



Summary :

According to the most valid foundation myth, Byzantium was a Megaric colony, founded by Byzas. Built on the site where Bosphorus opens up to the Sea of Marmaras, it combined a unique strategic location with a very fertile inland. The control of the Bosphorus was the decisive element which marked its further history.

Other Names

Lygos

Geographical Location

Turkey

Historical Region

Asia Minor

1. Mythology

According to one version of the foundation myth of Byzantium, when the Megarian [Byzas](#) asked Delphi for an oracle regarding the site on which he should found his colony, he received the answer that he should set its foundations “opposite to the city of the blind”.¹ When he reached the Bosphorus, Byzas immediately understood the meaning of the prophecy and he laid the foundation stone of his colony on the site where the Bosphorus formed an indentation to the west, later called the [Golden Horn](#).

The name Byzantium, however, points to a Thracian onomatology, as attested by the related place names Byzia and Byzires, as well as the name of the nearby river, Barbyzes.² According to [Pliny the Elder](#)³ the site was formerly called Lygos.

Not only the foundation myths, but also its chronological co-ordinates, appear in several versions. The most prevalent among the latter is that dating it in 660 or 659,⁴ yet there are also others lowering it to the beginning of the 8th century BC⁵ or raising it to the beginning of the 6th century BC.⁶

2. Topography

The site where Byzantium was founded had unique advantages. From a climatic point of view, it was the spot where Bosphorus brought down cold streams from the Black Sea which made summer more pleasant but were also accompanied by intensive raining which made the arable land fertile and the non-cultivable land covered with thick forests. From a strategic point of view, the peninsula formed among the Golden Horn, the Bosphorus and the Sea of Marmaras had a unique position, as it controlled the maritime communications, both for defensive and for commercial purposes. Even more advantageous was its position in relation to the ongoing colonisation: Byzantium could become the starting point for the foundation of yet more new colonies along the [Bosphorus](#) as well as on the shores of the [Black Sea](#).

Two rivers poured out into the cove of the Golden Horn, namely Barbysis (or Barbyzes) and Cydaris. The Byzantines took advantage of these rivers in order to transport wood from the nearby low mountains; initially this wood was used for the building of the city, later for the construction of the fleet, and finally as merchandise. In fact, it is considered that the very first settlement was founded exactly on that spot, on the cove of the Golden Horn and the estuaries of the two rivers where the sanctuary of Semystra lay.

Later on, the site on the tip of the peninsula was probably judged as more appropriate.⁷ The site was fortified with a wall 35 **stadia** long, from which the larger part covered the city from the sea and only 5 **stadia** protected it from inland.⁸

2.1. The walls of Byzantium



According to ancient writers, Byzantium was the third best fortified city of the ancient world after Messene and [Rhodes](#).⁹ The local historiography, enriched with mythological elements, attributed the construction of these walls to the divine help offered by Apollo and Poseidon to Byzas.¹⁰ In fact, the already strong classical walls were reinforced even further during the siege of the city by Philip II. The walls were formed by more than one sections. The front section was built with **isodomic masonry**. The carefully squared and smoothed stones were so well bound to each other, that they looked as if they had no seams.¹¹ Behind this front section there were erected embankments and additional buildings, which created a broad and protected corridor with ramparts. The walls were interrupted by seven strong towers, which protruded and protected the gates.¹² The position of the towers was so carefully planned, that the sound would reach one another as if they were adjacent, a fact which proved very convenient for the transmission of orders in battle. The land walls were naturally much higher than the sea walls, since the latter were surrounded by a rocky landing, natural in its larger part, which kept both sea waves and raiders away. At the middle of the land walls the most important gate, the Thracian gate, opened up. To the south and slightly to the east of the Thracian gate there was a second gate, the Milion (Mile), whereas a third one is also attested by the name "Herakleia". On the northwest corner of the walls, right above the sea and the port which was later called Neorion, there was the only circular and strongest tower of the walls.¹³

2.2. Ports

During the Classical and Hellenistic periods, Byzantium apparently had two ports, both on the north side of the peninsula. The easternmost one, which was called Bosporion, lay exactly before the tip of the peninsula, the Bosporia Akra. The second one was situated further to the west and in the medieval period it was called Neorion; its ancient name is unknown.¹⁴ The entry of the ports was closed with chains, whereas strong towers on both sides of the entry enhanced the defensive system.

Unguarded ports seemed to have existed on the south side, where later on Vlanga and Kadirga Limani lay. A natural port for mooring boats was of course the Golden Horn.¹⁵

2.3. Public Space

The tip of the peninsula had always a sacred character. On the Bosporia Akra, right inside the sea walls, the temple of Poseidon was situated,¹⁶ and the altar of Athena Ekvasia. Slightly deeper, on the first wall, the sanctuaries of Aphrodite, Apollo-Helios and Artemis were erected.¹⁷ It is most probable that the sanctuary of Apollo¹⁸ was situated exactly on the spot where stands, even today, the so-called column of the [Goths](#). The "stadiums and **gymnasiums**" were situated between the temple of Poseidon and the sea walls, but we do not know more about them. Only literary evidence exists on the sanctuary of Dionysus, as well as on some other sanctuaries which lay in the [area](#) outside the walls, on the cove and the entrance of the Golden Horn as well as at Sykeai, present-day Galata.

On the summit of the second hill, where today the [Hagia Sophia](#) stands, the large **agora** of the city was built. A stepped **crepis** raised the market level even higher. The agora was surrounded by sumptuous **stoas**, and this is the reason why the literary sources often mention it as the "Tetrastoon". At a later phase, probably in late antiquity, a column bearing the statue of Helios stood in the centre of the Tetrastoon.¹⁹

During the re-foundation of the city by [Septimius Severus](#) the historical centre of the city acquired two new large edifices, namely the Hippodrome and the [Baths of Zeuxippos](#), a magnificent building constructed over the earlier temple of Zeus. To Severus is also attributed the Cynegeion, which was reserved for representations of wild animal hunting.

3. History

3.1. Archaic period

An additional factor supporting the Megarian origin of the first colonists is that the city had adopted the alphabet, calendar and



primary cults of Megara. Yet, whichever version one might accept on the time and conditions of the foundation of the city, it is certain that in its early phase Byzantium must have fought hard against the [Thracian tribes](#) which surrounded it.²⁰ The colonists, of [Doric](#) origin, applied a control system similar to that of Sparta, turning the local inhabitants into a sort of helots, called "Prounikoi" (i.e. former residents). It seems, however, that the city maintained good relations with the Achaemenids. Ariston, the [tyrant](#) of Byzantium, is mentioned among the Greek political and military leaders who supported Darius during his [Scythian campaign](#), offering him ships among other things.²¹ The city, however, was not among the most loyal ones to the Persian king. When he was late to return, the Byzantines proposed to abandon their positions, and possibly to destroy the bridge over the Bosphorus. This proposal aroused the fury of Darius, who, upon his return, decided to punish Byzantium (the strategical position of which was so crucial) and appointed as governor of the city Otanes, well-known for his harshness.²²

In the course of the [Ionian Revolt](#), Byzantium was captured by the allied Greek forces.²³ After the unfortunate for the Greek side end of the revolt, several prominent citizens of Byzantium, fearing the rage of the Persians, together with citizens of [Chalcedon](#), who had maintained an anti-Persian position, left and founded [Mesembria](#) on the west coast of the Black Sea.²⁴ Indeed, Byzantium suffered extensive damage by the Persians as a form of punishment.²⁵

3.2. Classical period

During the [Persian Wars](#), the control of Byzantium secured the safe return of the Persian army, particularly after the final defeat at Plataea in 478 B.C. The Greeks, under Pausanias, victor of Plataea, conquered the city and captured several of the Persian aristocrats which formed its upper social class.²⁶ In the course of time, however, Pausanias seemingly came into terms with [Xerxes](#) and remained there as governor of the city, despite the will of the Spartans, for seven more years, until 470 BC.²⁷ The period of his government was described with dark colours. Finally Pausanias was expelled by the Athenians who had always wanted to control the Straights of Bosphorus.

Byzantium then acquired a democratic regime, and was made a member of the [Delian League](#), contributing considerable sums of money, due to its prosperous economy.²⁸ During the Peloponnesian War, Byzantium was initially on the side of the Athenians.²⁹ In 416 BC, together with Chalcedon, it organised an expedition against [Bithynia](#).³⁰ After the failure of the Sicilian Expedition, however, when the final defeat of Athens was on the horizon, Byzantium came into terms with the Spartans and finally defected from the Athenian league in 411 BC. Yet, in the following year the Spartan general [Clearchus](#) captured the city, under the pretext of the need to stop the despatch of [grain](#) to Athens from the Black Sea.³¹

The Athenians then turned against Byzantium and [Alcibiades](#) besieged the city in 409 BC. Its defender, Clearchus, at some point abandoned the city, and then certain citizens opened the gates to the Athenians. According to the literary sources, several citizens continued to support the Spartans and a battle was fought, even within the city walls, until Alcibiades promised amnesty.³² After their defeat at [Aegospotami](#) the Athenians signed a peace treaty with Sparta, according to which they had to abandon, among other possessions, Byzantium as well. The Byzantines who had opened the gates to Alcibiades followed the Athenian army back to Athens and later on acquired honorary Greek citizenship.³³

In 403 BC the Byzantines faced a problem with the Thracian tribes and asked for the help of the Spartans, who sent Clearchus once again. The latter, however, installed a terror regime, and the Spartans had finally to recall him forcefully and to put Cleandros in his position.³⁴ Around 390 BC Thrasybulus put a final end to the Spartan presence in the city, as well as to the oligarchic regime. In order to secure their alliance with Byzantium, the Athenians made a special treaty with them before the foundation of the [Second Athenian League](#).³⁵ However, the loyalty of the Byzantines to the Athenians was not based on stable ground. In 364 BC Epameinondas acquired their support relatively easily, in order to use their navy for reinforcing the rising power of the Boeotian League and of the Theban supremacy. In 362 BC the Byzantines barred once more the Straights for the ships which provided Athens with grain. A new crisis in the relations of the two cities occurred in 357 BC, when Byzantium joined forces with [Mausolus](#) of Caria. When a new peace treaty was finally accomplished, the Byzantines profited from it, by extending their influence on Chalcedon and



Selymbria.

Byzantium came again on the historical forefront at the time of the expansion of Philip II. The conflict of the Byzantines with the king of Thrace Kerseveptes led them to form a peace treaty with Philip. However, when he asked them to actively turn against Athens, they avoided doing it. Philip took revenge. In 341/340 BC he attacked nearby Perinthos, which the Byzantines actively supported. When his siege failed, Philip moved fast against Byzantium, as the latter's best forces were still located in Perinthos.³⁶ The siege of Byzantium by Philip acquired quasi-mythical dimensions in the collective memory of its citizens.³⁷ The Byzantines believed that their final salvation was due to the goddess Hecate Phosphoros. In fact, some Greek cities under the leadership of Athens proclaimed war against Philip, which until then were reluctant to do.³⁸ Among the generals of the expedition was the orator Demosthenes, one of the leaders of the anti-Macedonian party. The siege ended unhappily for Philip, who made sure that he had taken revenge at least on the general of the Byzantines, Leon, whom he falsely accused in front of his fellow citizens, thus forcing him to commit suicide.

3.3. Hellenistic period

Despite the obstacles that Byzantium had brought against his father, [Alexander](#) left the city in a state of autonomy, allowing it to mint its own coins. It is obvious that he had realized its strategic importance and that he did not want to run the risk of treason on the part of the Byzantines. Indeed, during his [campaign](#) to the Danube the Byzantines offered their support by sending a contingent of their navy to sail against the flow of the river.³⁹ After Alexander's death, the Byzantines initially supported [Antigonos](#) in his struggle against Polyperchon, later on though they maintained a neutral position during his struggle against [Cassander](#) and Lysander.⁴⁰ Their overall attitude towards the Antigonids was friendly, and they even erected statues in Olympia in honour of [Demetrius](#) and his son, [Antigonos Gonatas](#).⁴¹ After the battle at Couropedion, Byzantium coalesced with [Heraclea Pontica](#), in order to resist the [Seleucids](#).⁴²

In 278 BC, Celtic tribes marched against mainland Greece and Asia Minor and crossed [the Hellespont](#). Byzantium could not resist [the Galatians](#) who raided the countryside and accepted to pay a heavy tribute, which rose up to 80 talents. In the following years the Byzantines constantly sought to extend their supremacy and particularly to control [trade](#) which passed through the Straights. Thus, they waged war against [Callatis](#), which they subdued, Tomi and [Histria](#), whereas they asked the [Ptolemies](#) of Egypt for protection.⁴³ Byzantium wanted to make a step further and impose taxes upon the crossing of the Straights. This, however, infuriated Rhodes, as the new measures would immediately affect its navy; Rhodes thus proclaimed war. The Rhodians asked the assistance of [Prusias](#) of Bithynia, who started taking over the possessions of Byzantium in Asia Minor. A peace treaty was finally achieved through the mediation of the Celt monarch Kavaros and the Byzantines were forced to abolish the taxes in order to take back their territories.⁴⁴ Byzantium and Rhodes finally overcame their differences and made an alliance with [Attalus II](#) of Pergamon, in order to resist Philip V. Byzantium wanted in this way to regain control of Perinthos, which the Macedonian king had taken away from it. The implication of Rome on the side of the coalition was of a positive outcome, as after the battle of Pydna (197 BC) Byzantium took Perinthos back.⁴⁵

3.4. Roman period

Byzantium remained on the side of Rome during all its struggles for the consolidation of its power in the east such as the war against Andronicos (Andriscos) of Macedonia, in the [Mithridatic wars](#), and the war against the [pirates of Cilicia](#).

The spread of the Romans was never a threat for the Byzantines. On the contrary, through the favourable conditions created by the *Pax Romana*, Byzantium remained the second, after Rhodes, most important naval force of the east. Besides, Byzantium was often used by the Romans as an intermediate stop for the transportation of troops to Asia Minor. Equally important was the role of Byzantium in the frequent wars against the Thracians. For these reasons several emperors offered privileges to the city. [Claudius](#) accorded a five-year immunity, [Trajan](#), after a proposal made by his [legate Pliny the Younger](#),⁴⁶ waved off the tribute for the [imperial cult](#), whereas it is delivered that [Hadrian](#) provided the city with an aqueduct.

Fishing, agriculture and the income from customs duties secured the prosperity of the city even at the end of the second century AD, when other cities of the empire started to face a crisis. It was at that moment, however, that Byzantium committed a serious offense,



by supporting Pescennius Niger in his struggle against [Septimius Severus](#). The latter put the city under a systematic siege, which was maintained even after the death of Niger in Asia Minor. The war engines and the strength of its walls helped Byzantium to resist for almost three years. When it was finally conquered, the punishment was harsh. The city was destroyed by the Roman army. However, the son and successor of Severus, [Caracalla](#), managed to turn his father's mind, and the latter went on to rebuild the city and to give back some of the privileges he had abolished. Among the Severan buildings were a portico, the so-called "Baths of Zeuxippos", the "Cynegion" (apparently an amphitheater where representations of wild animal hunting were taking place) and the Hippodrome. Severus seems to have transferred the temple of Apollon within the acropolis. Thus, Byzantium had a prosperous period for another half a century.

A new destruction phase came with emperor [Gallienus](#), who punished the citizens for their disloyalty in the matter of imperial succession. From the mid-3rd century onwards, the raids of barbarian tribes, the Goths in particular, and the turmoil in the ranks of the Roman army put often the city in a critical situation. Yet, the blows were never decisive. An important decision, however, was that taken by [Diocletian](#), as a result of his [reformation](#), to make Perinthos, and not Byzantium, the capital of a province. The civil wars which broke out after Diocletian's abdication and the collapse of the Tetrarchy brought Byzantium in the forefront. The walls were further fortified; due to its fortified position [Licinius](#) took refuge there after his defeat in Hadrianople. His adversary, Constantine, persecuted him and made him surrender. During this siege [Constantine](#) apparently realized the unique privileges of the site and decided to transfer his capital there, under the name of [New Rome](#).

4. Culture and daily life

During the Late Classical and the Hellenistic period, Byzantium was at the peak of its prosperity. The accumulation of wealth, however, seems to have made the inhabitants flabby and self-indulgent. According to Theopompus of Chios they spent their life in the marketplace, in the tabernae and on the beach, seeking all sorts of pleasures, wine in particular. [Menander](#) in his "Flute-playing girl" repeats this accusation, which seems to have become a commonplace. More than one mentions of the debaucherie of the Byzantines are found in Athenaeus' *Deipnosophistae*. In one case he relates a passage by Phylarchus of Athens, who wrote that the Byzantines' love for wine made them not even stand the sound of the military trumpet. Their general, Leonides, in order to persuade them to fight at a certain instance, forced the wine merchants to put their tents up on the ramparts; then some of the citizens stayed, not for the sake of defence, but in order to maintain access to the wine provisions. The 1st century poet Antiphilos, himself a Byzantine, criticizes in a humorous manner the drunkenness of the Byzantines.⁴⁷

This, however, was only one side of daily life. Byzantium had many others to display. Poetry, and literature in general, was something that the Byzantines were successful in. In fact, one of the most famous women poets of the ancient world, Moero, whose floruit is placed around 300 BC was a Byzantine. She was renowned mainly for her work *Arae*, i.e. Curses. From Byzantium came also important scientists, such as [Philo](#), as well as learned persons, such as [Aristophanes](#) and [Dionysius](#).

The religious life of the city was dominated by cults which were based on the Greek pantheon: Poseidon, Apollo, Artemis, Aphrodite and Dionysos were among the main deities worshipped. In the Roman period deities of an [oriental background](#) were also added, such as Serapis and [Cybele](#). The most important religious [festival](#) was the Bosphoria, a sacred torch-bearing parade, which started at the beach and ended on the acropolis, where the sacred flame was lit.

5. Archaeological remains

As is expected in a city which was destroyed and rebuilt, re-founded and finally became the capital of empires for centuries, the archaeological remains from antiquity are barely visible here and there on the palimpsest of modern Istanbul. Such a monument is the "[Column of the Goths](#)", to which we had already referred to, and which is situated today between the Ottoman palace of [Top Kapi](#) and the Sea Walls. The column, which probably replaced the statue of the colonist, Byzas, was in a presumptuous position within the ancient city, close to the most important sanctuaries. Parts of another column, which was probably erected for praising the military victories of an emperor, are the reliefs incorporated in the lower part of the walls of the [Baths of Beyazid](#) on Ordu Caddesi. One of them, unfortunately placed upside-down, depicts a Roman legion in march.⁴⁸



The open space in front of Hagia Sophia and up to the present-day At Meydanı corresponded to the Roman Forum Augusti, from which nothing remains today. On the contrary, some remains of the [Hippodrome](#) are still visible; the latter was founded by Septimius Severus as part of the reconstruction of the city. The visible sphendone of the Hippodrome, hidden behind later buildings on the slope of the street which leads towards [St. Sergius and Bacchus](#) (Küçük Aya Sofya Camii) dates from a later stage of a reconstruction of the Hippodrome, yet its position marks the position of the earlier one. From the Forum Augusti started the [Mese](#), the street which headed towards the Sea of Marmaras, and the walls of Septimius Severus. The street corresponded roughly to the present day Divan Yolu. At the starting point of the street there stood a monumental [Tetrapylon](#), called Million (the mile). A second marketplace, [Forum Bovis](#), reserved for cattle, was situated in present-day Aksarı, close to the [Aqueduct of Valens](#) (375 AD). The latter, however, could be much earlier and in fact it could be the very aqueduct which Hadrian is reported to have given the city around 125 AD. This was a complicated work connected to a particularly extensive system of ceramic and stone pipes, which brought water from sources and torrents situated outside of the city.

A lot has been said about the antiquity of the columns of Hagia Sophia. More recent studies, however, have proved that the majority of those columns were constructed specifically for adorning the spacious church, although they came from various quarries, particularly from the Greek mainland. On the contrary, it has been proved that the columns and column bases which are incorporated in the lower parts of the [palace of Boukoleon](#) (in modern Kennedy Caddesi, just outside from the Sea Walls) are much older. They are dated to the 5th century BC and belonged to a non-identified (up to this moment) sanctuary which was situated in the area.

In the mezzanine of the Archaeological Museum of Istanbul a large room bears the title "Istanbul through the Ages". In this room one can see remains of the daily life of the ancient city, such as pottery items dating from the 7th century onwards. A series of funerary stelae offer information both on the genealogy of the deceased and for their habits, as they usually depict in relief scenes of the daily life or of banquets.

6. Epigraphic evidence

In contrast to the few architectural and artistic remains, the available epigraphic material coming either from excavations or building material in second use is rather rich. As mentioned above, a quite large number of inscriptions still persists, mainly funerary, honorary or dedicatory.⁴⁹ The honorary inscriptions in particular give us a good glimpse of the foreign policy of the city, as the honoured citizens are often those who were in charge of embassies or who mediated towards other cities or monarchs. The inscription in honour of Eudamos, son of Nicon, who originated from Byzantium and had managed to climb up the hierarchy in the court of [Antiochos III](#) [Appendix 1]. Other inscriptions, however, mention the names of important personalities who lived in the city, such as the Spartan general Pausanias [Appendix 2]. Furthermore, the inscriptions offer testimonies on aspects of the religious life of the city and of the rituals which took place, such as the big festival of the Bosphoria [Appendix 3], the festivals in honour of Dionysus [Appendix 4] or the "ship sailing" in honour of [Isis](#) [Appendix 5]. Generally, the inscriptions offer more useful information, such as the names of the inhabitants as well as those of the months or the dating system used at each period.

7. Numismatics

The city of Byzantium initially created its own [monetary system](#), based on iron coins, which could not be easily forged or falsified. The aim of this action was to create a numismatic unit which could enable secure commercial transactions, as it was clear from the beginning that trade would become the spinal cord of the economy of Byzantium. This system, however, was not long-lived. Already in the 4th century BC, some coins of Byzantium (both copper and silver issues) are based on the Persian monetary system, whereas slightly later, in the 3rd century BC, some coins follow the Rhodian monetary system.

Of the coins of the Classical period the most usual type is that with the depiction of a cow or bull on a dolphin on the [obverse](#) and of [pressed](#) antennas and sails of a windmill on the [reverse](#). Towards the end of the Hellenistic period and during the Roman period, deities such as Demeter, Dionysos, Artemis and so forth, make their appearance on the obverse, whereas on the reverse rather common is the symbol of the city, consisting of a crescent moon with an inscribed star and the inscription BYZANTIΩN. An



alternative symbol for the reverse in all periods, particularly though during the Hellenistic era, is the trident of Poseidon. During the imperial period, golden [imperial issues](#) make their appearance, following the general standards in use throughout the empire. Around the same time Byzas, founder of Byzantium, appears also on a limited number of issues.

1. For this version of the myth see Strabo 7.320, Hsch. (4.21). Herodotus, however (Hdt. 4.44) attributes this saying to the Persian satrap Megabazos.
2. The Thracian origin of the name, however, could be a counter-loan, as it is well-known that already from the archaic period onwards these names had penetrated even the Attic vocabulary.
3. Pliny, *NH* 4.46.
4. Hieronymus, *Fragmenta historicorum Graecorum* and Cassiodorus, *Chronicle* (ed. Th. Mommsen, Cassiodori Senatoris Variae, Berolini 1894). Cf. Cassiodorus, *Chronicle* (ed. Th. Mommsen, 1894).
5. Hdt. 4.44.
6. Johannes Lydus, *De magistratibus populi Romani libri tres*, ed. R. Wuensch (Lipisiae 1903).
7. It is the site where the Ottoman palace of Top Kapi was later built.
8. See Dion. Byz., *Per Bosporum navigatio*, ed. R. Gungerich (Berolini 1958) and *RE*, Suppl. III, 1118-1119, s.v. Byzantion (R. Kubitschek). The distance of 5 stadiums corresponds to almost 1 kilometer and is smaller than the contemporary one. This, however, could possibly be attributed to changes in the land morphology, as well as to human interventions, such as the deposits of earth and building material for the creation of Kadirga Limani.
9. Paus. 4.31.5.
10. Hsch. Mil. 12.
11. Diod. S. 7.14.4.
12. Hsch. Mil. 27.
13. Dion. Byz. 12.
14. Dio Cassius (D.C. 74.10.5) mentions two ports. Dionusius' report of a third port does not seem justified, at least not at that early age.
15. On the ports of the city see Müller-Wiener, W., *Die Häfen von Byzantion, Konstantinupolis, Istanbul* (Tübingen 1994).
16. See Appendix 1.
17. Herodotus (4.87) mentions an altar of Artemis Orthosia, but it is not certain whether this altar is identical with the sanctuary of the same deity mentioned by Hesybios (16).
18. Several inscriptions of a private or public character were dedicated to the sanctuary of Apollo. See Appendix 2.
19. See Malalas, *Chronographia*, 291 ff and *Chronicon Paschale* I, 494 ff.
20. See Dion. Byz. 8.9, 6.12, 53.35.
21. Hdt 4.138.



22. Hdt 4.143 ff, 5.26 ff.

23. The sources, however, do not clarify whether the body of citizens supported the Revolt. It is noteworthy that no naval force of the Byzantines participated at the naval battle of Lade.

24. This, however, is only one version on the foundation of Mesembria.

25. Hdt 6.33.

26. Thuc. I.94, 128. See also Appendix 1.

27. Thuc. I. 128-131.

28. According to epigraphic testimony for the year 450 BC the tribute was 15 talents/ ingots and the sum was maintained around the same level, with slight increase or decrease, during the following years. See *CIA* I 230. 233, 237, 239.

29. Thuc. II 9.4. Xen., *An.* 7.1.27. The tribute of the city was in fact raised to 21 talents. See *CIA* I 259.

30. Diod. S. 12.82.2.

31. Xen., *HG*, I.1.35.

32. Diod. Sic. 13.64.3 and 66.4 and Xen., *HG*, I.3.2.

33. Xen., *HG*, II.2.1.

34. Diod. Sic. 14.12.

35. See *CIA* II.19.

36. Diod. Sic. 16.76.

37. Leo of Byzantium wrote a seven-volume work on the siege. The work is not extant, however Justin (9.1) preserves a short compendium.

38. Diod. Sic. 16.77.2 and *CIA* II 118.

39. Arr., *An.* 1.3.3.

40. Diod. Sic. 19.77.7.

41. The erection of the statues is dated after 277/6 B.C. Pausanias 6.15.7.

42. Memnon of Herakleia 11 = *FrGrH* III 533. The anti-Seleucid coalition was maintained and was taking action whenever this was necessary under the circumstances, like the struggle against Antiochus II at the last decade of 260 BC.

43. According to Dionysius of Byzantium (41. 30) the Byzantines dedicated to Ptolemy Philadelphus a temple close to the Palinormikon, thus honouring him for the territories which he had accorded them in Asia Minor as well as for other grants.

44. Plb. 4.47-52.



45. Plb. 18.2.4.
46. Plin., *Epistulae*, 77.
47. Cf. Freely, J., *Istanbul: the imperial city* (London 1998).
48. The relief was already in second use in the nearby Forum of Theodosius.
49. A large number of these inscriptions has been incorporated in the volume *Byzantion* of the series *Inschriften Kleinasiens*.

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Glossary :

	agora, the
	The term initially meant the gathering of the people. During historical times this gathering was called ecclesia and the word agora meant the public space where citizens gathered. The agora consists of commercial and religious buildings as well as constructions of political character.
	crepis / crepidoma
	The solid mass of stepped masonry serving as the visible base of a building. The crepidoma usually consists of three steps. The top step from which the columns spring is called the stereobate.
	gymnasium
	The gymnasium was one of the most important centres of public life in Greek cities. The institution of the gymnasium, directly connected with the development of the Greek city, aimed to create virtuous citizens and gallant warriors. As educational institutions of public character, the gymnasia were intended for the physical and theoretical education of the young and consisted of separate spaces for special purposes.
	isodomic masonry (opus quadratum)
	A type of masonry in which blocks of equal length and thickness are laid in courses, with each vertical joint centered on the block below.
	legate
	(lat. <i>legatus</i>). The senatorial ambassador a) to foreign nations or b) to military commanders, in which case he assumed command. He was considered a functionary, since he was under the commands of the Senate; he was also a sacred person. In later periods, legate was named the representative sent to a foreign land, and such was the title of the head of the Italian communities in Byzantine Constantinople. The representatives of the Pope empowered for the settlement of ecclesiastical matters were also called legates.
	obverse
	The face of the coin which bears the more important device. Due to ambiguities that sometimes exist, many numismatists prefer to use the



term for the side struck by the lower (anvil) die.

■ repoussé technique, the

The process or the result of decorating

- a. metallic surfaces with designs in relief, hammered out on the surface of the material from the back to the front.
- b. ceramic objects, where the motif is impressed into the surface of the vessel (the fresh clay) before firing.

■ reverse

The back view of a coin where the issuing authority is usually inscribed.

■ stadium

The later Greek unit of linear measurement, containing 600 feet, equal to approximately 117,6 m.

■ stoa, portico, the

A long building with a roof supported by one or two colonnades parallel to its back wall.

■ talent, the

Numismatic weight unit. The silver talent equaled 60 mnai or 6000 silver drachmas.

■ tyrant, the

The initial meaning of the term was the leading archon of a noble origin. Later on he was the usurper of rightful power and the one who was ruling in an absolute way, aiming ostensibly to the welfare of his people.

Sources

Quotations

Appendix 1

IK Byzantion 1 (175-171 BC)

34

[Βυ]ζαντίων. ἔδοξ[ε] τᾷ βουλᾷ καὶ τῶι δάμωι ἐπ[ει]δὴ τοῖ

35

προσβευταὶ τοῖ ἀποσταλέντες π[ο]τι τὸν βασιλῆ]

Ἀντίοχον ἐπελθόντες π[ο] τὴν βουλᾶν [ἔ]φα]ν Εὐδαμον

Νίκωνος Σελ[ε]υκ[ῆ] διατρί οντα παρὰ τῶι β[α]σιλεῖ Ἄν-

τιόχωι κοινᾷ τε ποτὶ τὸν δᾶμον [οἰ]κείως ἔχειν καὶ]

ἰδία τοῖς ἐντυγχάνουσι τῶν πολιτῶν χρεΐας

40

παρέχεσθαι καὶ εἰς τὸν λοιπὸν ρόνον παγγ[έ]λ]-

λεσθαι ἐπιμέλειαν ποιῆ [ς π]όλιος, δε[δ]ό]-

χθαι τῶι δήμωι, ἐπαινέσαι μὲν ἐ [ἰ] τοῦ] οἰς Εὐδ[α]μον]

καὶ εἶμεν αὐτὸν πρόξενον τᾶς πόλιος· δε[δ]όσ]-

[θ]αὶ δὲ αὐτῶι καὶ ἐκγόνοις καὶ εἴσπ[ι]λου κ] ἰ [κ]πλου]

45

ἰ πολέμου καὶ εἰράνας [α]ς] ἀσυλεῖ [κ]αὶ ἀ[σ]πονδεῖ]

καὶ ἔφοδον ἐπὶ τὴν βουλᾶν καὶ τὸν δᾶμ[ο]ν πράττωι]

μετὰ τὰ ἰ [α] καὶ τοὺς συνα]-

[γ]όρο]υς τᾶς βουλᾶς ἀναθέ [ε]ν [αὐ]τοῦ τὸν τελαμῶ]να

[εἰς τὸ] ἰ[ε]ρὸν] τ[οῦ] Ἀ]πόλλ[ω]ν]ος[ς].

50

[Βυ]ζαντί . . ἔδοξε τᾷ βουλᾷ καὶ τῶι δάμωι ἐ[π]ει]-

δὴ Φάεινος ἐπελθὼν ἐπὶ τὴν βουλᾶν ἔφη Εὐ [ο]ν]

Νίκωνος Σελευκῆ πρότερόν τε διατελεῖν οἰκείως ἔ [ο]ν]-

τα ποτὶ τὸν δᾶμον καὶ χρεΐας παρέχεσθαι τᾷ τε πόλει

κοινᾷ καὶ ἰδία τοῖς ἐντυγχάνουσι τῶν πολιτῶν,



55

καθάπερ αὐτὸν {ι} διαμαρτυροῦντι ταὶ πρεσβεῖαι ταὶ
ἀποσταλεῖσαι πρὸς τὸν βασιλῆ καὶ εἰς τὸν λοιπὸν
χρόνον ἐπαγγέλλεσθαι πρόθυμον ἑαυτὸν παρέ-
ξειν εἰς τὰ τὰς πόλιος συμφέροντα, δεδόχθαι τῶι [ά]-
μωι, ἐπαινέσαι μὲν ἐπὶ τούτοις Εὐδαμον καὶ εἶμεν αὐ-
60

τὸν πολίταν κατὰ τὸν νόμον· ἐξεῖμεν δ' αὐτῶι καὶ [ι]-
γράψασθαι ποτὶ τὰν ἑκατοστὸν ἄγ κε θέλη· τοὺς
πεντεκαίδεκα καὶ τοὺς συναγόρους τὰς βουλ [ς]
ἀναθέμεν αὐτὸ τ[ὸ]ν τελαμῶνα εἰς τὸ ἱερόν [οῦ]
Ἀπόλλωνος.

Appendix 2

IK Byzantion 7, IK Byzantion 6, IK Byzantion 8A

Thrace – Byzantion (Istanbul) – 478 BC? – Athenaios XII,50,A

μνάμ' ἀρετᾶς ἀνέθηκε Ποσειδάωνι ἄνακτι
Πανσανίας ἀρχῶν Ἑλλάδος εὐρυχόρου
Πόντου ἐπ' Εὐξείνου, Λακεδαίμονιος γένος, υἱὸς
Κλεομβρότου, ἀρχαίας Ἡρακλέος γενεᾶς.

Appendix 3

IK Byzantion 11, CIG 2034 – SEG 14.483

Ὀλυμπιόδωρος Μενδι-
δώρου στεφανωθεὶς
ταῖ λαμπάδι τῶν ἀνή-
βων τὰ Βοσπόρια τὸ
ἄθλον Ἑρμᾶ καὶ Ἡ-
ρακλεῖ.

Appendix 4

IK Byzantion 30 (85-96 AD)

ἀγαθῆ τύχη.
ἐπὶ ἱερομνάμονος
Δομιτιανοῦ Καίσαρος
Σεβαστοῦ Γερμανικοῦ
5
τὸ ε', μῆνός Βοσπορίου
οἱ μύσται Διονύσου
Κάλλωνος ἐτείμησαν
τὸν εὐεργέτην ἑαυτῶν
καὶ γυμνασίαρχον Ροῦ-
10
φον Διοδώρου Φιλοκτη-
ρήας γυμνασιαρχήσαν-
τα πολυτελῶς καὶ καλῶς.



Appendix 5

IK Byzantion 324, *MDAI(A)* 36 (1911) 287,2

Ἰσιδι καὶ Σαράπιδι·
βασιλεύοντος Ῥοιμε-
τάλκου, μερα<ρ>χοῦν{P}-
τος {μεραρχοῦντος} δὲ Ἀρτεμιδώ-

5
ρου τοῦ Φι<λ>οστρά-
του, ἔτους · λ·β' · Ἀρτε-
μίδωρος Συνίστο-
ρος υἱὸς ναυαρχή-
σας τὰ μεγάλα [οι]-

10
αφέσια τὸν τελα-
μῶνα ἀνέθηκεν.