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43. An interpretation of how the Adriatic lagoonal settlement of Comacchio would have looked in the 8th century (Universita Ca' Foscari – Venezia).

Before Venice The Byzantine *patrikios* Theodosios Baboutzikos arrived in Venice from Constantinople in 840 CE and, according to the written sources, remained there a year.[1]

Venice was a new city that had not existed in classical antiquity. It had surprisingly sprung up in the midst of a lagoon in the upper part of the Adriatic Sea – an unlikely spot for a traditional city, but a characteristic location for a newly developing maritime society. At a time interpreted by modern scholars as a general decline of established Mediterranean towns,[2] the northern Adriatic appears instead to have been experiencing unusual 'ferment'. This phenomenon was not generally connected with the ancient urban centres, but seemed to favour new spaces, once uninhabited (or sparsely populated): often marginal sites, such as lagoons, but in excellent locations for commerce (inland and along the coast) and far enough away from the existing centres of strong political powers. These 'grey zones' favoured the emergence of new communities and new aristocracies, oriented in the construction of new opportunities related to transport and navigation, but they were not yet totally disconnected from land ownership.

Venice was not an isolated incident. To the south 160 km, another lagoonal settlement with very similar characteristics developed slightly earlier: Comacchio. While the archaeology of Venice's earliest times is still elusive, Comacchio is well known archaeologically and can serve for comparison. Recent excavations at Comacchio have shown that a settlement on small islands had suddenly developed between the 6th and 7th centuries. Archaeological finds show that it was economically oriented and crafts were a mainstay. At the beginning of the 8th century, Comacchio was stable enough to deal directly with the Lombard Kingdom in northern Italy for trading on the Po River and its tributaries. This is attested by an exceptional

document, the so-called "Capitulary of *Liutprandus*", a text that indicates the tolls that the ships from Comacchio had to pay the Lombards in a number of river ports. Comacchio's merchants exported mainly salt, which they, like the Venetians, collected from the nearby salt marshes. Excavations have also revealed that high-quality glass and metal items, such as cameos in glass or bronze letters were manufactured, surely for trade. Also traded were spices, oil and *garum* (a fish sauce appreciated in antiquity). Some of these products were carried in ceramic containers, or amphorae, which have been found in large quantities in excavations at the city. These amphorae, which come mainly from the Aegean Sea and perhaps the Black Sea, were traded by Byzantine merchants who had reached Comacchio but not yet the far northern Adriatic.[3]

Comacchio in the 8th century was an economically oriented centre, similar in some respects to Northern European settlements such as Hedeby or Kaupang, emerging in the same period, although in different historical and political contexts.[4] Comacchio seems to tell the earliest stage of what would be the future, and, along with Venice, documents an intriguing phenomenon that has no equal in the Mediterranean at this time.

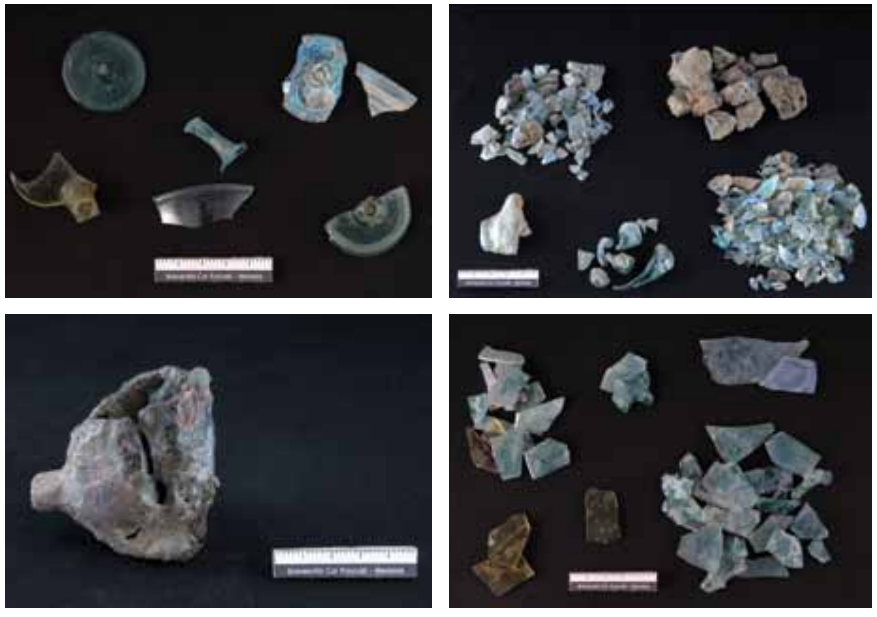
Venice and similar places in the region had gathered speed a century or so before Theodosios' voyage here from Constantinople. In the beginning of the 9th century, the 'new city' of the lagoon had been in conflict with the Franks, but following a peace in 814 the aristocracies of the lagoon hinged between two worlds: the Byzantine Empire (upon whom they still formally depended) and the Carolingian Empire (to whom they paid more attention because of new economic opportunities).

Before Theodosios Venice was born 'officially' in 810-11 when *Agnellus Partecipatius* was appointed Doge and a new

ducal palace was built.[5] But settlements in the Venice lagoon, like Torcello, had already been developing slowly between the 5th and 8th centuries, according to an interesting process of selection and centralisation, especially in the north. The reasons for this progressive growth were due to three main factors: economy, security and isolation. The lagoon had become important economically for its salt production[6] and for trade, first along the northern Adriatic coast (from Istria to Ravenna) and then into the hinterland through the Po River and its tributaries – the river serving as a corridor between the eastern Mediterranean and Northern and Western Europe. The lagoon itself was a protected and secure place for vessels, even serving as the seat of an important Byzantine fleet during the late 6th to late 8th centuries. Additionally, Venice was located some distance from the existing strong 'centres of power' in the region, and this isolation may have facilitated the growth of its own relatively autonomous identity.[7]

But what did the merchants in the northern Adriatic get in return? Perhaps the farms in the Lombard region were producing enough agricultural goods that their surpluses could be traded down the river. Or perhaps Comacchio and other contemporary small settlements in the Venetian lagoon like Torcello dealt only in long-distance maritime trade:[8] terminals receiving goods from afar, independent of the economy of the agricultural hinterland. However, connections into the hinterland are traceable by the presence of globular amphorae and a 'Comacchio type' ceramic in several cities of the interior (such as Cremona, Verona, Milan) and in some monasteries (as Nonantola).

In spite of a fragmentation of the economic and productive structures that takes place during the 7th century, signs of recovery can be seen in the exploitation of land ownership especially in the Po Valley.[9] A clue may be sought, although still indirect and archaeologically faint, just in the foundation of new monasteries in the late Lombard period. Monasteries were related directly to the king or to the highest aristocracy that from the start might have been active agents in a re-organisation and ownership of the territory.



44. Finished and unfinished products from a glass workshop excavated at Comacchio (Universita Ca' Foscari – Venezia).

A new perspective in the Adriatic Mediterranean After the peace between the Carolingian and Byzantine Empires in 814, a new scenario appears in the northern Adriatic. In this area, certainly among the most dynamic in the Mediterranean, Venice emerges as a powerful lagoonal city, eventually in the 13th and 14th centuries controlling its own maritime empire spanning several seas. But does the situation in the northern Adriatic reflect the general situation of the Mediterranean, or at least that part of the Mediterranean still under Byzantine control, when Theodosios arrived from Constantinople in the 9th century? It does not seem so.

The situation in the southern Adriatic might have been different, but there are few sites here that have been archaeologically investigated. Butrint, in

46. Settlements in the Venice lagoon began developing like Comacchio between the 5th and 8th centuries. Torcello, in the northern part of the lagoon, was one of the oldest Venetian sites. Today, a view towards Venice from the bell tower of the Cathedral of Santa Maria Assunta, established in the 7th century, gives an idea of how these early settlements must have looked (Photo: Athena Trakadas).

modern Albania, for example, was an ancient city that had become little more than a village in the early medieval period. In the 9th century, after being controlled briefly by the Bulgars, it became an outpost of the Byzantine Empire.[10] There are, for example, other locations which provide more evidence, such as Malta. Here, amphorae dating to the 8th and 9th centuries from southern Italy, the Aegean and the Crimea are found. These finds are not possible to understand if associated only with local consumption on Malta – they are perhaps better explained if the island is seen to function as an emporium in the trade between East and West.[11]

Until the first quarter of the 8th century, the island of Sicily seems to have been involved in local and long-distance exchange, with a strong circulation of goods within a system governed by *Patrimonium Sancti Petri*, whereby the Church of Rome controlled properties on the island. After the confiscation of these properties under the Byzantine emperor Leo III in the mid 8th century, and especially by the Islamic conquest of the entire island by 965, the situation changes. Then, the connections with the East and southern Italy seem to remain, at least for part of the island, albeit at a lower level than the previous centuries.[12]

Up to the time that Theodosios visited Venice in the 9th century, the direct relationship of the lagoonal city with the western Mediterranean seems modest. Venice's relationship with the East is also not so clear at this time; in the eastern Mediterranean, there was a mix of Caliphate- and Byzantine-controlled territories and maritime activities – some commercial, some piratical. Like in the Baltic, hoards of *dinars* and *dirhams* have been found in Venice and some from Torcello, but it is likely that they were brought there by traders who were not from the Muslim caliphates, as these groups did not seem to penetrate the Adriatic at this time.[13]

45. One of Comacchio's products: the matrix for a glass cameo (right) and a finished glass cameo (left) from an excavated workshop in the city (Universita Ca' Foscari – Venezia).

pirates off Corsica and Sardinia; failing to find any, Boniface put in to Sardinia and picked up pilots to guide him to Africa, where he harried the coastline of the Gulf of Tunis: McCormick 2001: 264-265; 913, no. 404; McCormick 2005: 139, 146-149; Dölger 2009: 216, no. 413.
19. Nerlich 1999: 272; Dölger 2009: 228, no. 443. See also Schreiner 2011: 769, no. 47.
20. Bekker 1838: 135. English translation by the author.
21. Thurn 1973: 79. These events are also recorded by Joseph Genesios, see Lesmüller-Werner & Thurn 1978: 50-51.
22. *Annales Bertiniani*: 42, s.a. 842. English translation by the author.
23. Pastorello 1938: 151. English translation by the author.
24. See Shepard & Cheynet, this volume, pp. xx-xx.
25. Reiske 1829: 674; Moffatt & Tall 2012: 673-674.
26. Reiske 1829: 660; Moffatt & Tall 2012: 660; Prigent 2010: 79-83.
27. The case for viewing Tissø as an occasional residence of the king was made by Jørgensen 2008: 77-82. See also Duczko 2004: 39-40, 56-58.
28. Bulgakova 2004: 53-55.
29. Shepard 1995: 44.

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1. Giovanni Diacono, *Istoria Veneticorum*, II, 50 (Berto 1999); see Shepard, this volume, pp. xx-xx.
2. Hodges & Whitehouse 1983
3. Hodges 1982: 24.
4. Gelichi & Hodges 2012
5. Giovanni Diacono, *Istoria Veneticorum*, II, 29 (Berto 1999).
6. As mentioned in the earlier years by Cassiodorus, *Variæ*, 24.
7. McCormick 2007
8. Theuws 2012: color plate 6.
9. Wickham 2005; Gelichi 2008.
10. Hodges 2012: 232.
11. N. Cutajar, pers. comm.
12. Nef & Prigent 2010.
13. McCormick 2001: 832-833, A37-40.

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Constantinople's Byzantine harbour: the Yenikapı excavations

UFUK KOCABAŞ

1. This Project is supported by Istanbul University's Scientific Research Projects Unit. Project numbers: 2294, 3907, 7381, 12765.
2. Gyllius 1997; Asal 2007; Gökçay 2007.
3. Kızıltan 2013; Kızıltan 2010.
4. Müller-Wiener 1998: 8-9.
5. Müller-Wiener 1998: 18.
6. Upon invitation by the Directorate of Istanbul Archaeology Museums, Dr. Ufuk Kocabaş has supervised the scientific research of 28 of the 37 shipwrecks; eight shipwrecks were turned over to Institute of Nautical Archaeology (INA) for study. See Kocabaş 2008; Kızıltan 2013.
7. Akkemik 2008: 201-212.
8. See Özsait-Kocabaş, this volume, pp. xx-xx.
9. Özsait-Kocabaş 2011a: 137-148; Kocabaş 2012: 1-5.
10. Özsait-Kocabaş & Kocabaş 2008: 97-186.
11. Sakelliades 1997: 47-54; Pryor & Jeffreys 2006; Pulak 2007: 128-141; see Trakadas, this volume, pp. xx-xx.
12. Kocabaş 2010: 23-33; Kocabaş *et al.* 2012

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A sea in transition: ships of the Mediterranean

ATHENA TRAKADAS

1. Agius 2008: 265-275; http://cudl.lib.cam.ac.uk/collections/genizah (accessed 1/2014); Pulak *et al.* 2013: 25-26.
2. Pomey, *et al.* 2012.
3. Of the 37 wrecks from Yenikapı, 26 have presently been studied in more detail; of these, 10 have been preliminarily dated to fall within the 9th century. Kızıltan 2013; see Kocabaş, this volume, pp. xx-xx.
4. Agius 2008: 355-357; Fahmy 1966: 27-42; Bell 1906.
5. Pulak *et al.* 2013: 29-30; Pomey *et al.* 2012.
6. Whitewright 2009.
7. For example, the Yenikapı 12 wreck is just under 10 m long (see Kocabaş, this volume, pp. xx-xx). There are exceptions and a few ships appear to be longer than 15 m (see Kocabaş, this volume, pp. xx-xx); Harpster 2009; Pomey *et al.* 2012: 271-273.
8. Ahrweiler 1966: 409-410.
9. Theophanes, *Chronographia* 397; Ahrweiler 1966: 409.
10. Agius 2008: 271-272.
11. Cassiodorus, *Varia* 5.16; see also Kocabaş, this volume, pp. xx-xx.
12. Fahmy 1966: 126-127; Agius 2008: 273-275, 334-338, 348-351.
13. Hocker 1995: 94-95.
14. Constatnine Porphyrogenitus, *De Caeremoniis* II, 45.
15. See Shepard, this volume, pp. xx-xx.
16. Pryor 1988: 59-60.
17. Pulak *et al.* 2013: 26; see Kocabaş, this volume, pp. xx-xx.

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The Yenikapı 12 wreck: connecting Constantinople

IŞIL ÖZSAIT-KOCABAŞ

1. Kocabaş 2008; Kızıltan 2013. This project is supported by Istanbul University's Scientific Research Projects Unit. Project numbers: 1845.
2. Kocabaş 2012: 10.
3. Özsait-Kocabaş 2011b.
4. Özsait-Kocabaş 2012.
5. Asal 2007: 184.

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The seals of Theodosios

JONATHAN SHEPARD & J.-C. CHEYNET

1. See Shepard, this volume, pp. xx-xx.
2. For the characteristics of the seals of Byzantine officials, the imagery favoured, and the other types of persons who issued seals, see Cheynet 2008: 16-21, 36-41, 52-55, 72-74.
3. Laurent 1978: 36-40; Feveile & Jensen 2000: 14, fig. 7c; Feveile 2006, vol. 1.2: 144, pl. 53; Jørgensen 2002: 241, figs 10, 14, 15; Jørgensen 2008: 77-82; Duczko 2004: 39-40, 52-57.
4. Oikonomides 1986: no. 46.
5. Illustration in Cheynet 2008: 10, fig. 5.
6. See Whittow 1996: 1; Cheynet 2008: 8-12.
7. But this was obviously not the case with the Istanbul seal. As for the Danish and German seals, Theodosios could scarcely have counted on sealed bags and emissaries' promises alone to win over Horic and other Viking lords; see Cheynet 2008: 42.
8. Duczko 2004: 55, 170-171.

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Theophilios' coin: treasure and image

HELLE HORSNÆS

1. Grierson 1982.
2. Wołoszyn 2009.
3. Fuglesang & Wilson 2006.
4. Georganteli & Cook 2006; see Shepard, this volume, pp. xx-xx.

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Kaupang: Viking-Age expansion to the North

UNN PEDERSEN

1. Bately & Englert 2007; see also Bately, this volume, pp. xx–xx.
2. Skre 2007c.
3. Pedersen 2010.
4. Stylegar 2007.

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Truso, silver and trade

MATEUSZ BOGUCKI

1. Hundreds of thousands of coins have been found, suggesting that millions were imported and either lost or melted down to form other objects. See Horsnæs, this volume, p. xx–xx.
2. See Bately, this volume, p. xx–xx.
3. Jagodziński 2010.
4. Lewicki 1949: 352–353; Montgomery 2008.
5. Montgomery 2008.
6. Graham-Campbell *et al.* 2011; Bogucki & Rębkowski 2013.
7. Mongomery 2008.

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