

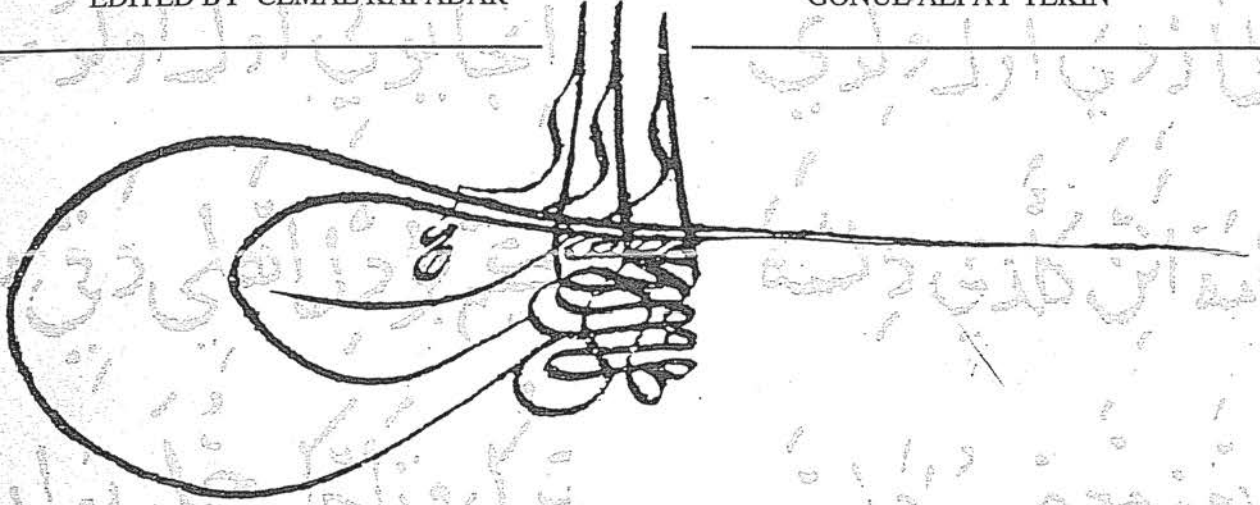
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THE SOCIAL TOPOGRAPHY OF LATE BYZANTINE CONSTANTINOPLE: EVIDENCE FROM THE PATRIARCHAL REGISTER

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With few exceptions, modern scholarship on the city of Constantinople has tended to focus on the early and middle Byzantine periods. The small number of scholarly works devoted to late Byzantine Constantinople (Fig. 1), on the other hand, display a strong tendency to treat only the initial phase of the Palaiologan period corresponding to the reigns of Michael VIII (r. 1261–1282) and Andronikos II (r. 1282–1328), which is marked by considerable construction and restoration activity throughout the city.¹ The general lack of scholarly interest in Palaiologan Constantinople is no doubt related, first, to the large-scale destruction undergone by the city during and in the aftermath of the Fourth Crusade and, secondly, to the dominant perception of the Palaiologan period as one of continuous decline and deterioration. The specific neglect of the later Palaiologan period, in turn, may be attributed to the emphasis of modern scholars on newly built and restored structures in the city, which ceased to be undertaken on a monumental scale after about the middle of the fourteenth century, mainly due to the economic hardships of the time.² In this context, shifting our focus away from construction and reconstruction activity to aspects of social topography —i.e., to the already existent lived

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¹ See, for instance, Alice-Mary Talbot, "The Restoration of Constantinople under Michael VIII," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 47 (1993): 243–61; eadem, "Building Activity in Constantinople under Andronikos II: The Role of Women Patrons in the Construction and Restoration of Monasteries," in *Byzantine Constantinople: Monuments, Topography and Everyday Life*, ed. Nevra Necipoğlu (Leiden, 2001), 329–43; Vassilios Kidonopoulos, *Bauten in Konstantinopel 1204–1328* (Wiesbaden, 1994). Although the more recent article of Vassilios Kidonopoulos, "The Urban Physiognomy of Constantinople from the Latin Conquest through the Palaiologan Era," in *Byzantium: Faith and Power (1261–1557). Perspectives on Late Byzantine Art and Culture*, ed. Sarah T. Brooks (New York–New Haven–London, 2006), 98–117, covers in principle the entire Palaiologan period, it offers only a cursory treatment of the years after the reigns of the first two Palaiologan emperors, devoting a mere page and a half to the period from 1328 to 1453.

² To be excluded from the observation above are works by Klaus-Peter Matschke, whose interest in Constantinople is not confined to the early Palaiologan period, and recent studies by Claudia Barsanti and Arne Effenberger on the fifteenth-century Florentine traveler Cristoforo Buondelmonti's *Liber insularum archipelagi*. See Klaus-Peter Matschke, *Das spätbyzantinische Konstantinopel. Alte und neue Beiträge zur Stadtgeschichte zwischen 1261 und 1453* (Hamburg, 2008); Claudia Barsanti, "Costantinopoli e l'Egeo nei primi decenni del XV secolo: la testimonianza di Cristoforo Buondelmonti," *Rivista dell'Istituto Nazionale d'Archeologia e Storia dell'Arte* 56 (2001): 83–254, esp. 169ff; Arne Effenberger, "Die Illustrationen – Topographische Untersuchungen: Konstantinopel / Istanbul und ägäische Örtlichkeiten," in *Cristoforo Buondelmonti, Liber insularum archipelagi. Universitäts- und Landesbibliothek Düsseldorf Ms. G 13: Faksimile*, ed. Irmgard Siebert and Max Plassmann (Wiesbaden, 2005), 13–104. See also the useful chapter on the spatial organization of fifteenth-century Constantinople in a book originally published in Greek in 2007 and now available in English translation: Tonia Kiousopoulou, *Emperor or Manager: Power and Political Ideology in Byzantium before 1453*, trans. Paul Magdalino (Geneva, 2011), 13–26.

environment— may provide an alternative approach which can help overcome the present bias in favor of the early Palaiologan period and contribute to our knowledge of what the Byzantine capital looked like and how it functioned as an urban center during the last two centuries preceding its fall to the Ottomans in 1453.

This paper aims to shed some light on the social topography of fourteenth- and fifteenth-century Constantinople, using one particular group of documents as source material; namely, the contemporary acts of the patriarchal tribunal of Constantinople.³ I first became acquainted with these important documents in one of Angeliki Laiou's graduate seminars at Harvard University back in the 1980s, which is why for the present volume dedicated to her memory I thought it would be appropriate to write on a topic that highlights the evidence they provide. What is presented here is actually part of a still ongoing project, which will take into consideration, besides the patriarchal acts, a wide range of Byzantine, western, and Ottoman sources, including monastic and archival documents, narrative histories, short chronicles, travelers' accounts, letters, and rhetorical works. There is unfortunately scanty archaeological evidence about late Byzantine Constantinople which can help enhance —or at least corroborate— the data provided by the written sources. For the period covered here, nothing exists that is comparable, for instance, to the spectacular recent finds at Yenikapı, on the site of the early Byzantine harbor of Theodosius. Hence, one must rely very heavily on written evidence. On the other hand, mention ought to be made of occasional pieces of visual evidence, such as the representations of fifteenth-century Constantinople found in different manuscripts of Cristoforo Buondelmonti's *Liber insularum archipelagi* (Figs. 2 and 3), the earliest of which date from the 1420s.⁴ Despite their differences, the Buondelmonti maps illustrate certain basic traits that we commonly associate with late Palaiologan Constantinople. Most importantly, they show us a city which is sparsely populated and sparsely built up, with clusters of buildings that are unevenly dispersed within the urban space enclosed by walls, yet with a much greater concentration along the Golden Horn and near the Blachernae Palace to the north and northwest of the city.

The patriarchal acts contain valuable information pertaining to the Golden Horn area, which served as the main commercial zone as well as the preferred residential center of Palaiologan Constantinople, in continuation of a trend that was established during the Komnenian period. In this context, it may be worth recalling that the Golden Horn shore, which had been the original economic center and the most densely populated area of early Byzantine Constantinople, remained largely underused during ca. 550-ca. 1050, when most commercial establishments and residences gravitated towards the city's southern coast along the Sea of Marmara. From the late eleventh

³ On the value of these documents as sources for the religious, social, and economic history of Late Byzantium, see the essays by Johannes Preiser-Kapeller, Christian Gastgeber, Ekaterina Mitsiou, Christof Kraus, Carolina Cupane, Klaus-Peter Todt, and Mihailo Popović published in *Historicum* 96 (2008).

⁴ On the Buondelmonti maps of Constantinople, see the works cited above in note 2, with references to earlier literature. For an analysis of these maps in the context of the city's changing cultural meaning and identity after 1453, see now Çiğdem Kafescioğlu, *Constantinopolis / Istanbul: Cultural Encounter, Imperial Vision, and the Construction of the Ottoman Capital* (University Park, Pennsylvania, 2009), 144-54.

century onwards, however, this tendency was reversed and the northern coast was revived and revitalized, mainly in association with the establishment of Italian colonies on the Golden Horn by virtue of the trading privileges granted by Komnenian emperors. The Italian colonies stimulated a massive relocation of commercial activity, as well as settlers, to the northern coast of Constantinople. Meanwhile, a parallel shift can be observed in the rise of the Blachernae Palace, located in the northwestern part of the city, as the favored imperial residence of the Komnenian dynasty, which henceforth overshadowed the Great Palace.⁵ Thus the Palaiologan period saw the continuation of these developments, and the acts of the patriarchal tribunal of Constantinople are among the most important sources that bear testimony to this fact.

Of particular significance in the Golden Horn region was the quarter of Kynegos, along with the gate carrying the same name, which figure in several documents from the patriarchal register. For example, an act dating from March 1400 gives evidence of a perfume workshop (*myrepsikon ergasterion*) located near the Gate of Kynegos, which the aristocratic entrepreneur Nicholas Sophianos purchased for 200 *hyperpyra*.⁶ Another act from the same year refers to taverns (*kapelika ergasteria*) in the Kynegos quarter that belonged to a tavern-keeper by the name of Stylianos Chalkeopoulos. Of his taverns, two small ones are reported to have a value of 69 *hyperpyra*, while the value of the large one is stated to be 225 *hyperpyra*.⁷ Incidentally, taverns situated alongside the Golden Horn (if not precisely in the Kynegos quarter) are known to us from other sources as well. A fifteenth-century text attributed to John Argyropoulos, for instance, refers to taverns (*kapeleia*) concentrated on the shore around the Plateia Gate, singling out among them the tavern of a certain Goudeles as the place where “the finest Cretan wine” was sold in the 1430s.⁸ A tavern also run by a Goudeles is mentioned in an earlier source, which states that the Genoese podestà of Pera bought his wine there in 1390.⁹ If the two taverns are indeed identical (as is often presumed),¹⁰ they can appropriately be regarded as a

⁵ Paul Magdalino, “The Maritime Neighborhoods of Constantinople: Commercial and Residential Functions, Sixth to Twelfth Centuries,” *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 54 (2000): 209–26 [reprinted in idem, *Studies on the History and Topography of Byzantine Constantinople* (Aldershot, 2007), Study III]. Cf. Cyril Mango, “The Development of Constantinople as an Urban Centre,” in *The 17th International Byzantine Congress. Main Papers* (New Rochelle, N.Y., 1986), 117–33, esp. 132 [reprinted in idem, *Studies on Constantinople* (Aldershot, 1993), Study I]. On the Italian colonies, see also Albrecht Berger, “Zur Topographie der Ufergegend am Goldenen Horn in der byzantinischen Zeit,” *Istanbuler Mitteilungen* 45 (1995): 149–65.

⁶ Franz Miklosich and Joseph Müller, *Acta et diplomata graeca medii aevi sacra et profana*, 6 vols. (Vienna, 1860–90) [hereafter: MM], 2:358–59 (no. 555). For Nicholas Sophianos, see Erich Trapp et al., *Prosopographisches Lexikon der Palaiologenzeit* (Vienna, 1976–94), no. 26412. Perfume workshops are also attested ca. 1340 at the nearby Gate of Saint John Prodromos on the Golden Horn. See *Actes de Lavra*, ed. P. Lemerle, A. Guillou, N. Svoronos, and D. Papachryssanthou, 4 vols. (Paris, 1970–82), 3:24 (no. 123). The same Athonite document mentions various other shops, workshops, warehouses, money-changing booths, as well as houses, which demonstrate the highly developed commercial and residential role of this upper (i.e., western) section of the Golden Horn shore, roughly corresponding to modern Balat. (See Fig. 1.)

⁷ MM, 2:452–54 (no. 617). This act has been dated to 20 December 1400 by Jean Darrouzès, *Les registres des actes du patriarcat de Constantinople*, I/6: *Les actes des patriarches. Les registres de 1377 à 1410* (Paris, 1979), 408.

⁸ Pierre Canivet and Nicolas Oikonomidès (ed. and trans.), “[Jean Argyropoulos], La comédie de Katablattas: invective byzantine du XVe s.,” *Δίπτυχα* 3 (1982–83): 67–69. The Plateia Gate (see Fig. 1) is the Ottoman Un Kapani Gate.

⁹ Spyridon Lampros, “Ο βυζαντινὸς οἶκος Γουδέλη,” *Νέος Ἑλληνομνήμων* 13 (1916): 216–17.

¹⁰ See, for instance, Nevra Necipoğlu, *Byzantium between the Ottomans and the Latins: Politics and Society in the Late Empire* (Cambridge, 2009), 210.

perfect symbol of the cosmopolitan commercial character of Palaiologan Constantinople's Golden Horn shore, where the Byzantines, the Venetians, and the Genoese came together for their business transactions. Nonetheless, even if the Golden Horn region appears to have had a concentration of taverns, it was naturally not the only area for such establishments. A patriarchal document dating from March 1400 makes reference, for instance, to a tavern situated at Vlanga, on the southern shore of Constantinople along the Sea of Marmara.¹¹

Concerning the Kynegos quarter, another patriarchal act provides precious details about residential life in this neighborhood at the time of the first Ottoman blockade by Bayezid I (1394–1402). The document informs us of an abandoned estate which belonged to a certain Mavrommates, who presumably fled the city during the siege. The estate consisted of a house and an adjoining land which had vines and trees planted on it. In Mavrommates' absence, his sister-in-law demolished the house and uprooted the land, perhaps intending to make improvements or for some other unstated reason. Then, around 1399 or earlier, the owner of a garden adjacent to Mavrommates' estate, the *oikeios* of the emperor Markos Palaiologos Iagaris, stepped in and started cultivating wheat on his departed neighbor's land. In May 1401, because of Mavrommates' prolonged absence, the patriarchal court sanctioned Iagaris' act of appropriation, granting the latter permission to continue using the neighboring land in return for an annual fee of one *hyperpyron*. A noteworthy detail to consider is the complaint raised by Iagaris about robbers who frequented the place, in response to which he obtained the patriarchal court's authorization for a fence he had built around the property for protection against them.¹²

...Markos Palaiologos Iagaris reported that near his garden in Kynegos were the dwellings (οικήματα) of Mavrommates, who is still away from home, and, moreover, an area (τόπος) planted with vines and trees, which have been destroyed by his [Mavrommates'] sister-in-law, the nun Petraleiphina...; and because the vines and the trees have been uprooted by her, the place was left both deserted and open for use by passers-by, from which suffering much damage ... since robbery often took place there ... he put a fence around the area and cleared up the place ... and sowed it [with wheat]...

The passage quoted above and the rest of the document from which it is extracted bear testimony to rising insecurity as well as to increased ruralization within the besieged city. It is true that gardens and vineyards had always existed in medieval Constantinople, but in the late fourteenth and fifteenth centuries their cultivation appears to have become more intensive, as the possibility of agricultural production outside the city walls declined, together with declining food imports, under the growing

¹¹ MM, 2:367 (no. 558). See also MM, 2:440–41, 533 (nos. 608, 668) for two other taverns in Constantinople with unspecified location. On Vlanga, see Albrecht Berger, "Der Langa Bostanı in Istanbul," *Istanbul Mitteilungen* 43 (1993): 467–77.

¹² MM, 2:497–99 (no. 649). This act, wrongly dated October 1400 by Miklosich and Müller, has been redated May 1401 by Darrouzès, *Regestes*, I/6, 433. For Markos Palaiologos Iagaris, see Trapp et al., *Prosopographisches Lexikon*, no. 7811.

threat of the Ottomans. At times of extreme crisis like Bayezid I's blockade, when food shortages affected nearly all the citizens, we also find that productive lands inside the city were put to new uses, as indicated by the transformation of Mavrommates' orchard or vineyard into a wheat field in the case cited above. That wheat cultivation became more widely practiced within Constantinople at this time is suggested by the Castilian ambassador Clavijo as well, who observed the existence of many wheat fields inside the walls during his visit to the city in 1403.¹³ Furthermore, the patriarchal acts contain some data regarding prices, based on which it can be postulated that productive land inside the besieged city became more expensive, as I have previously argued elsewhere.¹⁴ In this context, a noteworthy piece of evidence that is directly relevant to the Golden Horn region concerns a vineyard near the cistern of Saint John Prodromos, for which an extremely high price was assessed during a court case at the time of the siege, confirming the economic value and particular importance of this site.¹⁵

The evidence presented so far, bearing primarily on the Kynegos quarter and its vicinity, has highlighted two major characteristics of late Byzantine Constantinople: the coexistence of commercial and residential spaces on the one hand, and the coexistence of urban and rural spaces on the other. Patriarchal acts related to other sections of the Golden Horn, too, contain similar references to workshops near houses, and/or to houses with vineyards and gardens attached to them. So, for instance, at the Phanarion quarter (*topothesia tou Phanariou*) to the southeast of the gates of Kynegos and Saint John Prodromos, the properties belonging to the Panagiotissa convent dedicated to the Virgin of the Mongols included houses (*ospetia*), a bath (*loutros*), gardens (*peribolia*), and vineyards (*ampelonoi*) according to an act drawn up in October 1351.¹⁶ Further east, near the Small Gate (*Mikra Pyle*), on the other hand, a building complex which is described in a document of November 1360 consisted of houses (*oikemata*), a bakery (*mankipeion*), a garden and a courtyard (*peribolion kai aule*), and three workshops (*ergasteria*) on "the public road" (*demosia odos*).¹⁷

¹³ Ruy González de Clavijo, *Embajada a Tamorlán*, ed. Francisco López Estrada (Madrid, 1999), 143. See the first lines of the passage quoted below.

¹⁴ Nevra Necipoğlu, "Economic Conditions in Constantinople during the Siege of Bayezid I (1394-1402)," in *Constantinople and its Hinterland*, ed. Cyril Mango and Gilbert Dagron (Aldershot, 1995), 157-167; eadem, *Byzantium between the Ottomans and the Latins*, 152-54.

¹⁵ MM, 2:349, no. 550 (Nov. 1397). The vineyard in question had an area of 16 2/3 *mouzouria* (= *modioi*) and was priced 500 *hyperpyra* (i.e., 30 *hyperpyra* per *modios*). Cf. Cécile Morrisson and Jean-Claude Cheynet, "Prices and Wages in the Byzantine World," in *The Economic History of Byzantium. From the Seventh through the Fifteenth Century*, ed. Angeliki E. Laiou, 3 vols. (Washington, D.C., 2002), 2:833 and n. 50. It may be noted that ca. 1420 Buondelmonti observed the use of some cisterns in Constantinople for vine cultivation and production of wine: *Description des îles de l'Archipel par Christophe Buondelmonti*, ed. and trans. E. Legrand (Paris, 1897), 88.

¹⁶ *Das Register des Patriarchats von Konstantinopel*, vol. 3, ed. J. Koder, M. Hinterberger, O. Kresten et al. (Vienna, 2001), 66 (no. 184) = MM, 1:312 (no. 136). On this convent and its possessions, see Kidonopoulos, *Bauten*, 88-90; Kostis Smyrliis, *La fortune des grands monastères byzantins (fin du Xe-milieu du XIVe siècle)* (Paris, 2006), 68-69.

¹⁷ *Das Register des Patriarchats von Konstantinopel*, 3:250ff (no. 218) = MM, 1:391ff (no. 173). The location of the *Mikra Pyle* is disputed. Some scholars place it between the Petrion and Basilike gates, identifying it with the Gate of Dexiokratous or that of Saint Theodosia, while others have proposed an identification with the Gate of Saint Anastasia: see Nicolas Oikonomidès, *Hommes d'affaires grecs et latins à Constantinople (XIIIe-XVe siècles)* (Montreal-Paris, 1979), 97-98, n. 177; Klaus-Peter Matschke, "The Late Byzantine Urban Economy, Thirteenth-Fifteenth Centuries," in *Economic History of Byzantium*, ed. Laiou, 472.

The patriarchal acts provide similar information concerning other parts of late Byzantine Constantinople, which were less densely inhabited and less commercialized than the Golden Horn shore, but where we find occasional references to businesses related particularly to everyday needs. Thus, in the center of the city, “at the so-called Old Forum” (*peri ton legomenon Palaion Phoron*), which is most probably the Forum of Constantine, the aforementioned convent of Panagiotissa, or “of the Mongols,” possessed a bakery with two mules as well as two vineyards according to an act dating from 1351.¹⁸ It is quite likely, but not definite, that book trade was also undertaken at the Forum of Constantine in the late Byzantine period, since a hieromonk signed in May 1389 a document promising that he would no longer sell books “at the forum.”¹⁹ We may thus infer from the last two documents that at least part of the city’s old commercial district centered on the Mese continued to play some role in public and commercial life during the Palaiologan period, despite the development of the northern shore of Constantinople at this time. Meanwhile the reference to vineyards at the Constantinian Forum is a clear sign of the tendency towards increased ruralization, which is in line with the trend we have seen in other parts of the late Byzantine city. Further west along the Mese, near the monastery of Myrelaion, an estate comprising a courtyard with several buildings and a vineyard, which is attested in a document dated February 1400, points in the same direction.²⁰

An interesting piece of evidence comes from a court case in July 1324 involving two brothers-in-law who lived in houses next to each other overlooking the “imperial road,” which must probably refer to the Mese. When one of them (Kalonymites) decided to build an additional floor to his one-story house, the other (Isaakios Eutheiotokios, who lived together with his father-in-law in a presumably two-storied house) objected on the grounds that thereby his view would be blocked and his windows totally shut off. In the end, an agreement was reached according to which Isaakios and his father-in-law were to receive part of Kalonymites’ new floor as an attachment to their own house, thus resolving the problem of the obstruction of their view and the blockage of their windows.²¹ We do know from earlier Byzantine imperial legislation relating to urban planning in Constantinople that the idea of not obstructing a neighbor’s view had been common, yet it was directly associated with a view of the sea, as in the sixth-century treatise of Julian of Ascalon from Palestine.²² What is quite interesting in the present case at hand is the application of this idea to a land view of the Mese.

¹⁸ *Das Register des Patriarchats von Konstantinopel*, 3:68 (no. 184) = MM, 1:313 (no. 136). The mules mentioned in connection with the bakery point to the existence of an *in situ* mill for grinding the flour for bread. According to the same document, the convent possessed another bakery with two mules at an unidentified location. On mule-operated mills inside medieval Constantinople, see Smyrlis, *Fortune des grands monastères*, 119-120, n. 181.

¹⁹ MM, 2:134 (no. 408/1): “...ὁμολογῶ, ὅτι ... ἀλλ’ οὐδὲ πωλήσω ποτὲ εἰς φόρον βιβλία...” See Oikonomidēs, *Hommes d'affaires*, 101-2 and n 195.

²⁰ MM, 2:354-55 (no. 553).

²¹ *Das Register des Patriarchats von Konstantinopel*, vol. 1, ed. Herbert Hunger, Otto Kresten et al., (Vienna, 1981), 444-48 (no. 76) = MM, 1:107-8 (no. 57.iv). For the identification of the βασιλικὴ ὁδός with the Mese, see Kidonopoulos, *Bauten*, 184.

²² Magdalino, “Maritime Neighborhoods of Constantinople,” 210.

Documents from the patriarchal register offer us some glimpses of social and economic life at particular points along the land walls of Constantinople, too. Thus, from a document dated May 1341, we learn about an aristocratic house that was located in the neighborhood of the Gate of Saint Romanos, near which its owner, the late *domestikos* Phokas Maroules, had built a private nunnery around the beginning of the fourteenth century. The nunnery, built upon the foundations of an old and ruined church dedicated to the martyr saints Menodora, Nymphodora, and Metrodora, was converted after Maroules' death into a male monastery by his son, the *prothierakarios* John Synadenos. When the latter died, however, Maroules' wife appealed to the patriarchal court and gained authorization for its transformation back into a nunnery.²³ As late as August 1400, the establishment was still in existence as a nunnery.²⁴ In yet another document related to the neighborhood of Saint Romanos, we hear this time about a vineyard near the church of the Ascension, which an impoverished aristocrat, the *oikeios* Michael Palaiologos, was forced to sell in November 1401 in order to pay his debts and to protect his wife and child in famine-stricken Constantinople under Bayezid I's blockade.²⁵ It is once again in the context of Bayezid's siege that we are informed of a smithy located near the Gate of Charisios, the owner of which suffered serious financial hardships during 1399-1400.²⁶ Based on this evidence, Matschke has plausibly argued that some of the economic establishments along the land walls and gates may have combined military and civilian functions.²⁷

In his chapter on medieval Constantinople in the *Economic History of Byzantium*, Paul Magdalino succinctly described the city in the Palaiologan period as "a ruralized network of scattered nuclei."²⁸ This is precisely the image conveyed by our brief survey of the evidence drawn from the patriarchal register, as well as the Buondelmonti maps, showing us dispersed clusters of buildings, as stated at the opening of this paper. In a well-known passage which may be considered the literary counterpart of the Buondelmonti maps, Clavijo, who visited Constantinople in late 1403, accurately described it as follows:

Though the circuit of the walls is very great and the area spacious, the city is not throughout very densely populated. There are within its compass many hills and valleys where wheat fields and vineyards are found, and among the orchard lands there are hamlets and suburbs which are all included within the city limits. The most populous quarter of the city is along the lower level by the shore towards the point that juts into the Sea [of Marmora]. The trading quarter of the city is down by

²³ *Das Register des Patriarchats von Konstantinopel*, vol. 2, ed. H. Hunger, O. Kresten, E. Kislinger, C. Cupane et al. (Vienna, 1995), 272ff (no. 135) = MM, 1:221ff (no. 98). For the convent, see Kidonopoulos, *Bauten*, 65-67. For Phokas Maroules and John Synadenos, see Trapp et al., *Prosopographisches Lexikon*, nos. 17157 and 27123. On the land walls of Constantinople in general, see now Neslihan Asutay-Effenberger, *Die Landmauer von Konstantinopel-Istanbul* (Berlin-New York, 2007).

²⁴ MM, 2:424 (no. 597).

²⁵ MM, 2:557-58 (no. 678). See Necipoğlu, *Byzantium between the Ottomans and the Latins*, 163.

²⁶ MM, 2:326-28, 372-74 (nos. 536 and 562).

²⁷ Matschke, "The Late Byzantine Urban Economy," 473.

²⁸ Paul Magdalino, "Medieval Constantinople: Built Environment and Urban Development," in *Economic History of Byzantium*, ed. Laiou, 2:536.

the gates which open on the strand [of the Golden Horn] and which are facing the opposite gates which pertain to the city of Pera: for it is here that the galleys and smaller vessels come to port to discharge their cargoes: and here by the strand it is that the people of Pera meet those of Constantinople and transact their business and commerce. Everywhere throughout the city there are many great palaces, churches and monasteries, but most of them are now in ruin ... In a street that leads to a gate—of those that open out towards Pera—is seen the Exchange (*los cambios*)... Along the strand by the water side [of the Golden Horn] outside the city wall and facing Pera there are innumerable warehouses and shops for the sale of all sorts of goods. Hither the traders bring and store the merchandise that comes in from overseas...²⁹

It is important, before concluding, to discuss also the shortcomings of the patriarchal acts as sources for the social topography of late Byzantine Constantinople. These are difficult documents to use by themselves and raise methodological problems, first and foremost, because of the patchy and sporadic nature of the evidence they offer. Secondly, urban structures are frequently mentioned in them without designation of a location, which renders the information useless in terms of placing it on the social-topographic map of the city. Also noteworthy is the fact that some patriarchal documents offer precious information on ordinary houses in Constantinople,³⁰ yet when it comes to aristocratic housing, except for tidbits of information,³¹ they provide no evidence matching what we know about the palaces of the aristocracy from other sources, both written and visual, such as that of George Goudeles in the area of the Forum of Theodosius, converted by him into a poorhouse and hospital,³² or the magnificent pillared house of Theodore (Palaiologos) Kantakouzenos “in the finest section” of Constantinople,³³ or that of Loukas Notaras with its tall tower³⁴ (Fig. 4). Likewise, the patriarchal acts provide, as we have seen, plenty of references to shops and workshops throughout the city, yet these cannot by any means measure up to the description, found in the fifteenth-century text attributed to John Argyropoulos, of the food market along the Golden Horn, which stretched outside the sea walls between the Small Gate (*Mikra Pyle*) and the Imperial Gate (*Basilike Pyle*), and included, in order, fishmongers (*ichthyoprateron agora*), greengrocers (*lathanopolidas*), cheese sellers (*tyropolous*), caviar sellers (*ootarichopolous*), dealers in preserved meat (*kreotarichopolous*),

²⁹ Clavijo, *Embajada a Tamorlán*, ed. Estrada, 142–44. The translation is from Guy Le Strange, *Clavijo, Embassy to Tamerlane, 1403–1406* (London, 1928), 87–89, which I have slightly altered. Clavijo’s description of Pera, too, closely parallels the Buondelmonti maps: “Pera is but a small township, but very populous. It ... has excellent houses, all well built.” Clavijo, trans. Le Strange, 89. On descriptions of late Byzantine Constantinople by western travelers, see Michael Angold, “The Decline of Byzantium Seen Through the Eyes of Western Travellers,” in *Travel in the Byzantine World*, ed. Ruth Macrides (Aldershot, 2002), 213–32.

³⁰ E.g., MM, 2:341 (no. 543); 2:355–58 (no. 554), etc.

³¹ E.g., MM, 2:385–86 (no. 570); 2:393 (no. 577), etc.

³² *Johannes Chortasmenos (ca.1370–ca.1436/37). Briefe, Gedichte und kleine Schriften.*, ed. Herbert Hunger (Vienna, 1969), 157–59. On Goudeles’ house, see now Jonathan Harris, “The Goudelis Family in Italy after the Fall of Constantinople,” *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 33.2 (2009): 168–179.

³³ *Johannes Chortasmenos*, ed. Hunger, 190–92, 194–95. See Necipoğlu, *Byzantium between the Ottomans and the Latins*, 197–98; Neslihan Asutay, “Wer erbaute Mermer-Kule?” *Byzantion* 72 (2002): 270–75.

³⁴ *Ducas, Istoria Turco-Bizantină (1341–1462)*, ed. V. Grecu (Bucharest, 1858), XXXIX.26, p. 371. See Effenberger, “Die Illustrationen,” 41.

and fruit sellers (*oporopolounton*), and then continued with butchers (*makelle*) alongside a road that turned inland at the Imperial Gate.³⁵

In fact, one can hardly expect to get a full picture of Constantinople in the Palaiologan period even after the entire corpus of Byzantine and contemporary Latin sources have been exploited to the full. Yet one solution to this problem might be to use Ottoman sources of the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, such as the *kadı* registers, *vakfiyes*, and most importantly, the Ottoman survey of 1455, of which the long awaited study by Professor Halil İnalcık, with facsimile, English translation, notes, and commentary, is expected to appear before the end of 2011.

³⁵ Canivet and Oikonomidès (ed. and trans.), "[Jean Argyropoulos], La comédie de Katablattas," 55-57. Cf. Oikonomidès, *Hommes d'affaires*, 97-100. An anonymous Russian pilgrim to Constantinople at the end of the fourteenth century refers to this large market area on the Golden Horn as the Basilike ("imperial") market. See George P. Majeska, *Russian Travelers to Constantinople in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries* (Washington, D.C., 1984), 150; cf. 353-54.

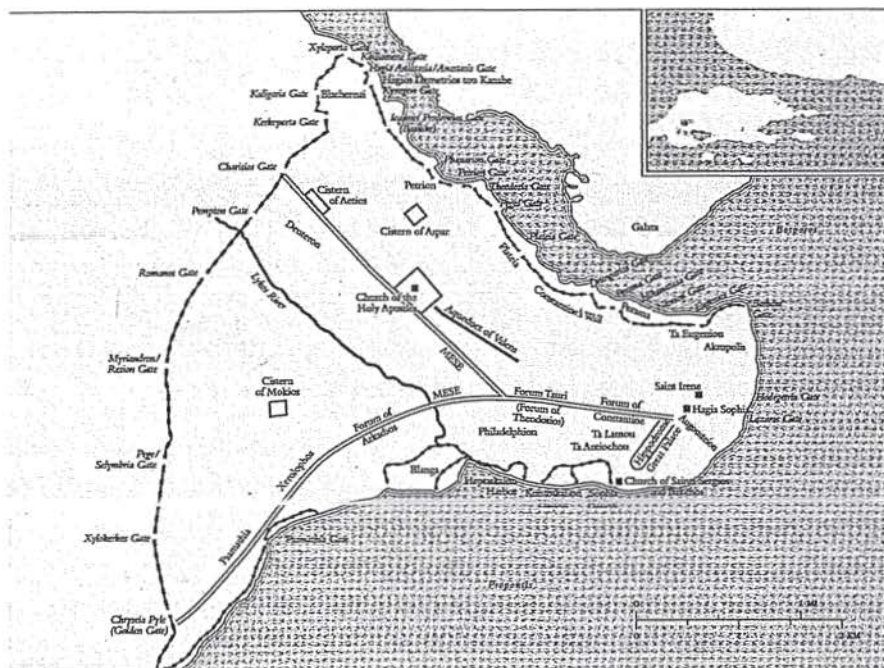


Fig. 1: Constantinople during the Palaiologan Period
 [After V. Kidonopoulos, "The Urban Physiognomy of Constantinople from the Latin Conquest through the Palaiologan Era," in *Byzantium: Faith and Power (1261-1557). Perspectives on Late Byzantine Art and Culture*, ed. S. T. Brooks (New York-New Haven-London. 2006). 100. fig. 59.]



Fig. 2: Map of Constantinople in Cristoforo Buondelmonti's *Liber insularum archipelagi*. Biblioteca nazionale Marciana, Venice, Ms. cod. Marc. lat. xiv, 25=4595, fol. 123r. [After H. Evans, ed., *Byzantium. Faith and Power (1261-1557)* (New York-New Haven-London, 2004), 401, cat. 246.]

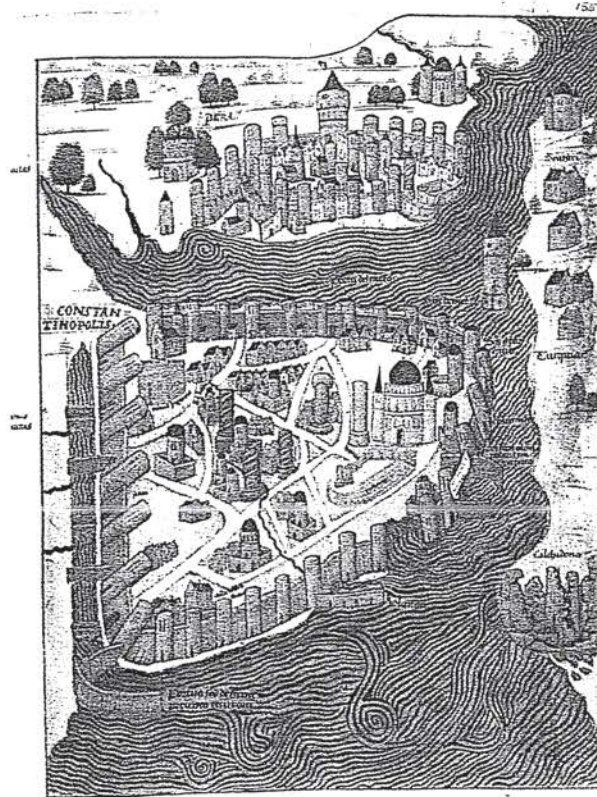


Fig. 3: Map of Constantinople in Cristoforo Buondelmonti's *Liber insularum archipelagi*. British Library, London, Ms. Arundel 93, fol. 155r. [After N. Necipoğlu, *Byzantium between the Ottomans and the Latins* (Cambridge, 2009), jacket.]

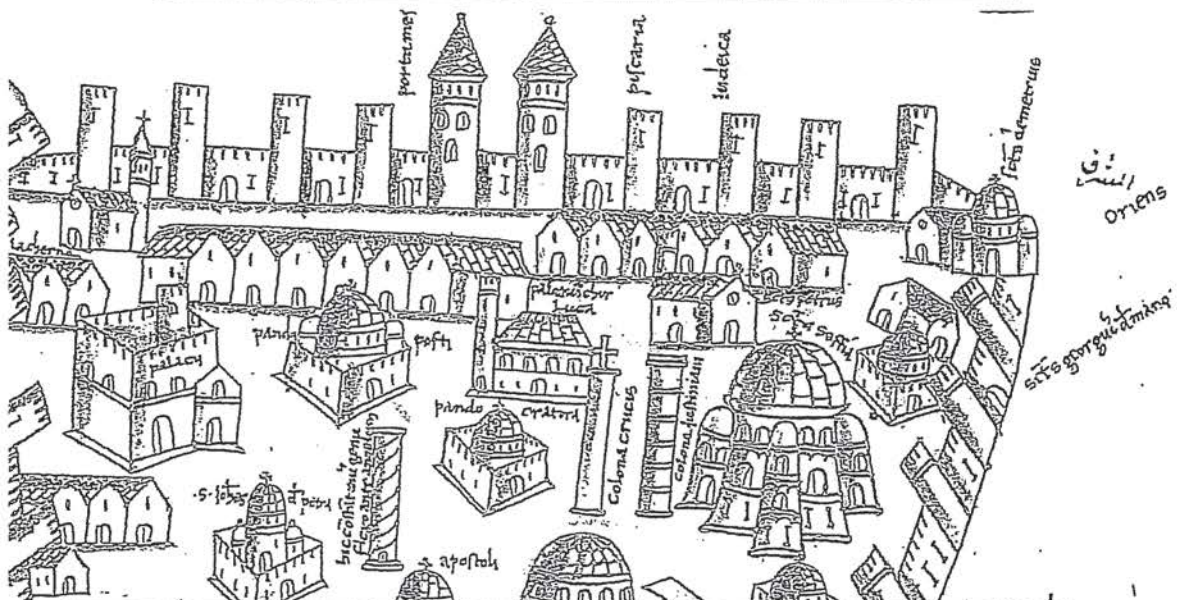


Fig. 4: Palace of Kyr Loukas Notaras, detail from the map of Constantinople in Cristoforo Buondelmonti's *Liber insularum archipelagi*. Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris, Nouv. Aqu. Lat. 2383, fol. 34v. [After I. Siebert and M. Plassmann, eds., *Cristoforo Buondelmonti, Liber insularum archipelagi*. Universitäts- und Landesbibliothek Düsseldorf Ms. G 13: Faksimile (Wiesbaden, 2005), 91, fig. 1.]