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## Being and Well-Being in Byzantium: The Case of Beverages\*

Twice in Byzantine history the Macedonian dynasty, founded by the emperor Basil I (867–886) was in danger of losing the throne to other aristocratic families. The Lakapenoi in the first half of the tenth century<sup>1</sup> as well as the Paphlagonians one hundred years<sup>2</sup> later already controlled the governments' day-to-day policy. But when they finally tried to take over total power, both of them failed.

By doing so in late 944 Stephen and Constantine Lakapenos even committed the foolish error of revolting against their own father. Romanos, the central figure and guarantor of the influence of the family had been confined to a monastery, in which soon afterwards the unsuccessful conspirators had to join him<sup>3</sup>. The father maliciously comments upon their arrival: *Caritas quae de me palacio expulit, filiacionem vestram non ibi diu esse permisit. O factum bene, quod me quam dudum praemisistis*. The new monastic routine, Romanos continues, differs a lot from the former life in the palace. No gourmet meal threatens one's health, instead *frigidior Gothicis aqua decocto pruinis*<sup>4</sup> is available.

A cup of cold water, already in the Gospels, had symbolised a rather small offering (Matt 10: 42; Mark 9: 41), but it represented the basic need of life (John 4: 14; Rev 21: 6). Who offers it mercifully will receive reward in heaven (Matt 5: 7). A slight allusion to the purifying power of water, which washes away the sins and is the natural medium of salvation, also is present in the story.

On a more realistic level this small episode characterises and distinguishes the two paradigmatic lifestyles of Byzantine civilization, imperial and ascetic, right down to the simple but vital aspect of beverages. Instead of water colder than snow at the monastery the imperial table would have offered "sweet gifts of Bacchus, which Gaza had created and lovely Ascalon had given". Present were "the draughts that the farmer squeezed from the grapes of Methymna", and servants poured chrysattic wines into golden cups<sup>5</sup>. Whereas fresh water is essential for being<sup>6</sup>, tasty wine improves the quality of Well-Being. Byzantine society and life was shaped by both of them<sup>7</sup>, and it reflected aspects of their availability and abuse.

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<sup>1</sup> St. RUNCIMAN, *The Emperor Romanus Lecapenus and his Reign. A Study of Tenth-Century Byzantium*. Cambridge 1929.

<sup>2</sup> *ODB* II 1365–6 (Michael IV and Michael V); T.K. LOUNGES, Χρονικόν περί της αναίρέσεως του Αποβασιλέως Κύρου Μιχαήλ του Καλαφάτου, του γεγονότος Καίσαρος, και των κατ' αυτήν συμβάντων. *Byzantiaka* 18 (1998) 73–104.

<sup>3</sup> Theophanes Continuatus, *Chronographia* VI 434–7 (BEKKER). RUNCIMAN, *Lecapenus* 232–4.

<sup>4</sup> Liudprand of Cremona, *Antapodosis* V 23 (144 BECKER). Th. WEBER, Essen und Trinken im Konstantinopel des 10. Jahrhunderts, nach den Berichten Liutprands of Cremona, in: J. KODER – Th. WEBER, *Liutprand von Cremona in Konstantinopel. Untersuchungen zum griechischen Sprachschatz und zu realienkundlichen Aussagen in seinen Werken (BV XIII)*. Wien 1980, 82–3. On the author, whose western origin explains the use of Latin, see J. N. SUTHERLAND, *Liudprand of Cremona, Bishop, Diplomat, Historian. Studies of the Man and his Age (Biblioteca degli "Studi Medievali" XIV)*. Spoleto 1988.

<sup>5</sup> Flavius Cresconius Corippus, *In laudem Justini Augusti minoris*, edited with translation and commentary by A. CAMERON. London 1976, III 87–100 describing the wines served at the coronation banquet. Cf. E. KISLINGER, *Zum Weinhandel in frühbyzantinischer Zeit. Tyche* 14 (1999) 141–56.

<sup>6</sup> In social hierarchy water and bread represented the level of poverty, see Procopius, *Secret history* XXVI 23 (III 162 HAURY – WIRTH).

<sup>7</sup> Other beverages like milk and beer played a minor to marginal role in Byzantine diet (Ph. KOUKOULES, Βυζαντινῶν βίος καὶ πολιτισμός, V/1. Athens 1952, 121–2, 130–1; D. DZINO, *Sabaiarius: Beer, wine and Ammianus Marcellinus*, in: *Feast, Fast or Famine. Food and Drink in Byzantium*, ed. W. MAYER – S. TRZCIONKA. Brisbane 2005, 57–68) and therefore will not be considered here.

Due to climatic conditions it was rather difficult to obtain drinking-water everywhere and at all times, especially during the hot summer months<sup>8</sup>. “Rain-miracles”, a special type of wonder literature, attest to how the human experience of being at the mercy of nature and of believing in divine help<sup>9</sup>. Apart from this rational provisions were taken to try to prevent lack of water. Aqueducts, most of which had already been built in Roman times, supplied the major towns. Nevertheless, repairs (attested at Demetrias in Thessaly or at Herakleia Pontike<sup>10</sup>) and the building of several new structures (among others at Philippopolis / Plovdiv and Karystos<sup>11</sup>) reveal continuous demand under less favourable demographic and economic conditions. In the case of Constantinople the sophisticated and complex network of aqueducts could procure water even from regions as distant as 100 km away<sup>12</sup>. Large cisterns such as those of Aspar and Aetios<sup>13</sup> (with a capacity over 1,000,000 sq.m) collected the influx, but use of such vast storage means caused some loss in quality and taste.

Five different kinds of drinkable water can be distinguished according to medical authorities. Those coming from rivers and lakes should be avoided but supplies were from sources, wells and rain water<sup>14</sup>. Given such circumstances Romanos's offer to his sons was not so bad. It is not accidental that in modern Greek “nero”, deriving from “nearon” (which means fresh) signifies water<sup>15</sup>.

Walls and other fortifications shaped the appearance of strongholds, but their architects were aware that a successful defence also depended on secure availability of sufficient water<sup>16</sup>. Byzantine forces at Beroe near Antioch were forced to surrender to the Persians (540) as a result of the consumption of all water supplies by the army horses and mules whilst penned up in the citadel<sup>17</sup>. The besiegers of a town might interrupt the water-supply to accelerate its surrender, as happened in Rome during the Gothic-war and in 626 in Constantinople<sup>18</sup>. The field armies in their turn had also to care for sufficient water, because the enemy might have destroyed or poisoned the wells of the territory<sup>19</sup>. The canteen of each soldier was expected to contain water

<sup>8</sup> J. KODER, *Der Lebensraum der Byzantiner. Historisch-geographischer Abriß ihres mittelalterlichen Staates im östlichen Mittelmeerraum (Byzantinische Geschichtsschreiber. Ergänzungsband 1)*. Wien 2001, 40–51; M. F. HENDY, *Studies in the Byzantine Monetary Economy, c.300–1450*. Cambridge 1985, 21–58.

<sup>9</sup> D. STATHAKOPOULOS, *Rain Miracles in Late Antiquity. An Essay in Typology. JÖB 52 (2002) 73–87*.

<sup>10</sup> J. KODER – F. HILD, *Hellas und Thessalia (TIB 1)*. Wien 1976, 145; K. BELKE, *Paphlagonien und Honorias (TIB 9)*. Wien 1996, 209, 212–3.

<sup>11</sup> P. SOUSTAL, *Thrakien (Thrake, Rodope und Haimimontos) (TIB 6)*. Wien 1991, 402–3; KODER – HILD, *Hellas und Thessalia 183–4*.

<sup>12</sup> C. MANGO, *The Water Supply of Constantinople*, in: *Constantinople and its hinterland (Society for the Promotion of Byzantine Studies. Publications 3)*. Aldershot 1995, 9–18; F. DIRIMTEKIN, *Adduction de l'eau à Byzance dans la région dite Bulgarie. Cahiers archéologiques 10 (1959) 217–43*; K. CECEN, *Sinan's Water Supply System in Istanbul*. Istanbul 1992 and J. CROW – R. BAYLISS, *Water for the Queen of Cities: a review of recent research into the Byzantine and Early Ottoman water supply of Constantinople. Basilissa. Belfast, Byzantium and Beyond 1 (2004) 27–49*. Cf. the contribution of M. Grünbart in this volume.

<sup>13</sup> W. MÜLLER-WIENER, *Bildlexikon zur Topographie Istanbuls*. Tübingen 1977, 271–85; P. FORCHHEIMER – J. STRZYGOWSKI, *Die byzantinischen Wasserbehälter von Konstantinopel (Byzantinische Denkmäler II)*. Wien 1893.

<sup>14</sup> Aetios of Amida, *Iatricorum libri XVI, libri I–IV*, ed. A. OLIVIERI (*CMG VIII/1*) Leipzig-Berlin 1935, 337–8 (III 165). Cf. Paul of Aegina, *Epitomae medicae, libri I–IV*, ed. I. L. HEIBERG (*CMG IX/1*). Leipzig-Berlin 1921, 33 (I 50). A. GARZYA, *L'eau dans la littérature médicale de l'antiquité tardive*, in: *L'eau, la santé et la maladie dans le monde grec (BCH Supplément XXVIII)*. Athènes-Paris 1994, 109–19.

<sup>15</sup> H. EIDENEIER, *Sogenannte christliche Tabuwörter im Griechischen (MBM 5)*. München 1968, 104–19.

<sup>16</sup> E.g. Dara on the Persian frontier: M. WHITBY, *Procopius' description of Dara (Buildings II 1–3)*, in: *The Defence of the Roman and Byzantine East, I–II*, ed. by Ph. FREEMAN and D. KENNEDY (*BAR Int. Series 297/i–ii*). Oxford 1986, II 737–8; Anastasioupolis in Thrace: Procopius, *Buildings IV 11, 11–12 (IV 144 HAURY – WIRTH)*; Thessalonica (AD 1185): Eustathius, *On the Capture of Thessalonica*, ed. St. KYRIAKIDIS. Palermo 1961, 76–8; fortresses of Semaluos and Taranta in Cappadocia: F. HILD – M. RESTLE, *Kappadokien (Kappadokia, Charsianon, Sebasteia und Lykandros) (TIB 2)*. Wien 1981, 276–7, 290–1; Sibia / Soublaion and Dorylaion in Phrygia: Euthymios Malakes, *Enkomiasitikos logos eis ton autokratora kyrin Manuel Komnenon*, ed. K.G. MPONES. *Theologia 19 (1948) 547–8*; Niketas Choniates, *Chronike diegesis*, ed. J. L. VAN DIETEN (*CFHB 11*). Berlin-New York 1975, 176. P. WIRTH, *Kaiser Manuel I. Komnenos und die Ostgrenze. Rückeroberung und Wiederaufbau der Festung Dorylaion. BZ 55 (1962) 21–9*.

<sup>17</sup> Procopius, *Wars II 7, 12–3 (I 179 HAURY – WIRTH)*.

<sup>18</sup> Procopius, *Wars VI 9, 1 (II 189 HAURY – WIRTH)*; Theophanes, *Chronographia 440 (DE BOOR)*. On Thessalonica in 676/77 see *Miracula S. Demetrii II 4 / 247 (I 212–3 LEMERLE)*. At Petra (Lazica) the Persians had constructed a triple system of water supply to mislead the Byzantine besiegers: Procopius, *Wars IV 12, 21–7 (II 550–1 HAURY – WIRTH)*.

<sup>19</sup> Maurikios, *Strategikon IX 3 (320 DENNIS – GAMILLSCHEG)*. Niketas Choniates, *Chronike diegesis 179 (VAN DIETEN)*.

– and not wine, as often seemed to occur<sup>20</sup>. Keeping a balance between military discipline and the satisfaction of the individual might prove a difficult task for the supreme command of the army. Preparations for a campaign against Crete in 911 included the provision of wine<sup>21</sup>, but military treatises strictly forbade a distribution of it before the battle<sup>22</sup>. After a first victorious battle against the Arabs on Crete (829 or later) the Byzantine forces rejoiced and much wine was consumed. When the enemies attacked again during the night the drunken soldiers could offer no resistance and were driven from the island<sup>23</sup>.

Seafaring depended on water and not only in a physical manner. Ships, especially those on long distance travel, had to be able to dispose of enough drinking water<sup>24</sup>. The sailor is unfortunately often obliged to slake his thirst with water that is little better than mire<sup>25</sup>. Spoilt water endangered the success of the fleet sent in 533 to conquer Vandal North Africa. Only storage in glass jars completely buried in sand in the hold of the ship preserved the water quality and saved the crews from death by dehydration<sup>26</sup>. This constitutes one reason, why medieval ships tried to avoid, if ever possible, passages on the high seas. Sailing along the coasts was preferred<sup>27</sup>, where fresh water could be easily supplied.

It does not seem a mere coincidence, that from the time of Antiquity, both regions along the sea and also nearby several islands along maritime trunk-routes, at one and the same time produced famous wines, e.g. Attica and Euboia or Western Asia Minor with Samos, Chios and Lesbos<sup>28</sup>. Their reputation also depended upon a geographic and communication-connected advantage. Commercial distribution (of wine) done by ship was faster and much cheaper than its transport overland<sup>29</sup>. “Some cities are located at a distance from the sea, whereas others have been built on the shores. Of these, those whose fate it was to dwell next to the sea are the truly prosperous cities. That which the earth bears for those inhabiting the city the sea receives, and that which the sea bears in return the land receives”<sup>30</sup>.

Such advantages and disadvantages of the traffic network affected markets and consumers, too. In his exile at Philippopolis, Nikephoros Basilakes (about 1160) complained in vain about the local wine, which almost foamed as a consequence of the addition of resin<sup>31</sup>. Unfortunately, it was the only type available. In the provinces, good wine from other areas – the high price of which would have been increased even further by the cost of transport on land – was not sufficiently in demand to make trade lucrative. The case of Michael Choniates is somewhat more complicated. The Metropolitan longed in vain for wines of good quality, even though he lived close to the sea, in Athens. This small twelfth-century settlement did not attract trade. Ships

<sup>20</sup> Maurikios, *Strategikon* VII A 10 (236 DENNIS – GAMILLSCHEG). Knowing about the soldier’s preference for wine, the retiring enemy left back poisoned wine: T. KOLIAS, *Essgewohnheiten und Verpflegung im byzantinischen Heer*, in: *Byzantios. Festschrift für Herbert Hunger zum 70. Geburtstag*. Wien 1984, 193–202, esp. 201–2. Cf. F. COLLARD, *Timeas Danaos et dona ferentes. Remarques à propos d’un episode méconnu de la troisième croisade*, in: *Chemins d’outre-mer. Etudes sur la Méditerranée médiévale offertes à Michel Balard (Byzantina Sorbonensia 20)*. Paris 2004, 139–47.

<sup>21</sup> Constantine Porphyrogenitus, *De cerimoniis* 658, 8–12 (REISKE). J. F. HALDON, *Theory and Practice in Tenth-Century Military Administration*. Chapters II, 44 and 45 of the *Book of Ceremonies*. *TM* 13 (2000) 210–11.

<sup>22</sup> Maurikios, *Strategikon* XII B 23 (484 DENNIS – GAMILLSCHEG), repeated in Leon (VI), *Taktika* XIV 92 (*PG* 107, 807B–C).

<sup>23</sup> Theophanes Continuatus, *Chronographia* II 25 (79–80 BEKKER). On the probable date see V. CHRISTIDES, *The conquest of Crete by the Arabs (ca. 824). A turning point in the struggle between Byzantium and Islam*. Athens 1984, 3–4, 85–8 and D. TSOUGARAKIS, *Byzantine Crete. From the 5th Century to the Venetian conquest (Historical Monographs 4)*. Athens 1988, 41–6.

<sup>24</sup> J. PRYOR, *Geography, technology, and war. Studies in the maritime history of the Mediterranean, 649–1571*. Cambridge 1992, 75–86.

<sup>25</sup> Libanios, *Progymnasmata*, X. *Comparationes*, 4. *Synkrisis nautilias kai georgias* (VIII 350 FOERSTER).

<sup>26</sup> Procopius, *Wars* III 13, 23–4 (I 372 HAURY – WIRTH). A filtering procedure is described in Maurikios, *Strategikon* X 4 (350 DENNIS – GAMILLSCHEG).

<sup>27</sup> Cf. the detailed indications of the portulans: K. KRETSCHMER, *Die italienischen Portolane des Mittelalters (Veröffentlichungen des Instituts für Meereskunde und des Geographischen Instituts an der Universität Berlin. Heft 13)*. Berlin 1909; A. DELATTE, *Les portulans grecs*. Paris 1947.

<sup>28</sup> Pliny, *Naturalis historia* XIV 73–9 (48–50 ANDRÉ). KOUKOULES, *Βιοç* V/1, 124–7; KISLINGER, *Weinhandel* 143–4, 150.

<sup>29</sup> HENDY, *Byzantine Monetary Economy* 555–9.

<sup>30</sup> Libanios, *Progymnasmata*, XII. *Descriptiones*, 8. *Ekphrasis limenos* (VIII 483 FOERSTER). Translation by Sp. VRYONIS Jr., *Thalassa kai Hydor. The sea and the water in Byzantine literature*, in: *The Greeks and the Sea*, ed. Sp. VRYONIS Jr. New Rochelle 1993, 118–9.

<sup>31</sup> Nicephori Basilace orationes et epistulae, ed. A. GARZYA. Leipzig 1984, 115 (letter 4). Cf. Gregorios Antiochos about sour wine at Sofia: J. DARROUZÈS, *Deux lettres de Grégoire Antiochos écrites de Bulgarie vers 1173*. *BSI* 23 (1962) 280.

passed it by and products from the islands of Euboea, Rhodos and Chios poured into the rich city of Constantinople<sup>32</sup>.

The vast range of offerings finds its best expression in the luxury of the imperial table (cf. already above 147 with note 5). Isaac II Angelos (1185–1195) dined in a Sybaritic manner, “feasting on a laird of wild beast, a sea of fish and an ocean of deep-red wine”<sup>33</sup>. Abundance, however, may result in abuse. Emperor Michael III (842–867) *methystes* (the drunkard) is the classical example. He surrounded himself with a dastardly crowd of lusty and sinful men, with whom he, the wretch, spent his time – with rowdy parades and drunkenness as well as with the addiction and intellectual limitations related to the latter – altogether without any consideration for the dignity of imperial majesty. Reckless as he was when he was drunk, he committed every kind of heinous deed, and left the right path of law and order<sup>34</sup>. Suitable moderation (*prepon, prosekon*) was one of the obligatory virtues, which a ruler should exercise<sup>35</sup>.

Public opinion reacted rather sensitively to all transgressions; in the Hippodrome the masses ridiculed the drunken emperor Phokas (602–610) by shouting to him: *Palin eis to kaukon epies, palin ton noun apolesas* (Once again inside the wine-jug, once again out of your mind)<sup>36</sup>. Such critics reflect the impact of Christian rigour against wine-consumption: “Be sober, not addicted to wine, because drunkenness is followed by sin”<sup>37</sup>. “Drunkenness causes the ruin of reasoning, destruction of strength, premature ageing, and death within a short time”<sup>38</sup>. “Water is the best beverage, tempers the senses, whereas inebriation, which takes possession, makes the mind turbid”<sup>39</sup>.

But not every citizen of Constantinople felt himself at risk with plenty of wine. “If only I could also refresh myself with wine from Chios, maybe four jugs, I could burp freely and with joy, but I was never allowed to take even one small sip”<sup>40</sup>. The person, who thus laments is a simple monk of the Philotheou-monastery. He enviously watches the heads of the monastery, whose nutrition includes sweet wines from Ganos (Thrace), Crete and Samos<sup>41</sup>. The basic problem of whether or not monks should be allowed to drink wine at all (as Pachomios laid down in his rules<sup>42</sup>) was watered down in the course of time and became a question of quantity and quality. In the 12<sup>th</sup> century the genre of satire, to which the Ptochoprodromic poems belong, focuses on a social-hierarchic conflict about Well-Being denied to those who do not have through the access to more and better wine. Drinking pure water makes the monk feel sick<sup>43</sup> and become a *methystes*<sup>44</sup>. The ascetic

<sup>32</sup> Michaelis Choniatae epistulae, ed. F. KOLOVOU (CFHB 41). Berlin 2001, 69 (letter 50).

<sup>33</sup> Niketas Choniates, Chronike diegesis 441 (VAN DIETEN). English translation by H. J. MAGOULIAS, O City of Byzantium. Annals of Nicetas Choniates. Detroit 1984, 242.

<sup>34</sup> Theophanes Continuatus V 20 and 26 (243, 251–2 BEKKER). On the literary image of Michael III see R. J. H. JENKINS, Constantine VII’s Portrait of Michael III. *Bull. Cl. Lett. Sc. mor. pol. Accad. Royale de Belgique* V 34 (1948) 71–7 (Reprint in IDEM, Studies on Byzantine History of the 9th and 10th Centuries. London 1970, no. IV); F. TINNEFELD, Kategorien der Kaiserkritik in der byzantinischen Historiographie. Von Prokop bis Niketas Choniates. München 1971, 98–101; E. KISLINGER, Der junge Basileios I. und die Bulgaren. *JÖB* 30 (1981) 137–9 with note 7.

<sup>35</sup> H. HUNGER, Prooimion. Elemente der byzantinischen Kaiseridee in den Arengen der Urkunden (WBS 1). Wien 1964, 109–12.

<sup>36</sup> Theophanes, Chronographia 296 (DE BOOR).

<sup>37</sup> Gnomology of John Georgides, ed. P. ODORICO, Il prato e l’ape. Il sapere sentenzioso del monaco Giovanni (WBS XVII). Wien 1986, 198 (no. 704).

<sup>38</sup> Basil of Caesarea, In Ebriosos 7 (PG 31, 457B).

<sup>39</sup> Gregory of Nazianz, Carmina moralia I 2, 32, 31–2 (PG 37, 918A). On a similar position of John Chrysostomos see C. BROC, La vin, la santé et la maladie dans la prediction de Jean Chrysostome, in: Vin et santé en Grèce ancienne, ed. J. JOUANNA – L. VILLARD – D. BÉGUIN (BCH Supplément XL). Athènes 2002, 269–89.

<sup>40</sup> Ptochoprodromos. Einführung, kritische Ausgabe, deutsche Übersetzung, Glossar, besorgt von H. EIDENEIER (Neograeca medii aevi V). Köln 1991, poem IV 181–2, 227–8 (148, 150).

<sup>41</sup> Ptochoprodromos, poem IV 332 (157 EIDENEIER). N. GÜNSENIN, Le vin de Ganos: les amphores et la mer, in: Eupsychia. Mélanges offerts à Hélène Ahrweiler, I–II (Byzantina Sorbonensia 16). Paris 1998, I 281–7.

<sup>42</sup> A BOON – Th. LEFORT, Pachomiana Latina. Règles et épîtres de S. Pachome, épître de S. Théodore et “liber” de S. Orsiesius. Louvain 1932, 173/no. 15–XLV (an exception is granted only to ill monks). Already the contemporary realization seems to have been less severe, cf. the examples given in L. REGNAULT, The Day-to-Day Life of the Desert Fathers in Fourth-Century Egypt. Petersham, Mass. 1999, 76–8; L. A. SCHACHNER, “I greet you and the brethren. Here are fifteen šentaese of wine”. Wine production in the early monasteries of Egypt and the Levant. *ARAM* 17 (2005) 157–84.

<sup>43</sup> Ptochoprodromos, poem IV 134–5 (146 EIDENEIER).

<sup>44</sup> Ptochoprodromos, poem IV 133: *kai methysten ton ek nerou, nyn hydrokopiasmenon* (156 EIDENEIER).

ideal of diet, which mainly consisted of water, bread and a few vegetables<sup>45</sup> (and thus intentionally resembles the nourishment of the poor<sup>46</sup>) has lost significance here. Warm water with added caraway, pepper (and/or aniseed)<sup>47</sup>, a traditional monastic lenten-beverage<sup>48</sup>, is no longer considered a good mixture (*eukraton*)<sup>49</sup>, even watered (*nerokopemenos*) wine proves unsatisfactory<sup>50</sup>.

For centuries Byzantium had maintained the ancient custom of mixing strong wine with boiled water<sup>51</sup>. Its addition sometimes was the responsibility of a special servant<sup>52</sup>. One chapter of the so-called „Book of the Eparch“, which regulates the commercial activities of various professions in the capital – particularly those who make clothes or produce food – is concerned with the proprietors of taverns (*kapeloi*). In the evening, they are compelled to extinguish the fire beneath the kettles. The aim was not to prevent preparation of cooked meals. It was to remove the supply of warm water to dilute the wine, with the objective of hindering the guests from staying all night and in their drunkenness, indulging in arguments and violence<sup>53</sup>. At this time – in the early tenth century – it seemed superfluous to contrive a way of preventing the alternative, which is – in the absence of water – to continue drinking undiluted wine. Only a drunkard<sup>54</sup> would act in such a manner.

Liudprand of Cremona, who visited the Byzantine Empire three times in diplomatic missions<sup>55</sup>, did not share this Byzantine attitude. He criticises various bishops with whom he stayed on his way home and who were poor hosts: „On their table, one finds only rusk and they drink, or rather sip, bath water from tiny glasses“<sup>56</sup>. The Italian guest disliked the fact that the wine had been diluted with warm water and especially the small quantity of wine served. Emperor Nikephoros II (963–969), in a conversation with Liudprand, indirectly confirms the different approaches to nutrition, when he expressed his contempt about Latin voracity: „Your master’s troops are neither good at riding nor at fighting on foot. ... Furthermore, their gluttony hinders those whose stomach is their god, whose inebriation is their courage and whose drunkenness is their bravery. With an empty stomach they are weak and when they are sober they are full of fear“<sup>57</sup>.

At the beginning of the 12<sup>th</sup> century we still encounter the gap between the occidental and the Byzantine way of drinking wine. According to the *Gesta regum Anglorum* by William of Malmesbury (V § 410 ed. Stubbs) King Sigurd of Norway visited Constantinople on his way back from the Holy Land. During his stay there, members of his retinue died in large numbers. Sigurd knew precisely why this occurred and how to

<sup>45</sup> To give only a few examples from hagiography (s. VIII–X): Life of St Athanasia of Aegina, ed. L. CARRAS, in: Maistor. Classical, Byzantine and Renaissance Studies for Robert Browning (*Byzantina Australiensia* 5). Canberra 1984, 214; Acta graeca SS. Davidis, Symeonis et Georgii Mitylenae in insula Lesbo. *AnBoll* 18 (1899) 221, 224; La vita di San Fantino il Giovane, ed. E. FOLLIERI (*Subsidia Hagiographica* 77). Bruxelles 1993, 424–6 (ch. 21); The Life of St Irene, Abbess of Chrysobalanton, ed. J. O. ROSENQVIST (*Studia Byzantina Upsaliensia* 1). Uppsala 1986, 18 (ch. 6); Life of Theodore Studites. *PG* 99, 300A.

<sup>46</sup> E. PATLAGEAN, Pauvreté économique et pauvreté sociale à Byzance, 4<sup>e</sup>–7<sup>e</sup> siècles (*Civilisations et Sociétés* 48). Paris 1977, 36–53. Cf. above note 6.

<sup>47</sup> Ptochoprodromos, poem IV 337, 617 (157, 172 EIDENEIER). Cf. Theodore Studites, Const. 30 (*PG* 99, 1716B).

<sup>48</sup> Typicon of the Theotokos-Euergetes-monastery, ed. P. GAUTIER. *REB* 40 (1982) 39 (line 444), 41 (line 463), 43 (lines 491–2); cf. Typicon of the Kecharitomene-monastery, ed. P. GAUTIER. *REB* 43 (1985) 95, 97 (lines 1345, 1382).

<sup>49</sup> Pratum spirituale, chapter 184 (*PG* 87/3, 3057B–C); Typicon of the Pantocrator-monastery, ed. P. GAUTIER. *REB* 32 (1974) 58–9 (line 492). There seems to be a bit of truth behind the satirical complaint, because the Euergetes-typicon (see note 48) in an addendum (lines 1344–58) limited its use – and alternatively granted wine – even during lenten time, because some monks had fallen ill by drinking *kyminaton*.

<sup>50</sup> Ptochoprodromos, poem IV 133, 396 (146, 160 EIDENEIER).

<sup>51</sup> P. VILLARD, Le mélange et ses problèmes. *Revue des études anciennes* 90 (1988) 19–33; M. D. DUNBABIN, Wine and Water at the Roman Convivium. *Journal of Roman Archaeology* 6 (1993) 128–40. Still today “krasi” (from *krasin* = drink, mingled with *krasis* = mixture or quantity necessary for a drink) is a Greek synonym for wine (*oinos*): EIDENEIER, Tabuwörter 55–84; IDEM, Zu “krasin”. *Hell* 23 (1970) 118–22.

<sup>52</sup> Source evidence in E. KISLINGER, Thermodotes – ein Beruf? *Klio* 68 (1986) 123–7.

<sup>53</sup> Das Eparchenbuch Leons des Weisen, ed. J. KODER (*CFHB* 33). Wien 1991, 132 (ch. 19.3.).

<sup>54</sup> Cf. Theophanes Continuatus 251, 15 (BEKKER) concerning Michael III.

<sup>55</sup> See already note 4 above.

<sup>56</sup> Liudprand of Cremona, Relatio de legatione constantinopolitana, ch. 63 (211 BECKER): “... *balneaque tunc vitro permodico non bibentes, sed sorbillantes*”. WEBER, Essen und Trinken (as note 4) 76, 81.

<sup>57</sup> Liudprand of Cremona, Relatio de legatione constantinopolitana, ch. 11 (182 BECKER). Cf. the image of the “crusaders” of 1204 in Niketas Choniates, Chronike diegesis 594 (VAN DIETEN).

remedy the situation. He ordered that from now on those remaining should drink less wine and *aqua mixtum*, wine diluted with water<sup>58</sup>.

The local practice was imitated by doing so, but among the Byzantines drinking habits slowly began to change. No longer did the dangers of wine-drinking stand at the centre of literary attention. Michael Psellos, encyclopaedic scholar and courtier (born 1017/18, died after 1078), wrote in praise of wine for the first time since late Antiquity<sup>59</sup>. A friend, whom the author had freed from tooth-aches, had sent him some excellent wine. The donor suspects that this wine was responsible for his sufferings, which renders the gift a bit ambiguous, but Psellos and a guest gloat over such anxiety<sup>60</sup>. For centuries wine had been tolerated as a necessary ingredient of medical prescriptions<sup>61</sup>. Care for personal health could even offer a pretext for one to ask for wine<sup>62</sup>. Psellos illustrated how medical practice allowed for access to the pleasures of wine<sup>63</sup>. Certainly the text belonged to the genre of rhetoric and the same author dedicated other encomia to fleas and lice<sup>64</sup>, which does not mean that Psellos was particularly fond of them. But wine and Well-Being were repeatedly associated in the vast range of his writings. Another of the so-called *Oratoria minora* ridicules the son of a tavern-keeper, who in his quest for social advancement, has become a lawyer<sup>65</sup>. Now that the young academic is unemployed, he should reflect on whether it was really such a disgrace and so stressful to turn the skewered lamb or pork on the barbecue. As far as the process of serving wine is concerned, the text is much more explicit. Psellos makes use of this in order to allude to classical mythology and once again proves how educated and well-read he is. It is not necessary to have first-hand experience of the milieu in question. If he had any at all, Psellos cleverly puts such words into somebody else's mouth: „One moment he is sipping pure wine, the next he is mixing it, if only with a little tepid water, so as not to reduce the strength of the wine. Frequently he grasps the pitcher with both hands and raises it to his mouth. He is familiar with all the city's taverns and knows exactly where high-quality wines are served, where the darkest red wine is available and that the best wine of all is without a doubt the one from Chios. This is the strongest wine, he says, and whoever has it, does not need any other“<sup>66</sup>. Who might be the subject of such an ironically-critical account? It is Psellos' father-confessor, who, due to his titles *grammatikos* and *notarios*<sup>67</sup> must surely have acted as suitable company for the courtier.

The still indirect and cautious way in which Psellos approaches public drinking of undiluted wine appears to be typical of the beginning of a gradual change in Byzantine society. There was a trend towards a greater diversity of material culture, consumption and Well-Being in general from the eleventh century onwards<sup>68</sup>. The sources document more luxury in dressing<sup>69</sup>, manufacture of silken clothes ceased to be limited to Constantinople<sup>70</sup> and flourished also outside at Thebes or Corinth<sup>71</sup>. *Tryphe*, physical weakening which might

<sup>58</sup> R. HIESTAND, Skandinavische Kreuzfahrer, griechischer Wein und eine Leichenöffnung im Jahre 1110. *Würzburger medizinhistorische Mitteilungen* 7 (1989) 143–53.

<sup>59</sup> E.V. MALTESE, Per una storia del vino nella cultura bizantina: appunti dalla letteratura profana, in: *Storie del vino (Homo edens II)*. Milano 1991, 195–6, 199–201 (Reprint in IDEM, *Dimensioni bizantine. Donne, angeli e demoni nel medioevo greco*. Torino 1995, 93–110).

<sup>60</sup> Michael Psellos, *Enkomion eis ton oinou*, ed. A. R. LITTLEWOOD. Leipzig 1985, 110–6 (or. 30). R. VOLK, *Der medizinische Inhalt der Schriften des Michael Psellos (MBM 32)*. München 1990, 280–6.

<sup>61</sup> A. GARZYA, Le vin dans la littérature médicale de l'antiquité tardive et Byzantine. *Filologia antica e moderna* 9/17 (1999) 13–25 (Reprint in *Vin et santé en Grèce ancienne = BCH Supplément XL*. Athènes 2002, 191–200).

<sup>62</sup> G. FATOUROS, Die Briefe des Michael Gabras (ca. 1290–1350), I–II (*WBS* 10/1–2). Wien 1973, II 163, 191 (letters 101 and 115); Théophylacte d'Achrida. *Lettres*, ed. P. GAUTIER (*CFHB* 16/2). Thessalonique 1986, 539 (letter 113).

<sup>63</sup> Cf. once again the Ptochoprodromic poem IV 584–5 (170 EIDENEIER), where the abbot's physicians receive a pay of ten gold-pieces or fifteen *metra* wine (approx. 120 litres).

<sup>64</sup> Michael Psellos, *Enkomion eis ten psyllan* and *Enkomion eis ten phtheira*, edd. A. R. LITTLEWOOD. Leipzig 1985, 97–101 (or. 27), 102–6 (or. 28). VOLK, *Inhalt* 245–56.

<sup>65</sup> Michael Psellos, *Eis tina kapelon genomenon nomikon*, ed. A. R. LITTLEWOOD. Leipzig 1985, 52–7 (or. 14).

<sup>66</sup> Michael Psellos, *Pros ton heautou papan*, ed. A. R. LITTLEWOOD. Leipzig 1985, 60–1 (or. 16).

<sup>67</sup> On these titles see *ODB* II 866 resp. III 1495.

<sup>68</sup> A.P. KAZHDAN – A.-W. EPSTEIN, Change in Byzantine culture in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. Berkeley 1985, 74–83.

<sup>69</sup> KAZHDAN – EPSTEIN, *Change* 75–7.

<sup>70</sup> D. SIMON, Die byzantinischen Seidenzünfte. *BZ* 68 (1975) 23–46; D. JACOBY, The Jews and the Silk Industry of Constantinople, in: IDEM, *Byzantium, Late Romania and the Mediterranean*. Aldershot 2001, 1–20 (no. XI).

<sup>71</sup> D. JACOBY, Silk in western Byzantium before the fourth Crusade. *BZ* 84/85 (1991/92) 452–500; IDEM, *Silk Economics and Cross-Cultural Artistic Interaction: Byzantium, the Muslim World, and the Christian West*. *DOP* 58 (2004) 197–240, esp. 219–27.

allow evil to enter, was no longer dreaded as much as before. The frequency of taking baths increased, monasteries opened their bath-houses to the public for payment<sup>72</sup>. Michael Choniates, Metropolitan of Athens, complained about the low standard of bathing facilities on the island of Kea. Only small huts, whose doors could not be closed, were available, so that the bathers suffered from smoke and heat and at the same time shivered from the draft<sup>73</sup> – and once again (see above 149–50 with note 32) another element of Well-Being, wines of good quality were missing<sup>74</sup>.

Conservative indignation about the new lifestyle arose. Emperor John II Komnenos (1118–1143) was highly critical of the haircuts and the shoe-styles at court and he cleared the palace of profligacy in food<sup>75</sup>. On the other hand, Manuel II (1143–1180) knew quite well, how to satisfy the common people. On the occasion of the wedding of his son Alexios with Agnes of France, the inhabitants of the capital were invited to a public banquet: "...wine was not drunk in allotted portions ... nor in the manner of the cup of friendship, *mixing the pure wine with water*, but just as every one wished it. Some were more prudent, those to whom it was important to be in control of themselves ... others were more headstrong, those who needed only one thing, to go away more heavy and be loaded beyond measure, being served with what they desired by widening their stomachs as if they were barns .. The wineskins provided by nature did not contain their excess, but they cast forth the surplus"<sup>76</sup>. Even high officials now intentionally displayed similar excessiveness. Kamateros, minister of Manuel, made a bet with the Emperor, that he would succeed in drinking up a huge *lekanis*. This bowl, which held nearly 7 litres (1,5 gal), was filled to the brim with water. Stooping over like an ox, the minister emptied the vessel, coming up for air but once. Heavy wine drinking was another "ability" of Kamateros. He could compete with the rulers of (western?) *ethne*, "who gulped down whole casks and held the amphorae in their fingers as though the were wine cups"<sup>77</sup>.

Kekaumenos, a provincial magnate, dramatically equates a single case of drunkenness with lifelong darkness, but at the same time he advises more wine-growing on the estates<sup>78</sup>. Therefore, the production and sale of wine promised considerable profit, reflecting the higher level of consumption as well as the changed geopolitical and economic premises.

The recapture of Crete, victories on the eastern Arabic frontier and the fall of the Bulgarian empire marked the Byzantine ascendancy during the later tenth and early eleventh century and resulted in a territorial expansion. More land was now available and could be cultivated in peace. The population began to grow, agricultural productivity (as Kekaumenos had recommended) went up<sup>79</sup>. Rhetorical descriptions (*ekphraseis*) of Byzantine cities like Thessalonica and Nicaea mention vineyards in its surroundings. Evidently, they constituted an element, which evoked positive feelings in the readers<sup>80</sup>.

The power of the Byzantine state vouched for the safety of regional and international transport routes<sup>81</sup>, from which trade soon began to profit. This expanding market attracted foreign traders, especially Venetians and Genoese. A commercial network came into being, favoured by tax-reductions, which the Byzantine em-

<sup>72</sup> Typicon of the Mamas-monastery, ed. S. EUSRATIADES. *Hellenika* 1 (1928) 309; Typicon of the Kosmosoteira-monastery, ed. L. PETIT. *Izvestija russkago archeologiceskago instituta v Konstantinopole* 13 (1908) 66. On the former ideal of *alousia* cf. H. HUNGER, *Zum Badewesen in byzantinischen Klöstern*, in: *Klösterliche Sachkultur des Spätmittelalters (Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, phil.-hist. Klasse, Sitzungsberichte 367)*. Wien 1980, 354–8.

<sup>73</sup> Michaelis Choniatae epistulae, ed. F. KOLOVOU (*CFHB* 41). Berlin 2001, 191 (letter 115).

<sup>74</sup> *Op. cit.* 192.

<sup>75</sup> Niketas Choniates, *Chronike diegesis* 47 (VAN DIETEN).

<sup>76</sup> Eustathii Thessalonicensis Opera minora, ed. P. WIRTH (*CFHB* 32). Berlin-New York 2000, 170–81, here 176. Cf. A. F. STONE, *Eustathios and the Wedding Banquet for Alexios Porphyrogenetos*, in: *Feast, Fast or Famine. Food and Drink in Byzantium*, ed. W. MAYER – S. TRZCIONKA. Brisbane 2005, 33–42, esp. 39–40 (English translation).

<sup>77</sup> Niketas Choniates, *Chronike diegesis* 113–4 (VAN DIETEN). MAGOULIAS, *City of Byzantium* 64–5.

<sup>78</sup> Cecaumeno, *Raccomandazioni e consigli di un galantuomo*, a cura di M. D. SPADARO (*Hellenica* 2). Alessandria 1998, 166 (ch. 117), 170 (ch. 122).

<sup>79</sup> A. HARVEY, *Economic Expansion in the Byzantine Empire, 900–1200*. Cambridge 1989.

<sup>80</sup> Ioannis Caminatae De expugnatione Thessalonicae, ed. G. BÖHLIG (*CFHB* 4). Berlin-New York 1973, 7 (ch. 5); Theodore Metochites, *Nikaieus*, ed. K. N. SATHAS in *MB* I 143.

<sup>81</sup> A. AVRAMEA, *Land and Sea Communications, Fourth-Fifteenth Centuries*, in: *The Economic History of Byzantium. From the Seventh through the Fifteenth Century*, vol. I, ed. A. E. LAIOU. Washington, D.C. 2002, 57–90; E. KISLINGER, *Reisen und Verkehrswege zwischen Byzanz und dem Abendland vom neunten bis in die Mitte des elften Jahrhunderts*, in: *Byzanz und das Abendland im 10. und 11. Jahrhundert*, hrsg. von E. KONSTANTINOOU. Köln-Weimar-Wien 1997, 231–57.

perors more or less willingly conceded to the Latin merchants<sup>82</sup>. A cheaper and expanded offer of commodities stimulated the demand and created new standards for Well-Being, both in the field of luxury items and basic needs such as beverages.

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<sup>82</sup> R. J. LILIE, *Handel und Politik zwischen dem byzantinischen Reich und den italienischen Kommunen Venedig, Pisa und Genua in der Epoche der Komnenen und Angeloi, 1081–1204*. Amsterdam 1984; A. LAIOU, *Exchange and Trade, Seventh-Twelfth Centuries*, in: *The Economic History of Byzantium. From the Seventh through the Fifteenth Century*, vol. II, ed. A. E. LAIOU. Washington, D.C. 2002, 697–770.