

# Foreword

During the work on the Istanbul underground about twenty years ago, the remains of the medieval Harbour of Theodosius were rediscovered, along with nearly 40 shipwrecks. This was an archaeological find of the century and a substantial argument for including the Byzantine harbour landscape in the Priority Programme 1630 of the DFG (Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft/German Research Council) »Harbours from the Roman Imperial Period to the Middle Ages«.

One of the individual projects within this Priority Programme is »Ports and Landing Places on the Balkan Coasts of the Byzantine Empire (Fourth to Twelfth Century): Technology and Monuments, Economy and Communication«. It is part of the Leibniz ScienceCampus Mainz/Frankfurt: Byzantium between Orient and Occident, a collaboration between the Römisch-Germanisches Zentralmuseum in Mainz (RGZM), the Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz and other partners, especially the Viennese School of Byzantine Studies (at the University of Vienna and Austrian Academy of Sciences/ÖAW).

As was generally the case throughout history, Constantinople also played a central role in seafaring. Situated at the southern mouth of the Bosphorus on a peninsula between the Sea of Marmara and the Golden Horn, the daily life of the inhabitants in many respects depended on the sea, and the harbours formed the interface between the city and the sea. For centuries, Constantinople was one of the most important and powerful trading centres in the Mediterranean. In addition, the Byzantine Empire also dominated the Mediterranean militarily for a long time (thalassocracy) and its main fleet was stationed in Constantinople.

Written sources mention a number of smaller and larger harbours that were repeatedly rebuilt, renamed or even newly built over the centuries. These harbours have been researched over the years. Wolfgang Müller-Wiener earlier brought these results together in his work »Die Häfen von Byzantion – Konstantinupolis – Istanbul« (»The Harbours of Byzantion, Constantinople, Istanbul«), published posthumously in 1994. However, research on the topography of the city and on Byzantine seafaring, which has intensified since then, has yielded new data and perspectives.

During a special course held at the University of Vienna in 2014, the idea arose to not only include the harbours of Constantinople in the DFG project's catalogue in an overview, but also dedicate a separate anthology to them that would

reflect the current state of research. The development of the Constantinopolitan harbours covers the entire Byzantine period from the fourth to the fifteenth centuries. In addition, the immediate periphery must also be considered: on the one hand, the harbours on the Asian side of the Bosphorus; and, on the other hand, the landing stages in the immediate Thracian vicinity of the city walls, both on the Golden Horn and on the Sea of Marmara.

The first edition of this book was published in 2016 in German as Volume 4 of the Leibniz ScienceCampus's book series »Byzantium between Orient and Occident« (BOO). The eight contributors produced a total of twelve essays and have all worked within the frame of the Priority Programme 1630 of the DFG or co-operated with it. This was reviewed several times, mostly appreciatively, but also with suggestions for possible deepening and broadening of the contents.

In response to this, the two editors of this volume, Falko Daim and Ewald Kislinger, decided in 2020 to publish an expanded version in English to reach a broader audience. The original contributions were not only translated but updated, and the now eleven authors of different nationalities and mother tongues have delivered a total of fifteen essays for the English edition. They have endeavoured to reflect the broad linguistic spectrum of publications on the topic in Byzantine studies, considering a narrow approach (as seen in some recent companions) to be less fruitful. All publications on the subject that were published, known to us, and accessible by the end of 2020 have been taken into account.

Without the commitment of all the authors, this volume could not have been completed so swiftly, including the addition of an index, which was the special responsibility of Klaus Belke. Johannes Preiser-Kapeller and Michael Ober were in charge of the maps and plans. Our sincere thanks must also go to other colleagues: Leo Ruickbie and Antje Bosselmann-Ruickbie, who prepared the English translations with great dedication and expertise, with additional input from Laury Sarti, and provided editorial co-ordination, and Franz Siegmeth, who prepared various illustrations for printing. We would also like to express our thanks to Claudia Nickel and Stefan Albrecht at the RGZM publishing house.

As has always been the function of the harbours themselves, this volume is not intended to be an end but a starting point for new research.

*Mainz and Vienna, March 2021  
Falko Daim and Ewald Kislinger*