Zeynep Olgun

A SAILOR'S LIFE FOR ME: THE MIDDLE BYZANTINE SAILOR

ON BOARD AND AT PORT

MA Thesis in Comparative History, with a specialization
in Late Antique, Medieval, and Renaissance Studies.

Central European University

Vienna

May 2022

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AND AT PORT**

by

Zeynep Olgun

(Turkey)

Thesis submitted to the Department of Medieval Studies,

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requirements of the Master of Arts degree in Comparative History, with a specialization in

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Accepted in conformance with the standards of the CEU.

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I, the undersigned, **Zeynep Olgun**, candidate for the MA degree in Comparative History, with a specialization in Late Antique, Medieval, and Renaissance Studies, with a specialization in Interdisciplinary Medieval Studies declare herewith that the present thesis is exclusively my own work, based on my research and only such external information as properly credited in notes and bibliography. I declare that no unidentified and illegitimate use was made of the work of others, and no part of the thesis infringes on any person's or institution's copyright. I also declare that no part of the thesis has been submitted in this form to any other institution of higher education for an academic degree.

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Abstract

This thesis focuses on Byzantine sailors in the Middle Byzantine Period (c. 642 CE–1204 CE) in the Eastern Mediterranean by drawing a general picture of the sailors' daily lives. In so doing, I argue that the experience of being a Byzantine sailor was multifaceted and complex. To gain insight into this variety of experiences, this thesis relies on the interdisciplinary study of textual, archaeological, and ethnographic sources from the Middle Byzantine Period and beyond, based on the *longue durée* characteristics of seafaring and interacting with maritime landscapes. These experiences are the result of the commonalities of living in the maritime landscape and interacting with this landscape through seafaring. Maritime travel covered various distances (day-long, regional, long-distance) through different types of sailing patterns (cabotage, tramping, and direct), form the framework for travelling in the seascape. To better understand the movement of the sailor, I introduce two concepts: emplacement (sailors belonged to their local maritime communities and cultures) and displacement (sailors journeyed away from this community). On this journey, the sailor stopped at two different types of ports: short-distance ports which served those who moved within micro-regions, and ports connected to long-distance trade which provided certain establishments, such as taverns, inns, and brothels, for the sailors and were central to a sailor's experience at the port. Some sailors, such as the crew of the eleventh-century Serçe Limanı shipwreck, moved outside the boundaries of the Byzantine Empire, and had to mediate linguistic, political, religious, and economic differences. Moreover, the daily experience on board the ship during journeys was regulated through laws, customs, and practices which governed the sailors' behaviours, bodies, and souls. By discussing the daily lives of Byzantine sailors, this thesis contributes to the wider scholarship regarding Byzantine society and experiences, and by employing a variety of

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sources in an interdisciplinary manner, gives voice to a group who otherwise would remain silent.

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List of Abbreviations

NRN   Rhodian Sea Law, edited and translated by Walter Ashburner. *Νόμος*

      Ροδίων Ναυτικός: The Rhodian Sea Law. Oxford: The Clarendon Press,

      1909.

YK   Yeni Kapı

Introduction

Πλοῦς γὰρ νόημα μὲν ἐκ θεῶν τόλμημα δὲ γενναίων ἀνδρῶν[1]

The Byzantine Empire was surrounded by the sea; countless sailors set sail every day in wooden ships and carried around the catch of the day, pilgrims and saints, letters, and most importantly, themselves.[2] In this thesis, I focus on these sailors who were active in the Middle Byzantine Period (*c*. 642 CE – 1204 CE) in the Eastern Mediterranean. I argue that there were complex and multiple experiences of being a sailor (ναύτης) in Byzantium. My thesis reveals these unique experiences through an interdisciplinary study of textual, archaeological, and ethnographic sources.

Sailors and seafaring in the context of people's relation to the Mediterranean have been a central theme of Mediterranean historiography,[3] however, the topic has not yet received extensive scholarly attention in the field of Byzantine Studies. Starting with Hélène Ahrweiler's pioneering work *Byzance et la Mer* in 1966 and most recently the monograph *The Age of the ΔΡΟΜΩΝ* by John H. Pryor and Elizabeth M. Jeffrey, the primary focus of Byzantine scholarship on the maritime aspects of the empire has mostly been on political and administrative matters.[4] Ewald Kislinger, however, has published several works on sailors and

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[1] "Navigation is the invention of Gods, but the accomplishment of noble men." Georgios Pachymeres, *Progymnasmata*, 12.11. Edited by Christian Walz, *Rhetores Graeci*, vol. 1 (Stuttgart: Cotta, 1832), 583.

[2] The sites and locations mentioned in this thesis are mapped in Figure 1.

[3] David Abulafia, *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011); Cyprian Broodbank, *The Making of the Middle Sea: A History of the Mediterranean from the Beginning to the Emergence of the Classical World* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2013); Peregrine Horden and Nicholas Purcell, *The Corrupting Sea: A Study of Mediterranean History* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2000); A. Bernard Knapp, *Seafaring and Seafarers in the Bronze Age Eastern Mediterranean* (Leiden: Sidestone Press, 2018); Thomas Tartaron, *Maritime Networks in the Mycenaean World* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013); Justin Leidwanger. *Roman Seas* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2020).

[4] Hélène Ahrweiler, *Byzance et la Mer* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1966); Antonio Carile and Salvatore Cosentino, *Storia della Marineria Bizantina* (Bologna: Lo Scarabeo, 2004); John H. Pryor and Elizabeth M. Jeffreys, *The Age of the ΔΡΟΜΩΝ: The Byzantine Navy ca 500–1204* (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2006).

seafaring in Byzantium, which have analysed the social and cultural aspects.[5] Another relevant

contribution is by George F. Bass, in which he has contextualised the recovered material from

the Yassıada I shipwreck within the narrative of the construction and the last journey of the

ship.[6] A more extensive treatment of the subject, *Studien zur spätbyzantinischen Schiffahrt* by

Georgios Makris, has focused on the Late Byzantine period.[7] Several other studies which

mentions sailors do so in the context of travel and trade, while the studies incorporating textual

material as well as recent archaeological evidence such as finds from shipwrecks and harbours

remain rare.[8]

In the first chapter of this thesis, I analyse different types (cabotage, tramping, and

direct) and distances (day-long, regional, long-distance) of maritime movement and lay the

framework to establish diverse experiences of maritime travel. In the second chapter, I further

this discussion by introducing two concepts: *emplaced* sailors, who were tightly connected to

the maritime culture of their local communities[9] where they had learned the trade, and the

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[5] Ewald Kislinger, "Reisen und Verkehrswege in Byzanz. Realität und Mentalität, Möglichkeiten und Grenzen," in *Proceedings of the 22nd International Congress of Byzantine Studies, Sofia 2011. Volume 1: Plenary Papers*, ed. Iliya Georgiev Iliev, 341–387 (Sofia: Bulgarian Historical Heritage Foundation, 2011); Ewald Kislinger, "Byzantinischer Alltag zu Schiff," in *Hinter den Mauern und auf dem offenen Land: Leben im Byzantinischen Reich*, eds. Falko Daim und Jörg Drauschke, 171–179 (Heidelberg: Propylaeum, 2017).

[6] George F. Bass, "Conclusions," in *Yassı Ada: A Seventh-Century Byzantine Shipwreck* eds. George F. Bass and Frederick. H. van Doorninck, 311–319. College Station: Texas A & M University Press, 1982.

[7] Georgios Makris, *Studien zur spätbyzantinischen Schiffahrt,* Collana storica di fonti e studi 52 (Genova: Istituto di Medievistica, 1988).

[8] Carlo Beltrame, "The Contribution of the Yassıada Shipwreck Excavation to the Knowledge of Life Aboard Ancient Ships," in *Maritime Studies in the Wake of the Byzantine Shipwreck at Yassıada, Turkey*, eds. Deborah N. Carlson, Sarah M. Kampbell, Justin Leidwanger, and George F. Bass, 63–70 (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2015); Michael McCormick, *Origins of the European Economy: Communications and Commerce AD 300-900* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001); Frederick. H. van Doorninck, "Ethnicity and Sphere of Activity of the Crew of the 11th Century Serce Limanı Ship: Some Tentative Observations," in *Between Continents: Proceedings of the Twelfth Symposium on Boat and Ship Archaeology, Istanbul 2009 (ISBSA 12)*, ed. Nergis Günsenin, 127–133 (Istanbul: Ege Yayınları, 2012); Angeliki E. Laiou, "Byzantine Traders and Seafarers," in *The Greeks and the Sea*, ed. Speros Vryonis, 79–96 (New Rochelle, NY: Aristide D. Caratzas, 1993); Ruth Macrides, ed., *Travel in the Byzantine World* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002); Paul Magdalino, "Merchant of Constantinople," in *Trade in Byzantium: Papers from the Third International Sevgi Gönül Byzantine Studies Symposium, Istanbul*, eds. Nevra Necipoğlu and Paul Magdalino, 181–191 (Istanbul: ANAMED, 2016).

[9] The definition of a "maritime community" is debated in the scholarship. (See Jesse Ransley, "Maritime Communities and Traditions," in *The Oxford Handbook of Maritime Archaeology* eds. Alexis Catsambis, Ben Ford and Donny Hamilton, 879–904 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).) In my thesis, I consider the communities that "face the sea", that is, depend mainly on the sea and seafaring for sustenance and profit. Thus, a maritime community might include sailors, captains, dockworkers, shipbuilders, and their families.

displaced sailors, who travelled away from this community. During this journey, I propose, he would stop at two different types of ports: rarely at the short-distance ports, which were connected within the microregions, and mostly at long-distance ports, which would provide the sailors with certain establishments such as taverns, inns, and brothels. I discuss the experience at the long-distance and foreign ports by using the journey of the Serçe Limanı shipwreck as an example, where the crew moved outside the linguistic, political, religious, and economic boundaries of the Byzantine Empire. In the last chapter, I focus on the experiences on board a ship, and I consider this under three aspects of sailors' daily life: their behaviours, their bodies, and their souls. In the conclusion, I reassert that sailors should be contextualised within the various dynamics of maritime travel in the Eastern Mediterranean in order to reveal the complexity of their daily experiences.

Sources and Methodology

I approach the Middle Byzantine sailors by investigating the peculiar experiences which constitute their daily lives. Claire Nesbitt and Mark Jackson define experience as "a specific outcome of a relationship people have when they encounter other people, ideas, beliefs, material objects and places as well as, for example, natural phenomena such as the weather."[10] Also, as Alf Lüdtke argues, this peculiar mode of experiencing is distinguished for groups who share a common attribute, in this case, the common profession.[11] The experience of sailors then consists of how they react to specific circumstances of seafaring and living within the maritime landscape. The history of the daily life of a Byzantine sailor, therefore, aims to shed light on these experiences.

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[10] Claire Nesbitt and Mark Jackson, "Experiencing Byzantium," in *Experiencing Byzantium*, ed. Claire Nesbitt and Mark Jackson, 1–13 (London and New York: Routledge, 2013), 2.
[11] Alf Lüdtke, "Introduction: What Is the History of Everyday Life and Who Are Its Practitioners?" in *The History of Everyday Life. Reconstructing Historical Experiences and Ways of Lif*e, ed. Alf Lüdtke, 1–40 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), 19.

Although there is not necessarily a lack of sources, the main problem in this endeavour is the dispersed and often biased nature of the textual evidence. Indeed, Lüdtke emphasizes that ordinary people (*kleine Leute*) remain largely anonymous in the textual sources.[12] In addition to this, Gerhard Jaritz also points out that medieval authors were interested in ordinary people when their lives became extraordinary, when they contradicted the order of the social system and its stability, or if they were used as a good example and model for the other members of the society.[13] Therefore, it is not surprising that unless they are a part of the navy, sailors are almost non-existent is historiographical sources. The texts that mention them, are scattered across different genres and time periods.

Anthony Kaldellis has touched upon the question of how to use textual sources in writing social history.[14] His discussion is highly relevant to this thesis: studies that compile references and anecdotes from written sources in order to recreate the "facts and facets of life or even the experiences" of women and children in Kaldellis' work—but by extension any underrepresented social group—disregard the complexity of such texts, which can only be understood by way of a literary study of their personal, political, religious, rhetorical, or ideological purposes.[15] Nonetheless, Kaldellis proposes that hagiographical sources, which this thesis makes extensive use of, frequently and casually reveal useful information about daily life.[16] This is because *au contraire* to writers of historiography whose narrative is often shaped by abovementioned concerns, hagiographers set the miracle component of their account into the life-like setting which the readers could identify with, to make their account more believable.[17]

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[12] Lüdtke, "What Is the History of Everyday Life and Who Are Its Practitioners?" 4.

[13] Gerhard Jaritz, "Daily Life," in *Handbook of Medieval Culture*, vol. 1, ed. Albrecht Classen, 301–313 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2015), 310.

[14] Anthony Kaldellis, "The Study of Women and Children: Methodological Challenges and New Directions," in *The Byzantine World*, ed. Paul Stephenson, 61–71 (London, New York: Routledge, 2010).

[15] Kaldellis, "Women and Children," 64.

[16] Kaldellis, "Women and Children," 65.

[17] Kaldellis, "Women and Children," 65.

One such source which reveals details about maritime communities is *Miracles of Saint Artemios*. The 45 miracle accounts written between 658–668 relate stories of healing associated with the church of Saint John the Baptist in Constantinople, where the relics of Saint Artemios were kept.[18] Alexander Kazhdan argues that although the author was capable of using a "higher" style of rhetoric (visible, for instance, in his use of figures such as *anaphora* and *tautology* in Miracle 34), he preferred to use simple and demotic language and vocabulary to write about the lives of ordinary Constantinopolitans,[19] which the reader could easily understand and identify with. Stephanos Efthymiadis and Vincent Déroche also highlight that the miracles are filled with details from the daily lives of "flesh and blood" people and possibly reflect their everyday experiences.[20] Amongst these people are sailors, a dockworker, a shipwright, and a shipowner, all associated with the maritime community of Byzantium; I have therefore made extensive use of this account in this thesis. In addition to *Miracles of Saint Artemios*, I have referred to several saint's lives: as the sea became a *topos* in these accounts around the Middle Byzantine period, sailors emerge as reoccurring characters embedded into their real-life scenarios.[21]

Another textual source which provides ample material regarding the daily lives—or more accurately, daily regulations of sailors—is the *Rhodian Sea Law* (hereafter *NRN*). Hassan S. Khalilieh proposes that until the emergence of the *NRN*, maritime matters were administered and adjudicated with the regulations "instituted by classical Roman lawyers and provincial customary practices."[22] There is extensive debate around the dating of the *NRN*, and Walter Ashburner, who edited, translated, and published the most thorough study of the text, dates it

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[18] Stephanos Efthymiadis and Vincent Déroche, "Greek Hagiography in Late Antiquity (Fourth–Seventh Centuries)," in *The Ashgate Research Companion to Byzantine Hagiography*: *Volume I: Periods and Places*, ed. Stephanos Efthymiadis, 35–95 (London and New York: Routledge, 2011), 66.

[19] Alexander Kazhdan, *A History of Byzantine Literature, 650–850* (Athens: National Hellenic Research Foundation Institute for Byzantine Research, 1999), 31–35.

[20] Efthymiadis and Déroche, "Greek Hagiography in Late Antiquity," 66.

[21] See Section *3.3.1 Saints and the Sea* below for further discussion.

[22] Hassan S. Khalilieh, *Admiralty and Maritime Laws in the Mediterranean Sea (ca. 800–1050): The Kitāb Akriyat al-Sufun vis-à-vis the Nomos Rhodion Nautikos* (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 10.

to between the seventh and ninth centuries.[23] Recently, Michael Humpherys has revaluated the text in the light of its association with the *Ecloga*, an eighth-century law book issued by emperors Leo III (r. 717-741 CE) and Constantine V (741-775 CE).[24] He argues that the *NRN* acted as an extension of the *Ecloga*, published shortly after, and provided regulations for the peculiar context of maritime affairs.[25] Most of the manuscripts of the *Ecloga* include at least Part III of the *NRN* with its forty-seven detailed chapters, providing regulations of which I have made extensive use as they refer primarily to the experience of seafaring.[26] It is not possible to precisely determine if *NRN* was enforced regularly, but Humpreys makes several convincing arguments to show that at least Part III was. One is the shift of Muslim power to Baghdad coinciding with the production of *NRN* in the mid-eight century, which resulted in less military conflicts in the Mediterranean and, thus, as Humphreys assumes, a growth in shipping and sea commerce.[27] He argues that this "intensifying movement and trade would *ceteris paribus* also produce a small increase in cases involving seafarers, prompting a renewed interest in maritime law," implying that the regulations were the result of necessity.[28] Furthermore, he suggests that the text itself had an official status, used by lawyers and officials, "a set of common legal scenarios, perhaps derived from actual cases, and the appropriate sentencing guidelines."[29] In the light of his conclusion, I have accepted the clauses in the *NRN* as real or possible occurrences that reflect the legal circumstances around seafaring.

Jacques Le Goff proposes that when writing about "ordinary men," who are indeed missing from the written texts, the historian will first encounter archaeology, or more precisely,

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[23] Ashburner, Walter. *Νόμος Ροδίων Ναυτικός: The Rhodian Sea Law* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1909), lxxv.

[24] Michael T.G. Humphreys, *Law, Power, and Imperial Ideology in the Iconoclast Era: c. 680-850*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 179–193.

[25] Humphreys, *Law, Power, and Imperial Ideology in the Iconoclast Era*, 183.

[26] Ashburner, *The Rhodian Sea Law*, lx.

[27] Pryor and Jeffreys call this period an "equilibrium of chaos" in Pryor and Jeffreys, *The Age of the ΔΡΟΜΩΝ*, 34.

[28] Humphreys, *Law, Power, and Imperial Ideology in the Iconoclast Era*, 191.

[29] Humphreys, *Law, Power, and Imperial Ideology in the Iconoclast Era*, 192.

the archaeology of daily life.[30] My thesis is an example how archaeology can contribute valuable information to social history, as has begun to be recognised in recent scholarship.[31] However, using archaeological material also comes with caveats. For example, shipwrecks provide ample artefacts that sheds light on daily life on board, but firstly, each shipwreck is the result of a single event, showing a moment in history, and secondly, the excavated shipwrecks that provide personal cargo are few. These limitations of the evidence make it difficult to draw general conclusions from shipwrecks.

In reaction to these limitations, Mark Staniforth has proposed that maritime archaeology has the potential to incorporate the result of a particular event, that is the shipwreck, into the longer term and larger scale trends.[32] This is related to the *longue durée* characteristics of seafaring and living in maritime landscapes. Johan Rönnby, for example, mentions that people who share the same physical maritime landscape, also share long-term mental and social structures regarding their relationship with it, which he terms *maritime durées* and that includes "exploitation of marine resources, communication over water, and the mental presence of the sea."[33] Thus, incidental evidence, such as the material from a shipwreck, has the potential to reflect long term structures of sailors' experience, as they are the result of the *longue durée* adaptive strategies. In this thesis, two shipwrecks provide ample evidence of

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[30] Jacques Le Goff, *Time, Work and Culture in the Middle Ages* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980), 234.

[31] Some recent works which integrate several sources to reveal daily life include Fotini Kondyli, and Benjamin Anderson, eds. *The Byzantine Neighbourhood: Urban Space and Political Action* (London and New York: Routledge, 2022); Fotini Kondyli, *Rural Communities in Late Byzantium: Resilience and Vulnerability in the Northern Aegean* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2022); Sharon Gerstel, *Rural Lives and Landscapes in Late Byzantium: Art, Archaeology, and Ethnography* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017).

[32] Mark Staniforth, The Archaeology of the Event: The Annales School and Maritime Archaeology," in *Underwater Archaeology Proceedings from the Society for Historical Archaeology Conference, 1997*, ed. Denise C. Lakey, 17–21 (Pennsylvania: The Society for Historical Archaeology, 1997), 18–19.

[33] Johan Rönnby, "Maritime Durées: Long-Term Structures in a Coastal Landscape," *Journal of Maritime Archaeology* 2 (2007): 66.

sailors' personal artefacts: Yassıada I[34] dating to *c.* 625 CE and the Serçe Limanı[35] shipwreck dating to *c.*1025. In addition, the excavations at the Theodosian Harbour of Constantinople (Yenikapı Excavations) provide not only a rich assemblage of local ships, but also other material related to port life.[36] An important aspect of the archaeological evidence is the find spots of the artefacts within the ship as an indication of their use. Maritime archaeologists acknowledge that during the process of wreck formation (sinking of the ship) shipboard objects, which would otherwise be secured in place during sailing, might move from their initial positions.[37] Nevertheless, it is convincingly argued that from the distribution and the areas of concentration of objects, general patterns of stowage can be inferred, which gives important clues about the structure of life on board.[38]

Lastly, I have made use of ethnographic data, and especially oral histories to understand how small maritime communities functioned. We can use such evidence owing to the abovementioned *longue durée* ways of interacting with the maritime landscape and seafaring. For example, when comparing the early twentieth-century maritime community of the Saronic Gulf to their Mycenaean counterparts, Thomas Tartaron points out that both communities had

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[34] For the complete excavation report, see George F. Bass and Frederick. H. van Doorninck, eds. *Yassı Ada: A Seventh-Century Byzantine Shipwreck* (College Station: Texas A & M University Press, 1982); Frederick H. van Doorninck, "The Seventh-Century Byzantine Ship at Yassıada and Her Final Voyage: Present Thoughts," in *Maritime Studies in the Wake of the Byzantine Shipwreck at Yassıada, Turkey*, eds. Deborah N Carlson, Sarah M. Kampbell, Justin Leidwanger, and George F. Bass, 205–216 (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2015), 205. Also see Beltrame, "The Contribution of the Yassıada Shipwreck Excavation," 63–70.

[35] For the complete excavation report, see George F. Bass, Sheila D. Matthews, J. Richard Steffy, and Frederick H. van Doorninck, eds. *Serçe Limanı: An Eleventh Century Shipwreck.* Volume I: *The Ship and Its Anchorage, Crew, and Passengers* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2004) and George F. Bass, Robert H. Brill, Berta Lledó, and Sheila D. Matthews, eds. *Serçe Limanı.* Volume II. *The Glass of an Eleventh-Century Shipwreck* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2009); as well as Frederick H. van Doorninck, "The Byzantine Ship at Serçe Limanı: an Example of Small Scale Maritime Commerce with Fatimid Syria in the Early Eleventh Century," in *Travel in the Byzantine World*, ed. Ruth Macrides, 137–48 (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002); Van Doorninck, "Ethnicity and Sphere of Activity of the Crew of the 11th Century Serçe Limanı Ship," 127–33.

[36] Zeynep Kızıltan, ed., *Istanbul: 8,000 Years Brought to Daylight: Marmaray, Metro, Sultanahmet Excavations* (Istanbul: Vehbi Koç Vakfı, 2007); Cemal Pulak, "Yenikapı Shipwrecks and Byzantine Shipbuilding," *Travaux et mémoires* 22, (2018): 237–95.

[37] Frederick H. van Doorninck, "The Galley," in *Yassı Ada: A Seventh-Century Byzantine Shipwreck* eds. George F. Bass and Frederick. H. van Doorninck (College Station: Texas A & M University Press, 1982), 90.

[38] Van Doorninck, "The Galley," 91.

similar technologies of subsistence and seafaring.[39] He emphasizes the long-term forces which result in similar adaptive strategies, such as the environment, human subsistence technologies, and other adaptive mechanisms (such as culture) that allow these communities to survive.[40] It is not possible to draw strict parallels between twentieth-century maritime communities and the Middle Byzantine ones, but through the long-term strategies to adapt to the same type of environment around the Eastern Mediterranean, it is possible to draw comparative similarities between the two.

Definition of Sailor

The employment of a sailor seems to have been a legal process in which the sailor and the employer (the ship owner or a shipmaster) were bound by a contract. The definition of a sailor in this legal context can be found in two legal codes: the *Digesta* (sixth-century legal compilation) and the *NRN*. The *Digesta* is mostly concerned with the economic aspects of seafaring and defines both the ship and the seaman very broadly. The ship is "any sea or river vessel, lake craft, or even a raft," while the seamen are the crew who sail the ship.[41] The document also suggests a certain hierarchy and distribution of duties amongst the crew members before the law, especially regarding the safekeeping of the goods on board. It is stated, for example, that the seaman who is liable for the safekeeping of goods should be understood as the one who is in charge of the ship, such as the master of the ship, or those given authority over the protection of goods, such as the ship's guards or the cabin stewards.[42] Meanwhile, "an

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[39]Tartaron, *Maritime Networks in the Mycenaean World*, 269.

[40] Tartaron, *Maritime Networks in the Mycenaean World*, 269.

[41] For the definition of the sailor see *Digesta* IV, 9, 1. Edited by Theodor Mommsen. *Digesta Iustiniani Augusti* (Berlin: Weidmann, 1868). English translation by Alan Watson. *The Digest of Justinian, Volume 1* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1998), 160. For the definition of the ship see *Digesta* XIV, 1, 6.

[42] *Digesta* IV, 9, 1.

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oarsman or an ordinary seaman" was not liable, unless something was entrusted to them by the ship master.[43]

This distribution of duties can also be seen in the *NRN*. It lists the different crew members of a ship when determining their share of the pay: master (ναύκληρος) receiving two shares, steersman (κυβερνήτης) one and a half, master's mate (πρωπεύς) one and a half, carpenter (ναυπηγός) one and a half, boatswain (καπαβίτης) one and a half, sailor (ναύτης) one, and cook (παρασχαρίτης) receiving half a share. This does not only draw the image of a small community which constituted the ship's crew, but also reflects the pay hierarchy, possibly in accordance with the responsibility and importance of the crew member on board. [44] Although the *NRN* is primarily concerned with seafaring, it does not give a definition of a sailor, but reiterates the contractual relationship. It mentions that when a free man hires himself out as a sailor, he is now a slave (δοῦλον εἶναι) and has sold himself to execute every task faithfully.[45] This does not necessarily mean that the sailor was a "slave", since δοῦλος could also be taken as "servant", reflecting servitude and work.[46] The definitions of the sailor in the two legal texts, therefore, are similar and focus on the contractual relationship between the sailor and his employer.

In this thesis, I also define sailors as the crew who sail the ship, including the captain. In the instances where a captain's duties are different from the rest of the crew (such as during trans-imperial interactions) I refer to him by his title. I use he/him pronouns for all sailors I mention, as I have not come across female sailors in my research. I exclude two groups of people who were also defined frequently as sailors in the textual sources: the sailors of the navy and the sailors who are explicitly mentioned as pirates. In addition, this thesis does not cover

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[43] *Digesta* IV, 9, 1.
[44] *NRN*, Part II, 1–7.
[45] *NRN*, App. D, 3.
[46] Noel Lenski. "Slavery in the Byzantine Empire," in *The Cambridge World History of Slavery, Volume 2: AD 500–AD 1420*, eds. Craig Perry, David Eltis, Stanley L. Engerman, and David Richardson, 453– 481 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021), 457.

any sailor that has been identified as non-Byzantine, such as Latin and Arab sailors. Although

they are out of the scope of this thesis, I intend to study these groups in my forthcoming doctoral

project.

Chapter 1: Moving in the Mediterranean

As a subgroup of maritime professions, sailors constituted a group of people who shared a common line of work and had similar experiences of daily life. However, there was not only one pattern of sailing in the Mediterranean, and diverse distances and types of voyages resulted in a multiplicity of everyday realities. In this chapter, I discuss maritime movement with examples from the Eastern Mediterranean to create a framework for the further discussion of sailors' experiences. I will establish that there were three different types of sailing: cabotage, tramping and direct sailing. These could cover daily journeys, regional travel, and long-distance (interregional) endeavours. I argue that although long-distance journeys were undertaken during the Middle Byzantine period, most of the maritime traffic was on a smaller scale, and therefore the experience of the sailor was confined to a smaller circumference, repeated interactions with the same communities, and exchanges involving little profit.

1.1 Patterns and Distances of Movement

Understanding the nature of seaborne movement is central to discussing the experiences of sailors. When it comes to the mobility of the sailor, there was a spectrum of experiences, which moved from the local to the distant. Sailors could move within their own regions, taking part in local exchange and exploitation of the sea, the distance they covered could increase to interregional connections, and they could travel to distant ports as part of a longer distance movement. I base this spectrum of movements on the model of connectivity proposed by Peregrine Horden and Nicholas Purcell in the *Corrupting Sea*, which integrates all these realities.

At the heart of their thesis, which aims to explain connectivity and movement in the region, lie the rhythms of production around the coasts of the Mediterranean. [47] In the Mediterranean, there is a peculiar regime of ecological risks mostly depending on meteorology (especially the variability of precipitation) which affects sustenance through good and bad yields.[48] To cope with these risks, a distinctive logic of production through the diversification of products, storage, and redistribution was developed, which necessitated people to be in constant interaction and communication. The pattern of this communication was also influenced by the topography of the region, as topographical features such as mountain ranges fragmented the shores into microregions. The topographical fragmentation then gave way to a distinctive regime of communications in relation to the diversified production, storage, and redistribution.[49] To the ecological factors on land which created the microregions and governed communication patterns, Justin Leidwanger adds particular marine conditions of different areas, arguing that the Mediterranean was far from a passive connector, but the systems of movement also depended on the favourable conditions of the sea.[50] Modes of interaction and exchange encompassing the entire sea were built upon these microregions, which were connected both internally and between each other, thus creating small clusters which accumulate to "something approaching the whole Mediterranean."[51] Most shipments, then, were the result of the constant demand for sustenance rather than long-distance profit-centred voyages.

Some terminology must be explained. As argued above, we may assume that sailing patterns in the Mediterranean remained stable over the *longue durée*; I therefore adopt the terminology that Bernard A. Knapp and Stella Demesticha have used in their discussion of the

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[47] See Horden and Purcell, *The Corrupting Sea*, 123–172 for an in-depth presentation of this theory.
[48] Horden and Purcell, *The Corrupting Sea*, 178–179.
[49] Purcell summarizes this fourfold theory in Nicholas Purcell, "The Boundless Sea of Unlikeness? On Defining the Mediterranean," *Mediterranean Historical Review* 18 no. 2 (2003): 10.
[50] Leidwanger, *Roman Seas*, 5.
[51] Horden and Purcell, *The Corrupting Sea*, 123.

Bronze and Iron Age Mediterranean for different ranges of movement. [52] One way of moving is cabotage: this is coastal navigation, from cape to cape, either short or long distance, involving technical and commercial stops on a predetermined route.[53] This movement was favoured over open sea sailing, as the ships could be supplied with victuals and drinking water at each stop. A similar movement is tramping, which hugs the coastline with frequent stops just like cabotage, but the route is not predetermined and is confined to local movement.[54] As Horden and Purcell also highlight, these types of movements, in which the ships were hugging the shore or hopping between islands, were safer than open sea sailing, while also making navigation easier: the ships were able to quickly respond to changing winds and currents.[55] A different type of navigation would be a direct route on which, even if stops were made for fresh water and victuals, there were no commercial stops and thus the cargo was not disturbed, as it was intended for one specific destination.

For distances, three different categories can be proposed: everyday, regional, and interregional. Most of the maritime activity in Middle Byzantium was of an everyday and habitual nature, and did not go beyond day-long journeys. Beyond the everyday is the regional, which is the movement within a "recognisable cultural area."[56] For example, the environs of Constantinople (Marmara Sea and Thrace) or the Aegean basin can be considered regional areas in which sailors moved in somewhat familiar waters through both cabotage and tramping, and in which the distance from one port to another is relatively short. Interregional movement, however, involves long-distance and often intercultural movement. This type of movement

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[52] A. Bernard Knapp and Stella Demesticha, *Mediterranean Connections: Maritime Transport Containers and Seaborne Trade in the Bronze and Early Iron Ages* (New York and London: Routledge, 2017).
[53] Knapp and Demesticha, *Mediterranean Connections*, 151.
[54] Knapp and Demesticha, *Mediterranean Connections*, 151.
[55] Horden and Purcell, *The Corrupting Sea*, 142.
[56] Knapp and Demesticha, *Mediterranean Connections*, 151.

often has a predetermined destination and is generated by the interests and purchasing power of aristocracy, state, and army.[57]

Although already disbanded in the Middle Byzantine period, a prominent example of long-distance movement was the food supply system of the Roman Empire. Not only corn was transported to Rome (and later Constantinople) from production centres such as Egypt (through the *annona*, the state-supported doling-out system), but commodities such as wine and oil were also acquired for the big metropolises through long-distance trade.[58] The nature of this movement would then be direct and interregional (although within the Roman Empire) and would depend on pre-determined sailing seasons that could support long journeys. The *Codex Theodosianus*, for example, regulates that although shippers had to deliver the *annona* in the first year when they reached their destination, they had to be back at their port of origin no more than two years after the start of their journey.[59] This regulation shows that the sailors who were employed on *annona* ships that would travel long distances, could spend up to two years away from their hometowns.

Although movements such as that of the *annona* ships have been called "exceptional," the tendency of the scholarship has been to concentrate on the long-distance bulk transport (of corn, or of armies during the Crusades) and to evaluate this type of movement, its infrastructure, such as harbours deep enough to accommodate large ships with high drafts, and the experience of sailing through long-distance voyages.[60] Pryor, for example, focuses on the trunk routes of

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[57] Horden and Purcell, *The Corrupting Sea*, 143.

[58] William V. Harris, *Rome's Imperial Economy: Twelve Essays* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 149. For *annona* see Geoffrey Rickman, *The Corn Supply of Ancient Rome* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980) and Lionel Casson, "The Role of the State in Rome's Grain Trade," *Memoirs of the American Academy in Rome* 36 (1980): 21–33.

[59] *Codex Theodosianus*, XIII.5.26. Edited by Theodore Mommsen, and Paul Martin Meyer. *Theodosiani libri XVI cum constitutionibus Sirmondianis et leges Novellae ad Theodosianum pertinentes* (Berlin: Weidemann, 1905). English translation by Clyde Pharr. *The Theodosian Code and Novels and the Sirmondian Constitutions* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1952). See also Michael McCormick, "Bateaux de vie, bateaux de mort. Maladie, commerce, transports annonaires et le passage économique du Bas-Empire au moyen âge," *Settimane di studio del Centro italiano di studi sull'alto medioevo*, 45 (1998): 87–88 for this observation.

[60] Geoffrey Rickman, "Ports, Ships and Power in the Roman World," *Memoirs of the American Academy in Rome. Supplementary Volumes 6* The Maritime World of Ancient Rome (2008): 9.

the Mediterranean as the shipping lanes, which connect major harbours.[61] Unlike larger

shipping movements—which could cease or increase in volume greatly depending on political,

economic, and social conditions—smaller movements, which stem from the ecology of the

region, were constant and rarely fluctuated. While everyday and regional traffic was

continuous, long-distance movements could peak in certain periods depending on the

abovementioned circumstances. The Roman Imperial period, for example, is one of those

periods when bulk transport by ships of larger sizes increased exceptionally, and

correspondingly harbour infrastructures that could accommodate such ships and transportation

were developed and maintained.[62] When the empire lost the economic means to sustain this

movement during Late Antiquity, it gradually decreased, with the "background noise" of small-

scale movement persisting.

As a case study of this phenomenon, Leidwanger has analysed the cargoes of fifty-four

shipwrecks (dating from the second century BCE to the seventh century CE) that sank off the

southwest coast of Asia Minor in order to understand the seaborne exchange patterns.[63]

Shipwrecks dating from the second century BCE to the mid-fourth century CE show a long-

distance connection, such as to the Adriatic and North Africa, with geographically uniform

cargoes reflecting direct routes instead of frequent commercial stops which would diversify the

cargo.[64] Meanwhile, shipwrecks dating from the mid-fourth through the seventh century CE

reveal a higher connectivity between adjacent regions, such as the Aegean, Cyprus/Cilicia, and

the southern Levant.[65] From this data, Leidwanger observes a clear regionalization in the

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[61] John H. Pryor, *Geography, Technology, and War: Studies in the maritime history of the Mediterranean 649—1571* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988).

[62] For a short overview of the fluctuations in shipping trends, see Andrew Wilson, "Developments in Mediterranean shipping and maritime trade from the Hellenistic period to AD 1000," in *Maritime Archaeology and Ancient Trade in the Mediterranean* eds. Damian Robinson and Andrew Wilson, 33-59 (Oxford: Oxford Centre for Maritime Archaeology, 2011).

[63] Justin Leidwanger, "From Time Capsules to Networks: New Light on Roman Shipwrecks in the Maritime Economy," *American Journal of Archaeology* 121, no. 4 (2017): 595–619.

[64] Leidwanger, "From Time Capsules to Networks," 612.

[65] Leidwanger, "From Time Capsules to Networks," 612.

Eastern Mediterranean in the early Byzantine period.[66] His analysis of shipwreck cargoes and find locations suggests the prevalence of a local, regional network in this period leading up to the eight century, rather than a Mediterranean-wide exchange system.

The regional networks such as the southern Asia Minor–Cyprus–Levant system connected these different regions through cabotage or tramping, which diversified the cargoes through frequent stops and exchanges on the way. The connections between the microregions followed a route of sight, that is to say, it was almost always possible to see the coast from the ship and vice versa. These routes would be defined by local knowledge and current practice.[67] The agents in this communication were smaller ships with lower tonnages. Braudel called these local ships the "proletarians of the sea": they were cheap, loaded quickly, and moved more easily compared to larger ones. [68] They operated over smaller distances, but as the "proletarians," these ships conducted the overwhelming majority of communications. Local goods were exchanged through compact and variable patterns. However, it is very hard to trace this mundane movement in the archaeological and textual record. I will focus on two geographical case studies to better illuminate the range of movement of sailors.

1.2 Connecting Through Cabotage – The Example of Aperlae

Cabotage and tramping connected small localities along the coasts. In some cases, the only communication that small coastal settlements had with neighbouring centres was maritime. A prominent example of this is Aperlae, a settlement on the Lycian coast of Asia Minor which was restricted by natural boundaries on land and could be reached almost only by the sea.[69] The port facilities of Aperlae were not suitable for large ships to anchor and could

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[66] Leidwanger, "From Time Capsules to Networks," 615.
[67] Horden and Purcell, *The Corrupting Sea*, 130.
[68] Fernand Braudel, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II, Vol I* (New York: Harper & Row, 1972), 296.
[69] Robert L. Hohlfelder and Robert L. Vann, "Cabotage at Aperlae in ancient Lycia," *International Journal of Nautical Archaeology* 29, no.1 (2000): 129.

easily be missed by ships taking a direct route to a nearby *entrepôt* such as Andriake.[70] Robert L. Hohlfelder and Robert Vann argue that Aperlae relied on cabotage of small ships for "survival and prosperity", as did various other settlements on the Lycian coast such as Simena, Teimiussa, and Antiphellos.[71]

Although Aperlae was a small city with an estimated number of a thousand inhabitants, five basilica type (10m x 20 m) churches were found dating to the Late Antique period.[72] Any facility which has the capacity to serve more than the usual inhabitants of a settlement reflects a special phenomenon, and Hohlfelder characterises the number of churches in this region as "excess."[73] In the case of Aperlae, this unusual number of churches might indicate two things: Aperlae's economy, which depended mostly on the production of purple dye from *murex* shells, could flourish enough to boast such constructions solely through maritime connectivity; and the city welcomed a high number of sailors, merchants, and travellers through the sea daily, which necessitated the construction of churches to serve this increased population. Hohlfelder also considers Aperlae a possible pilgrimage destination.[74] In line with this opinion, Günder Varinlioğlu also notes that through the churches Aperlae "acquired religious sanctity and joined the network and economy of pilgrimage" connected to the pilgrimage site of church of Saint Nicholas at Myra.[75]

In the *Notitiae Episcopatuum* of pseudo-Epiphanios, probably compiled during the reign of Herakleios (early seventh century), Aperlae is listed as a bishopric under the

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[70] Robert L. Hohlfelder, "Aperlae in Lycia: Ancient Maritime Life beyond the Great Harbors," *Classics Ireland* 12 (2005): 18. See also Robert L. Hohlfelder, "Maritime Connectivity in Late Antique Lycia: A Tale of Two Cities, Aperlae and Andriake," in *Maritime Archaeology and Ancient Trade in the Mediterranean* eds. Damian Robinson and Andrew Wilson, 211–222 (Oxford: Oxford Centre for Maritime Archaeology, 2011).
[71] Hohlfelder and Vann, "Cabotage at Aperlae in ancient Lycia," 129.
[72] Hohlfelder, "Aperlae in Lycia," 26–27.
[73] Hohlfelder, "Aperlae in Lycia," 26.
[74] Hohlfelder, "Aperlae in Lycia," 28.
[75] Günder Varinlioğlu, "Built Like a City: Boğsak Island (Isuria) in Late Antiquity," in *New Cities in Late Antiquity: Documents and Archaeology*, ed. Efthymios Rizos, 247-266 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2017), 265.

metropolitan see of Myra.[76] Hohlfelder dates the abandonment of the settlement to the mid-seventh century—following this mention in pseudo-Epiphanios—when the assaults of the Arab navy on the coasts of southern Asia Minor intensified.[77] These maritime raids culminated in the Battle of the Masts in 654 (following Salvatore Cosentino's dating),[78] when the Byzantine navy under the command of Emperor Constans II engaged with the Muslim fleet led by Abdallah ibn Sa'd in Phoinix, not too far from Aperlae. The battle not only resulted in Byzantine loss, but also signalled the changing dynamics of the Byzantine Eastern Mediterranean, which, according to traditional historiography, included the abandonment of coastal settlements in favour of hilltop *kastra*.[79]

Does this mean that the small distance maritime movements along the coast of Lycia, which was once flourishing, ceased in the Middle Byzantine period? I argue that they did not. The seeming abandonment of sites like Aperlae does not necessarily mean that they were not being used for other purposes, such as short term stops by local coasters. In the case of Aperlae, for example, there is evidence for further activity after the Arab incursions of the seventh century. In fact, Hohlfelder mentions cluster of ceramics found at the site dating from the Middle Byzantine period, which was concurrent with the renovation and revival of the Upper Church, and although these point to activity in the area, he disregards this evidence as "unconclusive" for the sake of the abandonment argument.[80] Clive Foss further argues that a

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[76] Pseudo-Epiphanios, *Notitiae Episcopatuum* 4.7.5. Heinrich Gelzer, ed. "Ungedruckte und ungenügend veröffentlichte Texte der Notitae episcopatuum: ein Beitrag zur byzantinischen Kirchen- und Verwaltungsgeschichte", in *Abhandlungen der Philosophisch-Philologischen Classe der Königlich Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften 21*, 532–641 (München: Verlag der K. Akademie, 1901), 539.

[77] Robert L. Hohlfelder, "The Late Antique Coastal Settlement of Aperlae on the Lycian Coast," in *Maritime Studies in the Wake of the Byzantine Shipwreck at Yassıada, Turkey*, eds. Deborah N. Carlson, Sarah M. Kampbell, Justin Leidwanger, and George F. Bass, 146–156 (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2015), 146.

[78] Salvatore Cosentino, "Constans II and the Byzantine navy," *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 100 (2008): 587.

[79] For an extensive discussion and historiography of the transformation from polis to *kastron*, see Luca Zavagno, *The Byzantine City from Heraclius to the Fourth Crusade, 610–1204: Urban Life After Antiquity* (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2021), 38–81.

[80] Hohlfelder, "The Late Antique Coastal Settlement of Aperlae," 149. Kislinger sees a possible decline in maritime activity in the region as a short interregnum between 654–718. See Ewald Kislinger, "Reisen und Verkehrswege in Byzanz," 348.

new citadel was constructed, and the upper city walls of the settlement were extensively remodelled during the Laskarid Period (1204-1261). [81]

In my opinion, although this evidence might not point to the revival of Aperlae to its former position, it is also not surprising that people have continued to interact with the inlet, as cabotage does not require continuous settlements on each stop. Today, Aperlae is not settled but, as Hohlfelder has observed, locals come to the bay with small boats to harvest sage from surrounding hills.[82] This activity leaves almost no trace in the archaeological record of the site. It is therefore not too far-fetched to suggest that during the "Dark Ages" and later the Middle Byzantine period, Aperlae could still welcome the occasional coasters for overnight stops. Johannes Koder, while discussing the transportation between Aegean islands, for example, proposes that it was not the economic and political situation or the demographic of each island that determined it as a stop, but it was the safety of its harbours from winds and the presence of freshwater resources.[83] Simple harbour facilities or natural anchorages could be reached by small boats on their short journeys. Aperlae was one of such anchorages, which was not safe from all weathers, but the inhabitants, despite having the means to do so, did not see the necessity to build breakwaters. Hohlfelder proposes that it was merely not needed, because the smaller crafts could adapt to the circumstances.[84] Because of the adaptable nature of the movement, cabotage and tramping prevailed as a continuous communication along the Byzantine coastline, with or without infrastructure maintenance of the harbours to accommodate shipping.

It is important to highlight this untraceable movement and to stress that it continuously arises from the need to navigate the ecological factors of the Mediterranean rather than from

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[81] Clive Foss, "The Lycian Coast in the Byzantine Age," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 48 (1994): 17.
[82] Hohlfelder and Vann, "Cabotage at Aperlae in ancient Lycia," 133.
[83] Johannes Koder, "Νησιωτική επικοινωνία στο Αιγαίο κατά τον όψιμο μεσαίωνα," in *Η επικοινωνία στο Βυζάντιο* ed. Nikos G. Moschanas, 445–456 (Athens: Κέντρο Βυζαντινών Ερευνών, 1993), 449.
[84] Hohlfelder, "Aperlae in Lycia," 18.

the commercial demands from larger urban centres. Everyday coastal activities, such as trading on a small scale (such as travelling by boat to harvest sage and transporting it back to another bay to sell), have been observed to be "threads connecting the different areas of the sea which may pass unnoticed in the great movements of history."[85] As Knapp and Demesticha emphasize, "[f]ishermen and small-time traders plied the coasts between anchorages or safe havens in the course of their everyday lives: visiting coastal communities, turning over cargo, connecting people and products."[86] It is this untraceable movement that cannot be found in the archaeological or textual record, and thus does not make its way into the secondary scholarship, even if most of the sailors and maritime communities of the empire would experience it on a daily basis. As Jacoby has also emphasized in line with Horden and Purcell's model of connectivity, the "extensive coastline, the connection between the mainland and numerous islands as well as between the latter, and wide diversity in economic resources" required continuous and intensive commercial exchanges between micro-regions and, according to Jacoby, between the empire and foreign countries as well.[87] Johannes Preiser-Kappeler highlights that during political and economic crises, although regional or trans-regional maritime trade suffered, the "maritime connectivity between the myriad of harbours, anchorages and landing sites at the islands and coasts of the Aegean at the local level" such as Aperlae, were resilient, as the everyday exchange of goods on a small scale did not require elaborate harbour structures.[88]

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[85] Braudel, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II*, 108.

[86] Knapp and Demesticha, *Mediterranean Connections*, 153.

[87] David Jacoby, "Byzantine Maritime Trade, 1025–1118," *Travaux et mémoires* 21 (2017): 631–632. I will focus on the travels beyond Byzantine borders in Chapter 2.

[88] Johannes Preiser-Kapeller, "Introduction: Seasides of Byzantium and Maritime Dynamics in the Aegean Sea," in *Seasides of Byzantium. Harbours and Anchorages of a Mediterranean Empire*, eds. Johannes Preiser-Kapeller, Taxiarchis G. Kolias, and Falko Daim, 9–21 (Mainz: Verlag des Römisch-Germanischen Zentralmuseums, 2021), 17.

1.3 Local Shipping around Constantinople and Environs

Constantinople dominates the textual sources due to its political importance, while the recent excavations at the Theodosian Harbour of the city as well as surveys and excavations in the Sea of Marmara (Propontis) provide valuable archaeological sources for the discussion of the movements of sailors in the Middle Byzantine period. When communications and commercial activities of this period are considered, Constantinople was, perhaps, the most important maritime centre of the empire. Its provisioning with foodstuffs alone combined short and long-distance journeys. Koder identifies two ways in which Constantinople was supplied: perishable goods such as fruits and vegetables would be brought from short distances around the Marmara Sea, while goods that did not grow in the environs of the city, such as grain, wine, legumes, oil, and olives, would come from long distances in bulk.[89]

As a result of the Theodosian Harbour excavations, there is now more information about the ships for local use in Constantinople and its vicinity. Although hundreds of ancient shipwrecks have been discovered in underwater surveys, due to budget and time constrains, nautical archaeologists often prioritize shipwrecks which can provide unique information about shipbuilding practices and commercial activities. For example, the Serçe Limanı shipwreck was excavated to fill the gap of knowledge of eleventh-century shipbuilding and due to its cargo of Fatimid glass.[90] Similarly, in addition to being in shallow waters, which aided the project, the Çamaltı Burnu shipwreck was excavated as it carried the last examples of amphorae used for commercial activities in the Eastern Mediterranean and was the oldest Byzantine

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[89] Johannes Koder, "Maritime Trade and the Food Supply for Constantinople in the Middle Ages," in *Travel in the Byzantine World*, ed. Ruth Macrides, 109–124. Society for the Promotion of Byzantine Studies Publications 10. (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002), 112–113.

[90] George F. Bass and Frederick H. van Doorninck, "Discovery, Excavation, and Conservation," in *Serçe Limanı: An Eleventh Century Shipwreck. Volume I: The Ship and Its Anchorage, Crew, and Passengers* eds. George F. Bass, Sheila D. Matthews, J. Richard Steffy, and Frederick H. van Doorninck, 49–70 (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2004), 52.

shipwreck that has been found to date.[91] It is not usual for small and local coasters to be excavated, which skews the archaeological record in favour of shipwrecks with peculiar cargoes or construction elements.

The finds at Theodosian Harbour, therefore, provide a unique opportunity to understand the sailing patterns of the local sailors of the region. There is one considerable drawback regarding the data: the shipwrecks have been excavated and published by two different teams, the Department of Conservation of Marine Archaeological Objects at Istanbul University and the Institute of Nautical Archaeology, and there are therefore differences in the publication of the material, such as the absence of estimated sizes from the Istanbul University publications. In the absence of equal data, it not possible to draw general conclusions; however, it is useful to mention certain trends.

An important aspect of shipping in general (as well as life on board) are the sizes of ships.[92] Although the estimated sizes for each shipwreck that has been studied by Istanbul University have not been published, Ufuk Kocabaş has categorised the twenty-three round ships into three categories: ten of them as small, eight of them as medium, and only five of them as large.[93] Two tentative conclusions can be drawn from this. First, at least in the excavated corpus, the sizes of the ships are mostly small and medium. Second, the larger ships seem to date to the earlier phases of occupation: these ships with wineglass-shaped cross-sections—which is more common until the ninth century—date to the fifth–ninth centuries.[94]

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[91] Nergis Günsenin, "From Ganos to Serçe Limanı: Social and Economic Activities in the Propontis during Medieval Times, Illuminated by Recent Archaeological and Historical Discoveries," *The INA Quarterly*, 26, no. 3, (1999): 21.

[92] The connection between ship sizes and life aboard is discussed in Chapter 3.

[93] Ufuk Kocabaş, "The Yenikapı Byzantine-Era Shipwrecks, Istanbul, Turkey: a preliminary report and inventory of the 27 wrecks studied by Istanbul University," *International Journal of Nautical Archaeology* 44, no.1 (2015): 12. According to Kocabaş' estimates, small shipwrecks: YK 6, YK 7, YK 8, YK 9, YK 12, YK 18, YK 19, YK 20, YK 26, YK 30, medium shipwrecks: YK 3, YK 10, YK 15, YK 21, YK 29, YK 31, YK 32, YK 34 and large shipwrecks: YK 17, YK 22, YK 27, YK 28, YK 35.

[94] These ships include YK 17, YK 22, YK 27 and YK 35.

However, when determining if a ship was used for local or interregional sailing, does size matter?

While discussing different sailing distances, I have so far maintained that small ships were used for local sailing. Yaacov Kahanov, Jeffrey Royal, and Jerome Hall also hypothesize that size and use of the vessels are related, and that small crafts would be operating locally.[95] Pascal Arnaud, however, points out that it is misleading to assume smaller vessels were used for coastal routes whereas larger ships were used for longer-distance voyaging over the open seas, but does not dismiss this completely; he instead proposes that smaller ships could also be preferred for long-distance voyages because they were easier and less costly to manufacture and maintain.[96] It can be tentatively concluded that for direct, bulk transport (this could include corn, amphorae cargoes of wine and oil, as well as architectural elements) larger ships would be preferred in every period (as will be discussed below in the context of the Tekmezar I shipwreck), and for coastal sailing, including both cabotage and tramping, especially considering the availability of harbours and anchorages, smaller to medium size ships would be the norm. The Theodosian Harbour finds seem to reflect a coastal sailing model, with ships possibly belonging to smaller enterprises.

One type of local movement, of course, is fishing. This could be done on a small scale to supply the needs of peasant households or could be a larger-scale marine exploitation.[97] Starting with the tenth-century *Book of the Eparch*, which regulates the guild of the fishmongers and gives information regarding the operational aspects of fishing in the capital,

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[95] Yaacov Kahanov, Jeffrey Royal, and Jerome Hall, "The Tantura Wrecks and Ancient Mediterranean Shipbuilding," in *The Philosophy of Shipbuilding. Conceptual Approaches to the Study of Wooden Ships*, eds. F. M. Hocker and C. A. Ward, 113–29 (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2004), 126.

[96] Pascal Arnaud, "Ancient Sailing Routes and Trade Patterns: The Impact of Human Factors," in *Maritime Archaeology and Ancient Trade in the Mediterranean* eds. Damian Robinson and Andrew Wilson, 59–78 (Oxford: Oxford Centre for Maritime Archaeology, 2011), 71.

[97] Efi Ragia, "The Circulation, Distribution and Consumption of Marine Products in Byzantium: Some Considerations", *Journal of Maritime Archaeology* 13 (2018): 450.

there are various sources mentioning fishing in Constantinople and its vicinity.[98] Gunther von Pairis, a Cistercian monk of the Alsatian abbey of Pairis who recorded the Fourth Crusade in his *Historia Constantinopolitana*, was told that prior to 1204, Constantinople "possessed a fishing fleet which alone was larger than the crusaders' entire navy," with 1600 fishing boats.[99] One of those fishing boats seems to have been discarded around the tenth century in the Theodosian Harbour after a long life of use. YK 6, a small ship estimated to be 8m in length and 2.5m in breadth, has been identified as having been used for fishing.[100] As seen from the mast-step, a single sail towards the bow was used. It has recently been pointed out that the placement of the mast on the bow "allows a greater area of free deck space than other rigs, an important consideration for fishing and work boats."[101] The owners of YK 6 seem to have had a small enterprise. The ship is much less robust than other excavated ships, with thin planks and light internal framing. The owner probably tried to cut costs by using less material and needed a ship that could be hauled onto the shore if needed. As a small vessel, it could be operated by a small crew. An eleventh-century Constantinopolitan manuscript on hunting and fishing shows night fishing with lanterns, on a small boat like YK 6, with a crew of only three people.[102] Although this depiction might not be strictly reflecting the reality, it should be emphasized that in small boats such as YK 6 there is limited space for the crew and the catch.

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[98] Emperor Leo VI, *The Book of the Eparch*, XVII. Edited by Jules Nicole. *Le livre du préfet; ou, L'édit de l'empereur Léon le Sage sur les corporations de Constantinople.* Geneve: H. Georg, 1893. English translation by Edwin Hanson Freshfield. *Roman Law in the Later Roman Empire. Byzantine Guilds, Professional and Commercial. Ordinances of Leo VI c. 895 from the Book of the Eparch* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1938), 40–41.

[99] Gunther von Pairis, *Historia Constantinopolitana*, VIII. Edited by Jacques Paul Migne. *Patrologia Latina*, 212 (Paris: Apud J-P Migne, 1855): 221–255. English translation by Alfred Andrea. *The Capture of Constantinople: The 'Historia Constantinopolitana' of Gunther of Pairis* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1997): 84.

[100] Dated based on stratigraphic context. Kocabaş, "The Yenikapı Byzantine-Era Shipwrecks," 11.

[101] Michael R. Jones and Nergis Günsenin, "A Roman Sprit-Rigged Vessel Depiction from Marmara Island (Proconnesos), Turkey," *International Journal of Nautical Archaeology* 50, no.1 (2021): 51.

[102] Venice, Biblioteca Nationale Marciana, Gr. Z 479=881 fol.-135r.

Makris observes that the monastic documents call these types of boats that were used for fishing *grippos*.[103] The sailors on these boats went out to the sea on a daily basis, bringing their produce back to the shore to be sold to the fishmongers each morning.[104] Considering that during this period the population of Constantinople had been increasing, there would have been demand for marine products, resulting in a high number of fishing boats and sailors to man them.[105] If Gunther von Pairis' (possibly inflated) number of more than a thousand fishing boats is considered, with five fishermen on each, this suggests that around two percent of the city's population would be taking part in these daily, short-distance fishing voyages.

Sailors on fishing boats were not the only ones embarking on short-distance voyages. The crew of YK 12, a small merchant ship dating to the ninth century, was possibly coming back from a short trip in the Marmara Sea when they were caught in a storm and sank.[106] YK 12 was a bit shorter than 10 m in length and had a breadth of 2.64 m; with this size it is considered to be a small merchantman.[107] Aside from victuals, a small stove-like brazier, and gaming pieces, it carried amphorae, mainly identified to be an early prototype of Günsenin 1/Saraçhane 54, with a slightly different body shape.[108] This connects the cargo to the

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[103] George Makris, "Ships," in *The Economic History of Byzantium from the Seventh Through the Fifteenth Century*, ed. Angeliki E. Laiou, 91–100 (Washington, DC: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 2002), 93.

[104] Emperor Leo VI, *Book of the Eparch*, XVII, 3.

[105] There are several calculations for the total population of the city in different periods. For a historiographical overview and calculations based on urbanisation, see David Jacoby, "La Population de Constantinople à l'époque byzantine: un problème de démographie urbaine," *Byzantion* 31 (1961): 81–109. Recently, Kaldellis has argued that the figure given by Geoffrey Villehardouin for the population of the city before the Fourth Crusade (400,000 individuals) was an exaggeration. See Anthony Kaldellis, "The People of Constantinople," in *The Cambridge Companion to Constantinople*, ed. Sarah Bassett, 50-63 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2022), 51. Magdalino, on the other hand, argues that due to the population increase in the capital at a level of the pre-pandemic sixth-century figures, the estimation is plausible: see Paul Magdalino, "Medieval Constantinople," in *Studies on the History and Topography of Byzantine Constantinople*, Variorum Collected Studies, 1–111 (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007), 63.

[106] Radiocarbon dating. See Kocabaş, "The Yenikapı Byzantine-Era Shipwrecks," 17. Sample OxA-23836 dated to cal CE 681–870 with 95.4% probability. Sample OxA-23837 dated to cal CE 690–876 with 95.4% and cal CE 762–876 with 60.1% probability. Sample OxA-23838 dated to cal CE 672–859 with 95.4% and cal CE 672–818 with 93.4% probability. The amphora finds are dated to the ninth century. See Işıl Özsait Kocabaş, "The Yenikapı 12 Shipwreck, a 9th-Century Merchantman from the Theodosian Harbour in Istanbul, Turkey: construction and reconstruction," *International Journal of Nautical Archaeology* 47, no.2 (2018): 360.

[107] Özsait Kocabaş, "The Yenikapı 12 Shipwreck," 386.

[108] Joanita Vroom, "Byzantine Sea Trade in Ceramics: Some Case Studies in the Eastern Mediterranean (ca. Seventh–Fourteenth Centuries)," in *Trade in Byzantium: Papers from the Third International Sevgi Gönül*

production centres around the Marmara Sea, in particular Ganos.[109] Another amphora type that was found on YK12 seems to be a type that may have been produced in the Aegean.[110] This mixed cargo suggests coastal navigation and the potential zone of movement of YK 12 to be restricted to short and medium-range journeys, perhaps locally within the Marmara Sea or crossing beyond Abydos to the Northern Aegean.

Unlike YK 12, the sailors of YK 1 were possibly safe at their homes when the ship sank, as it appears that it was broken into pieces by a violent storm while it was anchored at the harbour.[111] It is only a little bigger than YK 12 (10 m x 3.5 m) but dates to a later period as it was built in the tenth century and, after a long period of use evident from the extensive repairs, sank around the late tenth to early eleventh century.[112] Cemal Pulak, on the basis of the length-to-breadth ratio of approximately 2.9:1, calls the ship "a beamy, spacious coaster."[113] Several dozen amphorae of a piriform shape were identified by Joanita Vroom to be Günsenin 1/Saraçhane 54 amphora.[114] Thus, the ship was also linked to wine production in the area around Ganos on the Sea of Marmara.[115]

Why are Ganos type amphorae so prevalent in the Theodosian Harbour finds? Ganos (north-western shore of the Marmara Sea) has been identified as a major amphora production centre, which was part of a monastic network that produced and distributed wine during the Middle and Late Byzantine periods.[116] In the fourth of the Ptochoprodromic poems, dated to

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Byzantine Studies Symposium, Istanbul, ed. Nevra Necipoğlu and Paul Magdalino, 157–177 (Istanbul: ANAMED, 2016), 163.

[109] Nergis Günsenin, "Le vin de Ganos: les amphores et la mer," in *ΕΥΨΥΧΙΑ, Mélanges Offerts á Hélène Ahrweiler*, Byzantina Sorbonensia 16, 281–291. (Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne, 1998).

[110] Vroom, "Byzantine Sea Trade in Ceramics," 163–164.

[111] Cemal Pulak, Rebecca Ingram, and Michael Jones, "Eight Byzantine Shipwrecks from the Theodosian Harbour Excavations at Yenikapı in Istanbul, Turkey: An Introduction," *International Journal of Nautical Archaeology* 44, no.1 (2015): 59.

[112] Dated based on the cargo of several dozen amphorae of a piriform shape. Pulak, Ingram, and Jones, "Eight Byzantine Shipwrecks," 59.

[113] Cemal Pulak, "Yenikapı Shipwrecks and Byzantine Shipbuilding." *Travaux et mémoires* 22 (2018): 260.

[114] Vroom "Byzantine Sea Trade in Ceramics," 163.

[115] Pulak, Ingram, and Jones, "Eight Byzantine Shipwrecks," 59.

[116] Nergis Günsenin, "From Ganos to Serçe Limanı,"18.

the twelfth century, while listing all the foods and drinks that were consumed at a monastery in Constantinople, the poet mentions the sweet wine of Ganos (κρασὶν γλυκὺν γανίτικον) alongside wines from Crete and Samos, reflecting the popularity of these wines in the city.[117]

In surveys on the route between possible distribution centres and Constantinople, around eleven shipwrecks dating to the Byzantine period were identified, seven of them carrying Ganos-type amphorae.[118] Two of these are of importance to the communication between Ganos and Constantinople. The Tekmezar I shipwreck, dating to the eleventh century, carried around 20.000 amphorae, which makes it a *muriophoros* (μυριοφόρος, 'ten thousand carrier').[119] This is perhaps one of the largest commercial ships of its period, possibly intended for a single shipment, especially to a nearby commercial *entrepôt* such as Constantinople.[120] The only excavated shipwreck of the surveyed ones is the Çamaltı Burnu shipwreck, dating to the thirteenth century, which also carried Ganos-type amphorae.[121] The excavator, Nergis Günsenin, hypothesizes that the ship belonged to a monastery in the Marmara region and was shipping wine to Constantinople.[122] The lack of carpentry tools and weapons also support the idea that the ship was on a short-distance voyage in safe waters. Günsenin argues that the ship sank due to strong winds; the captain tried to shelter in the bay of Çamaltı Burnu and jettied some of the cargo and anchors to lighten the ship. Realising that the situation was beyond saving, the crew gathered their personal belongings (which are absent from the shipwreck) and

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[117] Ptochoprodromos, IV.332. Edited by Hans Eideneier. *Ptochoprodromos: Einführung, kritische Ausgabe, deutsche Übersetzung, Glossa* (Cologne: Romiosini, 1991), 157.

[118] Günsenin, "From Ganos to Serçe Limanı," 19–20.

[119] Dated based on the cargo, see Günsenin, "From Ganos to Serçe Limanı," 19–20. For the recent debate on the *muriophoroi* ships, see Emmanuel Nantet, "Les muriophoroi: état historiographique," in *Tout vendre, tout acheter: Structures et équipements des marchés antiques*, ed. Véronique Chankowski, and Pavlos Karvonis, 341–344 (Bordeaux-Athènes: De Boccard, 2012). The author, although writing after the discovery of Tekmezar I, only includes shipwrecks from the French coast.

[120] Nergis Günsenin, "Medieval Trade in the Sea of Marmara: the Evidence of Shipwrecks," in *Travel in the Byzantine World*, ed. Ruth Macrides, 125–135. Society for the Promotion of Byzantine Studies Publications 10. (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002), 131.

[121] Günsenin, "From Ganos to Serçe Limanı," 19–21.

[122] Nergis Günsenin, "A 13th-Century Wine Carrier: Çamaltı Burnu, Turkey," in *Beneath the Seven Seas: Adventures with the Institute of Nautical Archaeology* ed. George Bass, 118–123. (London: Thames & Hudson, 2005), 123.

possibly went for a nearby shore, leaving the ship to sink into the depths with the weight of the remaining cargo.[123]

The emphasis on this regional, short-distance connection between Ganos and Constantinople is more apparent from the thousands of Günsenin/Ganos-type amphorae excavated from the Theodosian Harbour.[124] In the light of these finds, both around the Marmara Sea and Constantinople, it can be concluded that the wine that was produced by the monasteries in the region was sent to Constantinople in either mid-size ships such as Çamaltı Burnu or with ships with higher tonnages such as Tekmezar I, either to be consumed in the city or to be distributed to the rest of the empire and beyond—beyond, because the amphorae on the Serçe Limanı shipwreck, which was on an interregional voyage between Constantinople and Fatimid Syria when it sank, were these types from Marmara region.[125] These journeys could have been made through cabotage and tramping along the coasts, "unless the entire wine cargo had been ordered or bought by specific wholesalers or tavern keepers and was to be delivered to them", which seems to be the case of the Tekmezar I shipwreck.[126] The journeys would take a short time. Whitewright argues that the sailing performance of ancient ships were 1-2 knots (windward) and 4-6 knots (favourable wind).[127] In light of this, a direct journey from Ganos (Gaziköy) to the Theodosian Harbour, which is around 75 nautical miles, when sailing with 4 knots, would take less than twenty hours. On the other hand, Günsenin hesitates to calculate any sailing times without experimental archaeology in the Marmara Sea and extensive knowledge regarding daily sailing patterns (such as the possibility of night sailing).[128] Koder, surveying various travel accounts from the Late Byzantine period, also highlights that "the type

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[123] Günsenin, "A 13th-Century Wine Carrier," 123.

[124] Nergis Günsenin, "Ganos Limanı'ndan Portus Theodosiacus'a," [From Harbour of Ganos to Portus Theodosiacus] in *Trade in Byzantium: Papers from the Third International Sevgi Gönül Byzantine Studies Symposium, Istanbul*, eds. Nevra Necipoğlu and Paul Magdalino, 399–402 (Istanbul: ANAMED, 2016), 400.

[125] Günsenin, "Medieval Trade in the Sea of Marmara," 133.

[126] Jacoby, "Byzantine Maritime Trade, 1025–1118," 634.

[127] Julian Whitewright, "The Potential Performance of Ancient Mediterranean Sailing Rigs," *International Journal of Nautical Archaeology* 40, no.1 (2011): 2–17.

[128] Nergis Günsenin, personal communication through email message to the author, 04.03.2020.

of ship and the experience and ability of the captain and crew were certainly important" in the daily distance covered, and the local captains would know the winds and the currents of the region due to their frequent travels.[129] This movement between Constantinople and sites in the Marmara Sea (such as Ganos and Prokonessos) was a short-distance, intraregional movement regularly travelled by experienced captains and crews.[130]

There is a possibility that these captains and crew were the monks or the lay employees at the wine-producing monastic institutions themselves. Michael Kaplan argues that from at least the end of the tenth century, there is extensive evidence proving that monasteries were involved in trade.[131] An important aspect of this trade is the monasteries owning (and possibly manning) their own ships. A steelyard recovered from the Yassıada I shipwreck (*c.* 625) is inscribed ΓΕΟΡΓΙΟΥ ΠΡΕΣΒΥΤΕΡΟΥ ΝΑΥΚΛΕΡΟΥ (*Georgiou Presbyterou Nauklerou*). Georgios, then, was both the captain—ναύκληρος (*naukleros*)—and also a priest—πρεσβύτερος (*presbyteros*). [132] Supported by additional evidence, Frederick H. van Doorninck has called Yassıada I a "church ship," which possibly belonged to a monastery.[133] The literary evidence points to similar examples. The *Life of Athanasios* (Vita B, from the tenth century) refers to a harbour being constructed at Athos due to the lack of natural anchorages for both the monastery's ships as well as other ships that visited the monastery and took shelter.[134] The Lavra also received a ship of 6.000 *modioi* capacity from Basil II, which was later given to the

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[129] Koder, "Νησιωτική επικοινωνία στο Αιγαίο κατά τον όψιμο μεσαίωνα," 455.

[130] In fact, Ahrweiler calls Propontis "la mer constantinopolitaine par excellence" in Hélène Ahrweiler, "L'escale dans le monde byzantine," *Recueils de la Société Jean Bodin* 32 (1974) 161–178, reprinted in *Byzance: les pays et le territoires* (London: Variourum Reprints, 1976), 167. Avramea translated this as "lake of Constantinople" in Anna Avramea, "Land and Sea Communications, Fourth–Fifteenth Centuries," in *The Economic History of Byzantium from the Seventh Through the Fifteenth Century*, ed. Angeliki E. Laiou, 55–90 Dumbarton Oaks Series No. 39 (Washington, DC: Dumbarton Oaks, 2002), 83.

[131] Michel Kaplan, "Monks and Trade in Byzantium from the Tenth to the Twelfth Century," in *Trade in Byzantium: Papers from the Third International Sevgi Gönül Byzantine Studies Symposium, Istanbul*, eds. Nevra Necipoğlu and Paul Magdalino, 55–64 (Istanbul: ANAMED, 2016).

[132] Van Doorninck, "The Seventh-Century Byzantine Ship at Yassıada and Her Final Voyage," 205.

[133] Van Doorninck, "The Seventh-Century Byzantine Ship at Yassıada and Her Final Voyage," 205.

[134] *Athanasios of Athos Vita B* (BHG 188), 35.2. Edited by Jacques Noret. *Vitae duae antiquae Sancti Athanasii Athonitae*. Turnhout: Leuven University Press, 1982. English translation by Alice-Mary Talbot "The Life of Athanasios of Athos, Version B," in *Holy Men of Mount Athos*, eds. Richard G. H. Greenfield and Alice-Mary Talbot, 127-367 (Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Press, 2016), 237.

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Iviron in 984 as a gift.[135] In fact, the *Vita* of the founders of the Monastery of Iviron mention that the monastery was to accept only Georgian monks, whereas "(…) it was inevitable that some Greeks were also accepted because we, as you see, have no experience in seafaring, and yet all our sustenance arrives by sea."[136] Two mentions from the Vita B of Athanasios give clues about how the monasteries owned multiple ships manned by the monks themselves. It is narrated that Athanasios embarked on a ship for urgent business, sailed off with other monks, only for the ship to quickly capsize.[137] After a miraculous rescue (although one of the brethren, a Cypriot called Peter, almost drowned due to his faithlessness), the monks from the Lavra who witnessed the incident from the harbour of the monastery, immediately boarded another ship to reach them. Although this episode might not strictly refer to a ship belonging to the monastery, it still shows that ships were available for the monks to sail away even in short notice. In a second instance, the saint urged the "monks who were appointed as fishermen," to set sail to fish for the monastery.[138] In both cases, there are mentions of the ships and the monks of the monastery itself, but no mention of outsider or hired sailors. There is a possibility then that the ships carrying the monastic wine from Ganos to Constantinople were owned by the monasteries themselves and might have had a crew of monks.

However, the regulations at Athos might not be representative of other monastic establishments. Alice-Mary Talbot mentions various craftsmen that were regularly hired by monasteries, such as shoemakers, carpenters, tailors, and many more, which suggests that

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[135] Kaplan, "Monks and Trade," 57–58.

[136] George the Hagiorite, *The Vitae of Our Blessed Fathers John and Euthymius and an Account of their Worthy Achievements*, 7. Edited by Ilia Abulaże. ცხორება ნეტარისა მამისა ჩუენისა იოვანესი და ეფთუჳმესი და უწყებაჲ ღირსისა მის მოქალაქობისა მათისა აღწერილი გლახაკისა გეორგი მიერ ხუცესმონაზონისა [*The Vitae of Our Blessed Fathers John and Euthymius and an Account of their Worthy Achievements as described by the Poor Hieromonk George the Hagiorite*], ძველი ქართული აგიოგრაფიული ლიტერატურის ძეგლები [The Literary Monuments of the Ancient Georgian Hagiography], vol. II. Tbilisi: Mec'niereba, 1967. English translation by Tamara Grdzelidze. *Georgian Monks on Mount Athos: Two Eleventh-century Lives of the Hegoumenoi of Iviron* (London: Bennett & Bloom, 2009), 60.

[137] *Athanasios of Athos Vita B* (BHG 188), 53,1–3.

[138] *Athanasios of Athos Vita B* (BHG 188), 46, 1.

sailors could also be employed.[139] In addition to this, it is not clear if the monasteries would be inclined to send monks to the capital on a regular basis. There is one account of a monk called Elias—a friend of Psellos who is a recurring character in letters—travelling to Constantinople from Trigleia in Bithynia. They were sailing along the mountainous promontory, hugging the coast as expected, while Elias was giving a detailed list of the taverns and brothels in Constantinople, and the qualifications of the prostitutes, which amazed his audience to such an extent that "the oarsmen from Syke were just about worshipping him."[140] Although he might be exaggerated, George T. Dennis argues that Elias was part of a "credible story."[141] Perhaps, Elias is an example of why the monasteries might be hesitant to send their monks on journeys to Constantinople. Considering this, the transportation might have been made with lay personnel, or with ships and sailors hired from the region, rather than the monks themselves.

<p style="text-align:center">***</p>

In the Mediterranean, due to different ways and distances of sailing, there were various experiences of being a sailor. The majority of communications were of short and medium distance, and the circulation of goods and people happened within local and regional communities. The Aperlae example demonstrates that continuous, daily journeys of cabotage and tramping do not necessarily leave traces in the archaeological record and are rarely mentioned in the textual sources. Meanwhile, the Theodosian Harbour finds as well as the Marmara Sea connections reveal a regional network of short journeys, made by sailors who possibly included monks. Although this network can be constructed for this region due to fortuitous archaeological discoveries, it possibly existed around other production centres and

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[139] Alice-Mary Talbot, *Varieties of Monastic Experience in Byzantium, 800-1453* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2019), 23.

[140] Michael Psellos, *Letters*, 97. Edited by Eduard Kurtz and Franz Drexl. *Michaelis Pselli Scripta minora*, II *Epistulae*. Milan: Vita e Pensiero, 1941. English translation by George T. Dennis, "Elias the Monk, Friend of Psellos," in Byzantine Authors. Literary Activities and Preoccupations: Texts and Translations Dedicated to the Memory of Nikos Oikonomides, ed. John W. Nesbitt, 43–62 (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2003), 55.

[141] Dennis, "Elias the Monk," 45.

urban harbours around the Empire as well. This, of course, does not eliminate the existence of

long-distance journeys and interregional commercial activities, to which Chapter 2 will turn.

Chapter 2: At the Port

Ports and harbours are departures and destinations of maritime journeys. They are inhabited by the maritime community, which includes people who work in various professions related to the sea, such as shipwrights, sail makers, captains, sailors, fishermen, and dockworkers, as well as their families. Although ports and harbours have this permanent community, depending on their size and function they are also zones of contact for diverse groups of peoples. At the ports that are connected to networks of long-distance travels, various relationships among different agents at multiple levels may develop.[142] In other words, ports are "gateway communities," which foster social contact and cross-cultural exchanges.[143]

Building on the framework established in Chapter 1, this chapter will discuss the different experiences sailors had at ports. As Paul Rainbird comments, "it is not just life at sea that makes seafarers distinct; it is also the communities within which they reside when in port."[144] Following Gary Reger, I divide these ports into two categories, short distance ports (ports that are not connected, or marginally and sporadically connected to interregional trade) and ports which are hubs in the network of long-distance communications.[145] Andreas Külzer, for example, points out that along the Western coast of Asia Minor coast there were more than a hundred harbours and anchorages in the cities and villages, but only some of them, namely

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[142] Myrto Veikou, and Ingela Nilsson. "Ports and Harbours as Heterotopic Entities in Byzantine Literary Texts," in Harbous as objects of interdisciplinary research – Archaeology + History + Geoscience, eds. Claus von Carnap-Bornheim, Falko Daim, Peter Ettel, Ursula Warnke, 265–277 (Mainz: Verlag des Römisch-Germanischen Zentralmuseums, 2018), 268.

[143] Myrto Veikou, "Mediterranean Byzantine Ports and Harbours in the Complex Interplay Between Environment and Society. Spatial, Socio-economic and Cultural Considerations Based on Archaeological Evidence from Greece, Cyprus and Asia Minor," in *Harbours and Maritime Networks as Complex Adaptive Systems* eds. Johannes Preiser-Kapeller and Falko Daim, 39–60 (Mainz: Verlag des Römisch-Germanischen Zentralmuseums, 2015), 40.

[144] Paul Rainbird, *The Archaeology of Islands* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 50.

[145] Gary Reger, "Nodes of Sea and Sand. Ports, Human Geography and Networks of Trade," in *Ancient Ports: The Geography of Connections. Proceedings of an International Conference at the Department of Archaeology and Ancient History, Uppsala University, 23-25 September 2010*, eds. Kerstin Höghammar, Brita Alroth, Adam Lindhagen, 9–36 (Uppsala: Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis, 2016), 18.

Assos, Atramyttion, Phokaia, Smyrna, Ephesus, and Anaia obtained prominence in the archaeological and textual record for their roles in long-distance trade.[146]

The experience of a sailor depended on the size, function, and the location of the port. I analyse this phenomenon through the notions of *emplacement* and *displacement*. The first section of this chapter focuses on the sailors emplaced in maritime communities comprised of people who engage with the sea daily; these sailors are permanently settled in the place where they have learned the profession and have families to whom they return.[147] The second section discusses the displaced sailor, following the experience of the crew of the Serçe Limanı shipwreck, which sank in the eleventh century, during a Byzantine-Fatimid long-distance trade venture. The displacement of the sailor depends on the length of the journey: as established in Chapter 1, most sailors travelled day-long or short-distance journeys. Others ventured on long-distance, interregional travels. Therefore, every sailor is emplaced in their own community, while displaced to different degrees through the journeys they take. The degree of displacement and the function of the port within the trade routes is the primary factor in the sailors' experience. A sailor who was from and travelled within the Marmara Sea (perhaps transporting Ganos wine to Constantinople) along small, local ports and harbours would experience less displacement, but if he were to travel to Syria (such as the crew of the Serçe Limanı ship), not only would he find greater displacement, but the long-distance ports on the route—such as the Byzantine trading hub Attaleia or Fatimid-ruled Tyre—would provide a different experience.

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[146] Andreas Külzer, "Harbor Cities as Interfaces of Maritime and Terrestrial Communication Systems in Late Antique and Medieval Western Anatolia," in *Space and Communities in Byzantine Anatolia* eds. Nikos D. Kontogiannis, and Tolga B. Uyar, 95–110 (Istanbul: ANAMED, 2021), 97–98.

[147] Robert Van de Noort, *North Sea Archaeologies: a Maritime Biography, 10,000 BC to AD 1500* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 25.

2.1 The Emplaced Sailor

Sailors often came from families who were already a part of the maritime community. The sailors of the crew that Synesius of Cyrene sailed with in the late fourth century, "a collection of peasants who even as late as last year had never gripped an oar," seems to be the exception (perhaps related to the very terrible experience Synesius had on board) and not the norm.[148] In the light of Horden and Purcell's model of connectivity, which assumes constant travel along the extensive coastline and islands, the coastal maritime communities produced numerous sailors as agents of this communication. In the absence of contemporary sources from the Middle Byzantine period, modern ethnographic research can help illuminate these sailors and the communities they belonged to. A series of interviews conducted with the elder residents of Korphos in the Saronic Gulf reveal how a small-scale maritime community functioned before the construction of paved roads and the introduction of motorized seacraft.[149] Korphos was a part of the small network within the Saronic Gulf, where port towns specialized in certain products, buying from and selling to each other constantly, where even water had to be brought in by boats from other shores; it therefore provides an example of the micro-regional connectivity theorized by Horden and Purcell. Moreover, Maria Leontsini, Eleni Manolessou, and Angeliki Panopoulou point out that since there was no investment in the overland road system and its maintenance in the Late Roman period, the maritime traffic in the Saronic and Argolic Gulfs was intensified well into the Middle Byzantine period.[150] There are other similar

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[148] Synesius, *Epistolae* 4. Edited by Rudolphus Hercher. *Epistolographi Graeci.* (Paris: A.F. Didot, 1873.) English translation by Augustine Fitzgerald. *The Letters of Synesius of Cyrene* (London: Oxford University Press, 1926), 80-91.

[149] The interviews were conducted by Lita Tzortzopoulou-Gregory between May 2007 and June 2009 for The Saronic Harbors Archaeological Research Project. Unfortunately, aside from the summary given by Tartaron, these interviews have not been published. (Lita Tzortzopoulou-Gregory, personal communication through email message to the author, 03.04.2020) See Thomas F. Tartaron, *Maritime Networks in the Mycenaean World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 265–270.

[150] Maria Leontsini, Eleni Manolessou, and Angeliki Panopoulou, "Harbours and Anchorages in Corinthia and Argolis (North-Eastern Peloponnese) from the Early to the Middle Byzantine Period," in *Seasides of Byzantium. Harbours and Anchorages of a Mediterranean Empire*, eds. Johannes Preiser-Kapeller, Taxiarchis G. Kolias, and Falko Daim, 153–165 (Mainz: Verlag des Römisch-Germanischen Zentralmuseums, 2021), 153.

regions in which coastal settlements and islands as microregions were connected to each other. The Gulf of Adramyttium (modern Edremit) with its connection to Lesbos is but one example. Although textual sources do not give much information on the region, Külzer's assessment of the archaeological evidence shows that the Gulf of Adramyttium—which was part of the *theme* of Samos in Western Asia Minor—was not only connect to the rest of the empire through land and sea routes, but was also connected within itself as the safe anchorages around the gulf allowed for fishing, trade, and transports of different goods.[151] Communities similar to Korphos existed on various coasts of the empire between seventh and thirteenth centuries.

2.1.1 Families, Knowledge, and Culture

At Korphos, knowledge of seafaring was transmitted orally, through the male members of the families, and young boys learned by accompanying their fathers and grandfathers on the boats from an early age.[152] Transfer of knowledge in maritime professions was not limited to seafaring activities. Research done along modern Turkey's Black Sea coast points to a similar social structure for shipwrights. Shipyards specialising in wooden shipbuilding were owned by families and the transmission of knowledge until the twentieth century was oral, passing through generations within the families.[153] From Byzantium, no manuals related to maritime activities survive. Just as many crafts, such as metal working or pottery making, it was taught through apprenticeship. Therefore, the childhood experience in these communities would have been intensely tied to the sea, and involved learning not only seafaring, but also the geography of the region, as well as other related maritime activities.

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[151] Andreas Külzer, "Harbours, Landing Places and Communication Routes in North-Western Anatolia. The Gulf of Adramyttium (Edremit körfezi) in Late Antiquity and Byzantine Times," in *Seasides of Byzantium. Harbours and Anchorages of a Mediterranean Empire*, eds. Johannes Preiser-Kapeller, Taxiarchis G. Kolias, and Falko Daim, 143–152. (Mainz: Verlag des Römisch-Germanischen Zentralmuseums, 2021), 17.

[152] Tartaron, *Maritime Networks in the Mycenaean World*, 266.

[153] Mahmut Davulcu, "Karadeniz Bölgesinde Ahşap Tekne Yapımcılığı ve Günümüzdeki Durumu," *Karadeniz Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi* 7 (2015): 106.

It was common for maritime professions to be run by families who transmitted this knowledge down through the generations. At Korphos, each family owned at least one fishing boat or small boat.[154] There are various episodes in Byzantine hagiographic accounts that suggest that ships were owned by families. For example, in the ninth-century *Life of Niketas of Medikion*, the three brothers who were saved from a storm by a miracle owned the ship together.[155] Moreover, Michael McCormick speculates that the ship might have been inherited from their father.[156] He argues that this might be due to the high price of ships—the *NRN* gives the price of a ship with all its tackle at fifty pieces of gold (*nomismata*) for every thousand *modioi* of capacity.[157] A small ship with the cargo capacity of 35 tons (such as the Serçe Limanı ship) therefore would have cost around 150 *nomismata*. For comparison, in the tenth century, the annual salary of a tagmata commander was 144 *nomismata*, and that of a sailor in the navy was three *nomismata*.[158] The archaeological record shows that Byzantine ships could undergo extensive reparations to elongate their lifespan and it is therefore possible that a ship could belong to two generations of the same family.[159] A shipowner/captain (*naukleros*) named George the Rhodian in the miracle stories of Saint Artemios waited at the church where the saints relics were kept to be cured for two years, while his sons took over the ship and the business, making three round trips between Constantinople and Rhodes.[160] In the absence of

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[154] Tartaron, *Maritime Networks in the Mycenaean World*, 266.

[155] Theosterictus, *Life of Niketas of Medikion* (*BHG* 1341), 45. Edited by Jean Carnandet. *Acta Sanctorum April I.* Paris and Rome: Apud Victorem Palmé, 1866. Russian translation by Dmitry Yevgenievich Afinogenov, *Žitija vizantijskih sviatyh epohi ikonoborčestva*, vol. 1 (Saint Petersburg: Publishing Project Kvadrivium, 2015), 300.

[156] McCormick, *Origins*, 544.

[157] McCormick, *Origins*, 544; *NRN* Part II. 16.

[158] Cécile Morrisson and Jean-Claude Cheynet, "Prices and Wages in the Byzantine World," in *The Economic History of Byzantium from the Seventh Through the Fifteenth Century,* ed. Angeliki E. Laiou, 815–878. Dumbarton Oaks Series No. 39 (Washington, DC: Dumbarton Oaks, 2002), 861.

[159] YK 11, a round ship dating to the second quarter of the seventh century excavated in the Theodosian Harbour of Constantinople, for example, shows that it was extensively repaired before it was abandoned. See Rebecca Ingram, "The Hull of Yenikapı Shipwreck YK 11: A 7th-Century Merchant Vessel from Constantinople's Theodosian Harbour," *International Journal of Nautical Archaeology* 47 no. 1 (2018): 103–139.

[160] *Miracles of St. Artemios (BHG 173–173c),* Mir. 35. Edited by Athanasios Papadopoulos-Kerameus, In *Varia Graeca Sacra* (St Petersburg: Tipogr. V. Th. Kiršbauma 1909), 1–75. English translation by Virgil S. Crisafulli and John W. Nesbitt. *The Miracles of St. Artemios* (The Medieval Mediterranean 13. Leiden: Brill, 1996), 185–189.

their father, the sons operated the vessel, which shows that ships, as well as the business connected to them, could stay in the family.

Another episode from the same miracle collection does not only reflect the relationship between the sailors and their home ports, but also gives further details about a sailor's life. This sailor, Isidore, was fifty-three years old when he arrived at the church of Saint John the Baptist to be cured from a hernia that he had been suffering from "for many years."[161] He is one of the few sailors in the written accounts that is mentioned by name. His age should be underlined: Alice-Mary Talbot asserts that only half of the Byzantine population reached the age of thirty-five, and much fewer lived to be older than fifty.[162] Thus, Isidore had reached γῆρας, old age in Byzantine terms, even if his work was physically demanding. While Isidore was still waiting at the church after being healed, the saint appeared to him again and ordered the sailor to go back to his own land to his own people, and specifically his family (εἰς τὴν χώραν σου πρὸς τοὺς σοὺς), "for greatly they lament over you, believing that you have died."[163] Isidore, who spent decades at the sea, could still be expected to have a family, home, and community to return to. The story does not report how long Isidore has been away from home, but emphasizes that he has people waiting for him, concerned that he had died. We can assume that Isidore, after hearing these words, indeed went back to his home, "cheering them by [his] presence."[164]

Although sailors spent long periods of time journeying in the Mediterranean, even the ones who travelled the furthest seem to have longed for home. It is not possible to find sailors expressing such sentiments from the middle Byzantine period due to lack of sources, but a letter preserved in papyrus illustrates how a sailor from the *annona* fleet related to his hometown. This letter, dating to second/third century CE, is written by Eirenaios, who departed from Egypt and travelled to Rome carrying the annual grain supply. He wrote to his brother

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[161] *Miracles of St. Artemios (BHG 173–173c)*, Mir. 6.
[162] Alice-Mary Talbot, "Old Age in Byzantium," *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 77 (1984): 268.
[163] *Miracles of St. Artemios (BHG 173–173c)*, Mir. 6.
[164] *Miracles of St. Artemios (BHG 173–173c)*, Mir. 6.

Apollinarios that he arrived on the 6th of Epeiph (June 30th) possibly at the harbours of Rome—Portus or Ostia—unloaded the grain on the 18th and went up to Rome on the 25th (July 9th). In the next month, Meseore (August 2nd) he was still waiting. Even for this short stay, he found it necessary to write to his brother to inform him about his situation and complain to him that no one from the grain fleet had yet left.[165] The letter was found in Fayyum, showing that it made home, possibly followed by Eirenaios himself in the early fall.[166]

Aside from their profession being related to the sea and seafaring, what other cultural attributes might distinguish maritime communities from other people of the lower strata of the society? The inhabitants of Korphos defined themselves as "island" people with their distinct maritime culture in contrast to the nearby inland community of Sophikites, whom they perceived as "mountain" people with a different culture and outlook.[167] An aspect of a distinct maritime culture penetrated Middle Byzantine literature. In *Rhodanthe and Dosikles*, a twelfth-century novel by Theodore Prodromos set in an antique past, a banquet scene at a merchant's house is narrated. The captain of the ship which the main characters Rhodanthe and Dosikles have been travelling with, starts singing, and a sailor, Nausikrates, begins a "somewhat nautical dance" (ὄρχησιν ὠρχήσατο ναυτικωτέραν).[168] The author defines Nausikrates' moves as "rustic" (ἀγροικικὸν), perhaps distinguishing it from the people at the banquet whole belonged to higher classes, such as Rhodanthe and Dosikles themselves.[169] Panagiotis Roilos identifies only one other instance in the surviving Greek novels where such dances are described, in

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[165] The dates corresponding to the Egyptian/Coptic months are provided in David Noy, *Foreigners at Rome: citizens and strangers* (London: Duckworth with the Classical Press of Wales, 2000), 165.

[166] BGU 1 27. Edited by Adolf Erman and Fritz Krebs. *Aus den Papyrus der Königlichen Museen Band I* (Berlin: Weidmannsche Buchhandlung, 1895): 41. English translation by Arthur Surridge Hunt and Campbell Cowan Edgar. *Select Papyri, Volume I: Private Documents LOEB LCL 266* (Cambridge, Massachusetts and London: Harvard University Press, 1932), 307.

[167] Tartaron, *Maritime Networks in the Mycenaean World*, 268.

[168] Theodore Prodromos, *Rhodante and Dosikles*, 2.110. Edited by Miroslav Marcovich. *Theodori Prodromi de Rhodanthes et Dosiclis amoribus libri IX*. Stuttgart: Teubner, 1992. English translation by Elizabeth M. Jeffreys, *Four Byzantine Novels: Agapetus - Theodore Prodromos; Rhodanthe and Dosikles - Eumathios Makrembolites; Hysmine and Hysminias - Constantine Manasses; Aristandros and Kallithea - Niketas Eugenianos, Drosilla and Charikles* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2012), 39.

[169] Theodore Prodromos, *Rhodante and Dosikles*, 2.117.

Heliodoros' *Aithiopika*, where Phoenician merchants perform a similar dance, and Roilos argues that this section was reworked by Prodromos.[170] However, Prodromos is not the only twelfth-century author to allude to a sailors' dance. Eustathios of Thessaloniki, who would have been familiar with sailors' traditions as he lived in port cities such as Thessaloniki and Constantinople, mentions in *Commentary on the Iliad*, that "even today", the *laburinthos* of Daidalos was imitated in dance, especially by seamen (μάλιστα ναυτικοί), who "whirl in a dance with many turns and many gyrations."[171] Thus, the dance by sailors which Prodromos uses to contrast the rustic and the aristocratic, is also visible in Eustathios of Thessaloniki's work as a part of contemporary practice, being associated with sailors in both cases. The experience of being a sailor who belonged to a distinct community entailed the immersion into this culture and the elements which separates it from other social groups, such as specific dances and, perhaps, music. Although the ethnographic data supports that maritime culture was not only distinct from higher classes, but also from other social groups which can be considered lower class, unfortunately very few reflections of this can be found in literary sources.

2.1.2 Seafaring Towns and Maritime Populations

In Korphos, which was essentially a fishing and seafaring village, 90% of the male population of the town was engaged in daily fishing or merchant activities in the Saronic Gulf.[172] It is unfortunately not possible to determine the percentage of people who belonged to the Middle Byzantine maritime communities. An example from Late Antique Korykos demonstrates that it is not possible to do so even with periods that had an epigraphic tradition which recorded people and their trades. Korkyos was coastal settlement and an important harbour in Cilicia, and the 456 inscriptions which form the epigraphic corpus recording the

[170] Panagiotis Roilos, *Amphoteroglossia: A Poetics of the Twelfth Century Medieval Greek Novel*. Hellenic Studies Series 10 (Washington, DC: Center for Hellenic Studies, 2006), 435–436.

[171] Eustathios of Thessaloniki, *Commentary on the Iliad*, 4.267.25–268.2. Edited by Marchinus van der Valk, *Eustathii archiepiscopi Thessalonicensis commentarii ad Homeri Iliadem pertinentes*. (Leiden: Brill, 1987).

[172] Tartaron, *Maritime Networks in the Mycenaean World*, 266.

settlement's trade and crafts, about 7% refer to professions of the maritime community.[173] I believe this number is misleading. As Varinlioğlu in her analysis of this corpus notes, these numbers reflect the population that could afford burial practices, which included epigraphic commemorations, and most of the lower-class people, which included sailors, would be buried in modest and uninscribed graves or in mass-burials.[174] Also, as attested in the Abydos Tariff dating to the reign of Anastasius I (*c.* 492 CE), Cilician *naukleroi* who carried wine to Constantinople paid lower fees compared to their counterparts from other regions.[175] Thus, although they are not prominent in the epigraphic corpus of the region, the sailors from Cilicia are recorded in other sources as prominent traders in the Eastern Mediterranean.[176] Therefore, a higher percentage of the population would have participated in various maritime professions but went unrecorded, and are invisible in the epigraphic data. Since epigraphic habits change in the Middle Byzantine period, the inscriptions regarding sailors become even more faint. Meanwhile, going back to Korphos, the ethnographic evidence does suggest that especially in smaller coastal towns, most of the townsman would be associated with some aspect of seafaring.

2.2 The Displaced Sailor

Korphos represents small-scale commercial activity between micro-regions, supplying and being supplied by the Saronic Gulf. The sailors of Korphos, then, had a low level of displacement and most sailed within the Gulf, in local waters. Its anchorages were far from cosmopolitan and did not serve a wide range of social classes. This would have been the

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[173] Frank Trombley, "Korykos in Cilicia Trachis. The Economy of a Small Coastal City in Late Antiquity (saec. V-VI) – A précis," *The Ancient History Bulletin* 1 (1987), 18–19.

[174] Günder Varinlioğlu, "Trades, Crafts and Agricultural Production in town and Countryside in Southeastern Isauria," in *Archaeology and the cities of Asia Minor in Late Antiquity*, eds. Ortwin Dally and Christopher Ratté, 173–187 (Ann Arbor: Kelsey Museum Publication, 2011), 179.

[175] Jean Durliat, and André Guillou, "Le tarif d'Abydos," *Bulletin de Correspondence Hellénique* 108 (1984), 585.

[176] Michael Decker, "The Wine Trade of Cilicia in Late Antiquity," *ARAM* 17 (2005): 51–59.

experience of many Middle Byzantine coastal communities. In contrast, the Mediterranean harbours which Ingela Nilsson and Myrto Veikou discuss as *heterotopic* entities are the harbours that are connected to long-distance trade.[177] As previously pointed out, these were hubs where different agents of trade and maritime travel—from sailors, who can be considered as the lowest social class present, to higher middle class merchants—interacted with one another one another and shared a space and an experience together.[178] At ports such as Attaleia, this connection to long-distance Mediterranean trade was coupled with its role as a prominent base for the Byzantine navy; almost every family in the community was thereby dependent on the sea for employment, trade and sustenance.[179] But as a long-distance port, the people of Attaleia were "exposed to different nations on a daily basis and learned to treat foreigners as part of life."[180] Attaleia experienced high degrees of both emplacement—local fishing, boat repair, and naval service— and displacement, as foreign and Byzantine sailors from across the Mediterranean visited its wharfs. It was a level of connectivity which made Attaleia and other similar ports a unique, and decidedly different experience for Middle Byzantine seamen.

In this section, I will focus on the journey of the Serçe Limanı shipwreck as an example of a long-distance trade venture and discuss the experiences of the crew at the different ports the ship might have visited. The evidence points to a possible route starting from the Marmara Sea, following the coast of Asia Minor: the ship acquired a cargo of mostly glass on the Fatimid Syrian coast and sank in the Southwestern coast of Asia Minor while on its way back to Constantinople.[181] The sailors, who presumably were from the Marmara Sea region,[182] therefore experienced a great degree of displacement, possibly stopping at several small to

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[177] Veikou, and Nilsson, "Ports and Harbours as Heterotopic Entities in Byzantine Literary Texts," 265.

[178] Veikou, and Nilsson, "Ports and Harbours as Heterotopic Entities in Byzantine Literary Texts," 268.

[179] For a recent discussion of Attaleia in this context, see Dimitris Krallis, *Serving Byzantium's Emperors: The Courtly Life and Career of Michael Attaleiates* (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019), 55–74.

[180] Krallis, *Serving Byzantium's Emperors*, 64.

[181] Frederick H. van Doorninck, "The Byzantine Ship at Serçe Limanı," 139–140.

[182] Van Doorninck, "Ethnicity and Sphere of Activity of the Crew of the 11th Century Serçe Limanı Ship," 131.

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larger sized Byzantine and Fatimid anchorages along their route while hugging the coast.[183]

Among the larger, long-distance ports are the abovementioned Attaleia, which was a common stop for those journeying to the Levant.[184] Their experience at these ports depended on the establishments serving the sailors, such as inns, taverns, and brothels. In addition, as the Serçe Limanı ship crossed the linguistic, religious, political, and economic borders of the Byzantine Empire, their experience at the port also included the foreign and other, requiring them to adapt to the circumstances.

2.2.1 Establishments Provided at Long-Distance Ports

The experience at a long-distance port revolved around the establishments that were provided for the seafarers. It is not easy to identify in the archaeological record if a certain construction is an establishment serving specifically sailors. Nicholas K. Rauh, Matthew J. Dillon and T. Davina McClain have argued that the Roman residence building *Maison du Lac* in Delos functioned as a maritime inn, tavern, or brothel.[185] They have proposed that these establishments were commonplace features in Mediterranean harbours, as commonplace as moles, quays, warehouses, or shop-lined market squares, as a part of the leisure culture of what they termed the maritime mob (*ochlos nautikos*).[186] It seems like this culture as confined in a designated space in the long-distance harbours continued well into the Byzantine Period and beyond. For the harbours of Constantinople, perhaps the largest long-distance trading hub of the Empire, Kislinger mentions a few "establishments of commercial hospitality, public houses

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[183] For a discussion about the maritime routes along Caria, Lycia, and Pamphylia, see Élisabeth Malamut, "The Region of Serçe Limanı in Byzantine Times," in *Serçe Limanı: An Eleventh Century Shipwreck.* Volume I: *The Ship and Its Anchorage, Crew, and Passengers* eds. George F. Bass, Sheila D. Matthews, J. Richard Steffy, and Frederick H. van Doorninck, 21–29 (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2004), 22.

[184] Gregory the Cellarer, *The Life of Lazaros of Mt. Galesion (BHG 979)*, 8-9. Edited by Hippolyte Delehaye and Paul Peeters. *Acta Sanctorum November IV* (Brussels: Société des Bollandistes, 1925). English translation by Richard P.H. Greenfield. *The Life of Lazaros of Mt. Galesion: An Eleventh-Century Pillar Saint* (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 2000), 84–87.

[185] Nicholas K. Rauh, Matthew J. Dillon and T. Davina McClain, "Ochlos Nautikos: Leisure Culture and Underclass Discontent in the Roman Maritime World," *Memoirs of the American Academy in Rome. Supplementary Volumes* 6 (2008): 197–242.

[186] Rauh, Dillion, and McClain, "Ochlos Nautikos," 208.

with their range of alcoholic drinks for sailors and dockworkers, sometimes also associated with prostitution."[187] Preiser-Kappeler also underlines the presence of taverns around the port area of Heptaskalon in the city.[188] It is possible to assume that most of the long-distance port cities would provide these services, as a means of profiting from the seafarers who stopped at their harbours. The crew of the Serçe Limanı ship, then, as well as being adequately victualed during their journey,[189] could also take advantage of the taverns, inns, and brothels provided by long-distance trade ports along their way.

In any period, harbour prostitution was a widespread phenomenon in the Mediterranean, and paying a visit to a prostitute was part of the Middle Byzantine sailors' experience at the long-distance port. As demonstrated by both Irene Chrestou and Claudine Dauphin, prostitution in Byzantium was especially associated with the hospitality business, such as inns, hostels, and taverns.[190] This did not only extend to these establishment at the harbours but became a focal point. Gary Leiser in his study of Late Antique and Medieval period shows that sex trade was not only commonplace at the major ports along the Eastern Mediterranean coasts, but also proposes that harbour prostitution was even an incentive for long-distance traders to make stops at such harbours. [191] He distinguishes between land and sea travel, arguing that due to the more dangerous nature of the sea, the attraction of finding a woman at the end of a journey was a compensation associated mainly with seafaring. [192]

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[187] Ewald Kislinger, "On Better and Worse Sites: The Changing Importance of the Harbours of Constantinople," in *The Byzantine Harbours of Constantinople*, eds. Falko Daim, and Ewald Kislinger, 9–18 (Mainz: Verlag des Römisch-Germanischen Zentralmuseums, 2021), 10.

[188] Johannes Preiser-Kappeler, "Heptaskalon and Other Selected Moorings on the Golden Horn," in *The Byzantine Harbours of Constantinople*, eds. Falko Daim, and Ewald Kislinger, 141–150 (Mainz: Verlag des Römisch-Germanischen Zentralmuseums, 2021), 146.

[189] Discussed in Section *3.2.3 Diet* in this thesis.

[190] Claudine Dauphin, "Brothels, Baths and Babes Prostitution in the Byzantine Holy Land," *Classics Ireland* 3 (1996): 51; Irene Chrestou, "Innkeepers, Ship-owners, Prostitutes: Three "Female" Business Activities," in *The Material Sides of Marriage: Women and Domestic Economies in Antiquity*, ed. Ria Berg, 243–247 (Rome: Institutum Romanum Finlandiae, 2016), 245.

[191] Gary Leiser, *Prostitution in the Eastern Mediterranean World: The Economics of Sex in the Late Antique and Medieval Middle East* (London, New York: IB Tauris, 2017), 237.

[192] Leiser, *Prostitution in the Eastern Mediterranean World*, 237–238.

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Dauphin also emphasizes that prostitution was mostly practiced at Byzantine harbours with international maritime trade links, such as Alexandria, Beirut, and Jerusalem, as they provided a cosmopolitan clientele of residents, travellers, and even pilgrims.[193]

Several texts point to prostitution at harbours. When Pope Martin I visited Constantinople in the seventh century, as he arrived at the harbour, he was surrounded by various men, of whom the Pope's disciple Theodoros Spoudaios wrote, "I shall call [them] wolves on account of their savage behaviour" (varii homines, quos propter ferales mores lupaces dixerim).[194] McCormick thinks this sounds like pimps and male prostitutes, but I am uncertain if such a conclusion can be drawn from a short passage that does not mention these professions by name.[195] Meanwhile, in the ninth-century *Life of Gregory of Dekapolis*, Ignatios the Deacon indeed mentions a prostitute in Syracuse who services especially those "who came from the sea" (μάλιστα δὲ τοὺς ἐκ θαλάσσης ὁρμωμένους) from her tower at the entrance of the harbour.[196] The main client base of prostitution at the ports seem to be the travellers, and being frequented regularly by many seafarers, the long distance harbours and ports would be the ideal locations for prostitution to flourish. It was, then, offered together with establishments of hospitality and taverns, and was a part, if not the main attraction, of a stop at such a harbour.

In addition to the leisurely activities, the ships that docked also had responsibilities towards the state. In Byzantium, the harbour masters (*limenarchoi*) collected the harbour taxes (*limenatikon* and *skaliatikon*), and the officials of the *Eparch* in Constantinople regulated the transactions.[197] A *parathalassites*, which from the reign of Justinian I (r. 527 to 565) to the thirteenth century had a changing significance, was a judge who was concerned with the legal

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[193] Claudine Dauphin, "Brothels, Baths and Babes Prostitution in the Byzantine Holy Land," *Classics Ireland* 3 (1996): 49.

[194] Theodore Spoudaios, *Commemoratio*, 592.C. Edited by Jacques Paul Migne. *Patrologia Latina 129* (Paris: Apud Garnier Fratres, 1879).

[195] McCormick, Origins, 425.

[196] Ignatios the Deacon, *Life of Gregory of Dekapolis (BHG 711)*, 28. Edited and translated by Georgios Makris. *Ignatios Diakonos und die Vita des Hl. Gregorios Dekapolites* (Stuttgart and Leipzig: B.G. Teubner, 1997), 93.

[197] Kislinger, "On Better and Worse Sites," 10.

matters around sailing, and the sailors could appeal to them at their stops.[198] Therefore, these

spaces were not unchecked, but were under the control of the state and the legal authorities.

The legal regulation of ports and harbours was of course not limited to those within

Byzantine territory. Khalilieh emphasizes that when a Byzantine ship anchored at a Muslim

harbour, such as the Serçe Limanı ship, the legal position of the ship changed.[199] The captain,

who had exclusive jurisdiction on board during the journey, now shared it with the port

superintendent *shahbandar* or *nāẓir*. This position of this superintendent seems to have been

similar to that of the *limenarchoi*, as he was responsible for the tax collection and clearing the

ships for departure. The captain of the Serçe Limanı ship must have been the authority who

engaged with the *nāẓir* on the Fatimid coast. In addition to this, he would have had *amān*, a

temporary safe conduct given to foreign merchants for their life and property.[200] Therefore,

although long-distance ports and harbours are often associated with leisurely activities, eating,

drinking, and having fun, they were also zones under special jurisdiction and were regulated

closely.

2.2.2 Transactions at the Foreign Port

Following Natalie Rothman's definition, captains or merchants who were engaged with

foreigners and completed trade transactions can be perceived as trans-imperial subjects, who

operated beyond the Byzantine "linguistic, religious, and political boundaries."[201] To these, I

also add economic boundaries, as the interaction also included mediating between different

issues of coins and units of measurements. The captain and/or the merchant on board the

eleventh-century Serçe Limanı shipwreck were such trans-imperial subjects, as they were

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[198] Hélène Ahrweiler, "Fonctionnaires et Bureaux Maritimes a Byzance," *Revue des études byzantine*s 19 (1961): 246–251.

[199] Hassan S. Khalilieh, "Security Protection and Naval Escort during the 10th and 12th Centuries in the Islamic Mediterranean," *Graeco-Arabica* 7/8 (2000): 228.

[200] Khalilieh, "Security Protection and Naval Escort," 222 n.6.

[201] Natalie Rothman, *Brokering Empire: Trans-Imperial Subjects between Venice and Istanbul* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2012), 2–3.

involved in interregional, long-distance trade and transaction after docking at the foreign port. Various artefacts that would have been used in a Byzantine-Fatimid mercantile transaction were recovered from the stern compartment.[202] The stern compartment was reserved for the captain (who has been identified as a certain Michael from ownership marks on about thirty amphorae stowed under the stern), merchants, and high-ranking crew members, and those were the people who were involved in the trade.[203] Therefore, in the first part of my discussion, I will focus on them instead of the lower ranking sailors of the crew.

How was it possible for the crew of the Serçe Limanı ship to cross these linguistic, religious, political, and economic boundaries and conduct this socioeconomic interaction? To start with, upon arrival, the travellers were not scattered around in the foreign port cities but were often lodged in certain spaces that were reserved for them. In Constantinople, for example, Muslim merchants were present throughout the late tenth, eleventh and twelfth centuries.[204] There was a lodging assigned to them—*Perama mitaton*—that was also associated with a mosque (which Niketas Choniates called the synagogue of the Saracens (Σαρακηνῶν συναγώγιον)).[205] Locations such as this gave the outsiders a familiar space to reside, conduct their business, and even perform their religious duties. As Olivia Remie Constable has extensively discussed, the *funduq* in the Muslim ports (as well as inland cities on trade routes),

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[202] George F. Bass and Frederick H. van Doorninck, Jr., "The Ship, Its Lading, and Its Living Spaces," in *Serçe Limanı: An Eleventh Century Shipwreck.* Volume I: *The Ship and Its Anchorage, Crew, and Passengers* eds. George F. Bass, Sheila D. Matthews, J. Richard Steffy, and Frederick H. van Doorninck, 265–274 (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2004), 271.

[203] This is further discussed in this thesis in section *3.1.2 Living Spaces*; Van Doorninck, "The Byzantine Ship at Serçe Limanı," 142.

[204] Stephen W. Reinert, "The Muslim Presence in Constantinople, 9th-15th Centuries: Some Preliminary Observations," in *Studies on the Internal Diaspora of the Byzantine Empire*, eds. Hélène Ahrweiler, and Angeliki E. Laiou, 125–150 (Washington, DC: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 1998), 131.

[205] Niketas Choniates, *History*, The Reign of Alexios Angelos, 525. Edited by Jan Louis van Dieten. *Nicetae Choniatae historia, pars prior* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1975). English translation by Harry J. Magoulias, *O City of Byzantium: Annals of Niketas Choniates* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1984), 288; Aygül Ağır, "Bizans Başkentinde Müslüman Tacirler İçin Mimarlık: Mitaton," [Architecture for Muslim Merchants in the Byzantine Capital: The Mitaton] in *Trade in Byzantium: Papers from the Third International Sevgi Gönül Byzantine Studies Symposium, Istanbul*, eds. Nevra Necipoğlu and Paul Magdalino, 233–247 (Istanbul: ANAMED, 2016), 239.

provided these services.[206] These institutions served the merchants by offering lodging as well as "storage for their goods, places for sales and negotiation, and a locus for governmental taxation."[207] Jacoby, following Arabic sources, also argues for a special *funduq* in Old Cairo for Byzantine merchants in the tenth century.[208] It was common for *funduq* to be established at ports as early as the eight century, as was the case in Tyre, which is one of the possible cities that the Serçe Limanı ship visited.[209] Gregory F. Votruba argues that a flat-bottomed vessel like Serçe Limanı could be beached on the Levantine shores in case of a "storm or draft surge," and would otherwise be moored in the harbour.[210] Sailors would have probably stayed with the moored ship or at an inn in the harbour while being anchored at a foreign port, while the captain and/or merchant could be lodged at the *funduq*.

Although Remie Constable emphasizes the importance of the *funduq* in the Islamic Near East, she also points out that the regulations around this institution tightened only after the heightened contact with Western Christian traders around the twelfth century.[211] In fact, most of the literature regarding the intercultural and interlingual communication at the ports of the Near East refer to Latin merchants, due to these merchants' unfamiliarity with the region and its languages. For example, Remie Constable proposes that the business conducted between European and Mamluk traders must have been aided by interpreters called *dragoman*, either by Westerners who knew Arabic, or Egyptians who spoke Western languages.[212]

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[206] For the general discussion of this institution and its history, see Olivia Remie Constable, *Housing the Stranger in the Mediterranean World: Lodging, Trade, and Travel in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

[207] Remie Constable, *Housing the Stranger in the Mediterranean World*, 41.

[208] David Jacoby, "Byzantine Trade with Egypt from the Mid-Tenth Century to the Fourth Crusade," *Θησαυρίσματα* 30 (2000): 35.

[209] Remie Constable, *Housing the Stranger in the Mediterranean World*, 75.

[210] Gregory F. Votruba, "Did vessels beach in the ancient Mediterranean? An assessment of the textual and visual evidence," *The Mariner's Mirror* 103 no. 1. (2017): 22.

[211] Olivia Remie Constable, "Funduq, Fondaco, and Khan, in the Wake of Christian Commerce and Crusade," in *The Crusades from the Perspective of Byzantium and the Muslim World,* eds. Angeliki E. Laiou and Roy Parviz Mottahedeh, 145–156 (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 2001), 148.

[212] Remie Constable, *Housing the Stranger in the Mediterranean World*, 289.

Dominique Valérian also proposes that translators were intrinsic to establishments such as the *funduq* at the port cities of the Maghreb such as Tunis to deal with issues beyond translation, such as mediating between two distinct cultures.[213]

The lack of references to the language barrier in the trade ventures between Byzantines and Fatimids might be due to the presence of many Christians living in the Near East under Fatimid rule.[214] It is plausible to assume that bilingual mediators who spoke both Greek and Arabic lived in these port cities, where they could profit from their skills. Additionally, contrary to the lack of contact between "Frankish" and Arabic speakers in the Eastern Mediterranean before the Crusades, Greek and Arabic co-existed in the region since the Arab conquest. This is also evident from the efforts of translating Greek works into Arabic and vice versa, which points to the existence of bilingual or multilingual people in both the Islamic Levant and Byzantium.[215] The co-existence and the interaction between these two languages are especially visible in the maritime sphere. The recent excavations of the Ma'agan Mikhael B shipwreck (seventh-eighth centuries CE) from the Levantine coast has revealed several Greek and Arabic inscriptions from the ship, both on the amphorae it was carrying and the wood of the ship itself. Maayan Cohen and Deborah Cvikel propose that the two Greek letters incised on the masthead of the ship could have been the initials of the carpenter, whereas the Christian markings (such as crosses) on the amphorae have been interpreted as an involvement of the Church in trade, even if they might also be simply markings of Christian sailors.[216] In addition to these, there

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[213] Dominique Valérian, "Marchands latins et sociétés portuaires dan le Maghreb médiéval: Le rôle central des intermédiaires," in *"Arriver" en Ville: Les Migrants en Milieu Urbain au Moyen Âge*, eds. Cédric Quertier, Roxane Chilà, and Nicolas Pluchot 213–223 (Paris: Sorbonne, 2013).

[214] Johannes den Heijer, "Religion, Ethnicity and Gender under Fatimid Rule," *Bibliotheca Orientalis* 65 no.1 (2008): 40.

[215] For the Greco-Arabic translation movement see Dimitri Gutas, *Greek Thought, Arabic Culture: The Graeco-Arabic Translation Movement in Baghdad and Early 'Abbasaid Society (2nd-4th/5th-10th c.)* (London: Routledge, 1998); Dimitri Gutas, "Arabic into Byzantine Greek: Introducing a Survey of the Translations," in *Knotenpunkt Byzanz: Wissensformen und kulturelle Wechselbeziehungen*, eds. Andreas Speer and Philipp Steinkrüger, 246–262 (Berlin, Boston: De Gruyter, 2012).

[216] Maayan Cohen and Deborah Cvikel, "Rigging of the Ma'agan Mikhael B shipwreck (7th–8th centuries AD): new finds," *The International Journal of Nautical Archaeology* 49, no.2 (2020): 296; Michelle

are Arabic invocations, such as *bismillah* (in the name of God) and *'al-sinad* (our support) which were incised on the amphorae.[217] In this small space of a 23m long ship, Christianity and Islam, as well as Greek and Arabic co-existed.

Political boundaries were drawn by a series of treatises, wars, and agreements that governed foreign relations and especially sailors' freedom of movement outside Byzantium. Although there is no space to exhaust all the political developments which might have affected trade in the Eastern Mediterranean between seventh and the thirteenth centuries, a short overview of the political circumstances around the Serçe Limanı ship's journey is illuminating in this respect. In 988, an agreement between Basil II and the Fatimid Caliph al- 'Aziz gave the right to Byzantine subjects to trade freely all commodities in the Fatimid lands (to reverse an earlier prohibition to do so). [218] Not long after, in 1016, over a dispute regarding Aleppo, Basil II banned trade and travel with all lands under Fatimid hegemony.[219] This ban seems to have been lifted in 1027, and Jacoby is doubtful whether or not it was rigidly enforced.[220]

On the one hand, there were frequent shifts of borders, as well as change in trade relations between Byzantium and its neighbours during the period under scrutiny. On the other hand, the effect of the political circumstances to a certain extant are questionable, as even in the presence of bans, embargoes, and active armed conflict, commercial activities seem to have persisted. Koray Durak, in his extensive treatment of Greek and Arabic sources regarding the connections between the Caliphate and the Byzantine Empire around the Cilician frontier

Creisher, Yuval Goren, Michal Artzy, and Deborah Cvikel, "The amphorae of the Ma'agan Mikhael B shipwreck: preliminary report," *Levant*, 51 no.1 (2020): 112.

[217] Creisher, Goren, Artzy, and Cvikel, "The amphorae of the Ma'agan Mikhael B shipwreck," 112.

[218] Jonathan Shepard, "North-South, not just East-West: An understated nexus of Byzantium before and during the crusading era?," in *Crusading and Trading between West and East: Studies in Honour of David Jacoby*, eds. Sophia Menache, Benjamin Z. Kedar, and Michel Balard, 265–283 (London and New York: Routledge, 2019), 267.

[219] Jonathan Shephard, "Holy Land, Lost Lands, Realpolitik: Imperial Byzantine Thinking about Syria and Palestine in the Later 10th and 11th Centuries," *Al-Qanṭara* 33 no.2 (2012): 519.

[220] Reinert, "The Muslim Presence in Constantinople," 138; David Jacoby, "Byzantine Trade with Egypt," 38.

between the eighth and tenth centuries, draws an image of a bustling trade route.[221] He emphasizes that regional and interregional commerce between the two political entities continued during times of war.[222] As ports were more regulated than frontier zones, it is uncertain if seaborne trade could continue as freely under these circumstances, but it seems that there was always incentive to do so regardless of political boundaries and political circumstances. The vast number of weapons found on board has led Ruthy Gertwagen to speculate if the Serçe Limanı ship was involved in piratical endeavours;[223] however, I would rather connect the presence of such weaponry to the potential dangers of sailing beyond Byzantine boarders into a different cultural and political realm.

Lastly, the mercantile items that were recovered from the Serçe Limanı shipwreck point to efforts to mediate between different coinage and measurement units. Although these have not been published extensively yet, Van Doorninck has mentioned that there were a Byzantine steelyard and two large sets of balance-pan weights.[224] One set was disc shaped and based on a Byzantine pound of about 319 g, whereas the other set was barrel shaped, mostly based on a dirham of 3.125 g. In order to undertake a transaction at the Fatimid coast, the ship carried sixteen glass weights to weigh Fatimid coins, including 1/8,1 /4, 1/2, 1, and 2 silver dirham and 1 gold dinar weights.[225] In addition to the weights, there were also Fatimid gold coins (quarter-dinars), as well as fifteen clippings from other Fatimid coins, and about forty Byzantine copper coins.[226] Van Doorninck argues that the few coins and jewellery as bullion might suggest that

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[221] Koray Durak, "The Cilician Frontier," in *Center, Province and Periphery in the Age of Constantine VII Porphyrogennetos: From De Ceremoniis to De Administrando Imperio*, eds. Niels Gaul, Volker Menze, and Csanád Bálint, 168–183 (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag).

[222] Koray Durak, "The Cilician Frontier," 170.

[223] Ruthy Gertwagen, "Is there a Typology of Pirate Crews and Ships across the Byzantine and Medieval Mediterranean? (11th to 15th Century)," in *Seeraub im Mittelmeerraum. Piraterie, Korsarentum und maritime Gewalt von der Antike bis zur Neuzeit*, eds. Nikolas Jaspert and Sebastian Kolditz, 67–82 (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 2013), 79.

[224] Van Doorninck, "The Byzantine Ship at Serçe Limanı," 143.

[225] Van Doorninck, "The Byzantine Ship at Serçe Limanı," 143.

[226] Van Doorninck, "The Byzantine Ship at Serçe Limanı," 143.

letters of credit were issued—three lead seals were found on board.[227] As previously stated, these items were kept in the stern area, indicating that sailors who ranked lower in the shipboard hierarchy and were not allowed into this area might not have been involved in these transactions.

However, the lower-class sailors could have traded the small number of items belonging to themselves. Van Doorninck points out that the trade the Serçe Limanı ship conducted was "few cargoes of fairly substantial size", that is, the glass, "and quite a number of much smaller, seemingly personal cargoes," which indicates that in addition to the main cargo, several travellers on the ship were engaged in their own transactions.[228] There are two pieces of evidence for this. Firstly, the transport amphorae that were stacked in different locations in the ship had incised marks of ownership, representing around a dozen different individuals.[229] They were mostly owned by people with Greek names, such as Leon, Nikolaos, Michael, and Ioannis.[230] The marks of usage on the amphorae shows that they had been emptied and refilled multiple times. Van Doorninck concludes that the owners of these amphorae used them repeatedly to transport wine, "keeping the amphoras for future transport."[231] It seems that the sailors were trading wine in the different ports along the route and were using the same amphorae marked with their names, and perhaps using some of it for personal consumption. Secondly, there were bundles of smaller trade items. One such bundle was found in the bow compartment and contained intact Islamic glassware and Islamic glazed bowls ready for sale.[232] This evidence shows that some of the sailors, if not all, were involved in their own small-scale trade ventures.

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[227] Van Doorninck, "The Byzantine Ship at Serçe Limanı," 143.
[228] Van Doorninck, "The Byzantine Ship at Serçe Limanı," 140.
[229] Van Doorninck, "Ethnicity and Sphere of Activity of the Crew of the 11th Century Serçe Limanı Ship," 127.
[230] Van Doorninck, "The Byzantine Ship at Serçe Limanı," 140.
[231] Van Doorninck, "The Byzantine Ship at Serçe Limanı," 142.
[232] Bass and van Doorninck, "The Ship, Its Lading, and Its Living Spaces," 266.

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This sketch of the Middle Byzantine port experience further shows that the daily lives of the sailors on land were multifaceted and depended on the size, function, and the location of the port they were at. It demonstrates that the sailors frequently journeyed short and long distances, however, they were emplaced into their own communities, and more specifically, to their families. The ethnographic evidence reveals much about this community—often comprising the whole coastal town—which taught the children not only the trades associated with seafaring, but also a distinct maritime culture. On the occasions when sailors travelled to ports that were linked to long distance trade, their experience involved the establishments of commercial hospitality provided there. A sailor from Ganos, for example, would have distinct experiences at a small harbour on the Prokonessos where he loaded the cargo to the ship, and at Constantinople, which was a hub and destination in long-distance trade. Sailing outside Byzantium as a trans-imperial subject would entail crossing many boundaries and require a different set of weights, and coins. However, the evidence shows that especially these boundaries between Byzantium and the Islamic Near East in this period were not unsurpassable, and were especially more fluid in the maritime sphere.

Chapter 3: Living Aboard

I have so far outlined several aspects of a sailor's daily experience, mostly discussing his presence on land. Most of the sailors' time, however, would have been spent sailing on board a ship. This chapter, therefore, focuses on the daily life on board during a journey. It analyses three aspects of this experience: the sailor's behaviour, body, and soul.

3.1 Behaviour

A sailor could be contracted to ships of various sizes in the Mediterranean, and the size of the ship would determine the space in which the sailor had to spend long periods of time during the journeys, affecting the experience on board. Lucas McMahon has recently compared the sizes of twenty Byzantine shipwrecks dating to between the sixth and eleventh centuries and has estimated the average length as 8 to 15 metres with beams of 3 to 5 metres.[233] As pointed out previously, most of the shipwrecks recovered from the Theodosian Harbour excavations were of these medium to smaller sizes. The two shipwrecks which are extensively discussed in this section are the Yassıada I shipwreck, *c.* 20 to 12 metres, and the Serçe Limanı shipwreck, *c.* 15 to 5 metres.[234] It is important to have an estimation of the vessel sizes, as this valuable space would be shared amongst the cargo, ships tackle, provisions, the crew and, often, the passengers. The *NRN* regulates the spaces allocated to passengers but does not do so for the sailors.[235] However, the evidence points to the regulation of the sailor within the vessel:

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[233] Lucas McMahon, "Logistical modelling of a sea-borne expedition in the Mediterranean: the case of the Byzantine invasion of Crete in AD 960," *Mediterranean Historical Review* 36, no. 1 (2021): 63–94.

[234] Richard J. Steffy, "Reconstructing the Hull," in *Yassı Ada: A Seventh-Century Byzantine Shipwreck,* eds. George F. Bass and Frederick. H. van Doorninck (College Station: Texas A & M University Press, 1982), 86; Steffy, J. Richard. "Construction and Analysis of the Vessel," in *Serçe Limanı: An Eleventh Century Shipwreck.* Volume I: *The Ship and Its Anchorage, Crew, and Passengers*, eds. George F. Bass, Sheila D. Matthews, J. Richard Steffy, and Frederick H. van Doorninck (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2004), 167–168.

[235] *NRN*, Part II, 9–13.

behaviours and living spaces were organised by law and custom to ensure the smooth operation of the ship. This section will analyse these regulations.

3.1.1 Duties and Negligence

Legal documents determined the behaviour of the crew members through duties and responsibilities and ensured they were carried out thoroughly. A seventh-century Coptic papyrus "Undertaking by a sailor to work for a year on board a ship named 'The *Apa Severus*'" illustrates the details of the contractual relationship between the sailor John and the shipmaster George: John agrees to be a sailor on the ship for a year "without sloth or neglect."[236] Avoiding neglect seems to be a recurring theme also in the *NRN*. It gives various provisions regarding the negligence of sailors and captain, as well as the repercussions of such neglect. If the captain or the sailors are negligent and the goods or the ship are damaged, they are responsible for the loss.[237] The loss could occur in different scenarios, one of them being collision. If a ship has slackened sail at night, the sailors are expected to light a fire or give a shout to avoid collision with a sailing ship.[238] Procopius relates that Belisarius erected upright poles on the prow of certain ships of the fleet and hung lights from them to distinguish these ships, and a similar arrangement in which a source of light would be hung from the mast can be considered for the merchant ships.[239] Interpreting κραυγὰς παρεχέτω (let them give a shout) in the *NRN*, Ashburner even suggests that the sailors would take turns singing at night (which, to me, seems to be an overinterpretation).[240] In a similar situation, if the sailman of the sailing ship was inattentive and the watchman "dozed off", the collision would be the responsibility of this

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[236] *P.Ryl.* Copt. 144, in Walter E. Crum, *Catalogue of the Coptic Manuscripts in the Collection of the John Rylands Library, Manchester* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1909), 75–76.

[237] *NRN*, Part III, 10; Part III, 26. Part III, 27.

[238] *NRN*, Part III, 36.

[239] Procopius, *Wars*, 3.13.1. Edited by Jacob Haury. *Procopii Caesariensis Opera Omnia vols. 1-2* (Leipzig: Teubner, 1962-1963). English translation by Henry B. Dewing. *Procopius. History of the Wars, Volume II: Books 3-4. (Vandalic War)* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1916), 119.

[240] Ashburner, *The Rhodian Sea Law*, 111.

moving ship.[241] Ashburner, by referring to various contemporary maritime laws, points out that the watch on board was a post taken in turns; thus each sailor had to be on watch duty at some point.[242] Therefore, the sailors were especially cautious about collusion—no matter the means, they had to be attentive and avoid it. It is also worth highlighting that nights on board were not completely dark: in addition to the above-mentioned fire, the archaeological evidence suggests that clay lamps were used to illuminate the ships, which would have created a faint but visible source of light.[243]

Another example of oversight could occur during storms; if a ship loaded with corn was caught in a storm, the sailors were supposed to pump the water out, as negligence could result in the damping of the cargo with bilge water and the punishment of the sailors.[244] Therefore, the sailors were not only supposed to be attentive at all times, but they also had to take on certain duties in times of urgency; the margin of error seems to have been very small. It is not a coincidence that another clause in this law code suggests that merchants should pick ships with "good seamen, brisk and smart."[245]

3.1.2 Living Spaces

The crew members were assigned certain living spaces within the ship. These spaces were divided into sections in accordance with the status of the crew member, and these spaces as well as containers in these spaces were secured with locks. The evidence suggests that the captain, merchants, and other higher-ranking officials would have quarters in the stern area, while other crew members, such as the sailors, would stay on the forward sections or the deck

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[241] *NRN*, Part III, 36.

[242] Ashburner, *The Rhodian Sea Law*, 111.

[243] From the Yassıada shipwreck, for example, twenty-four clay lamps were recovered, eight of them with traces of charring and smoke, indicating that they were in use before the sinking. See Karen D. Vitelli, "The Lamps," in *Yassı Ada: A Seventh-Century Byzantine Shipwreck*, eds. George F. Bass and Frederick. H. van Doorninck (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1982), 189–201.

[244] *NRN*, Part III, 38. Corn (σῖτος) here refers to grains, mostly wheat and barley. See Rickman, *The Corn Supply of Ancient Rome*, 4.

[245] *NRN*, Part III, 11.

of the vessel.[246] The archaeological evidence gives further clues about this custom through the find locations of certain items associated with various crew members on board. In the seventh-century Yassıada I shipwreck, for example, a locker for valuables and stores (for things like purses of coins) as well as a boatswain's store were found in the stern area.[247] An iron sheathed wooden padlock indicates that some of the valuables were probably kept secured.[248] Padlocks were portable and could be used for safekeeping of personal possessions, as well as for securing items or cargo entrusted by merchants to those traveling on the ship or to the ship's captain.[249] A similar case can be observed in YK 12, where personal artefacts were recovered from the stern area, which points to a living space in this section of the ship.[250] Lastly, the Serçe Limanı shipwreck provides evidence of a hierarchical living arrangement. Three living spaces were identified, one of them being a small compartment in the bow that was possibly occupied by merchants and sailors.[251] On the opposite end of the ship, at the stern, a larger compartment revealed the majority of the personal possessions and, to judge from the value of the objects,

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[246] Kenneth Cassavoy, "The Gaming Pieces," in *Serçe Limanı: An Eleventh Century Shipwreck.* Volume I: *The Ship and Its Anchorage, Crew, and Passengers*, eds. George F. Bass, Sheila D. Matthews, J. Richard Steffy, and Frederick H. van Doorninck (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2004), 336. Pryor moreover suggests for crusader transport ships that important quarters such as *paradisi* and *vanna* were also located in the stern section. For example, on the return voyage from Cyprus, Queen of France and her ladies stayed at the *paradisus* quarter, while King St. Louis was lodged in the *vannum* compartment. See John H. Pryor, "The Naval Architecture of Crusader Transport Ship: A Reconstruction of Some Archetypes for Round-hulled Sailing Ships Part II," *The Mariner's Mirror* 70, no.3 (1984): 278–279. John Edward Dotson points out that in the maritime code of Doge Ranieri Zeno of Venice (r. 1253–1268), sailors are prohibited from sleeping on the part of the deck from the main mast to the stern, as this section was reserved for the merchants. See John Edward Dotson, "Freight Rates and Shipping Practices in the Medieval Mediterranean," PhD diss., (The Johns Hopkins University, 1969), 139–140.

[247] Van Doorninck, "The Galley," 95–97.

[248] Object MF 51. Susan Womer Katzev, "Miscellaneous Finds," in *Yassı Ada: A Seventh-Century Byzantine Shipwreck* eds. George F. Bass and Frederick. H. van Doorninck (College Station: Texas A & M University Press, 1982), 288–289.

[249] Cemal Pulak "The Padlocks," in *Serçe Limanı: An Eleventh Century Shipwreck.* Volume I: *The Ship and Its Anchorage, Crew, and Passengers* eds. George F. Bass, Sheila D. Matthews, J. Richard Steffy, and Frederick H. van Doorninck (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2004), 444; Gary Vikan and John Nesbitt. *Security in Byzantium: Locking, Sealing and Weighing.* (Washington: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 1980), 6. *NRN*, Part II, 14 and Part III, 13 mentions that passengers deposit their gold or other valuables with the captain.

[250] Işıl Özsait-Kocabaş, "The Yenikapı 12 Shipwreck, a 9th-Century Merchantman from the Theodosian Harbour in Istanbul, Turkey: construction and reconstruction," *International Journal of Nautical Archaeology* 47 no. 2 (2018): 357; Işıl Özsait-Kocabaş, "The Centuries Long Voyage of Ship Yenikapı 12," in *Stories from the Hidden Harbor: Shipwrecks of Yenikapı*, eds. Zeynep Kızıltan and Gülbahar Baran Çelik (Istanbul: Istanbul Archaeological Museums Press, 2013), 49.

[251] Bass and van Doorninck, "The Ship, Its Lading, and Its Living Spaces," 266.

was possibly occupied by the highest class of crew or passengers.[252] As previously mentioned, the stern was inhabited by those who controlled the items needed for mercantile transactions, as well as most of the ship's tools and weapons.[253] At the same time, four padlocks, which were not in use when the ship sank, were recovered from this section.[254] In the middle of the bow and the stern, artefacts of lower quality that possibly fell from an open deck suggest that these were the living spaces of the sailors.[255] This arrangement of different living spaces which separated sailors from higher ranking crew members such as the captain also emphasize the hierarchy within the shipboard society.

3.1.3 Stealing

Perhaps the padlocks were not always enough to stop petty crimes on board. Chapters on stealing both in and outside the vessel are included in the *NRN*. Two chapters are concerned with the robbery of a ship's tackle, especially anchors.[256] However, these chapters seem to reflect more the importance of anchors than just condemning stealing; in addition to the monetary value of the anchor, once it was stolen, the ship was at the risk of drifting to the sea and being lost. In addition, sailors were punished for stealing from merchants and passengers: if a sailor robbed them by the captain's orders, the captain would pay the damage twofold and the sailor would receive a hundred blows; if the sailor himself decided to steal, he would be "well beaten" and had to pay the stolen money back.[257] The same law is replicated in different sections; "Moreover none of the sailors is to steal" is repeated in the same section of the *NRN* to which the abovementioned chapters belong, while another law in Appendix D repeats the punishment of a hundred blows.[258] Wade has proposed that "it is clear from this legislation that

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[252] Bass and van Doorninck, "The Ship, Its Lading, and Its Living Spaces," 268.
[253] Bass and van Doorninck, "The Ship, Its Lading, and Its Living Spaces," 271.
[254] Objects Lk1, Lk2, Lk3, and Lk4. Pulak "The Padlocks," 445.
[255] Bass and van Doorninck, "The Ship, Its Lading, and Its Living Spaces," 267.
[256] *NRN*, Part III, 1, 2.
[257] *NRN*, Part III, 3.
[258] *NRN*, Part III, 38; Appendix D, 1.

sailors were often regarded as common thieves."[259] This, however, seems to be an exaggerated interpretation of the laws regarding stealing in the *NRN*. Stealing happened on board ships as much as elsewhere in the society. Robbery is regulated in various law codes, including the *Ecloga*, which, as discussed before, is closely related to *NRN*. It indicates almost the same punishment for the first offence, i.e. paying the stolen value back or being flogged and exiled if poor, and a more severe punishment for the second offence, i.e. the cutting of the hands.[260] The *NRN*'s regulations therefore are an echo of broader customs and laws, adapted to the specificity of the maritime sphere, as demonstrated by the emphasis on anchors. It does not necessarily reflect that sailors were perceived as thieves, but perhaps gives insight about the socio-economic difference between the captain, who was to pay his fine twofold, and the sailor, who was to pay for what he had stolen and was flogged.

3.2 The Body

As demonstrated, the behaviours in the ship were managed tightly, and the sources reflect similar concerns about the body of the sailors. Most of the work of sailors was done with their bodies, so that the strength and integrity of the body mattered for the proper execution of their duties. I believe this is the main reason why the *NRN* has specific chapters regarding physical harm done to the sailors.

3.2.1 Bodily Harm and Hernias

Aside from an attempt to prevent physical fights on board, the regulation "let them fight with words and let no man strike another" in the *NRN* aims at reducing the harm that the sailors

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[259] Janet Wade, "Lock up your valuables': Perceptions of Sailors and Sea-Merchants in Port Cities of Late Antiquity and Early Byzantium," *Journal of the Australian Early Medieval Association* 10, (2014) 47–75.

[260] *Ecloga*, XVII, 11. Edited by Antonius G Monferratus. *Ecloga Leonis et Constantini cum appendice* (Athens: Typis Fratrum Perri, 1889). English translation by Edwin Hanson Freshfield. *A Manual of Roman Law: the Ecloga Published by the Emperors Leo III and Constantine V of Isauria at Constantinople A.D. 726*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1926), 107.

might inflict upon each other.[261] The relation of this stipulation to the sailors' capacity to keep working is apparent from the rest of the section, which states that, if one sailor is to injure another by striking him, "let A pay B his doctor's fees and expenses and his wages for the whole time that he was away from work taking care of himself."[262] The value of the sailor's body, then, is measured through its capacity to work and was protected by law. A similar case is presented in section 7 of the same law, which states: if "one of the captains or merchants or sailors strikes a man with his fist and blinds him or gives him a kick and happens to cause a hernia", he is liable to pay the doctor's bill, as well as give twelve gold pieces for the eye and ten gold pieces for the hernia.[263] Although it is not specified who this "man" is, in the context of the regulations in general, it can be taken as one of the crew members rather than a random man outside the ship. Similar laws also exist in the *Ecloga*, Chapter XVII, which regulates offences and punishments, and includes various clauses concerning fighting and killing.[264] The *NRN*, however, is more detailed in two ways: it specifies certain injuries (such as blinding and hernia) and also introduces fines. It seems that the law was adapted to the maritime sphere, as being blind or having a hernia in most cases would make the sailor incapable of working.

It would not be easy to get medical care during journeys. A sailor in Moschos' *Spiritual Meadow* (sixth century) complains that while sailing from Africa on the high sea (πέλαγος), he developed *ophthalmia*, an inflammation of the eye; as he "could not go and get treatment," the disease progressed, and he became blind.[265] The letter of Synesius' unfortunate journey (late fourth-century) also perhaps reflects the bodily defects sailors had due to the toil of seafaring as well as lack of urgent medical care: he writes that the crew members addressed each other

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[261] *NRN*, Part III, 5.
[262] *NRN*, Part III, 5.
[263] *NRN*, Part III, 7.
[264] *Ecloga* XVII, 45–49.
[265] Moschos, *Spiritual Meadow (BHG 1442)*, 77. Edited by Jean-Baptiste Cotelier. *Ecclesiae Graecae Monumenta II* (Paris: Franciscum Muguet, 1681). English translation by John Wortley. *The Spiritual Meadow (Pratum Spirituale)* (Kalamazoo: Cistertian Publications, 1992), 59.

"by the distinguishing marks of their misfortunes," and among these he also includes "the Ruptured" (ὁ κηλήτης), which might have been a sailor on board, or a common characteristic of sailors which Synesius observed and decided to include.[266] It is not expected for this situation to have changed in the Middle Byzantine period, sailors on maritime journeys, especially direct crossings without a stop at a port with such facilities did not have access to medical care, unless a saint on board could perform a miracle.[267]

A simple logic, therefore, lies behind these legal regulations about a crew member's body: the work of a sailor is physically demanding, and his body is his only capital, which should therefore be protected from the harm that can be caused by the working conditions or a fight with another person. In fact, hernia is a condition frequently associated with sailors, as it often results from heavy lifting. Research benefitting from archival documents of Admiral Nelson's navy in eighteen-century England shows that hernias are a common issue amongst the crews of ships.[268] Moreover, sailors with severe or recurring hernias were discharged from service as unfit for duty.[269]

The *Miracles of Saint Artemios*, which have also been discussed in above (Section *2.1.1 Families, Knowledge, and Culture*), are once more useful as they narrate the healing of hernias by the saint. It is not surprising that the people associated with the maritime community of Constantinople—sailors, a dockworker, a shipwright, and a shipowner—were some of Saint Artemios' supplicants. An analysis of these miracle stories documenting the curing of hernias

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[266] Synesius, *Epistolae* 4.

[267] In addition to healing sailors in various occasions (which I discuss here extensively for Saint Artemios) saints also raised sailors from dead. In the Life of Nicholas of Sion, for example, the mast of the ship hits and kills a sailor called Ammaonios, and Nicholas raises him from the dead. *Life of Nicholas of Holy Sion (BHG 1347)*, 31. Edited by Gustav Anrich. *Hagios Nikolaos: Der Heilige Nikolaos in der Griechischen Kirche*. (Leipzig, Berlin: Teubner, 1913), 3–62. English translation by Ihor Ševčenko and Nancy Patterson Ševčenko. *The Life of St. Nicholas of Sion*. The Archbishop Iakovos library of ecclesiastical and historical sources 10 (Brookline: Hellenic College Press, 1984), 55–57.

[268] Jonathan Charles Goddard, "Genitourinary medicine and surgery in Nelson's navy," *Postgraduate Medical Journal* 81 (2005), 416.

[269] Goddard, "Genitourinary medicine and surgery in Nelson's navy," 416.

can provide information about how the sailors' bodies were affected by their working conditions and, in return, how their physical well-being affected their work.

Miracle 14 is about a certain sailor (τὶς ναύτης) who waited at the church for thirty days to be healed.[270] At this point, he was forced to set sail back home, possibly because he worked on a merchant ship that was bound by the weather and contracts. During the journey, and as the miracle takes place, the sailor is depicted as lying on the deck of the ship. Since he is referred to as "the sick man" (ὁ νόσων) several times, he is possibly lying because he is unable to work, but instead of being abandoned, he is being carried of home with the rest of the crew. Isidore, a 53-year-old sailor, suffered fate similar to that of the unnamed sailor of Miracle 14, as he had been dealing with hernias "for many years."[271] After an exorcism performed by the saint, Isidore was healed. Aside from the two sailors mentioned in the account, another character who can be associated with sailing is the shipowner (ναύκλερος) George the Rhodian, who finally was cured after waiting at the church for two years.[272]

The most detailed testimony of how sailors might have suffered from hernias is the miracle account of Menas, a 20-year-old Alexandrian dockworker, who worked in Constantinople for a wine-merchant.[273] It illustrates in detail the types of activities which could have resulted in hernias in the daily lives of sailors and dockworkers alike. Menas was loading full jugs into a ship moored on a shallow part of the coast, which allowed the men to walk in the water between the ship and the shore. As Menas lowered the jug to stow it, "through an evil spirit the edge of the ship broke off."[274] While trying to save the jug and control the ship, Menas was hit by both the ship and the jug, thus developing a hernia. The handling of both heavy

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[270] *Miracles of St. Artemios (BHG 173–173c),* Mir. 14.
[271] *Miracles of St. Artemios (BHG 173–173c)*, Mir. 6.
[272] *Miracles of St. Artemios (BHG 173–173c)*, Mir. 35.
[273] *Miracles of St. Artemios (BHG 173–173c)*, Mir. 32.
[274] *Miracles of St. Artemios (BHG 173–173c)*, Mir. 32.

items and the ship was a part of being a sailor and presumably resulted in occasional physical injuries, just like in the case of Menas.

The last miracle from this collection that should be mentioned is concerned with a shipwright (ναυπηγός) called Theoteknos.[275] While waiting at the Church of Saint John the Baptist for a cure for his hernia, which he had had for twenty-five years of his life, Theoteknos "meticulously" did carpentry work for the church, before sailing away with his ship. On the one hand, this story shows that shipwrights, who were essentially carpenters, could work jobs outside the sphere of shipbuilding. On the other hand, shipbuilders—as laid out by the *NRN*— were often present on board the ships as well. In a military context, having shipbuilders on board is recommended in the *Taktika* (Ναυμαχικά Λέοντος βασιλέος) of Emperor Leo VI (r. 886-912 CE), where it is said that a shipwright is to be present on board with all his necessary tools.[276] Moreover, Carlo Beltrame interprets the recovery of carpentry tools (three axes, five adzes, some chisels, an awl, a presumed caulking iron, and a compass) from the Yassıada I shipwreck as evidence of the presence of a shipwright on the vessel.[277] Eventually, Theoteknos had to sail off, and while sailing around Gaul, he had to dive under the ship to fix a problem with its keel. After this, the saint appeared on the ship in the guise of the sailing master (ναύκληρος) and healed the carpenter, while simultaneously bestowing fair sailing and prosperity onto their journey. All the maritime "characters" from the miracle stories were healed and their bodies were back to working conditions. Without the miracle workings of a saint, the injuries caused by the daily labour of the sailors must have put a considerable strain on their bodies, which is indeed reflected in these accounts.

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[275] *Miracles of St. Artemios (BHG 173–173c)*, Mir. 27.
[276] Leo VI, *Taktika*, XIX. 5. Edited and translated by George T. Dennis. *The Taktika of Leo VI*. Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae 49. Dumbarton Oaks Texts 12. (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 2010), 505.
[277] Beltrame, "The Contribution of the Yassıada Shipwreck Excavation," 68.

3.2.2 Appearance

Although the sources discussed above open a window onto the bodily defects the sailors might have had, unfortunately, not much is known about the appearance of sailors, or if this appearance was regulated by any means. Tenth-century Islamic maritime customs required ship owners to outfit their crew and staff with uniform dress called *jibāb* to distinguish them from passengers. [278] However, similar practices are not attested in Byzantine sources. The archaeological evidence points to possible grooming on board: a wooden comb, a pair of iron scissors, an iron razor, an iron knife, and the wooden handle of some iron object, perhaps a mirror, were recovered from the Serçe Limanı shipwreck.[279] Some clues can be found in the twelfth-century manuscript known as the *Madrid Skylitzes*, which does not depict ordinary sailors, but shows various military naval scenes. In one image of a naval engagement, on the contrary to the non-differentiated enemy where each sailor looks like the other, the Byzantine sailors are individualised in a recognisable way, where they seem to be different clothing and sporting various hair and beard styles.[280] Regular grooming might have been a requirement to prevent the spread of lice in this confined space, but further research is required to better understand depictions of sailors in Byzantine art.

3.2.3 Diet

Another aspect of regulating the bodies of sailors on board involved their diet. Some accounts are rather optimistic about the amount of provisions on board. Cyril Phileotes, an eleventh-century holy man, lived three years as a sailor and led an ascetic life while on board,

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[278] Khalilieh, Admiralty and Maritime Laws in the Mediterranean Sea, 67.

[279] George F. Bass, "Personal Effects," in *Serçe Limanı: An Eleventh-Century Shipwreck.* Volume I: *The Ship and Its Anchorage, Crew, and Passengers*, eds. George F. Bass, Sheila D. Matthews, J. Richard Steffy, and Frederick H. van Doorninck, 275–287 (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2004), 275.

[280] *Codex Græcus Matritensis Ioannis Skyllitzes* (MS Graecus Vitr. 26-2) Biblioteca Nacional de Madrid, fol. 34v.

eating as little as possible.[281] His shipmates, who ate "fatty meats and fish", would not even think of leaving him fruits and vegetables, whereas Cyril lectured them on eating moderately.[282] It should be considered that the food consumed by the sailors might have been exaggerated to provide a greater contrast with the abstinence of the saint. There are, however, other examples which show the different ways in which the ships were supplied with a variety of foodstuffs and seem to confirm the bountiful supply that Cyril's ship had. Goitein notes that in the Cairo Geniza records, there are almost no references to the difficulties of provisioning during voyages on sea.[283] He argues that the lack of references might reflect that "the Mediterranean seafarer did not find unsurpassable the difficulties in providing himself adequately."[284]

The *NRN* makes it clear that ships would take "water and provisions and the ropes which ships have need of" before departure.[285] A letter from the Cairo Geniza, moreover, demonstrates that the arrival of provisions on board indicated that it was about to set sail,[286] which shows that ships would not set sail without adequate supplies. One of the daily activities during journeys would be cooking the meals for the crew, possibly by a cook who was paid less than his shipmates, as previously indicated. [287] A reason behind delegating this responsibility to one crew member (in addition to presumed cooking skills) was the danger of cooking on a wooden vessel. Fire was as dangerous to a ship as capsizing. In the *NRN*, passengers are banned from frying fish on board.[288] The charring of a late twelfth-century shipwreck found in the harbour of Rhodes (Rhodes Wreck No. 4) indicates that the ship sank

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[281] Kataskepenos, *Life of Cyril Phileotes* (*BHG 468*), 5.1. Edited and translated by Étienne Sargologos. *La Vie de saint Cyrille le Philéote, moine byzantin (†1110)* (Brussels: Société des Bollandistes, 1964), 279–280.

[282] Kataskepenos, *Life of Cyril Phileotes* (*BHG 468*), 5.5–6.

[283] Shelomo Dov Goitein, *A Mediterranean Society, Vol I: Economic Foundations* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press), 316.

[284] Goitein, *A Mediterranean Society, Vol I,* 316.

[285] *NRN*, Part III, 22.

[286] Goitein, *A Mediterranean Society, Vol I,* 316.

[287] *NRN*, Part II, 1–7.

[288] *NRN*, Part II, 10.

because of a fire on board.[289] The extensive fire burned all wooden structures down to the waterline.[290] The wooden structure of the ship, supported with caulking and covered in pitch, was highly flammable; with the right wind the fire could spread around the ship very easily and even sink it.

One material witness to cooking on board is the galley ware. Galley ware assemblages are often comprised of worn-out coarse ware that was not intended to be traded but was to the be used on board. The cooking arrangements of Yassıada I deserve special attention. From the Yassıada I shipwreck, various pieces of galley ware were recovered; the cooking utensils included 21 ceramic cooking pots in a variety of shapes and sizes, two cauldrons, a baking pan of copper, and a mortar and pestle.[291] Food was also stored in 16 pantry jars, in the main storage locker.[292] For serving this food, several copper or bronze pitchers, a glass bottle, 18 ceramic pitchers and jugs, a half dozen spouted jars with lids, and four or five settings of fine tableware, each consisting of a red slip ware plate and dish, a glazed bowl, and a one-handled cup, were used.[293] In addition to all the pots and pans, a hearth was located on the port side of the galley.[294] These show very extensive cooking activities, possibly not only for the sailors. For this reason, these finds should be evaluated with caution. Van Doorninck argues that the eating and drinking arrangements of the Yassıada I ship are very "gracious" and are not paralleled by any excavated ancient shipwreck in the Mediterranean. He assumes that the ship was designed for the transportation of high-ranking people.[295] Yassıada I is evidence for how sophisticated and

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[289] George Koutsouflakis and Eric Rieth, "A Late-12th-Century Byzantine Shipwreck in the port of Rhodes," in *Under the Mediterranean I, Studies in Maritime Archaeology*, eds. Stella Demesticha and Lucy Blue, 91–110 (Leiden: Sidestone Press, 2021), 96.

[290] George Koutsouflakis, "The transportation of amphorae, tableware and foodstuffs in the Middle and Late Byzantine period: The evidence from Aegean shipwrecks," in *Multidisciplinary approaches to food and foodways in the medieval Eastern Mediterranean*, ed. Sylvie Yona Waksman, 447–482 (Lyon: MOM Éditions, 2020), 456.

[291] Van Doorninck, "The Seventh-Century Byzantine Ship at Yassıada and Her Final Voyage," 206.

[292] Van Doorninck, "The Seventh-Century Byzantine Ship at Yassıada and Her Final Voyage," 206.

[293] Van Doorninck, "The Seventh-Century Byzantine Ship at Yassıada and Her Final Voyage," 206.

[294] Van Doorninck, "The Galley," 87.

[295] Van Doorninck, "The Seventh-Century Byzantine Ship at Yassıada and Her Final Voyage," 206.

extensive cooking on board could be, although it is safe to suggest that a regular sailor would not be eating in such luxury. This point has also been made by Beltrame, who reminds us that most ships carried a "less structured and organised kitchen" compared to the one on the Yassıada ship, consisting of a small portable *foculus* (stove) of lead, clay or iron instead of hearths. [296] Recently, a similar clay "stove-like brazier" was recovered from the YK 12 shipwreck.[297]

What is common to most shipwrecks regarding the supply of food, however, is the fishing gear. Considering the primacy of the cargo when it comes to occupying space, and the short shelf life of fresh meat, fruits and vegetables, the ship would have to be revictualed during the journey. As previously discussed, most, if not all navigation was coastal with frequent stops, which means that it was possible for the crews to buy food at harbours. The ample evidence of fishing gear recovered from shipwrecks indicates that fishing was a very frequent activity on board. On Yassıada I, for example, the crew engaged in both simple net and hook-and-line fishing, as shown by finds such as net weights, an iron net fork, and a wooden spreader.[298] Evidence from the Serçe Limanı shipwreck, which consists of around 900 lead sinkers and floats, indicates the presence of three nets of 40 meters in length on the deck of the ship when it sank.[299] A twelve-pronged spear-head for fishing was also recovered from the wreck.[300] Thus, the sea itself supplied victuals for the seafarers on a daily basis.

A related everyday activity was the upkeep of the fishing gear. Evidence from Yassıada I shows that there the fishing nets were constantly mended with needles, while lead weights

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[296] Beltrame, "The Contribution of the Yassıada Shipwreck Excavation," 65.

[297] Özsait-Kocabaş, "The Yenikapı 12 Shipwreck," 357.

[298] Peter Ian Kuniholm, "The Fishing Gear," in *Yassı Ada: A Seventh-Century Byzantine Shipwreck*, eds. George F. Bass and Frederick. H. van Doorninck, 296–310 (College Station: Texas A & M University Press, 1982), 296–310.

[299] G. Venetia Piercy and George F. Bass. "Fishing Gear," in *Serçe Limanı: An Eleventh Century Shipwreck*. Volume I: *The Ship and Its Anchorage, Crew, and Passengers* eds. George F. Bass, Sheila D. Matthews, J. Richard Steffy, and Frederick H. van Doorninck, 399–435 (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2004), 424.

[300] Piercy and Bass. "Fishing Gear," 429.

were cast on board.[301] Spinning probably occupied the free time of the sailors. Eight spindle whorls, which were suitable for spinning wool or cotton, were used on board the Serçe Limanı shipwreck and were found on the deck.[302] A Chinese official from the thirteenth century, Zhao Rukuo, records in his collection about the traditions of various peoples which he learned from merchants, that Arab ships, which left from Damietta and travelled to Al-Maghreb, even had weaving looms on board.[303] It is too farfetched to assume that the mid-sized Byzantine ships would have weaving looms, but the sailors did spend time spinning, which would not only supply the ship with nets, but could also bring additional income to the sailor if he sold them. This image of men spinning is peculiar, as the historical sources from this period (as well as in Antiquity and the Medieval period in general) consider spinning to be a predominantly female craft.[304] However, in the tenth-century dream book *Oneirocriticon* by Achmet ibn Seirem (which, as Steven M. Oberhelman argues, is a pseudonym of an Orthodox Christian Greek author), it is mentioned that "If [a man] dreams that he was spinning hairs or hemp or the wool of sheep or goats, he will have a proportionate journey and profit because these fibres are profitable and because it is customary for men to spin these materials. But if he dreams of weaving flax or cotton, he will be dishonoured and humbled: for this is women's work."[305] The mention of the goat wool is indeed compelling—the net remains from the shipwreck have been identified as goat fibres.[306] It is not possible to conclude that the *Oneirocriticon* reflected contemporary practices, as it drew its material from various earlier dream books, such as the

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[301] Kuniholm, "Fishing Gear," 309–310.

[302] Piercy and Bass. "Fishing Gear," 418–421.

[303] Chao Ju-k'uo, *Zhufan zhi*, 35: Murabit, Southern Coast of Spain (Mu-lan-p`i 木蘭皮). Edited and translated by Frederick Hirth and William W. Rockhill. *Chau Ju-Kua: His Work on the Chinese and Arab Trade in the twelfth and thirteenth Centuries, entitled Chu fan chi* (St. Petersburg: Printing Office of the Imperial Academy of Sciences, 1911), 142–143.

[304] Lynda Garland, "The Life and Ideology of Byzantine Women: A Further Note on Conventions of Behaviour and Social Reality as Reflected in Eleventh and Twelfth Century Historical Sources," *Byzantion* 58, no. 2 (1988): 379.

[305] Achmet ibn Seirem, *Oneirocriticon*, 262. Edited by Franciscus Drexl. *Achmetis Oneirocriticon* (Leipzig: Teubner, 1925). English translation by Steven M. Oberhelman, *The Oneirocriticon of Achmet: A Greek and Arabic Treatise on the Interpretation of Dreams* (Texas: Texas Tech University Press, 1991), 228.

[306] Piercy and Bass. "Fishing Gear," 417.

late ninth-early tenth century *Oneirocriticon* of Nicephorus,[307] and recycled material preserved within the tradition.[308] Nevertheless, it is clear that men were using spindle whorls in the Serçe Limanı ship before it sank.

Fish could easily be spoiled, and although salted fish could be brought as provisions, the identified fish species from the Serçe Limanı shipwreck—tunny, bass, tub gurnard, and drum—were most possibly freshly caught.[309] This covers the fish from the diet of the crew members about whom Cyril Phileotes complained, but how about the fatty meats? There are several finds which illuminate meat consumption on board. From the Serçe Limanı shipwreck, a minimum number of two pigs and 4 goats/sheep (which were present when the ship sank) have been identified.[310] These were concentrated in the living area (stern) of the ship and were intended for the consumption of the seafarers: pieces of charcoal indicate that the food was cooked there.[311] Philip L. Armitage, who has studied the faunal remains of the ship, argues that the meat was possibly boiled, which would have been the most convenient means of cooking it within the restricted confines of the vessel.[312] In the light of finds of goat/sheep coprolite (dropping), it has been proposed that some of the animals might have been alive on board.[313] This is a known practice in the period: a list of tolls exacted at Billingsgate, London (991-1002) declares that the visiting merchants were permitted to buy three live pigs (*tres porcos vivos*) for their ship.[314] Carrying livestock long distances was also familiar to the Byzantines. Michael

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[307] Steven M. Oberhelman, *Dreambooks in Byzantium: Six Oneirocritica in Translation, with Commentary and Introduction* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008), 9.

[308] Oberhelman, *The Oneirocriticon of* Achmet, 228, n.873.

[309] Philip L. Armitage, "Faunal Remains," in *Serçe Limanı: An Eleventh Century Shipwreck.* Volume I: *The Ship and Its Anchorage, Crew, and Passengers*, eds. George F. Bass, Sheila D. Matthews, J. Richard Steffy, and Frederick H. van Doorninck, 471–492 (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2004), 472.

[310] Armitage, "Faunal Remains," 481.

[311] Armitage, "Faunal Remains," 480.

[312] Armitage, "Faunal Remains," 484.

[313] Armitage, "Faunal Remains," 487; Cheryl Ward, "Plant Remains," in *Serçe Limanı: An Eleventh Century Shipwreck.* Volume I: *The Ship and Its Anchorage, Crew, and Passengers*, eds. George F. Bass, Sheila D. Matthews, J. Richard Steffy, and Frederick H. van Doorninck, 495–511 (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2004) 499.

[314] Æthelred IV. 2. 9. Edited and translated by Agnes Jane Robertson. *The Laws of the Kings of England from Edmund to Henry I* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1925), 72.

Grünbart points out that the military would have a supply of living animals for the campaigns.[315] It can therefore be argued that living animals such as goats, which could endure the conditions of Mediterranean seafaring better than other livestock, could be a part of a ship's provisions. This, of course, would also be another element to add to the various smells of the life on board.

Lastly, fresh or dried fruits and vegetables—which his shipmates where not sharing with Cyril Phileotes—are also present in the archaeological record. Almond, apricot, peach, grape, olive, and watermelon seeds were recovered from the Serçe Limanı shipwreck, even if it is not clear whether they were there as provisions or trade items.[316] In YK 12, cherry seeds in a basket (which were being consumed close to the ship's sinking), as well as olive and peach seeds were found.[317] Some perishable goods which could have been eaten on board, such as bread or milk products, are also perishable archaeologically and are rarely preserved in the shipwrecks. An exciting discovery, however, was made during the excavation of the twelfth-century Rhodes Wreck No. 4, where a pouch made from goat pelt filled with white cheese was recovered.[318] Although no other material evidence has been found from Byzantine shipwrecks, cheese is frequently mentioned in letters being sent as gifts.[319] The correspondence of Psellos in the eleventh century, for example, shows that in addition to their letters, he had received large quantities of cheese as gifts from various friends.[320]

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[315] Michael Grünbart, "Store in a Cool and Dry Place: Perishable Goods and their Preservation in Byzantium," in *Eat, Drink, and be Merry (Luke 12:19): Food and Wine in Byzantium*, eds. Leslie Brubaker and Kallirroe Linardou, 39–49 (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007), 45.

[316] Ward, "Plant Remains," 508–509.

[317] Işıl Özsait-Kocabaş, "The Yenikapı 12 Shipwreck, a 9th-Century Merchantman from the Theodosian Harbour in Istanbul, Turkey: construction and reconstruction," *International Journal of Nautical Archaeology* 47 no. 2 (2018): 358.

[318] Koutsouflakis and Rieth, "A Late-12th-Century Byzantine Shipwreck in the port of Rhodes," 94.

[319] Cheese was one of the common foodstuffs that were sent as a gift with letters, these include fruit, fish, meat, and wine. See Floris Bernard, "Epistolary Communication: Rituals and Codes," in *A Companion to Byzantine Epistolography*, ed. Alexander Riehle, 307–332 (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2020), 312.

[320] Psellos, *Letters* G 5–6, G 9, KD 206, KD 233, KD 264, S 59. Edited by Stratis Papaioannou. *Michael Psellus Epistulae* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2019). English summaries in Michael Jeffreys and Marc D. Lauxtermann. *The Letters of Psellos* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017).

It is tempting, therefore, to conclude that the image of ships abounding with provisions as constructed by Cyril Phileotes reflected not only the saint's aversion to mortal pleasures of feasting, but also, to some extent, reality. With the exception of extreme cases such as raid captives such as John Kaminiates[321], who had to settle for one piece of rotten bread, the sailors in the Mediterranean were well provisioned with victuals on board, could resupply at frequent stops that were made along the coastline, and could acquire fresh fish every day.[322]

3.2.4 Leisure

I have already mentioned spinning as a possible free-time activity for sailors, which, though tedious, was profitable. The evidence however shows that they also spent time playing chess and other board games, which possibly included checkers or backgammon. From the Serçe Limanı shipwreck, eight chessmen and one tableman were recovered.[323] Owing to their find location, it seems that they were not trade goods but rather non-utilitarian items, solely present for entertainment.[324] Serçe Limanı is not the only ship where games were played on board. Knucklebones from the shipwrecks Uluburun and Gelidonya attest to the presence of games on board in the Eastern Mediterranean from as early as the Late Bronze Age, while later examples can be found in shipwrecks from China (thirteenth century) to Tudor England.[325] At

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[321] Kaminiates' experience on board the ship, was of course drastically different than of a regular shipboard life. Recently, Adam Goldwyn has extensively discussed Kaminiates' experience. See Adam J. Goldwyn, *Witness Literature in Byzantium: Narrating Slaves, Prisoners and Refugees. New Approaches to Byzantine History and Culture* (Chaim: Palgrave Macmillan. 2021), 71–141.

[322] Kaminiates, *The Capture of Thessaloniki*, 68. Edited by Gertrude Böhling. *Eis ten alosin tes Thessalonikes / De Expugnatione Thessalonicae* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1973). English translation by David Frendo and Athanasios Fotiou. *The Capture of Thessaloniki* (Perth: Australian Association for Byzantine Studies, 2000), 111.

[323] Cassavoy, "The Gaming Pieces," 329–330.

[324] Cassavoy, "The Gaming Pieces," 330.

[325] George F. Bass, "A Bronze Age Shipwreck at Ulu Burun (Kaş): 1984 Campaign," *American Journal of Archeology* 90 (1986): 292; George F. Bass, "Cape Gelidonya: A Bronze Age Shipwreck," *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society* 57, no. 8 (1967): 133; Chinese shipwreck with chess pieces: Jeremy N. Green, "The Song Dynasty Shipwreck at Quanzhou, Fujian Province, People's Republic of China," *IJNA* 12 (1983): 260; English shipwreck Mary Rose with a folding backgammon table with counters, a simple chessboard, several dice, and one domino: Margaret Rule, *The Mary Rose: The Excavation and Raising of Henry VIII's Flagship,* (Leicester: Windward, 1982), 190–192, 198.

the Yenikapı excavations, an ivory chess piece, bone game pieces, and bone and ivory dice were found, which shows that playing games was also a preferred pastime activity at ports.[326]

The most detailed study of games such as dice (*kyboi*), checkers (*petteia*), backgammon (*tablia*), chess (*zatrikion*), and knucklebones (*astragalismos*) in Byzantium is by Phaidōn I. Koukoules. [327] The introduction of chess to Byzantium is not established, even if a mention can be found in the tenth-century *Oneirocriticon* by Achmet ibn Seirem in a chapter on dreams where one sees themselves playing chess, titled "From the Persians and Egyptians concerning chess".[328] Anna Komnene also narrates in her *Alexiad* (twelfth century) that Emperor Alexios I would play chess (ζατρίκιον), adding that the game "came to us from the Assyrians." [329] The game was clearly associated with the East where it is assumed to have originated, but seems to be played by Byzantines as well. In the fourteenth-century fable poem *An Entertaining Tale of Quadrupeds* (Παιδιόφραστος διήγησις τῶν ζῴων τῶν τετραπόδων), in the section where the elephant talks about how its bones are used, it comments that noblemen and merchants own games from ivory: ταβλία καὶ ζατρίκια καὶ ὅσα τὰ τοιαῦτα (backgammon and chess and all things of the sort).[330]

The items recovered from the shipwreck are not ivory, but of wood and bone, possibly indicating the financial status of the owners, making it more likely that they were used by people of a lower status. It also shows that board games were a common pastime activity on

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[326] Gülbahar Baran Çelik, "Daily Life in Yenikapı," in *Istanbul: 8,000 Years Brought to Daylight: Marmaray, Metro, Sultanahmet Excavations* edited by Zeynep Kızıltan, 220–229 (Istanbul, Turkey: Vehbi Koç Vakfı, 2007), 220.

[327] Phaidōn I. Koukoules, *Βυζαντινῶν Βίος καὶ Πολιτισμός* (Athens: Εκδόσεις Παπαζήση, 1949), 185–221. See also Marcus Rautman, *Daily Life in the Byzantine Empire* (Connecticut, London: Greenwood Press, 2006), 57. Tamara Talbot Rice mentions that chess was introduced to Byzantium in the sixth century, but she does not cite any primary sources. See Tamara Talbot Rice, *Everyday Life in Byzantium* (London: Batsford; New York: Putnams, 1967), 46.

[328] Achmet ibn Seirem, *Oneirocriticon*, 239.

[329] Anna Komnene, *Alexiad*, 12.6.1. Edited by Athanasios Kambylis and Diether R. Reinsch. *Annae Comnenae Alexias* (Berlin, New York: De Gruyter, 2001). English translation by Elizabeth A. S. Dawes. *The Alexiad* (London: Kegan, Paul, Trench & Trübner, 1928), 222.

[330] *An Entertaining Tale of Quadrupeds*, 920–922. Edited by Vasiliki Tsiouni. *Diegesis Paidiophrastos ton Zoon ton Tetrapodon* (Munich: Institüt für Byzantinistik und Neugriechische Philologie der Universitat, 1972). English translation by Nick Nicholas and George Baloglou. *An Entertaining Tale of Quadrupeds: Translation and Commentary* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003), 208.

board, and Byzantine seafarers possibly spent their time playing chess or backgammon or checkers. There are two assumptions that the excavators made regarding the implications of these finds. Firstly, they argue that when the literary and archaeological evidence for the diffusion of chess is considered, the owner of the chess set "was likely either from, or intimately associated with, Islamic society." [331] Since our knowledge of dissemination of chess in Byzantium is limited, I think it is not possible to associate the pieces, and therefore the owner of them with the "Islamic society". It is not surprising to find such artefacts considering the ship's possible operation area in the Eastern Mediterranean. Secondly, the excavators go so far as to suggest that the chessmen were found in the stern area and therefore belonged to the crew members higher in the hierarchy, such as the captain, while the tableman was found in midships and thus might have belonged to a regular crew member. [332] Does this reflect the societal position of these two games? As mentioned, in *An Entertaining Tale of Quadrupeds*, both the merchant and the noble are playing both backgammon and chess, but both these people can be seen as wealthy, higher-class individuals. In addition, while Anna Komnene appreciates chess, she finds checkers (*petteia*) to be amongst "unlawful things."[333] Thus, the find spots of the games might indeed reflect how different classes of society might have played different board games, but further research about these games in general in the Middle Byzantine society would be needed to assign them to certain socio-economic classes.

3.3 The Soul

The presence of people on the sea is unnatural—humans are land creatures.[334] In the light of this premise, Timmy Gambin argues that having to relate to, move through, and survive

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[331] Cassavoy, "The Gaming Pieces," 340.
[332] Cassavoy, "The Gaming Pieces," 337.
[333] Anna Komnene, *Alexiad*, 15.7.9.
[334] Timmy Gambin, "Maritime activity and the Divine – an Overview of Religious Expression by Mediterranean Seafarers, Fishermen and Travellers," in *Ships, Saints and Sealore: Cultural Heritage and*

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in this often dangerous environment, people at sea developed specific and distinct religious beliefs and practices.[335] This section will discuss these nautical-cultural beliefs and practices. In saints' lives, the sailor was a frequent character interacting with saints on board; sailors, moreover, inscribed invocations and graffiti on rocks, anchors, churches, asking or giving thanks for safe voyages, and prayed and partook in rituals on board.

3.3.1 Saints and the Sea

In Byzantium, two saints were significant for sailors. The first is Saint Phokas of Sinope, who lived in Pontus in the first-second century CE. There are two versions of his *Vita* (BHG 1535y, BHG 1535z), written around the sixth century, both recounting the miracles that the saint performed mostly in his childhood.[336] The main themes of the miracles are ships, seafaring, and seamen. Stories in which Phokas exorcises a ship from a demon, saves a ship from wrecking, or calms storms, are bound together by a nautical theme and are associated with various localities in the Pontus region of the Black Sea coast of Asia Minor (such as Heraclea, Sinope, and Amisos). A late fourth-early fifth-century homily on Phokas by Asterius of Amasea also points to this connection between the saint and seafaring: he mentions that "the seamen and sailors everywhere" kept Phokas in their prayers and invocations, as well as "as a guest at table," where the sailors collected money to distribute to the poor.[337] Asterius also makes it clear that Phokas replaced the Dioscuri as a deity of seafaring: "Let people no more think about the Dioscuri as saviours; sailors know too well who is their helper."[338] The

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Ethnography of the Mediterranean and the Red Sea, eds. Dionisius A. Agius, Timmy Gambin, and Athena Trakadas, 3–12 (Oxford: Archaeopress, 2014), 3.

[335] Gambin, "Maritime activity and the Divine," 3.

[336] *Life of Phokas* (BHG 1535y, BHG 1535z). Edited by Charles Van De Vorst. "Saint Phocas," *Analecta Bollandiana* 30: 252–295. publication date is missing

[337] Asterius of Amasea, *Homily IX*, 11. Edited by Cornelis Datema. *Asterius of Amasea, Homilies I-XIV: Text, Introduction and Notes* (Leiden: Brill, 1970). English translation by Boudewijn Dehandschutter. "Asterius of Amasea," in *'Let Us Die That We May Live': Greek Homilies on Christian Martyrs from Asia Minor, Palestine and Syria, (c. AD 350-AD 450)* eds. Johan Leemans, Wendy Mayer, Pauline Allen, and Boudewijn Dehandschutter, 167–172 (London: Routledge, 2003), 172.

[338] Asterius of Amasea, *Homily IX*, 13.2. The Dioscuroi were associated with seafaring in Antiquity. See, for example, the Homeric Hymn *In Dioscuros* which describes how the Dioscuri would save seafarers from storms

prominence of Phokas around the empire is also visible in a votive inscription left by sailors at the port of Grammata on the island of Syros (in the Cyclades, Aegean Sea) dating to between the fifth and seventh centuries.[339] The inscription invokes the Lord and Saint Phokas together, "Κ(ύρι)ε κα(ὶ) ἅγιε Φωκα", and asks them to save their ship Μαρία (Mary) and those who sail in it.[340]

There is consensus that around the ninth century, Saint Nicholas of Myra replaced Saint Phokas as the protector of seamen and seafarers.[341] Pointing out that Nicholas never served as a sailor, Stylianos Lykoudis hypothesizes that his prominence was because around the feast day of the saint (December 6th) the sea would be stormy.[342] The saints association with seafaring is reflected in two texts which emerged in the first half of the ninth century, recounting miracle stories in which the saint calms storms and saves sailors: one *Life* by Michael the Archimandrite (*Vita per Michaelem*) and Life by Methodios (*Methodius ad Thedorum*), both possibly produced in Constantinople.[343] Both incorporated a nautical miracle conventionally referred to as *Praxis de Nautis*, in which the saint saves a ship caught in a storm.[344] From this point on, Saint Nicholas started to be venerated as the saviour of sailors and sea travellers. It is also plausible that sailors' belief in the aid of St. Nicholas could have

and shipwrecks "when the shipmen see them they are glad and have rest from their pain and labour." Edited by Thomas W. Allen, Edward Ernest Sikes, and William Reginald Halliday. *The Homeric Hymns* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1936), 91–92.

[339] An analysis of these inscriptions can be found in Georges Kiourtzian, *Recueil des inscriptions grecques chrétiennes des Cyclades. De la fin du IIIe au VIIe siècle après J.-C.* Travaux et mémoires du Centre de recherche d'histoire et civilisation de Byzance, Monographies 12 (Paris: De Boccard, 2000), 136–200.

[340] Kiourtzian, *Recueil des inscriptions grecques chrétiennes des Cyclades*, 144.

[341] Stephanos Efthymiadis, "The Sea as Topos and as Original Narrative in Middle and Late Byzantine Hagiography," *in Ein Meer und seine Heiligen: Hagiographie im mittelalterlichen Mediterraneum*, eds. Nikolas Jaspert, Christian A. Neumann, and Marco di Branco, 109–121 (Paderborn: Wilhelm Fink and Ferdinand Schöningh, 2018), 113; Georgios Makris, *Studien zur Spätbyzantinischen Schiffahrt* (Genova: Istituto di Medievistica 1988), 148.

[342] Stylianos Lykoudis. "Οἱ κατὰ τὴν θρησκευτικὴν πίστιν, τὴν κατὰ τὴν ἀρχαιότητα καὶ τοὺς χριστιανικοὺς χρόνους πάτρωνες τῶν ναυτικῶν μας," *Πρακτικὰ Ἀκαδ. Ἀθηνῶν* 11 (1936): 424.

[343] Michael, *Life of Nicholas of Myra (BHG 1348).* Edited by Gustav Anrich. *Hagios Nikolaos: Der Heilige Nikolaos in der Griechischen Kirche.* (Leipzig, Berlin: Teubner, 1913), 113–139; Methodios, *Life of Nicholas of Myra, vita by Methodios (BHG 1352y).* Edited by Gustav Anrich. *Hagios Nikolaos: Der Heilige Nikolaos in der Griechischen Kirche.* (Leipzig, Berlin: Teubner, 1913), 140–150.

[344] Michael, *Life of Nicholas of Myra (BHG 1348)*, 34–36.

been enhanced by the fact that they saw the widespread representation of the nautical miracle scenes in murals and icons.[345] In the catalogue of the exhibition *Byzantine Hours: Works and Days in Byzantium* under "ex-votos dedicated by seafarers", there are five icons of St. Nicholas, not larger than 11 cm by 9 cm, intended for private worship.[346] Most of these have holes on the top, which indicates that "the icon would have been suspended from a cord and worn next to the flesh, probably by a sailor who wished to secure the saint's blessing."[347] Although no remains of such icons have been recovered from shipwrecks, it can be assumed that sailors would be wearing small icons of Saint Nicholas, some of which were left at churches as ex-voto offerings.

Around this period (ninth century), the sea becomes a prevalent *topos* in saint's lives. Efthymiadis argues that this is due to the loss of the Eastern provinces of the empire, which meant the loss of an important hagiographical setting—the desert.[348] Thus, the sea became the background of miracles in which the saint made "manifest his charismatic skills and react heroically" to calamities, while common people (such as most of the sailors) experienced awe and fear.[349] He further suggests that the sea does not emerge as an "imaginative, apocalyptic, extremely fearful or irrational" setting, but is connected to the reality.[350] Sailors become prominent characters in hagiographical texts, often interacting with or invoking a saint.

The interaction of the sailors with the holy man on board was not always positive, which is mostly related to the content of the hagiographical account itself. It is common for sailors to be depicted negatively in these stories for the saint to convey his moralistic message through saving or persuading them to good deeds. For example, while Saint Constantine the Former

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[345] Nancy P. Ševčenko, *The Life of Saint Nicholas in Byzantine Art* (Torino: Bottega D'Erasmo, 1983), 95-103.
[346] Catalogue items 179-183. Dimitra Papanikola-Bakirtzi, ed. *Byzantine Hours. Works and Days in Byzantium. Daily Life in Byzantium* (Athens: KAPON Publications, 2002), 158–163.
[347] Dimitra Papanikola-Bakirtzi, *Byzantine Hours. Works and Days in Byzantium*, 160.
[348] Efthymiadis, "The Sea as Topos," 109–110.
[349] Efthymiadis, "The Sea as Topos," 111.
[350] Efthymiadis, "The Sea as Topos," 121.

Jew was journeying to Cyprus in the ninth century, the sailors, "as usual for this sort of people," trusted the favourable wind and got very drunk, falling into a death-like sleep.[351] When the ship started to fill with water due to a hole in the bottom, the saint performed his miracle, saved the oblivious sailors from drowning, and later scolded them for their behaviour. This is also a bad case of neglect on the part of the sailors, which, as I have discussed, would have been a punishable offense. A similar portrayal of the sailors comes from *The Life of Saint Nikon* (tenth century), where the sailors on his ship were "greedy and fearfully overcome by the spirit of avarice;" and these "bareheaded" (γυμνῇ τῇ κεφαλῇ) men were openly swearing false oaths, as well as committing murders and other unlawful acts.[352] They were about to drown the holy man, thinking that he had a bag of gold, yet the saint revealed to them during a meal that his bag was in fact filled with salt, which led the sailors to ask for forgiveness. This does not only reflect how hagiographers perceived sailors as a group of people to be portrayed negatively, but also shows how they used them as characters for a saint to perform his transformative miracles upon.

The antagonistic sailor, however, is not the only portrayal of crew members in hagiographical texts. The sailor from the *Life of Lazaros of Mount Galesion*, for example, is depicted as a very pious man.[353] While sailing, he was caught in a storm, but as soon as a passenger invoked Saint Lazaros, they were saved. The sailor later visited Lazaros and confessed, receiving a lead seal with the Theotokos as a token, which he continued to carry with him, and vowed to give half of his profits to the saint. Perhaps Lazaros had an affinity to sailors, as he had been saved by one from being sold as a slave in his youth.[354] Another anecdote

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[351] *Life of Constantine the Former Jew (BHG 370)*, 29. Edited by Hippolyte Delehaye and Paul Peeters. *Acta Sanctorum November IV* (Brussels: Société des Bollandistes, 1925). Russian translation by Dmitry Yevgenievich Afinogenov. *Žitie prepodobnogo otca nasego Konstantina, cto iz Iudeev. Žitiesv. ispovednika Nikity* (Moscow: Indrik, 2001), 31–32.
[352] *The Life of Saint Nikon (BHG 1366)*, 22. Edited by Spyridon Lampros. Ὁ Βίος Νίκωνος τοῦ Μετανοῖτε, *Νέος Ἑλληνομνήμων*, 3 (1906): 132–228. English translation by Denis Sullivan. *The Life of Saint Nikon* (Brookline: Hellenic College Press, 1987), 90–95.
[353] Gregory the Cellarer, *The Life of Lazaros of Mt. Galesion (BHG 979)*, 75.
[354] Gregory the Cellarer, *The Life of Lazaros of Mt. Galesion (BHG 979)*, 9.

is related to Saint Theodore of Kythera (tenth century) whose Life was possibly composed around the eleventh century.[355] After spending eleven months at the church of Sergios and Bakchos, Saint Theodore died there, only to be found by sailors who had recently anchored in Kythera and visited the church to pay due honours to the saints.[356] The sailors kissed the dead saint's remains and left the island. Therefore, the depiction of the sailor in hagiographical texts appears to be twofold: the sailor is a negative character who finds salvation through the saint, or he is a pious character who frequently visits churches and saints, carrying tokens. It is hard to assume that sailors would have been impious or pious just because of their being a sailor, or would have truly been the one-sided characters as we find them depicted in hagiographical texts. It is more probable that the character of "sailor" found its way into hagiographical texts due to the broader trends in the development of the genre as mentioned. However, these accounts reflect again various experiences of sailors associated with rituals and belief. The token of Theotokos might serve the same function as the token of Saint Nicholas worn by a sailor as reflected in the archaeological record.

3.3.2 Votive Inscriptions and Graffiti

When the sailors anchored, revictualed, and visited churches at the frequent stops during their voyages, they also left marks of their presence. A common form of such remains are votive inscriptions. An example of this is the early Byzantine inscription on the ambo of Basilica A at Cape Drepanon in Cyprus, which has been identified as a stopover of the *annona* fleet sailing between Egypt and Constantinople.[357] Indeed, finds such as ampullae from the

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[355] Anthony Kaldellis and Ioannis Polemis, *Saints of Ninth- and Tenth-Century Greece* (Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Press, 2019), xxii.

[356] *Life of Theodore of Kythera (BHG 2430)*, 5. Edited by Nikolaos Oikonomides. "Ὁ Βίος τοῦ Ἁγίου Θεοδώρου Κυθήρων," in *Τρίτον Πανιόν Συνέδριον: Πρακτικά* edited by Phaidon C. Bouboulides and Maria G. Nystazopoulou, 264–291 (Athens, 1967). English translation by Anthony Kaldellis and Ioannis Polemis. *Saints of Ninth- and Tenth-Century Greece* (Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Press, 2019), 162.

[357] Charalambos Bakirtzis, "The role of Cyprus in the grain supply of Constantinople in the Early Christian period," in *Cyprus and the Sea. Proceedings of the International Symposium*, eds. Vassos Karageorghis and Demetrios Michaelides, 247–252 (Nicosia: University of Cyprus, 1995), 250.

shrine of Saint Menas close to Alexandria create links between Cape Drepanon and Egypt. [358]

Since the latest coin found during the excavations so far is a *follis* of Constantine II of the year 641-642 CE, the abandonment of the settlement seems to have coincided with the Arab conquest of Egypt in 642, when the grain shipments from Alexandria to Constantinople ceased.[359] The ambo of Basilica A in Cape Drepanon is inscribed ΥΠΕΡ ΕΥΧΗΣ ΝΑΥΤΩΝ (on behalf of the blessing of sailors), implying that the ambo was put up "as a vow by sailors or seamen."[360] Since the settlement was frequented by the sailors of the grain fleet, it is possible that the inscription was put up by them.

In addition to the inscription of this ambo, which might have followed a donation, there are smaller-scale graffiti by captains and sailors. The collection of inscriptions (third to seventh century) from Grammata on the island of Syros reveals the ways in which the crews supplicated before, during, or at the end of their journey. It is apparent that the inscriber was often the captain, who included the rest of the crew members in the inscription. For example, the *naukleros* Kyriakos asked for help for both himself and his sailors.[361] Similar inscriptions mention the *naukleroi*, as well as "those who sail with him," "their crossing companions," or "their shipmates."[362] Although the crew members aside from the captain are not mentioned by name, several of these inscriptions identify the origin of the sailors, such as "crew of

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[358] Charalambos Bakirtzis, "Sea Routes and Cape Drepanon: Excavations at Agios Georgios tis Pegeias, Paphos, Cyprus," In *From Roman to Early Christian Cyprus: Studies in Religion and Archaeology*, eds. Laura Nasrallah, Charalambos Bakirtzis, and Annemarie Luijendijk, 25–32 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2020), 31–32.

[359] Konstantinos Raptis and Olga Maria Bakirtzis, "Agios Georgios, Pegeia – Cape Drepanon: Integrating an Excavation Site into an Archaeological Landscape", in *Proceedings of the 5th Annual Meeting of Young Researchers on Cypriot Archaeology*, ed. Giorgos Papantoniou, 87–95 (Oxford: BAR Publishing, 2008), 89.

[360] Demetrios Michaelides, "The Ambo of Basilica A at Cape Drepanon," in *Mosaic: Festschrift for A.H.S. Megaw*, eds. Judith Herrin, Margaret Mullett, and Catherine Otten-Froux, 43–56 (London: British School at Athens, 2001), 51.

[361] "Lord, help Kyriakos the *naukleros* (and his?) sailors, amen." Kiourtzian, *Recueil des inscriptions grecques chrétiennes des Cyclades*, 142.

[362] "Christ help your servant Par(…) and those who sail with him." Kiourtzian, *Recueil des inscriptions grecques chrétiennes des Cyclades*, 172; "Lord protect the ship of *naukleros* Georgios and Peter with their crossing companions, people of Miletus and Pelusium, amen." Kiourtzian, *Recueil des inscriptions grecques chrétiennes des Cyclades*, 188; "Lord, protect the ship of John and Martyrios of Melos with their shipmates. We arrived at this port on 8th of January (…) 5 days." Kiourtzian, *Recueil des inscriptions grecques chrétiennes des Cyclades,* 190.

Naxians."[363] A longer, more elaborate inscription gives insight into the members of the ship and the port as a small society: "Choir of the holy apostles, protect the ship named Maria with loaders … John the *naukleros* and his shipmates." The inscription identifies the ship by name, mentions the dockworkers who loaded the ship, the captain John, and the rest of the crew members. [364] These inscriptions reflect how the crews of the ships constitute small communities led by the *naukleros*.

Most of the prayers seem to have been inscribed before the ships departed from the anchorage as votive offerings, while another inscription—"We give thanks to you, Lord, for saving your servant Asteris of Naxos and all his crew, amen"—seems to be an ex-voto, that is, offered after the ship had safely sailed to Grammata.[365] Several inscriptions are shorter, just asking for a good voyage,[366] or simply stating "Lord, help the ship of Philalethios"[367] or "Lord protect the ship Maria, belonging to Isidore de Pina(r)a."[368]

These examples also show that some ships are mentioned by their name, and all the mentioned names are "Maria." The practice of naming ships after deities dates back to antiquity; Casson points out that ships would be named after the gods of the Greek pantheon or deities specifically associated with sailing, such as Isis and the Dioscuri. [369] Citing inscriptions other than the ones I have discussed here, Casson also mentions that Maria became the most common name for ships during the Christian period. [370] The Virgin herself was associated with seafaring through her connection to the earlier Egyptian deity, Isis. One of the festivals of Isis, *Navigium Isidis*, was a nautical celebration that marked the beginning of the

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[363] "Lord come to the aid of your servant Eunomios and all the crew of Naxians who accompanied." Kiourtzian, *Recueil des inscriptions grecques chrétiennes des Cyclades*, 174.

[364] Kiourtzian, *Recueil des inscriptions grecques chrétiennes des Cyclades*, 161–162.

[365] Kiourtzian, *Recueil des inscriptions grecques chrétiennes des Cyclades*, 175.

[366] Kiourtzian, *Recueil des inscriptions grecques chrétiennes des Cyclades*, 146, 150.

[367] Kiourtzian, *Recueil des inscriptions grecques chrétiennes des Cyclades*, 149–150.

[368] Kiourtzian, *Recueil des inscriptions grecques chrétiennes des Cyclades*, 170.

[369] Lionel Casson, *Ships and Seamanship in the Ancient World* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1971), 359-360.

[370] Casson, *Ships and Seamanship*, 360.

seafaring season.[371] Gertwagen argues that as a female deity of seafaring, Isis was gradually replaced by Mary.[372] Several nautical metaphors in the Akathistos Hymn, which was well known during the Middle Byzantine period, also associated the Theotokos with salvation during seafaring. In Stanza 17, Mary is first called "who have filled the nets of the fishermen", continuing with "ship (ὁλκάς) for those who wish to be saved; harbour (λιμήν) for the seafarers of life."[373] This imagery might have had a significance for the seafarers. In addition to this association, naming the ship after Mary gave sanctity to the ship itself, and called upon the protection of the Virgin.

Not all graffiti included writing; some of them were drawings of ships—from very simple depictions to complex engravings with a full set of rigging. Medieval ship graffiti are found in the context of religious buildings such as churches, secular buildings ranging from private houses to fortifications, in buildings related to water (bathhouses, cisterns), and on artefacts such as pottery or ship hulls.[374] Otto Meinardus, who has surveyed various ship graffiti in religious contexts (churches and monasteries) argues that they should be analysed in relation to their religious significance and should be seen as votive offerings of sailors prior to or after long and perilous voyages.[375] The existence of ship graffiti in churches far away from the sea or in certain areas of the churches to which a sailor would not have access, suggests that priests, monks, but most probably pilgrims, who themselves often travelled on ships, may

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[371] Stephen Benko, *The Virgin Goddess: Studies in the Pagan and Christian Roots of Mariology* (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2004), 45.

[372] Ruthy Gertwagen, "The Emergence of the Virgin Mary as the Patron Saint of Seafarers," *Journal of Mediterranean Studies* 16 (2006): 149.

[373] Akathistos Hymn, Stanza 17, 13–17. Edited and translated by Leena Mari Peltomaa, *The Image of the Virgin Mary in the Akathistos Hymn* (Leiden, Boston, and Cologne: Brill, 2001), 14-15.

[374] Ioannis Nakas, "Play and Purpose: Between Mariners, Pirates and Priests: An Introduction to The World of Ship Graffiti in Medieval Mediterranean," *Papers from the Institute of Archaeology* 30 no.1 (2021): 50–52.

[375] Otto Meinardus, "Medieval Navigation According to *akidographemata* in Byzantine Churches and Monasteries," *Δελτίον της Χριστιανικής Αρχαιολογικής Εταιρείας* 6 (1970–1971): 31.

have created such graffiti as well.[376] Very similar to the inscriptions I have discussed above

(apart from the inscription at Cape Drepanon), in this case instead of carving the name of the

ship to ask for a safe voyage, the travellers would scratch the image of a ship inside the

churches.

The creators of these ship graffiti possibly included sailors; they might not have been

literate enough to write a prayer, but they would have been well acquainted with the appearance

of their ship. This also raises another question about the hierarchy of creating votive

inscriptions and drawings. It seems that most of the votive inscriptions were created by the

captains, whereas the drawings could have been made by any of the crew members. Was this

because captains were the only literate member of the crew who might have received a better

education, or was this because they ranked higher in the hierarchy of the shipboard society as

their "leader" which gave them the responsibility of carving these inscriptions?

Aside from votive inscriptions left outside the ship, various apotropaic symbols and

engravings are found on ships and their tackle. In addition to the protective attribute they share

with the votive inscriptions, the ones engraved on shipboard objects also reflect the sailors'

relationship with the very objects.[377] After all, in the face of a tempest, the ship was the only

protection the crew had. Several composite anchors recovered from Ashkelon bear crosses and

other Christian symbols.[378] One of the anchors, dated to the Byzantine period, has the letters

XA inscribed, which has been interpret as "Christ the prince" or "Christ the ruler" by Ehud

Galili and Baruch Rosen. [379] Perhaps, considering the physical use of the anchor, being lowered

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[376] Nakas, "Ship Graffiti," 54; Stella Demesticha, Katerina Delouca, Mia Gaia Trentin, Nikolas Bakirtzis, Andonis Neophytou, "Seamen on Land? A Preliminary Analysis of Medieval Ship Graffiti on Cyprus," International Journal of Nautical Archaeology 46 no.2 (2017): 372.
[377] This, perhaps, share some parallels with the apotropaic symbols used in urban contexts for the protection of houses. See John Mitchell, "Keeping the Demons out of the House: the Archaeology of Apotropaic Strategy and Practice in Late Antique Butrint and Antigoneia," in Objects in Context, Objects in Use: Material Spatiality in Late Antiquity eds. Luke Lavan, Ellen Swift, and Toon Putzeys, 273–310 (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2007).
[378] Ehud Galili and Baruch Rosen, "Protecting the Ancient Mariners, Cultic Artifacts from the Holy Land Seas," Archaeologia Maritima Mediterranea 12 (2015): 66.
[379] Galili and Rosen, "Protecting the Ancient Mariners," 69.

and pulled up frequently, it can even be interpreted as Χριστός Ἀνέστη. In addition to anchors, sounding leads with crosses, Christian symbols, and inscriptions have been found.[380] Overall, the inscribing of a ship's instruments with religious symbols, parallel to drawing ships on church walls, reflect the need for spiritual protection, and perhaps the relationship between the sailors and their vessels.

3.3.3 Shipboard Worship

Various prayers said and even shouted by sailors are recorded in hagiographical texts. The crew chanting "Κύριε ἐλέησον" (Lord have mercy) after their shipmate was cured by the vision of Saint Artemios[381] or the prayers of help to God and Saint Lazaros during a tempest "Ὁ Θεός, διὰ τῆς εὐχῆς τοῦ ἁγίου Λαζάρου τοῦ ἐν τῷ Γαλησίῳ βοήθησον ἡμῖν" (God help us, through the blessing of holy Lazaros who is in Galesion)[382] reflect very usual responses to unusual circumstances. Among the middle and late Byzantine liturgical texts compiled by Jacques Goar, [383] several prayers related to seafaring are recorded, such as "Εὐχή επί δυσκρασίας ἀνέμων καὶ κλύδωνα θαλάσσης" (prayer for tempest of wind and rough sea), which asks God to calm the seas and save the sailors.[384] An earlier example, from the *Barberini Euchologion* from the eight century contain another nautical prayer "Εὐχὴ ἐπὶ πλοίου μέλλοντος πλεῖν" (prayer for ship about to sail).[385] However, Ron Barkai proposes that the prayers which are the "direct consequence of a spiritual need felt by the diverse seafarers-

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[380] Galili and Rosen, "Protecting the Ancient Mariners," 78.
[381] *Miracles of St. Artemios (BHG 173–173c),* Mir. 14.
[382] Gregory the Cellarer, *The Life of Lazaros of Mt. Galesion (BHG 979)*, 75.
[383] Goar compiled this edition on the basis of Euchologia manuscripts in Paris, Rome and Grottaferrata, which has been widely used for its implications about social and cultural history of Byzantium, however does not note from which manuscript the individual prayers come from. See Claudia Rapp, Eirini Afentoulidou, Daniel Galadza, Ilias Nesseris, Guilia Rossetto, and Elizabeth Schiffer, "Byzantine Prayer Books as Sources for Social History and Daily Life," *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik* 67 (2017): 173–211.
[384] *Euchologion*, In Aeris Intemperiem et Maris Procellam. Edited by Jacques Goar. Euchologion sive Rituale Graecorum complectens ritus et ordines divinae liturgiae (Venice: Ex Typographia Bartholomae Javarina, 1730), 636–637.
[385] *Barberini Euchologion*, 193. Edited by Stefano Parenti, and Elena Velkovska. *L'Eucologio Barberini Gr. 336* (Rome: Centro Liturgico Vincenziano, 1995), 214.

merchants, pilgrims, tourists, and, of course, sailors" are to be found outside the canon of official prayers.[386] Thus, aside from the prayers written down in the *euchologia*, it is possible that other seafaring prayers existed, which have not been recorded.

Shipboard rituals were not introduced with Christianity, as they existed as long as seafaring itself, but were Christianised. Casson points out that during the Roman period, there would have been an altar on the stern area.[387] A relief, for example, dating to the third century CE, depicts the entrance of a cargo ship to the port of Rome while a ritual is being performed on board.[388] The censer recovered from the Serçe Limanı shipwreck can be evidence of such shipboard rituals. It is a bronze censer (incense burner) with a finial in the form of a cross.[389] Womer Katzev, who interprets the censer in the light of shipboard rituals known from antiquity, suggests that "One or all of our Byzantine mariners used the censer in a similar ritual, offering prayers of thanks to their patron saint for safe passage."[390] Despite negative portrayals in some hagiographical sources, the sailors seem to be as pious (or even more so) as the rest of Byzantine society, and left the marks of their piety on rocks, and church walls, as well as attempting at sanctifying their own ships and tackle.

<p align="center">***</p>

The harsh conditions of sailing the Mediterranean required a highly regulated shipboard life. These regulations might have been enforced through laws, customs, and traditions. Sailors were confined to certain spaces and were punished for not fulfilling their duties thoroughly. Their bodies were their main capital, but were affected by the manual tasks of sailing, and sometimes it took a miracle for them to regain their health. Notwithstanding this grim picture of a sailor's life, a well-provisioned ship and good weather conditions could offer the sailors

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[386] Ron Barkai, "A Seafarer's Prayer," *Mediterranean Historical Review* 1 no.1 (1986): 117.
[387] Casson, *Ships and Seamanship*, 182.
[388] Casson, *Ships and Seamanship*, fig 146.
[389] Objects MF1 and MF2 in Womer Katzev, "Miscellaneous Finds," 266.
[390] Womer Katzev, "Miscellaneous Finds," 268.

free time to mend their nets, spin wool or cotton, and play board games during the journeys. Still, the sea was always dangerous, and before setting out on their journeys sailors asked for blessings, captains inscribed the name of their ships on rocks, sailors scratched images of their ship on church walls. The experience on board a ship was multifaceted, and even if the evidence cannot be exhausted in just one chapter, it reflects a regulated and hierarchical space created by the realities of seafaring.

Conclusion

In the Foreword to the volume *The Social History of Byzantium* published in 2009, the editor John Haldon regrets that "specific groups outside the elite and aristocracy, the church, or the monastic world, yet nevertheless identifiable by their role, dress, beliefs, or otherwise" were not included in the contributions.[391] This thesis has contributed to filling this gap by tying in with the growing trend of studying the lower classes of Byzantine society.[392] In the preceding pages I have explored a group of people bound by similar experiences, the maritime community, and more specifically, sailors. These experiences, I have argued, are the result of their engagement with the same circumstances in their daily lives: living in the maritime landscape and interacting with this landscape through seafaring. Meanwhile, my analysis has shown that these experiences were not singular. Although often generalised under the broad category of "sailors," due to the differences between the types (cabotage, tramping, and direct) and distances (day-long, regional, long-distance) of maritime movement, the daily experience of sailors could drastically differ from one another. Every sailor was emplaced in the community that raised him within the very specific maritime culture and displaced to different degrees depending on the length and distance of his journeys. A sailor's experiences at the port were determined by the types of port he visited. He could bring the catch of the day to his small home port, where the fish could sustain his family and perhaps be exchanged with nearby villagers for other goods or money. At the same time, a sailor could travel to a long-distance port, where the services provided there, such as taverns, inns, and brothels, were at the centre of his experience. The final chapter has discussed the daily life on board the ship and argued

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[391] Ashburner, *The Rhodian Sea Law*, ix.
[392] The recent *The Routledge Handbook on Identity in Byzantium* features chapters on provincial identities, peasants, and slaves. See for example, Cahit Mete Oguz, "Middle Byzantine Historians and the Dichotomy of Peasant Identity," in *The Routledge Handbook on Identity in Byzantium* eds. Michael Edward Stewart, David Alan Parnell, and Conor Whately, 282–299 (London and New York: Routledge, 2022).

that due to the dynamics of maritime travel, life was regulated and hierarchical. These regulations, customs, and practices governed the sailors' body, behaviour, and spirit.

My analysis has benefitted from different types of sources from various genres and periods. By using this ample material in an interdisciplinary manner, the discussion could move beyond being a collection of anecdotes, and instead has provided deeper insights into the daily lives and experiences of Byzantine sailors and the broader maritime community. When dealing with so-called "silent" individuals and groups which have not produced written sources but are sporadically mentioned by others, it is crucial to use an array of evidence, including material remains, in order to expand our understanding of their experiences and place in society. Without the inclusion of archaeological and ethnographic material, sailors would not be able to speak for themselves in this thesis.

Future research with a similar methodological approach could take a comparative perspective in order to analyse and contrast different professions. For example, in various manuscripts, the *NRN* was found together with the Farmer's Law (*Nomos Georgikos*) and the Soldier's Law (*Nomos Stratiotikos*), which might reflect how lawmakers and compilers perceived different social groups of the Empire.[393] Therefore, a comparative study of these groups could show why they might have been associated with one another, or whether there were any social, political, and economic connections between them. Moreover, this methodological approach could also give these groups a voice. Another avenue of future research would be to compare Byzantine and Arab seafarers and seafaring during the period under discussion. The work of Khalilieh shows that there is great potential in such research to understand how maritime laws developed and were shared by various communities around the Eastern Mediterranean.[394] Similarly, it remains to be investigated—by scholars proficient in

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[393] Ashburner, *The Rhodian Sea Law*, cxiii.
[394] Khalilieh, *Admiralty and Maritime Laws in the Mediterranean Sea*, 1-26.

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both Greek and Arabic—how maritime technologies, beliefs, customs, and practices were transferred and shared between these communities.

I did not include certain sources which give insight into maritime communities of the Middle Byzantine Period, as some of their aspects lay beyond the scope of my thesis. For example, since the present study does not include piracy, I have not touched upon the *Life of Theoktiste of Lesbos*, as this text is specifically connected with Muslim piracy in the ninth-century Aegean.[395] The study of the changes that sailors as a social group might have gone through over time is the main perspective that this thesis has not been able to address. Instead of following a chronological pattern, I have used the *longue durée* characteristics of seafaring and living in maritime landscapes to draw a general image of sailors' experiences. Future research, then, could adopt a chronological perspective and analyse the possible changes throughout the centuries.

New archaeological and literary discoveries, as well as new approaches to known sources, allow us to write a history of Byzantium, as Roland Betancourt proposes, "that privileges the vibrancy of human experience, showcasing not achievements in military conquests and buildings, but in the diversity of its people and its society."[396] Sailors constitute a peculiar part of this society, a part of the broader maritime communities and landscapes; their experiences reflect not only daily life in Byzantium, but a distinct living experience. The interdisciplinary study of sailors dispels long-held convictions about them in the field. Alexander Kazhdan and Giles Constable, for example, have noted that "The Byzantines were not courageous mariners; they preferred to navigate, in the words of Theophylact of Ochrid,

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[395] Niketas Magistros, *Life of Theoktiste of Lesbos (BHG 1723–1724)*. Edited by Hippolyte Delehaye and Paul Peeters. *Acta Sanctorum November IV* (Brussels: Société des Bollandistes, 1925). English translation by Angela C. Hero, in *Holy Women of Byzantium, Ten Saints' Lives in English Translation*, ed. Alice-Mary Talbot (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 1996), 95-116.

[396] Roland Betancourt, "The Monuments We Privilege, or, How to Write an Ethical History of Byzantium," *YILLIK: Annual of Istanbul Studies* 3 (2021): 172.

touching the shore with the oar."[397] My analysis has demonstrated that this was not a matter of fear; rather it was common practice for the *Nauta Byzantinus* to navigate by hugging the coast. The study of lower-class people, such as sailors, has the potential to transform deep-rooted ideas about Byzantine society, and even Byzantine Studies as a field.

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[397] Alexander Kazhdan and Giles Constable, *People and Power in Byzantium: An Introduction to Modern Byzantine Studies* (Washington: Dumbarton Oaks Trustees for Hardvard University, 1982), 42.

Figure 1 Map of the Locations Mentioned in this Thesis.

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