

Δελτίον της Χριστιανικής Αρχαιολογικής Εταιρείας

Τόμ. 24 (2003)

Δελτίον ΧΑΕ 24 (2003), Περίοδος Δ'. Στη μνήμη του Νίκου Οικονομίδη (1934-2000)



Ενα μνημείο για τον αυτοκράτορα Μαυρίκιο;

Cyril MANGO

doi: [10.12681/dchae.362](https://doi.org/10.12681/dchae.362)

Βιβλιογραφική αναφορά:

MANGO, C. (2011). Ενα μνημείο για τον αυτοκράτορα Μαυρίκιο;. *Δελτίον της Χριστιανικής Αρχαιολογικής Εταιρείας*, 24, 15–20. <https://doi.org/10.12681/dchae.362>



ΔΕΛΤΙΟΝ ΤΗΣ ΧΡΙΣΤΙΑΝΙΚΗΣ ΑΡΧΑΙΟΛΟΓΙΚΗΣ ΕΤΑΙΡΕΙΑΣ

A Memorial to the Emperor Maurice?

Cyril MANGO

Τόμος ΚΔ' (2003) • Σελ. 15-20

ΑΘΗΝΑ 2003

A MEMORIAL TO THE EMPEROR MAURICE?

The profession of stylite required – literally – an infrastructure: one had to get hold not simply of a pillar, but of a very big pillar, comparable in size to those monumental columns that were erected in antiquity to support imperial statues. Indeed, the idea of placing a human being on top of a column may well have been inspired by such imperial monuments. Dimensions naturally varied, but the capital had to be wide enough to support a railing and whatever kind of shelter the stylite chose for himself¹.

This kind of arrangement naturally cost money. A would-be stylite, if he happened to be poor, had to find a patron. In the case of St Daniel, his first pillar, which was only twice a man's height, was provided by a silentarius called Mark. His second, taller pillar was donated by the imperial *castrensis* Gelanios. The third, which had twin shafts, was put up by the emperor himself². By contrast, St Alypios in rustic Paphlagonia had to be content with an ancient tomb, which was surmounted by a pillar. The latter supported the statue of a lion, as was common in some parts of Asia Minor³. The lion was removed. Even so, the surface of the capital had to be extended by means of planks⁴. An additional factor of some importance was that of location. Stylites did not set up shop anywhere. They usually chose a spot that was at some distance from settlements, yet sufficiently visible to attract attention. The pillar, therefore, had to be purpose-built in the right place, but once built, it could pass without further expenditure from one occupant to another.

In 935 St Luke the Stylite was supernaturally directed to

leave his native province of Anatolikon and proceed to Constantinople. It may be noted that while he was still living at home, he had built for himself a pillar of twelve cubits on which he dwelt three years⁵. He was prosperous enough to afford it. It was not in the interior of Asia Minor, however, that he was destined to distinguish himself. He heard a divine voice saying to him, "Proceed to the column near (πλησίον) Chalcedon, the one that is in the domain of Eutropios. It is there that you must accomplish the course of your struggle"⁶. The column, therefore, already existed and was unoccupied. Luke mounted it with the help of a ladder after obtaining permission from the metropolitan of Chalcedon. He was to perch there for the next 44 years until his death in 979, when he was succeeded by another stylite.

Where was the column? We may note that it was right on the water's edge because not long after Luke's death it was thrown down by waves in the course of a storm and the hermit who dwelt on it in succession to Luke was drowned⁷. We may also recall that Luke, after he had mounted the column, was pelted by demons with turtles (sic!). Let us now look at Janin's map⁸ (Fig. 1). The coastline of Chalcedon has changed greatly over the centuries. The ancient city, like Byzantium, was built on a peninsula joined to the mainland by a narrow neck and had a harbour on either side. The eastern harbour, which opened into the bay of Kalamış, has been filled with silt washed down by the stream Chalcedon (Kurbalıdere) and is now invisible. The bay is protected on the south by the jutting headland of Fenerbahçe, site of the fa-

1. For a discussion of the physical features of stylites' columns see, e.g. W. Djabadze, *Archaeological Investigations in the Region West of Antioch on-the-Orontes*, Stuttgart 1986, p. 61 ff. (with reference to St Symeon the Younger).

2. *Vita Danielis*, ed. H. Delehay, *Les Saints stylites*, Brussels 1923, p. 25-27, 29-30, 41.

3. See J. Kubińska, *Les monuments funéraires dans les inscriptions grecques de l'Asie Mineure*, Warsaw 1968, p. 61-63.

4. *Vita Alypii*, ed. Delehay, op.cit. (n. 2), p. 154, 158.

5. *Vie de saint Luc le stylite*, ed. F. Vanderstuyf, PO XI/2, 1914, p. 69-70.

6. Ibid., p. 71-72.

7. Leo Diaconus, Bonn ed., p. 176. Vanderstuyf, ibid., p. 18, as well as Delehay, op.cit. (n. 2), p. XCIX are, I believe, mistaken in dating this incident exactly to 986. Leo the Deacon records here a variety of portents and natural calamities, including the earthquake of 989 (noy 986!), which may have occurred over a period of years.

8. R. Janin, *Les églises et les monastères des grands centres byzantins*, Paris 1975, p. 30.

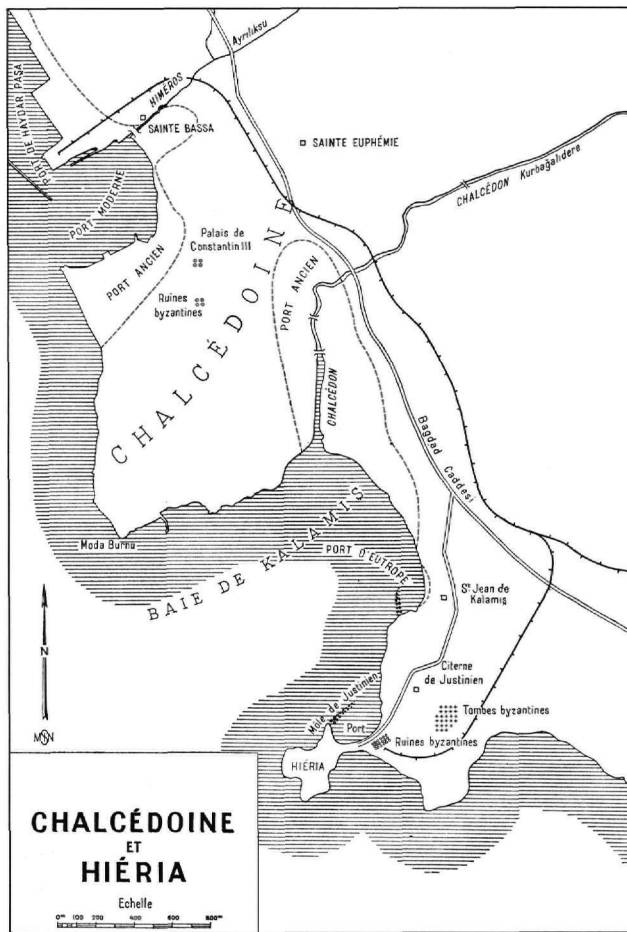


Fig. 1. Plan of Chalcedon and surroundings, after R. Janin.

mous Byzantine palace of Hiérieia⁹. Procopius describes in some detail the construction of the palace by Justinian and, next to it, of an artificial harbour, protected by two converging moles. The latter were built by the expedient of sinking caissons in the sea. Procopius then adds that Justinian “constructed another harbour on the opposite mainland (ἐν τῇ ἀντιπέρασ ἡπείρῳ), in the place which bears the name of Eutropios, not far distant from this Heraeum [Hiérieia], ex-

cuted in the same manner as the harbour I have just described”¹⁰. This suggests that the harbour of Eutropios was not on the same side as Hiérieia, as shown by Janin, but opposite, i.e. on the Chalcedon side, and that is how Gyllius understood it, too¹¹. In his time (1544-50) remains of the ancient harbour of Chalcedon facing east, which he identified as that of Eutropios, were still visible as well as those of the ‘Heraeum’ harbour, which he rightly placed at the “acra Ioannis Calamoti” [Kalamis]. The reason Janin and Pargoire before him disregarded the clear indication of Procopius is probably because the funerary inscription of a Eutropios was preserved in the Greek church of St John at Kalamis (Fig. 2)¹². Unfortunately, the inscription does not tell us anything about the status of the deceased, who was probably not the eponym of the domain. The name of the latter may well have been that of the all-powerful eunuch, who was made consul and patrician in 399¹³.

St Luke’s column stood, therefore, right at the water’s edge, probably on the eastern shore of the Chalcedon peninsula. We have seen that, according to the Life, it was ‘near’, not ‘in’ Chalcedon, which is exact as regards the medieval settlement (see below). But what was the column doing there? There are two possibilities: either it had been erected by a previous stylite¹⁴ or it was a secular monument. Now, the Life preserves a curious detail: affixed to the capital were five bronze crosses, one on each side or rather in each corner (τετραμερόθεν) and the fifth presumably in the middle of the front side, since it faced the stylite (κατὰ πρόσωπον αὐτοῦ καθιδρυμένος). Whenever there was a storm the crosses would glow in the dark and light up Luke’s narrow cabin (στενωπόχωρον δωματίου). This miracle, we are told, continued for 42 years and even a little longer¹⁵. The editor was bothered by a chronological discrepancy: given that Luke spent 44 years on the column, why did the miracle last only 42? His answer¹⁶ was that the crosses were placed some time after his ascent. It is just as likely that the miracle started happening two years after the Saint had taken up his post. In the course of Byzantine history only one memorable event took place at the harbour of Eutropios. It was there, on 27 November 602, that the emperor Maurice was execut-

9. The basic topographical study remains that of Pargoire, Hiérieia, *IRAİK* 4 (1899), p. 11-70.

10. *De aedificiis*, I, 11, 16-22.

11. *De Bosphoro thracio*, III, 11, ed. Lyon 1561, p. 253-255.

12. R. Merkelbach, *Die Inschriften von Kalchedon*, Bonn 1980 = *IK* 20, Nr. 77.

13. J.R. Martindale, *Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire*, II, 1980, Eutropius 1.

14. So Delehay, *Les Saints stylites* (n. 2), p. CLI.

15. *Vie de saint Luc* (n. 5), p. 79-80.

16. *Ibid.*, p. 14.

ed along with four of his six sons, namely Tiberius, Peter, Justin and Justinian¹⁷. A monumental column crowned by five crosses would have been an appropriate memorial to Phocas' victims and a reminder of a tragic incident that soon passed into the realm of legend and hagiography¹⁸. The tragedy was repeated in 605, when Maurice's widow Constantina was executed at the same spot along with her three daughters following the discovery of a plot against Phocas¹⁹. A few comments are, however, necessary. First, there is some confusion about the number of Maurice's sons who were killed at Chalcedon. Theophanes²⁰ says they were five, whereas Theophylact Simocatta, who is our chief source for the events in question, provides neither a figure nor names²¹. Neither does John of Antioch²². The Paschal Chronicle, which I am following is, on the other hand, unusually precise. It tells us that Maurice fled from Constantinople to Prainetos with his nine children, namely six boys (Theodosios, Tiberius, Peter, Paul, Justin and Justinian) and three girls (Anastasia, Theoctiste and Cleopatra). Eight of these were arrested, i.e. minus the eldest, Theodosios, who fled and was executed separately near cape Akritas. The missing one, therefore, was Paul. It may be, of course, that his name was accidentally omitted from among those killed at Chalcedon (which would spoil my argument). On the other hand, there may have been some reason why he was not slain along with his brothers. A misunderstood passage in the Life of Theodore of Sykeon informs us that he may have been seriously ill, even though the Saint allegedly healed him (or his sister) at Hihereia. Festugière's text²³ reads as follows: Συνέβη δὲ τοῦ βασιλέως Μαυρικίου ἐν τῶν παιδίων πάθει ἀνιάτῳ περιπεσεῖν· ἦν γὰρ πολλὰ τραύματα ἐκβράσαν, ὥς δοκεῖν ἐλεφαντιᾶσαι· ὅπερ πάθος οἱ μὲν φασὶ λέγεσθαι παυλάκιν, οἱ δὲ τὴν κλεοπάτρην, etc. Festugière translates, "certains nomment cette maladie paulacis, d'autres cleopatra", but he has to admit²⁴ that these terms are unknown to him. Evidently, the text has to be cor-

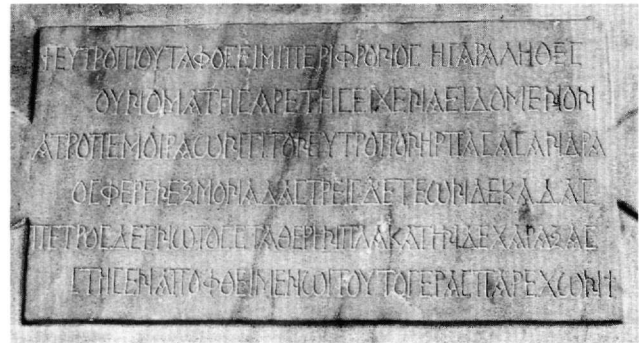


Fig. 2. Church of St John, Kalamış. Epitaph of Eutropios (Photo I. Ševčenko, 1966).

rected to something like, ὅπερ πάθος οἱ μὲν φασὶ λυμναίνεσθαι τὸ Παυλάκιν, οἱ δὲ τὴν Κλεοπάτρην, i.e. either little Paul or Cleopatra was wasted by this disease. Was Paul too sickly to have been executed? Or is there some truth in the story of the faithful nurse who concealed one of Maurice's children?

If the column was commemorative, it was probably erected by Heraclius, who is also recorded to have placed a cross on top of another column that had been put up by Phocas near the church of the Forty Martyrs²⁵. The location was significant, for the church in question, started by Tiberius, was completed by Maurice²⁶, and was, in fact, the only major ecclesiastical foundation at Constantinople unequivocally attributed to that emperor. By erecting a cross next to it, Heraclius was commemorating the piety of his unfortunate predecessor. It may also be pertinent to remember that on his return from the East, Heraclius resided for a fairly long time in the palace of Hihereia before he was persuaded to cross the Bosphorus on a bridge of boats (638)²⁷. At Hihereia he would have been directly opposite the harbour of Eutropios, constantly reminded of the tragic incident that had sparked the

17. *Chron. Paschale*, Bonn ed., p. 694.

18. See J. Wortley, *The Legend of the Emperor Maurice*, *Actes du Xe CIEB, Athènes 1976*, IV, Athens 1980, p. 382-391; P. Schreiner, *Der brennende Kaiser, Byzance et ses voisins. Mélanges Gy. Moravcsik*, Szeged 1994, p. 25-31. The Syriac 'Histoire de saint Maurice', ed. F. Nau, PO V, 1910, p. 773-778, though, no doubt, based on a Greek original, has undergone considerable corruption. I am not entirely convinced by L.M. Whitby, *Theophanes' Chronicle Source*, *Byz.* 53 (1983), p. 318, who posits a very early hagiographic Life of Maurice, allegedly used as a source by Theophylact Simocatta.

19. *Chron. Paschale*, p. 696-697. Theophanes, ed. de Boor, p. 295.

20. P. 290-291. So also Cedrenus, Bonn ed., I, p. 706-708.

21. VIII, 11, 3.

22. *FHG* V, p. 36, fr. 218d.

23. *Vie de Théodore de Sykéon*, Brussels 1970, I, p. 79.

24. *Ibid.*, II, 233.

25. *Chron. Paschale*, p. 703, a.612. Cf. my remarks in *Studies on Constantinople*, Aldershot 1993, no. X, p. 14-16.

26. Theophanes, p. 267.

27. Nikephoros, *Short History*, ed. C. Mango, CFHB XIII, c. 24.

Persian war and ultimately determined the course of his own career.

Medieval Chalcedon

For our understanding of the Life of St Luke it may be helpful to try and visualize the aspect of Chalcedon as it was at the time. Surprisingly, that proves to be a difficult task; for although Chalcedon lay within sight of Constantinople and was familiar territory to all inhabitants of the capital, our sources say practically nothing about it after the seventh century.

Ancient Chalcedon had been a great and prosperous city, which probably covered the entire peninsula. It was known for its strong walls, two harbours and oracle of Apollo. Christianity added the famous martyrion of St Euphemia outside the walls, seat of the Council of 451. As the terminal of the great Anatolian highway that led to Nicomedia, Nicaea and points farther east, Chalcedon ought to have done well after the foundation of Constantinople, just as Üsküdar prospered and expanded for the same reason in the Ottoman period.

It seems that Chalcedon was devastated by the Persians in the early seventh century, but our information on this score is remarkably meagre and ambiguous. It was besieged and captured by the Persian general Shahin in 614-5 and was again occupied by the general Shahrbaraz in 626²⁸. Then darkness descends. Some legendary stories suggest that Chalcedon lay in ruins²⁹. The relics of St Euphemia were translated to Constantinople, perhaps in c. 680³⁰. Neither the Typikon of the Great Church nor the Synaxarion records a single synaxis being celebrated at Chalcedon³¹. Surprising-

ly, however, the palace of Hiereia continued to function through the Dark Age until the Fourth Crusade.

If we now skip to the Ottoman period, we find a small village, an *exiguus vicus*, according to Gyllius, who found no standing ruins other than some remains of harbours³². He does not mention a small Byzantine church of the inscribed cross, four-column type, which was seen in 1678-80 by C. de Bruyn, who sketched both its exterior and interior³³. It was called St Euphemia, but probably had no connection with the original martyrion, although it boasted a long and heavy spit on which the Saint had been allegedly martyred³⁴. The church was rebuilt by the metropolitan Gabriel in c. 1700. The seat of the metropolis was, however, at Kuskuncuk on the Asiatic side of the Bosphorus³⁵. It may be worth recalling that the unique Geneva manuscript of the Eparch's Book was acquired at Chalcedon in 1636 by A. Léger, chaplain of the Dutch embassy³⁶.

On the earliest map of Constantinople that can claim a degree of accuracy, that of F. Kauffer of 1786 (Fig. 3), the village of Kadıköy is placed on the west shore of the peninsula, roughly where the modern landing-stage (*iskele*) is situated. There is some reason to believe that the Byzantine town was on the same spot and may have been not much bigger than the village of the Ottoman period.

An important rescue excavation in 1976 established that the limit of the classical city followed more or less the sinuous line formed by Söğütluçeşme Caddesi, continuing as Kuşdili Caddesi (Fig. 4). North of that line lay the narrow isthmus and a necropolis exhibiting a row of sarcophagi, mostly of the second and third centuries AD³⁷. Similar observations had been made in 1924, but attracted little attention. I am quoting the words of Ernest Mamboury: "Lors de la con-

28. Nikephoros, c. 6, line 9 speaks of a lengthy siege by Shahin. Theophanes, p. 301, here relying on his Oriental source, records the beginning of the siege in 614/5 and the capture of the city in 615/6. Discussion of these events by B. Flusin, *Saint Anastase le Perse*, Paris 1992, II, p. 88-93. For the second siege in 626 see Theophanes, p. 316, who does not make it clear whether the city fell.

29. According to one legend, Constantine the Great, who considered establishing his capital at Chalcedon, found it "destroyed by the Persians": Cedrenus, I, p. 496. A hopelessly confused story in the *Patria*, ed. Preger, *Script. orig. Constant.*, II, p. 197-8, tells how Chalcedon was betrayed to the Persians by a heretical deacon after the Council of 451 (sic!), how the inhabitants fled to Constantinople, taking with them the relics of St Euphemia, and how the Persians removed a gilded statue of Helios, which they conveyed to their own country. A. Berger, *Die Reliquien der heiligen Euphemia*, *Ελληνικά* 39 (1988), p. 315 ff., tries to make some sense of this tale.

30. As conjectured by Berger, *ibid*.

31. Yet, they do mention synaxeis in neighbouring localities, some of them farther away than Chalcedon, e.g. at Satyros, Galakrenai, Rufiniana, etc.

32. As in n. 11, above.

33. *A Voyage to the Levant*, London 1702, p. 37, figs 24-25. His account of Chalcedon, p. 45, is, however, copied from that of Grelot, *Relation nouvelle d'un voyage de Constantinople*, Paris 1680, p. 50.

34. *Lettres de M. l'abbé D. Sestini*, III, Paris 1789, p. 170-174.

35. M.I. Gedeon, *Εκκλησίαι βυζαντιναί εξακριβοῦμεναι*, Constantinople 1900, p. 108.

36. J. Nicole, *Le Livre du Préfet*, Geneva 1893, p. 3, n. 1.

37. N. Asgari and N. Firath, *Die Nekropole von Chalcedon*, *Studien zur Religion und Kultur Kleinasiens. Festschrift F.K. Dörner*, Leiden 1978, I, p. 1-92.

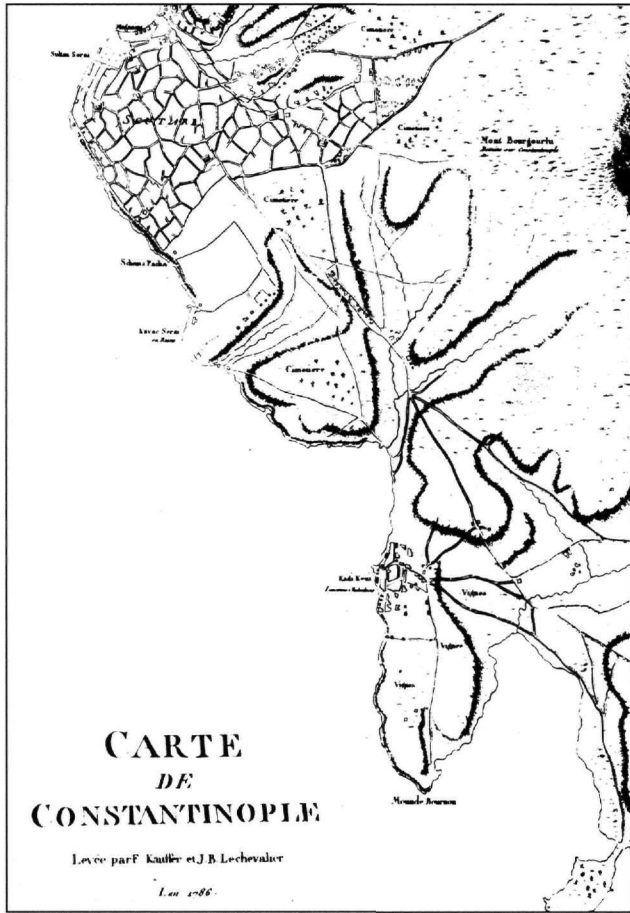


Fig. 3. Üsküdar and Kadıköy from map of Constantinople by F. Kauffer (1786).

struction d'une maison, au même lieu [i.e. le long de la rue Kuşdili], on retrouva un pan de mur appartenant à une tour ronde d'angle appartenant à l'enceinte de la ville ; le mur, de 3 m. de largeur, constitué par un blocage moyen surmonté de gros blocs, comme la tour, est encore visible sous la rue Kırtasiyeci. On peut ainsi déterminer les limites nord et est de la ville. Depuis la mer, l'enceinte remontait la colline au sud et à quelques mètres de la rue Sogutla Çeşme [sic] jusqu'à la tour ronde sur une longueur de 400 m. environ. De la tour, elle prenait la direction sud, longeant le sommet

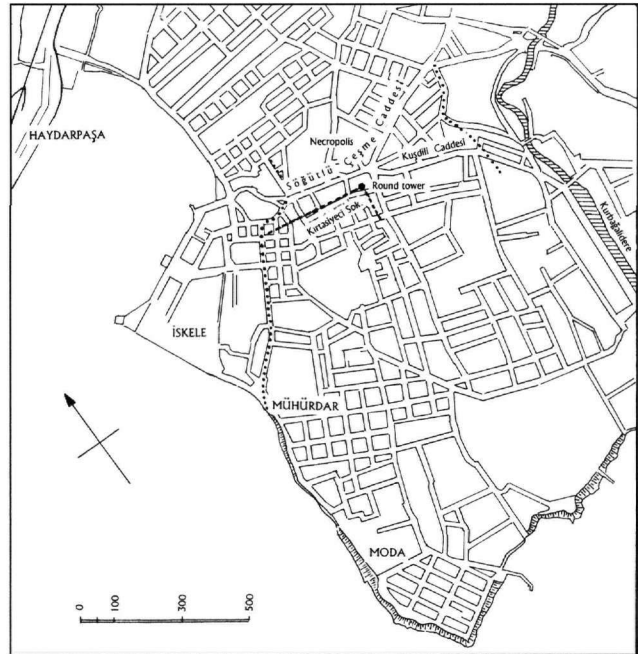


Fig. 4. Street plan of Kadıköy in 1934. Dotted lines indicate approximate ancient shore.

de la colline qui domine l'ancien Chalcédon ; jusqu'où allait-elle ? On ne sait³⁸. I have before me Mamboury's own copy of the Istanbul gazetteer (*Istanbul şehri rehberi*) of 1934, on which he has marked in pencil the position of the wall and round tower. These are reproduced in Fig. 4.

What Mamboury observed was not, of course, the wall of the classical city, but that of its medieval successor, perhaps rebuilt after the Persian invasions: an enclosure c. 400 m. wide and, I would imagine, not much more than 500 m. long, roughly down to the quarter known as Mühürdar, where a trapezoid sarcophagus of a certain monk Antonios (about twelfth century) was found in 1965³⁹, the only medieval Byzantine find from 'urban' Chalcedon. It may have belonged to the monastery του Μιχαήλ τζη, in which the relics of St Theodore Graptos were deposited a long time after his death⁴⁰. In short, medieval Chalcedon was not much of a town. The Life of St Luke still calls it a *polis* and refers to the

38. Les fouilles byzantines à Istanbul, *Byz.* 11 (1936), p. 250. The account of the same finds by J. Papadopoulos, *EO* 25 (1926), p. 46-48, is less informative.

39. Asgari and Firathi, *op.cit.*, p. 80-81 and fig. 44.

40. *Vita Theodori Grapti*, PG 116, 684. Cf. Janin, *Grands centres* (n. 8), p. 34.

stables of the public post attached to the imperial highway⁴¹. In the earlier *Life of St Stephen the Younger*, whose action takes place in the district of Chalcedon, it appears only as a ναύσταθμος⁴².

When he was teaching in Canada, Nikos Oikonomides be-

came interested in the reign of Heraclius and wrote a number of memorable articles devoted to it. I should like to think that this slender contribution might have appealed to his curiosity.

Cyril Mango

ΕΝΑ ΜΝΗΜΕΙΟ ΓΙΑ ΤΟΝ ΑΥΤΟΚΡΑΤΟΡΑ ΜΑΥΡΙΚΙΟ;

Ὁ ὁσίος Λουκάς ὁ Στυλῖτης (†979) ἐξῆσε ἐπὶ σαράντα τέσσερα χρόνια πάνω σὲ ἓνα στύλο, ποὺ βρισκόταν στο λημάνι τοῦ Εὐτροπίου, στὴ Χαλκηδὸνα. Στὴν παρῶσα μελέτη υποστηρίζεται ὅτι ὁ στύλος εἶχε ἀνεγερθεῖ ὡς μνημεῖο γιὰ τὸν αυτοκράτορα Μαυρίκιο, ὁ

ὁποῖος εἶχε ἐκτελεστεῖ στο ἴδιο σημεῖο τὸ 602. Επιπλέον δίδονται ὀρισμένα στοιχεῖα γιὰ τὴ μεσαιωνικὴ Χαλκηδὸνα. Οἱ παρατηρήσεις ποὺ ἔκανε ὁ E. Mamboury τὸ 1924 βοηθοῦν στὸν καθορισμὸ τῶν βόρειων καὶ τῶν ἀνατολικῶν ορίων τῆς πόλης.

41. *Vie de Saint Luc* (n. 5), p. 115.

42. *La Vie d'Étienne le Jeune par Étienne le Diacre*, ed. M.-F. Auzépy, Birmingham 1997, p. 101.