participation in the decision-making process, i.e. in real power, but its principal stronghold, the Senate, was as Zonaras points out, humiliated and shunned by Alexios I, and it reciprocated by mounting and supporting a number of conspiracies to his rule.

While the military aristocracy was overwhelmingly defined by its *military* functions and outlook, the civil aristocracy was *principally if not exclusively a bureaucratic* elite. It controlled the great departments of state, the *sekreta*, and had official access to the Emperor. Its stronghold was the Senate, *synkletos*, supposedly modelled on the ancient Roman institution, but which was nothing of the sort: under the Roman Republic the Senate, together with the shadowy Roman people, ruled the state: *Senatus populusque Romanus, SPQR*]. It was thus a legislative and deliberative body, the principal and before Augustus the only source of ALL power. It is true that the principate and the empire made the Roman senate a rubber stamp for Imperial decisions, and that toward the end of the Roman Empire it became a mere shadow of its former self. But it never lost completely the attributes of a power-making body. As

such it was transported to Constantinople literally, with Constantine the Great importing many Roman Senatorial families to the new capital and building appropriate houses for them. But unlike Rome Constantinople was not a Senatorial, much less a Republican capital: it was *the* Imperial capital. And from its beginning it was *the* Christian city, a proud and triumphant symbol of the victory of the Cross over the countless gods and goddesses of ancient Rome. The Senate in Constantinople, accordingly, was never a law-making assembly, it was more or less the *top* department of the Imperial administration and an assent-giving body. Since the Emperor was in law and fact a *sole* ruler [*autokrator*] the Senate's role was to aid the Emperor in providing legitimacy first to his rule and then to his laws by *giving assent*. With the exception when it had to give assent to the election of a new emperor (usually a usurper) the Senate became literally a rubber stamp, and a glittering body including all the top brass of the empire in its upper reaches. Thus the Byzantine Senate [*synkletos*] was the apex of the very administrative structure represented by the central bureaucracy staffed by the civil [*politikon*] aristocracy.

Leonora Neville states that in the 11th century "the senate was no longer a regular deliberative body.The references to people of senatorial rank and to those participating in the senatorial company do not seem clearly to distinguish one subset among the title-holders. In the *Ceremony Book*, the terms for the senate and senators 'seem sometimes to encompass all ranking members of court; at others they seem to designate non-military officials.'"[14] Neville points out that "honorary titles of *protospatharios* and higher conferred senatorial rank."[15] The senate included the so-called 'sandalled senate', called thus because of the type of sandals they wore, which has been identified as "middle-ranking bureaucrats" and "civil servants".[16] Oikonomides has identified this sandalled senate with "the functionaries subordinate to the *sekreta*"[17], i.e. the administrative departments. Neville quotes Philotheos on the composition of this sandalled senate: "*Assekretai, chartoularioi* of the great secretaries, imperial notaries of the said secretaries, such as are of the rank of *spatharokandidatos* and lower, *hypatoi, dishypatoi, kometes* of the schools, *silentiarioi, protiktoroi, euthychophoroi, skeptrophoroi, axiomatikoi,* and various *tagmata*."[18] As Neville characterizes them, they are all book-keepers literally; below them, i.e. those who are not members of this sandalled senate, are

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[14] Leonora Neville, *Authority in Byzantine Provincial Society, 950-1100*, 15 quoting A. Kazhdan & Michael McCormick, "Social Composition of the Byzantine Court" in H. McGuire, ed., *Byzantine Court Culture from 829 to 1204*, 174, n. 37.

[15] Ibid., 15.

[16] Kazhdan & McCormick in McGuire, op. cit., 180.

[17] N. Oikonomides, *Les Listes de préséance Byzantines des IXe et Xe siecles*, 168, n. 147.

[18] Ibid., 16 quoting Oikonomides, 169. Also see Constantine Porphyrogennetos, *The Book of Ceremonies*, Vol. II, 742-743.

mere scribes. We know from Constantine Porphyrogennitus how many there were: "168 in number".[19]

It is thus quite clear that, apart from the top rung of the Senate, most of its members were bureaucrats. But what kind of a bureaucracy was it? Max Weber defined a bureaucracy by three attributes: authority is vested in posts rather than individuals; bureaucratic duties are clearly defined; all actions are treated according to the same routine and same rules (e.g., in the saying 'to throw the book at it'). As Neville points out, "the highly ordered ranks of officials and title-holders can look like the clearly prescribed ranks of functionaries in modern bureaucracies. As Beck pointed out some years ago, the Byzantine system of titulature and precedence makes the imperial administration look like an ordered bureaucracy to modern observers. Officials were arranged in strict order around the emperor and empress, and dependent upon the imperial will for their ranks. There were also actual administrative jobs. The correspondence between the ranks and the duties, however, is not always clear."[20]

I would argue that the higher the office or title the lesser was the correspondence between the ranks and duties. This became particularly true after the Komneni came to power. By pushing the civil aristocracy out of power and denigrating the importance and role of the Senate as such, the Komneni instituted what Byzantium lacked until then, the system of titulature based NOT on performance but on the proximity to the Emperor and his family. This is not *hereditary* nobility, but it came very close to it or as close as the *autocratic* nature of the empire would tolerate: "The lack of a system of hereditary titulature contributes to the sense that the emperor was surrounded by faceless bureaucrats, but a participant in the imperial processions and receptions would have been aware of the many kinship ties and legacies among the title-holders. Because these connections played no formal role in the protocols, we do not see them. To us, the titled crowd can look anonymous."[21] This was definitely not the case with the people belonging to the *sebastos* rank and above under the Komneni, but as far as the Senate is concerned it accounts for the lack of information on its membership: we are given the names of the top brass and the name of the *proedros*, i.e. the president of the Senate, and that is that. Sources listing various offices, in particular, *The Book of Ceremonies*, is misleading because it gives the impression of an enormous number of offices, dignities, titles etc. But as Neville points out, "while the Byzantine title-holders were bound in a special relationship with the emperor, they were not necessarily working for the government. If it is correct to equate the 'sandalled senate' with people actually doing paperwork, then about 160 people were employed in the central administration of the empire. The archival records

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[19] Ibid., 743. Also see Kazhdan & McCormick in McGuire, op. cit., 180.

[20] Neville, op. cit., 34 quoting Beck, "Theories und Praxis im Aufbau der byzantinischen Zentralverwaltung", 4.

[21] Neville, op. cit., 35.

indicate that the number of working officials would be in *in the hundreds rather than thousands at any given time*."[22] [my emphasis] What should be kept in mind *at all times* is that the Byzantine central administrative archives have not survived (though thousands of lead seals appended to individual documents stored in it have been unearthed). Neville gives as an example the documents found in the archives of the Monastery of Iviron on Mount Athos which mention 61 individuals between 927 and 1100 with official titles, but the number of people who were actual officials was more like 38. It may or may not be a good example, but I think it makes it clear that the surviving "archives do not make a case for a government involving more than several hundreds of officials."[23]

It is thus appropriate to distinguish several layers of this bureaucracy: first, the central administrative personnel in Constantinople divided into the top officials all of whom had direct access to the Emperor (at least in theory), the middle rung 'sandalled Senate', and the lower strata made up of scribes etc. The list of titles makes this clear and we are reproducing it in its classic form before the so-called Komnenian 'revolution':

1. KAISAR
2. NOBELISSIMOS
3. Kouropalates
4. Protoproedros
5. Proedros
6. Magistros
7. Protovestarch
8. Vestarch
9. Protovestes
10. Vestes
11. Illoustrios
12. Anthypatos
13. Patrikios
14. Dishypatos
15. Hypatos
16. Protospatharios
17. Spatharokandidatos

The two top ranks (in capitals) were reserved, until the Time of Troubles of the 11th century, to the closest members of the Imperial family, e.g. the heir-apparent etc. But between 1025 and 1081 a number of them were given to those whom the emperors or usurpers wanted to honor thereby securing their support. The president of the Senate held the title of proedros but was placed than some higher ranks in official ceremonies, and is listed as such in the List

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[22] Ibid., 35.

[23] Ibid., 35.

of the Council of Blachernae of 1095. The title of *protoproedros* is attested before 1070, those of *protovestarch* and *protovestes* after 1070. As already pointed out in the previous chapter, ALL the highest ranks created by Alexios I after 1081 were based on the dignity of SEBASTOS and were all (with just a couple of minor exceptions) given to the members of his family and his in-laws, i.e. those whom I have called 'the Imperials' by analogy with the British 'Royals' [*HRH*].

Obviously, they had nothing to do with the civil aristocracy. The titles of *protonobelissimos* and *proto-kouropalates* were again designed to give greater weight to the ordinary *nobelissimos* and *kouropalates* after they ceased to be of any real importance. This was particularly true of *nobelissimos* which was no longer associated with the Imperial family and was now given to the *lowest* grade of Komnenian in-laws as *protonobelissimos* after the initial years of Alexios's reign (Nikephoros Bryennios was a *protonobelissimos* until he became a *kaisar*).

What the above discussion makes clear is that there was a SINGLE set of ranks for all offices, both civil and military, both executive and judicial, but there were different additional titles or dignities attached to some offices. All of this can be seen as truly Byzantine, i.e. as artificial, elaborate, and hypertrophied, but the complexities of titulature and dignities was supposed to mirror the equally stratified and vast heavenly kingdom over which Jesus presided as the emperor presided over the one on earth.

Alexander Kazhdan's whole examination of the Byzantine aristocracy is based on the distinction between its military and civil branches. As already explained, the civil aristocracy was based in the capital and consisted of the Imperial central bureaucracy. The military aristocracy was found in the provinces, until the eleventh century mostly in Asia Minor, but also, to a lesser extent, in the Balkans: "Although from the tenth century on, a landed, hereditary nobility began to arise, it was never fully established; vertical mobility remained characteristic of Byzantine society through the eleventh century. During that century, the aristocracy was divided into two major groups according to military and civil functions. The military aristocracy originated primarily in the frontier regions: Cappadocia, Armenia, and Syria in the east, Bulgaria and Macedonia in the northwest. Even when settled in Constantinople and embedded in the imperial hierarchy, these aristocrats preserved connections with their homelands. There they possessed estates (*oikoi* or *proasteia*) or even palaces and small fortresses to which they could retire in case of imperial disfavor. Not coincidentally, the military aristocrats of the eleventh century often drew their family names from the sites where their estates were located: the Botaneiates of Botana, for example, or the Dokeianoi of Kokeia, or the Dalassenoi of Dalassa."[24]

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[24] Ibid., 63.

Kazhdan also investigated the etymology of aristocratic patronymics of the eleventh and twelfth centuries. According to him, there is a clear distinction between the two branches of aristocracy: among the military aristocrats 37% came from the toponyms of the great and small centers in the provinces; only 16% were found among the civil aristocrats. The latter derived their patronymics from Constantinople (8.5% as opposed to 1.5% for the military) and professions (13% as opposed to 7.5%).[25] Yet, though deriving their descent and power from the provinces the military aristocracy could and did not want to transform the empire into a loosely-governed 'feudal' state. As Kazhdan warns, "despite their considerable power, landed aristocrats were restricted in their independence; they were not autonomous barons but imperial functionaries who could be dismissed, exiled, or dispossessed at any time. This certainly led, in Ahrweiler's terms, to the 'Constantino-politization' of the Byzantine aristocracy, with its tight bonds with the capital and imperial court."[26]

The eleventh century saw the triumph of vertical mobility in the Byzantine Empire: in his history of this period Michael Attaleiates stressed how Nikephoros III Botaneiates showered the whole Senate with promotions to the amazement of all: "I have passed over in silence the honors that he bestowed on the other days because of their unlimited number. What took place on Palm Sunday, however, surprised everyone in one fashion or another, for the whole Senate, which included more than a myriad of men, was awarded such great honors that each man was individually promoted four or five steps up in the ranks, so that not even the *protovestiarios* himself could keep up in receiving from the emperor the names of those honoured and in announcing their new ranks, but he kept being sent rank after rank: he would turn back to the promotion, and then immediately turn back again, or stand in the same place, but there he was overtaken by even more offices and so he hurried to announce those being honoured, and in the end he had to work so hard that he lost his voice."[27] The coming to power of Alexios I Komnenos in 1081 led to a dramatic reversal of this vertical mobility *outside of that part of the military aristocracy allied to the Komneni*: "The highest military elite was consolidated in a closed body of powerful families connected by intermarriage and forming a 'clan' around the ruling Comnenian dynasty. The higher military administrative functions were monopolized by the Comnenian clan, while the families of the military aristocracy who were not included in this clan either disappeared or entered the ranks of the civil nobility. [...] In the eleventh century there was no unbridgeable gap between the military and civil elites. Some families of the civil aristocracy performed military functions. Intermarriage between the two groups was common. After the Comnenian clan was established, the situation

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[25] Kazhdan & Constanble, *People and Power in Byzantium*, 170, Table 4.

[26] Kazhdan & Epstein, *Change in Byzantine Culture*, 65.

[27] Michael Attaleiates, *The History* [trans. by Anthony Kaldellis & Dimitris Krallis](Cambridge, Mass., 2012), 501-503.

changed: marriage between members of the Comnenian dynasty and the bureaucratic families was discouraged; in general, the senators, i.e. the civil elite, were regarded as socially inferior."[28] That is the view of Zonaras as well: "The emperor" [Alexios I] "did not sufficiently respect or care for the members of the senate; rather he attempted to humiliate them."[29]

In all of his publications Alexander Kazhdan put great emphasis on *nuclear* family as the basic unit of Byzantine society. It might have been for the other groups (though I am not convinced) but it certainly was not the case with the military aristocracy. With their rise in the 11th century and their apogee under the Komneni there was a shift as even Kazhdan admits: "While the family remained important in Byzantium throughout the Middle Ages, the traditional family structure seems to have modified in the late eleventh and twelfth centuries. The narrow limits of the nuclear family were widened to include blood relations. This shift in domestic structure from the nuclear family to the extended family may be detected in the actions and attitudes of the ruling dynasty...[I]n the seventh century uncles and cousins were regarded by the emperor as his rivals and potential enemies. Their mutilation and blinding became almost obligatory...In contrast, Nikephoros's successor, Alexios I, was guided by opposite principles, regarding his lineage and kinship relations as the main support of his throne. [...] With the shift in the structure of society toward the extended family, lineage became increasingly important in determining an individual's status and power. The use of patronymics was an external sign of this new concern. [...] The new emphasis on lineage and extended family ties was due to the emergence of the military aristocracy as the ruling elite of Byzantium. In the less concrete sphere of ideology the new power of the aristocracy was even more influential. The concept of nobility and the attributes of noble character were greatly elevated. At the same time, there was a modification of the imperial ideal."[30]

As Skoulatos emphasizes, "in conclusion, the military group [*les groupe des militaries*] occupies a dominant place in *The Alexiad*. Within it the members of the imperial family hold key posts [*postes-clés*]."[31] What about civil aristocracy? According to Skoulatos, only nine administrative office holders are identified in *The Alexiad*.[32] And he concluded that "administrative functionaries play only a secondary role in *The Alexiad*."[33] As for the Senate, it exists in *The Alexiad*, according to Skoulatos, only as a *collective body*. He explains it by reference to Zonaras' well-known and often-cited comment that

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[28] Kazhdan & Epstein, op. cit., 69.

[29] Ibid., 108 quoting John Zonaras, *Epitome historiarum* [ed. M. Büttnert-Wobst (Bonn, 1897)], Vol. III, 766.17-19.

[30] Kazhdan & Epstein, op. cit., 100-101, 102, 104.

[31] Skoulatos, op. cit., 345.

[32] Ibid., 345.

[33] Ibid., 346.

Alexios I scorned the Senate and persecuted its members. But Anna does mention John Salomon's participation in the Anemas Conspiracy as indicative of the support the Anemas brothers received from some high Senators.[34] As for court functionaries and secretaries Anna mentions seven persons who were in Alexios's service, but altogether, she "gives more details on the persons of the secretariat than on the courtiers properly speaking...[the latter] playing almost no role" [*qui ne jouent presque aucun rôle*].[35]

All Byzantinists agree (more or less) that the reign of Alexios I Komnenos (1081-1118) saw a great change in the system of both titles and ranks in the Imperial system of honors as such. But it went even further than that. Leonora Neville states that "the reign of Alexios Komnenos...marks the break between two cultural styles of government organization. That of the ninth and tenth centuries has characteristics that have looked bureaucratic to some modern observers. The aristocratic political culture of the late eleventh and twelfth centuries has more characteristics in common with that of medieval Europe than its predecessor does. The empire of the Komnenoi therefore looks more medieval than the Byzantine empire of the 'imperial centuries' which, especially as described in twentieth-century historiography, looks like modern centralized state adrift in the Middle Ages."[36] As far as titles were concerned, "in the course of the eleventh century older titles were granted so widely they lost value. The prefix *proto* was added to a number of older titles, creating new tiers at the top of the hierarchy."[37] Here is the list of such holders during the first half of Alexios' reign, i.e.. present at the Synod of Blachernae in c. 1095:

TABLE 20: TITLE HOLDERS UNDER ALEXIOS I (1095)

Name	Clan	Title	Office
Manuel	Philokales	Protonobelissimos	Epi tou Kanikleiou
Michael		Protonobelissimos	Mystikos+Eparchos
Andronikos	Skleros	Protonobelissimos	Logothetetes Dromou
Isaac	Kontostephanos	Protonobelissimos	
Bardas	Ikanatos	Nobelissimos	
Michael	Diabatenos	Nobelissimos	
John	Taronites	Protokouropalates	Epi ton Deeseon
Michael	Barys	Protokouropalates	
Constantine	Katakalon	Protokouropalates	
Nicholas	Mermentolos	Protoproedros of the Senate	Megas Droungarios

[34] AKA, 345-347.

[35] Skoulatos, op. cit., 349-350.

[36] L. Neville, *Authority in Byzantine Provincial Society, 950-1100*, 31.

[37] Ibid., 32.

Romanos	Palaiologos	Kouropalates	
John	Synadenos	Kouropalates	
Constantine	Antiochos	Kouropalates	Megas Hetaireiarch
Antiochos	Euthymios	Kouropalates	Krites
Michael	Skleros	Kouropalates	
Constantine	Iasites	Kouropalates	
Constantine	Choirosphaktes	Kouropalates	
Tatikios		Protoproedros	Megas Primmikerios
N.	Tarchaniotes	Protoproedros	
Theodore	Smyrnaios	Protoproedros	Hypatos of the Philosophers
George	Manganes	Protoproedros	
George	Basilakes	Protoproedros	
Constantine	Opos	Protoproedros	
Niketas	Kastamonites	Protoproedros	
John		Proedros	Grammatikos
Basil	Mauros	Proedros	
Michael	Autoreianos	Proedros	Krites Hippodromou
George	Aristenos	Proedros	
George	Pyrros	Proedros	
Michael	Antiochos	Proedros	Primmikerios Vestiarios
Eustathios	Kamytzes	Proedros	Chartoular Stolou
Basil		Raiktor	Papias Blachernon
John	Skoutariotes	Raiktor	
Theodore	Pepagomenos	Raiktor	
Leo	Vestarches	Raiktor	Grammatikos
Michael	Opheomaches	Raiktor	Grammatikos

This merely reflected the erosion and devaluation of *existing* titles. But Alexios did not leave it there: he created a new top-tiered system reserved exclusively for the Imperials, i.e. the Imperial clan of the Komneni and its in-laws based on the existing (very rarely given) title of *sebastos* which is the Greek equivalent of Latin *augustus*. This new title separated those who were 'in' from all those who were 'out', and it is this *sebastos* system (as I called it) that constitutes the veritable 'revolution' in the *cursus honorum* of the Komnenian emperors. Neville comments: "An entirely new system of titles was created in the 1080s by Alexios Komnenos that used *sebastos*...as a base term. The new titles were granted almost exclusively to members of Alexios' close family. The idea of precedence in title was replaced by precedence in kinship with the emperor. By the reign of Manuel Komnenos, designations of kinship such as 'nephew' and 'cousin' of the emperor took the place of titles."[38] This was already presented. This meant that the prestige of an aristocratic clan

[38] Ibid., 32 on the basis of Oikonomides, "L'evolution de l'organisation administrative", 128.

[*oikos*] was based on the proximity of its members to the Emperor and his family, and the authority followed suit: "To take only one example of a well-known phenomenon, in 1112 Andronikos Doukas signed a ruling simply with his name 'Doukas' insead of his title *pansebastos*. This was an 'eloquent sign of the new mentality that prevailed under the Komnenoi, the relation or familiarity with the emperor swept away the importance of the office or dignity.'"[39] Neville is entirely correct in concluding that "the change in the system of titles was one of the ways Alexios made the government essentially coterminous with his kin. The transformation of the government limited who counted to Alexios' own closest supporters, to the exclusion of other families and the rest of those with imperial titles."[40] We have examined this already. But what remains to be seen is how *extensive* and *thoroughgoing* this exclusion of all others was. And this could not be done previously for it called for an investigation of the entire aristocratic system of both aristocracies before, during and after the reign of Alexios I. We can now proceed to examine it on the basis of Kazhdan's list already discussed.

Basil II's wholesale exclusion of particularly *military* houses from government, and his reliance on eunuchs and others meant that both aristocracies were relegated to the background during his reign (976-1025, as an effective ruler from 986). As Ostrogorsky put it so briefly, "his fixed resolve was to break the overweening power of the aristocracy, against which his ancestors had striven in vain."[41] The result was that "Basil II emerged victorious from his conflict with the aristocracy of Asia Minor. After desperate struggles and terrible civil wars all his enemies and opponents were vanquished."[42] This is reflected in Kazhdan's list which shows that out of 281 identified clans or houses [*oikos*] only 56 held a title of any weight during his reign. *That is only 20% of the houses!* Kazhdan points out that during Basil's reign the old system of titulature was still holding firm, reserving the highest titles to the members of the Imperial families. It should be pointed out that Kazhdan assigns the levels from 1 to 5 by giving each so many points so that the highest is 5 and the lowest 1. During his reign only two members held the highest titles of *kuropalates* and *proedros*, namely Skleros and Lekapenos respectively. Of the following titles 14 belonged to the fourth category of *vestes* and *magistros*, 23 to the third level of *anthypatos* and *patrikios*, 11 to the second level of *proto-spatarios* and 5 to the lowest, first level of *spataros* and *spatarokandidatos*.

The situation could not be more different for the period following Basil II's death in 1025 until the accession of Alexios I in 1081. During this peri-

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[39] Ibid., 33 citing *Actes de Docheiariou*, edited by N. Oikonomides in *Archives de l'Athos* 13 (Paris, 1984), 63, n. 3.

[40] Ibid., 34.

[41] G. Ostrogorsky, op. cit., 307.

[42] Ibid., 305.

od 154 out of 281 houses held rank, i.e. *55%. Thus more than a third of the known number of houses was added to the system of honors.* Of these 11 belonged to the fifth, highest level with the titles of *kaisar, sebastos, nobilissimos* and *kuropalates*. The fourth level of *protoproedros* and *proedros* was held by 29 families. The third level of *magistros* was held by 23 families, the second level of *vestarch* was held by 54 families, and the fifth, lowest level of *hypathos, protospatharios* etc. was held by 35 families.

As already mentioned several times, Alexios I Komnenos (1081-1118) changed the whole nature of the system: under him and his Komnenian successors all titles below the *sebastos* level were degraded and devalued and really did not give one access to *participation in the highest offices of the army and the central administration*. Kazhdan points this out very well when he states that "during this period the old titles (*magistros, patrikios, protospatarios*) remain in use but undergo a profound devaluation, while the highest grades of the nobility no longer have any correspondence to the system in force at the time of Basil II. [...][In this period the highest grade of the aristocracy was made up of those who had the titles of *sebastos* and higher."[43] This highest grade made up of *sebastos* and higher (*sebastokrator, kaisar, panhypersebastos, sebastohypertatos*) is now made up of the Komnenian in-laws though there are still a few who had been given some of the higher (but not the highest rank of *sebastokrator*) outside the Imperial family. Here is the table:

TABLE 21: ARISTOCRATIC CLANS UNDER ALEXIOS I

No. in Kazhdan	Byzantine Clan	1081-1118
1	Comneni	5
2	Botaneiati	5
3	Doukas	5
4	Taronites	5
5	Kamateros	5
6	Tzikandelos	5
7	Angeli	5
8	Vatatzes	4
9	Branas	4
10	Briennyos	5
11	Gabras	4
12	Katakalon	5
13	Kontostefanos	3
14	Palaeologos	5
15	Skleros	5
16	Dalassenos	3
17	Makrembolites	3
18	Melissenos	5
19	Maniakos	5

[43] A. Kazhdan & S. Ronchey, *L'aristocrazia bizantina dal princio dell'XI alla fine del XII secolo* [2nd ed.], 229.

20	Tarchaniotes	2
21	Xeros	2
22	Pakurianos	5
23	Tornikes	1
24	Arbantenos	5
25	Kastamoniti	2
26	Cerularios	5
28	Radenos	2
29	Filokales	5
30	Vladislavichi	1
32	Malesi	3
34	Pirri	4
36	Straboromani	4
37	Alopi	1
38	Antiochi	3
40	Burtzes	2
41	Dokeiani	5
42	Iasites	3
43	Kamitzes	4
45	Xifilini	1
47	Abalanti	2
48	Basilaci	3
50	Gudeli	4
51	Dabateni	5
53	Mermendoli	4
56	Triakontafili	3
59	Cherosfakti	3
60	Argyri	1
63	Essamilioti	2
64	Karanteni	1
65	Kekaumeni	1
68	Opi	4
69	Poti	4
71	Sgouros	1
72	Spanopouli	2
74	Calcutzidi	1
76	Aliati	1
78	Anzadi	2
84	Glabas	1
90	Mangani	2
91	Maurici	1
93	Mesopotamiti	2
95	Panareti	1
96	Pantecnidi	2
98	Scylitzes	3
99	Smiermei	2 [3]**
100	Sinadeni	5
102	Cumni	1
104	Crisovergi	1
108	Amiropouli	1
109	Artsrunidi	2
114	Blacherniti	2
116	Dekani	3
119	Drimi	1
120	Drosi	1

123	Zonaras	4
124	Ikanatı	4
125	Kabasili	4
134	Pepagomeni	2
135	Promunteni	1
141	Skutarioti	2
143	Tzantzadi	4
155	Aristeni	3
157	Bari	3
161	Eugeniani	1
162	Eulampi	1
164	Canabi	3
165	Karatzadi	3
166	Karamalli	3
167	Karianiti	1
170	Lalakoni	3
171	Machetari	1
172	Matzuchi	1
173	Mesemeridi	3
174	Mitilenei	3
176	Nicei	2
178	Solomoni	2
179	Tatikes	3
181	Tziti	3
182	Kamtuni	3
184	Agalliani	1
188	Artabasdi	2
191	Basprakaniti	2
193	Berioti	2
195	Dossopatridi	1
200	Karıcı	2
201	Kefaladi	2
202	Kiparissioti	1
204	Kladoni	2
209	Madariti	2
211	Muntani	2
216	Rodii	2
219	Tziritoni	2
222	Agioeufimiti	1
223	Akapni	1?
228	Gimni	1
229	Eufii	1
234	Komiti	1
235	Kontomiti	1
236	Kopseni	1
237	Mauropodi	1
238	Morokarzani	1
239	Moschi	1
241	Olinteni	1
243	Ofeomachi	1
245	Pekuli	1
246	Placeni	1
247	Polieukti	1
249	Romaniti	1
250	Sceuenadi	1

251	Spondili	1
252	Stippeioti	2
253	Karsianiti	1
254	Krisobalantiti	1
1*	Gidi	
2*	Paktiari	4
3*	Pereni	1
11*	Mauri	2
14*	Sikunteni	2
16*	Arotradi	1
17*	Chiti	1
18*	Laktentitzidi	1
20*	Maditenbi	1
21*	Marapadi	1
23*	Pamfili	1
24*	Panokomiti	1
25*	Passeni	1
6*	Agriti	3
9*	Cimineiani	2

SOURCE: KAZHDAN 2nd ed. *Additional houses on the basis of seals.
**Corrections on the basis of seals.

At first sight, it seems that just about the same number of aristocratic houses held rank under Alexios I as under his predecessors: 148 out of 281, as opposed to 154, i.e. 53% vs. 55%. This is because the first half of Alexios's reign in particular was a transitional period and the new system of titles co-existed (though it did not literally rub shoulders) with those below it. Let us now see which houses stood at the apex of the new Komnenian system, i.e. those given 5 points by Kazhdan:

TABLE 22: TOP ARISTOCRATIC CLANS UNDER ALEXIOS

No. in Kazhdan	Byzantine Clan	1081-1118
1	Comneni	5
2	Botaneiati	5
3	Doukas	5
4	Taronites	5
5	Kamateros	5
6	Tzikandelos	5
7	Angeli	5
10	Briennyos	5
12	Katakalon	5
14	Palaeologos	5
15	Skleros	5
18	Melissenos	5
19	Maniakos	5
22	Pakurianos	5
24	Arbantenos	5
26	Cerularios	5
29	Filokales	5

41	Dokeiani	5
51	Dabateni	5
100	Sinadeni	5

SOURCE: KAZHDAN, 2nd ed.

Of course, we know this already for the so-called Imperials came from these 20 houses. So out of 148 houses that held rank *only twenty became a part of the new Komnenian system based on the gradations of the sebastos title.* This is a staggeringly low 13.5! That means that 86.5% of all the houses holdlng rank during Alexios' reign were from the highest circle that disposed of everything. The same narrowing of the access takes place at the next to the highest level [4] of *protonobelissimos and nobelissimos.* Some of the holders of this rank (particularly of the *protonobelissimos*) are at the very fringes of the Komnenian in-laws waiting, so to speak, to be elevated to the all-important *sebastos* level:

TABLE 23: SECOND-LEVEL CLANS UNDER ALEXIOS I

No. in Kazhdan	Byzantine Clan	1081-1118
8	Vatatzes	4
9	Branas	4
11	Gabras	4
13	Kontostefanos	4
34	Pirri	4
36	Straboromani	4
43	Kamitzes	4
50	Gudeli	4
53	Mermendoli	4
68	Opi	4
69	Poti	4
123	Zonaras	4
124	Ikanati	4
125	Kabasili	4
143	Tzantzadi	4
2*	Paktiari	4

SOURCE: KAZHDAN 2nd ed.

*Additional house on the basis of seals.

These 36 houses still represent only less than 25% (24.3%) of all housing holding rank which means that ¾ of all the houses never reached the very high and highest ranks. The third level of *protokuropalates and kuropalates* has 23 (correction from 22) houses in its ranks:

TABLE 24: THIRD-LEVEL CLANS UNDER ALEXIOS I

No. in Kazhdan	Byzantine Clan	1081-1118
16	Dalassenos	3
17	Makrembolites	3
32	Malesi	3
38	Antioche	3
42	Iasites	3
48	Basilaci	3
56	Triakontafili	3
59	Cherosfakti	3
98	Scylitzes	3
116	Dekani	3
155	Aristeni	3
157	Bari	3
164	Canabi	3
165	Karatzadi	3
166	Karamali	3
170	Lalakoni	3
173	Mesemeridi	3
174	Mitilenei	3
179	Tatikes	3
181	Tziti	3
182	Kamtuni	3
6*	Agriti	3
99	Smiernei	2 [3]**

SOURCE: KAZHDAN 2nd ed. *Additional houses on the basis of seals. **Correction on the basis of seals.

The next lower level [2] of *proedros, proedros, sebastophoros* and *raiktor* consisted of 31 houses at this level, i.e. 21%:

TABLE 25: FOURTH-LEVEL CLANS UNDER ALEXIOS I

No. in Kazhdan	Byzantine Clan	1081-1118
20	Tarchaniotes	2
21	Xeros	2
25	Kastamoniti	2
28	Radenos	2
40	Burtzes	2
47	Abalanti	2
63	Essamilioti	2
72	Spanopouli	2
78	Anzadi	2
90	Mangani	2
93	Mesopotamiti	2
96	Pantecnidi	2
109	Artsrunidi	2
114	Blacherniti	2
134	Pepagomeni	2

141	Skutarioti	2
176	Nicei	2
178	Solomoni	2
188	Artabasdi	2
191	Basprakaniti	2
193	Berioti	2
200	Karici	2
201	Kefaladi	2
204	Kladoni	2
211	Muntani	2
216	Rodii	2
219	Tziritoni	2
252	Stippeioti	2
11*	Mauri	2
14*	Sikunteni	2
9*	Cimineiani	2

SOURCE: KAZHDAN 2nd ed.

*Additional houses on the basis of seals.

The lowest (first) level is made up of all the titles inherited from the 10th and 11th century and now totally degraded. Of the total of 148 houses that held rank 57 (38.5%), i.e. more than a third belonged to this totally declassed category:

TABLE 26: LOWEST-LEVEL CLANS UNDER ALEXIOS I

No. in Kazhdan	Byzantine Clan	1081-1118
23	Tornikes	1
30	Vladislavichi	1
37	Alopi	1
45	Xifilini	1
60	Argyri	1
64	Karanteni	1
65	Kekaumeni	1
71	Sgouros	1
74	Calcutzidi	1
76	Aliati	1
84	Glabas	1
91	Maurici	1
95	Panareti	1
102	Cumni	1
104	Crisovergi	1
108	Amiropouli	1
119	Drimi	1
120	Drosi	1
135	Promunteni	1
161	Eugeniani	1
162	Eulampi	1
167	Karianiti	1
171	Machetari	1
172	Matzuchi	1
184	Agalliani	1

195	Dossopatridi	1
202	Kiparissioti	1
209	Madariti	1
222	Agioeufimiti	1
228	Gimni	1
229	Eufii	1
234	Komiti	1
235	Kontomiti	1
236	Kopseni	1
237	Mauropodi	1
238	Morokarzani	1
239	Moschi	1
241	Olinteni	1
243	Ofeomachi	1
245	Pekuli	1
246	Placeni	1
247	Polieukti	1
249	Romaniti	1
250	Sceuenadi	1
251	Spondili	1
253	Karsianiti	1
254	Krisobalantiti	1
3*	Pereni	1
16*	Arotradi	1
17*	Chiti	1
18*	Laktentitzidi	1
20*	Maditenbi	1
21*	Marapadi	1
23*	Pamfili	1
24*	Panokomiti	1
25*	Passeni	1

SOURCE: KAZHDAN 2nd ed. *Additional houses on the basis of seals.

Were we to be generous we would argue that all houses holding rank 3 to 5 would be in the upper echelons of the system. In that case there would be 59 houses, i.e. 40%. But were we to cut off the elite at the 4th level this would make it only 36 houses, i.e. less than 25%.

When we turn out attention to the highest [5th] grade we are now in a position to do something that Kazhdan chose not to, but which would have given a truer picture of the Komnenian revolution: how individual houses fared across the period between 1025 and 1180, i.e. whether they rose up by acquiring a rank in the upper level, stood on the same level, or fell by being relegated to the lower level. We will start by comparing the position of individual houses between the two periods: 976-1025 and 1025-1081, i.e. before the Komnenian revolution. Here is the table:

TABLE 27: COMPARISON BETWEEN
976-1025 AND 1025-1081

No. of Clans	Difference
3	5
6	4
17	3
29	2
45	1
17	0
38	-1
37	-2
18	-3
14	-4
2	-5

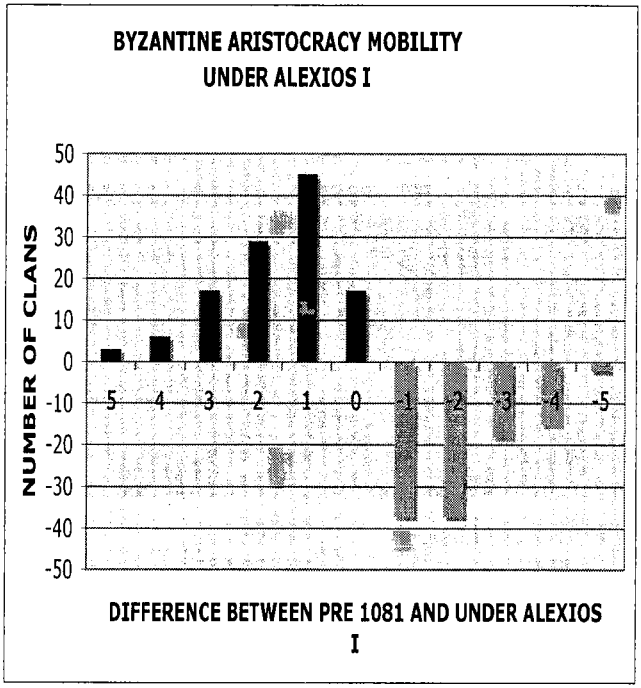
Now we can see the true extent of the Komnenian revolution in its initial phase under Alexios I: 109 out of 226 houses declined in their standing, 100 increased it and 17 stayed the same, i.e. 48%, 44% and 8% respectively. Let us do the same but for two aristocracies separately:

TABLE 28: MILITARY AND CIVIL ARISTOCRACY
DIFFERENCE BETWEEN 976-1025 AND 1025-1081

Difference	Military Aristocracy	Civil Aristocracy
5	3	0
4	3	3
3	9	7
2	16	13
1	9	35
0	7	10
-1	12	21
-2	18	19
-3	11	7
-4	6	7
-5	1	1

SOURCE: KAZHDAN 2ND ed.

GRAPH 2



SOURCE: Table 26.

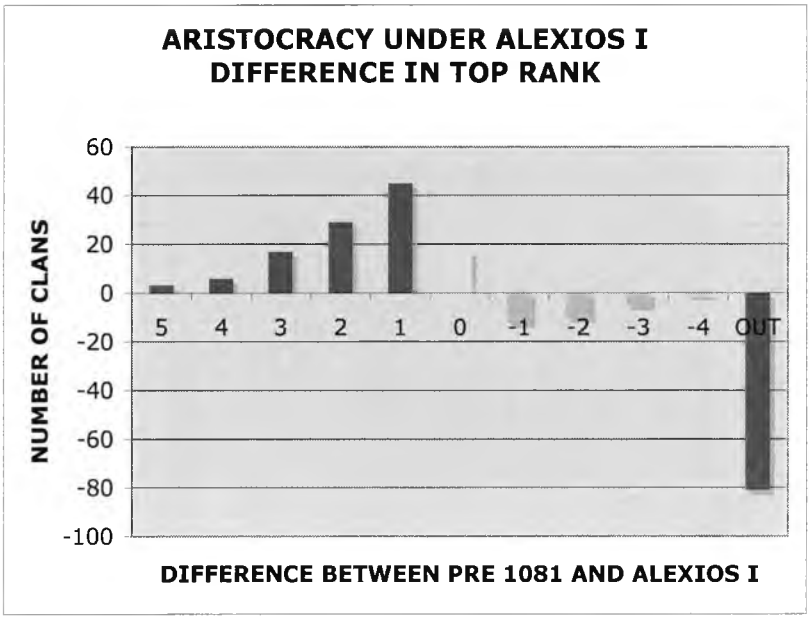
The above table is misleading, however, for it does not bring out the true separation between those houses that were still 'in' and those that were definitely 'out', as the following table demonstrates:

No. of Houses	Military Aristocracy	Civil Aristocracy
In	49	85
Out	29	37

To the above we have to add 35 houses which cannot be classed either as military or civil:

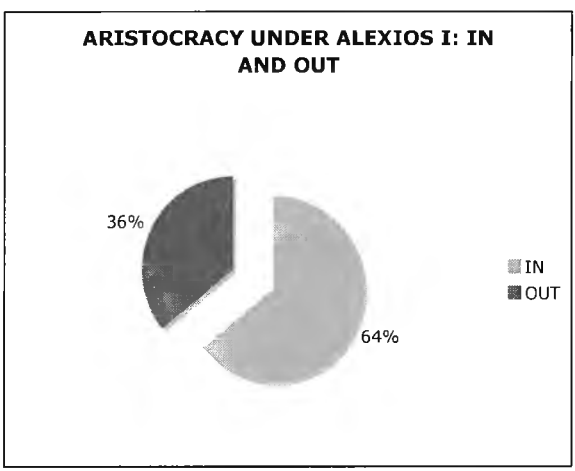
No.	Military Arist.	Civil Arist.	Unkown
In	49	85	11
Out	29	37	15

GRAPH 3



No. of Houses	Aristocracy
In	145
Out	81

GRAPH 4



The number of houses stili with a rank under Alexios I were less than 2/3 (64%) of what was the state before he came to power; more than one third (36%) were 'out'. The number of civil houses was augmented under Alexios I by 14 military houses 'going over' (in Kazhdan's view) to the civil aristocracy, i.e. providing now members of the administration rather than the military. They were:

TABLE 29: ARISTOCRATIC HOUSES UNDER ALEXIOS I

No. K.	House	1025-1081	1081-1118	Difference
24	Arbantenos	2	5	3
22	Pakurianos	3	5	2
18	Melissenos	4	5	1
38	Antiochi	2	3	1
2	Botaneiati	5	5	0
60	Argyri	2	1	-1
23	Tornikes	2	1	-1
42	Iasites	5	3	-2
20	Tarchaniotes	4	2	-2
103	Criseli	2	0	-2
205	Kurtikes	2	0	-2
30	Vladislavichi	4	1	-3
65	Kekaumeni	5	1	-4
16	Dalassenos	5	3	-2

SOURCE: KAZHDAN 2nd ed.

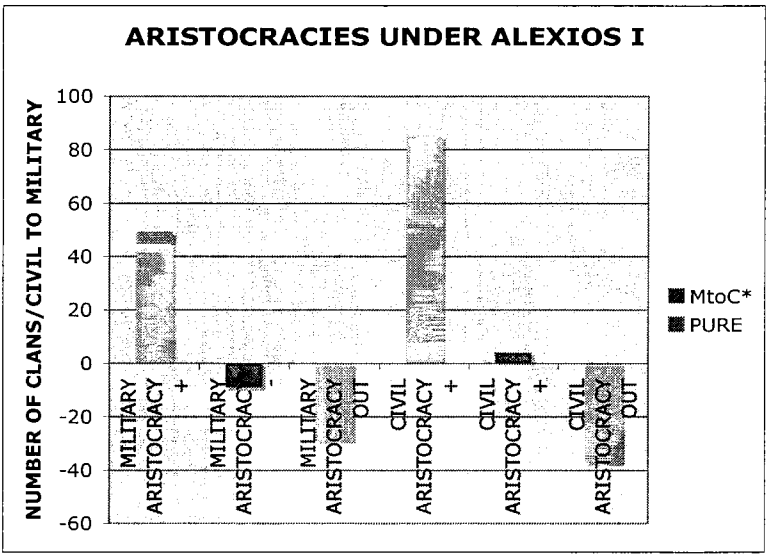
These military clans that 'went over' to the civil aristocracy did not necessarily improve their position: most of them, including those that intermarried with the Komneni, saw an erosion of their title and prestige. It should be pointed out that 10 out of 14 intermarried with the Komneni (the exceptions are Argyri, Tornikes, Criseli and Kekaumeni):

TABLE 30: MILITARY TO CIVIL CLANS

	'Pure'	Military to Civil*
Military Aristocracy +	49	
Military Aristocracy -		-9
Military Aristocracy Out	-29	
Civil Aristocracy +	85	
Civil Aristocracy +		4
Civil Aristocracy Out	-37	

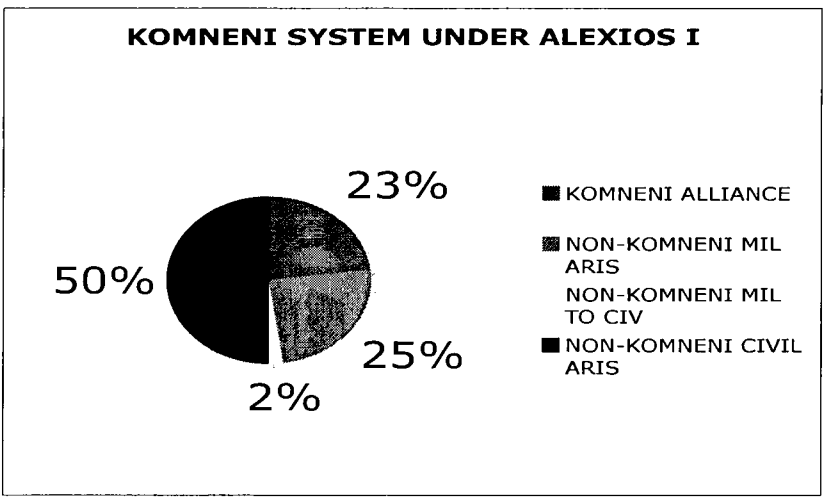
SOURCE: KAZHDAN 2nd ed.

GRAPH 5

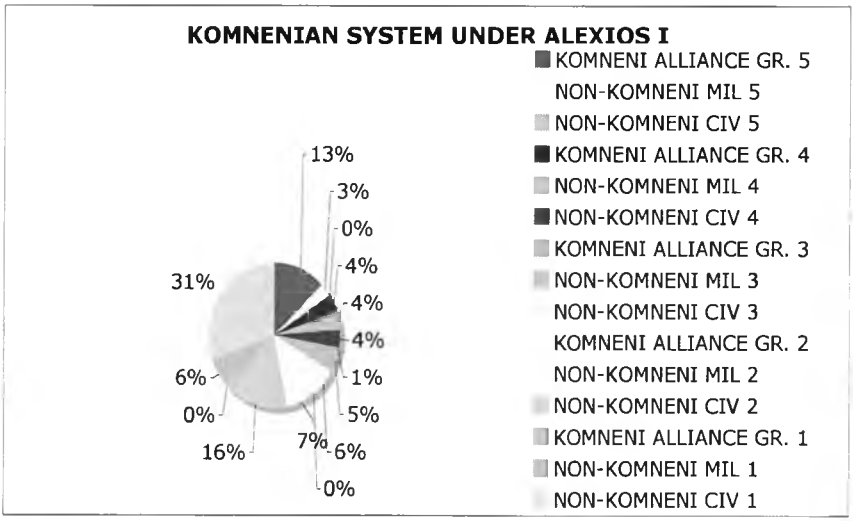


The Komneni relied on a number of allied clans to ensure their supremacy, of which the foremost were the Doukas clan, but even so there were a lot of both military and civil clans that were outside of this Komneni alliance as this graph shows:

GRAPH 6



GRAPH 7



ABBREVIATIONS: GR[ADE], CIV[ILIAN], MIL[ITARY]
The Two Aristocracies under John and Manuel (1118-1180)

The Komnenian 'revolution' was not over when Alexios I died in 1118. In fact, one can view legitimately his rule as a transition period, even though he laid the solid foundation for all later changes, and initiated its first phase. We will treat the later Komneni as a single phase (as Kazhdan does), but will note the important differences between the two reigns. Let us start by surveying the aristocracy during this phase. The first shocking discovery is that of 281 (two are in question) identified houses 225 held no rank: a whopping 80%. Of the remaining 56, 9 held the highest rank of *pansebastos sebastos* and above, *but not the title of sebastos* which now, according to Kazhdan[44], has lost the importance it had under Alexios I; the second rank of *sebastos* was held by 20 houses, the third level of *protonobelissimoshypertatos* by 7, the fourth level of *protokouropalates* and *kouropalates* was held by 13 houses. Three are identified as questionable. The reason for such a drastic diminution of the *number of titles* is, according to Kazhdan, that during this period the older, lower titles from *protovestes* down went definitely out of use.[45] Here is the table with 53 remaining houses:

---

[44] Ibid., 233-234.

[45] Ibid., 233: "[I] vecchi titoli, da protovesta in giù, dopo il regno di Alessio I uscirono definitivamente dall'uso."

TABLE 31: ARISTOCRATIC CLANS 1081-1180

No. in Kazhdan	Byzantine Clan	1081-1118	1118-1180	Difference
1	Commeni	5	5	0
7	Angeli	5	5	0
2	Botaneiati	5	4	-1
3	Doukas	5	4	-1
4	Taronites	5	4	-1
10	Briennyos	5	4	-1
5	Kamateros	5	4	-1
6	Tzikandelos	5	4	-1
18	Melissenos	5	4	-1
8	Vatatzes	4	5	1
24	Arbantenos	5	4	-1
13	Kontostefanos	4	5	1
14	Palaeologos	5	4	-1
16	Dalassenos	3	5	2
12	Katakalon	5	3	-2
11	Gabras	4	4	0
9	Branas	4	4	0
43	Kamitzes	4	4	0
19	Maniakos	5	2	-3
32	Malesi	3	4	1
20	Tarchaniotes	2	4	2
21	Xeros	2	4	2
17	Makrembolites	3	3	0
98	Scylitzes	3	2	-1
36	Straboromani	4	1	-3
35	Rogeri	0	5	5
77	Anemadi	0	5	5
90	Mangani	2	3	1
96	Pantecnidi	2	3	1
155	Aristeni	3	2	-1
137	Rauli	0	4	4
33	Petralifi	0	4	4
39	Aspieti	0	4	4
128	Laparpadi	0	4	4
147	Calufi	0	4	4
23	Tornikes	1	2	1
57	Tripsichi	0	3	3
72	Spanopouli	2	1	-1
91	Maurici	1	2	1
104	Crisovergi	1	2	1
122	Eleodoriti	0	3	3
149	Agioteodoriti	0	3	3
167	Karianiti	1	2	1
203	Klaudiopoliti	0	2	2
46	Splenarii	0	2	2

131	Monasteroti	0	2	2
67	Mesariti	0	2	2
190	Bardalidi	0	2	2
208	Lipariti	0	2	2
215	Peribleptini	0	2	2
*12	Moseles	0	2	2
192	Beriboi	0	1	1
225	Astikomiti	0	1	1

SOURCE: KAZHDAN 2nd ed.

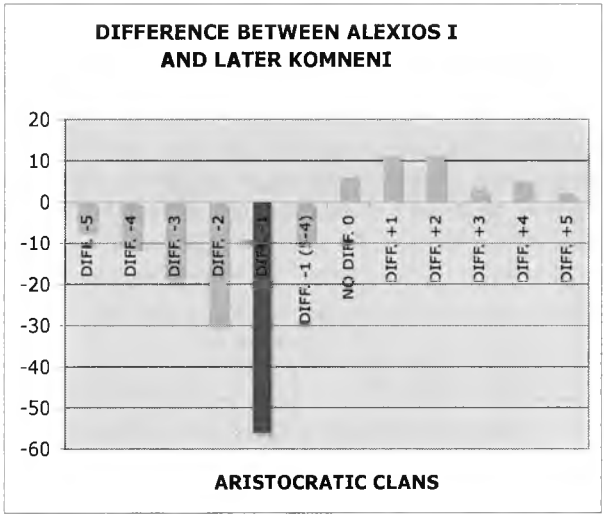
Taking into account that although now devalued houses holding the title of *sebastos* under Alexios and again under the later Komneni would formally not have suffered a diminution of status (but in effect this is exactly what happened) I have separated the difference between the highest title of 5 [*pansebastos sebastos*] and 4 [the *sebastos*] from other differences:

TABLE 32: DIFFERENCE BETWEEN 1081-1118 AND 1118-1180

Difference between 1081-1118 and 1118-1180: Highest rank held	**No. of Houses**
DIFF. -5	-7
DIFF. -4	-11
DIFF. -3	-19
DIFF. -2	-30
DIFF. -1	-56
DIFF. -1 (5-4)	-9
NO DIFF. 0	6
DIFF. +1	11
DIFF. +2	11
DIFF. +3	3
DIFF. +4	5
DIFF. +5	2
DIFF. -5	-7

SOURCE: KAZHDAN 2nd ed.

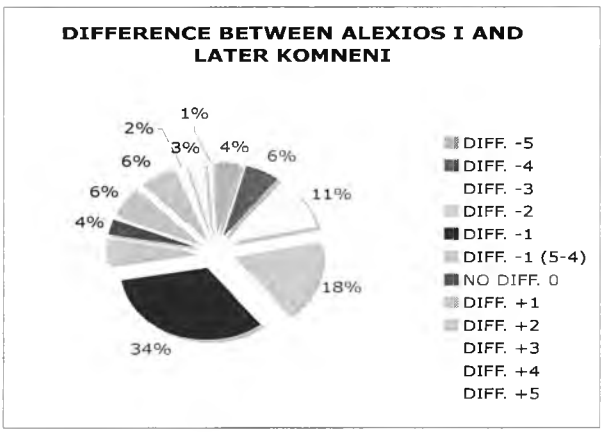
GRAPH 8



LEGEND: Difference of -1 between *pansebastos sebastos* and *sebastos* indicated separately from other -1.

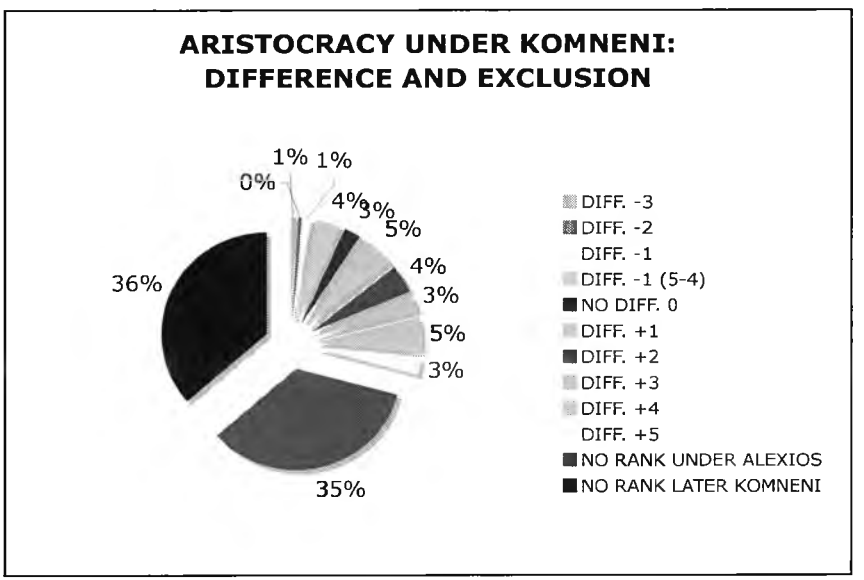
What is clear is that even by putting aside the formal difference between the highest rank under Alexios I (at the *sebastos* level) and the new highest rank under John and Manuel (at the *pansebastos sebastos* level), the diminution of rank is staggering: 56 houses were pushed into the next lower rank (not counting the *sebastos* level and above!). What should be made crystal-clear is that in *formal* terms none of these houses were actually *demoted*, i.e. given a *lower* rank. Rather their rank no longer carried the same prestige it did under Alexios I.

GRAPH 9



Under the later Komneni (1118-1180) out of 148 houses that held rank under Alexios I 115 no longer did so: that is a whopping 78%. Only 33 houses (22%) that held rank under Alexios held rank under the later Komneni. Of the 56 houses that held rank under the later Komneni 23 held no rank under Alexios I (41%) and 33 (59%) carried over from Alexios's reign. Of the 281 houses that Kazhdan identified as holding rank, by the later Komneni 225, i.e. 80% no longer did. However, since 110 of these did not hold rank under Alexios I either, they have to be indicated separately. What complicated the matter is that 23 houses who did not hold rank under Alexios did so under the later Komneni. We are left with the following picture:

GRAPH 10



When we take a closer look at those houses which held rank under Alexios I but did not hold any under the later Komneni, a discrepancy between the two aristocracies is so stark: of the 115 excluded houses, 33 (29%) belonged to the military aristocracy, 76 (66%) to the civil aristocracy (including those military clans which had joined the civil ones), and 6 (5%) are of indeterminate nature (we do not know whether they were military or civil). Of those who were excluded from participating in the governing of the empire 2/3 belonged to civil, and less than 30% to the military. This means that John and Manuel excluded mostly the civil bureaucrats. Let us now see whom they did include. Of the 56 clans making up the aristocracy with rank under the later Komneni 26 (46%) belonged to the military, 26 (46%) to civil, and 4 (8%) we cannot be sure of. Of the 23 houses that did not hold rank under Alexios but held rank under his successors 11 belonged to the military (48%),

9 (39%) to the civil, and the rest, 3, we cannot determine (one of them were the Arpadi, i.e. the Hungarian royal house).

Before we draw general conclusions about the Komnenian 'revolution' let us see how the Byzantine aristocracy fared between 976 and 1180, i.e. from the beginning of Basil II's reign to the death of Manuel II.[46] I have included in the table below only those houses whose total points over the two centuries amount to 5 and above which means that *at least during one phase they were close to or in the top rung*:

TABLE 33: ARISTOCRACY BETWEEN 976 AND 1180

No. of total points	No. Of Houses
18	2
17	2 (3)*
15	1
14	3
13	3 (2)*
12	1
11	4
10	5
9	5
8	7
7	11
6	17
5	19
4	36
3	37
2	52
1	51

*Melissenos [see Kazhdan 2nd ed., ft. 15]

Out of 255 houses 80 (31%), i.e. less than a third were close to or in the uppermost rung. We can see from the below that NO house, including the Komneni, was in the top rung (5) during the four consecutive phases.

We will now list those houses that were in the top rung (5) for at least one phase:

---

[46] Kazhdan's tables include the period 1180-1204, i.e. from Manuel II's death to the taking of Constantinople by the Crusaders. Since this is beyond our study I have left out the figures and recalculated the totals. If a house did not have a title holder before 1180 it has been left out. That accounts for the number of houses being 255 rather than 283 as Kazhdan has it.

TABLE 34 TOP-RUNG CLANS BETWEEN 976 AND 1180

No. in Kazhdan	Byzantine Clan	976-1025	1025-1081	1081-1118	1118-1180	Total
15	Skleros	5	4	5	0	14
88	Lecapeni	5	0	0	0	5
1	Commeni	3	5	5	5	18
2	Botaneiati	4	5	5	4	18
3	Doukas	3	5	5	4	17
16	Dalassenos	4	5	3	5	17
10	Briennyos	0	5	5	4	14
21	Xeros	0	5	2	4	11
26	Cerularios	0	5	5	0	10
42	Iasites	0	5	3	0	8
65	Kekaumeni	0	5	1	0	6
82	Bacrami	0	5	0	0	5
97	Paflagoni	0	5	0	0	5
4	Taronites	4	2	5	4	15
12	Katakalon	4	2	5	3	14
5	Kamateros	0	4	5	4	13
6	Tzikandelos	0	4	5	4	13
18	Melissenos	0[4]*	4	5	4	13
22	Pakurianos	3	3	5	0	11
24	Arbantenos	0	2	5	4	11
7	Angeli	0	0	5	5	10
19	Maniakos	0	3	5	2	10
14	Palaeologos	0	0	5	4	9
41	Dokeiani	0	3	5	0	8
51	Dabateni	0	2	5	0	7
29	Filokales	0	1	5	0	6
100	Sinadeni	0	0	5	0	5
8	Vatatzes	0	2	4	5	11
13	Kontostefanos	0	0	4	5	9
35	Rogeri	0	0	0	5	5
77	Anemadi		0	0	5	5
79	Assuchi	0	0	0	5	5
80	Arpadi	0	0	0	5	5

SOURCE: KAZHDAN 2nd ed. *See Kazhdan 2nd ed., ft. 15.

Thus only 33 houses out of 255, i.e. 13% were in the top layer of the Byzantine aristocracy during *at least* one phase (out of four). What is very revealing is that only 2 houses were in the top rank during 976-1025 (which is so

revealing about Basil II's attitude), 11 during the 'golden age' of the aristocracy (1025-1081), but no less than 20 during Alexios I's reign (1081-1118), and only 9 during the later Komneni (1118-1180). This means that by inventing and making the *sebastos* level the top rung Alexios was guilty of the inflation of honors, which his successors were able to scale down by excluding the *sebastos* title from the very top. In a certain sense the circle has come back to the reign of Basil II but with the crucial difference that whereas the latter ruled *without and against the aristocracy* the later Komneni were now a family firm *Komneni Inc.* incorporating the top houses.

When we look at these top 33 houses we see the following division between the military and civil aristocracy:

TABLE 35: MILITARY AND CIVIL ARISTOCRACY

Period	Military	Civil
976-1025	1	1
1025-1081	8 (4*)	3
1081-1118	18 (4*)	2
1118-1180	9 (1*)	0

*Military aristocracy going over to civil (included in the total).

These two centuries were pivotal in the development of this elite which by the times of the Komneni was totally dominated by the *military* aristocracy at the highest level (5). With a couple of exceptions all the highest positions were held either by aristocrats still serving a military career or 'going over' into the civil administration. It can be truly said that the period of the Komneni (1081-1180) was not only the triumph of the military over civil aristocracy (the Komneni themselves were the chief benefactors and agents of this change) but the total *militarisation* of the entire Byzantine state structure. This was the *extent and depth of the Komnenian* revolution.

9

THE MILITARY [*STRATIOTIKON*]

REMEMBERING that the Byzantine Empire was from first to last a *military* empire, the position of those who provided the command structure of the Imperial Army (and to a lesser extent, the Navy) was absolutely vital for the preservation and grandeur of the state. In the period before the rise of the Komneni the old military organization based on themes was being reorganized into more flexible ones, headed now by the duke [*doux*] and *katepano*, but the deprivation of military forces in Asia Minor under the emperors coming from and supported by the civil aristocracy of the capital meant that the themes were no longer in a position to repel large-scale attacks and incursions, such as those of the Normans and the Turks, without additional forces sent by the capital. At the same time, some administrative units, such as those of Dyrrakhium facing Italy, and Antioch, assumed huge strategic importance, as they controlled the roads into the interior of the empire. Cheynet has established the evolution of the administrative units from those controlled by a general [*strategos*] to those now headed by a duke [*doux*]. He points out that new themes were created in the West, i.e. in the Balkans: those of Bulgaria (following Basil II's conquest of Samuilo's state), Paradounavon [*Paristrion*], *Sirmium* [or Serbia], and in the East, in Asia Minor, those of Taron, Vaspourakan, Iberia, Great Armenia and Edessa. The lists of these military governors and commanders reads like who-is-who of Byzantine military aristocracy in the 11th century[1]:

Doux of Bulgaria or of Skopje:

David Areianites, 1st *katepan* of Bulgaria
Constantine Diogenes, *doux* of Bulgaria
John, *strategos* of Bulgaria
Tzourbaneles, *strategos* of Bulgaria
Andronikos Philokales, *katepan* of Bulgaria
Nikephoros Karantenos, *doux* of Bulgaria
Damian Dalassenos, *doux* of Skopje
Michael Saronites, *katepan* of Bulgaria
Nikephoros Vatatzes, *doux* of Bulgaria
Nikephoros Bryennios, *doux* of Bulgaria
Alexander Kabasilas, *doux* of Skopje

---

[1] Jean-Claude Cheynet, "Du stratège du thème au duc: chronologie de l'évolution au cours du XIe siècle" *T&M* 9 (1985), 181-194.

Doux of *Paradounavon* or *Paristrion*

Symon, *katepan*
Demetrios Katakalon, *katepan*
Basil Apokapes, *doux*
Nestor, *doux*

The seals that pertain to Constantine Diogenes can be read as pertaining to the *strategos* of Serbia[2].

In the East K. N. Yuzbashian has given the lists:

Taron:

Gregory, *doux*

Vaspourakan:

George Maniakes, *katepan*
Stephen Likhoudes, *katepan* [*patrikios*]
Pankratios, *doux*
Michael, *doux* [*vestarch*]

Iberia and Great Armenia:

Theophylact Dalassenos, *katepan*
Roman Dalassenos, *katepan*
Isaac Komnenos, *katepan*
Michael Iasites, *katepan* [*vestarch*]
Basilakes, *doux* of Theodosioupolis

We can supplement the above with the known dates of the last *strategos* and first *doux* or *katepan* of other themes:

THEMES IN ASIA

Theme of Anatolikon

Several *strategos* until
Michael Bourtzes, *magistros, strategos* slightly after 1056
Roman Skleros, *proedros* and *doux* of Anatolia, c. 1060

---

[2] V. Laurent, "Le thème byzantin de Serbie au XIe siècle", REB 15 (1957), 211-214 though Cheynet has his reservations (it could refer to a place of Serbia in western Macedonia, an important place during the wars between Basil II and the Bulgarians; see his study in ft. 7, p. 184).

Constantine Doukas, *protoproedros, strategos* in 1072
Nikephoros Botaneiates, *doux* under Michael VII
Nikephoros Melissenos, *monostrategos* under
Nikephoros Botaneiates

Theme of Armeniakon
Leon Iasites between 1070 and 1080

Theme of Optimaton
Leon Areniates, *doux* 1070-1080

Theme of Opsikion
The last *strategos* is Theodore Dalassenos between 1050 and 1060

Theme of Boukellarion
Between 1050 and 1070 Leon Iasites is a *magistros, vestes* and *strategos*.
c. 1070 Michael Maurix is a *doux*.

Theme of Mesopotamia

Aaron, *magistros* and *doux* in 1059

Theme of Seleucia

Peter, *vestarch* and *doux* between 1060 and 1080

Theme of Lykandos

Basil Machetarios, *katepan* c. 1060

Theme of Kibyrrhaoitai

Gregory, *strategos* and *vestarch* c. 1050
Leon Tzykandiles, *proedros* between 1065 and 1080, but there is a possibility that the same person was also a *doux*[3]

Theme of Melitene

Leon Lampros, last *strategos* in 1043
Peter Gymnos, 1st *doux, vestes* and *katepan*
Basil Machetarios, *katepan*, also in charge of Lykandos

---

[3] See Cheynet, "Du stratège...", 190, ft. 62, citing the MS dated 1124 but obviously referring to the earlier period.

Theme of Cyprus

Michael, *vestes* and *doux*

THEMES IN EUROPE

Theme of Thrace

Constantine Areianites, *doux* of Adrianople, in 1047-1048
An anonymous *katepan* in 1077
Symon Logariastes, *protoproedros* and *katepan* of Adrianople

Theme of Thessalonica
Theme of the Peloponnisos and of Hellas
Nikephoros Botaneiates *doux* between 1063 and 1074
Theme of Dyrrakhion

Basil Synadenos, *strategos* in 1040
Michael, son of Anastatos, *katepan* in 1042
Perenos, *doux* in 1069
Michael Maurix, *katepan*
Nikephoros Bryennios, *doux* in 1077
Nikephoros Basilakios, *doux* in 1078
George Monomachatos, *doux* in 1081

Cheynet points out that in case of Dyrrakhion one can date the transition from a *strategos* to a *doux* between 1040 and 1042 precisely. He summarizes the above by stating that a *doux* was now put in charge of all the newly created themes since the end of the reign of Basil II in 1025, and in addition of all the frontier themes. Under Alexios I all the extant themes, i.e. those not conquered by the Seljuk Turks following Manzikert in 1071, were headed by a *doux*.

Having surveyed the change from the older system of themes to the new ones Hélène Ahrweiler points out that under Alexios I towns and smaller regions were also given a *doux*: 1. Thebes, 2. Berroia, 3. Anchialos, 4. Corfu, 5. Belgrade, 6. Nicaea, 7. Amastris, 8. Ephesus, 9. Smyrna, 10. Melaggina, 11. Crete, 12. Cyprus, 13. Trebizond, 14. Attaleia, 15. Ochrid, 16. Seleucia, 17. Melitene, 18. Abydos etc.[4] The above lists make it clear that the military aristocracy, coming mostly from Asia Minor, dominated the military command structure and the administrative divisions of the empire during the transition from a system headed by a *strategos* to one by a *doux* or *katepan*. The situation

[4] H. Ahrweiler, "Recherches su l'administration de l'empire byzantin aux IXe-XIe siècles" in her *Etudes sur les structures administratives et sociales de Byzance*, VIII, 63-64.

under Alexios I (1081-1118), based largely on the information supplied by *The Alexiad* shows the triumph of the military aristocracy:

TABLE 36: MILITARY DIGNITARIES UNDER ALEXIOS I

Function and Rank	Holder
Grand Domestic of West	Adrian Komnenos*
Grand Duke of the Fleet	John Doukas*
Grand Duke of the Fleet	Isaac Kontostephanos*
Grand Duke of the Fleet	Landulph
Governor of Dyrrachium	Alexios Komnenos*
Governor of Synope	Constantine Dalassenos*
Governor of Cyprus	Constantine Euphorbenos Katakalon*
Governor of Trebizon	Dabatenos
Governor of Philippopolis	George Mesopotamites*
Governor of Dyrrachium	George Monomachatos
Governor of Dyrrachium	George Palaiologos*
Governor of Trebizon	Gregory Taronites*
Governor of Dyrrachium	John Komnenos*
Governor of Dyrrachium	John Doukas*
Governor of Paristrion	Leon Nicerites
Governor of Crete	Nikephoros Diogenes*
Governor of Ephesus	Petzeas
Governor of Kourikos	Strategios Strabos
Governor of Trebizon	Theodore Gabras*
Grand Drongarios of Fleet	Eustathios Kymineianos
Grand Drongarios of Fleet	Nikephoros Komnenus*
Duke of the Fleet	Manuel Boutomites*
Duke of the Fleet	Constantine Dalassenos*
Duke of the Fleet	Nichetas Kastominites*
Duke of the Fleet	Nicholas Maurokatakalon*
Duke of the Fleet	Marianos Maurokatakalon*
Thalassocrator	Constantine Dalassenos*
Thalassocrator	Kaspay
Chief of the Fleet	Mavrix
Protostrator	Michael Doukas*
Strategos of Laodicea	Andronic Tzintziloukes*
Strategos of Philadelphia	Constantine Gabras*
Strategos of Lampea	Eustathios Kamytzes*
Strategos of Kotiaion	George Lebounes
Strategos of Larissa	Leon Kephalas
Strategos of Philadelphia	Michael Kekaumenos*

Strategos of Akrounos	Michael d'Amastris
Strategos of Cyprus	Rhapsomates
Strategos of Smyrna	Nicephorus Exazene Hyaleas
Strategos of Adrianople	Nicholas Branas*
Toparch of Cappadocia	Bourtzes*
Toparch of Heraclea /Pont & Paphlagonia	Dabatenos*
Phalangarch	Michael Doukas*

NOTE: Members of military clans are indicated with and asterisk.

Cheynet has provided a list of some of the major offices and posts in the empire. Let us take a look at the *doux* of Antioch:[5]

Roman Skleros, *magistros*, then *proedros* under Constantine IX
Katakalon Kekaumenos, *magistros* under Theodora
Michael Ouranos, *magistros* under Michael VI
Nikephoritzes, *sebastophor* under Constantine X
Nikephoros Botaneiates, *proedros* in 1067 under Constantine X
Peter Libelisios, *magistros* under Romanos IV Diogenes
Joseph Tarchaneiotes, *proedros* and later *protoproedros* under Michael VII
Isaac Komnenos, *protoproedros* under Michael VII
Philaret Brachamios, *kouropalates*, *protokouropalates* and (probably) *sebastos*[6]

A similar list of progressive titles is found for the position of the *doux* of the West:

Constantine Kabasilas, *patrikios* (1042) under Constantine IX
Constantine Areianites, *magistros* and *archont* of the West (1048-1050) under Constantine IX
Romanos Skleros, *proedros* and *domestikos* of the Scholes of the West (c. 1060) under Constantine X
Nikephoros Batatzes, *magistros* and *doux* of the West (1071) under Romanos IV
Michael Saronites, *magistros* and *doux* of the West (1072) under Michael VII
Alexios Komnenos, *protoproedros* and *domestikos* of the West (1077-1078) under Michael VII

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[5] Cheynet, "Dévaluation des dignités et dévaluation monétaire dans la seconde moitié du XIe siècle" in *The Byzantine Aristocracy and its Military Function*, VI, 463-468.

[6] Cheynet, op. cit., VI, 464, n. 40 where he argues that since Nikephoros III Botaneiates had given the title of *sebastos* to Alexios Komnenos, the future emperor, for holding the position of the *domestikos* of the West, he could have given the same title to Brachamios for being the *doux* of Antioch and thus performing the duties of the *domestikos* of the East.

Alexios Komnenos, *protonobelissimos*, then *sebastos* and grand *domestikos* of the West under Nikephoros III
Gregory Pakourianos, *sebastos* (1081-1086) under Alexios I
Adrian Komnenos, *sebastos* (after 1086) under Alexios I

One of the most sensitive military administrative positions in the whole Empire was that of Dyrrakhium. It was held by the following:

Michael, *patrikios* under Constantine IX
Michael Maurix, *vestarch* (1066) under Constantine X
Nikephoros Bryennios, *proedros* under Michael VII
Nikephoros Basilakes, *protoproedros* under Nikephoros III
George Monomachatos, *protoproedros* (1081) under Nikephoros III
George Palaiologos, *sebastos* under Alexios I
John Komnenos, *sebastos* under Alexios I

Again, it should be kept in mind that the *strategoi*, i.e. the command structure of the army together with its subordinate officers and officials, was a separate corps. Now, according to Philotheos and Constantine Porphyrogennetos, there were 25 themes. But during the period covered by this study this was no longer the case: after the disastrous defeat at Manzikert in 1071, most of Asia Minor was lost and despite some reconquest was never fully recovered. So how many themes were left to the Komneni? Since every theme had 11 offices under it, the full 26 themes would have had 286 offices. But this was no longer the case. Let us see if we can reconstruct the state of the themes under the Komneni.

First of all, the Balkan themes stayed the same: 12 in number. Sicily was lost as well as whatever was still held by Byzantium in Italy, including Venice. In Asia Minor the situation was very different. Jean-Claude Cheynet tried to ascertain the degree of Byzantine presence in Anatolia following Manzikert and before the accession of Alexios I in 1081. He gives the list of following officials in these themes:

TABLE 37: BYZANTINE HOLDINGS IN ASIA MINOR

Theme	**Anatolikon**	
Official	*Title*	Source
Constantine Promountenos	*Magistros*	DOS III, 86.25
Leon Skleros	*Vestarkhos*	Seibt, Skleroi, 87
Basil	*Vestarkhos*	Zacos II, No. 966
Niketas	*Protovestes*	Zacos II, No. 656
Nikephoros	*Proedros Pretor*	Zacos II, No. 656
Theme	**Armeniakon**	
Nikephoros	*Proedros & Pretor*	DOS III, 86.38

Basil	*Vestes*	Zacos II, No. 797
John	*Vestes*	Zacos II, No. 531
Theodore	*Vestes*	Zacos II, No. 743
Constantine Promoundinos	*Vestarkhos*	Shandrovskaia, II, No. 713
Stephen	*Protovestes*	Zacos II, No. 1048
Manuel	*Proedros & Pretor*	Seyrig, 166
Theme	**Boukellarion**	
Nicholas Skleros	*Vestes*	Seibt, Skleroi, 93
Basil Pan...	*Vestarkhos*	Szemioth, No. 47
Constantine Promountenos	*Vestarkhos & Pretor*	DOS 55.1.3272
Michael Barys	*Magistros*	SBS 2, 168-169
Theme	**Kharsianon**	
Michael	*Vestes*	Zacos II, No. 603
John	*Vestarkhos*	Do 55.1.2448-2449
Constantine	*Magistros, Vestes*	Konstantopoulos, No. 155B
Theme	**Kibyrrhaiotai**	
Christophore	*Pretor & Vestarkhos*	Zacos II, No. 400
Theophylact (?)	*Protovestarkhos*	Vente Münz Zentrum, 76 (1993), no. 126
Basil Tzirithon	*Protovestarkhos*	DOS II, 59.7
Basil Xeros	*Magistros*	V. Laurent, No. 1932
Theme	**Lykandos**	
Peter Gymnos	*Vestes*	Vienne MK 271
Theme	**Opsikion**	
John Bithylakas	*Vestes*	SBS 3, 78
Theodore Makrembolites	*Protovestes*	Hermitage
Peter Serblias	*Magistros, Vestes*	DOS III, 39.16
Leon Skleros	*Magistros, Preter*	Seibt, Skleroi, 87
Polyeuktos	*Magistros, Preter*	DOS II, 39.42
Nikephoros	*Proedros*	Zacos II, No. 639
Theme	**Optimaton**	
Gregory Taronites	*Magistros, Vestarkhos, Doux*	DOS III, 71.19
Basil	*Vestes*	DOS III, 71.23
Theme	**Paphlagonia**	
Basil	*Vestes*	Do 55.12.2527-2628
John Aboudimos	*Vestarkhos*	Do 58.106.5642
Theophylact	*Vestarkhos*	Zacos II, No. 904
John	*Pretor, Vestarkhos*	Zacos II, No. 994
Theme	***Thrakesion***	
Helios	*Vestes*	Vienne MK 228
Sergei Hexamilites	*Vestes*	DOS III, 2.27
Michael, S. of Euthymios	*Magistros, Vestes*	Cat. of seals in British Museum,

		No. 17691
John	*Vestes*	DOS III, 2.14
John	*Vestarkhos*	DOS III, 2.15
Constantine	*Vestarkhos*	DOS III, 2.12
Unknown	*Proedros, Pretor*	DOS III, 2.32

SOURCE: Jean-Claude Cheynet, "La résistance aux Turcs en Asie Mineure entre Manzikert et la Première Croisade" in *Eupsychia: mélanges offerts à Hélène Ahrweiler* (Paris, 1998), 137-139; for abbreviatios of seals see List of Abbreviations.

Under Alexios I Komnenos, despite the recovery of the coastal strip of western Asia Minor with such cities as Nicaea and Bursa, the central plateau of Anatolia was left in Turkish hands; both John and Manuel tried to win it back, but were only able to recover the southern coastal fringe of Asia Minor from the Aegean Sea to the Principality of Antioch. According to John Haldon, the Komneni controlled the following themes in Asia Minor: 1. Trebizond [Chaldia]; 2. Oinaion [Sinope]; 3. Paphlagonia; 4. Boukellaion; 5. Optimaton; 6. Opsikion; 7. Neokastra; 8.Thrakesion; 9. Attaleia (after 1118); 10. Malagina; 11. Laodikeia (after 1118); 12. Mylasa/Melanoudion (after 1118); and 13. the Principality of Antioch (which was in Crusader hands). This is reflected accurately in the list of *strategoi* and *douxoi* of the Eastern themes under Alexios I:

TABLE 38 OFFICE-HOLDERS OF EASTERN THEMES

Office	**Office-Holder**	**Theme**
Governor	Constantine Dalassenos	Synope
Governor	Constantine Euphorbenos Katakalon	Cyprus
Governor	Dabatenos	Trebizon
Governor	Gregory Taronites	Trebizon
Governor	Petzeas	Ephesus
Governor	Strategios Strabos	Kourikos, Seleucia
Governor	Theodore Gabras	Trebizon
Strategos	Andronic Tzintziloukes	Laodicea
Strategos	Constantine Gabras	Philadelphia
Strategos	Eustathios Kamytzes	Lampea
Strategos	George Lebounes	Kotiaion
Strategos	Michael Kekaumenos	Philadelphia
Strategos	Michael d'Amastris	Akrounos
Strategos	Rhapsomates	Cyprus
Strategos	Nicephorus Exazenehyaleas	Smyrna
Toparch	Bourtzes	Paphlagonia
Toparch	Dabatenos	Paphlagonia

SOURCE: Basile SKOULATOS, *Les personages byzantins de l'Alexiade: analyse prosopographique et synthèse* (Louvain, 1980), 338-340.

The Western or Balkan themes were (after the loss of Bari in Italy in 1081) the following: 14. Thrace; 15. Macedonia; 16. Boleron; 17. Strymon; 18. Thessalonica; 19. Paristrion; 20. Naissos [Niš]; 21. Dyrrakhion [Dürres]; 22. Berroia; 23. Serbia; 24. Hellas; 25. Peloponnesos; 26. Nicopolis. Thus 26 themes times 11 offices plus governors/*strategoi* would give 312 offices. To these should be added another 75 offices that belonged to the *domestikoi*, and *stratarchai* to give a total for military services (Army and Navy) of 387 (give or take a few that did not have a number indicated). It should be pointed out that this number includes only the *strategoi*, *domestikoi*, *stratarchai* and other top military officers *with their administrative personnel, not the subordinate military ranks*, e.g. the various military ranks below *strategos* etc. The number of non-military offices in the City (*not the provincial administration*) is 114. The total number of *offices* (*not office-holders*) is thus 501 which is in line with what Neville and others have proposed. Of course, both the military and especially non-military personnel was much larger, especially in the provinces, but about 500 offices is what the central administration of the Byzantine Empire probably came to.

There is one author writing under the early Komneni that surpasses all the above in supporting the military aristocracy in general, and Alexios I Komnenos (1081-1118) in particular. No account of Komnenian Byzantium would be complete without her. Not only is Anna Komnena rightly considered as the greatest of all women writers of Byzantium: in many ways she can be regarded as one of the two or three greatest writers the Byzantine Empire produced. She was also the eldest daughter of Alexios I, born in purple and thus *porphyrogenneta*. It is beyond the scope of this study to do justice to her account of the life and deeds of her father or to assess her place in Byzantine literature. On both there is a rather extensive body of literature.

But a few aspects of her work and life must be brought to the fore. First of ali, her inordinate pride in being not just a Komnena (a female form of Komnenos), but a Doukaina (a female form of Doukas) as well, thus in fact twice-well-born, and on both sides from Imperial families, i.e. who did once or still (during her lifetime) held the throne of Byzantium. This is how she puts it in her Testament: "My father was Alexios Komnenos, the most distinguished Emperor of the Roman people, whose trophies and valiant deeds and stratagems against the barbarians the whole earth cannot contain, as the divine word has it. My mother was Irene, the great ornament of Empire, born of the Doukai, whose virtues dazzled the entire earth under the sun, rivalled in nothing and by no-one."[7]

Second, Anna Komnena wrote her work to describe the glorious deeds and commemorate the memory of her father as emperor. She chose to do it in unabashedly classicist (if not classic) style: by writing an *epic*. This is why her

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[7] Thalia Gouma-Peterson, ed., *Anna Komnene and her Times* (New York, 2000), 4 citing from P. Gautier, ed., *Michel Italikos, Lettres et discours* (Paris, 1972), 106-107.

work is titled *The Alexiad* imitating the title of Homer's and Virgil's great epics, *The Iliad* and *The Aeneid*. While *The Odyssey* may not appear as relevant, in fact it is equally so: for it starts 'Sing to me of man, O Muse' [*Andra moi ennepe Mousa*]. And that is precisely what Anna Komnena does: she sings of her father's deeds [*klea andron*]. It may be a strange epic, not in verse, and pretending to be a narrative history, but it still an epic, and written on a vast canvass, of truly epic proportions. Though we would not expect a woman in 12th-century Constantinople, even if a Byzantine princess and *kaisarissa*, to devote almost the entire work to military matters, this is what Anna (who was extremely intelligent but also wise) understood the times of the Komneni which his father enshrined required: an emperor was above all two things: a successful, glorious and ever-victorious commander-in-chief [*imperator* in Latin] and a defender of Orthodoxy. These two aspects of Alexios as emperor dominate *The Alexiad* to the exclusion of almost everything else.

Third, as Paul Magdalino points out, Anna Komnena wrote at the time when her clan stood supreme and momentarily unchallenged (except by the members of her own family, including herself) as far as power is concerned, i.e. she belonged to the post-Alexian settlement: "As an author, Anna belonged not to the generation which was writing under her father, but to the generation which flourished in the mid-twelfth century, the generation of Theodore Prodromos, Michael Italikos, John Tzetzes, George Tornikes, and Nikephoros Basilakes."[8] This generation, coming of age under John (1118-1143) and surviving into the early years of the reign of Manuel I (1143-1180) was desirous in establishing its own credentials to power as *the only legitimate successors to the man who (in their eyes) saved the empire*. As Magdalino puts it, "they needed to identify with Alexios by celebrating his greatness in exclusive demonstrations of filial piety. At the same time, they needed to demonstrate that they and they alone were worthy of his inheritance because they were uniquely able to emulate or surpass his achievements. The dynamic of simultaneously identifying and competing with a revered founding figure is built into all political regimes, and was certainly well established in Byzantium before the Komnenoi. However, it was particularly intense under the Komnenoi because of the particular emphasis given at the time, both to the kinship and lineage of the reigning emperor and to the rhetorical celebration of the emperor's deeds. Both aspects of imperial power reached new extremes in the 1130s and 1140s. On public occasions the ritual of glorifying the emperor in speeches and songs produced an image of a divinely heroic figure which became especially fulsome from 1133, when John II celebrated a victory over the Turks by reviving the ceremony of the triumphal entry into Constantinople; in the context of the *Alexiad*, it is relevant to note that at least one poet who sang the

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[8] Paul Magdalino, "The Pen of the Aunt: Echoes of the Mid-Twelfth Century in the *Alexiad*" in Gouma-Peterson, op. cit., 15.

emperor's deeds did so in a very passable imitation of the language and style of Homeric epic."[9]

Fourth, and very important, the very emphasis on military matters in *The Alexiad* has raised the issue of the authorship: Who wrote *The Alexiad*? In the context of a conference and volume on Alexios I Komnenos James Howard-Johnston raised precisely this issue: "If we knew nothing of the author, we would suppose that the *Alexiad* was penned by a retired officer whose active life had been spent in the field and whose later years were dominated by the memories and reminiscences of himself and his old companions-in-arms."[10] He then went on to propose Anna's husband, Nikephoros Bryennios, as the actual author of *The Alexiad*. He provided most of the material for the wars that figure so prominently in Anna's work, and he was also responsible for archival material such as Alexios' charter to Anna Dalassena. This resulted in Bryennios' raising *The Alexiad* "to the level of the very best historical works produced in Christendom or indeed in the Islamic lands in the middle ages."[11]

Anna's contribution "was to fill out the material in Nikephoros' dossier, to plug the gaps in the main military and diplomatic narrative, adding matter of her own choosing and comments of her own, and to subject all the material to a thorough stylistic upgrading."[12] Ruth Macrides picked up this challenge to Anna Komnena's authorship in her paper, "The Pen and the Sword: Who Wrote the *Alexiad*?".[13] First of all she points out that Anna did not conceal her debt to her husband:

> The main reason why I have to write the account of my father's deeds is this: I was the lawful wife of the *Kaisar* Nikephoros, a scion of the Bryennii...[A]mong other compositions worthy of honourable mention, he chose in particular to write the history of Alexios, the Emperor of the Romans, and my father, on the orders of the empress, and to record the events of his reign in several books...He did indeed begin the history...with references to the period before Alexios, starting with Diogenes, the Emperor of the Romans, and carrying it down to the times of his original subject...The *Kaisar*'s plan was such as I have described; his writings make that clear. However, he did not manage to complete what he set out to do, and the history was not completed. After carrying on the account to the times of the Emperor Nikephoros Botaneiates he stopped writing because circumstances prevented any further progress, to the

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[9] Ibid., 17 and ft. 13 citing Theodore Prodromos' poems in W. Hörandner, *Theodoros Prodromos, historische Gedichte* (Vienna, 1974), nos. 4-6.

[10] Ruth Macrides, "The Pen and the Sword: Who Wrote the *Alexiad*?" in Gouma-Peterson, op. cit., 64 citing James Howard-Johnston, "Anna Komnene and the *Alexiad*" in Margaret Mullett and Dion Smythe, eds. *Alexios I Komnenos*, Vol. I (Belfast, 1996), 273-274.

[11] Ibid., 65 quoting Howard-Johnston, 284.

[12] Ibid., 65 quoting Howard-Johnston, 296.

[13] Ruth Macrides, "The Pen and the Sword: Who Wrote the *Alexiad*?" in Gouma-Peterson, op. cit., 63-81.

> detriment of the history itself and the sorrow of its readers. That is why I have chosen to record the full story of my father's deeds myself, so that future generations may not be deprived of knowledge about them. Everyone who has encountered his literary work knows with what symmetry and grace the Caesar wrote... Having reached the point I have mentioned, he brought back his work to us from foreign parts half-finished and hastily put together, and also, I am sorry to say, an illness which was to prove fatal.[14]

That Nikephoros Bryennios left only a draft is admitted by himself: "I chose neither to write a history nor to weave an encomium...but set out in this work with the wish to provide a starting point for those who want to write about his deeds. Let the name of the composition be 'Material for a history'."[15] The main difference between Nikephoros' unfinished history and Anna's finished epic history is in the assessment of Alexios I, Nikephoros's son-in-law and Anna's beloved father. As Leonora Neville puts it, "Nikephoros portrays Alexios differently in books 1 and 2 than in books 3 and 4. There is a shift in rhetorical strategy as the second half of the history becomes far more patent in its criticism of Alexios than the first. In book 1 Alexios is lavishly praised, but shown to be ineffective and foolish...In the later parts of book 2 and increasingly in books 3 and 4, as Alexios becomes militarily successful, Nikephoros aligns Alexios with Turks and military tricksters, painting a picture of ruthlessness and dishonourable grasping after any advantage. Alexios's lack of honor is contrasted particularly with Bryennios the Elder's noble conduct in book 4."[16] The overall picture of Alexios I is overtly negative:

> Alexios's effectiveness as a politician is not doubted, and one might make the case that he had some traits necessary in an emperor, but his personal character is unmistakably denigrated. Several different attacks have been made upon Alexios's character. In fighting by deception instead of forthright attacks he does not display Roman honesty or Roman courage bur rather mendaciousness and cowardice. In fighting with skirmishing, false retreats and ambushes Alexios's generalship and fighting style also matches that of the Turks, further alienating him from Roman military traditions. In fighting like a Turk, Alexios's behavior is aligned with that of the Empire's enemies. Alexios is unflinchingly ruthless and willing to slaughter unarmed people to maintain the emperor's grip on power. He is beholden to his mother in a way that marks him as immature and lacking in true masculinity. In his first military foray Alexios's behavior was destructive and foolish...Nikephoros appears to have worked to create a portrait of Alexios that denigrates his character as not properly masculine in a

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[14] AKA [trans. by E.R.A. Sewter, rev. by Peter Frankopan], 4-5.

[15] Macrides, op. cit., 65 citing P. Gautier, ed., *Nicéphore Bryennios Histoire* (Brussels, 1975), Prooimion, 73.6-11.

[16] L. Neville, *Heroes and Romans*, 159.

classical Roman sense. Alexios may have been very successful, but he was not a virtuous man.[17]

Anna Komnena saw things differently and judged accordingly: "Now that history has brought these men, Bryennios and my father Alexios Komnenos, both heroic men, to the point of battle, it is worthwhile to arrange them in their opposing battle lines and then to examine the fortunes of the war. (Neither was inferior to the other in bravery, nor was one surpassed by the other in experience.) Certainly they were both handsome and brave, in skill and physical strength equally balanced as on a scale. The task at hand is to see how fortune favoured one side. Bryennios, confident in his soldiers, relied on his own knowledge and the good discipline of his army, whereas on the other side Alexios had modest hopes, so far as his own forces were concerned, but in reply put his trust in the strength of his own ingenuity and in his art as a general."[18] Unlike the Greeks of classical times who used both frontal bravery and deceitful trickery to win battle, the Romans lauded the former and ostracized the latter. In classical terms they preferred Achilles to Odysseus, the great hero to sly trickster. But Anna Komnena did not follow the Roman view: "The general should not invariably seek victory, in my opinion, by drawing the sword; there are times when he should be prepared to use finesse, if the opportunity appears and events allow it, and so achieve a complete triumph. As we know full well, a general's supreme task is to win, not merely by force of arms, but...there is another way—sometimes, in the right circumstances, an enemy can be beaten by fraud."[19] Anna prefers the second way clearly: "We are courageous in war against men whom we can beat; against men too strong for us we are foolhardy. Thus when danger hangs over us, being unable to make frontal assault we change our tactics and seek to conquer the enemy without resorting to warfare. The prime virtue of a general is the ability to win a victory without incurring danger—as Homer says, it is by skill that one charioteer beats another."[20]

Anna Komnena is determined to show that "there is no one method of achieving victory, nor one form of it, but from ancient times up to the present, success has been won in different ways. Victory means the same thing always, but the means by which generals attain it are varied and of intricate patterns. It appears that some of the renowned generals of old overcame their adversaries by sheer strength, whereas others prevailed on many occasions by making good use of some advantage of a different kind."[21] No one could sum up her assessment of Alexios I more brilliantly than Anna herself in these few sen-

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[17] Ibid., 169-170.

[18] AKA, 17.

[19] AKA, 367.

[20] AKA, 437.

[21] AKA, 437.

tences: "To put it briefly I would say this: he would triumph when he fled, and when he was doing the chasing, he would conquer. He landed on his feet when he fell, and would end the right way up, like a three-pointed jack which always sticks up no matter how you throw it."[22]

This is not how Nikephoros Bryennios saw it. For him the decade before Alexios seized power was tragic: "Tragic in that the Roman Empire was dismembered and defeated at the hands of foreign enemies. Tragic in that the Roman generals were consumed with fighting each other while the Empire was being conquered. Tragic in that good men lost despite fighting bravely. Tragic in that Providence determined winners and losers without regard for merit. Perhaps most of all, tragic in that the wrong man became emperor."[23] For Nikephoros Bryennios what counted most of all was *gennaiotita*, i.e. nobility. While Leonora Neville equates this nobility with bravery and proper action rather than blood lines, it seems to me that Bryennios does distinguish clearly between 'merely' brave [*agathos*] men, i.e. those having manliness [*andreia*] and this special kind of noble courage. Men in general can be brave, *agathos*, and even enemies and infidels, like the Saracens and the Turks, can have manliness, but, as Neville points out, "the paucity of references to *andreia* indicates that bravery was not particularly linked with manliness. This is especially interesting because *andreia* was one of the cardinal virtues of an emperor. Rather, the emphasis on *gennaios* implies a tight connection between lineage, standards of behavior, and bravery."[24]

In her well-known study of Anna Komnena Georgina Buckler tackles the Byzantine princess's feeling about aristocracy thus:

> Considering her as a woman, and a woman of noble birth, we at once come up against the quality of feminine and aristocratic *aidos* which she like all princesses of her day would assume as a virtue if she had it not. She cannot relate unpleasant details or scandal fit only for the vulgar. It would sully her tongue to expose the Bogomile heresy in full... This aristocratic sentiment is ingrained in her. The moment a new character appears on her scene the one point that seems to preoccupy her is his birth and social position. Hostages, rebels, courtiers, even enemies—again and again with wearisome iteration she impresses on us that they were 'of the noblest families', 'notables both by birth and rank', *megistanes, aristoi* and so on *ad infinitum*. One is an *aner gennadas*, another *ek genous lamprou*, others *eugeneis* or *gennaoi*, the latter word being significantly used by Anna both for 'well-born' and for 'courageous'... Courage and military achievements naturally belong to the upper classes, and the above-mentioned quality *to gennaion* shines out of their very countenance.[25]

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[22] AKA, 438.

[23] L. Neville, *Heroes and Romans*, 170.

[24] Ibid., 212-213.

[25] Georgina Buckler, *Anna Comnena: A Study* (Oxford, 1929, 2000), 51-52.

It is thus quite clear that Anna Komnena sees aristocracy as endowed with the special virtue of courage, manliness, and honor. How does she actually view the two aristocracies of her time, the military and civil? In his prosopographical study of the persons found in *The Alexiad* Basil Skoulatos points out that when referring to the soldiers of whatever rank Anna uses the term *stratiotes*, i.e. those whose career is to carry arms, and then he states that "these military men [*militaires*] form the most numerous group in *The Alexiad*."[26] I have already listed all the top military brass under Alexios I in Table. It numbers 45 top generals and governors of themes. This military top command [*astratian*] is the most important group in *The Alexiad* and Anna makes it clear that it and the emperor form a tight whole, and she sees her father as not just its emperor but its commander-in-chief, "the whole Roman army serving under the emperor as military general. For them he was emperor, general and instructor."[27]

Frankopan singles out Anna Komnena's account in *The Alexiad*: after pointing out that the sequence of events narrated in this work is out of joint, something that has been known by historians for a long time, he stresses Anna's deliberate distortion of the true state of the empire in Asia Minor on the eve of Alexios' call for help:

> While some problems of the *Alexiad*'s chronology have been identified by scholars, a great many have not. This in turn has led to major errors in the commonly accepted sequence of events that took place in the reign of Alexios I Komnenos. The most significant of these concerns the state of Asia Minor on the eve of the Crusade. The picture presented by Anna Komnene's account is misleading; in fact, careful re-evaluation of the *Alexiad*—taken together with other source material—reveals startling conclusions, sharply at odds with long established views. In the past, it has been assumed that the Byzantine emperor sought military assistance from the west to undertake an ambitious and opportunistic reconquest of Asia Minor from the position of strength. The reality was very different. His call for help was a desperate last roll of the dice for a ruler whose regime and empire was teeering on the brink of collapse.
>
> [...] By the time of Urban's speech at Clermont, the Turks had demolished the provincial and military administration of Anatolia that had stood intact for centuries and captured some of the most important towns of early Christianity: places like Ephesus, home of St. John the Evangelist, Nicaea, the location of the famous early church council, and Antioch, the original see of St. Peter himself, were all lost to the Turks in the years before the Crusade.[28]

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[26] B. Skoulatos, *Les personages byzantins de l'Alexiade: Analyse prosopographique et synthèse* (Louvain, 1980), 336.

[27] AKA, 361. The original reads: *To auto gar kai basilei kai stratego kai didaskalo echronto* [*The Alexiad*, Leib ed., Vol. III, 92, *8-12*.

[28] Ibid., 10-11.

This is in stark contrast to Jean-Claude Cheynet who claims that though the Turks had indeed reached the other shore of the Dardanelles and were in sight of Constantinople, their hold on these recently-conquered provinces was very tenuous.[29] Yet, Frankopan's claim is absolutely correct when he claims that "nowhere were Alexios' limitations clearer than in Asia Minor, where the emperor's attempts to reverse Turkish advances had proved woeful. Attempts to recover the coast had failed completely and efforts against Nicaea had been embarrassingly ineffective. As Alexios' reign began to look like a disaster, minds inevitably turned to the alternatives."[30]

In 1094 disappointment with Alexios' rule coalesced into the opposition and conspiracy led by Nikephoros Diogenes, *doux* of Crete, who was the son of Romanos IV Diogenes, the emperor defeated at Manzikert in 1071, and was *porphyrogennitos*. His claim to the throne of Byzantium was supported by some of the closest relatives of the ruling Emperor, including Maria of Alassia, former *basilissa* (as wife of both Michael VII and Nikephoros III Botaneiates), Michael Taronites, *panhyper-sebastos*, brother-in-law to Alexios, Kekaumenos Katakalon together with a large group of army officers, a host of army soldiers, and some of the most influential Senators. Alexios was supported by Manuel Philokales, *protonobelissimos* and *epi tou kanikleiou* [the keeper of the Imperial inkwell], Tatikios, *protoproedros and primicius of internal vestiaries*, Adrianos Komnenos, Alexios' brother, Grand Domestic, and Gregory Kamateros, *hypogrammateus* [higher secretary] of the Emperor. While Nikephoros Diogenes was blinded, and Michael Taronites lost his possessions, the rest were pardoned. There were other conspiracies as well: Cheynet has dealt with twenty of them during Alexios' reign (1081-1118). They are not necessarily in this order, but have been put together by Cheynet:

1. June 1081: George Monomachatos, *protoproedros* and *doux of Dyrrakhion* opposed by George Palaiologos, brother-in-law to Alexios I;
2. Spring 1081: Bourtzes and Dabatenos, both *toparch*
3. October, 1081: Xantas, *patrikios*, supported by the *tagma* of the Manichaneans in Philippopolis
4. Theodor Gabras, *sebastos* and *doux of Trebizond*, supported by the army and population of Trebizond
5. Between 1081 and 1090: Tzachas, *protonobelissimos* under Nikephoros III Botaneiates opposed by Sultan Kilidj Arslan, John Doukas, *sebastos* and *megas doux*, brother-in-law to Alexios I, Niketas Kastamonites, *doux* of the fleet; Constantine Dalassenos, relative of Alexios I, Constantine Opos, *doux*, and Kaspax, *doux*

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[29] Jean-Claude Cheynet, "La résistance au Turcs en Asie Mineure entre Mantzikert et la première croisade" in *Eupsychia: Mélanges offerts à Hélène Ahrweiler* (Paris, 1998), republished in his *The Byzantine Aristocracy and its Military Function* (Variorum, 2006), XIV, 147.

[30] Frankopan, op. cit., 78-79.

6. After November 1083: Traulos, baptized Manichaean, supported by the Pechenegs, and the region of Philippopolis
7. October or November 1083: Pounteses, Norman soldier, supported by Leon Baasprakanites, Senators, and the *tagmata*
8. After 1085: probably Bohemond (according to P. Gautier) supported by the Bogomil population, opposed by Michael Doukas, *sebastos* and *protostrator*, brother-in-law to the Emperor
9. In 1097: an unknown who had accomplices of the highest rank
10. In 1091-1092: Gregory Gabras, sons of Theodor, supported by George Dekanos, Eustathios Kamytzes, opposed by George Mesopotamites, *doux* of Philippopolis, and Leon Nikerites, *doux* of Paristrion
11. May 1091: Constantine Humbertopoulos, head of the Frankish *tagmata* supported by numerous people
12. Between 1091-1093: John Komnenos, *sebastos* and *doux* of Dyrrakhion, opposed by Adrianos Komenos, *sebastos* and the Domestic of the West, Alexios' brother, and Nikephoros Melissenos, *sebastos*, brother-in-law to Alexios I
13. Between 1091 and 1093: Rapsommates, official of Cyprus, supported by troops stationed on the island of Cyprus, together with a part of the *tagma* of the Immortals, opposed by John Doukas, *megadux*, brother-in-law to Alexios
14. 1091-1093: Karykes, official in Crete, opposed by John Doukas, *megadux*
15. First half of 1094: Nikephoros Diogenes, supported by Michael Taronites, *panhypersebastos*, brother-in-law to Alexios I, Kekaumenos Katakalon, and ex-*basilissa* Maria of Alania, together with a great part of the army, and the most influential Senators, opposed by Manuel Philokales, *protonobelissimos* and *epi tou kanikleiou*, Tatikios, *proedros*, Adrianos Komnenos, Grand Domestic, and Gregory Kamateros, *hypogrammateus*
16. In 1095: Pseudo-Diogenes (an impostor) opposed by Nikephoros Bryennios
17. In 1100-1101: Michael Anemas, supported by his brothers, the Antioches clan, Nikephoros Exazenos Hyaleas, Constantine Exazenos Doukas, Niketas Kastamonites, Kourtikios, George Basilakios, John Solomon, *protoasekretes*, Skleros and Xerox
18. In September 1103 or 1104: Gregory Taronites, *doux* of Trebizond, cousin of Alexios I, opposed by Dabatenos and other nobles of Trebizond, John Taronites, Alexios' nephew, *sebastos*
19. In 1107: Aaron, a military officer, distant cousin of the Doukas emperors, and through Eirene Doukas, to Alexios I, supported by his brother and other aristocrats, opposed by Constantine, personal servant of Alexios I
20. In 1111-1112: Michael d'Amastris, *strategos* or *doux* of Akrounos with its garrison, opposed by George Dekanos in charge of the Imperial army[31]

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[31] Jean-Claude Cheynet, *Pouvoir et contestations à Byzance (963-1210)*(Paris, 1996), 90-103

It is thus quite clear from the above that there were revolts or near-revolts (what Cheynet calls in French *contestations* which may be translated as contested power contests) throughout Alexios' reign (1081-1118). Nevertheless one should keep in mind that Cheynet has identified 207 such contestations of power between 963 and the Latin occupation of 1204. Thus less than 10% for the period of thirty seven years is not excessive. Yet, it must be admitted that the overwhelming number of contestations came from the MILITARY aristocracy, was supported by some of the members of the Komnenos-Doukas alliance and their in-laws, and involved the most senior members of the Senate [*sinkletos*], i.e. CIVIL aristocracy (though, by the second half of Alexios' reign the Senatorial aristocracy had been invaded if not inundated by former (and still existing) MILITARY aristocracy.

As Skoulatos emphasizes, "in conclusion, the military group [*les groupe des militaries*] occupies a dominant place in *The Alexiad*. Within it the members of the imperial family hold key posts [*postes-clés*]."[32]

[32]Skoulatos, op. cit., 345.

10

THE PALACE OFFICIALS

BYZANTIUM was probably the most hierarchically stratified of all empires, and all subsequent empires (such as the Muscovite empire) imitated if not equalled its traditional order of ranks which was known as *taxis*. Constantine Porphyrogennetos has 18 of them, taken over from Philotheos (I have followed the order, starting with the lowest[1]):

1. *Stratelates*
2. *Silentiarios*
3. *Vestetor*
4. *Mandator*
5. *Kandidatos*
6. Groom
7. Consul
8. *Spatharios*
9. *Spatharokandidatos*
10. Twice-serving consul
11. *Protospatharios*
12. *Patrikios*
13. Proconsul
14. *Magistros*
15. Patrician Woman
16. *Kouropalates*
17. *Nobelesimos*
18. *Kaisar*

Before the coming to power of the Komneni the list of precedence stood like this in the middle of the 11th century (1060/1070)[2]:

1. *Spatharokandidatos*
2. *Protospatharios*

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[1] BC, 708-712. Philotheos' *Kletorologion* was compiled in 899 and was edited by Nicolas Oikonomides, *Les listes de préséance Byzantines des IXe et Xe siecles: introduction, texte, traduction et commentaire* (Paris, 1972), 65-235.

[2] V. Déroche, V. Puech, S. Métivier & G. Saint-Guillain, *Le monde byzantin 750-1204: Economie et société* (Neuilly, 2007), 656.

3. *Hypatos*
4. *Dishypatos*
5. *Patrikios*
6. *Anthypatos*
7. *Illoustrios*
8. *Vestes*
9. *Protovestes* [after 1070]
10. *Vestarkhos*
11. *Protovestarkhos* [after 1070]
12. *Magistros*
13. *Proedros*
14. *Protoproedros* [before 1070]
15. *Kouropalates*
16. *Nobelessimos*
17. *Kaisar*

It is quite clear from the above that the list of precedence referred to *titles not offices*. According to Porphyrogennetos, there were 60 offices that were filled by imperial nomination [*dia logou basilikou*] and are listed in a descending order of precedence (the first the highest)[3]:

1. *Basileopator* [father to the emperor]
2. *Raiktor*
3. *Synkellos*
4. *Strategos* of the Anatolikoi
5. *Domestikos* of the *scholia*
6. *Strategos* of the Armeniakoi
7. *Strategos* of the Thrakesioi
8. *Komes* of the Opsikion
9. *Strategos* of the Boukellarioi
10. *Strategos* of Kappadokia
11. *Strategos* of Charsianon
12. *Strategos* of Koloneia
13. *Strategos* of Paphlagonia
14. *Strategos* of Thrace
15. *Strategos* of Macedonia
16. *Strategos* of Chaldia
17. *Domestikos* of the *exkoubitoi*
18. Eparch of the City [=Constantinople]
19. *Strategos* of Peloponnesos
20. *Strategos* of Nikopolis
21. *Strategos* of the Kibyrrhaiotai

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[3] BC, 712-714.

22. *Strategos* of Hellas
23. *Strategos* of Sicily
24. *Strategos* of Strymon
25. *Strategos* of Kephallenia
26. *Strategos* of Thessalonike
27. *Strategos* of Dyrrhachion
28. *Strategos* of Samos
29. *Strategos* of the Aegean Sea
30. *Strategos* of Dalmatia
31. *Strategos* of Cherson
32. *Sakellarios*
33. *Logothete* of the *genikon*
34. Quaestor
35. *Logothete* of the *stratiotikon*
36. *Droungarios* of the Watch
37. *Logothete* of the post
38. *Droungarios* of the Fleet
39. *Protospatharios* of the emperor's men
40. *Logothete* of the herds
41. *Domestikos* of the *hikanatoi*
42. *Domestikos* of the *noumera*
43. *Domestikos* of the *optimatoi*
44. *Komes* of the Walls
45. *Chartulary* of the *sakellion*
46. *Chartulary* of the *vestiarion*
47. *Chartulary* of the inkstand
48. Head groom
49. Chief imperial secretary
50. Representative of the themes
51. *Komes* of the stable
52. *Eidikos*
53. Great curator
54. Curator of the Mangana
55. Officer in charge of petitions
56. Head of the Orphanage
57. Demarch of the Blues
58. Demarch of the Greens
59. Master of Ceremonies
60. *Domestikos* of the emperor's men

Philotheos (and Porphyrogennetos after him) divide the above into seven groups: the *strategoi*, *domestikoi*, judges, officials of the bureaus, *demokratai*, *stratiarchai*, and special titles. The first group is of the greatest importance for this study and it proves that the *strategoi* were seen as a separate group. They

were grouped into eastern and western themes (all titles of *strategos* except where noted[4]):

Eastern Themes

1. Anatolikai
2. Armeniakoi
3. Thrakesioi
4. Opsikion [*komes*]
5. Boukellarioi
6. Kappadokia
7. Charsianon
8. Koloneia
9. Paphlagonia
10. Thrace
11. Macedonia
12. Chaldia

Western Themes

13. Peloponnesos
14. Nikopolis
15. Kibyrrhaoitai
16. Hellas
17. Sicily
18. Strymon
19. Kephallenia
20. Thessalonike
21. Dyrrhachion
22. Samos
23. Aegean Sea
24. Dalmatia
25. Cherson
26. Representatives of the Themes

There were 7 *domestikoi*, 3 judges (the Eparch of the City, the Quaestor and the Officer in charge of petitions), 11 titles of departments or bureaus, 2 *demokratai* (demarchs of the Blues and Greens), 5 *stratarchai*, and 7 unique titles.

The most important position in the capital, after that of the Emperor, was the *eparch* who was in charge of the capital's administration and governed

[4] BC 714-715.

the city in the absence of the emperor. This civil function nevertheless carried a lot of weight and prestige. Here is Cheynet's list:

Anastasios, *protospatharios* and *epi tou Chrissotriklinou* in 1042 under Constantine IX
Epiphanos Kamateros, *proedros* under Michael VII
Sergei Hexamilities, *protoproedros* and eparch before 1082 under Alexios I
Michael Machetarios, *vestarch* c. 1087
Basil Tzirithon, *protoproedros* (before 1089)
John Skylitzes Thrakesios, *proedros* in 1090
Michael Philokales, *protoproedros* then *protonobelissimos* under Alexios I

This was also true of the judicial system dominated by the so-called judges of the Hippodrome and of *velum*. Again Cheynet provides a brief list:[5]

In 1045 [all below were notaries of the *eidikou Logothetou*]
Michael, *protospatharios*
Basil, *protospatharios, krites of the Hippodrome*
Romanos Agallianos, *krites of the velum, patrikios, anthypatos, vestes*
John, *protospatharios, krites of the Hippodrome*
Basil Tzirithon, *protospatharios, krites of the Hippodrome*
John Kamateros, *protospatharios, krites of the Hippodrome*

In 1088 (under Alexios I)
Basil Gorgonites, *protovestarch, krites*, Grand Chartoularios
Basil Kamateros, *magistros, krites of velum*
Leon Hexamilites, *magistros, krites of velum*, Grand Chartoularios
Epiphanos Hexamilites, *magistros, krites of velum*, and notary
Nicholas Beriotes, *magistros, krites of velum*, notary
George Promoundenos, *magistros, krites of velum*
Leon Karamallos, *magistros, krites of velum*, and Grand Chartoularios

Cheynet points out that during the 11th century, particularly between 1050 and 1081, there was a steady creeping up of the titles for the judges [*krites*], which antedated the wholesale inflation of honors under the Komneni: "Beginning with 1050s one obtained the dignities of hypatos and patrikios, in the 1070s, one could hope to become vestes and vestarch. The relative lack of information between 1063 and 1078 is regrettable for it...prevents us to know with precision when the first judges as vestarchs appeared. This dignity was still given gingerly to the best generals under Constantine Doukas. With Botaneiates appeared the first judges as protovestarchs and without doubt the

[5] Cheynet, "Dévaluation...", VI, 468-469.

judges as protovestes, and finally under Alexios I Komnenos, around 1087-1088 the dignity most commonly acquired is that of magistros."[6]

Philotheos goes on to list the offices subordinate to each head of these ranks divided into those of the regiments, of the themes, and of the senate. They are summarized in the tables below:

TABLE 39A: LIST OF SUPERIOR AND SUBORDINATE OFFICES ACCORDING TO PHILOTHEOS

Rank of Superior Office	Rank of Subordinate Office
Strategoi of *Individual Themes*	*Tourmachai* *Merarchai* *Komes* of the Marquee Chartulary of the theme *Domestikos* of the Theme *Droungarios* of the Banda *Kometes* of the *Banda* Centurion of the *Spatharioi* *Komes* of the *Hetaireia* *Protokankellarios* *Protomandator*
Domestikos of *Scholai*	*Topoteretes* *Kometes* of the *Scholai* Chartulary *Domestikoi* *Proximos* *Protiktores* *Tyche*-Bearers Sceptre-Bearers Title-Holders *Mandatores*
Domestikos of the *Exkoubitoi*	*Topoteretai* Chartularies *Skribones* *Protomandatores* Dragon-Ensign Bearers Insignia-Bearers Standard-Bearers Subaltern Officers Mandatores
Eparch of the City	*Symponos* Judges of the Regions* Supervisors *Protokankellarioi* Centurion Inspectors Exarchs Neighbourhood Superintend

[6] Cheynet, "La résistance aux Turcs en Asie Mineure entre Mantzikert et la première Croisade" in *The Byzantine Aristocracy and its Military Function*, XIV, 136-137; this contains lists of *krites* on pp. 135-136.

	Lawyers Keepers of the Seals Heads of Organizations & Trades *Kankellarioi* Harbour Master
Logothete of the *Genikon*	Great Chartularies of B.** Chartularies of Repositories Inspectors of the Themes *Kometes* of the water Supply *Oikistikos* Customs Officials Curator of Imp. Estate Komes of the *Lamia* Tax-Officers *Komentianos* *Protokankellarios* *Kankellarioi*
Quaestor	Legal Draftsmen Scribe Collator Court Clerk *Protokankellarios* *Kankellarioi*

*Regions of Constantinople

**Bureau

SOURCE: *BOOK OF CEREMONIES*, 716-717

TABLE 39B: LIST OF SUPERIOR AND SUBORDINATE OFFICES ACCORDING TO PHILOTHEOS

Rank of Superior Office	Rank of Subordinate Office
Logothete of the *Stratiotikon*	Chartularies of the Bureau Chartulaties of the Themes Chartularies of Regiments *Legatarioi* Army pay Officers *Protokankellarios* *Mandatores*
Droungarios of the Watch	*Topoteretai* Chartulary *Akolouthos* *Kometes* Centurions Banner-Bearers Bearers of the Labara Ensign-Bearers *Doukiniatores* *Mandatores*
Droungarios of the Fleet	*Topoteretai* Chartulary *Protomandator* *Kometes* Centurions

	Komes of the *Hetaireia* *Mandatores*
Logothete of the Post	Protonotary of the Post Chartularies of the Post Supervisors Interpreters Curator of the Apokrisiarikion* Couriers *Mandatores*
Protospatharios of Emperor's Men	*Domestikos* of the Emp. Men *Spatharioi* Of Spatharikion** *Kandidatoi**** Imperial *Mandatores*

*The Bureau of the Emissaries **Covered Hippodrome

***Bureau of the Kandidatoi

SOURCE: *BOOK OF CEREMONIES*, 717-718

TABLE 39C: LIST OF SUPERIOR AND SUBORDINATE OFFICES ACCORDING TO PHILOTHEOS

Rank of Superior Office	Rank of Subordinate Office
Logothete of the Herds	Protonotary of Asia Protonotary of Phrygia Tax-Officers of Holding Yards *Kometes* Supervisors
Domestikos of the *Hikanatoi*	*Topoteretai* Chartulary *Kometes* *Protomandator* Centurions Banner-Bearers *Doukiniatores* Ensign-Bearers *Mandatores*
Dometikos of the *Noumera*	*Topoteretai* Chartularies Tribunes *Protomandator* Lieutenants *Mandatores*
Domestikos of the *Optimatoi*	*Topoteretai* Chartularies *Kometes* Centurions *Protokankellarios*
Domestikos of the Walls	*Topoteretai* Chartularies Tribunes *Protomandator* Lieutenants *Mandatores*
Chartularyof the *Sekellion*	Imp. Notories of the Bureau

	Protonotaries of the Themes Heads of Hospices Controller of Weights Officials for Measures Heads for Homes for Aged Chartularies of Pious Institutions *Protokankellarios* *Kankellarioi* *Domestikos of the theatre*

SOURCE: *BOOK OF CEREMONIES*, 718-719

TABLE 39D: LIST OF SUPERIOR AND SUBORDINATE OFFICES ACCORDING TO PHILOTHEOS

Rank of Superior Office	Rank of Subordinate Office
Chartulary of the *Vestiarion*	Imp. Notories of the Bureau Centurion *Legatarios* Archon of the Mint Head of Dockyard of Constantinople Curators *Chosbaitai* *Protomandatores*
Head Groom	Grooms Guards of the Chariots *Stablokometes*
Chief Imperial Secretary	Imperial Secretaries Imperial Notaries The Constable
The head of the *Eidikos Logos*	Imp. Notaries of the Bureau Archons of the Worshops Those Rostered for the Week Managers of the Workshops
Great Curator	Protonotary Imperial Notaries Curators of the Palaces Curators of the Estates Manager of the Palace of Eleutherios Head of Hospice of Sangaros Head of Hospice of Pylai Head of Hospice of Nikomedia Supervisors
Head of the Orphanage	Chartularies of House of St Paul Chartularies of Holy Man Treasures of Repositories Curators
Demarchs of Blue and Green	Deputy Demarchs Chartulary and Poet Archons Neighborhood Superintendents Musicians Notaries of the Factions Charioteers Top Officials

	Demesmen
Master of Ceremonies	Consuls *Vestetores* Silentiaries Ex-Eparchs Senators*

*There are five senatorial titles including twice-serving consuls. If these were included, senators here would refer collectively to the five preceding titles.[7]
SOURCE: *BOOK OF CEREMONIES*, 719-720

In addition to the above offices there were eight titles reserved for eunuchs alone which the emperor himself bestowed in person, and ten by imperial nomination [*dia logou basilikou*].[8]

It is quite clear from the above that the Imperial bureaucratic system was extremely elaborate by medieval standards and thus truly (in contemporary parlance) 'Byzantine'. While it is possible to calculate roughly the *number of offices* it is not reliable to do so with *office-holders* as there were more than one in most of the offices. The number of offices, on the other hand, can be summarized thus:

TABLE 40: NUMBER OF OFFICES

Rank of Superior Office	**No. of Subordinate Offices**
Strategos of Each Theme	11
Domestikos of the *Scholai*	10
Domestikos of the *Exkoubitoi*	9
Eparch of Constantinople	14
Logothete of the *Genikon*	12
Quaestor	6
Logothete of the *Stratiotikon*	7
Droungarios of the Watch	10
Droungarios of the Fleet	7
Logothete of the Post	7
Protospatharios of Emperor's Men	4
Logothete of the Herds	5
Domestikos of the *Hikanatoi*	9
Domestikos of the *Noumera*	6
Domestikos of the *Optimatoi*	5
Domestikos of the Walls	6
Chartulary of the *Sakellion*	10
Chartulary of the Vestiarion	10
Head Groom	3

[7] Oikonomides, op. cit., 124 n. 73 & 295-296.
[8] BC, 720-725.

Chief Imperial Secretary	3
Head of the *Eidikos* Logos	4
Great Curator	9
Head of the Orphanage	4
Two Demarchs of Blue/Green	7
Master of Ceremonies	5
*Nipsistiarios**	
*Koubikoularios**	
*Spatharokoubikoularios**	
*Ostiarios**	
*Primikerios**	
*Protospatharios**	
*Praipositos**	
*Patrikios**	

*Eunuchs. Number of offices below not given.

The number of offices is thus 193 for non-eunuchs and eight for eunuchs, for the total of 201, plus the *sakellarios*, and the chartulary of the inkstand [*epi tou kanikleiou*], and the *komes of the stable*, for the final total of 204.

On the basis of the information provided by Philotheos Warren T. Treadgold has calculated the number of office-holders in the Central Bureaucracy circa 842. While this antedates my study by about two and a half centuries, given the Byzantine propensity to carry on with tradition and not to change things, it is the best approximation we have to how many office-holders Byzantine central administration (most probably) had during the Komnenian era:

TABLE 41: NUMBER OF OFFICE-HOLDERS IN CENTRAL BUREAUCRACY IN 842 ACCORDING TO TREADGOLD

Bureau	Title	Number
1. City Prefect		
	City Prefect	1
	Sumponus	1
	Logothete of the Praetorium	1
	Judges of the Region	12
	Episceptetae	12 (?)
	Protocancellarii	2
	Centurion	1
	Epoptae	4
	Exarchs and Prostatae	21

	Geitoniarchs	12
	Nomici	12
	Bulotae	12 (?)
	Prostatae*	
	Cancelarii	6
	Parathalassites	1
Total		**98**
2. Questor		
	Quaestor	1
	Antigrapheis	2
	Scribas	1
	Sceptor [Notary]	1
	Protocancellarius	1
	Cancelarii	6 (?)
Total		**13**
3. Minister of Petitions		
	Minister of Petitions	1
	Concelarii (?)	6 (?)
Total		**7**
4. Sacellarius		
	Sacellarius	1
	Notaries	9
Total		**10**
5. General Logothete		
	General Logothete	1
	Great Chartularies of the Secretum	12
	Chartularies of the Arclae	23
	Epoptae of the Themes	23
	Counts of the Waters	2 (?)
	Oecisticus	1
	(Commerciarii)*	
	Head of the Curatoria	1
	Count of the Lamia	1
	Dioecetae*	
	Comentianus	1
	Protocancellarius	1
	Cancellarii	6 (?)
Total		**72**
6. Military Logothete		
	Military Logothete	1
	Chartularies of the Secretum	12
	Chartularies of the Themes*	

	Chartularies of the Tagmata*	
	Legatarii and Mandators	56 (?)
	Optiones	28
	Protocancellarius	1
	Mandators*	
Total		**98**
7. Logothete of the Drome		
	Logothete of the Drome	1
	Protonotarius of the Drome	1
	Chartularies of the Drome	23
	Episceptetae	23
	Hermeneutae	12 (?)
	Curator of the Apocrisiarieium	1
	Diatrechontes	24 (?)
	Mandators	46 (?)
Total		**131**
8. Sacellium		
	Chartulary of the Sacellium	1
	Imperial Notaries of the Secretum	8
	Xenodochi	6
	Zygostates	1
	Metretae	2 (?)
	Gerocomi	2
	Chartularies of the Institutions	8
	Protonotarii of the Themes	23
	Protocancellarius	1
	Cancelarii	6 (?)
	Domestic of the Thymela	1
Total		**59**
9. Vestiarium		
	Chartulary of the Vestiarium	1
	Imperial Notaries of the Secretum	8
	Centarch	1
	Legatarius	1
	Archon of the Mint	1
	Exartistes	1
	Chartulary	1
	Curators	2
	Chosbaitae	2 (?)
	Protomandator	1
	Mandators	4 (?)
Total		**23**

10. Chancery		
	Protoasecretis	1
	Asecretae	24
	Imperial Notaries*	
	Decanus	1
Total		**26**
11. Special Secretary		
	Special Secretary	1
	Imperial Notories of the Secretum	8
	Archons of the Factories	3
	Hebdomarii	2 (?)
	Meizoteri of the Factories	2
Total		**16**
12. Great Curator		
	Great Curator	1
	Protonotarius	1
	Imperial Notories	8 (?)
	Curators of the Palaces	8
	Curators of the Estates	5 (?)
	Meizoterus of the Palace of Eleutherius	1
	Xenodochus of Sangarius	1
	Xenodochus of Pylae	1
	Xenodochus of Nicomedia	1
	Episceptetae	17 (?)
Total		**44**
13. Orphanotrophus		
	Orphanotrophus	1
	Chartularies of the House	2 (?)
	Chartularies of the Hosius	2 (?)
	Arcarius	1
	Curators	2
Total		**8**
Grand Total		**605****

*These officials are counted elsewhere.
**This figure excludes officials counted elsewhere.
SOURCE: WARREN T. TREADGOLD, *The Byzantine State Finances in the Eighth and Ninth Centuries* (Boulder/New York, 1982), Table VI, pp. 111-114. It is based on Philotheos, *Kletorologion*, edited by Nicolas Oikonomidès, *Les listes de préséance Byzantines des IXe et Xe siecles* (Paris, 1972), 65-235, and is included in BC, Vol. II, 702-791.

Treadgold's 'conjectural' (as he calls it) pay scale of Byzantine officials circa 842/843 is based on the following scale of Imperial pay or *roga*:

TABLE 42: PAY SCALE OF OFFICIALS CIRCA 842/843 ACCORDING TO TREADGOLD

Ranking and Pay in Nomismata*	Name of Top Officials	No. of Office-Holders
4. 864 Nomismata	City Prefect	1
	Quaestor	1
	Sacellarius	1
	General Logothete	1
Total		**4**
5. 432 Nomismata	Minister for Petitions	1
	Military Logothete	1
	Logothete of the Drome	1
	Chartulary of the Sacellium	
	Chartulary of the Vestiarium	1
	Protoasecretis	1
	Special	1
	Secretary	
	Great Curator	1
	Orphanotrophus	1
Total		**8**
7. 144 Nomismata	Various	214
8. 72 Nomismata	Various	76
9. 36 Nomismata	Various	216
10. 18 Nomismata	Various	32

SOURCE: W.T. TREADGOLD, *The Byzantine State Finances in the 8th and 9th Centuries*, Table VI, pp. 111-114

It is quite clear from the above that the lowest part of the central bureaucracy, i.e. ranks 8 through 10 made up 324 members while the middle ranks 4 through 7 numbered 226. The grand total is thus 550, and not, as Treadgold puts it, 605 (the actual total of his figures is 603, not 605). Be that as it may, we are still talking of roughly half a thousand middle- and lower-rung officials. But the top officials are not all accounted for.

For this we have to go to his figures for the military establishment whose officers are detailed in the work of Al-Jarmi, an Arab official who was a prisoner in Byzantium for several years before his release in 845. We will now present the data for the top military command structure:

TABLE 43: PAY SCALE FOR TOP MILITARY DIGNITARIES

Ranking and pay in Nomismata	Officials
1. 2,880 Nomismata	Strategos of the Anatolics
	Domestic of the Schools
	Strategos of the Armeniacs
	Strategos of the Thracesians
2. 2,592 Nomismata	Strategos of the Bucellarians
	Count of the Opsician
	Strategos of Macedonia
3. 1,728 Nomismata	Strategos of Cappadocia
	Strategos of Paphlagonia
	Strategos of Thrace
	Strategos of Chaldia
4. 864 Nomismata	Strategos of Paleponnesos
	Strategos of Cibyrrhaeots
	Strategos of Sicily
	Strategos of Cephalonia
	Strategos of Thessalonica
	Strategos of Dyrrhachium
	Strategos of Crete
	Strategos of the Climata
	Domestic of the Excubitors
	Protospatharius of the Imperials
	Protospatharius of the Hippodrome
5. 432 Nomismata	Drungary of the Watch
	Domestic of the Hicanati
	Domestic of the Numera
	Domestic of the Optimates
	Count of the Walls
	Logothete of the Herds
	Protostrator
	Drungary of the Fleet
	Drungary of the Cibyrrhaeots
	Drungary of the Gulf
	Count of the Stable
	Cleisurach of Charsianum
	Cleisurach of Seleucia
	12 Topoteretes
	Archon of Dalmatia
	Duke of Calabria [Sicily]
	Archon of Cyprus

SOURCE: W.T. TREADGOLD, Table II, pp. 98-100

The above 50 officers with the 550 in the previous table make up 600, but some turmarchs received 432 nomismata (3) for a total of 603 which is the figure I got above. This is precisely the number Warren Treadgold arrived at: "The entire central bureaucracy seems to have shrunk to about six hundred men."[9] Though it is not possible to give a precise overall figure for the Imperial bureaucracy as a whole, it is clear that it was much larger than just the members of the Senate and corroborates Neville's statement that "all that can be reasonably observed is that the archives do not make a case for a government involving more than several hundreds of officials."[10]

Philotheos gives us not only the number of offices (as opposed to office-holders), but the order of precedence. For our purpose it is sufficient to present the order of precedence of the highest order of ranks, i.e. that of the *magistros* down to the *protospatharios*. This is translated by Moffatt and Tall thus:

> [Summoning] for the complete seating of the various ranks: the *magistros;* the rector; the *synkellos*; the patrician who is *praipositos*; the eunuch patricians; the proconsular patricians who are *strategoi* according to their postings as *strategos*, or [proconculsar patricians who are holders of high office] according to their offices;[11] plain proconsular patricians according to their codicils; patrician *strategoi* according to their postings as *strategos*, or according to their offices; the *praipositos* who is not a patrician—but if he has been honoured also with an office, he has precedence over the other *praipositos*; *the protospatharios* who is *strategos* of the Anatolikoi; the *proto-spatharios* who is *domestikos* of the *scholai*; the *protospatharioi* who are *strategoi* of the Eastern themes according to the region they govern [*kata ta strategata auton*]; the *protospatharios* who is *domestikos* of the *exkoubitoi*; the *protospatharios* who is eparch of the City; the *protospatharioi* who are *strategoi* of the Western themes according to their postings as *strategoi*; the metropolitans and archbishops according to [the ranking of] their thrones; the *protospatharios* who is *sakellarios;* the bishops occupying seats...[12]

This is followed by the title of *protospatharios* according to the ranking of offices above. What should be emphasized is that the lists makes a very clear distinction between the military ranks of *strategos* and others, such as *droungarios*, and the civil ones that were found in both Imperial bureaucracy and the Court. Second, that the *strategoi* of the themes are ranked according

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[9] Warren Treadgold, "The Struggle for Survival 641-780" in Cyril Mango, ed., *The Oxford History of Byzantium* (Oxford, 2002), 147-148.

[10] L. Neville, *Authority in Byzantine Provincial Society 950-1100* (Cambridge, 2004), 35.

[11] BC, 730. This means that the *strategoi* who have a rank of *patrikios* are carefully separated from those who hold the same title but belong to the Senate.

[12] BC, 730-731.

to the order of their themes (enumerated above), with the Eastern themes having precedence over the Western ones.[13] The second, third and fourth orders are made up of bureaucrats and courtiers as well as lower military officers and their accompanying officials. All four orders, seated in the order of their precedence, occupied the 18 tables with 12 places each at imperial banquets in the Hall of the Nineteen Couches (12 seats were reserved for the invited 'poor'). It should be pointed out that there was an additional, thirteenth, imperial table, to which "only these six titles dine with the emperors at the separate table: 'the patriarch of Constantinople', 'the Caesar', 'the nobelesimos', 'the *kouropalates*', 'the *basileopator*', 'the girdled patrician woman'."[14]

From Anna Komnena's *The Alexiad* and other sources it is possible to give a rather incomplete list of the title holders under her father, Alexios I. Here it is:

TABLE 44: TITLE HOLDERS UNDER ALEXIOS I

Rank	Name	Clan	Title
1	Isaac	Komnenos	Sebastokrator
2	John	Doukas	Kaisar
2	Nikeforos	Bryennios	Kaisar
3	Adrianos	Komnenos	Protosebastos*
4	Michael	Taronites	Panhypersebastos
4	Michael	Taronites	Protosebastos
4	Nikephoros	Bryennios	Panhypersebastos
4	Nikephoros	Euphorbenos Katakalon	Panhypersebastos
5	Constantine	Humbertopoulos	Sebastos
5	Constantine	Maniakes	Sebastos
5	Eumathios	Philokales	Pansebastos Sebastos
5	Eumathios	Philokales	Sebastos
5	Eustathios	Kamytzes	Sebastos
5	George	Palaeologos	Sebastos**
5	John	Taronites	Sebastos***
5	John (2)	Doukas	Megadux Sebastos****
5	Marinos	Maistromiles	Sebastos
5	Michael	Doukas	Protostrator Sebastos
5	Michael	The Logothete	Sebastos
5	Nikeforos	Komnenos	Sebastos
5	Nikeforos	Palaelogos	Sebastos
5	Roger	Dagobert	Sebastos
6	Andronic	Skleros	Protonobelissimos

[13] BC, 733, n.1.

[14] BC, 726-727.

6	Constantine	Humbertopoulos	Protonobelissimos
6	Constantine	Opos	Protonobelissimos
6	Eumathios	Philokales	Protonobelissimos
6	Eustathios	Kamytzes	Protonobelissimos
6	George	Palaeologos	Protonobelissimos
6	Isaac	Kontostephanos	Protonobelissimos
6	Manuel	Philokales	Protonobelissimos
6	Nikeforos	Bryennios	Protonobelissimos
7	Alexander	Kabasilas	Nobelissimos
7	Bardas	Ikanatos	Nobelissimos
7	Constantine	Euphorbenos Katakalon	Nobelissimos
7	Eustathios	Kamytzes	Nobelissimos
7	Michael	Dabatenos	Nobelissimos
8	Constantine	Katakalon	Protokuropalates
8	Euthymios		Protokuropalates
8	John	Taronites	Protokuropalates
8	Marinos	Maistromiles	Protokuropalates
8	Michael	Barrys	Protokuropalates
9	Basil	Mesemeres	Kuropalates
9	Constantine	Antiochos	Kuropalates******
9	Constantine	Choirosphactes	Kuropalates
9	Constantine	Euphorbenos Katakalon	Kuropalates
9	Constantine	Iasites	Kuropalates
9	Eumathios	Philokales	Kuropalates
9	Euthymios		Kuropalates
9	John	Bryennios	Kuropalates
9	John	Katakalon	Kuropalates
9	John	Synadenos	Kuropalates
9	John	Taronites	Kuropalates
9	Katakalon	Tarchaniotes	Kuropalates
9	Michael	Barrys	Kuropalates
9	Michael	Iasites	Kuropalates
9	Michael	Skleros	Kuropalates
9	Nikeforos	Dekanos	Kuropalates
9	Nikephoros	Bryennios	Kuropalates
9	Romanos	Palaeologos	Kuropalates
10	Constantine	Choirosphactes	Protoproedros #
10	Constantine	Opos	Protoproedros
10	George	Basilakios	Protoproedros
10	George	Manganes	Protoproedros
10	Manuel	Komnenos	Protoproedros
10	Nicholas	Mermentolos	Protoproedros##

10	Nikefor	Melissenos	Protoproedros
10	Niketas	Kastamonites	Protoproedros
10	Romanos	Straboromanos	Protoproedros
10	Tatikios		Protoproedros
10	Theodore	Smyrnaios	Protoproedros
10		Tarchaniotes	Protoproedros
11	Basil	Mauros	Proedros
11	Constantine	Katakalon	Proedros###
11	Eustathios	Kamytzes	Proedros
11	George	Aristenos	Proedros
11	George	Pyrrhos	Proedros
11	John	Grammatikos	Proedros
11	Leon	Kephalas	Proedros
11	Michael	Antiochos	Proedros
11	Michael	Autoreianos	Proedros
11	Rodomir	Aaron	Proedros
12	Basil		Raiktor
12	John	Skoutariotes	Raiktor
13	Theodor	Pepagomenos	Raiktor
13	Eumathios	Philokales	Magistros
13	John	Bryennios	Magistros
13	Leon	Kephalas	Magistros
13	Michael	Mavrikas	Magistros
14	Leon	Kephalas	Vestarchos
14	Michael	Mavrikas	Vestarchos
14	Michael	Opheomaches	Vestarchos
14	Rodomir	Aaron	Vestarchos

NOTES: *JORDANOV III, #541, 211; **JORDANOV III, #632-642, 236, 1094-1119;***JORDANOV III, #648, 240;****JORDANOV III, #646, 239;***** JORDANOV III, #518-520, 204-205;****** JORDANOV III, #437-438, 177;# JORDANOV III, #537, 210;## LAURENT II, #1042, 574;### JORDANOV III, #497, 197.
Note: The above gives all the ranks a particular title holder held, i.e. a *cursus honorum*.

Under Manuel I the Komnenian revolution reached its zenith and showed the full extent of the network of relationships around the emperor:

TABLE 45: TITLE HOLDERS UNDER MANUEL I

Name	Clan	Title
Stephen	Kontostephanos	Despot
John	Roger [Dalassenos]	Despot
Andronikos	Komnenos	Sebastokrator

John	Roger [Dalassenos]	Kaisar
John	Komnenos	Protosebastos [Nephew]
Stephen	Kontostephanos	Panhypersebastos
Constantine	Angelos	Pansebastohypertatos
Theodore	Vatatzes	Pansebastohypertatos
John	Angelos	Pansebastos Sebastos [Gambros]
John	Arbantenos	Pansebastos Sebastos [Gambros]
Joseph	Bryennios	Pansebastos Sebastos [Gambros]
Nikephoros	Bryennios	Pansebastos Sebastos
Constantine	Doukas	Pansebastos Sebastos [Gambros]
John	Doukas	Pansebastos Sebastos [Gambros]
Michael	Gabras	Pansebastos Sebastos [Gambros]
Andronikos	Kamateros	Pansebastos Sebastos
Basil	Kamateros	Pansebastos Sebastos
Leo	Kamateros	Pansebastos Sebastos
John	Kantakouzenos	Pansebastos Sebastos [Gambros]
Constantine	Komnenos	Pansebastos Sebastos
Alexios	Komnenos	Pansebastos Sebastos
John	Kontostephanos	Pansebastos Sebastos
Constantine	Palaiologos	Pansebastos Sebastos
Alexios	Palaiologos	Pansebastos Sebastos
George	Palaiologos	Pansebastos Sebastos
Alexios	Palaiologos	Pansebastos Sebastos
John	Taronites	Pansebastos Sebastos
Goudelios	Tzikandiles	Pansebastos Sebastos
Constantine	Doukas	Sebastos [Gambros]
John	Doukas	Sebastos
John	Kantakouzenos	Sebastos
Alexios	Kontostephanos	Sebastos [Nephew]
Andronikos	Lapardas	Sebastos
George	Palaiologos	Sebastos
Alexios	Petraliphas	Sebastos
Alexios	Roger [Dalassenos]	Sebastos
Goudelios	Tzikandiles	Sebastos [Gambros]
Michael	Angelos	Protonobelissimohypertatos
Michael	Hagiotheodorites	Protonobelissimohypertatos
John	Kamateros	Protonobelissimohypertatos
Basil	Kamateros	Megalepiphanestatos, Protonobelissimo-hypertatos
Theodore	Pantechnes	Megalepiphanestatos, Protonobelissimo-hypertatos
Isaac	Aaron	Protonobelissimos
Basil	Kamateros	Protonobelissimos

Michael	Kamateros	Protonobelissimos
Theodore	Styppeiotes	Megalodoxotatos+Protonobelissimos
Basil	Trypsychos	Protonobelissimos
George	Manganes	Nobelissimos
Basil	Trypsychos	Nobelissimos
Elias	Bourtzes	Megalepiphanestatos+Protokuropalates
Michael	Kamateros	Megalepiphanestatos+Protokuropalates
John	Karianites	Protokouropalates
Theodore	Pantechnes	Megalepiphanestatos+Protokuropalates
George	Skylitzes	Protokouropalates
Constantine	Mesarites	Kouropalates
George	Spleniarios	Kouropalates
Isaac	Akolouthes	Protonobelissimos
John	Alopas	
John Alexios Andronikos	Angelos Angelos Angelos	[Cousins, sons of Emperor's Uncle, Pansebastohypertatos Constantine Angelos]
Isaac	Angelos	
Nikephoros	Borbenos	Megalodoxotatos
Joseph	Bryennios	Pansebastos Sebastos [Gambros]
John	Doukas	[Cousin, son of Pansebastohypertatos
Andronikos	Doukas	[Cousin, Brother of the Above]
Isaac	Doukas	Sebastos
John	Doukas	[Cousin, son of late Caesar Bryennios]
Constantine	Doukas	Pansebastos Sebastos
Alexios Andronikos	Euphorbenos Euphorbenos	[Sons of Porphyrogennete Maria, Cousin]
Michael	Hagiotheodorites	Protonobelissimohypertatos
Thomas	Haploucher	
Andronikos	Kamateros	Pansebastos Sebastos
Andronikos	Kamateros	Pansebastos Sebastos
John	Kantakouzenos	Sebastos [Gambros]
John	Kantakouzenos	Pansebastos Sebastos [Gambros]
Andronikos	Kappadox	Megalepiphanestatos
Alexios	Komnenos	[Son of Kaisarissa Anna, Cousin]
Alexios	Komnenos	[Brother of John Komnenos]
John Alexios	Komnenos Komnenos	Protosebastos [Nephews/Sons of Sebastokrator Andronikos]
Andronikos	Komnenos	[Nephew, Son of Pansebastohypertatos
Alexios	Komnenos	[Nephew/Brother of the Above]
John	Komnenos	Protosebastos
Alexios	Komnenos	
Alexios	Komnenos	[Cousin, Son of the Panhypersebastos]

John	Komnenos	Protosebastos
*Andronikos	Komnenos	
John	Komnenos	Protosebastos
Alexios	Komnenos	
John	Kontostephanos	[Nephews]
Alexios	Kontostephanos	Nephews]
Alexios	Kontostephanos	[Nephew, Son of Panhypersebastos Stephen)
John	Makrembolites	Megalodoxotatos
John?	Makrembolites	Megalepiphanestatos
Leo	Monasteriotes	
John	Of Poutza	Megalodoxotatos
Constantine	Palaiologos	Pansebastos Sebastos
Theodore	Pantechnes	Megalepiphanestatos
Basil	Pekoules	Megalepiphanestatos
Nicholas	Zonaras	Megalepiphanestatos

Though of a much later date (probably the mid-14th century) Pseudo-Kodinos gives a list of offices which are, unfortunately, mixed together with the titles. I have removed the known titles such as *sebastokrator*, *panhypersebastos*, *sebastos* etc., but have retained the military titles. Alexander Kazhdan points out that "[the] courtiers of lower rank wore apricot, lemon, or gold-white *skaranika*" as opposed to the highest who wore "red and gold (*chrysokokkinon*)".[15]

Here is the summary in the following table with the appropriate colors of headdress and uniform:

TABLE 46: LIST OF OFFICES ACCORDING TO PSEUDO-KODINOS

Office Title	Headdress Color	Robe Color
Grand Duke [Megas Doux]	Red	
Grand Domestic	Red	
Protostrator	Red	
Grand Stratopedarch	Red	
Grand Primmikerios	Apricot*	
Grand Constable	Apricot	
Grand Logothete	Apricot	
Pigkeres	Apricot	
Kouropalates	Apricot	
Paraikomenos of Seals	Apricot	

[15] A. Kazhdan, "Skaranikon" in *ODB*, Vol. III, 1909.

Paraikomenos of Chamber	Apricot	
Logothete Tou Genikou	White	
Protovestiarios		Red
Domestic of the Table		Red
Epi tes Trapezes		Red
Grand Papias		Red
Eparch		Red
Grand Droungarios of Fleet	Yellow	Red
Grand Heteirach	Yellow	Red
Grand Chartoularios	Yellow	Red
Logothete of the Dromos		Red
Protasekretis	Violet & White	
Epi Tou Stratou	Violet & White	
Mystikos		
Domestic of the Scholai	Violet & White	
Grand Drongarios of the Fleet	Violet & White	
Primmikerios of the Court	Violet & White	
Grand Archont	Violet & White	
Tatas of the Court	Violet & White	
Grand Tzaousios	Violet & White	
Praetor of the People	Violet & White	
Logothete of the Oikeiakon		
Grand Logoriastes		
Protokygenos	Violet & White	
Protokygenos	Violet & White	
Skouterios	Violet & White	
Admiral	Violet & White	
Epi ton Deeseon		
Quaestor		
Grand		
Adnoumiastes		
Logothete of the Stratiotikon		
Protoierakarios		
Logothete of the Troops		
Grand Interpreter	Red	
Akolouthos		Red**
Judge of the Army		Red
Archont of the Allagiou		Red
Protallagator		Red
Grand Dioiketes		Red
Orphanotrophos		Red
Protonotarios		Red

Epi ton Anamneseon	Red & White	Red
Domestic of the Walls	Red & White	Red
Prokathemenos of the Chamber	Red & White	Red
Prokathemenos of the Vestiarios		Red
Vestiarios		Red
Heteriarch		Red
Logariastes of the Court		Red
Stratopedarch of the Monokaballoi		Red
Stratopedarch of Tzangratoron		Red
Stratopedarch of the Mourtatoi		Red
Stratopedarch of the Tzakonians		Red
Prokathemenos of the Grand Palace		Red
Prokathemenos of the Palace of Blachernae		Red
Domestic of the Themes		Red
Domestic of the Eastern Themes		Red
Domestic of the Western Themes		Red
Grand Myrtaites		Red
Protokomes		Red
Papias		Red
Drongarios		Red
Myrtaites		Red

SOURCE: PSEUDO-KODINOS, *Traité des offices* [introduction, texte et traduction par Jean Verpeaux (Paris, 1976), 133-166.

*Pseudo-Kodinos, op. cit., 155: "La soie de son skaranikon est de couleur abricot, brodé au fil d'or; de meme que le gris est intermédiaire entre le rouge et le noir, de meme cette couleur est-elle intermédiaire entre le rouge et le blanc..."

List of Offices found in the Appendix to *Hexabiblos* by Harmenopoulos (c. 1321), reproduced in Pseudo-Kodinos, op. cit., 300-302, specifies that the "red and gold skiadion was worn from pan-hypersebastos to the grand statopedarch, gold embroideries from the grand primmikerios to the kouropalates, embroideries from the protovestiarites to the end. The skaranikon is worn by the dignitaries from the beginning to the logothete of the troups, red [*ta de kokkina*] (ornaments) from akolouthos to the end." (p. 302) The word 'ornaments' is filled in by the editor, but it is not in the text of the original.

In his study of the portraits in Byzantine illuminated MSS Iohannis Spatharakis offered a detailed analysis of each portrait (though, unfortunately, they are not reproduced all in color!). His comments are worth reproducing. The *sebastokrator* Constantine Palaeologus, the younger brother of Emperor Michael VIII "is clad in a red tunic with golden decoration and a brown mantle with gold medallions representing double-headed eagles. These two garments are called by Ps.-Codinus *roukhon* and *tamparion*; they were also worn by the *despotes*. The crown of the *sebastokrator* consists of a gold diadem with two bands crossing each other at the top. It is not described by Ps.-Codinus, but by Anna Comnena who called it the *stephanos*. [His wife was] Irene [who] has in the text of the Typicon, the additional family names Lasca-

rina Cantacuzena... Irene is clad in red garments with a palmette decoration in gold. Her crown is higher than that of her husband and studded, like his, with red and blue precious stones."[16] The second portrait is that of Ioannes Komnenos Doukas Synadenos and his wife Theodora, the last of the five children of the previous couple, Constantine and Irene. Ioannes is "clad in a red robe, known as a *kabbadion*, with gold decoration. It fastens at the front and has a gold belt from which hangs a white handkerchief. His headdress, the *skaranikon*, is gold with a brown dark pattern and red stipples...The foundress is also clad in red and gold."[17] The third portrait is that of the first son of Constantine and Irene, Theodore Komnenos Doukas Synadenos and his wife Eudokia Doukaina Komnena Synadena Palaiologina. Thedore's robe is the same as his father's: "The only difference appears in the colour of his *skaranikon*, which is red and crossed with gold lines."[18] He held the high office of *protostrator* before 1320. The second son of Constantine and Irene is Ioannes Komnenos Doukas Synadenos who married Irene Laskarina Komnena Doukaina Palaiologina: "John is clad in a green *kabbadion* with gold ornamentation and a gold *skaranikon* with a red check pattern...He held the office of Grand Constable"[19] [*megas konostaulos*], the head of the Frankish mercenaries.

The first grand-daughter of the foundress, Theodora Palaiologina, Anna Komnena Doukaina Palaiologina Asanena, was married to Manoul Komnenos Raoul Asanes who was a *megas primikerios*. According to Pseudo-Kodinos, he handed the sceptre to the emperor or held it for him. In the army he stood at the head of the imperial escort.[20] Their costume is exactly the same as of those above. The second grand-daughter of Thedora was Euphrosyne Doukaina Palaiologina, the wife of Constantine Komnenos Raoul Palaiologos who held the title of *protosebastos*. This was a pure sinecure by the Palaeologian times. He is specifically identified as *gambros*, i.e. the emperor's in-law. Their clothes are of the same color: red with gold. The next grand-daughter, Anna Kantakouzena Komnena Palaiologina Vrienesa was married to Mikhail Komnenos Laskaris Vrienios [i.e. Bryennios], a young man without a headdress who does not have any title or office. He is nevertheless identified as *gambros*. His *kabbadion* is orange with gold ornamentation. Now Anna was the daughter of Ioannes and his first wife Thomais and the only one of the three daughter-in-law of the foundress who bears the family name Cantcuzena. The last grand-daughter, Irene Komnena Kantakouzina Palaiologina Asanina, was married to Mikhail Komnenos Tornykes Asanes

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[16] Iohannis Spatharakis, *The Portrait in Byzantine Illuminated Manuscripts* (Leiden, 1976), 192-193.

[17] Ibid., 193.

[18] Ibid., 195.

[19] Ibid., 196.

[20] Pseudo-Kodinos, op.cit., 174-175.

Palaiologos, again identified as *gambros*. As Spatharakis points out, "Michael is portrayed without a headdress, clad in a red and gold *kabbadion*. [He] is a beardless youth. He has no title of office. Irene is also clad in red and gold, *similar to the other female members of the family*."[21] [my emphasis]

On the basis of the Lincoln Typikon Spatharakis compared the portraits with the information found in Pseudo-Kodinos since, according to him and other scholars, "both works are contemporary. In the following table, the first column lists the officials portrayed in the Typicon followed by a number in brackets denoting their rank in the list of Ps.-Codinus; the second column gives the colour of their costume and the third the colour mentioned by Ps.-Codinus (page and verse numbers refer to Verpeaux's edition); *sk* stands for *skaranikon* and *ka* for *kabbadion*.[22]

TABLE 47: COMPARISON BETWEEN LINCOLN TYPICON AND PSEUDO-KODINOS

Title and Rank	Robe Color Lincoln TYPIKON	Robe Color PS-Kodinos
Sebastokrator (2)	No *SK*, But *Stephanos*, Red Robe	Red Robe
Protostrator (9)	*SK* Red and Gold *KA* Red and Gold	Red and Gold
Stratopedarchos (10)	*SK* Brown, Red and Gold	Red and Gold
Primmikerios (11)	*SK* Red and Gold *KA* Red and Gold	Apricot
Megas Konostaulos (12)	*SK* Red and Gold	Apricot
Protosebastos (14)	*SK* Red and Gold *KA* Green and Gold	Apricot

Spatharakis noted the discrepancies between Pseudo-Kodinos and the Lincoln Typikon regarding the use of color:

> The colour of the *skaranikon* of the *protostrator* in the miniature corresponds to that prescribed by Ps.-Codinus for the Grand Duke (153, 13-17); the colour of the *skaranikon* for the *protostrator* and the *megas stratopedarches* is being described as being identical with that of the Grand Duke. However, in the miniature the *megas stratopedarches* has a brown check pattern with red stipples on a gold background. The colour of the *skaranika* of the *megas primmikerios*, *megas konostaulos* and *protosebastos* is also red and gold in the Typicon. Ps.-Codinus described it as *verikokkokhroun* (an apricot colour) and explained as a colour *meson kokkinou kai leukou*. The *kabbadia* could be of any colour according to Ps.-Codinus. The officials in the Typicon all have *kabbadia* of red with gold decoration except the last two, whose *kabbadia* are green with gold.[23]

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[21] Spatharakis, op.cit., 198.

[22] Ibid., 204.

[23] Ibid., 206.

As Spatharakis quotes himself, *meson kokkinou kai leukou* can be translated as the color midway between red and white, which would make it pink rather than apricot. It would still be a variety of RED. But I think the Lincoln Typikon presents us with a graphic and irrefutable evidence that all male and female members wear red, all male members wear a red (and gold) *skaranikon*, and a red (and gold) *kabbadion* with the exception of the *megas konostaulos* and *protosebastos* who wear green (and gold) *kabbadion*. Does this represent a new departure or is there an earlier division between red and green (both ornamented with gold)?

The army, i.e. its elite regiments like the one that guarded the Imperial tent (the so-called *kortinaroi*) and the Imperial bodyguard made up of the so-called Vardarioti, were both dressed in *red*, with their commander also dressed in red.[24] Red was also the color of the grand dukes [*megas doux*], of the protostrator, stratopedarch and other high military commanders.[25] As its commander-in-chief the emperor (its Latin name *imperator* means literally commander-in-chief) when wearing a military costume was portrayed in red. There is the Psalter kept in the Marciana Library in Venice, where it belonged to the books donated by Cardinal Bessarion, which dates from the time of Basil II Bulgarooktonos (976-1025) as the inscription says explicitly: *BASILEIOS EN KHRISTO PISTOS BASILEUS ROMAION O NEOS* (O NEOS stands for our Roman numeral II, literally 'a new one') who is portrayed in a well-known and often-reproduced miniature as standing. As Spatharakis explains: "He is clad in a military costume consisting of a short purple tunic with long sleeves and a decorative border at the hem and the wrists. Around the arms are golden mail pieces which, along with their decorative, have also a protective function. The upper part of the body is covered by a golden mail breastplate, worn over a blue cloth seen protruding under the lower part. His blue *sagion*, a short cloak, is fastened over the chest with a *fibula* decorated with a ruby. On his feet are red jackboots, the *kampagia*, set with pearls."[26] Again, we should keep in mind that purple is a combination of red and blue, and is often treated as a variety of red. The emperor is flanked by six vignettes representing *soldier saints*, i.e. Saint Theodore, Demetrius, George, Procopius and Mercurius, the sixth having his name erased, probably St. Nestor. All of them, as can be seen, wear red tunics with additional blue cloaks as befits their spiritual and celestial status. The eight figures at the bottom, almost literally under the emperor's feet, have been interpreted differently.

Anthony Cutler summarizes the controversy thus:

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[24] Pseudo-Kodinos, op.cit., 181.

[25] Ibid., 153-154.

[26] Spatharakis, op. cit., 22.

> The significance of the figures prostrate before Basil is a more serious and celebrated problem. Positive identification was offered by Grabar in 1936: "*Depuis Kondakov, les archéologues sont unanimes pour y reconnaitre des chefs bulgares... Il est à peu près certain que cette image originale commémore la victoire definitive de Basile II sur les Bulgares (1017), et elle s'inspire sans doute du fameux triomphe qui avait été offert alors au Bulgaroctone.*"[27] ["Since Kondakov, the archaeologists are unanimous in identifying them as Bulgarian chiefs...It is almost certain that this original image commemorates Basil II's definitive victory over the Bulgars (1017), and it is inspired without doubt by the famous triumph which was then offered to the Bulgar-slayer"].

Cutler is understandably sceptical about such an interpretation: "While Skylitzes and Zonaras report that Basil entered the Golden Gate in triumph, both chroniclers make less of this event early in 1019 than of the thanksgiving he offered in the Parthenon on his lengthy and circuitous roadback to Constantinople to Bulgaria. Just as our picture does not show the familiar iconography of a triumph—the emperor receiving crowns from his captives as a sign of their submission—so the texts contain no reference to the Hippodrome, the site where such ceremonies normally took place. Neither the miniature nor the chroniclers indicate that the antique rite of treading on the necks of the captives took place. Indeed, unless their mention of Basil's presentation of his trophies in Hagia Sophia is understood as the celebration, there is no evidence at all that the emperor enjoyed a 'triumph' in the traditional sense of the term."[28] Cutler rightly points out that "Skylitzes says that the chief captives of the emperor were Maria, the *tsarina*, and the daughters of Samuel Kometopoulos yet the frontispiece to our Psalter shows eight prostrate figures, all of them male."[29] After rejecting Jordan Ivanov's claim that the prostrated captives wear the authentic Bulgarian dress in the miniature and that the fact that they wear one earring is indicative of their being Bulgarian, Cutler finally argues that "it may be that ornate costume of the figures in proskynesis denotes no more than the aristocracy of Asia Minor crushed by Basil. His hatred of these dynastic families is well-documented. The miniature, then, may be a generalized image of the emperor's God-given authority, an emblem of the power that broke Bardas Phokas and the independent magnates of the

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[27] Antony Cutler, "The Psalter of Basil II" in *Arte Veneta* XXX, 9-19 and XXXI, 9-15 (Venice, 1976/1977), reprinted in Anthony Cutler, *Imagery and Ideology in Byzantine Art* (Variorum, 1992), III, 18 quoting A. Grabar, *L'Empereur dans l'art byzantin* (Paris, 1936), 86, notes 3, 87 and p. 60.

[28] Ibid., 18-19 referring to Skylitzes, *Synopsis Historiarum* [ed. I. Thurn](Berlin, 1973), 364-365, Cirag Estopañan, *Skylitzes Matritensis* I. *Reproducciones y miniatures* (Barcelona, 1965), no. 474, and to Grabar, op. cit., 54-56, 65-67, 133 and plates VII, 1, XII, 2, XIV, XV.

[29] Ibid., 18-19.

Eastern themes. This animosity received legal expression in his novel of 996 in which he resumed and furthered the anti-aristocratic policy of his great-grandfather, Romanos Lekapenos, and cited the houses of Phokas and the Maleinoi as the outstanding representatives of the over-mighty landed class."[30]

According to Schramm, the prostrate men are the emperor's courtiers, and their *proskinesis* is an expression of submission to a ruler who represents Christ the Pantokrator on earth, a lynchpin between God and people.[31] The iambic poem written on a folio opposite the miniature suggests a different reading: "Christ extends from heaven, in His life-bringing right hand, the crown, the symbol of power, to the pious and mighty ruler Basil. Below, the foremost of the Incorporeals; one of whom, after receiving (the crown), has brought it, and rejoicing, crowns (the emperor), while the other, to add victories to power, bringing a lance, a weapon that frightens off adversaries, places it in the ruler's hand. The martyrs fight with him, as a friend, laying low the enemies prone at his feet."[32] Spatharakis argues that "the figures in *proskynesis* represent...captives and the whole composition is inspired by the ceremony which was part of the emperor's triumph and which took place in the Hippodrome of Constantinople."[33] Be that as it may, in my opinion, there is no question that the prostrate men at the emperor's feet are wearing uniforms belonging to the Byzantine officials[34] in other miniatures, but the *colors* are those we have already discussed: red, blue, violet (or purple), and white. They are also carefully positioned to suggest their ranks and thus place at the court: next to the emperor's feet one in purple or violet on the right, one in blue on the left, further to his right one in red, further to his left one in purple or violet; in the front row, away from his feet, one in blue on his right, one in red on his left, one in white away on his right, one in white away on his left. Even if these men are Bulgarian dignitaries their robes carefully *imitate* those of the Byzantine Imperial court (as Bulgaria did in everything, its ruler calling himself a *car* (the same as *tsar* in Russian), and his state an empire: *carstvo*).

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[30] Ibid., 23 citing Ostrogorsky, op.cit., 306-307 and Psellos, *Chronographia* [ed. E. Renauld], Vol. I (Paris, 1926), 18-19 who states that Basil "brought down [*katastesas*] the chiefs of the great families and put them on an equal footing as others." This is how Sewter in the Penguin edition rendered this passage: "[Basil] dealt with his own subjects and completely subjugated them too—I think 'subjugate' is the right word to describe it. He decided to abandon his former policy, and after the great families had been humiliated and put on an equal footing with the rest..." Michael Psellus, *Fourteen Byzantine Rulers* (Penguin, 1966), 44.

[31] P.E. Schramm, "Das Herrscherbild in der Kunst des frühen Mittelalters", *Vorträge der Bibliothek Warbug* 2 (1924), 171, pl. 18.

[32] I. Ševčenko, "The Illustrations of the Illuminators of the Menology of Basil II", *DOP* 16 (1962), 272, n. 92; and Spatharakis, op.cit., 24.

[33] Spatharakis, op.cit., 24.

[34] J. Ivanov, "Les costumes des anciens Bulgares" in *L'art byzantin chez les Slaves* (Paris, 1930), Vol. 1, 328, pl. XLVII.

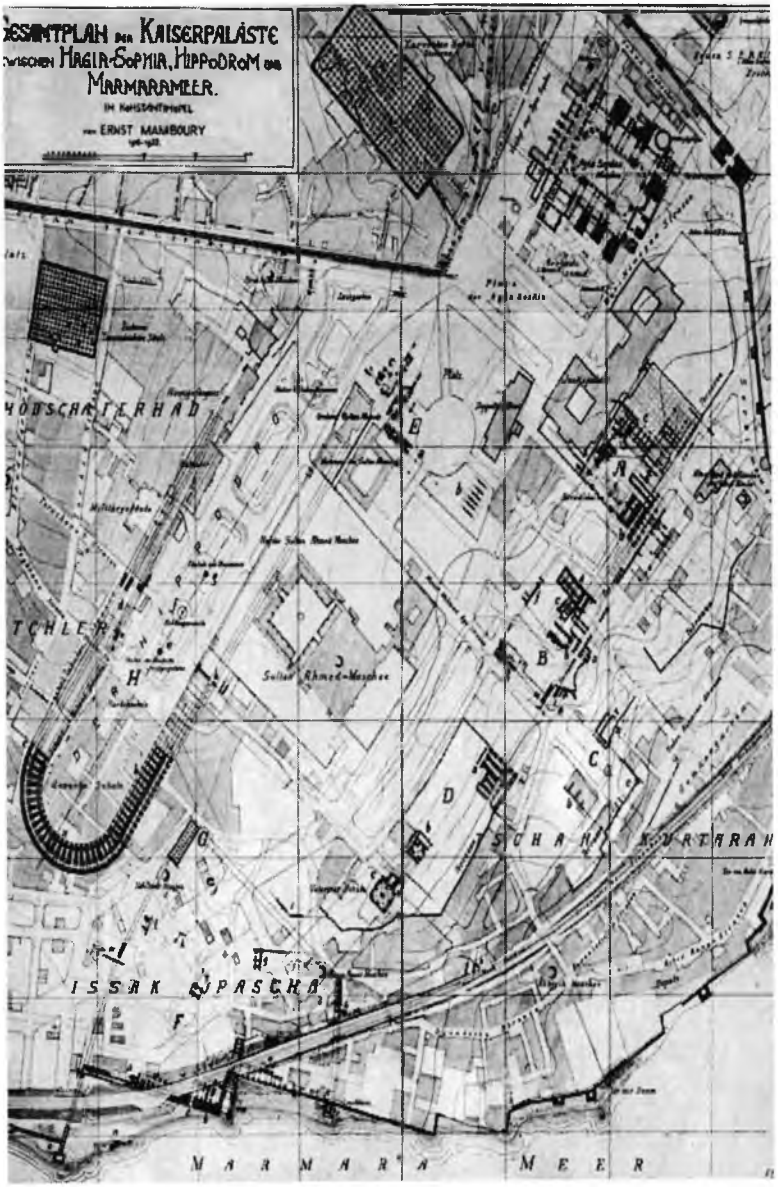


ILLUSTRATION FOUR: THE GROUNDPLAN OF THE GREAT PALACE

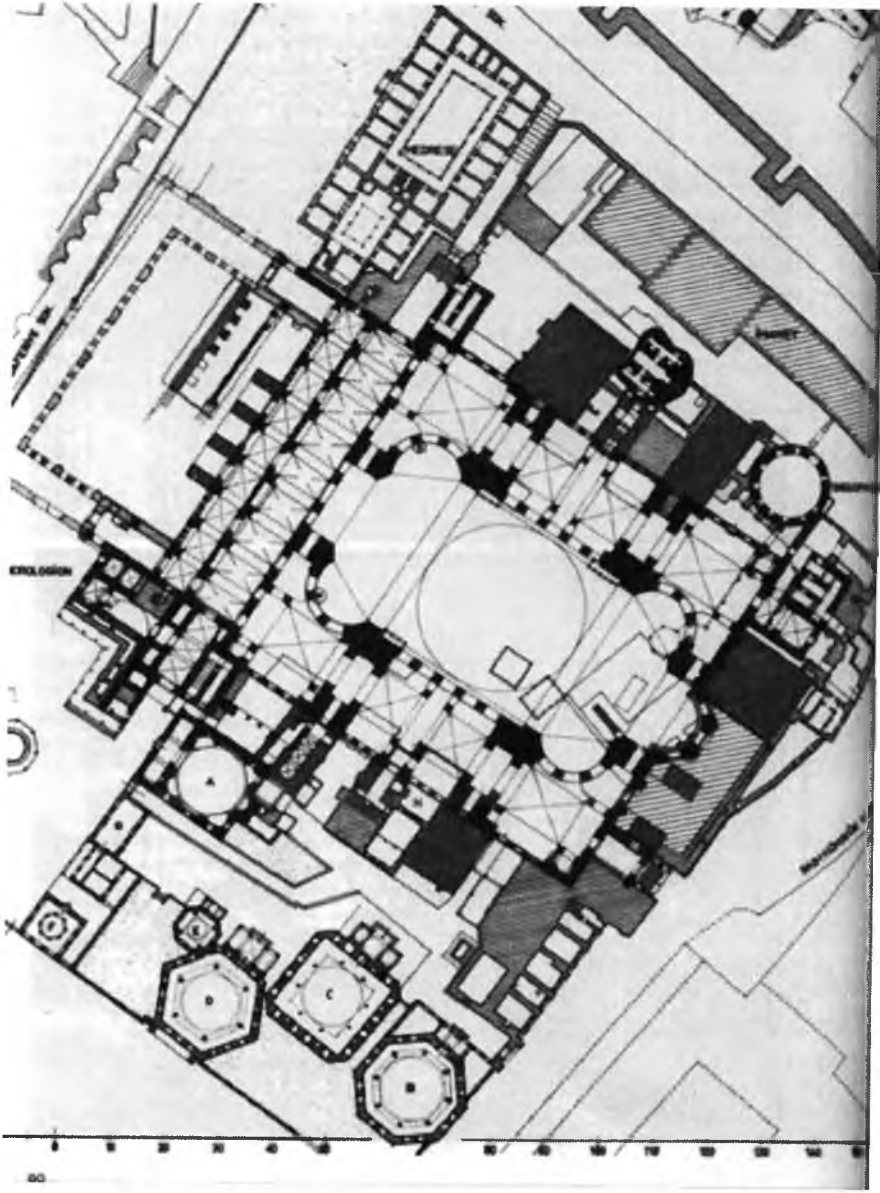


ILLUSTRATION FIVE: THE GROUNDPLAN OF HAGIA SOPHIA

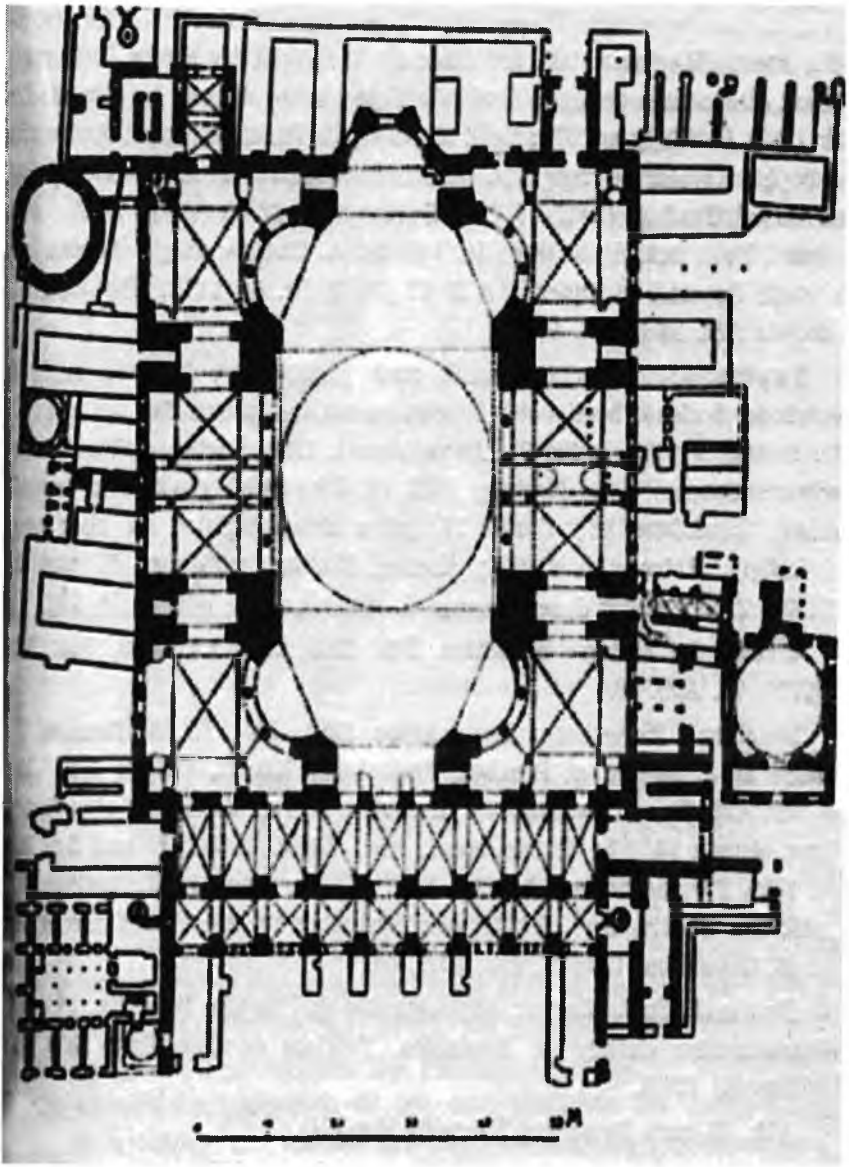


ILLUSTRATION SIX: THE GROUNDPLAN OF
HAGIA SOPHIA

CONCLUSION

IN THE REIGN of Manuel I Komnenos (1143-1180) Benjamin of Tudela (actually Tuteila) in Arab-held Spain visited Constantinople. His account, though short, has some revealing features on the Imperial capital. Thus he reported that twelve ministers were under the Emperor: "At their head is the King Hipparchus, the second in command is the Megas Domesticus, the third Dominus, and the fourth is Megas Ducas, and the fifth is Oeconomus Megalus; the others bear names like these."[1] Of course, we can recognize the Grand Domestikos and Megas Doux, but King Hipparchus is Benjamin's rendition of *basieus hyparhos*, i.e. a viceroy. Since Benjamin of Tudela visited Constantinople in the late 1160s, it could be his rendering of the title of *despotes* which Alexios/Bela carried; or if he was in the City in 1171 it could refer to *basileus Alexios*, i.e. King Alexios, son of Manuel, who was proclaimed co-emperor at the tender age of two (born in 1169). Benjamin reports that "the circumference of the city of Constantinople is eighteen miles; half of it is surrounded by the sea, and half by land, and it is situated upon two arms of the sea..."[2]

When it comes to describing the city itself Benjamin is full of praise:

> All sorts of merchants come here from the land of Babylon, from the land of Shinar, from Persia, Media, and all the sovereignty of the land of Egypt, from the land of Canaan, and the empire of Russia, from Hungaria, Patzinakia, Khazaria, and the land of Lombardy and Sepharad. It is a busy city, and merchants come to it from every country by sea or land, and there is none like it in the world except Bagdad, the great city of Islam. In Constantinople is the church of Santa Sophia, and the seat of the Pope of the Greeks, since the Greeks do not obey the Pope of Rome. There are also churches according to the number of the days of the year. A quantity of wealth beyond telling is brought hither year by year as tribute from the two islands and the castles and villages which are there. And the like of this wealth is not to be found in any other church in the world. And in this church there are pillars of gold and silver, and lamps of silver and gold more than a man can count. Close to the

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[1] *The Itinerary of Benjamin of Tudela* [critical text, translation and commentary by Marcus Nathan Adler](London, 1907), 12.

909 Ibid., 12.

walls of the palace is also a place of amusement belonging to the king, which is called the Hippodrome, and every year on the anniversary of the birth of Jesus the king gives a great entertainment there. And in that place men from all the races of the world come before the king and queen with jugglery and without jugglery, and they introduce lions, leopards, bears, and wild asses, and they engage them in combat with one another; and the same thing is done with birds. No entertainment like this is to be found in any other land.

This King Emanuel built a great palace for the seat of his government upon the sea-coast, in addition to the palaces which his fathers built, and he called its name Blachernae. He overlaid its columns and walls with gold and silver, and engraved thereon representations of the battles before his day and of his own combats. He also set up a throne of gold and of precious stones, and a golden crown was suspended by a gold chain over the throne, so arranged that he might sit thereunder. It was inlaid with jewels of priceless value, and at night time no lights were required, for every one could see by the light which the stones gave forth. Countless other buildings are to be met with in the city. From every part of the empire of Greece tribute is brought here every year, and they fill strongholds with garments of silk, purple, and gold. Like unto these storehouses and this wealth, there is nothing in the whole world to be found...[f]or the Greek inhabitants are very rich in gold and precious stones, and they go clothed in garments of silk with gold embroidery...[3]

Golden Byzantium.

[3] Ibid., 12-13.

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APPENDIX ONE

THE ILLUSTRATED CHRONICLE OF IOANNES SKYLITZES IN MADRID

The illustrated manuscript of the chronicle of Ioannes Skylitzes, *Synopsis Istorion*, in the National Library of Spain in Madrid is the only Byzantine illustrated chronicle. It contains 574 miniatures, many of surprising beauty, and some either faded or in a poor state of preservation. Since the original and the reproductions of the miniatures in full color by Vasiliki Tsamakda is copyrighted, a reader can get their reproduction either on the Internet at the website of the Biblioteca Nacional de España [see Skylitza] or in Vasiliki Tsamakda's edition. The discussion below is keyed to Tsamakda's edition.

The illustrated Skylitzes is very important for this study because of the portrayal of emperors and their servitors, both palace and military, in the miniatures. Skylitzes is a rather typical Byzantine chronicler who organized his material according to the reign of the emperors.[1] He covers the period from the accesson of Michael I Rangabe in 811, the former kouropalates, until the deposition of Michael VI the Elder or Stratiotikos in 1057. His continuation, the so-called *Skylitzes Continuatus*, contains the account of the reigns of Isaac Komnenos, Constantine X Doukas, Romanos IV Diogenes, Michael VII Doukas and the beginning of the reign of Nikephoros III Botaneiates. While some historians still continue to hold on to the old theory that somebody else wrote this continuation, most now agree that it is the work of Skylitzes himself. But why is Madrid Skylitzes important for the views presented in this book?

In order to answer this question it is important to establish both the provenance and the authorship of the miniatures. This has been the most vexed question, and from the very beginning of its treatment by scholars Madrid Skylitzes [as I will refer to the illustrated version in this abbreviated form] has posed more questions than answers. There are three important questions: 1) when was it illustrated?; 2) by whom it was illustrated, i.e. who were the miniature painters?; and 3) where was it illustrated? There are some subsidiary questions handled expertly by Tsamakda, but they are not of importance for this book. So let us address these three questions.

We have very few clues to the life of Ioannes Skylitzes except that he was a high palace official reaching the rank of the kouropalates (almost invar-

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[1] Bernard Flusin, "Re-writing History: John Skylitzes' *Synopsis historion*" in John Skylitzes, *A Synopsis of Byzantine History 811-1057*, trans. by John Wortley (Cambridge, 2010), [henceforth abbreviated as S], xii-xxxiii.

iably following his name in the title of his book), born probably before 1050, and died perhaps shortly before or after the end of the reign of Alexios I Komnenos in 1118.[2] It is almost certain that he wrote his history towards the very end of the 11th century, though if the *Skylitzes Continuatus* is his work then it was probably written after 1100, i.e. in the second half of Alexios I's reign. Thus 1118, give or take a few years either way, is a *terminus ante quem non*, i.e. it could not have been written before it. It was thus written at the time when the new system of court titles based on that of *sebastos* was being instituted by Emperor Alexios and could not have included any contamination with later proliferation of subtitles introduced by Alexios but developed by John and used to excess by Manuel Komnenos, based on *hyper* and *proto* additions. But one argument is decisive: since the new titles like sebastokrator and hypersebastos were invented by Alexios I, they had no existence prior to his reign in Byzantine history. That means that any chronicle, such as the one by Skylitzes which covered the reign *before* the accession of Alexios I (and both its shorter version to 1057 and the *Continuatus* to the reign of Nikephoros III Botaneites, whom Alexios I deposed in 1081, deal before Alexios's coming to power), would not have had to deal with these newly-fangled (and, by the way, highest) titles.

But Madrid Skylitzes, according to all art experts, was illustrated quite some time after the chronicle had been written and had widely circulated. But when was it actually illustrated? Tsamakda presents a very detailed account of the various theories concerning the dating of Madrid Skylitzes, and a reader can go to her book for additional argumentation and details. Here I will summarize it briefly. Though the illustrated MS was briefly described by Iriarte in his catalogue of the Greek MSS in the Royal Library in Madrid in 1769, the first scholar to address it seriously was Kondakov more than a century later. He dated the MS to the 14th century. Other art historians such as Diehl and Millet followed Kondakov in his dating of the MS.[3] De Boor, who had examined the transmission of texts of the chronicle of Skylitzes dated it to the thirteenth century.[4] In 1964 Pomar offered the first thorough examination of the MS in palaeographical and codicological terms and dated it between the end of the twelfth and the second half of the thirteenth century.[5] Ihor Ševčenko studied the poems written in the margins of the codex, and came to the conclusion that it should be dated around 1200.[6] In his *editio princeps*, i.e. the

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[2] Jean-Claude Cheynet, "Introduction: John Skylitzes, the author and his family" in John Skylitzes, *A Synopsis of Byzantine History 811-1057*, ix-xi.

[3] Vasiliki Tsamakda, *The Illustrated Chronicle of Ioannes Skylitzes in Madrid* (Leiden, 2002), 1 [henceforth abbreviated as MS]

[4] De Boor, "Zu Johannes Skylitzes" BZ 13 (1904), 356-369; id., "Weiteres zur Chronik des Skylitzes" BZ 14 (1905), 409-467.

[5] J.M.F. Pomar, "El Scylitzes de la Biblioteca Nacional de Madrid" in *Gladius* 3 (1964), 15-44.

[6] I. Ševčenko, "Poems on the Deaths of Leo VI and Constantine VIII in the Madrid Manuscript of Scylitzes" *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 23-24 (1969-1970), 187-228.

first published edition of Skylitzes's work in 1973 Thurn went back to dating it to the thirteenth or fourteenth century.[7]

In their publication of the miniatures in Madrid Skylitzes A. Grabar and M. Manoussacas examined them iconogra-phically[8], and Grabar went along with Manoussacas' dating of the codex to the thirteenth century, but, most importantly, Grabar noted that the miniatures do not reflect the Byzantine style of the thirteenth but *rather of the eleventh century*. He called this style 'archaic'.[9] Finally, in 1978 Wilson published a thorough palaeographical study of the codex and proved that it was written indeed in the twelfth century.[10] In his second study of Madrid Skylitzes Ševčenko followed Wilson in dating it to the twelfth century.[11] In her exhaustive study of Madrid Skylitzes Vassiliki Tsamarda follows suit by dating it to the third quarter of the twelfth century, i.e. the reign of Manuel I Komnenos (1143-1180). The now accepted theory that Madrid Skylitzes belongs to the twelfth century, i.e. the Komnenian period, is of great importance for this study. As far as it is possible, the first question has been answered.

It is more problematic to solve the second question: where was it produced? The first to try to answer this question was Estopañan in 1965, i.e. just about 200 years after the codex was first described in 1769.[12] He suggested Messina or Constantinople as the place of origin. Ševčenko, on the other hand, suggested a variety of places: Sicily, Constantinople, Nicaea and Arta among others. A. Grabar was much more specific: he though the codex was produced in Sicily, in Palermo, at the court of the Norman kings. This theory of South Italian origin found its confirmation when Wilson found another manuscript, Vaticanus Graecus 300, written in his opinion by the same hand as Madrid Skylitzes. He suggested that the latter was brought as a gift from the Byzantine emperor, i.e. Manuel I Komnenos, to William I, Norman king of Sicily, betwen 1158 and 1160. According to Wilson, the model was a copy of a Constantinopolitan original kept in the Imperial Library which, like Madrid Skylitzes, was illustrated. Wilson followed Grabar in suggesting Palermo as the place where it was produced.[13] Wilson's theory was accepted by Caval-

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[7] I. Thurn, *Ioannis Scylitzae Synopsis Historiarum*, editio princeps (Berlin-New York, 1973).

[8] A. Grabar & M. Manoussacas, *L'illustrations du manuscript de Skylitzès de la Bibliothèque Nationale de Madrid* (Madrid, 1979)

[9] A. Grabar, "Les illustrations de la Chronique de Jean Skylitzès de la Bibliothèque Nationale de Madrid", *Cah Arch* 21 (1971), 191-211

[10] N.G. Wilson, "The Madrid Skylitzes" in *Scrittura e Civiltà* 2 (1978), 209-219.

[11] I. Ševčenko, "The Madrid Manuscript of the Chronicle of Skylitzes in the Light of its New Dating" in I. Hutter, ed., *Byzanz und der Westen. Studien zur Kunst des europäischen Mittealters* (Vienna, 1984), 117-130

[12] S.C. Estopañan, *Skylitzes Matritensis. Reproducciones y miniaturas*, Vol. I (Madrid, 1965)

[13] MS 3.

lo in 1982.[14] Ševčenko was convinced by Wilson's dating to the twelfth century, but he disagreed with Wilson about the Constantinopolitan original: he thought the codex was a South Italian original, but did not find Palermo acceptable as a place of origin. His theory found support by Re who argued that there is no evidence that it was a product of the court in Palermo as there was no scriptorium producing Greek books in that city.[15] Nicholas Oikonomides revived took up Wilson's theory of the Constantinopolitan origin of Madrid Skylitzes, basing his view on the depiction of the Eparch of the City according to Constantinopolitan fashion.[16] Both Foti[17] and Lucà[18] proved on palaeographical grounds that Madrid Skylitzes was produced in Sicily, and argued that it was made at the Monastery of S. Salvatore in Messina. They both dated it to the twelfth century, Foti to the seventies, and Lucà to the first half of the twelfth century. Tsamakda summarizes the state of research thus: "In the present state of research, the dating of the codex in the twelfth century and the theory of its execution in Palermo as a product of Norman culture have prevailed. [...] The dating of the manuscript and the elucidation of the models remains an important target of this book. Essentially, four proposals have been presented in past about the origin of our codex: 1. It is a thirteenth-century copy of an eleventh-century Italian model, produced in South Italy. 2. The codex was produced *ad hoc* in Sicily in the twelfth century. 3. It is a twelfth-century copy, produced after 1158-1160 A.D. in Palermo with a Constantinopolitan model. And 4. The codex was produced in the twelfth century in Constantinople."[19]

Tsamakda concluded that Madrid Skylitzes belonged to the holdings of the monastery of S. Salvatore in Messina: "The manuscript was produced in the *scriptorium* of the Monastery of S. Salvatore in Messina. This has been established by comparing its script with that of Vat. Gr. 300 and other twelfth-century manuscripts which were written with certainty in S. Salvatore...All the marginal annotations of the codex point to a monastic milieu and associate the codex in one wary or another with Messina. A possible commis-

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[14] G. Cavallo, "Scritture italo-greche, librarie e documentarie. Note introduttive ad uno studio correlato" in *Bisanzio e l'Italia. Ricolta di studi in memoria di Agostino Pertusi* (Milan, 1982), 29-38.

[15] M. Re, "A proposito dello 'Scylitzes' di Madrid" *La Memoria* 3 (1984), 329-341.

[16] Nicholas Oikonomides, "I stoli tou eparhou kai o Skylitzes tis Madritis" *Euphrosynon Afieroma ston M. Hatzidaki* (Athens, 1991), 422-432.

[17] M.B. Foti, "Lo *scriptorium* del S.mo Salvatore di Messina" in G. Cavallo, G. d. Gregorio & M. Maniaci, eds., *Scritture, Libri e Testi nelle aree provinciali di Bisanzio. Atti del seminario di Erice (18-25 sett., 1988)*, Vol. I (Spoleto, 1981), 389-416

[18] F. Lucà, "I Normanni e la 'Rinascita' del sec. XII" *Archivio storico per la Calabria e Lucania* 60 (1993), 1-91

[19] MS 4-5.

sioner of the manuscript is Onofrius, the energetic Archimandrite in Messian from 1159 to 1183 A.D. Other Greeks may not be excluded."[20]

Even more important for this study is the question of its miniatures. Who were their painters? Tsamakda established that "the painters were copyists, who did not illustrate the Skylitzes text for the first time. This is suggested by the various kinds of mistakes discovered in the miniatures, the captions, and the inscriptions accompanying them. The sequential order of miniatures is occasionally disturbed, indicating that the artists copied a few miniatures in the wrong place. In most cases, however, the miniatures correctly follow or precede the passage which they illustrate, or are painted between its lines. [...] The captions and the inscriptions contain numerous mistakes, if one compares them to the content of the miniatures or the text. The inscriptions were often wrongly assigned to certain figures and scenes or differ in content from the text; they occasionally even refer to episodes which are not illustrated. A large number of the inscriptions wrongly assigned to certain figures or scenes of a miniature are based on the text. This means that they were not written by the artists, but by a scribe who added them to the miniatures after reading the text. [...] A few miniatures deviate from the wording of the Skylitzes text and can be better explained by the narrations of Michael Psellos or Ioannes Zonaras. [...] The assumed use of an illustrated Zonaras chronicle could have only occurred in a later stage of the copying process, since the work of Zonaras was written after 1118 A.D. If our assumption is correct, the model of the Matritensis cannot be dated before this year."[21]

According to Tsamakda, Madrid Skylitzes was illustrated by seven painters of whom two were Byzantine (indicated as A1 and A2) and five are Western (indicated as B1, B2, B3, B4 and B5). What is PARTICULARLY IMPORTANT for this study is Tsamakda's claim that "the comparison of the forms and elements of the two groups showed that the Byzantine painters FOLLOWED THE BYZANTINE TRADITION and the western painters used as a rule western iconographic types. It has been emphasised, however, that the western painters frequently used BYZANTINE FORMS as well."[22] [my emphasis] Noting that each painter can be distinguished from others Tsamakda states that "the Byzantine painter A1 exhibits traits comparable to the late Comnenian style; the treatment of the drapery and the stance of a few figurers are similar to those seen in the mosaics of Monreale and other South Italian works of art, as well as to Constantinopolitan and provincial manuscripts dating from the second half of the twelfth century; these works all share characteristics of the so-called *dynamic* style. Painter 1 does not, however, exhibit THE STRONG MANNERISM SEEN IN WORKS OF THE LATE TWELFTH CENTURY. I have, therefore, proposed a dating for the Matritensis [i.e. Ma-

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[20] MS 397.

[21] MS 395-396.

[22] MS 396.

drid Skylitzes] to the third quarter of the twelfth century."[23] [my emphasis] If this is indeed the case (and I share the same view), then Madrid Skylitzes belongs to the reign of Manuel I Komnenos (1143-1180), specifically to the period 1150-1175.

It is not my purpose to dwell on the decoration system of Madrid Skylitzes purely in artistic terms except when it helps us establish the iconographic system reflecting the Byzantine use of COLORS and depiction of the COURT CEREMONIAL and its RANKS. For everything else a reader is referred to Tsamakda's edition. I will now examine all the miniatures that provide clues to the above-mentioned system. Since both the Madrid Skylitzes codex in the Biblioteca nacional de España and Tsamakda's edition are copyrighted, it is not possible to reproduce them here. The reader should know, however, that the Madrid Skylitzes codex in its original form has been scanned and put on the website of the Biblioteca nacional for public use. It contains all the miniatures.

I will give preference to Byzantine painters, particularly A1, as more AUTHENTIC in rendering the depiction of the insignia, costumes, and ranks of Imperial iconography. In this I will follow Tsamakda's general conclusions.

Tsamakda emphasizes that "in almost half of the miniatures in the Skylitzes Matritensis [i.e. MS], an emperor or an empress is depicted. The depiction of the enthroned emperor clearly predominates."[24] Tsamakda summarized Byzantine Imperial iconography thus:

> The miniatures of this group follow, as expected, the Byzantine tradition of imperial iconography. The emperor is usually clad in ceremonial costume, i.e. a blue, red or purple tunic, generally identified as *dibetesion* or the *skaramangion*, the *loros* is arranged over it in both known ways, more often draped vertically in a T shape than crossed in a Y shape (e.g. on fols. 23r, 43r top; Figs. 40, 41, 94). The *loros* is golden and and set with gems; it is occasionally decorated with a checked-pattern and sometimes has a black or red lining (fols. 42v, 52r, 56v, Figs. 93, 123, 134)...The tunic is decorated with golden borders in the collar, wrists and hem, and occasionally with dots, suggesting precious stones (e.g., on fols. 14v top, 70r; Figs 15, 172). Frequently, the tunic and the *loros* are both painted in gold (e.g., on fols. 10v, 24r, 34r; Figs. 3, 43, 68). The shoes *(kampagia)* are mainly red and decorated with white dots, indicating that they were studded with pearls (e.g., on fols. 28v top, 43r top; Figs. 54, 94). In battle scenes the emperor is depicted, naturally, in military costume, but...is shown in scale armour with shoulder-straps and leather bands, but the lower part of his costume resembles the ceremonial one (Fig. 137). [...] The court costume of the empress is almost identical to that of the emperor, but the col-

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[23] MS 397.

[24] MS 269.

our scale is reduced (e.g., on fol. 24r, where the imperial couple is depicted enthroned on a double throne; Fig. 43).[25]

In her treatment of the other insignia Tsamakda notes that the crown is of two types: the first is a low diadem with a gemstone in the middle which can be dated to the eleventh century (e.g., on fols. 12v, 16r, 18v top, 37r, etc.; Figs 8, 19, 26, 77). The second type was introduced by the Komneni and is a *kamelaukion* which is a dome decorated with a gemstone, with strings of pearls hanging from it over the cheeks. The best example is the so-called St. Stephen or National Crown of Hungary (now in the Hungarian Parliament in Budapest) which was sent in the twelfth century to the Hungarian King.[26] The use of halos in red, blue or white (note the three colors, as in fols. 10v, 26r top; Figs. 3, 48), but also in other colors (fol. 26r top, 26v bottom, 29r, 31v bottom; Figs 48, 51, 62) is a Komnenian phenomenon (note the halo in the well-known miniature showing Alexios I Komnenos offering Zigabenus' *Panoplica dogmatica* in Parisinus gr. 510 (containing the homilies of St. Gregory Nazianzen) or in Codex Vaticanus gr. 1176 showing Manuel I Komnenos and his wife with red halos (containing the acts of the Council of 1166 endorsing Manuel's solution to Christ's saying: "My Father is greater than I." [John 14:28]).

The most important regalia is, of course, the throne which in a Byzantine tradition almost invariably contains a RED cushion. As Tsamakda notes, the throne is always golden: "The back usually has a drapery painted in gold (e.g., on fol. 12v, Fig. 8) or decorated in white with red and blue strips (e.g., on fols. 13r top and bottom, 87r; Figs. 9, 10, 213. An almost identical drapery is depicted in the eleventh-century Psalter Theol. Gr. 336 (fol. 16v) and the twelfth-century New Testament Suppl. Gr. 52 (fol. 1v), both in the National Library of Vienna."[27]

The accession to the throne has already been discussed in the body of this study, so here we can summarize briefly. Originally it consisted of FOUR steps: 1. Election by the army, the senate, or (very seldom) the people; 2. The acclamation by the people, later invariably in the Hippodrome; 3. The ratification by the Senate; and 4. The coronation, almost invariably in Hagia Sophia, after Justinian. By the Komnenian period the ratification by the Senate was either discontinued or was insignificant. We should recall Zonaras's bitter complaint against Alexios I Komnenos that he treated the Senators with utter contempt (for a good reason: most of the plots against him involved them). The first step, the election, is the most contentious, for Madrid Skylitzes shows the newly-elected emperor raised on a military shield. As Tsamakda notes, "the subject matter raising on a shield is found only in book illumina-

[25] MS 269-270.

[26] MS 271-272.

[27] MS 273.

tion, above all in Byzantine Psalters. It also appears in the Bulgarian Manasses and the Russian Hamartolos chronicles, as well as in Vat. Gr. 333, the only illuminated Byzantine manuscript of the *Book of Kings*. In all these examples, the raising on a shield of an Old Testament king is depicted. This means that the Skylitzes miniature is the only one depicting a raising on a shield of a historical personage."[28] It is important to note that the rebel Tornikios is shown in miniature 230r (Fol. 544) as being on a shield supported by *court dignitaries not soldiers*. That this is indeed the case is corroborated by "the eleventh-century Vat. Gr. 333, fols. 44r, 89v and 95r (Fig. 595)..., the closest parallels to the Skylitzes miniature. In all of them, those raising the shield are not soldiers but courtiers, as in the Skylitzes Matritensis [i.e. MS]... It becomes clear that the Skylitzes miniature reproduces an established iconographic type."[29]

Only one miniature presents the so-called *proskynesis*: on fol. 42r bottom Emperor Theophilos while on the throne is flanked by a group of courtiers while a man prostrates himself and holds the emperor's foot in order to kiss it.

The most important aspect of the miniatures contained in Madrid Skylitzes is is depiction of the costumes of Imperial dignitaries. Unfortunately, Tsamakda has rather little to say about it:

> The Byzantine dignitaries are clad in BLUE or RED girdled tunics, with GOLDEN borders at the bottom (e.g., on fols. 14v, 26v bottom; Figs 15, 51. The sleeves are frequently embellished with *segmenta* with pseudo-cufic letters. The dignitaries occasionally wear mantles over their tunics, buttoned at the side or over the chest. On fol. 42v, the garments of the senators nad dignitaries are richer than usual (Fig. 93). A few of them wear mantles with *tablia*. [my emphasis]
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> The dignitaries often wear a white bonnet (e.g., fol. 12v, Fig. 8) and occasionally a pointed white hat (e.g. fol. 10v, Fig. 3). The former is the *skaranikon*, worn by several categories of people, e.g, the protonotarios on fol. 22r (Fig. 38)..., the *questor* on fol. 24v top (Fig. 44), the eparch on fol. 43r (Fig. 94), the senators on fol. 61v top (Fig. 149), but also by the ambassadors on fol. 28v top (Fig. 54). In a few cases, the dignitaries appeqar with hairy red headgear (e.g., fo. 45r bottom, Fig. 102).[30]

After noting that the well-known Coislin 79 MS has four dignitaries around the emperor, two with white and two with red headgear (which we have examined in detail in the text above), she brings up the depiction of the eparch (the Mayor of Constantinople) which Oikonomides has shown is based

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[28] MS 280.

[29] MS 281.

[30] MS 360-361.

on written sources. Though Pseudo-Kodinos does include the costume of the eparch, it should be pointed out that Pseudo-Kodinos does state that the office of the eparch no longer existed. The eparch is "clad in a WHITE tunic, over which he wears a RED loros decorated with circles and hearts. He also bears a white *skaranikon*."[31] [my emphasis]

Now, colors WHITE AND RED are the CITY colors of the GREEN and the BLUE as we already have established. They are the colors of the CITY FACTIONS. Appropriately, the eparch, as the Mayor of Constantinople, displays in his costume the combination of the two with RED being given more prominence in his loros. This is because the eparch was in control of the troops in the city, particularly when the emperor was away, and RED is the tunic of the military, while WHITE also stands for the Senatorial position he occupies. His costume thus illustrates to perfection the Byzantine color-coded ranking.

I shall proceed now to analyze all the miniatures in Madrid Skylitzes which illustrate the above color-coded ranking. The first is No. 2 in Tsamakda's edition [henceforth T2 and following]. It illustrates the accession of Emperor Michael I Rhangabe (811-813) to the throne. The relevant text in Skylitzes [henceforth S] simply states that "he found himself holding the Roman sceptre at the behest of the senate and the people".[32] Michael is sitting on the golden throne with armrests and a stool in red. His garments are blue and red, and he wears a golden crown of the old type (not globe-shaped). The officials on his left and right are clad in red followed by blue on his side, and blue then red then blue on the bishop's side. This is very appropriate: clearly the figure clad in red is closest to the new emperor and thus holds the most eminent position. All officials have hems of gold indicating their high status, i.e. proximity to the emperor.

The next miniature, T3, is the most reproduced of all miniatures in MS: it shows the coronation of Michael I. Now S says nothing about his coronation. In effect the miniature shows the coronation of a junior emperor or co-emperor by the senior emperor whose superior position is indicated by a RED halo, while the junior one has a BLUE one, again appropriate given his lesser status. What is even more baffling is that this supposed coronation takes place on a shield raised by officials not by soldiers as was the case with the Byzantine newly-elected emperors. The shield is red, an appropriate color for the foundation of an empire. The senior emperor wears blue costume with a golden loros, while the junior one is all clad in gold with a narrow loros in blue. The officials around the shield are hierarchically positioned: the closest to the senior emperor is clad in purple red, then follows the crimson red, and then blue. The same is true on the junior emperor's side: red, then blue, then red. Tsamakda points out that "the coronation of a co-emperor is never mentioned

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[31] MS 361.
[32] S 4.

in the sources in relationship with a raising on a shield."[33] Whether the miniature has migrated from an illustrated edition of Theophanes' *Chronographia* as Plitz claims[34], or whether it was an application of a coronation scene in a Biblical MS relating to David's raising on a shield as Walter claims[35] it is clearly an interpolated miniature that shows that the election of a Byzantine emperor was seen in a Biblical context dominated by the 'case of David', i.e. that God chose David who was not not Saul's son in preference to others, that is, that the Biblical line of succession was not linear, i.e. based on automatic succession, usually on primogeniture, but on the *election* of the worthiest. There is thus no question that the Byzantines saw the Roman (i.e. Byzantine) throne as *elective, NOT based on linear succession as in the West.* Tsamakda has offered this explanation for this fanciful interpolation: "My identification of the crowned figure as Michael I could, however, explain the raising on a shield: Theophanes and other sources considered the proclamation of Michael I as a *coup d'état* in the hippodrome. He was proclaimed emperor at seven o' clock in the morning by the entire senate and the guard regiments. At ten o' clock he was crowned in St. Sophia by the Patriarch Nikephoros. The picture could be a conflation of the proclamation in the hippodrome, represented symbolically through the raising on a shield, and the coronation by the patriarch Nikephoros which followed. The appearance of the coronator may be explained if one assumes that this figure initially represented a patriarch. We have already observed that his costume is not correct for an emperor; it is moreover unique among the representations of emperors in the Skylitzes Matritensis. The transformation of this figure may be ascribed to the modification of the model in the copying process. In the light of this interpretation the miniature on fol. 10v could be considered as a migrated miniature from a lost illustrated Thophanes or Leon Grammatikos manuscript, the two sources which recount both the proclamation of Michael I in the hippodrome and the coronation in St. Sophia by Patriarch Nikephoros."[36]

T4 is rather problematic: though the MS identifies the figure in the tent as the Bulgarian ruler Khrum, Tsamakda argues that it should represent Michael I: "One must, however, seriously take into consideration the possibility that the scene represents the assembling of the Byzantines [sic] armies, after the orders were given by the emperor."[37] In the above half the emperor is clad in red with a collar of gold sitting on a golden throne, surrounded by courtiers

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[33] MS 45.

[34] E. Plitz, *Troi sakkoi byzantins*[Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis](Uppsala, 1976), 14.

[35] Ch. Walter, "Raising on a Shield in Byzantine Iconography" *Revue des études byzantines* 33 (1975), 133-175, and "The Coronation of a Co-Emperor in the Skylitzes Matritensis" in *Actes du 143 congrès international des études byzantines* II (Bucharest, 1975), 453-458. Both reprinted in *Studies in Byzantine Iconography* (Variorum, London, 1977).

[36] MS 45-46.

[37] MS 46.

clad in red and one in blue; in the lower half the emperor is clad in gold, with both flanking ones in red, while the attending ones are all clad in red or purple with golden hems.

T8 represents the proclamation of Leo I as emperor. He is sitting on a golden throne with armrests and foot cushion in red, clad in blue with a golden loros, flanked on each side by courtiers the colors of whose robes are: purple, blue, red on his left side, purple, blue, red, purple, on his right side. The one wearing purple on his left side has a white head cap, while on his right has a red head cap. The rest seem not to wear any headgear.

The next three miniatures, T9-11 depicts the events prior to Michael I's abdication. In all three of them Michael is wearing a blue dress with golden loros surrounded by courtiers whose costumes are again color-coded: in T9 purple, yellow (or gold), blue, red; in T10 red, blue, purple, red, purple, blue, purple, red; in T11 the two deliberating courtiers are in red and blue (the red closest to the emperor).

T12 pictures Leo V the Armenian in the Stoudios Monastery in Constantinople. Leo is depicted in imperial costume in blue and gold, while the dignitaries are identified as *oi douleutai* which would almost certainly stand for the senators. They are wearing red and blue dresses.

T14 shows the Chrysotriklinos where Leo, while still a usurper against Michael, took off his imperial clothes in order to pray and gave it to Michael Travlos, the headgroom, who promptly put them on. This was interpreted as a prophecy that Michael would succeed Leo as an emperor.[38] The (usurper) emperor is wearing blue with gold, while Michael is in red. T15 depicts a further sign that Michael would succeed Leo when the former stepped on the golden hem of the latter's imperial dress while walking to the church.[39]

The three miniatures T40, 41 and 42 show Leo in two different imperial vestments: in T40 he is wearing purple with gold, in T41 and T42 blue and gold. The three courtiers are arranged in this proximity to the emperor: blue, purple, red in T40, purple, blue, red in T41, purple, blue, red in T42. In T40 all three are wearing white headdress while in T41 and T42 they do not (though T41 is difficult to tell due to its state of decomposition).

The assassination of Leo V was followed by the dragging of his body to the Hippodrome through the Skyla Gate as depicted in T50. The emperor is fully clad in gold, while the courtiers dragging him are in red and blue. The soldiers surrounding are have red shields or a blue shield with red circles in the middle, as in the bottom right figure.

T51 represents the proclamation as Emperor of Michael II Travlos. Tsamakda points out that it is a cliché.[40] It shows Michael Travlos in a golden dress, surrounded by dignitaries, the one on his right in red, the ones on his

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[38] S 8.

[39] S 8-9.

[40] MS 67.

left in this sequence: blue, red, blue, red, blue, red, blue. This is a clue, I think, that when courtiers were assembled, though red took precedence over blue, the sequence was intertwined to show red-blue mixture rather than strict sequence. The precedence of red over blue is again confirmed by the courtier on the emperor's right, standing by himself, wearing red. This is also confirmed by T52 which shows the scene with a banquet in which the guests, all courtiers, sit in this proximity to the emperor: purple, red, blue, purple. By the way, the daughters presented to the guests by a general wearing purple, are in the order of red, blue, red, confirming the intermixing of the two colors.

In T54 the Patriarch is asking Michael II to restore the veneration of icons. His envoy is clad in red with a white headdress, followed by a soldier, then a group of courtiers arrayed thus: purple, red, and three in blue, confirming the superiority of red over blue. The patriarchal envoy and the three blue courtiers wear white headdresses. It is possible that the envoy is a eunuch (he is clean shaven), but the three blue ones definitely are 'bearded' men. This would preclude the conclusion that only eunuchs wore a white headdress.

In T64 the imperial capital, Constantinople, is depicted in gold with red lines, appropriately denoting its status. In three miniatures T76-78 Emperor Michael II is wearing full golden robes with blue and white hems, surrounded with dignitaries in red and blue in T77.

T93 is one of the most frequently used illustrations: it shows the proclamation of Michael II's son as Emperor Theophilos. He is sitting on a throne which has a white back with red and blue lines, and armrests and a cushion under his feet in red. The courtiers are assembled on both sides in a strict MIXED order: blue, red, blue, red, blue on his left, red, blue, red, blue, red on his right. Since the left side was not the privileged one, this would mean that when the courtiers stood on both sides of the throne, the sequence started FROM THE CLOSEST PROXIMITY TO THE EMPEROR first to the right, and then proceeded from the closest proximity to the emperor on the left, but so that the red-blue alteration CONTINUED WITHOUT INTERRUPTION. That would explain why the group to the left of the emperor starts with a blue dignitary, for the privileged group on the right FINISHES (IN THE FRONT ROW) with a red one. It also means that the precedence went from the front row, as natural, to the back rows. All courtiers wear white headdress, many quite old and bearded, which again means that a theory that only eunuchs wore white headdress is patently wrong.

T94 has already been discussed and was used by Oikonomides to argue that the Madrid Skylitzes had illustrations based on a Constantinopolitan model since it correctly showed the dress of the Eparch of Constantinople: white garment with a red loros and a red bottom hem, with a white headdress (another confirmation that eunuchs were not the only ones to wear it, for the Eparch COULD NOT BE A EUNUCH). What is also important is that this is the first miniature to show Theophilos in a purple dress with a golden loros, as all previous depictions of imperial garment showed it as blue. In T95 Emperor

Theophilos is again depicted riding in purple dress with white dots, and a golden halo. To his right is a courtier in red dress with golden hems.

In T102 Emperor Theophilos is shown on a throne together with Empress Theodora. While she is wearing a blue dress over the golden garment, he is wearing what appears to be (due to flaking it can only be surmised) a red dress with a golden loros. Both have armrests and cushions of red. The courtiers on both sides of the throne are arranged in this sequence: red (it appears as white due to flaking), blue, red on the left, blue, blue, red, blue, red on the right. Why this arrangement? The group left of the Emperor represents his courtiers: All of them wear RED caps, while the group on the right of the empress represents her courtiers. They therefore start with the inferior color of blue, followed by red, blue, and red in the proper order.

In both T106 and T107 Emperor Theophilos is portrayed wearing a purple garment with golden loros. In T107 the courtiers are arranged in the sequence of purple, red, and blue, and then red, purple, blue. In T112 Theophilos is wearing a red garment with gold. This is the first time the emperor is seen wearing red rather than purple red.

In T118-120 Empress Theodora is portrayed in golden robe with a blue hem with white dots. In T118 the three courtiers to her left are in the red, blue, red dress with golden hems, on her right in the order of blue, red, blue, red (the right side starting correctly with a lower left color). In T119 the courtiers on her left are three in red and one in blue, and on her right the only one is in red. In T120 the courtiers surrounding her are blue on her left, red, blue, red, red on her right behind her.

In T126 Emperor Theophilos is again shown wearing a blue dress with a golden loros, flanked by a single dignitary wearing a read dress with a golden hem. Theophobos is wearing imperial costumes in purple with golden hems as he is being wed to Theophilos' sister who is shown in full imperial dress of gold with blue and white hems.

In a sequence in the Hippodrome an Arab prisoner is showing his skill and then being defeated by Theodore Krateros. In all three scenes the Imperial box or kathisma is being shown with the emperor and/or empress within. In the stands the courtiers are depicted in the mixed order of red and blue. In T133 Emperor Theophilos wears a red dress with a golden loros, but in T134 he wears again the full golden garment with blue and white hem. A courtier in front of him wears and red dress with golden hems.

In a very important but badly preserved miniature T135 Emperor Theophilos wearing red and gold garment promotes Manuel to a *magistros*. Three figures are standing in front of him, all THREE IN RED. One of them, probably the middle one, is Manuel. This is a good indication that the rank of magistros had a red dress.

T149 is one of the most important for this study: it shows Emperor Theophilos enjoining the assembled senators to protect the empire and give allegiance to his wife and son as he lay dying. The senators are portrayed in

blue and red dresses, with the inscription *ho synkletos* [the senate] above it. All of them, except for the first man, wear white headdress. If the miniaturist followed the Imperial court ceremonial properly, that would indicate that the Senators wore a white headdress, but the head of the senate, the proedros, did not.

In T152 Theophilos is succeeded by his son Michael III and his wife, Theodora. Michael is depicted on the throne in full imperial regalia, in a golden dress, while two groups of men stand on both sides: to his right in the sequence: purple red, blue, red, blue, purple red; to his left: blue, purple, blue, red, purple. They have no golden embroidery on their dresses, and are identified as *ho laos* [the people].

In T155 the Council of 843 which restored the worship of the icons is portrayed. Since Michael III was only four years old when he came to the throne, the miniaturist painted him as a grown man with a beard, but wearing a blue imperial dress with a golden loros, with his mother beside him on the throne in a red imperial tunic with a golden loros. Two groups flank them: to Michael's right three bishops, to Theodora's left three senators in the sequence red, red, blue (badly flaked).

T175 shows Empress Theodora sitting on a throne in a red dress with a golden loros addressing the senators (the inscription *ho synkletos* is above them). Though badly flaked the figures are in blue closest to her, and in blue, red, blue, blue.

I will skip all the miniatures painted by Western artists as they MAY OR MAY NOT be true to Byzantine originals. The last miniatures painted by a Byzantine artist identified by Tsamakda as A1 are on folios 227-234 verso. Of these T541 shows an emperor wrongly identified as Konstantinos IX Monomachos (1042-1055) accepting the surrender of Kakikios. The emperor is clad in blue clothes with golden loros, while the courtiers outside the tent are rightly placed in the correct red-blue-red-blue sequence.

In one of the most important miniatures for this study, T544, in the upper half Leon Tornikios is proclaimed emperor by being raised on a shield. Since Skylitzes does not talk about this at all, Tsamakda rightly suggested that is taken from Psellos' *Chronography* where there is an account of it.[41] It depicts Leon Tornikios standing on a shield, clad in red imperial garment with golden loros and hem, flanked by two groups of courtiers, to his left in the sequence blue-3 red, to his right red-purple. The two courtiers holding the shield are blue to his right and red to his left (with a golden hem). In the lower half Emperor Konstantinos IX Monomachos is sitting on a throne in a full golden dress, flanked by two courtiers in red.

Madrid Skylitzes [MS] is the most important of all visual representations of the Byzantine Imperial system, with the Emperor in the middle and the highest-ranking officials around him. In many ways, it is unique. I have

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[41] MS 254-255.

omitted all the miniatures painted by Western artists (B1 to B5) and have used Byzantine artists (A1 and A2) exclusively in order to avoid any Western contamination, though it should be pointed out that Western artists were heavily influenced by Byzantine models and followed them, but not slavishly as did the Byzantine ones. Since MS was painted in the 12th century, i.e. during the Komnenian period, but dealt with the period of Byzantine history *preceding* the Komneni, i.e. before 1081, its illustrations did not have to deal with the new hierarchy of court titles instituted by Alexios I and which I dubbed the sebastos system. Thus MS cannot be used to find out what the costumes of, say, sebastokrator or protosebastos were. But my point is that it can and should be used to find out what the highest ranks of officials before 1081 wore. It is only fair to assume that in Byzantium, in a society saturated with tradition and in which nothing changed except by Imperial command as far as the court ritual was concerned, the costumes of the officials below the sebastos level *remained the same even during the Komnenian period.* If we accept this hypothesis, then it is possible to use MS as (the only) illustration of the Byzantine court system before the Palaiologian period when Lincoln College MS gr. 35 can be used. It can also be assumed that the Byzantine illustrators of the MS followed the Constantinopolitan model (as in the case of the clothes of the eparch of Constantinople) which was still extant in the Komneni period. Not for the first or last time would they have been guilty of anachronism, of depicting past events in contemporary clothes. But, if our hypothesis is right, they would have simply followed tradition religiously, and would not have been guilty of *inventing* robes and colors. My argument is that they were not: the tradition they applied to MS was still alive and kicking in Constantinople in the 12th century.

Using MS to explicate the Imperial system of both the pre- and Komnenian period (below the sebastos level for which we have other, both literary and visual sources) reveals to us immediately a very striking note: with very minor exceptions all the representations of the courtier costumes are depicted in RED and BLUE. This was duly noted by Tsamakda: "The Byzantine dignitaries are clad in blue or red girdled tunics, with golden borders at the bottom... The sleeves are frequently embellished with *segmenta* with pseudocufic letters. The dignitaries occasionally wear mantles over their tunics, buttoned at the side or over the chest. On fol. 42v, the garments of the senators and dignitaries are richer than usual (Fig. 93). A few of them wear mantles with *tablia*."[42] The fact that the dignitaries wear (almost) exclusively RED and BLUE garments, though mostly with GOLD embroidery, confirms the central thesis of this study that these three colors, symbolizing the divinity and humanity of Christ reflected in the person of the emperor, were the *highest-ranking* colors in Byzantium. Noticeably absent in all the miniatures is green which we know from Arab sources in particular was associated with the Em-

[42] MS 360.

press and her retinue. This could be because the empresses represented in MS were more than mere spouses of the emperors, but were frequently co-rulers or regents in their own right.

Of the three colors GOLD is worn fully ONLY by the emperors and empresses, i.e. those addressed as "your Majesty" [*vasileia sou*]. Gold ornaments and embroidery, however, was included on both red and blue costumes to indicate their holders' participation in the Imperial system. As emperor's men (and they were all men) they were entitled to wear golden ornaments. GOLD was seen by the Byzantines as the highest of all colors and reserved exclusively for God: in the famous Deesis in Hagia Sophia the background tesserae are of gold with the golden embroidery on Christ's red tunic as well. To wear gold was thus to assume the Imperial status, and to have golden embroidery was to be close to Imperial power. Gold is thus not a controversial color.

It is different with red and blue. First of all, there is NO question that in all illustrations in MS RED takes precedence over BLUE. There is one notable exception: Imperial clothes, when not fully golden, are almost invariably BLUE. Under the Komneni the emperors usually wore RED. First of all, why is RED given precedence over BLUE in the Byzantine iconographic system? Because RED stands for Christ's DIVINITY and BLUE for his HUMANITY. Of course, as God he was greater than man, which, of course, gave rise to Manuel Komnenos' famous explication of "My Father is Greater than I". With one or two notable exceptions Byzantine emperors in MS wear a BLUE costume with a GOLDEN loros. They thus do not pretend to be DIVINE like Christ, though they are DIVINELY-INSTITUTED and thus entitled to wear GOLD.

The Imperial courtiers, on the other hand, clearly are divided into those higher ones who wear RED and lower one who wear BLUE. IF this were that simple, we would expect ALL miniatures to show ALL THE RED courtiers closer to the Emperor, particularly when on the throne, and ALL THE BLUE ones in a bunch further away and taking the second place to the red ones. But this is NEVER the case. In ALL the miniatures RED is mixed with BLUE almost interchangeably, one courtier in RED followed by another in BLUE, then the next in RED, followed by the BLUE one, and so on. In some cases two or three courtiers in RED or BLUE are followed by others in opposite colors. So we are facing an enigma: why are the courtiers portrayed in a MIXED order IF, as I argued, RED has precedence over BLUE? This is indeed THE key problem found in MS illustrations as far as the depiction of courtiers is concerned.

We know from both visual and written sources that the PROXIMITY to the Emperor as the source of ALL power in Byzantium was ALL-IMPORTANT: of course, it reached its apogee under the Komneni, but it was there from the very beginning. So to argue that the courtiers simply stood in a RANDOM fashion or any other one BUT THE ONE OF THE PROXIMITY to the Emperor is out of the question. That leaves only one solution: that the painter

simply painted one courtier after another and arbitrarily assigned colors to them. In an extremely hierarchically-organized state and society to assign colors ARBITRARILY, i.e. at random, would have been out of the question for it would have violated the very hierarchical system which color-coding was supposed to represent. So we must assume that the illustrators knew exactly which color to give to which courtier. And this means that the color depended on the RANK, not on the LEVEL of rank, i.e. that the highest 5 grades of rank all wore RED, and the lowest 5 grades all wore BLUE, let us say for argument's sake. It can also be argued that the position of the courtiers within a group depended NOT on their RANK but on their office, but the office usually carried a specified rank, so this argument is rather hollow. Ann Moffatt and Maxeme Tall follow Oikonomides in suggesting that "that the ranking of titles within an order was by date of appointment", but caution that more specific evidence is needed.[43]

Let us review all the miniatures discussed above briefly:

T2: RIGHT: red, blue, blue; LEFT: blue, red, blue. PRECEDENCE to the left as closest to the emperor

T3: RIGHT: purple/red, blue, red, blue; LEFT: blue, red, blue, red. PRECEDENCE to the left as closest to the senior emperor

T8: RIGHT: purple/red, blue, red; LEFT: purple/red, blue, red, purple/red.

T9: LEFT: blue; RIGHT: purple/red, yellow, blue, red. PRECEDENCE to the left.

T10: LEFT: red, blue, purple/red, red, purple/red, blue, purple/red, red

T11: LEFT: red, blue

T15: RIGHT: red, blue, red

T40: RIGHT: blue, purple/red, red

T41: RIGHT: purple/red, blue, red

T42: RIGHT: purple/red, blue, red

T44: RIGHT: purple/red, blue, red

T51: LEFT: red; RIGHT: blue, red, blue, red, blue, red, blue

T54: LEFT: red, purple/blue, red, blue, blue, blue

T56: LEFT: blue, red, purple/blue

T93: LEFT: red, blue, red, blue, red; RIGHT: blue, red, blue, red, blue. PRECEDENCE to the left

T94: LEFT: white (the Eparch)

T102: LEFT: blue, blue, red, blue, red; RIGHT: red (appears as white due to flaking), blue, red

T112: LEFT: red, blue, purple/blue, purple/blue, red

T118: LEFT: blue, red, blue, purple/red; RIGHT: red, blue, purple/red. PRECEDENCE to the right

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[43] BC II, 727, ft. 2 citing N. Oikonomidès, *Les Listes de Préséance byzantines des IXe et Xe Siècles. Introduction, texte, traduction et commentaire* (Paris, 1972).

T119: LEFT: red; RIGHT: red, purple/red, red, blue
T120: LEFT: purple/red, blue, red, purple/blue
T125: LEFT: red; RIGHT: red
T126: LEFT: red, blue, red
T134: LEFT: blue; RIGHT: red. PRECEDENCE to the right
T135: RIGHT: red, red, red (promotion to magistros)
T138: LEFT: blue, red
T149: RIGHT: blue, red, blue, purple/red, red, blue, purple/red, red; LEFT: red. PRECEDENCE to the left
T151: LEFT: purple/red, red; RIGHT: blue, red, purple/red. PRECEDENCE to the left.
T152: LEFT: purple/red, blue, red, blue, purple/red; RIGHT: blue, purple/blue, blue, red, purple/blue
T155: RIGHT: red, purple, blue
T162: LEFT: red, purple, blue
T163: LEFT: blue, red
T172: RIGHT: red, blue, purple, blue
T175: LEFT: blue, purple/blue, (indistinct), red
T196: RIGHT: purple, blue, red

APPENDIX TWO

MONASTERIES IN KOMNENIAN CONSTANTINOPLE (1081-1180)

This catalogue of monasteries found in Komnenian Constantinople and its immediate vicinity is based entirely on Janin's magisterial work, *La géographie ecclésiastique de l'empire byzantin,* Vol. III (Paris, 1953). Additional sources are indicated only when necessary. Janin gives all the sources following each entry and they should be used by interested scholarts. Also used ls Alexander van Millingen, *Byzantine Churches in Constantinople: Their History and Architecture* (London, 1912 and reprint); and A.D. Mordtmann *Esquisse topographique de Constantinople* (Lille, 1892). Also see Paul Magdalino, *Studies on the History and Topography of Byzantine Constantinople,* "Medieval Constantinople", first published as *Constantinople Médiévale. Etudes sur l'évolution des structures urbaines* (Paris, 1996), 1-111, particularly 2-5 with maps on p. 2 and 4 [reprinted in Variorum/Ashgate]; and W. Müller-Wiener, *Bildlexikon zur Topographie Istanbuls* (Tübingen, 1977). I felt that not everyone, including scholars, will have (easy) access to the above, in particular to Janin, and that a short description of the monasteries as centers of Black Byzantium is warranted. To facilitate use a map is included which lists those monasteries whose location can be ascertained with some precision. The numbers correspond to the number assigned to each monastery in brackets. Those monasteries that exist as mosques have not been included, and those identified by the map with names have also not been included. The location of all existing monasteries and/or churches turned into mosques can easily be found in M-
Wiener above.

ABRAMITON [1]
This monastery is situated in the Triton quarter close to the ramparts that included the Golden Gate, but, according to J, we do not know whether it was to its right or left. It was thus very close to the triumphal way that led from the Golden Gate. J 8-10. Also Mordtmann, no. 22, p. 13.

ATHENOGENOUS [2]
In 1140 a countil met in Constantinople to examine the writings of Konstantinos Chrysomales. A copy of his writings was found in the possession of Peter, head of the monastery of St Athenogenos, and it was used to condemn Chrysomales as a heretic. J is not sure whether the monastery was located inside the walls of Constantinople. J 15

AIKOIMETON [3]
The chrysobull that Manuel Komnenos gave to the Venetians in March of 1148 mentions this monastery. Anthony of Novgorod specifies that this monastery was run by old monks versed in Divine law. Anthony does not give its location, but since it fell within the Venetian quarter it was along the Golden Horn after Bigla, according to J between the present Odunkapı and Balıkpazarkapı. J 20-21 citing Khitrowo 97.

ALEXIOU [4]
The monastery was the foundation of Patriarch Alexis the Studite (1025-1043) who was imprisoned there by Constantine Monomachos in 103. According to Skylitzes, the monastery was located on the Bosphorus, but it is not known whether on the European or Asian side. J 22-23 citing Skylitzes (Bonn), II, 536, 550. J 22-23

ANANIOU [5]
Anthony of Novgord mentions this monastery in 1200. According to J, it was located on the hills of Galata. J 24 citing Khitrowo 108-109. J 24

ANASTASEOS [6]
This monastery appeared for the first time in the 12th century according to J. Theodotos II, Patriarch of Constantinople between April of 1151 and August of 1153 and who succeeded Nicholas IV Muzalon, was one of its monks. Its location was close to the Church of St Anastasia, and thus north of the present Grand Bazaar. J 24-26

ANDREOU EN TE KRISEI [7]
According to J, this monastery is only dated from the end of the 8th century. The monastery suffered from and then recovered from the Iconoclastic persecutions. It was dedicated to St Andrew the Cretan who suffered martyrdom under the Iconoclastic Emperor Constantine V in 766, though J doubts that this was more than a legend. It was changed into a mosque by Mustafa Paşa and exists under his name. J 32-35

ANDREOU TOU SALOU [8]
It is more than likely that this monastery has nothing to do with Andrew the Holy Fool who lived in Constantinople in the 10th century. However, it is likely that it is existed under the Komneni. It was located close to Andreou en te Krisei. J 36-37

ANTONIOU [9]
This monastery dates only under this name at the end of the 12th century for it is mentioned in the Chrysobull of Isaac II Angelos given to the Pisans in February of 1192. Though uncertain, J accepts that this monastery was known to the Byzantines as "tou Kaleos, tou Kalliou, tou Kaulea", its name derived from that of Patriarch Antony Ii Kauleas or Blacheas (August 893-February

901) whose head he was before becoming a patriarch. Patriach Cosmas I retired to it following his abdication in 1081. The monastery was dedicated to the Virgin, and its church contained a mosaic of Christ the Pantokrator in the dome. It was located to the east of Balıkpazarı, and according to J, most likely was situated at the sight of the present mosque Validecami. J 44-46

APOLOGOTHETHON [10]
This monastery whose origin is unknown was given to the Pisans following the conquest of Constantinople in 1204, and, thus, was in what became the Pisan quarter. It was located on the sight of the Customs House of Constantinople. J 46

BASILEOU [11]
This monastery was founded by Basil, a bastard son of Romanos Lekapenos, paraikomenos and paradynastos under Constantine Porphyrogennetos. Following his disgrace and execution under Basil II it was stripped of all its possessions by the Emperor, but it continued to exist after Basil II took over all power in 976. Antony of Novgorod noted in 1200 that it was located close to the Church of Annunciation. According to J, this church is none other than Theotokos ta Kirou. The monastery was thus close to the St Romanos Gate in Topkapı. J 64-65

BASSIANOU [12]
This is a very old monastery dating back to Emperor Marcian (450-457). It was located in the Deuteron district, thus facing north from the 4th hill of Constantinople. According to J, it was most probably located west of Sultan Selim's Çukurbostan, i.e. the ancient cistern of Aspar. J 65-66

BASSOU [13]
The Church was built by Bassos, patrikios and praetorian prefect under Justinian. In the first half of the 9th century a monastery was added to it. J has suggested that it should be located between the quarters of Karpianu and Oxeia, i.e. facing the Golden Horn, and thus on the down slopes of the third hill in the vicinity of Zindankapı. J 66-67

GASTRION [14]
Though legend has it that it was founded by Constantine the Great's mother Helen after she returned from the Holy Land with the True Cross, the chroniclers report that it was built by Theophilos (829-842). It is mentioned by Constantine Porphyrogennetos in the *Book of Ceremonies* (II, 42, Bonn 647-648). It is likely that the monastery became later a nunnery which was close to the Golden Gate. It was located on the sight of the present mosque called Sancakdarmesciti which was once a Byzantine church built in the 11th or 12th century. J 72-73 citing Mordtmann, no. 134, p. 77.

GEORGIOU TON MANGANON [15]
This is one of the most famous of all monasteries in Constantinople. It was founded by Emperor Constantine Monomachos (1042-1054). Because of its Imperial connection it was privileged and its head (hegumen) later (in the 14th century) carried the tile of archimandrite and protosynkellos, ranking second after that of the monastery tou Stoudiou in the Synodal sessions and official ceremonies in St Sophia. In 1118 Alexios I Komnenos chose to die in it. It boasted of a very large and rich library. Six seals of its functionaries have been recovered and published dating from the 11th and 12th centuries. It was located on the very promontory overlooking the straits between Europe and Asia, close to the walls of the Seraglio partly demolished to provide access to the railroad. J 75-81

GEROKOMEIOU [16]
In 1140 the monks of this monastery were accused of having the heretical writings of Constantine Chrysomalas, condemned by the Synod of 1140. Its location is not known. J 83

DALMATOU [17]
One of the important monasteries it was founded by Isaac the Syrian in 382. Legend claims that it was the oldest in the capital. Later it became a dumping ground for the internment of political prisoners. It suffered persecution under Constantine V due to its attachment to the veneration of the images. According to J, it was located in the eastern part of the Psamathia quarter. It faced the Church of St Stephen, and thus was close to Xerolophos and the Aurelianae quarters, perhaps on the grounds of the mosque Haakimoğlupaşa. J 86-89

DANIEL EN TO STILO [18]
It was named after St Daniel from Maratha in Mesopotamia when he came to Constantinople in 451 who lived on top of the column (Stylite). A monastery was built in his honor by Emperor Leo I (457-471). It is not easy to decided on its location: it could be in present Kabataş or Beşiktaş, but most likely in Istinye (Sosthenion). J 90-92

DEMETRIOU TON PALAIOLOGON [19]
The church and monastery were built by George Palaiologos in the middle of the 12th century. According to J, it was located on the Golden Horn between the Jewish Gate and the Seraglio Promontory. This is attested by Alexios III Angelos' charter to the Genoese which names the monastery (*apoteichizonta ten monen tou agiou Demetriou*). It was destroyed when Mehmed the Conqueror built the Seraglio. J 96-99

DIOMEDOUS [NEA IOEROUSALEM] [20]
It is mostly known under the name of 'Jerusalem' or 'New Jerusalem'. Though legend has it that it was founded by Constantine the Great, but it does not appear in sources until 518 at the earliest. Basil the Macedonian rebuilt it,

and it is mentioned in 1092 when its head Athanasios helped to bring a reconciliation between the Metropolitan Leo of Chalcedon with the synod. It was located very close to the Golden Gate, but inside the walls. J 100-102

DIOU [21]
In 518 and 536 this monaster's head signed right after that of the Dalmatos monastery, indicating its importance. It stood as one of the centers of iconodule devotion during the Iconoclastic period and was probably partly destroyed. It was rebuilt and its head was present at the Second Council of Nicea (787). In 817 its head joined the Iconoclastic movement. It was mentioned in 1200 by Antony of Novgorod. According to J it was located in the Valley of Lycus. J 103-105

EUTHIMIOU [22]
Leo VI the Sage built this monastery for monk Euthrymios, later patriarch. It is located in the Psamathia quarter (Samatya), probably west of the Stoudiou monastery. J 122

EFOROU [23]
This monastery is first mentioned in the 12th century. It was the body of the deposed and mutilated Emperor Andronikos I Komnenos (1183-1185) which was left next to the monastery of Eforou on the side of Zeuxippos (September 12, 1185). Zeuxippos is thus the quarter where one should look for it. J 138-139

THEODOSIAS EN TOIS DEXIOKRATOUS [24]
This is a nunnery built in honor of St Theodosia martyred in 729 in Constantinople during the Iconoclastic struggle. It was facing the Golden Horn. J 150-152

THEODOSIOU [9 CHOIRS OF ANGELS] [25]
Outside the city walls this monastery was built by Michael Kerularios. J 153

THEODOROU EN TO RESIO [26]
There is a disagreement among historians as to the location of this monastery since Anna Komnena specifies that the Byzantines of the Capital took their Sunday strolls to it and, thus, could not be in Resion or Rision (which was about twenty kilometres from the capital), but, according to J, in Riakos which would locate it in present Bakırköy or, according to another theory, in Çobanağiasması. Thus it would be located close to the walls and not far from the Propontis. J 157-158

THEOTOKOU TES EVERGETIDOS [EVERGETIS] [27]
This important monastery is known largely because of its extensive typikon consisting of 43 chapters and one addition. It is now available in a fine English translation. It influenced decisively the monastery in Kosmosotira, near

the Marica River, founded by Isaac Komnenos (1152), that of St Mammas (1158), and that of Elegmoi in Bithynia founded by mistikos Nikephoros (1162), thus having a major influence on Komnenian monastic foundations. In 1153 Patriarch Neophytos was elected after having lived a long time as a monk in this monastery. Sava Nemanjić, the founder of the Serbian autocephalous church, had very close connections with Evergetis. It was located outside the city walls, near the Gate of Pege (Silivrikapı), though this was only a metochion of the main monastery located some two kilometres from the city walls. J 186-191. For its typikon see Paul Gautier, "Le typikon de la Théotokos Evergétis" *Revue des études Byzantines* 40 (1982), 5-101, text 15-95; and for the English translation see *BMFD*, Vol. II, 545-506. Also see R.H. Jordan and Rosemary Morris, [introduction, translation and commentary], *The Hypotyposis of the Monastery of the Theotokos Evergetis, Constantinople (11th-12th Centuries)* (Ashgate, 2012), especially Appendix I: "The *Typikon* of Paul Evergetinos: A Reconstruction", 217-239

THEOTOKOU TES KECHARITOMENES [28]
This was one of the great Imperial foundations of the Komneni, having been founded by Irene Doukas, the wife of Alexios I. The foundation included both a female convent and a male monastery dedicated to Christ Philanthropos (see below) while Alexios was still alive (died 1118). The Kecharitomene typikon is available as is its English translation. Both Irene Doukas and her daughter, the famous historian Anna Komnena, retired to this convent where the latter wrote her history of Alexios I's reign, *The Alexiad*. Anna Komnena retired to the convent ca. 1136-1137 and died there in 1153/1154. According to J, its location was in the Deuteron quarter, on the crossroads between the former Mese in the northwesterly direction and the lateral street that went down to Blachernae. This would put it in modern Balat, relatively close to the Charisios Gate (Edirne kapı). J 196-199. For its typikon see Paul Gautier, "Le typikon de la Théotokos Kécharitoménè" *Revue des etudes Byzantines* 43 (1985), 5-165; its English translation in *BMFD* Vol. II, 649-724.

THEOTOKOU TON KIROU [29]
This monastery held the icon of Mother of God Kyriotissa to whom Michael Psellos addressed an epigram. When Manuel I Komnenos (1143-1180) was preparing a campaign against the Seljuks of Asia Minor which was to result in a disastrous defeat at Myriokephalon in November of 1176, according to Niketas Choniates, a certain Mauropoulos claimed to have a dream in which he went to the Church of the Mother of God and prayed to the icon of Kyriotissa which announced that a great danger awaited the Emperor. Contrary to Mordtmann who placed it in the Myrelaion quarter, P.J. Pargoire proved that it was located to the southeast of the Saint Romanos Gate (Topkapı). J 201-203

THEOTOKOU TON HODEGON [HODEGETRIA] [30]

This monastery with its famous icon of the Mother of God Hodegetria was not founded by Michael III, as legend has it, but it was certainly restaured in the 12th century since the Grand Heteriarch, George Palaiologos Komnenos Doukas is mentioned in an epigram that claims him as the donor of the refectory. It also mentions portraits of seven emperors: Constantine and Michael Doukas, Romanos Diogenes, Nikephoros Botaneiates, Alexis, John and Manuel Komnenos. Also mentioned are John Arbantenos and his wife, and Theodore Prodromos. Its venerable icon was supposedly painted by St. Luke and was paraded through the City whenever it was in great danger. It was also carried in procession when Michael VIII Palaiologos retook the City from the Latins on August 15, 1261. The monastery was located close to the Great Church (Hagia Sophia) on its right toward the sea. It would have been very close to the Monastery of Mangana. J 208-216

THEOTOKOU TES PAMMAKARISTOU [31]

It is not possible to date precisely the foundation of this monastery, as J rightly points out that its founder could not be protostrator Michael Tarchaniotes Glabas (under Andronikos II), and a text of an inscription in the bema of the church cannot refer to John Komnenos and his wife Ann Doukas, for the former's wife was a Hungarian princess who took the name of Irene. George Pachymeres states that Michael Tarchaniotes Glabas was the founder of the monastery (*ten idian monen*) as an inscription says: "Stranger, do you see this important man? It is the protostrator, the founder of this monastery, noble Glabas." J cautions that one should not take such an expression at face value. In fact, Michael Tarchaniotes Glabas was the restorer of an already existing monastery in 1293. In 1578 Stephen Gerlach mentioned the existence of an inscription naming the restorers (rather than, as believed, the founders): "Michael Doukas Glabas tarchaniotes, protostrator and ktetor, Maria Doukaina Komnene Palaiologina Branaina, protostratorissa kai ktetorissa." Gerlach also reported the tomb of Alexios Komnenos in Pammakaristos. J is rightly sceptical that his tomb which happened to be in the Monastery of Christ Philanthropos founded by Alexios was moved by the patriarch following the Ottoman conquest. In 1581 Salomon Schweiger, chaplain of the ambassador of the Holy Roman Empire stated that the tomb carried an inscription which he read: "Alexios autokrator ton Romaion" with an eagle on its right. Martin Crusius also sttes that Alexios' tomb was found at Pammakaristos. This is an enigma that has not been solved by historians and archaeologists because the monastery no longer exists. The Turks took over the Church in 1586 and turned it into a mosque called Fetiyecami or Mosque of Victory. The Church with its magnificent mosaics still exists brought to life by the efforts of the Byzantine Institute of Boston. J 217-222 citing Van Millingen, 225-47.

THEOTOKOS TES PANACHRANTOU [32]
This monastery is mentioned for the first time in 1073. It later became a female convent (nunnery), probably in the second half of the 14th century. It was located in the St Stophia quarter, near the monastery of Pantanassa, between the Mangana Palace and the Monastery of St. George. J 223-224.

THEOTOKOU TES PERIBLEPTOU [33]
This monastery can be dated to the first half of the 11th century. Romanos III Argyros (1028-1034) dedicated it to the Mother of God 'Who Sees Everything' [Peribletos]. He was buried in the church in 1034. Nikephoros Botaniates (1078-1081) repaired the structure and was forced to retire to its monastery following his deposition by Alexios I Komnenos where he died and was buried in the church. Eythymios Zigabenos, author of the *Panoplia dogmatica*, was one of its monks. On October 1, 1143, a Synod condemned monk Niphon for his Bogomil heresy and imprisoned him in the Monastery. He later renounced his heresy and was transferred elsewhere. According to Ruy Gonzalez de Clavijo, ambassador of Henry III, King of Castile and Leon, who visited Constantinople in 1402, and reported that on both sides of the Mother of God above the entrance door were the portraits of the emperor and the empress. He reported that in the church, to the left, was the tomb of Emperor Romanos III of red jasper, and elsewhere in the church another tomb of Nikephoros Botaneiates, also of red jasper. This would confirm the theory that as late as the end of the 11th century imperial tombs were still of red color. The Church claimed to possess the True Cross, and was decorated with mosaics, particularly the ceiling of the refectory. The present Armenian church of St. George of Psamathia occupies the location of the monastery.
J 227-231 quoting Ruy Gonzalez de Clavijo, *Historia de gran Tamorlan, e itinerario del Viaje, y Relacion de la ambajada, que Ruy Gonzalez de Clavijo le hizo per mandado del muy podoreso Rey y Senor Don Enrique Terceto de Castilla* (Madrid, 1582), 32-35.

THEOTOKOU TES PEGES [34]
Pege was one of the most famous monasteries though it was located outside of the City walls. All sorts of legends were created surrounding its foundation. It was founded by Justinian in 559-560 who used the material left unused after the building of Hagia Sophia. In 1078 Alexios Komnenos met George Monomachatos, dux of Dyrrhachium, according to Anna Komnena (I, 16), and it was there that he had John Italos confined to put an end to a controversy which the latter aroused by his teaching in Constantinople. The monastery and the church were located next to the source of the miraculous spring which was reputed to have healing powers and was credited with miracles. The Church was decorated with magnificent mosaics depicting Crucifixion, Transfiguration, Hypapantos, and the Ascension among others. Its come was covered with pure gold. It was the object of Imperial procession for the Ascension as reported in the *Book of Ceremonies*. Its location was in the suburb of Kåsimpaşa. J 232-237.

THETOKOU TES CHRISOKAMARIOTISSES [35]
This monastery was founded by Andronikos Rogerios, sebastos and prokathemenos, in the 12th century. Theodore Balsamon left an epigram on the typikon and there is also a seal of its founder. J 251

THEOTOKOU TES PSYCHOSOSTIDOS or PSYCHOSOSTRIAS [36]
We do not know when this monastery was founded but it existed at the end of the 11th century. A document dated 1214 located it in the *Contrada Bella* or *Platea Pulchra*, but we have no idea where this street was. J 252

IASITOU [37]
We do not know when this monastery was founded and it is mentioned only in 1158 when an addition to the typikon of the Monastery of St. Mamas was written. Its location was in the Kocamustafapaşacami quarter. J 264

IOANNOU EN TO HEBDOMO [38]
While the church dates back to the 4th century we do not know when the monastery was founded. It could be that its founder was Basil II Bulgarooktonos who requested his brother Constantine to bury him in the monastery: "en to kata to Hebdomon nao tou euaggelistou kai theologou." In 1074 Nikephoros Nikephoritses, the all-poweful minister of Michael VII Doukas, received the monastery and its widespread gifts as a gift from the emperor. This grant was revoked by Nikephoros Botaneiates who gave the monastery to Maria, Michael VII's widow and her son Consantine. The *Book of Ceremonies* lists one of the Imperial processions as taking place on St John's nameday, May 8th. It was there that Patriarch Cosmas abdicated in 1081. Tentatively one can locate it between the Bakırköy station and a Turkish cemetery. J. 275-278

KALLISTRATOU [39]
This monastery dated back to the 6th century but was completely raised by Constantine V, but was completely rebuilt for Patriarch Paul IV (780-784) to retire to it after his deposition. Its head, Gregory, participated in the Second Council of Nicaea in 787. One of its monks, Sabas, Photius's disciple, was named the head of the great Monastery of the Forerunner (Prodromos), i.e. Stadiou in 865/866. It was still flourishing in the 10th century as the seal of its head proves. We know only that it was located in the west of the City. J 285-286

KANIKLEIOU [40]
This monastery was founded on the premises of the chancery presided by the keeper of the inkwell (epi to kanikleiou), but it was already a monastery in the middle of the 10th century when Romanos II Diogenes imprisoned in it his five sisters, though George Hamartolos seems to indicate that it was still a palace (*eis ton basilikon oikon ton legomenon Kanikleiou*). We do know that it was a monastery at the time of the coming to power of Alexios I Komenos in 1081 for his mother and the wives of him and his brother were interned in

the monastery (*ek to mones tou Kanikleiou*) by Nikephoros Botaneiates whom Alexios deposed. It was located on the Golden Horn, most probably in Odunkapı or Zindankapı. J 286-287

KARPOU KAI PAPILOU [41]
Though legend has it that Helen, mother of Constantine the Great, founded this monastery which was built in imitation of the original Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem, there is no evidence of this, but it does seem to be old since it was there in the 10th century. When Antony of Novgorod saw it it was a convent of nuns. Though various theories have been advanced about its location, the best we can say is that it was to the southwest of the 7th hill. J 288-289

KELLARAIAS [42]
This monastery appears only once in Byzantine documents: it was in the typikon of Theotokos Kecharitomenes given to this monastery by Eirene Doukas, the wife of Alexios I Komnenos in which it is specified that some of the nuns can be interred in Kallaraias. J thinks that its location is at present Odalarcami, i.e. on the summit of the Petra valley. J 290

KOSMA KAI DAMIANOU [43]
Nothing is known about this monastery except a mention in the appendix to the typikon of the Monastery of Lips newly restored by Empress Theodora, widow of Michael VIII Palaiologos. J points out that one should not confuse this monastery with Kosmidion. J 296

KOSMIDION [44]
J does not know whether Theodosius II was the founder of this monastery, but it existed already in 518, and Justinian repaired its church. In 996 Basil II deposed Patriarch of Antioch, Agapios, and gave him the Monastery of Cosmidion. Michael IV Paphlagonian (1034-1041) reconstructed the monastery and the church and endowed it with precious mosaics before retiring to it and dying shortly thereafter. Nicholas IV Muzalon was the head of this monastery before becoming Patriarch of Constantinople in 1151. In 1181 the Komnenoi, feeling endangered by Nikephoros III Botaneiates, took refuge in the monastery before leaving the capital (*The Alexiad* II.6). It should be located in Eyüp on the heights above the sea. J 296-300

KONSTANTINOU [45]
This was a convent of nuns located close to the cistern of Bonus. According to Antony of Novgorod it was close to the Pantokrator Monastery. J 307-308

LAZAROU [46]
Chroniclers attribute the foundation of this monastery to Leo VI the Sage, though some other sources claim it was Basil I the Macedonian who built the church where he put the relics of St Lazarus that came from Cyprus and of St

Mary Magdalene that came of Ephesus. According to Symeon the Magister this was in 899/900. In 1190 an anonymous English pilgrim wrote: "Iuxta monasterium sancta Dei genitricis *[Hodegetria] est monasterium sancti Lazari et ibi iacet sanctus Lazarus... et sancta Maria Magdalena et reliquie sancta Marthe et Marie sororis Lazari*." It was regularly visited by the Imperial court for the feast of St. Lazarus. It was located in the Topoi, i.e. the part of the Seraglio Point that looks east. J 309-310

LIBOS (LIPS) [47]
Though this is one of the oldest and most celebrated of Constantinopolitan monasteries nothing certain is known of its foundation. According to Constantine Porphyrogennetos, the founder was Constantine Lips, drongarios of the fleet, who died fighting the Bulgarians in 917. It thus seems that he was the founder. It was located close to the Church of the Holy Apostles. J states that its present location is Fenerisamesciti, i.e. the mosque of Fener Isa who transformed it into a mosque and died in 1496. J 318-321 citing van Millingen, 122-134.

MAMAS [48]
This monastery was built by Gordia, sister of Emperor Maurice, and both she and the Emperor were buried in its church. Its head in the 10th century was Symeon the New Theologian. Its typikon has been published and translated into English. All historians including van Millingen have placed it in Eyüp. J, however, follows P.J. Pargoire in distinguishing between the monastery and the church which was located inside the Great Palace. It was located close to the port of Xylokerkos, thus in the vicinity of the monastery of ton Stoudiou, St Andrew in Kriseis. J 325-331 citing J. Pargoire, "Les Saints-Mamas de Constantinople" in *Bulletin de l'Institut archéologique russe de Constantinople* IX (1904), 261-316. Its typikon is in BMFD III, 973-1041.

MANOUEL [49]
According to some sources, it was magistros Manuel, who died in 838, who founded this monastery. It was heavily damaged by the earthquake of 866/867. It was restored under Romanos Lekapenos (919-944). After being deposed in 1078 Michael VII Doukas lived in this monastery and died during Alexios I's reign. Its location should be sought near the cistern of Aspar and the monastery of St Matrona. J thinks that the Odalarcami mosque could be the church. J 331-333.

MICHAEL TES KATASKEPES [50]
This monastery was founded by Manuel Komnenos (1143-1180). It disappeared during the Latin occupation (1204-1261). It was well outside the City and could be on the site of Rumeli hissari. J 354-355
MICHAEL TO SOSTENIO [51]
Though this monastery cannot be attributed to Constantine the Great, its church dates back to the beginning of the 6th century. Its monastery was

founded later than the 9th century. It no longer exists but was found in the Stenia (Istinye) area close to the sea. J 359-363

MIRELAIOU [52]
Despite popular legends this monastery was founded by Romanos Lekapenos (919-945) who transformed his Palace of Myrelaion into a monastery. The latter served as the place of burial for his family, including that of Helen, wife of Constantine Porphyrogennetos, in 961. In the 10th century it was a convent. Anna Dalassena, mother of Alexios I Angelos, bestowed upon it the island of Leros. It is presently a mosque Bodrumcami, south east of Aksaray. J 364-366

MOKIOU [53]
Though its church was one of the most venerated it was not founded by Constantine the Great, as legend has it, but it did exist by 402, and Justinian made sure that it did not appear inferior compared to his more grandiose monuments. It was restored by Basil I the Macedonian. It is not known when a monastery was added to it, but it was perhaps at the time of Basil's restoration. Manuel Komnenos restored the ceiling of its refectory, which included the paintings of Alexios I, John, and Basil II Bulgaroktonos. Manuel gave one hundred pounds of gold to decorate its ceiling. St Mokios was the destination of one of the most important of Imperial ceremonies described in the *Book of Ceremonies* (1.17). It is not possible to give its location precisely but it was outside of the walls of Constantine, probably west of the cistern, in the quarter ta Kirou and near the Gate of St. Romanos. J 267-371

MOSELE [54]
Though mentioned in the twelfth century we do not know very much about this monastery prior to the 14th century. It was located close to Myrelaion and thus to the east of the Bodrumcami. J 371-372

NARSOU [55]
Though probably dating before the 11th century, its first mention is by Michael Psellos (1018-1079) who stated that he was born near it and was raised in it. An anonymous English traveller who visited Constantinople wrote in 1190: "Ad monasterium quod vocatur Nasu est imago sancta Marie quam pinxit Lucas evangelista dum adhuc viveret ipsa Dei genitrix." It was located in the quarter called ta Narsou identified with the present Yenikapı, i.e. the area descending from the Grand Bazaar to the Golden Horn. J 373

NIKOLAOU TOU MOLIBOTOU [56]
Constantine X Doukas was buried in this monastery in May of 1057. It was located close to the Golden Gate as Antony of Novgorod specified in 1200. J 386-387

NIKOLAOU [57]
This convent of nuns is mentioned in Eirene Doukas' typikon to Kecharitomene. It was thus located in the vicinity of the Chora. J. 387-388

OIKOPROASTEIA [58]
No location can be given of this monastery founded by Empress Theodora in 1056.
J 394

OIKOPROTEROU [59]
Nothing is known of this monastery except that its head was present at the reconciliation between the Synod and Metropolitan Leo of Chalcedon (1092) arranged by Alexios I.

OLOBOBON [60]
It is only mentioned in Isaac II Angelos' chrysobull to the Pisans of 1192. J 395

PANAGIOU [61]
We can date this monastery back to the beginning of the 11th century. It was noted for holiness and inspired Gregory Pakourianos when the latter founded his monastery in Petritzos (Bačkovo) and gave it a typikon in 1083 and decreed that a copy of it should be kept in this monastery in case of dispute. Following the Latin occupation it was totally in ruins and was transformed into a nunnery by Maria, the illegitimate daughter of Michael Paloiologos, under the name of Theotokos Panagiotissa. J 399-400

POLIELAIOU [62]
All we know of this monastery is that its head, hegumen John (who was also titled as *epi tou kanikleou*; J thinks he was a former head of the chancery) was present when the Synod and Metropolitan Leo of Chalcedon were reconciled under Alexios I in 1092. J 419

PRASIANOU [63]
At the reconciliation of the Synod and Leo, Metropolitan of Chancedon, in 1092 the head of this monastery was present. That is all we know about it. J 421

PROBOU, TARACHOU KAI ANDRONIKOU EN TOIS NARSOU [64]
In 1092 its head, Cyril, was present at the reconciliation between the Synod and Leo, Metropolitan of Chalcedon. It was mentioned as the monastery of St Prolius (sic), Tarachos and Andronikos by an anonymous English traveller in 1190. According to J, it was located on the slope that descends from the Grand Bazaar to the Golden Horn. J 422-423.

PRODROMOS TES MONES TOU LIBOS [65]
This monastery was probably founded at the beginning of the 10th century by Constantine Lips, *patrikios* and *drongarios* of the fleet, but it should not be confused with the more famous Lips Monastery. It fell into ruins during the

Latin occupation. It was restored by Theodora, widow of Michael VIII Palaiologos and mother of Andronikos II at the end of the 13th century. She gave it a typikon. Its present state is that of the mosque of Fenerisamesciti, at the bottom of the Lycus Valley. J 431-432

PRODROMOU EN TA PETRA [66]
This monastery became famous in the late Byzantine empire, but its origins are not certain. It was close to the Blachernae Palace and was visited by Manuel Komnenos. It is also mentioned by Antony of Novgorod in 1200. It possessed one of the richest libraries in Byzantium. Siderides gave a list of the following MSS: Library of Tübingen; Library of Vienna, codex of John Chrysostomos; Library of Sinai, codex 352; Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, codex Reg. 618; Royal Library of Munich, codex III (10th c.); Library of the monastery in Lemnos, codex 37 (11th c.); Library Chigi, codex R VII 50 (11th c.); codex Patmos 30 (11th c.), St Basil; Marciana, Venice, codex Cl. VII 25 (11th c.); Natinal Library, Athens, codex 57, gospels of the 11th or 12th century, copied and illuminated by hieromonk Kyros of the Monastery ton Nassion, once belonging to the Monastery of the Theotokos tou Skoutre; Bibliothèque Nationale of Paris, katechesis of St Theodore the Studite, written in 1136; Library of Escorial, codex ω III-15 (end of the 12th c.), various writings by St Athanasios; codex 265 of Patmos with the typikon of the Monastery of Theotokos ton Heliou Bomon; and the Vatican Library, MSS 434, 537, 565 and 647. J does not think that it was located in Bodansaray, abut rather between Bogdansary and Çukurbostan near the Adrianople Gate. J 435-443; X. A. Siderides' list in Hellenikos Filologikos Sillogos V. XXIX (1902), 252-253, note.

PRODROMOU EN TOIS STOUDIOU [67]
This is by far the most famous of all Byzantine monasteries in the City: commonly referred to as Studion or Stoudiou. It was founded by *patrikios* A. Stoudios in the Psamathia quarter leading to the Golden Gate. After it fell into ruins during the Iconoclastic period it revived following the Second Council of Nicea in 787. It was then brought to great heights by its head, Theodore, who turned it into the most intellectually renowned monastery in the capital. It served as a copying center and its monks who copied the MSS were excused from a part of divine services. The second Iconoclastic period fell heavily upon this monastery. Its typikon was one of the most imitated all over the Orthodox world. In particular it influenced Russia after its introduction in the second half of the 11th century. It was abandoned during the Latin occupation, but in the 14th century it held the first place again of all the monasteries of the City. After the Conquest its church was turned into a mosque Mirahor or Imrahor Camii and exists to this day. The monastery is in total ruin. Several deposed emperors retired to the monastery: Michael V Kalaphates in 1042, Isaac Komnenos (1059), Michael VIII Doukas in 1078. When Michael VIII Palaiologos took the City from the Latins in 1261, he entered the City through the Golden Gate, his entourage headed by the great Hodegetria Mother of

God ikon which he deposited in the Monastery where he stopped to worship, and from there he went on horse to Hagia Sophia. Both Stephen of Novgorod in 1350 and Ruy Gonzalez de Clavijo in 1402 commented on its church's richly decorated mosaics shining with gold. All of them have disappeared. J 444-455

PTERIGIOU [68]
One of the attendants of the reconciliation between the Synod and Leon, Metropolitan of Chalcedon, was the head of the Monastery of tou Pterigiou. That is all that is known—and neither is its location. J 460

SERGIOU KAI BAKCHOU [69]
The church was built by Justinian and its monastery was added later by the emperor for noble and illustrious men. It was located close to the Hippodrome and the Great Palace as attested by an anonymous English visitor: "*Suptus autem in ypodromio iuxta magnum palatium est monasterium martirum Sergii et Bacchi.*" In 1350 Stephen of Novgorod confirms its location: "No far from the Palace is located the convent of Sergius and Bacchus." In 1393 scribe Alexander wrote: "Close to Constantine's Imperial Palace is found the convent of St Sergius and Bacchus." After the Conquest it was turned into a mosque and is known as the Little Aya Sofia [*Küçükayasofya*].
J 466-470 and van Milligen, 62-83.

STEIROU [ST. MICHAEL] [70]
Pseudo-Kodinos mentions only a church, while Codex Paris. Suppl. Gr. 657 (13th c.) states that there was a monastery dedicated to St Michael. It was probably built by Basil I. In its monastery was buried Patriarch of Jerusalem Leontios I in 1190. J locates it on the first hill of the City. J 487

TARASIOU [71]
Patriarch Tarasios founded this monastery during his tenure of office (784-806). It is clear that in later centuries it was a convent of nuns, according to Antony of Novgorod: "There is a female convent where they buried Patriarch Tarasios." It was located between St Mamas in Beşiktaş and St Phocas in Ortaköy or between Anaplous and Sosthenion. According to J it was on the cape of Defterdarburnu. J 497-498

PHILOTHEOU [72]
At the reconciliation of Metropolitan Leo of Chalcedon with the Synod one of the present was a monk from the monastery of Philotheou. It was built between 1022 and 1053, according to the Life of Symeon the New Theologian. It was located in modern Arnavutköy. J 510

PHOCAS [73]
This monastery dates back to the second half of the 9th century, founded by the future emperor, Basil I. In 1092 its head Luke was present at the reconcili-

ation between Metropolitan Leo of Chalcedon and the Synod. According to J it was located in modern Ortaköy. J 514

CHRISTOU TOU AKATALEPTOU [TOU SOTEROS] [74]
We do not know its origin but it appears at the reconciliation between Metropolitan Leo and the Synod in 1092. According to the novella of Alexios I Komnenos this monastery was located "*kata ten Kamarin*". This would place it close to the acqueduct of Valens. According to J, it exists in the form of Kalenderhane Camisi near the University (Seraskerat). J 518-520

CHRISTOU TO EVERGETOU [75]
This is one of the great Komnenian foundations. Though it existed before it was completely restored by John Komnenos, protosebastos and megas dux. J has identified him as John Komnenos, son of Andronikos, brother of Emperor John Komnenos who perished in the Battle of Myriokephalon (1176). J located it in the region of ton Dexiokratous or more exactly close to the Church of St Theodosia which, according to J, formed a part of the monastery. It still exists as Gülcami.
J 522-524

CHRISTOU TOU PANOIKTIRMONOS [76]
In 1078 historian Michael Attaliates founded this monastery and gave it its typikon. Its name, "All Compassionate", served as Attaliates' retirement and he is mentioned as its head (hegoumenos) in Codex Vat. Gr. 342. J thinks its location is near the Chruch of St George en to Kiparissio where Michael Attaliates had his tomb.
J 526-527

CHRISTOU TOU PANTEPOPTOU [77]
This was the famous monastery dedicated to the "All-Seeing" Christ founded by Anna Dalassena, the other of Alexios I Komnenos. She retired to it and died shortly after. The date of her death is crucial for the argument of this study and has been established as before 1102, the earliest date when sebastokrator Isaac died. Its church still exists as a mosque Eki Imaret mesciti, but the monastery has disappeared.
J 527-529

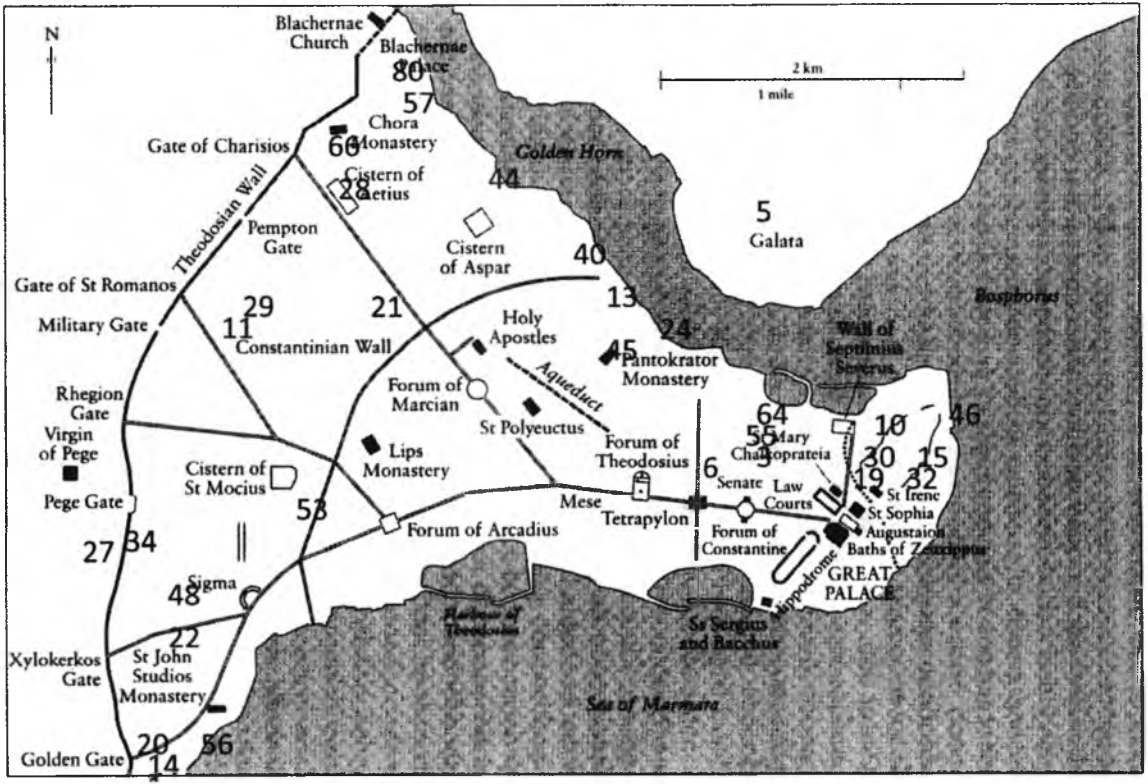
CHRISTOU TOU PANTOKRATOROS [THE PANTOKRATOR] [78]
This is the greatest foundation of the Komneni, built by John II Komnenos, according to Niketas Choniates, in 1137, but by his wife, Eirene, daughter of Ladislas of Hungary and John's first wife. But Eirene died in 1124 and the foundation was not ready before 1136. When John died in a hunting accident in 1143, his second son and designated successor, Manuel, had his older brother Isaac, imprisoned in the Pantokrator Monastery. After John's body arrived in Constantinople Manuel entered the City and freed his brother. In

1158 Manuel had his wife Eirene (Bertha) of Germany buried there. He too was buried there on September 24, 1180. His tomb of black marble with eight small domes on top of it was placed on the left side of the Church of St Michael. In front of it was the red marble stone on which Joseph of Arematheа and Nocodemus placed the body of Christ after it was taken from the cross in order to be embalmed. It was brought from Ephesus and Manuel carried it on his shoulders when it reached the City. Its typikon is noted for the details regarding its administration. Some of the decorations still exist, and the building has been partly changed into a museum. It still stands as Zeyrek Camii and is the finest surviving monument of the Komneni in the City itself. For an extended description see Chapter Seven. J 529-538; its typikon in Paul Gautier, "Le typikon du Christ Sauveur Pantocrator" in *Revue des etudes Byzantines* 32 (1974), 1-145, text on 27-131; English trans. in BMFD II, 725-781. Also Robert Ousterhout, "Architecture, Art and the Komnenian Ideology at the Pantokrator Monastery" in Nevra Neçipoglu, ed., *Byzantine Constantinople: Monuments, Topography and Everyday Life* [Papers from the International Workshop held at Boğaziçi University, Istanbul, 7-10 April, 1999] (Leiden, 2001), 133-150; E. Congdon, "Imperial Commemoration and Ritual in the *Typikon* of the Monastery of Christ Pantokrator" *Revue des études byzantines* 54 (1996), 161-199; A.H.S. Megaw, "Notes on Recent Work of the Byzantine Institute in Istanbul", *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 17 (1963), 333-364; and the bibliography in Wolfgang Müller-Wiener, *Bildlexikon zur Topographie Istanbuls* (Tübingen, 1977), 209-215.

CHRISTOU TOU POLIELAIOU [79]
At the reconciliation between the Synod and Leo, Metropolitan of Chalcedon, in 1092 John, the head of this monastery, was present. We do not know its location. J 538

CHRISTOU TOU PHILANTHROPOU [80]
This monastery was founded by Eirene Doukas, the wife of Alexios I Komnenos, according to the information found in the typikon given by the Empress to her foundation of Theotokos Kecharitomene. It already existed in 1107. The two monasteries were close to and connected with each other, separated only by a wall. The envoy of the German emperor, Lothar II, claimed in 1135 that it contained five hundred monks (!). It was located in the Deuteron district, close to the Blachernae and in the direction of the Gates of Adrianople (according to J). 539-541 citing R. Janin, "Les deux monastères du Christ Philanthrope à Constantinople", *Etudes Byzantines* IV (1946), 135-150

Map of Monasteries



Map: Plan of Constantinople. After John Haldon, Palgrave Atlas of Byzantine History (Basingstoke, 2005), p. 40

INDEX ONE
ALL IMPERIALS

This Index contains entries on all the known, i.e. identified imperials. All the anonymous Komneni etc. have been left out (though they are referred to within entries when the known imperials married them). It follows that the number of all imperials is higher, but there is no point in listing the anonymous ones. Anyhow, at least for the Komneni they are included in Vartzos. The abbreviations are as follows:

b. = born
d. = died when followed by a date, daughter when giving relationship
m. = married
s. = son
K. = Komnenos [followed by entry number in Vartzos]
D. = Doukas [followed by entry number in Polemis]
S = Skoulatos [followed by entry number]
V = Vartzos (or Bartzos) [followed by entry number]

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INDEX TWO
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b. = born
d. = died when followed by a date, daughter when giving relationship
m. = married
s. = son
K. = Komnenos [followed by entry number in Vartzos]
D. = Doukas [followed by entry number in Polemis]
S = Skoulatos [followed by entry number]
V = Vartzos (or Bartzos) [followed by entry number]

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