

<p>Nicholas Mesarites, Ekphrasis on the Church of the Holy Apostles</p> <p>THE MAUSOLEUM OF CONSTANTINE AND THE TOMBS OF THE EMPERORS</p> <p>XXXIX. But let us, if you please, go off to this church which lies toward the east, so that we may look at the things in it, in order to admire and describe them - this church whose founder our discourse has already declared to be Constantius.</p> <p>2. This whole church is domical and circular, and because of the rather extensive area of the plan, I suppose, it is divided up on all sides by numerous stoaed angles, for it was built for the reception of his father's body and of his own and of the bodies of those who should rule after them.</p> <p>3. To the east, then, and in first place the body of Constantine, who first ruled the Christian Empire, is laid to rest within this purple-hued sarcophagus as though on some purple-blooming royal couch - he who was, after the twelve disciples, the thirteenth herald of the orthodox faith, and likewise the founder of this imperial city.</p> <p>4. The sarcophagus has a four-sided shape, somewhat oblong but not with equal sides. The tradition is that Helen, his mother and his fellow-worker for the orthodox faith, is buried with her son.</p> <p>5. The tomb toward the south is that of the famous Constantius, the founder of the Church. This too is of porphyry color but not in all respects similar to the tomb of his father, just as he who lies within it was not in all ways similar to his father, but was inferior to his father, and followed behind him, in piety and in mental endowment.</p> <p>6. The tomb [Theodosius was finally buried in Constantinople on 8 November 395.] toward the north and opposite this, and similar to those which have been mentioned, holds the body of Theodosius the Great like an inexhaustible treasure of noble deeds.</p> <p>7. The one toward the east, closest to this one, is that of Pulcheria. She is the honored and celebrated founder of the monastery of the Hodegon; see how she, a virgin herself, holds in her hands the likeness of the all holy Virgin.</p> <p>8. This tomb holds the dust of him who was an emperor among wise men and a wise man among emperors [=Leo VI, "the Wise", 886-912]. This is the tomb of the Empress Theophano [d. 893], the worthy and venerable, whose memory is everlasting, whose husband was the Wise Emperor, the truly wise Empress, who lived a praiseworthy life; "for the first wisdom is a praiseworthy life" as the holy writings say.</p> <p>9. This is the tomb of Constantine, the first emperor born in the purple, whose name is great in righteous judgment...</p> <p>10. This is the tomb of Basil [I, 867-86] the Macedonian, who by most divine providence was raised from a lowly walk of life to the eminence of the imperial position - he who, they say, removed a quantity of the decoration from the church of the heralds of God and transferred it to the sacred house which he himself built in the name of the chief marshal of the powers on high, the church whose title is the Nea</p> <p>11. This is the tomb of Nikephoros [I, 963-969] [Must be II?] Phokas a most brave and warlike and prudent man, who lost his life by treachery. The tomb in the inner part of the Church contains Constantine [VIII, 1025-1028], born to the purple, the brother of the great emperor who is known as [Basil II, 976-1025] the Bulgar-slayer.</p> <p>12. This is the Constantine who built this Church in the form in which it is now to be seen, as various people have told.</p>	<p>THE MAUSOLEUM OF JUSTINIAN AND THE TOMBS OF THE EMPERORS</p> <p>XL. Let us go on a little, if it seems good to you, o spectator, to another building, which is called a heroon, and is named by some a place of mourning because there are buried in it the emperors, who are, one might say, heroes.</p> <p>2. You see another building with five stoas like that pool at the Sheep Gate of Solomon; for here too there lies a great multitude of those who have lost their vigor because of the weakness to which every man is subject through sin.</p> <p>3. But these men too will spring up at the coming of the angel, when he sounds the trumpet to all the world at the second coming of the Lord, and they will stand before the impartial judge of all, the Savior Christ.</p> <p>4. This tomb at the east is that of Justinian [I, 527-565] [Justinian's body was entombed in a specially built mausoleum in the Church of the Holy Apostles until it was desecrated and robbed during the pilage of the city in 1204 by the Latin States of the Fourth Crusade.], whose name is great and celebrated for just judgment and observance of the law, who is the founder of the great shrine of the Wisdom of the Word of God. His name will be celebrated from generation to generation as the doer of the most mighty deeds, as the supreme ruler, who cast down great princes who had subjected the whole world to the power of their might.</p> <p>5. The tomb close to this and toward the north is that of Justin [II, 565-578], the grandson of Justinian, a man celebrated for his justice and greatly renowned for his piety, who also built what was lacking in the great shrine of the Wisdom of the Word of God, and completed it and resettled the dome, which had fallen, and skilfully raised it.</p> <p>6. The tomb toward the south is that of his consort Sophia, a devout and seemly woman, really wise and truly fearing the Lord; for the beginning and end of wisdom is the fear of the Lord, as the holy writing says".</p> <p>7. This is the tomb of Heraclius [610-641] whose fame is wide and resounding in Persia and the lands about it. He performed many labors, surpassing, as one might say, those labors of Heracles; and before performing these he put off his imperial robe and as he set out on his campaign, put on black-hued boots, and then returned when he had turned them red, dyeing them in the blood of the barbarians.</p> <p>8. This green sarcophagus is that of Theophilus [829-842], who belched forth the venom of impiety against the holy images and poured it over those who venerated them.</p> <p>9. Whether, indeed, as the story is, he was saved by the remarkable assistance and zeal of the orthodox Theodora, his wife, through the restoration and veneration once more, at her behest, of the holy and divine images, I myself cannot say certainly; but let him speak who was tattooed by him - and is known to this day as the Graptos - on account of his veneration of the august images - he who is himself inscribed in the Book of Life.</p> <p>10. This tomb of Sardinian stone belongs to Theodora [wife of Justinian I] the prudent empress, whose work this celebrated and admired church of the heralds of God is. And concerning the others, why should we care, since their memories are buried with them in their tombs?</p> <p>Constantinople, recueil d'études, d'archéologie et d'histoire. Description of the Church of the Holy Apostles at Constantinople mpedani@unive.it [Maria Pia Pedani] antonio.fabris@gmail.com [Toni Fabris] r.m.speelman@uu.nl [Raniero Speelman]</p>	<p>CONSTANTINE'S "GREAT CHURCH"</p> <p>Constantine probably also started the Hagia Sophia in 326 (Chron. pasch. 1.543–45). This church was the cathedral of the new capital, consecrated on February 15, 360, by Eudoxius (bp. 360–370) in the reign of Constantius II. Originally it was simply called The Great Church (Megalē ekklēsia), and only later was it dedicated to "Divine Wisdom" (Hagia Sophia) (Socrates, Hist. eccl. 2.16). The foundations of this important structure are covered today by Justinian's church of the same name. Only part of the atrium and the small house for keeping the sacred vessels (skeuophylakion) remain of the original Constantinian building. John Chrysostom used to preach from the throne in the middle of the church. The church had an ambo and solea (passageway), made of stone (Cedrenus, Hist. comp. 1.531; Nicephorus Callistus, Hist. eccl. 17.10; John Chrysostom, Exp. Ps. 48.17; Hom. 5 [PG 55.507]) . Golden drapes screened the entrances, and the altar was also made of gold, encrusted with precious stones (Chron. pasch. 1.544–45). The Constantinian Great Church and the nearby Senate House were ravaged by fire in the turbulences following the final deposition of John Chrysostom on June 9, 404.</p> <p>CHURCH OF THE HOLY APOSTLES</p> <p>The Church of the Holy Apostles was founded by Constantine as the main Christian place of worship of the new capital. The emperor planned to move the relics of all the apostles there, designating himself the thirteenth of them.</p> <p>The church was consecrated by his son, Constantius II, who buried Constantine there (Procopius, Aed. 1.4.19), establishing the tradition of imperial burials in Christian churches. The church had marble walls, a gilded dome, and galleries all around (Eusebius, Vit. Const. 4.58–59).</p>		
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