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The Constantinopolitan intellectual elite and the inhabitants of the Byzantine capital between the 4th and the early 7th centuries

Konstantynopolitańska elita intelektualna a mieszkańcy stolicy cesarstwa bizantyńskiego od IV do początków VII wieku

(summary of the PhD dissertation)

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Research on the intellectual elite of the early Byzantine Constantinople and their attitude to the populace of the capital as a whole and to its different social strata has brought forth interesting results. It opens the way to a better, more precise and unstereotyped understanding of the Byzantine literature, and in spite of the genre determinants and the source limitations it allows perception of singular Constantinopolitans as well as the city's population in general, and within it, its major or minor groupings and social categories. The further prospects perspectives in this matter seem to be promising.

Relatively large social mobility and frequent changes of position on a social ladder (both by individuals and families) are noticeable in the Constantinopolitan social structure throughout the whole early Byzantine period. Chances for fast careers and serious danger of declassing, together with broad and frequent replacement in the upper classes prevented petrification of the social relations and supported the constant mechanisms of social advancement. In effect, the delimitation of the strata in the dissertation has to only be relative and partially conventional.

Prosopography confirms that tendency, showing an elite that was not without elitism, but nonetheless allowed for a stable influx of new people and families into its midst. The existence and flourishing of the ruling and senatorial circles depended on the imperial favour and imperial promotions, and categories similar to the ancient Roman patricians and plebeians never emerged. Early Byzantine aristocracy was composed of the relatives and in-laws of the monarchs, foreign royals or chieftains resident in Constantinople, and above all the administrative and military elite, maintaining stable relations e.g. through the institution of a senate as a kind of a keystone, as much as via

commonly revered dignity of a patrician, granted in perpetuity, but not hereditary. The ceremonial and consultative functions of the senate provided, on the one hand, backdrop for the imperial and state ritual, and on the other generated social possibilities that gathered, in one space, the present and former notables at the same time. The detailed prosopographic display of the upper echelons of society reveals only a dozen agnatic or cognatic families that were able to maintain their position within three, four or more generations. Through unhindered procedure of *adlectio* to the senate and fast exchange on the major imperial posts, the circles of power were expanded by the officials of a relatively humble social background. Besides, the ethnic diversity of the elite and its varied territorial origins must be taken into account. The native Constantinopolitans were just a small fraction of the highest social class. As a result, it is difficult sometimes to discern the Constantinopolitan elite originating from the city itself from the provincial, but resident in the capital. Some of the nobles, while permanently bound to Constantinople, held constant relations with the *patris* of their ancestors.

Lifestyle of the elite was somewhat similar to the one of the middle classes, and the principles of Christian philanthropy and *euergesia* encouraged the members of the upper levels to pious foundations and building undertakings. In consequence, they left an indelible mark on the Constantinopolitan landscape, which could be seen, for instance, in urban onomastics: in comparison to the whole topographic nomenclature of the city, the number of circa 115 eponymous names derived from the founders, accounts for a considerable percentage. It should be noted, however, that the group of eponyms was not deprived of the exponents of the other social strata, e.g. clergy of the court eunuchs.

The monks and clergy formed a special group, as it included the members of virtually all the social groups, from the wealthiest to the most impoverished. Only some of the monks were brought up to the role, and in the early Byzantine period it was not uncommon for the laymen to assume the ecclesiastical, even episcopal functions. The survey reveals variety of reasons that inspired the laypeople to become clergymen.

Conventionally understood category of the middle class is in the three discussed chapters maintained mainly for its utility, but with the awareness of its relative character and the constant interweaving both with high society and the humbler milieux. The staff of the imperial court and the prefectures, teachers, rhetoricians, professions – professions that can all be found in this diversified and numerous class, with the different earnings and prestige among the posts and representatives. Seniority, contacts, protection or outstanding abilities fostered new careers: John the Lydian's biog-

raphy provides a proof of a life-long career in lower and medium-level offices, from his early adulthood to retirement. The physicians, teachers and tutors of the nobles' children sometimes showed an appetite for politics, influencing the course of state matters, actively participating in diplomacy, plots, and so forth. The legal expertise, held in high esteem, was immensely useful for facilitating in advancing through the steps of respective careers.

The army, visible in the city, with its different structures, recruitment and contingents, despite certain standardisation, formed a heterogeneous environment, in which the palace guard was of special importance. Part of the soldiers came from the incoming peoples or from frontiers of the empire, other were recruited from among the local inhabitants. Possibilities of elevation were as varied as they were wide, sometimes up to the imperial dignity. The rudimentary selection mechanisms of the most able and the most useful soldiers were introduced and developed at the same time.

The vast part of the local community was formed by the artisans and merchants. An important centre of trade, unvaryingly before and after Constantine, the city sheltered and developed these groups appropriately to the demographic growth. The differences in prices reveal different demand for the services of, as well as different possibilities of effective earning, among the respective crafts. Sources show existence of the merchants' associations of the kind and a significant role played by some groups, e.g. the *argyropratai*. Due to the remnants in topography of Constantinople and in the literary sources it can be concluded that the workshops and stalls, butcheries and markets, porticoes and fairs permanently occupied specific areas within the city.

The social landscape is supplemented by a number of low-paid trades and services, delivered often directly to the customer rather than at a separate place, by hired hands, drivers, water-carriers, cleaners, and so forth. The city's environment was able to maintain the city's poorest and unqualified inhabitants at a most basic, subsistence level, ensuring them little more than vegetation. Despite the issue of poverty, which indeed existed, the lowest registers of the social pyramid were too diverse to limit it but to the poor. Constantinopolitan streets were crowded with actors and actresses, prostitutes, conjurers, storytellers, amulet sellers, so-called holy fools, street urchins, drifters, as well as servants and slaves, not to mention a *demi-monde* or numerous further categories, ones that can only be barely seen in the sources. Their situation did not mean exclusion automatically in every case, and when it comes to the athletes, especially charioteers and mimes, broad popularity among the crowd seems obvious. Influence of the Church, the imperial court and the elite created, insufficient as it was, but still unique, network of charity to support in an emergency those in need, ill, and so-

cially excluded. That support was primarily provided through orphanages and hospices. Christian theology and practices of life also influenced the situation of slaves. The institution was not eliminated, but *douloi* were treated in a more and more humanitarian way, with their status eventually resembling that of the freeborn servants. Deprived of public rights, but with fairly regular everyday routine and giving the chances for certain tomorrow, they were not infrequently in a better position than many impoverished freeborn Constantinopolitans.

All of the strata of the Constantinopolitan society crossed their ways in public space of the city, which contributed to creation of a sophisticated and multi-faceted personal, public and material relations, in which elitist and egalitarian tendencies rivalled. Much of world view, mentality, and entertainment united the Constantinopolitans across their social inequalities. Public space (churches, baths, fora) had its specific role there, and high population density induced neighbourly relations and conflicts alike, and in consequence, led to intensified attempts at legal intervention. Beside the family and the neighbourhood, an important role was played by professional connections, and by mutual friendships, struck up sometimes not without reservations. The latter factor should not be treated as a form of cliental net or a rhetoric expression of formal relationships and subordination. It should be stressed that a comprehensive social structure of the city, intertwined by manifold links, placed the community of the Early Byzantine capital between *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft*. This observation gains more importance if one remembers that modern social sciences hardly ever notice any possibility of such ascription as far as Antiquity or the Middle Ages are concerned.

The basic microstructure that shaped the Constantinopolitan social cosmos was family, understood in both the widely and narrow sense, bound by relations of blood, affinity and symbolic connections. It should be noted that local realities generated possibilities for both the arranged and the improvised relationships, both formal and informal; preponderance of marriage is beyond any doubt. There is evidence from that period of clear expressions of the family pride, care for offspring even among the poor, as well as of social pathologies, sale, exposure, abuse.

An important part of considerations on the social tissue of Constantinople stems from cooperation between the classical and gender studies; these are currently almost unnoticed in Polish research. The Constantinopolitan environment was definitely patriarchal, but role of women should not be perceived by stereotypes. Dominant Christian mentality made attitude towards women quite ambivalent, not without misogynist accents, but it also bore fruit in certain improvement of average woman's situation, and the separate, common female gender roles were enhanced. The early Byzan-

tine (postclassical) law granted them relatively broad possibilities of possession and ownership, and the economic situation resulted in necessity of women labour, especially in the lower social strata. Among the imperial virtues an attention and care for the most vulnerable women, i.e. the widows and those in need, were prominently listed. With such contradictory influences, the real situation of women oscillated, on an individual basis, between enslavement and notable liberty, and the open perspectives for male careers found natural counterparts in the situation of the opposite sex.

Eunuchs played a special part in the public life of Constantinople, as they were both numerous and highly visible, recruited both from outside and inside (due to accidents of children and adolescents) the empire. It was specifically in the imperial capital that the presence of eunuchs, their administrative functions and gender specificity concentrated, evoking various reactions from the populace and the circles of power, from respect to bitter contempt and stereotypical ascription of every imaginable anti-virtues and vices. Homosexual Constantinopolitans are, in contrast, barely noticed by the sources, and one can barely observe their existence in the capital, dispersed across all the groups, and gradually treated (if men) more and more severely if identified; during the reign of Justinian some regular repressive actions occurred. Attitude of the lower social strata towards gay and lesbians cannot be determined.

In such social circumstances, in a huge for late Antiquity and still demographically growing city, one little by little taking over and establishing its preponderance among metropoleis of the Mediterraneum, as the *Queen of the Cities*, a diverse and sophisticated educational system developed. It was derived from the not inconsiderable traditions of the pre-Constantinian polis (evidenced by a gallery of local intellectuals, fostering their careers in Byzantion or abroad), it was able to truly bloom after the imperial residence was established. Based on the best traditions of classical *paideia* and the intellectual heritage of Graeco-Roman Antiquity, and partially merged with Christian theology and thought, it has sometimes been described as conservative, but it was able to change via evolution, practical and closer in local realities to *egkyklios paideia* than the *triodos–tetraodos* system. It has never lost its basic feature, an ability to train in desirable and, so to say, marketable skills.

The teachers never formed a homogeneous environment, with their varied salaries, prestige and number of students. The wages may be compared with the contemporary purchasing power

of money, which highlights the differences within the group. There were signs of more or less constant imperial support, such as encouraging and selection of the official town teachers, controlled by the senate, or stable tendency in adjusting the legal status of the teachers with exemptions from legal nuisances and obligations. No matter what the practice was, conditions for the public teachers were rigorously put in place, expectations formulated, support provided.

Students of the Constantinopolitan teachers were an equally diverse crowd, brought up in different groups and circles, from the sons of the highest officials to the offspring of the prostitutes and servants. Selection and treatment of students, height of fees, depended to a certain degree on the teachers themselves, but on the other hand popularity and esteem of the tutor highly influenced the number of students enrolling to his classes. The case of Menander the Guardsman and his brother Herodotus may serve as a good example of the nearly modern dilemmas of the young adults taught in Constantinople, and a number of source passages on the nicknames given to law students of each class as on their specific customs, reveals existence of the separate environments which cultivated traditions and customs of their own, variously accepted or barely tolerated outside. Some data can be gathered, which reveal everyday school routine, rules concerning calendar and schedule of lessons.

Practice of the Constantinopolitan grammarians and rhetoricians was based on an established canon of required reading and an existing set of exercises, supplemented by old and new school books or sets of collected passages. A preserved list of personal names for more than thirty local grammarians is just a fraction of all the teachers that were active in the capital. We should also take note of the separate place of the Latin grammarians, needed by the court and local Latin speaking circles, with the school of Priscian and his Constantinopolitan successors as the best known example.

Rhetoric was invariably taught through *progymnasmata*, and in addition the local milieu had a local textbook by Nicholas of Myra at its disposal, which supplemented classical materials. In circumstances of more and more widening tendencies towards *diglossia*, a mission of rhetoricians and rhetors was, apart from educating next generations of orators, preserving a deposit of classical language, understood as a closed, perfect structure. In the early Byzantine period it did not result in isolation of those who followed the art of rhetoric: they were listened to willingly and universally praised around the city. In consequence, the most splendid orators had prospects for considerable wealth, high social position or even introduction into the *curia*.

Rhetorical skills were used by a wide circle of intellectuals, such as for example the philosophers, among whom many were, like Themistius, both philosophers and rhetors. In spite of the competition of Athens and Alexandria, discernible up to the time of Justinian I, philosophical teaching was active on the Bosporus, and it was accepted and supported, at least in declarations, by the emperors (it is worth noting that the support was provided by such different personalities as Constantius II and Leo I). Beside Themistius, a few other philosophers are known at least by name, thanks to the narrative sources from 5th and 6th centuries. Only a few treatises or other texts from that time survived, and what little there is to be deduced from their content suggests that the thinkers drew predominantly on opinions of the older schools, now amalgamated or upheld, with Plato and Aristotle overshadowing all the other authorities.

With the legislator active predominantly in the capital and the inherited from the ancestors high standards of jurisprudence and legal culture, development of the Constantinopolitan centre of legal education was only a matter of time. The city, apart from the greatest lawyers, was crowded with numerous *scholastikoi*, legal practitioners, actively competing for clients. It should be assumed that the Constantinopolitan legal circles were in a great part responsible for the ideas of two great imperial codifications (which were not mere compilations), the Theodosian Code and Justinian's *Corpus iuris civilis*, the cornerstones of the post-classical law. The schedules of legal education before and after the reforms of Justinian reveal intentional improvements of education and an attempt to cover as broad material as it was possible; these are discussed in detail in the relevant place of the present dissertation. Respect for the ancient legal doctrine, not only policies and activities of Justinian and his officials are expressed in that system, but also initiative and actions of the teachers of law, seeking refinement of legal education. About a dozen names of the most renowned legal authorities and professors of law are preserved, as some of them were members of the codification committees, others were famous for their classes, and yet others created treatises or epitomes.

Two laws of Theodosius II, dated February and March 425, established, precisely and in detail, a public institution for higher education in Constantinople. Its place in history of universities and higher education, almost forgotten outside the Byzantine studies, should be justly restored, and there is no mistake in using the term *university* in describing that establishment, regardless of how long it lasted (presumably at least up to the beginning of the 6th century). The system did not originate *ex nihilo*, as public teaching existed for a long time. The rules of employing were known, an

individual professor was already bound to the individual auditorium, precedents existed for raising teacher's status with seniority or for distinguishing the teachers who were publicly and privately paid. It is the inclusion of all these elements in one founding act, as well as the understanding of diverse higher education (grammatical and rhetorical, legal, philosophical) as an integrated system, and providing of a single place for it, that convince of the need to recognise the Constantinopolitan school as, *mutatis mutandis*, a university.

An appreciation of education as valuable can be easily observed in the attitude of the ecclesiastical authorities of the era; some authors accepted reading the pagan writers as well (cf. Basil of Caesarea's *Address to young men on the right use of pagan literature*, with references to many ancient authors). In consequence, there was no vital movement for creation of a separate system of Christian education, understood as an alternative to the official one, and no specific classes were developed, apart from such as those aimed at catechumens, for teaching in orphanages or initiatives of teaching children or illiterate monks in some of the monasteries. Even on the monastic turf an anti-intellectual current never dominated the tendency to educate.

A separate place in the Constantinopolitan education was held by vocational teaching, delivered usually at the teacher-practitioner's (physician, engineer, architect) workplace by means of an apprenticeship, often lasting for many years. Book production was also developed throughout the period, in the crucial historical moment of shift from scroll to codex; scriptoria thrived and booksellers' stalls were constantly opened for the more well-off inhabitants. After Constantine, no further need existed for ordering books from outside of the city – which was previously necessary due to their lack. A public city library, created by Constantius II, burnt down in 475 A.D. and was probably rebuilt by Anastasius (and later passed into the city's legend); other book collections existed as well (imperial, ecclesiastical, private). Importance of Constantinople in transmission of cultural achievements and cultural heritage cannot be omitted or disregarded. Viewing the city as culturally inferior when compared to Athens, Alexandria, Antioch or Berytus is, *summa summarum*, unjust and ungrounded.

The highly developed city organism, with not only a stable centre of power and patronage but also flourishing environment of instruction on all levels, possessed its own intellectual elite. The

third part of the dissertation is based exclusively on the texts of the Constantinopolitan intellectuals, and the apology of applying the term to the late antique reality forms an introduction to the issue. The chapter proposes a new way of understanding the authors' identification and classing them as Constantinopolitan; their temporary stay in the capital is not assumed as sufficient. Assuming this view, an author may be regarded as Constantinopolitan based on the degree and durability of his (her) links with the city's environment. With such a definition, individual authors may be claimed to have been Constantinopolitan or not Constantinopolitan throughout their lives depending on the period between their stay in the city and completion of the individual oeuvres. Thus the survey included only those works which are dated precisely enough to establish that the authors were present in Constantinople for at least ten years, merging their individualism into the cultural landscape of the city. Only such intellectuals may be classified as the Constantinopolitans writing about their compatriots, *nota bene* regardless of how strong was their identification with the city or the community of the capital.

Survey shaped with that method of classification allows to analyse the works of thirty six Constantinopolitan intellectuals. These are: Bemarchius, Themistius, Oribasius, Philostorgius, the author of *Notita Urbis Constantinopolitanae*, Philip of Side, Socrates Scholasticus, Hermias Sozomen, Proclus, Priscus of Panium, Nicholas of Myra, Zosimus, Priscian, Malchus of Philadelphia, Theodore Lector, count Marcellinus and the anonymous author of the last section of his chronicle, Hesychius of Miletus, deacon Agapetus, Romanus the Melodist, grammarian Eutyches, Aetius of Amida, Leontius the Presbyter, Stephen the Byzantine, John of Lydia, Paul the Silentiary, Peter the Patrician, the author of the large part of the eighteenth book of John Malalas' *Chronography* (i.e., in my opinion, Malalas himself), bishop Eutychius, Agathias of Myrina, Menander the Guardsman, Theophanes of Byzantium, John of Ephesus, Eustratius, bishop John IV the Faster, presbyter Photinus. I hope that this catalogue is appropriate and useful not only in context of the topic of the chapter and may find wider application. Output of only a few of the above-mentioned authors is completely lost, and only a few other works turned out to be unsuitable for investigating the issue. A dozen or so of the authors proved to be of fundamental importance, including Themistius, Philostorgius, Socrates, Sozomen, Priscus, Zosimus, Marcellinus, Agapetus, Leontius, John Lydus, Paul the Silentiary, John Malalas, Agathias, Menander, Eustratius, Photinus.

Writers of such different biographies and *Weltanschauungen*, diverse literary preferences and preferred genres, viewed the inhabitants of the Byzantine capital in manifold ways. Their notion of Constantinopolitans as a whole differs, albeit the authors generally refrain from open judgements on the populace. Narratives use most often the established order of πλῆθος (πλήθη) – δῆμος – λαός – ὄχλος, five main term denoting the crowd as historiographical actor, but the separate authors use the words in different meaning, which was pointed out in the chronological order on a representative sample of the authors and usages. Even the vast narratives as the church histories of Socrates and Sozomen mainly describe, and not evaluate. Both of the writers use relative judgements in relation to the religious denomination of the crowd, although it is not the exclusive indicator. Some events from the religious history of the city, as the last months of John Chrysostom's pontificate provide clearer insight to the characteristics of the inhabitants and their activities. There are some differences between the two sources, depending on Socrates' and Sozomen' attitude to the personages described (more than towards the crowds). Zosimus perceives the Constantinopolitans more negatively. Count Marcellinus mentions behaviour of the populace mainly in connection with the riots and rebellions (although the great rebellion of 532 is shown as an usurpation, and not a popular revolt); he also uses religious categorisation. John the Lydian, who included in his *De magistratibus* many opinions and assessments tinged with emotions, is generally critical towards the inhabitants, yet for different reasons than Zosimus. In discussion on his relation of *Nika!*, apart of *De magistratibus*, his *De ostentis* should be also taken into account. The passages of John Malalas on the same events, much more detailed, take part of responsibility and odium from the Constantinopolitans, and the separate notes of his chronicle show closely behaviour of the people in the face of natural disasters – that element links part of Malalas' narrative with the literary output of Agathias, despite the difference of genre.

There is a lot of value, as far as I am concerned, in quantitative comparison of collective and individual actors of the Constantinopolitan narratives. Sample juxtaposition has been presented in the chapter, based on the works of Socrates, Marcellinus and Malalas (XVIII, 71/76sqq), to take advantage of extensiveness of the histories and precision of the chronicles. It showed heterogeneity of the sources in surveyed respect, and differences between the two chronicles, with the superiority of Malalas', more detailed and better in observing of the "supporting actors" of the narrative. Apart from the interesting comparison of proportion of the clergy and laymen, the number and diversity of

the collective subjects seem to be of crucial meaning. In the light of their numerical strength and frequency, an opinion that crowds and populace do not play any important role in the late antique narratives, the common people are dominated by members of the elite, and the groups cannot be characterised – cannot be maintained.

Picture of the individual categories and social groups as viewed by the Constantinopolitan intellectuals confirms in a compelling way, worthy of further investigation, the above-mentioned variety of views and paradox of elitism (for example Themistius or Agathias) and egalitarism (for example homiletics, Menander, Agapetus). Members of all of the social groups were included in the field of interest of the Constantinopolitan writers, usually in the context of the current events, sometimes mentioned in an opinion, expressed by an epithet (e.g. Themistius, Marcellinus).

The elite of the empire, widely present in the sources, is described usually in a state, not a city context. Filiations as indications of stronger aristocratic trends in Constantinople are more often as late as the 6th century. At the same time, from Themistius onwards, a trend can be observed in Eastern Roman intellectual thought (a natural continuity with an earlier views), in which elevation of virtuous men is perceived as more favourable than of privileged due to their background. This belief seems connected with the high advances of the emperors and officials of non-aristocratic origin. Socrates and Sozomen also wrote at length on the officials in the capital, with evaluations dependent on their activities (especially in religious contexts); both historians often ascribe separate deeds to the anonymous and collective *mighty* of different names. Broad and varied criticism of the elites was displayed by Zosimus, who pointed out elements of negative selection in the system of power of the Christian empire. Marcellinus Comes identified the actors of the politics through their status as patricians more often than his predecessors, and he revealed some sentimental attachment toward those who originated from his own region of Illyricum. Except for the latter factor, there are many similarities in description of dignitaries between the Latin-writing Marcellinus and the Greek-writing Malalas. For John the Lydian, one of the major spurs to his literary activity was his barely-hidden disgust to those who reached the highest dignities in a few decades of his historical perspective, and above all to John the Cappadocian; Lydus reflected the tastes of his time and a gamut of his emotions in introducing extensive elements of invective to his descriptions. The officials he supported were evaluated and contrasted with the Cappadocian. Nearly all of the authors – surprisingly often – reflect the role of the senate as a symbolic and institutional keystone, with a rank lower but to the imperial one.

The Constantinopolitan clergy is pictured mainly by the ecclesiastical historians, and the significance of Philostorgius, Socrates and Sozomen is much higher than all the other texts. The portraits and evaluation of each member of ecclesiastical sphere in Constantinople cannot be disconnected from their religious assignment as confronted with the overall views of the historians. Of all the clergy, bishops are the most frequently described, often with clear positive or negative appraisal; account of John Chrysostom is especially useful, as the memorable pontificate of this bishop allowed the historians to reveal their personal views. The passages on the presbyters are no less important, and the fragments in Socrates devoted to the Novatians of Constantinople are unique. The other authors only supplement the picture painted by the church historiography, with valuable accounts by Marcellinus, John Malalas, Eustratius and Photinus. The monastic circles of the Byzantine capital are treated separately, and much less discernible than in the middle or late Byzantine period (the monasteries in the vicinities of Constantinople, as for example Ruphinianae, are excluded from the discussion).

The Constantinopolitan 'middle class' is relatively well reflected in the oeuvres of the Constantinopolitan intellectuals, as their own social setting. Common, and usually unfavourable, are mentions of the individual court or prefecture officials, e.g. the tax collectors. The sources generally depict a wide variety of the lower grade offices and posts and sometimes note the data unattested elsewhere (John the Lydian). The interpreters and their specific roles are also described by several of the historians. Some passages on the incompetent and uneducated δῆμος / πλῆθος in John the Lydian's *De magistratibus* should also be related to the various lower posts of the prefecture, and not to the 'common people' as it is in the modern translations.

Our authors usually treat physicians and jurists with reverence, and medical metaphors form a rhetorical tool used by authors as different as Themistius, Proclus, Socrates, Agapetus, Leontius, or even Romanus the Melodist. High esteem in which the doctors were held does not contradict the mistrust towards them expressed by some of the writers, either fideistic (belief in superiority of God's power over human medicine), or realistic (frequent ineffectiveness of treatment). Equally abundant is the information on rhetors and philosophers; some of them show relationships with intellectual circles of contemporary Constantinople (e.g. Troilus and his circle). The issue of relation between philosophy and rhetoric in thought and (self)identity of Themistius, one of his leitmotifs, is of separate interest, as opinions of Socrates and Sozomen on philosophy, an individual synthesis of *paideia* and Christian theology. Detailed remarks of Agathias on a pseudo-philosopher Uranius or

on different neighbour relations of an architect Anthemius with the lawyer and rhetor Zeno are also valuable and noteworthy.

The artisans – surprisingly – much more often than the merchants occur in the Constantinopolitan sources, generally in two ways. Firstly, they are mentioned in different contexts with relation to the separate events in the city. Interestingly enough, these are not usually the same professions as in the Antiochene sources, which may be a consequence of the predominance of John Chrysostom and Libanius in that segment of the early Byzantine literature, and the specificity of Constantinople on the other hand. There we can find the *argyropratai* and the goldsmiths, and the professions related to supply and provision of the city. Singular mentions show other crafts. Secondly, frequent comparisons to the craftsmen' work and jobs, easily understood in the city, appear habitually in speeches, both secular and ecclesiastical. Themistius is at the forefront once again, but the weaving metaphors in Proclus or sailor references in Agapetus should not be forgotten in this respect. They have wide Biblical or classical origins, but were clearly understandable, and sometimes they reveal the Constantinopolitan realities – viz. Themistius on the public controllers, *βασανισταί*, watching over proper sale of purple, gold and gemstones. The philosopher's remarks on *douleia* of the craftsmen, bound with his understanding of philosophy, did not mean disregard or contempt towards such work or people themselves.

The sources only rarely observe individuals or groups from the lowest social strata of Constantinople, although they regularly show behaviour of the Constantinopolitan street, and they contain many interesting data, even if these appear in passing. Attitude towards poverty is visible, it is presented variously as inducing anxiety, stigmatising, arousing compassion. Christian philanthropy in its verbal aspect is especially noticeable in the homiletics, hagiography, or in hortatory text of Agapetus; there are many examples of help to the impoverished. The athletes, such as charioteers and the trainers, were often well-respected. On the other hand the actors and mimes, despite the abovementioned popularity among the population of the capital, were generally so negatively labelled by the intellectuals that such opinions seem exaggerated and biased. The slaves and servants are usually portrayed without contempt or social prejudice.

The overall conclusion of the research, with a repeated stress on individualism of the early Byzantine authors active in Constantinople, should express 1. the limitations of the source material; 2. satisfaction of the relatively extensive data as compared with elsewhere in the region; 3. importance of self-identification of the authors. The latter is not flat or one-dimensional. Besides the most popu-

lar – Roman and Christian – there are also links to the *patris* or the language spoken, to the kin and family, and many other, not easily definable and more metaphorical (as John the Lydian's with magistrature, ritual and tradition). In those circumstances, although the labels 'a Constantinopolitan, a Byzantine' are rarely used, the identification of the intellectuals with the city seems to exist in many cases. Proof lies in many positive remarks, placed in fragments free from panegyrical setting.