



SLOVANSKÝ
SÚSTAV

Colloque international

VILLES DE TOUTE BEAUTÉ

L'ekphrasis des cités dans les littératures byzantine
et byzantino-slaves

Prague (Villa Lanna), 25-26 novembre 2011

organisé par

Académie des Sciences de la République Tchèque
Institut d'Études Slaves

et

École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales
Centre d'Études Byzantines,
Néo-helléniques et Sud-Est Européennes

Programme

Vendredi 25 novembre

8.30 – 9.00 *registration*

- 9.00 Introduction: Paolo ODORICO (Paris)
– Václav ČERMÁK (Prague)
- Allocution de M. Constantinos KOKOSSIS,
Ambassadeur de Grèce en République Tchèque
- 9.15 Hélène SARADI (Kalamata): Idyllic Nature and Urban
Setting: An Ideological Theme with Artistic Style,
or a Mode of Playful Self-indulgence

10.00-10.30 *break*

10.30-12.00 Président: Ruth WEBB

- * Delphine LAURITZEN (Bologne – Paris): A l'ombre
des jeunes villes en fleurs. Nikaia, Tyr et Béroé
dans les *Dionysiaques* de Nonnos de Panopolis
- * Vlastimil DRBAL (Prague): Béroé et Amymôné dans
la description de Bérytos dans les *Dionysiaques* 41-43
de Nonnos de Panopolis

discussion

12.00-14.00 *déjeuner*

14.00-15.30 Président: Stéphanos EFTHYMIADIS

- * Henry MAGUIRE (Baltimore, MD): The Heavenly City
in Ekphrasis and in Art

- * Wolfram HÖRANDNER (Wien): Theodore Prodromos and the City

discussion

15.30-16.00 *break*

16.00-18.00 Président: Wolfram HÖRANDNER

- * Stéphanos EFTHYMIADIS (Nicosia): Michael Choniates' *Inaugural Address at Athens*: A City's Enkomion and a Two-fold Spiritual Ascent
- * Beatrice DASKAS (Milan): Images de la ville imperiale dans les *ekphrastikas diégèses* de Nikolaos Mésaritès
- * Andreas RHOBY (Wien): Theodoros Metochites' *Byzantios* and other city *encomia* of the 13th and 14th centuries

discussion

Dîner offert par Son Excellence M. Constantinos Kokossis, Ambassadeur de la République de Grèce, pour les participants invités.

Samedi 26 novembre

9.00-10.30 Président: Andreas RHOBY

- * Paul MAGDALINO (Istanbul): The Beauty of Antiquity in Late Byzantine Praises of Constantinople
- * Ruth WEBB (Lille): Ekphraseis of cities in Greek rhetoric of the Roman period and their reception in the fifteenth century: The case of Manuel Chrysoloras' ekphrasis of Rome

discussion

10.30-11.00 *break*

11.00-12.30 Président: Paul MAGDALINO

- * Charis MESSIS (Paris): De l'invisible au visible: Venise dans la littérature byzantine des derniers siècles
- * Igor MEDVEDEV (Saint-Petersburg): Constantinople versus Rome: *Ekphrasis* of Manuel Chrysoloras

discussion

12.30-14.30 *déjeuner*

14.30-16.00 Président: Igor MEDVEDEV

- * Julie JANČÁRKOVÁ (Prague) – Sergej GAGEN (Prague – Jekaterinburg): Images of a City in Byzantine *Ekphraseis* and Old Russian Wanderings /*Khozhdeniya/* (XIIIth and XIVth centuries)
- * Olga BARYNINA (Saint-Petersburg): *Ekphrasis* of a City in Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus (on materials of archive of the Russian Byzantine commission)

discussion

16.00-16.30 *break*

16.30-17.30 conclusion du colloque et du projet:
Paolo ODORICO (Paris)

18.30-20.30 réception dans la Villa Lanna
pour les participants invités

Résumés

H. SARADI (Kalamata)

Idyllic Nature and Urban Setting: An Ideological Theme with Artistic Style, or a Mode of Playful Self-indulgence

Idyllic descriptions of nature have been an element of the *ekphrasis* of the late antique and Byzantine city. The setting of the city in an esthetically pleasing environment (plains, fields, mountains, sea, rivers, lakes, meadows, forests, and gardens) is praised in most of the city *ekphraseis*. Particularly appropriate was the emphasis in the nature in the description of suburbs. The praise of Antioch and the lament for Nikomedeia by Libanios offer some of the best early examples. Constantinople was praised for its location on the shore of Bosphorus and the stunning view it offered to the inhabitants.

The paper will examine descriptions of nature in city *ekphraseis* in the later Byzantine centuries: the description of Thessalonica by Kameniates, the praises of Nicaea by Theodore Laskaris and Theodore Metochites, the *Byzantios* of Metochites, the praises of Trebizond by Bessarion and John Eugenikos, the praise of Corinth and of the *kome* Petrina by the same author are some of the best examples. Descriptions of nature in praises of cities, especially of Constantinople, are also found in hagiographical texts of the late centuries. These texts describe the cities in an idyllic natural environment not only as the frame of the urban setting, but also as a spiritual space. In particular, in the texts of Eugenikos the secular realism of the urban space is dressed with the spirituality and purity of the natural environment. Prototypes of such perceptions of nature can be found in idyllic descriptions of ancient temples, in the *Panathenaic* of Aelius Aristeides, in the description of a meadow by Procopius of Gaza, and in Plato's *Phaedros*. In images of the nature's beauty as a source of aesthetic pleasure an influence of the Italian Renaissance may also be discerned. At the same time, however, the Byzantine descriptions of nature maintain the quest for idealization and for nature's transcendental qualities – a Byzantine perception of the world.

D. LAURITZEN (Bologne – Paris)

A l'ombre des jeunes villes en fleurs. Nikaia, Tyr et Béroé dans les Dionysiaques de Nonnos de Panopolis

Il s'agit ici d'étudier comment le poète égyptien Nonnos de Panopolis (V^e siècle) traite l'*ekphrasis* encomiastique de ville dans sa grande œuvre

épique en quarante-huit chants, les *Dionysiaques*. Nonnos démontre sa maîtrise des codes rhétoriques en intégrant dans son récit des passages qui relèvent, en bonne et due forme, de ce genre. Il semble cependant que l'on ait parfois affaire à des procédés de pastiche, voire à une parodie. La fonction de ces moments est en effet moins de glorifier les villes réelles dont il est effectivement question que de créer un univers littéraire dans lequel ces dernières prennent alors tout leur sens.

Trois villes – Nikaia, Tyr, Béroé – sont autant de jalons dans l'économie de l'épopée dionysiaque, et ce à plusieurs niveaux : géographique si l'on s'en tient au déroulement de l'histoire – cosmique lorsque c'est son interprétation qui est en jeu – et, en conséquence, métalittéraire en ce qu'elles apparaissent finalement comme les piliers de l'édifice poétique élevé par l'auteur. Le génie de Nonnos et de l'œuvre pousse ainsi à l'extrême de ses possibilités le genre de l'éloge de ville, traversé, bousculé et remodelé par les exigences d'autres codes, ceux de la description, de la personnification et de l'héméneutique.

V. DRBAL (Prague)

Béroé et Amymoné dans la description de Bérytos dans les *Dionysiaques* 41-43 de Nonnos de Panopolis

Dans les *Dionysiaques* 41-43 de Nonnos de Panopolis, la nymphe protectrice de Beyrouth est appelé ou Béroé (le nom utilisé par Nonnos aussi pour la ville elle-même, à côté de Bérytos), ou bien Amymôné. Le but de la communication est d'étudier les origines différentes de ces deux personnages mythologiques et le rôle qu'ils jouent dans la description de la ville.

Béroé était une nymphe éponyme de la cité macédonienne Beroia; vraisemblablement, la ville phénicienne avait reçu le même nom parce qu'elle aussi était connue pour l'abondance des eaux. Pendant l'Antiquité tardive, le mythe d'Amymôné a beaucoup évolué: Poséidon, du sauveur de la nymphe devant le Satyre, est devenu son époux comme le prouve la fin de la description de Nonnos dans le chant 43 (où pourtant, la nymphe est nommée sous la forme Béroé ici) et – dans les œuvres d'art – la mosaïque de Cassiopée de la grande maison sous la „cathédrale de l'Est“ à Apamée en Syrie sur laquelle Amymôné est représentée clairement en tant qu'épouse de Poséidon.

L'association des deux nymphes opérée par Nonnos est un trait caractéristique de l'Antiquité tardive, pendant laquelle différentes traditions mythologiques ne font qu'une dans le but évident d'inventer un motif nouveau. Chez Nonnos, ce nouveau motif s'exprime dans la volonté d'accentuer l'ancienneté et l'importance de Bérytos, refusant – dans le cadre d'une

rivalité entre Bérytos et Chypre à propos de la primauté dans le culte et le mythe d'Aphrodite – les prétentions de l'île. La description de Bérytos dans les *Dionysiaques* de Nonnos est ainsi un exemple intéressant de la volonté d'exprimer, avec les moyens de la géographie et des mythes, la supériorité de la ville, qui était particulièrement chère à l'auteur. Le pendant d'une telle volonté dans les œuvres d'art constitue la mosaïque de la maison de Dionysos à Néa Paphos à Chypre: la mosaïque, elle aussi, veut exprimer cette supériorité – à l'aide du mythe de Poseidon et Amymôné.

H. MAGUIRE (Baltimore, MD)

The Heavenly City in Ekphrasis and in Art

Byzantine literature contains rich and specific descriptions of the heavenly city and of the palace of its ruler. Cyril Mango has drawn attention to the *Vision* of the tenth-century monk Cosmas, which gives a detailed account of the heavenly city, with its walls of twelve courses, its gold and silver gates, its golden pavements, golden houses, and golden seats. Its palace in many respects resembled the Great Palace of Constantinople. Similar descriptions of the heavenly city are found in other texts, such as the Apocalypse of Anastasia, the Life of Andrew the Fool, and the Life of Basil the Younger. This great wealth of heavenly architecture, however, went largely without illustration in medieval Byzantine art. In Byzantine mosaics and paintings it is the *absence* of buildings that distinguishes heaven from earth, not, as in the texts, the evocation of structures that are larger or more splendid than those below. On the other hand, western medieval artists did on occasion depict heaven in the form of palace-like edifices framing sacred figures. My paper will explore the reasons for this disjunction between the visual and the literary arts in Byzantium with respect to the portrayal of heaven.

W. HÖRANDNER (Wien)

Theodore Prodromos and the City

Being one of the most important court poets of his time (and even beyond), Theodore Prodromos time and again praised the imperial City, its beauty and its institutions, particularly the court and the Great Church. Yet his relationship with the City was not always unproblematic. In one of his poems (Historical Poems, no. LXXIX), entitled “Verses of farewell to the Byzantines”, he blames Constantinople for letting leave the City one of its most excellent intellectuals together with Prodromos himself. Thus, he combines skillfully praise (*enkomion*) and reproach (*psogos*) in one and the same

poem. In the contribution at hand I try to demonstrate by use of which means (language, meter, rhetorical figures etc.) he succeeds in expressing his ambivalent feelings towards the City and its rulers.

S. EFTHYMIADIS (Nicosia)

Michael Choniates' Inaugural Address at Athens: A City's Enkomion and a Two-fold Spiritual Ascent

The present paper aims to discuss under a new perspective a text which is key to our understanding of the spirit and the language of renewal that prevailed during the Comnenian age. Before turning himself to the harshest critic of Athens in premodern times, Michael Choniates addresses the Athenians, his flock-to-be, as heirs to and keepers of the ancient light which by virtue of the Christian revelation has acquired a spiritual dimension which can lead them up to the Promised Land and the metropolis of the Forebearers, i.e. Heaven. The city's enkomion offers to Choniates the opportunity first to a self-projection, then to a contemplation at once of three different landscapes: the physical, the intellectual, and the spiritual. These are treated not in oppositional but in accumulative terms ending in a climactic crescendo which brings into unison the Parthenon and Mt Sinai, both points of Theophany.

B. DASKAS (Milan)

Images de la ville impériale dans les *ekphrastikas diégèses* de Nikolaos Mésaritès

Ecrits tout à la fin du siècle des Comnènes, les 'récits descriptifs' (*ekphrastikas diégèses*) de Nikolas Mesarites séduisent pour leur originalité. En particulier, le *Récit sur la Révolution de Palais*, qui relate la tentative d'usurpation de Jean le Gros sous le règne d'Alexis III Ange, nous introduit, grâce à la variété de ses effets, à la réalité vivante de la ville impériale, bouleversée par les événements. Les espaces symboles du pouvoir – la Sainte-Sophie, le Grand Palais - sont plongés dans le tourbillon diabolique de la révolte, profanés par un mélange confus de freluquets nécessiteux et obscurs, qu'à la tête de leur commandant en chef se lancent à la conquête de la ville par excellence. Au fil de la narration, c'est une image de Constantinople tout à fait insolite qui se construit la beauté étonnante de ses lieux et ses décors, qu'on a l'habitude de saisir à travers les milliers des pages qui lui ont été dédiées, est sous attaque. Mais cela ne peut que faire partie du destin d'une ville exceptionnelle, au pouvoir d'attraction hors du commun, irrésistible.

A. RHOBY (Wien)

Theodoros Metochites' *Byzantios* and other city *encomia* of the 13th and 14th centuries

The late antique tradition of composing city encomia was readopted in late Byzantium. In the 13th and 14th centuries two encomia were written for the praise of Nikaia (Theodoros Laskaris, Theodoros Metochites), two were devoted to Constantinople (Theodoros Metochites, Georgios Karbones). So far Metochites' lengthy speech on Constantinople – *Byzantios or about the imperial megalopolis* –, preserved in cod. Vind. phil. gr. 95 (s. XIV), fol. 233^v–302^v, despite the fact that it belongs to his major works, has not received the scholarship it deserves mainly due to the lack of a reliable critical edition. It is this paper's purpose to present the content of the *Byzantios* and to compare this encomion with the three other speeches. Specific stress will be laid on the comparison with the *Nikaeus*, which Metochites delivered early in his career. In addition, the following questions will be posed: What can be said about the motivation of composing these speeches? What can be stated about the major differences, what about similarities? How is ekphrasis employed in these speeches?

P. MAGDALINO (Istanbul)

The Beauty of Antiquity in Late Byzantine Praises of Constantinople

This paper looks at the extent to which the antiquity of Constantinople was emphasised or articulated in literary celebration of the city and its monuments. It surveys texts from the 8th to the 15th centuries, concentrating particularly on the *Byzantios* of Theodore Metochites and the *Comparison of Old and New Rome* by Manuel Chrysoloras. My basic conclusion is that while an aesthetic appreciation of the antique past was always implicit in admiration for the 'wonders' (θαύματα) and 'spectacles' (θεάματα) of Constantinople, and in reverence for the city's Roman roots and Constantinian foundation, this sense of antiquity did not become explicit until the late Byzantine period, when it was inseparably linked with the following developments:

- The tendency to write eulogies and ekphraseis of cities as a whole, rather than of individual buildings
- More systematic *mimesis* of ancient rhetorical models, notably of the Second Sophistic
- The cultivation of Hellenic as well as Roman identity
- The political fragmentation of the Byzantine world and the separatism of provincial cities

- The destruction, depopulation, and dilapidation of the urban environment
- If time allows, I will devote special consideration to the perception of ruins and spolia by Metochites and Chrysoloras.

R. WEBB (Lille)

Ekphraseis of cities in Greek rhetoric of the Roman period and their reception in the fifteenth century: The case of Manuel Chrysoloras' ekphrasis of Rome

A notable instance of the revival of interest in late Byzantium the classical past and in rhetorical models of the Roman period is the *Comparison of Old and New Rome* by Manuel Chrysoloras, written in 1411. This paper will look at the description of Rome and its monuments in the first half of the *Comparison* to see how Chrysoloras makes use of the Greek rhetorical tradition of city ekphrasis in order to present Rome in a characteristically Greek idiom that combines the writings of Aelius Aristides and Libanios as well as specifically Byzantine modes of describing. I suggest, in particular, that the aim of ekphrasis, to place its subject 'before the eyes' of the reader or listener was specific to the Greek rhetorical tradition and that Chrysoloras' use of it was new in the Italian context.

Ch. MESSIS (Paris)

De l'invisible au visible: Venise dans la littérature byzantine des derniers siècles

Le but de cette intervention est d'examiner les raisons d'une absence et d'une réapparition: les *enkōmia* des villes, dans le cadre de la littérature byzantine. Cette question sera abordée à partir de l'examen des textes consacrés à la description de Venise, en tant que réalité géographique et historique, pendant toute la période byzantine, du X^e siècle, époque où Venise fait son apparition timide et bien ciblée dans le *De administrando Imperio* de Constantin Porphyrogénète jusqu'au XV^e siècle, époque où elle sera dotée d'un nombre considérable de références élogieuses de taille variable et écrites d'auteurs à des visées politiques variées. Notre analyse sera close par l'examen de l'*enkōmion* de Venise inséré dans l'œuvre historiographique de Laonikos Chalkokondylès. Nous suivrons le passage de Venise de l'invisibilité médiobyzantine à une visibilité de plus en plus pointée à l'époque de la chute de Constantinople, et nous nous demanderons des causes de cette évolution.

I. MEDVEDEV (Saint-Petersburg)

Constantinople versus Rome: Ekphrasis of Manuel Chrysoloras

The present report is based on Manuel Chrysoloras' voluminous writing from 1411, intended for Emperor Manuel II Palaiologos. Chrysoloras was one of the most brilliant representatives of the late Byzantine humanistic intellectuals, and this work is a rather original and cleverly written survey of Rome's and Constantinople's antiquities, presented in a comparative art-historical and archaeological study. According to the author, Rome and Constantinople were both capital cities of the same empire. While Manuel Chrysoloras looks at Rome basically through the eyes of an archaeologist, in the case of Constantinople he acts rather like an art and architectural historian. By the end of his work Manuel Chrysoloras adopts the attitude of a philosopher and a thinker pondering on the evanescence of all earthly things, even those possessing the magical capacity to enchant with their air of history and their echo of glory.

J. JANČÁRKOVÁ (Prague) – S. GAGEN (Prague – Jekaterinburg)

Images of a City in Byzantine *Ekphraseis* and Old Russian Wanderings /*Khozhdeniya*/ (XIIIth and XIVth centuries)

The report is devoted to the rhetorical means of depiction of a city in Byzantine *ekphraseis*, which were borrowed by the authors of Old Russian Wanderings (*khozhdeniya*) in XIIIth and XIVth centuries. Another problem concerns the discrepancy between the Old Russian art and literature. We are dealing with three questions:

Firstly, it is necessary to allocate rhetorical means that were used by Byzantines at the city description. It is a question of metaphors, comparisons and literature images characterizing a city but not being an *ekphrasis* in a rhetorical sense. Secondly, it is necessary to pay attention to the Byzantine scheme of *ekphrasis* constructed as an ensemble of rhetorical *topoi*. Thirdly, it is necessary to analyze what could have been borrowed for the Old Russian Wanderings (*khozhdeniya*) from these literary richnesses.

We have chosen from the oceans of the Byzantine literary sources only two authors. The first one, Nicephoros Gregoras, left us a well-known «*ekphrasis* of the Athos» (1347) and «*ekphrasis* of *politeia* of the Cyprus» (1351). Both these *ekphraseis* represents Plato's ideal of *politeia*. Gregoras never visited either Athos or Cyprus. His descriptions were purely literary constructions, based on rhetorical models of antiquity. The second one, a monk Matthias, described in the year 1398 Feodoro, a Gothic city situated at the Empire borders on Crimea, which he really visited.

Byzantine *ekphrasis* of a city was developed on the basis of the antique description Plato's «ideal of *politeia*». Besides, Byzantines creatively used traditional Plato's metaphors, thinking out new allegories, or filling household sketches of everyday life with allegorical sense. Slavs and Old Russian had neither Plato's legacy nor Byzantine creativity. Metaphors of the Old Russian literature, concerning cities, were rather poor. Actually, it is possible to name only one: «a city of indescribable beauty». Descriptions of Old Russian travellers are rather realistic, but their realism is one of Byzantine guides for foreign pilgrims (*proskynitaria*).

(*der Vortrag wird auf Deutsch gehalten*)

O. BARYNINA (Saint-Petersburg)

Ekphrasis of a City in Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus (on materials of archive of the Russian Byzantine commission)

The activity of the so-called Russian-Byzantine commission (or Byzantine commission of the Russian Academy of Sciences, 1918-1930) was dedicated to collecting and studying of the texts attributed to Constantine Porphyrogenitus or reflected his epoch (the ultimate goal of the Commission was to reprint Du Cange's Greek dictionary.). Sixteen Byzantine historical texts were translated into Russian and almost all of them were excerpted. Different terms and names were extracted from these texts (such as *De Administrando Imperio*, *De Ceremoniis*, *De Thematibus*, *Vita Basili*) and most of them were annotated. Researching of the remained archival materials allows drawing conclusions about Constantine's purposes and ways of use of *ekphrasis* reception in his secular historical compositions. The archival documents allow making a number of interesting supervision that can be actual for a contemporary interpretation of *ekphrasis* in Byzantine literature and studying the tradition of *ekphrasis* during the Macedonian dynasty.

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