

The Landing Stage at Brachialion

On the shores of the Sea of Marmara, where the Theodosian wall once met the sea walls of Constantinople, a section of a wall is still preserved. This wall was supposed to prevent attackers from gaining access to the lower fortifications along the coast (figs 1-2)¹. It was called *brachialion*², and just west of it a stone quay protruded into the sea in Byzantine times, which is attested to in old photographs (figs 3-4)³. A reconstruction of the quay at Brachialion by Walther Karnapp was included in the German survey of the walls of Constantinople in 1938⁴. It shows a quay system made of stone blocks, provided with wooden posts for mooring the vessels (fig. 5). The stone construction served as a breakwater and offered protection from the current of the Bosphorus⁵. However, the vessels had to approach the landing stage from the west and had to moor in such a way that their broad side was against the quay.

Today, its remnants lie under the International Peace Garden (Uluslararası Barış Parkı) and the adjoining Kennedy Caddesi, and to my knowledge they have not been the subject of archaeological research. Thus, various questions concerning the date, construction and function of the landing stage at Brachialion still await a definitive answer. Despite that, using old photographs that show huge stone blocks ranging deep into the Sea of Marmara, we can deduce that this structure must have played a significant role in the maritime topography of Constantinople. Keeping this in mind, it seems plausible to identify what is shown in the old Istanbul photographs with the landing stage that is known from Greek written sources since the ninth century onwards, one that performed a major function both in connection with the shrine of the Mother of God of the Live-Giving Spring at Pege and in imperial ceremonies.

One of the most important sanctuaries in the immediate vicinity of the Byzantine capital was the Pege Church in front of the Theodosian wall (today Balıklı Meryem Ana Rum Manastırı in the Istanbul district of Zeytinburnu) (fig. 6)⁶. A church was built in the fifth or sixth century at the local spring⁷, which was famous for its healing properties far beyond Constantinople⁸. In the vicinity of the church, a palace was built. Compared to other *miracula* of healing saints, Pege's collection of miracles, which attributes the power of the spring to Mary, shows a significant difference: many of its visitors were from the upper classes of the empire and even members of the ruling family frequented the spring⁹. It is therefore no coincidence that the emperor paid a solemn visit to the Church of Pege on Ascension Day:

»All the archons go along to the Palace while it is still dark in *skaramangia*. If the emperor commands that they go away by boat, according to custom, he straight away boards the *chelandion* with whomever he commands, and goes away as far as the harbour of the Golden Gate. When he has disembarked there from his *chelandion*, at a command, an audience is indicated to the archons there through the *praipositos*. Moving away a little, the archons of the *kouboukleion*, wearing true-purple *sagia*, stand in the form of a circle and the emperor goes into 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 *kouboukleion* previously mentioned stand forming a circle. Then the emperor rides from there in a *skaramangion* with gold *clavi*, and goes through the field which is there and the area beside the wall, and goes away as far as the gate which leads out opposite the spring«¹⁰.

1 Chronicon Paschale 719, 14-16 (Dindorf). – On the interpretation of the Brachialia of the Easter Chronicle, see Tsangadas, Fortifications 91-93. 251 n. 82. – Tsangadas, Brachialia, and the plausible critique by Speck, Bellum Avaricum 99-100 n. 148. – According to Müller-Wiener, Bildlexikon 289, the structure was a supporting pillar.

2 Theophanes, Chronographia AM 6165 (353, 28-30 de Boor). – LBG I 295. – Menge, Großwörterbuch Lateinisch 94.

3 Diez/Glück, Altkonstantinopel fig. 21. – Meyer-Plath/Schneider, Landmauer pl. 25. – Cf. van Millingen, Walls 300-301. – Müller-Wiener, Bildlexikon 60. 289.

4 Krischen, Landmauer pl. 18.

5 Ullyott/Ilgaz, Hydrography. – See also Simeonov, Hebdomon n. 89 in this volume. – However, old photographs such as the one in fig. 4 show a T-shaped landing stage near Brachialion and Mermerkule. The section that runs parallel to the seashore and thus encloses a harbour basin right before Mermerkule may have served as a protection from the south winds during winter. Whether the whole facility was built simultaneously or some of its parts were of a later date, should remain open.

6 Külzer, Ostthrakien 573-575.

7 On the history of the church and its surroundings, see Gedeon, Zoodochos pege 23-85, who, however, confuses the locations of Pege and Pegai (on the north bank of the Golden Horn). – Nomides, Zoodochos Pege 73-163. – Külzer, Ostthrakien 573-575. – Kimmelfield, Pege. – Janin, Siège de Constantinople 223-228. – Eftymiades, Monastère de la Source 284-288. – Benay, Monastère de la Source.

8 Miracula Deiparae ad Fontem 12. 30 (228-232. 270-274 Talbot).

9 Miracula Deiparae ad Fontem 3. 5. 7-9. 20-21. 26-28 (210-224. 256-258. 266-268 Talbot). – On the collection, see Talbot, Anonymous *Miracula*. – Talbot, Pilgrimage.

10 English translation by Moffatt/Tall, The Book of Ceremonies I 108-109. – Konstantinos Porphyrogenetos, De cer. I 27 (I 201, 3-16 Dagron/Flusin/Feissel): Προέρχονται πάντες οἱ ἄρχοντες ἐνύχιον ἐν τῷ Παλατίῳ ἀπὸ σκαραμαγγίων, καὶ εἰ κελεύει ὁ βασιλεὺς ἀπελθεῖν διὰ τοῦ πλοῦς, κατὰ συνήθειαν, εἰσέρχεται τάχιον εἰς τὸ χελάνδιον μεθ' ὧν ἂν κελεύει, καὶ ἀπέρχεται μέχρι τοῦ βραχιαλίου τῆς Χρυσῆς Πόρτης. Κάκεισε ἐξελθὼν ἀπὸ τοῦ χελανδίου αὐτοῦ, δίδοται σελέντιον διὰ τοῦ



Fig. 1 Tower 1 of the Theodosian land wall with Brachialion. – (Photograph G. Simeonov).



Fig. 2 Brachialion. – (Photograph G. Simeonov).

The procession ended in front of the Church of Pege, where the service was celebrated. This was followed by a festive meal, in which the emperor, the patriarch, high dignitaries and friends of the ruler took part¹¹.

In 831 (or 837), Emperor Theophilus returned to Constantinople after a victorious campaign in Cilicia against the

Arabs¹². He spent a week in Hiereia on the Asian shore of the Bosphorus, crossed over to Hagios Mamas and stayed there for another three days¹³. Theophilus sailed from Hagios Mamas to the Blachernae district, where he went ashore and began his triumphal procession¹⁴. The emperor rode to the grasslands in front of the Golden Gate and went to a

πραπιστού από κελεύσεως τοῖς ἐκεῖσε ἄρχουσι, καὶ ὑπεξελθόντες μικρὸν, ἴστανται οἱ ἄρχοντες τοῦ κουβουκλείου, φοροῦντες σαγία ἀληθινά, κυκλικῶ τῷ σχήματι. Καὶ εἰσέρχεται ὁ βασιλεὺς μέσον αὐτῶν καὶ στέφεται ὑπὸ τοῦ πραπιστοῦ διὰ τὸ ὄλωσ, ὡς ἀνωτέρω εἴρηται, ἐμπροσθε βαρβάτων μὴ στέφεσθαι· ἔνεκα γὰρ ταύτης τῆς αἰτίας τὴν κυκλικὴν στάσιν ἐκτελοῦσιν οἱ προρρηθέντες ἄρχοντες τοῦ κουβουκλείου. Καὶ εἰθούτως ἰππεύει ἀπὸ τῶν ἐκεῖσε ἀπὸ σκαραμαγγίου χρυσοκλάβου καὶ διέρχεται διὰ τοῦ ἐκεῖσε ὄντος λειμῶνος καὶ τοῦ παρατειχίου καὶ ἀπέρχεται μέχρι τῆς ἐξαγωγῆς πόρτης ἀπέναντι τῆς Πηγῆς. – Cf. Janin, *Processions religieuses* 82. – Berger, *Processions* 76. 82-83. – Nomides, *Zoodochos Pege* 144-148. On the *chelandion*, see Pryor/Jeffreys, *Dromon* 166-169 and 188-191. – On the

skaramangion (a tunic slit at the front and back, which was suitable for riding), see Parani, *Reality of Images* 61 n. 38. – Henny, *Catalogue* 158.

11 Cletorologium Philothei 213, 1-10 (Oikonomidēs). – Vita Euthymii III (19, 3-22 Karlin-Hayter).

12 On the dating, see McCormick, *Eternal Victory* 146 n. 51. – Haldon, *Three Treatises* 285 n. on C 808sq. – On the triumphal procession, see McCormick, *Eternal Victory* 146-149.

13 On Hiereia and its harbour, see Belke, *Gates*, in this volume. – On Hagios Mamas, see Külzer, *Ostthracien* 512-513.

14 Konstantinos Porphyrogennetos, *De exped.*, C 812-827 (146 Haldon).

Fig. 3 Remains of the quay of Brachialion. – (Photograph Sébah & Joaillier, www.eskiistanbul.net).



Fig. 4 Remains of the quay of Brachialion. – (Photograph www.eskiistanbul.net).



tent (*korte*) erected on the occasion of a triumph¹⁵. In this tent, Theophilus waited for the Arab prisoners of war to be brought from Chrysopolis in Asia Minor the same day. According to the source, the vessels landed at the place where the emperor sojourned¹⁶. Thus, it can be assumed that the landing site was the quay of Brachialion, from which access was easily provided to the area in front of the Golden Gate.

A similar procedure can be seen in the triumphal procession of Basil I in 878¹⁷. The emperor landed at Hebdomon¹⁸

and together with the heir to the throne Constantine visited the Church of St Mary of the Abramites Monastery near the city, where they prayed and lit candles¹⁹. The distinguished among the Arab prisoners of war were brought together with the military standards (*phlamoula*) and the captured weapons on ships from Hierieia to the area in front of the Golden Gate²⁰. From here, they participated in the procession through the city (fig. 7). Logically, their landing (like that of 831 or 837) would have taken place at Brachialion.

15 Konstantinos Porphyrogennetos, *De exped.*, C 827-829 (146 Haldon). – See Heher, *Zelt*.

16 Konstantinos Porphyrogennetos, *De exped.*, C 829-832 (146 Haldon): Ἐφθασαν δὲ τῇ αὐτῇ ἡμέρᾳ καὶ οἱ τοὺς δεσμίους φέροντες ἐν Χρυσοπόλει καὶ βάλλοντες αὐτοὺς εἰς πλοῖα διεπέρασαν αὐτοὺς, ἔνθα καὶ ὁ βασιλεὺς παρῆν.

17 On the triumphal procession, see McCormick, *Eternal Victory* 155-157, who dates it to 879.

18 On this, see Simeonov, *Hebdomon*, in this volume.

19 On the church of the Monastery of the Abramites, see Janin, *Siège de Constantinople* 4-6. – Berger, *Untersuchungen* 679-681.

20 Konstantinos Porphyrogennetos, *De exped.*, C 742-747 (140-142 Haldon): Ἐν τῷ λιβαδίῳ τῷ ἔξω τῆς Χρυσῆς Πόρτης ἐπίγησαν τένται, καὶ διεπέρασαν ἀπὸ Ἱερειᾶς ἐκεῖσε τοὺς εὐγενεῖς καὶ ἐμφανεῖς τῶν αἰχμαλώτων Ἀγαρηνῶν καὶ τὰ ἐξαιρετὰ τῶν λαφύρων τοῦ πολέμου, φλαμούλων τε καὶ ἀρμάτων, καὶ ἐν ταῖς τέντεσιν ἔνδον ἀποτεθέντα διηρέθησαν, καὶ διήλθον ἐν τῇ Μέσῃ θριαμβευόμενα ἀπὸ τῆς Χρυσῆς Πόρτης ἕως τῆς Χαλκῆς τοῦ παλατίου, ἀνοίσεως τότε τῆς μέσης καὶ μεγάλης Χρυσῆς Πόρτης. – On Hierieia, see Belke, *Gates* 229-231, in this volume.

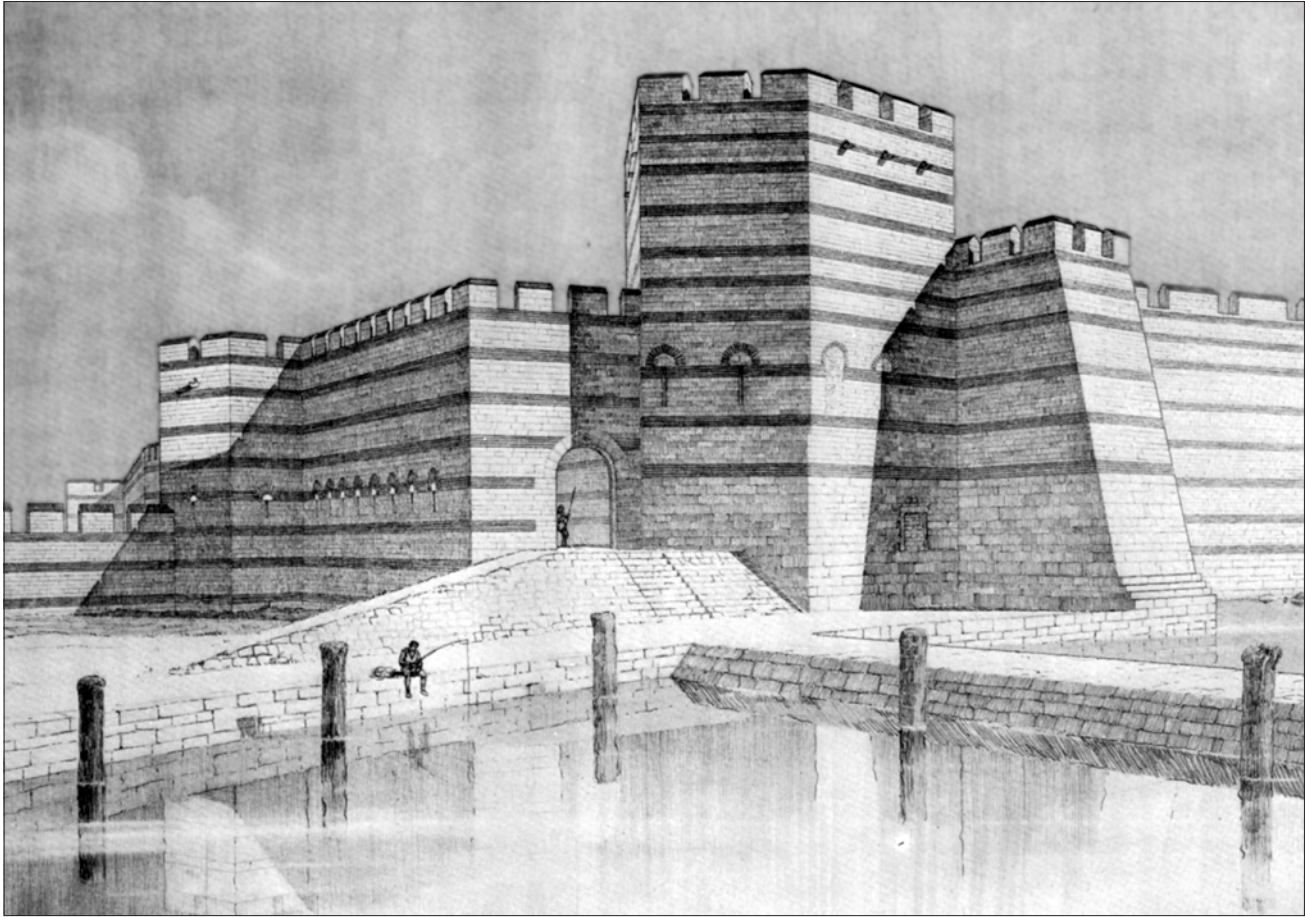


Fig. 5 Reconstruction of the quay of Brachialion by W. Karnapp. – (From Krischen, Landmauer, pl. 18).

The next evidence for the use of the Brachialion quay may be connected with the solemn entry of the Mandylion of Edessa, one of the most venerated Christian relics, in Constantinople in August 944. On 15 August, it arrived by ship at Blachernae, where the emperors celebrated the feast of the Dormition, and was then brought to the Great Palace. A *narratio* written on occasion of gaining back this most holy relic and bringing it to Constantinople describes the further route of its translation:

»On the following day, the sixteenth of the month, they again kissed and worshipped it with the due respect, and then the priests and the young emperors (the elder emperor had stayed at home as he was ill) picked it up with psalms, hymns and bright lights. They took it down the road to the sea and once again placed it in the royal ship, rowing around the city so that it might in some way preserve the city by its sea circuit.

They moored outside the city's western wall, where they disembarked. The emperors, all the members of the senatorial council, the patriarch and the whole body of the clergy went on foot with a fitting escort. They went with the box holding the precious and sacred objects as if it were another Ark of the Covenant or something even greater. They proceeded outside of the walls up to the Golden Gate and then went into the city, forming a procession with lofty psalms, hymns and spiritual chants and the light of countless torches as they made their way through the centre of the city, believing that in this way the city would be made holier and stronger, and would be kept unharmed and unassailable for all time«²¹.

As we saw from the account of the Book of Ceremonies, which is contemporary to the *Narratio de imagine Edessena*, an important route for tenth-century Byzantine ceremonies

21 English translation by Guscini on p. 57 of the critical edition. – *Narratio de imagine Edessena* 28 (56, 8-25 Guscini): Τῆ δὲ ἰκνουμένη τῶν ἡμερῶν, ἥτις ἐξκαιδεκάτῃ τοῦ μηνὸς ἦν, μετ' αἰδοῦς καὶ εὐλαβείας πάλιν τὸν ἀσπασμὸν καὶ τὴν προσκύνησιν ποιησάμενοι καὶ λαβόντες αὐτὴν ἐκείθεν οἱ τε ἱερεῖς καὶ οἱ νεώζοντες βασιλεῖς, ὁ γὰρ γέρον οἰκουρὸς δι' ἀσθένειαν κατελείπετο, μετὰ ψαλμῶν καὶ ὕμνων καὶ δαυιλοῦς τοῦ φωτὸς διὰ τῆς πρὸς θάλασσαν καθόδου εἰς τὴν βασιλείον τριήρην αὐθις ἐνθέμενοι, τῆς πόλεως ἐν χρῶ σχεδὸν τὴν εἰρεσίαν ποιούμενοι, ἵνα τρόπον τινὰ διαζώσῃ τὸ ἀστὴ διὰ τῆς ἐν θαλάσῃ πορείας αὐτῆς, ἐκτὸς τοῦ πρὸς δύσιν τείχους τῆς πόλεως προσωρμίσθησαν, ἔνθα τῆς νεῶς ἐκβάντες, πεζοποροῦντες

οἱ τε βασιλεῖς καὶ πάντες οἱ τῆς γερούσιας βουλῆς καὶ ὁ τῶν ἱερῶν κατάρχων μετὰ παντὸς τοῦ τῆς ἐκκλησίας πληρώματος, τῆ προσηκούσῃ δορυφορία, ὡς ἄλλην κιβωτὸν μάλλον δὲ καὶ ὑπὲρ ταύτην, τὸ τῶν ἁγιωτάτων καὶ τιμίων φρουρὸν σκεῦος παρέπεμπον. Καὶ τὰ ἐκτὸς τοῦ τείχους μέχρι τῆς Χρυσῆς διελθόντες πύλην, εἶτα ἐκείθεν ἐντὸς γεγονότες τοῦ ἀστεος μετὰ μετέωρων ψαλμῶν καὶ ὕμνων καὶ ᾠδῶν πνευματικῶν καὶ ἀπείρου λαμπάδων φωτὸς τὴν πάνδημον συγκροτοῦντες παραπομπὴν διὰ μέσης τῆς πόλεως τὴν πορείαν διήνουν, ἁγιασμοῦ μεταλαβεῖν καὶ κρείττονος σθένους τὴν πόλιν διὰ τοῦτο πιστεύοντες καὶ ἀβλαβῆ καὶ ἀπόρητον εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα συντηρηθήσεσθαι. – Cf. Auzéry, *Déplacements* 362.

began at the Brachialion quay in the southwest corner of Constantinople's land defences and went further to the Golden Gate²². Its next use is attested when Nikephoros II Phokas arrived in Constantinople on 16 August 963²³. After the *parakoimomenos* Basil broke Joseph Bringas's resistance and exercised control over the city, General Nikephoros's way to the imperial throne was open. In the shipyard, warships armed with Greek Fire were prepared and sent to Hiereia on the Asian bank of the Bosphorus, where the pretender to the throne sojourned²⁴. On the morning of 16 August, Nikephoros boarded the imperial dromon and accompanied the warships to the European shore. According to the *Book of Ceremonies*, he landed at the Golden Gate, where the whole population received him solemnly. Nikephoros disembarked and rode on horseback to the Abramites Monastery, which was located between Hebdomon and the Golden Gate. After a short stay to change clothes, Nikephoros Phokas was able to enter the city²⁵. The exact location of the landing is indicated in the *Book of Ceremonies*, which is more detailed than Leo the Deacon's historical work²⁶. After landing, Nikephoros

22 Heher/Simeonov, *Ceremonies by the Sea*.

23 According to McCormick, *Analyzing Imperial Ceremonies* 12, the date was not chosen at random. On 16 August 963, the 245th anniversary of the victory against the Arabs was celebrated, who in 718 had lifted the second siege of Constantinople.

24 Leon Diakonos, *Historia* III 7 (47, 5-8 Hase). – Ioannes Skylitzes, *Synopsis* 258, 54-56 (Thurn). – Konstantinos Porphyrogennetos, *De cer.* I 105 (II 453, 82-89 Dagron/Flusin/Feissel). – For a critical overview of the sources of Skylitzes and Leo the Deacon, see Sjuzumov, *Istočniki*.

25 Konstantinos Porphyrogennetos, *De cer.* I 105 (II 453, 87-92 Dagron/Flusin/Feissel): ἐμβὰς εἰς τὸ βασιλικὸν δρομόνιον προσέβαλεν ἐν τῇ Χρυσῇ Πόρτῃ κάκεϊ προσυπήντησεν αὐτῷ πᾶσα ἡ πόλις, μακροὶ τε καὶ μεγάλοι, μετὰ λαμπάδων καὶ θυμιαμάτων. Κατελθὼν δὲ ἀπὸ τοῦ δρόμονος καὶ ἵππεύσας διήλθεν διὰ τοῦ ἔξω παρατειχίου, καὶ διὰ τῆς πλακωτῆς στραφεῖς εἰσῆλθεν εἰς τὴν μονὴν τῶν Ἀβραμιτῶν τὴν λεγομένην Ἀχειροποίητον τῆς Θεοτόκου.

26 Leon Diakonos, *Historia* III 7 (47, 9-11 Hase).

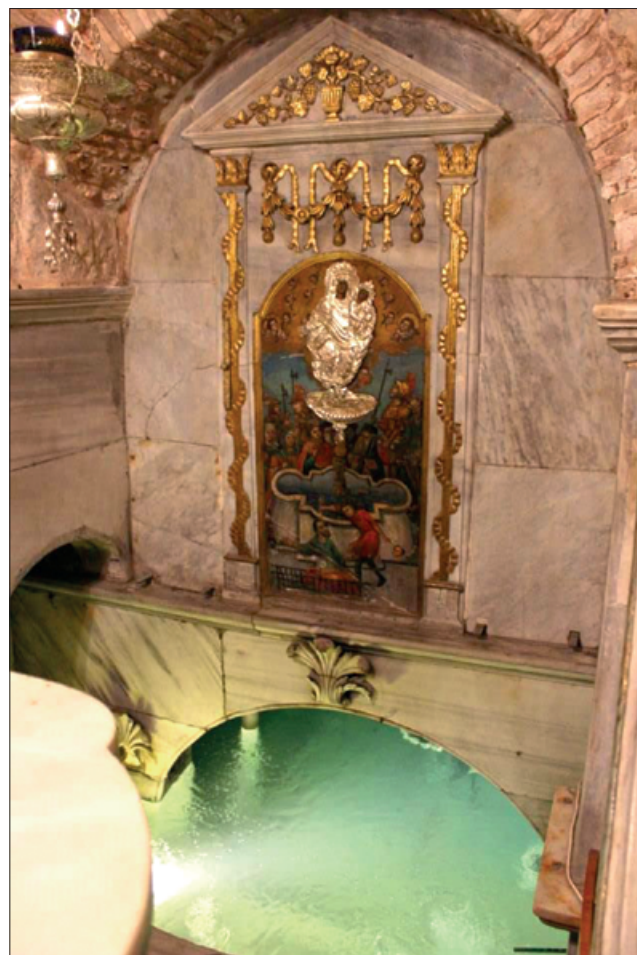


Fig. 6 The fountain of the Church of the Virgin at Pege. – (Photograph G. Simeonov).

Fig. 7 View of the Golden Gate, Brachialion and Mermerkule (Marble Tower). – (Photograph G. Simeonov).



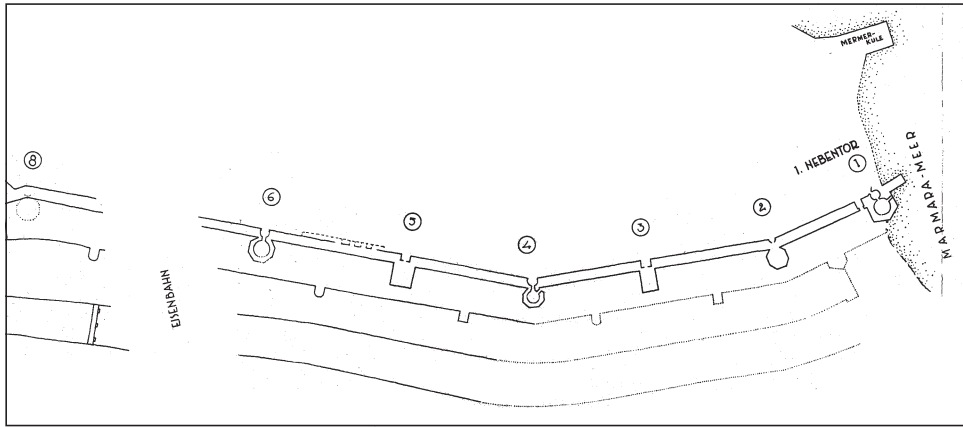


Fig. 8 Plan of the Theodosian land wall south of the Golden Gate. – (From Meyer-Plath/Schneider, Landmauer pl. 1).



Fig. 9 The southern section of the Theodosian wall showing the external and internal walls, 1870s. – (From Meyer-Plath/Schneider, Landmauer pl. 25a).

passed the outer bailey (*to exo parateichion*) to reach the monastery²⁷. This only makes sense if the landing site was between the main wall and the moat (**fig. 8**)²⁸. From this, it can be concluded that the dromon with Nikephoros on board arrived at the quay of Brachialion, the remains of which were preserved until the middle of the twentieth century (**fig. 9**). As for John Skylitzes's report about a landing at Hebdomon²⁹, this can be explained as the interpretation of an historian

who lived a hundred years after the events. For him, the entire area in front of the Golden Gate was obviously part of Hebdomon.

A harbour of the Golden Gate (*limen tes Chryses Pyles*) of the Theodosian wall was documented for the last decades of Byzantine history³⁰. According to the historian Doukas, there may have been another harbour of the same name at the second, »new« Golden Gate on the Acropolis³¹. In any case,

27 Konstantinos Porphyrogennetos, *De cer.* I 105 (II 453, 89-92 Dagron/Flusin/Feissel). – Janin, *Siège de Constantinople* 6. – The southernmost part of the outer wall and the moat is no longer preserved, see Meyer-Plath/Schneider, *Landmauer* 37 and 84, as well as pl. 1.

28 The exact course of the outer wall and moat southwest of the Golden Gate can no longer be determined due to the late Ottoman building development in the area, see Meyer-Plath/Schneider, *Landmauer* 84. According to Meyer-Plath, the construction of the moat dates back to the year 1000. – Müller-Wiener, *Lexikon* 286 does not exclude the possibility that parts of the moat had already been created in vulnerable places before this time. The existence of an *exo parateichion*, i.e., an outer bailey, south of the Golden Gate as early as 963 is an indication of this.

29 Ioannes Skylitzes, *Synopsis* 258-259, 54-60 (Thurn). – Cf. Schlumberger, *Nicéphore Phocas* 299-300, who reconstructs the course of the advent from the

former Magnaura Palace at the Hebdomon to the Golden Gate. This is based on analogies with the second triumphal procession of Basil I. There is no evidence of this in Leo the Deacon or in the *Book of Ceremonies*, cf. Simeonov, *Topographie*.

30 Dukas, *Historia* XXXIX 7 (355, 10-15 Grecu).

31 According to Dukas, *Historia* XXXVIII 7 (335, 13-14 Grecu) on 20 April 1453, the Turkish ships departed from their base in Diplokionion on the banks of the Bosphorus and waited for the ships from Chios outside the harbour of the Golden Gate. From the context of the naval battle that took place in the waters near the Acropolis, it becomes clear that the facility in question was located in the eastern part of Constantinople. On the »eastern« Golden Gate, see Magdalino, *Columns* 150-155. Another view has Kislinger, *Neorion*, in this volume, and Kislinger, *Eugenios-Tor*. – On the naval battle, see Philippides/Hanak, *Siege and Fall* 432-434.

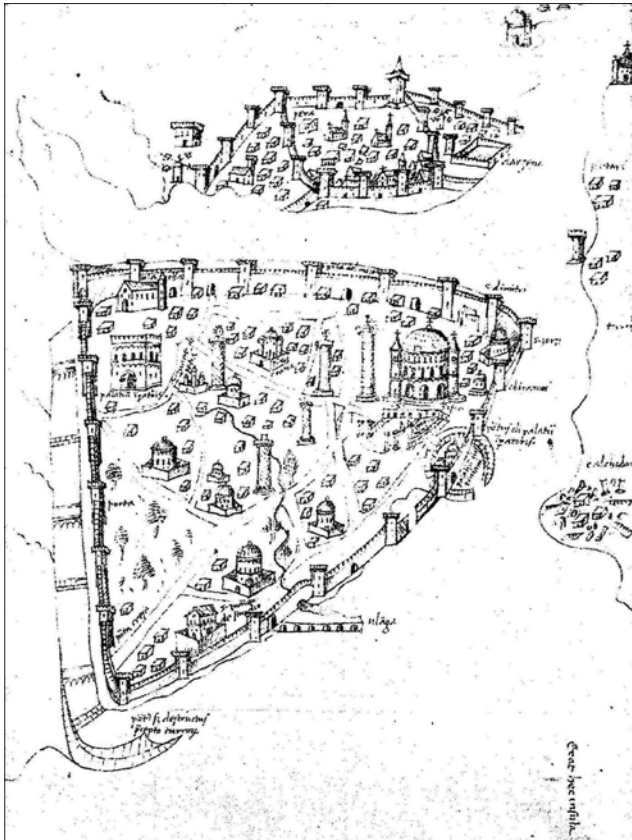


Fig. 10 View of Constantinople by Cristoforo Buondelmonti, Rome, Biblioteca Vaticana, Fond Rossiano, X, 82-702. – (From Gerola, Vedute).

some copies of Cristoforo Buondelmonti's view of Constantinople show a harbour in the area of the southwest wall of the city. They can be assigned to two groups. The first is the drawing from Ravenna and the one in Codex Rossiano 702 in the Biblioteca Vaticana in Rome³². Both show an arch-like harbour structure (mole or quay?) that consists of two rows of stone blocks (fig. 10). The layout on the illustration from Ravenna is accompanied by the inscription *portus destructus ex preceptu turchorum*³³, the drawing from Rome comments similarly *portus sed destructus preceptu turcorum*³⁴. This destruction was linked by Asutay-Effenberger to the events of 1391 when Sultan Bayezid I instructed the Byzantine Emperor John V to tear down the Polichnion fortifications in the southwest corner of the city³⁵.

Yet, the *portus* in the illustrations is not located between the main wall and the moat, but rather begins in front of the outer side of the moat and protrudes into the Sea of Marmara. This may speak against equating the system in the drawings with the quay of Brachialion already discussed.

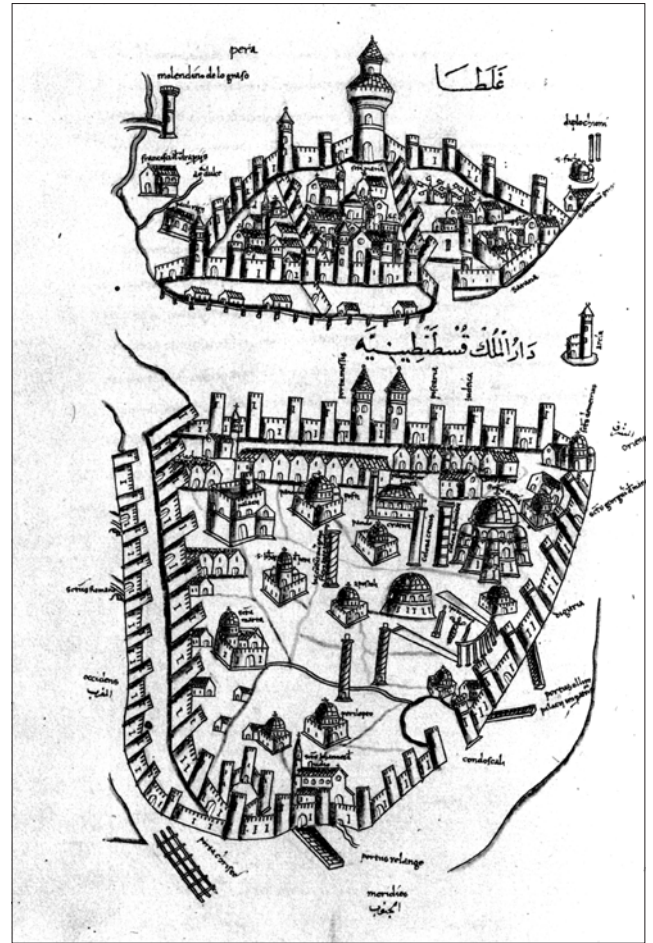


Fig. 11 View of Constantinople by Cristoforo Buondelmonti, Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France. – (From Effenberger, Illustrations fig. 1).

However, this difference may also be explained by the schematic style of the representations.

As far as the second group of copies of the Constantinople *veduta* by Buondelmonti is concerned, they are less precise with regard to a harbour west of the city: they either show a headland (Rome, Florence, Paris) or a grid lying freely in the sea (Paris)³⁶. The latter is most likely a misinterpretation of the landing stage in other *vedute* (fig. 11). The embankment on the coast that was created during the construction of the Kennedy Caddesi does not clarify whether there was another landing stage between the quay of Brachialion and the bay of Hebdomon in the Late Byzantine period.

The topography of the area of Mermerkule (Marble Tower) must also be taken into account with regard to the Polichnion landing stage³⁷. The Brachialion quay is only one of several

32 Gerola, Vedute 250-251 and the illustrations on pp. 248 (Rome) and 253 (Ravenna).

33 Gerola, Vedute 251. 268.

34 Gerola, Vedute 248 and 268. On the vedute, see Effenberger, Pictorial Sources, in this volume.

35 Asutay-Effenberger, Landmauer 111-112 and 115-117. – Cf. Dukas, Historia XIII 4 (77, 4-12 Grecu). – Kleinchroniken 7, 23 (l 69, 1-6 Schreiner).

36 Effenberger, Illustrationen fig. 1. – Gerola, Vedute.

37 On the Polichnion, see Asutay-Effenberger, Landmauer 110-117. – Peschlow, Mermerkule. – Peschlow, Residenz. – Effenberger, Polichnion 7-8.



Fig. 12 Remains of a structure east of the Marble Tower. – (Gülmez Frères. Mermer-Kalé, Aux Sept Tours, Neg. No. 55, Undated. GRI Special Collections).

options. Old photographs of Istanbul testify to the existence of a stone quay (or mole?) east of Mermerkule (fig. 12)³⁸. Written evidence also locates the landing stage of the Stoudiou Monastery in the same area, which was used by the emperor during his visit³⁹. In her analysis of Buondelmonti's drawings, Asutay-Effenberger connected the *portus* in the *vedute* of Constantinople with the port of Polichnion, the location of which »clearly points to the neighbourhood of Mermerkule«⁴⁰.

Which of the two harbour structures that are today buried under the embankment can be interpreted as the harbour of the Polichnion? Taking into account the construction concept of this fortification, which Emperor John V Palaiologos had built during the conflicts with his grandson John in 1389, it would make sense, not to locate these harbour facilities outside the Theodosian wall, but to the east of Mermerkule⁴¹. Concerning the term »Harbour of the Golden Gate« – meaning the gate in the western part of the city – in

Late Byzantine times, a clear identification with the quay of Brachialion or with the landing stage east of Mermerkule is unfortunately no longer possible due to insufficient source documentation.

The Brachialion landing stage is mostly mentioned in the written sources in connection with Byzantine ceremonies. In older literature, this landing site was equated with the *apobathra ton Pegon*, i. e., from Pegai⁴². However, one has to be careful due to the confusion of the two almost homonymous locations: Pege in the western area of Constantinople and Pegai on the northern bank of the Golden Horn⁴³. It is difficult to say whether the pilgrims and monks who came to the Sanctuary of Pege before the Theodosian wall from different areas of the empire – such as from Chaldia⁴⁴, Thessaly⁴⁵, the Peloponnese⁴⁶, Serres⁴⁷ or the Meander Valley⁴⁸ – arrived directly at the landing stage of Brachialion, or, more plausibly, that they first landed at one of the major harbours in the capital and went to Pege from there⁴⁹.

38 Müller-Wiener, *Bildlexikon* 319 and fig. 367 considers this mole east of Mermerkule to be possible remnants of the »Chrysis Harbour« mentioned in Doukas's historical work.

39 Konstantinos Porphyrogenetos, *De cer.* II 13 (III 89-91, 104-135 Dagron/Flusin/Feissel). – van Millingen, *Walls* 264-265. – See the *Vita Euthymii VIII* (51, 20-23 Karlin-Hayter), according to which Saint Euthymios went to his monastery in Psamatheia near Stoudiou by ship after a meeting with the emperor.

40 Asutay-Effenberger, *Landmauer* 115.

41 Byzantine and Slavonic sources speak in favour of such a hypothesis. From the account of *Kleinchroniken* 7, 21-22 (68, 1-69, 13 Schreiner) we learn that Manuel, second son of John V Palaiologos, left the besieged Polichnion in 1390 onboard a ship and sailed to Rhodes in order to find help against the usurper John VII. Manuel came back with a small fleet and, coming out of Polichnion, he drove his rebellious nephew out of Constantinople. Bearing in mind that Polichnion was under siege both when Manuel left and came back, it makes sense to search for its harbour to the east of Mermerkule rather than to identify

it with the quay that lied to the west of Brachialion and was thus vulnerable to enemy attacks. Furthermore, talking about John VII's insurrection, Ignatius of Smolensk makes an interesting remark that supports the identification of Polichnion's harbour with a landing stage to the east of Mermerkule. According to him, Manuel »penetrated the limen, that is to say, the harbour, and entered the castle where his father was. (A stone wall with high towers extended to the water's edge so that the enemy was unable to reach him [the old emperor] either by sea or by land)«, cf. Majeska, *Russian Travelers* 102 and 103.

42 Gedeon, *Zoodochos pege* 84. – Nomides, *Zoodochos Pege* 158-163.

43 Cf. Külzer, *Ostthrakien* 572-575, especially 575.

44 *Miracula Deiparae ad Fontem* 30 (270-274 Talbot).

45 *Miracula Deiparae ad Fontem* 12 (228-232 Talbot). – Nikephoros Xanthopoulos, *Thaumata* 9 (24-26 Pamperis).

46 Nikephoros Xanthopoulos, *Thaumata* 49 (67-68 Pamperis).

47 Nikephoros Xanthopoulos, *Thaumata* 63 (89 Pamperis).

48 Nikephoros Xanthopoulos, *Thaumata* 62 (87 Pamperis).

49 Cf. Simeonov, *Crossing the Straits* 43-45 and 50-54.

Summary / Zusammenfassung

The Landing Stage at Brachialion

At the point where the Theodosian land wall once met the sea wall, there was an impressive quay, the remains of which were preserved until the twentieth century. The so-called Quay of Brachialion is mainly documented in sources from the Middle Byzantine period, describing its role in Byzantine ceremonies. The facility was used for processions outside the capital, for example, the visit to the Church of St Mary at Pege, as well as during the solemn ceremonial entries of the Byzantine emperors into Constantinople. The question of an identification of the quay with the Late Byzantine harbour of the Polichnion is unresolved.

Die Brachialion-Anlegestelle

An der Stelle, an der einst die theodosianische Landmauer auf die Seemauer traf, befand sich eine prächtige Kaianlage, deren Reste bis in das 20. Jahrhundert erhalten waren. Der sogenannte Kai des Brachialion ist vor allem in Quellen der mittelbyzantinischen Zeit belegt, die seine Rolle im byzantinischen Zeremoniell überliefern. Die Anlage wurde sowohl bei Prozessionen außerhalb der Hauptstadt angelaufen, so dem Besuch in der Marienkirche in Pege, als auch während feierlicher Einzüge der byzantinischen Kaiser in Konstantinopel. Die Frage nach einer Identifizierung des Kais mit dem spätbyzantinischen Hafen des Polichnion hat offen zu bleiben.