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Coinage and Money in Byzantine Typika

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To the editors of Archives de l'Athos,
past and present,
and in memoriam Paul Gautier

“**Y**ou shall not possess anything of this world, nor store up anything for yourself as your own, not even one piece of silver” (οὔτε ἀποθησαυρίσεις ἰδιορίστως εἰς ἑαυτὸν μέχρι καὶ ἑνὸς ἀργυρίου).¹ Theodore Stoudites’s words ruling against worldly possessions were more than once repeated in later typika such as Athanasios’s for Lavra. His strictures of course applied only to individuals, although there were frequent exceptions.² But inevitably attention had to be paid to monastic property and finances as a means of insuring the foundation’s permanence and its fidelity to monastic duties, as well as the maintenance of the community members and above all the exercise of their charitable activities. Although the traditional mistrust of money led some typika to avoid the subject, a third of them (some twenty of the sixty-one assembled in the “Surviving Founders’ Typika and Testaments” translated in *Byzantine Monastic Foundation Documents*) do deal in varying detail with monetary matters. Byzantine monetary history is therefore greatly indebted to the typika for evidence on one of its most complex periods, the eleventh and twelfth centuries.

Since the first edition of a typikon was that of the Kecharitomene in Montfaucon’s *Analecta Graeca* published in 1688,³ Charles Du Cange had no knowledge of any such documents when he wrote his learned *De imperatorum Constantinopolitanorum seu de inferioris aevi vel imperii ut vocant numismatibus dissertatio*. This was published in 1678 as an appendix to his Glossary of medieval Latin and included long commentaries on several coin types and names.⁴ Among the nineteenth-century scholars, Jean N. Svoronos, in a group of short essays on various coin names and monetary inscriptions, cites only the Kecharitomene.⁵

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¹ Theodore Stoudites, PG 99:1817.

² G. Constable, “Preface,” in *Byzantine Monastic Foundation Documents*, ed. J. Thomas and A. C. Hero (Washington, D.C., 2000), 24 (hereafter *BMFD*).

³ See *BMFD*, “Introduction,” 1–2.

⁴ Reprinted also as an appendix to G. A. L. Henschel and L. Favre’s edition of his *Glossarium Mediae et Infimae Latinitatis* in 1887 (vol. 9).

⁵ J. N. Svoronos, “Βυζαντιακὰ νομισματικὰ ζητήματα,” *JIAN* 2 (1899): 348–63, at 352, after Cotelier’s edition in *Ecclesiae Graecae Monumenta* (Paris, 1677), 72.

More recently Anatole Frolov⁶ and later Vitalien Laurent⁷ attempted with limited success to untangle their rich evidence. My own first contact with the typika goes back to Paul Lemerle's 1965 seminar on Pakourianos and other eleventh-century documents which prompted me to study the *michaëlaton* and related coin names of the period.⁸ It was Michael Hendy who properly sorted out the apparent confusion about Komnenian coins lamented by previous authors. He made extensive use of the whole series of twelfth-century typika in his path-breaking book of 1969.⁹ In chapter four on "The Monetary Terminology of the Twelfth Century," typika account for a good half of the documentation he cites. Although they must be complemented by other textual evidence from historical sources or more frequently from archival documents, whether Greek, Latin, or sometimes Georgian, the typika present well-dated factual material. This is due to their often dual composition combining rules and customs—often but not necessarily formulaic in character—and data of a testamentary and autobiographical nature.

The collection of translations offered by the Dumbarton Oaks publication is most welcome since it enables one to obtain an exhaustive view of the material. While Konstantinos Smyrlis deals in this volume of *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* with the general management of monastic estates, I propose to examine how typika reflect the monetary systems of their time and try to give a brief insight, however partial, into the image they offer of the relations of monasteries with the monetary economy.

COINAGE AND MONETARY SYSTEMS AS REFLECTED IN TYPIKA

That typika reflect fairly exactly the existing currency of their time will be shown in what follows. Even formulaic stipulations adapt to the changes. The seventh-century Apa Abraham testament (*BMFD* 1), though unfortunately vague, uses the Evangelical *assarion* (Matt. 10:29 and Luke 12:16),¹⁰ but also mentions the main types of contemporary currency: "6 ounces of gold," that is half a pound, as a penalty, the "trimesion" or one-third of a solidus as the lowest gold unit, and the "obol" as an equivalent of the follis or as a general name for the smallest available unit.¹¹ The statement in the typikon of Apa Abraham and similar later declarations about the monks' renunciation of any kind of private property, which go back to the rule of Basil of Caesarea, show this evolution over the course of time. As mentioned already, Theodore Stoudites (*BMFD* 3) refers to "not even an *argyron*," a term used in the early Byzantine period for the billon-surface silvered coin and later bronze unit.¹² It probably referred then, in 826, as it does in Theophanes Continuatus, in

⁶ A. Frolov, "Les noms de monnaies dans le typikon du Pantocrator," *BSI* 10.2 (1949): 241–53.

⁷ V. Laurent, "Bulletin de numismatique byzantine (1940–1949). Dix années de trouvailles et d'études," *REB* 8 (1950): 192–251 ("II. Le vocabulaire numismatique," 199–206).

⁸ C. Morrisson, "Le michaëlaton et les noms de monnaies au XIe siècle," *TM* 3 (1968): 369–74 (repr. in eadem, *Monnaies et finances à Byzance: Analyses, technique* [Aldershot, 1994], art. v).

⁹ M. F. Hendy, *Coinage and Money in the Byzantine Empire 1081–1261*, DOS 12 (Washington, D.C., 1969).

¹⁰ Cf. P. Grierson in *DOC* 5.1:25.

¹¹ C. Morrisson, "Monnaie et prix du Ve au VIIe siècle," in *Hommes et richesses dans l'empire byzantin*, vol. 1 (Paris, 1989), 239–60 (repr. in *Monnaies et finances*, art. III).

¹² *Argyron* is used in the 4th century (PRyl. IV, 607 and POxy. XXIV, 2729). For later 5th- and 6th-century examples and its abbreviation on bronze coins as AP, wrongly interpreted as meaning *antiquo pondere, arca prae-fecturia*, or as a reference to the *scrinium ad pecunias*, see C. Morrisson, "L'économie monétaire byzantine," *RN* 29 (1987): 248 note 3 with references.

the *Book of Ceremonies*, or later in the *Palaia Logarike*, to the silver miliaresion.¹³ In Athanasios's rule (*BMFD* 11, 228), ca. 963, the whole range of coins from the high-value gold to the smallest bronze is encompassed in the phrase ἡ νομισματα ἢ νομμία, which the translator has rendered as “coins or currency.” This is also the technical vocabulary still used in the early twelfth century in Alexios I's fiscal rescripts included in the *Logarike*.¹⁴ In the Kecharitomene typikon (1110–16), the formula adopts the equivalent “even to the extent of an obol.”¹⁵ This equivalent to the follis is often found in the works of learned and educated writers of the twelfth century, such as Niketas Choniates,¹⁶ and it is no surprise to find it in the classicizing pen of the author commissioned by Anna Komnene's mother, Empress Irene, to write the typikon, perhaps Anna herself.

The evolution cannot be followed any further since this interdiction on monks' possession of private property seems not to have been repeated. However, in a different context, limits are set in terms of the current units of the time. In 1406, in forbidding a “restive” brother seeking solitude to ask for any allowance from the monastery, the typikon of Manuel II Palaiologos (1406) states that he should not demand “any hyperpera,”¹⁷ implying the silver coin of the period. In Crete, in 1400, the testament of Neilos Damilas threatens with excommunication “anyone who is found to have a passionate attachment to her relatives or children and wishes to give them money from her own work, even one *grosso*,”¹⁸ that is, the silver coin of Venice whose minting had resumed in 1379 on a slightly changed standard of fineness probably inspired by the need for a simple equation with the new Byzantine silver hyperpyron.¹⁹

More precise details appear only from the late eleventh century onward, and it is no surprise that this coincides with the last and worst period of the eleventh-century debasement, but also (see Smyrlis, Table 1, p. 253) more or less with the typika dealing also with complex cash management. Attaleiates (*BMFD* 19) offers the first mention of the *trachy*, a term evolving from the adjective *holotrachy* qualifying the state or condition of gold coins, whether full weight or not, from the late tenth century (Bari, 971, Panteleimon and Esphigmenou, 1034)²⁰ into a proper qualification of a denomination, contrasted in the text with the tetarteron for a sum to be paid half in trachea, half in tetartera. The denomination was created by Nikephoros II and is mentioned in earlier documents (e.g., the chrysobull of Constantine X for Iveron, in 1065) which specified the same half and half payment to make the two balance.²¹

¹³ C. Morriison, “La Logarikè: Réforme monétaire et réforme fiscale sous Alexis Ier Comnène,” *TM* 7 (1968): 419–64, esp. 422 and 440 (repr. in *Monnaies et finances*, art. vi).

¹⁴ Zepos, *Jus* 1:335.

¹⁵ “So then, practice utmost poverty, not only as regards money even to the extent of an obol, but also in food and drink even to the smallest amount” (*BMFD* 27, 694, §50–Gautier, 101).

¹⁶ *Historia*, ed. J. L. van Dieten, CFHB (Berlin–New York, 1975), 1:57.

¹⁷ *BMFD* 59, 1618.

¹⁸ *BMFD* 54, 1471.

¹⁹ F. C. Lane and R. Mueller, *Money and Banking in Medieval and Renaissance Venice* (Baltimore, 1985), 402–4 and fig.

²⁰ Grierson, *DOC* 3:51, 55.

²¹ *Actes d'Iviron*, II. *Du milieu du XIe siècle à 1204*, ed. J. Lefort, N. Oikonomidès, and D. Papachryssanthou, in collaboration with V. Kravari and H. Métrévéli (Paris, 1990), 113, no. 38, lines 2–3; Grierson, *DOC* 3:39; M. F. Hendy, “Lightweight Solidi, Tetartera, and the Book of the Prefect,” *BZ* 65 (1972): 57–80 (repr. in idem, *The Economy, Fiscal Administration and Coinage of Byzantium* [Northampton, 1989], art. ix).

The contribution of the Komnenian period typika to our understanding of the contemporary monetary system looms large: three documents require particular attention. In the biographical part of his testament, Pakourianos (*BMFD* 23; 1083) provides the detailed list of the cash (*logarion*) that formed part of the valuables he entrusted to his brother Apasios, while he was commanding in the East as duke of Theodosioupolis:²² “the old coinage of Romanos [III Argyros], the trachy of [Constantine IX] Monomachos, the coins of [Constantine X] Doukas and the scepter coins; there were also coins minted by Michael [VII Doukas].”²³

This enumeration is remarkable in following, I believe (*pace* Grierson, *DOC* 3), a strict chronological order following that of debasement whose phases generally coincided with a change in types. The respective fineness of *nomismata histamena*, called *trachea* in the documents, amounted to the following averages: Romanos III, more than 90 percent; Constantine IX, ca. 87 percent; Constantine X, ca. 80 percent; Eudokia,²⁴ 75 percent; Michael VII, ca. 58 percent. Although it is not quite clear how debased coins were handled in circulation, this indicates how aware the public was at the time of the declining quality of the coinage. Pakourianos’ typikon is not the first document to attest coins being named by the emperor issuing them, but the Georgians were particularly careful in qualifying the coins or drawing up detailed lists such as those in the testaments of Kale and Symbatios Pakourianos (*Iviron*, 2: nos. 44 and 47) and the *Synodikon* of Iveron. However, the regulations of *rogai* (allowances) are stated in “nomismata” with no other qualification than that they should be “in standard trachy coinage.” Apparently Pakourianos’ wealth enabled him to provide *rogai* in full-weight coins as opposed to the half *trachea*/half *tetartera rogai* offered by the civilian Attaleiates for the monks of his foundation in Rhaidestos. The *folleis* are clearly the lowest and most despicable monetary unit, only mentioned once in an ironic (?) context: “If any of our relations is discovered to be without a legacy . . . and is very insistent that he get a share, we rid this person in every way of this wicked notion and decree that he should receive 12 *folleis*²⁵ only as a bequest from our administrators and should cease from this shameless insistence” (δῶδεκτι φόλλεις μόνας λόγῳ λεγάτου).²⁶

The testament of Christodoulos for Patmos with its codicil (*BMFD* 24; March 1093) is most notable for its evidence on the reformed coinage of Alexios I Komnenos. As is known from Hendy’s 1969 study, the coins of the first part of his reign, badly debased *trachea* and *tetartera* that contain a mere 10 percent gold, debased *miliaresia* and rare *folleis*, were then replaced by a stable three-tier system with the gold hyperpyron at its top followed by its third part, the electrum gold-silver alloy *trachy*, and its 48th part, the billon, silver-washed *trachy*, not to mention the petty copper divisions, the *stamenon* and *tetarteron*. This private testament is the first document of Komnenian times that mentions *hyperpyra*

²² After 1071, according to P. Lemerle, *Cinq études sur le XIe siècle byzantin* (Paris, 1977), 167.

²³ *BMFD* 23, 526. Παλαιὸν λογάριον ῥωμανᾶτον, τραχὺ μονομαχᾶτον, δουκᾶτόν τε καὶ σκηπτράτον, πρὸς δὲ καὶ μυχπηλάτον.

²⁴ Grierson considers it the first type of Constantine IX’s *histamena* where the emperor is shown holding an elaborate cross-scepter. I have proposed to identify the *skeptrata* (scepter coins) in the typikon of Pakourianos with Eudokia’s coins (Morrisson, *Monnaies et finances*, art. v, 370). However, since *skeptron* in the sources, notably in the *De cerimoniis*, refers to a processional cross or, mainly, to the *labarum* (Hendy, *DOC* 4.1:172), one can think that it refers here to Constantine X’s first issue (emperor standing, holding *labarum*) as opposed to the second one (emperor and Virgin standing).

²⁵ 12 *folleis* would have sufficed to buy bread for less than a month at 2 pounds a day.

²⁶ *BMFD* 23, 541 = Gautier, 88, lines 1151–54.

nomismata, in its list of the four boats bequeathed to the Patmos monastery, and it is part of the evidence for dating the creation of the restored coinage to 1092–93.²⁷ *Nomismata* termed *chichata*, once qualified as *kala*, are clearly the same denomination. My interpretation of these as coins “with a *chi*,” alluding to the IC XC on the obverse of the hyperpyron, as opposed to the Virgin on the base-gold coin, later called *theotokia* (chrysobull, Patmos, 1119?), has been generally accepted.²⁸ B. Koutava-Delivoria²⁹ has, however, pointed out earlier occurrences of the term in Symbatios Pakourianos’ testament dated 1090 (*Iviron*, no. 44, 15–16) and collected all later examples with related forms (*chinata*, *chinati* in Georgian texts). She argues that the X alludes not to Christ but to a particular form of the labarum ending on some of Alexios I’s hyperpyra and that their issue must go back to ca. 1089.

This is a matter to be solved by numismatists, so let us proceed to the Pantokrator (*BMFD* 28; 1136) typikon which has attracted so much attention since its first publication by A. A. Dmitrievskij in 1895. The apparent complication of its multiple coin names, “which more than double” (according to Frolov) the four denominations found in the Kecharitomene (*BMFD* 27; 1110–16) typikon,³⁰ is in fact an illusion, as will be seen. The Kecharitomene is more concerned with the management of income and expenditure and the accounts to be rendered by the *docheiaris* of unspecified “*nomismata*,” meaning cash in precious metal (gold and electrum) in general. But three of the five (or six) denominations of the Komnenian system appear in one place or the other: (1) one *hyperpyron nomisma* for the clothing allowance of the nuns in the Ta Kellaraias dependency; (2) 24 *trachea nomismata* for their normal allowance, which must be the silvered copper coin; (3) *noummia* for various distributions (νουμμία νομισμάτων τραχέων δώδεκα or νουμμία νομισμάτων τραχέων ἕξ),³¹ translated as “coins”—or *noummia*—“of twelve,” or “six,” or “four,” or “three *trachea nomismata* (*sic*),”³² but which must be understood as “*noummia* to the value of twelve, six, four, or three *trachea*” and which must be the smallest change, the tetarteron (the bronze coin that Alexios I distributed to the poor pilgrims of the First Crusade³³). The only denomination omitted in the Kecharitomene typikon is the electrum one-third hyperpyron, which the empress was rich enough to pass over in favor of the gold hyperpyron, as Pakourianos was able to do with *trachea*, which he preferred to tetartera.

The Pantokrator typikon (*BMFD* 28; 1136) with its detailed list of salaries (with related cash and food allowances), supplies, and coin distributions provides complete evidence for all known Komnenian denominations. As is natural for this outstanding and generously endowed imperial foundation, with its staff of 103 for the hospital with 50 to 61 patients, the majority of entries (78 out of 96 in Gautier’s index) refer to the gold hyperpyron under five different epithets: νόμισμα ὑπέρπυρον (*nomisma hyperpyron*, i.e., refined “in fire”³⁴),

²⁷ Hendy, *Coinage and Money*, 39–49 and *DOC* 4.1:16; Morriison, “Logarikè,” 449.

²⁸ Morriison, “Michaèlaton,” 372. See Hendy, *DOC* 4:58, referring to Hendy, *Coinage*, 38.

²⁹ B. Koutava-Delivoria, “Les chichata, les protocharaga et la réforme monétaire d’Alexis I Comnène,” *RBN* 141 (1995): 13–36.

³⁰ Frolov, “Les noms de monnaies,” 241.

³¹ *BMFD* 27, 699 and 701.

³² *BMFD* 27, 696, § 59 and § 63; 701, § 71, etc.

³³ Fulcher of Chartres, *Historia Hierosolymitana (1095–1127)*, 5.10, ed. H. Hagenmeyer (Heidelberg, 1913), 188–89.

³⁴ And not “hyper-pure” as sometimes erroneously stated; see P. Grierson, “From Solidus to Hyperperon: The Names of Byzantine Gold Coins,” *NCirc* 74 (1966):123–24.

νόμισμα ὑπέρπυρον καινούργιον (“new” *nomisma hyperpyron*), νόμισμα χρυσοῦν προτιμώμενον (“the preferred gold *nomisma*”), νόμισμα καινούργιον προτιμώμενον (“new preferred gold *nomisma*”), παλαιὸν ὑπέρπυρον (“old” *hyperpyron*). The document is particularly interesting, however, in stipulating the exchange of one denomination for a handful of lower-value ones and even on one occasion giving the rate of exchange. We are thus informed that on the days of commemoration of the emperor and his wife and son, 50 hyperpyra were to be distributed to different participants, comprising 32 hyperpyra given out in gold coins, while “the rest [i.e., 18 hyperpyra] should be changed into *hagiogeorgata nomismata* and distributed to the banners” (ὑπαλλαττέσθωσαν εἰς ἀγιογεωργάτα νομίσματα).³⁵ The identification with the Constantinople electrum coin of John II³⁶ is straightforward, as it is the only issue of the reign bearing an image of St. George and was incidentally the first in Byzantine coinage to show the image of this saint. The term *theotokia* could apply to the hyperpyra of John II depicting him with the Virgin,³⁷ as Hendy assumes: but the context of their being given to the infirmarian for small expenses (for vine oil: ὑπὲρ οἴνανθίου—3 *nomismata theotokia*; for cold cauterizers: ψυχροκαυτήρων—2 *nomismata theotokia*; for “lamps”: κανδηλῶν—1 *nomisma theotokion*)³⁸ rather point to their being of smaller value than the hyperpyron mentioned in the same paragraph for more important expenses. The electrum coin is also intended under the designation of *nomismata trikephala* to be distributed, one to each of the fifty patients who get their feet washed on Holy Thursday³⁹ or to constitute the monthly allowance (μηναῖον) of the doctor and his assistants. The origin of this *nummus trino capite insignitus*, as Du Cange defined it,⁴⁰ must be sought in a three-headed type such as Alexios’ coronation electrum coin⁴¹ or Thessalonican coins.⁴² The term could apply here to John’s electrum coins with St. George or St. Demetrios, but the three-headed type is not necessarily specific to them and could be used for the hyperpyron where John appears with the Virgin. It is probable that already by then the term *trikephalon* was alluding to its 1:3 relationship with the hyperpyron.⁴³ Some forty years after the coinage reform, monetary terminology is still “in the making.” As we will see, shifting away from its iconographical etymology, *trikephalon* becomes the common coin name of the base gold Komnenian and later Nicaean silver issues.

The typikon of St. Mamas (1158) considers

it better that the items of clothing be supplied to each of the brothers through the use of money, putting an end to contentions and grumblings even in this matter.

Therefore, there shall be given to each of the brothers . . . equally, except for the old men who do not toil . . . at the present time two hyperpyra each and two old trikephala each; that is at the beginning of September one hyperpyron each and one trikephalon each and at the beginning of March similarly one each. But, if, indeed, as time progresses,

³⁵ *BMFD* 27, 756 = Gautier, 83, lines 899–900.

³⁶ *DOC* 4: pl. ix, 8a.1–8d.3.

³⁷ *DOC* 4: pls. vii–viii, 1a.1–3b.4.

³⁸ *BMFD* 27, 761 = Gautier, 95, lines 1104–06.

³⁹ *BMFD* 27, 762 = Gautier, 99, line 1165.

⁴⁰ C. Du Cange, *Glossarium ad Scriptores Mediae et Infimae Graecitatis* (Lyons, 1688), s.v., col. 1605.

⁴¹ *DOC* 4: pl. iv, 21.

⁴² *DOC* 4: pl. iv, 23a.1–23c.

⁴³ Hendy, *DOC* 4:58 dates this transformation in the reign of Manuel I whose hyperpyra generally had two figures, while most of his trachea had three.

the monastery should prosper, as I hope and pray, it is our wish that even three hyperpyra be given them for the whole year.⁴⁴

The increase of the allowance, time permitting, from 2½ hyperpyra to 3 full hyperpyra confirms the value and identification of the *trikephalon* in the text with the one-third hyperpyron piece.⁴⁵ The Pantokrator typikon stipulates other small expenses, distributions, or monthly allowances of lesser personnel in trachea and defines the value of the trachy as ¼st of the hyperpyron: “two aspra trachea nomismata or a twenty-fourth part of the preferred gold nomisma of the day . . . for incense and candles for each of the sick who die.”⁴⁶

This is one of the very few documents of the twelfth century giving the relative value of the billon. The “folleis” mentioned as being spent on the decoration of baskets⁴⁷ or for buying soap on various occasions⁴⁸ are apparently the name of the old denomination transferred to its contemporary equivalent. Whether the “billon” aspron trachy—the *stamenon* of Latin documents—or the tetarteron is implied is difficult to tell.

Smaller change is to be given to the fifty patients for their daily expenses for wine and all other refreshment when one trachy nomisma for each is not available.⁴⁹ The mention of the hyperpyron as “the preferred of the day” distributed in τεταρτηρῶν ἢ νουμίων implies changing down the gold coin in order to give each of the fifty patients the equivalent of one trachy in tetartera, 288 trachea then equaling one hyperpyron.⁵⁰ The same sort of changing down was implied in the Kecharitomene typikon, which provided for the distribution at the gate of “coins of 12 (or 6) trachea nomismata” (*sic* in trans.), that is, “12 (or 6) trachea nomismata in noumia” (νουμμία νομισμάτων τραχέων δώδεκα).⁵¹

Documents of the late twelfth century and of the thirteenth century, though still dealing in detail with the management of monetary revenues,⁵² offer a much simpler picture of circulating medium, most of them mentioning only the two higher denominations, except Elegmoi (*BMFD* 33) where a distribution is also provided in “tetartera to the value of two trikephala nomismata”⁵³ in a passage that has, however, been copied from the typikon of St. Mamas.

Trikephalon has now become the current and universally accepted name of the fraction

⁴⁴ *BMFD* 32, 1013–14; Eustratiades ed., *Hellenika* 1 (1928), chap. 28, p. 283.

⁴⁵ The ambiguous cases of references to the trikephalon are apparently not as numerous as Hendy (*Coinage*, 33) assumes.

⁴⁶ *BMFD* 28, 762 = Gautier, 99, lines 1162–63.

⁴⁷ *BMFD* 28, 759 = Gautier, 91, lines 1032–33.

⁴⁸ *BMFD* 28, 760 = Gautier, 91, line 1047; *BMFD* 28, 764 = Gautier, 103, line 1245.

⁴⁹ *BMFD* 28, 759 = Gautier, 91.

⁵⁰ See the discussion in Hendy, *DOC* 4.1:48–49. He understands *tetartera noummia*. The value of the silvered tetarteron of Constantinople is convincingly shown by Hendy, *ibid.*, 49–50, to have amounted to ⅙ of the billon trachy, that is ½^{ss} of the gold hyperpyron, instead of ⅓, that is ⅙⁶⁴ of the gold hyperpyron for the copper tetarteron issued by provincial mints. Allowing for a commission of ca. 10%, to change the hyperpyron, instead of the usual ¼th (0.4%) (Hendy, “The Gornoslav Hoard, the Emperor Frederick I, and the Monastery of Bachkovo,” in C. N. J. Brooke et al., eds., *Studies in Numismatic Method: Essays Presented to Philip Grierson* [Cambridge, 1983], 188 and note 59, citing his then forthcoming *Studies*), each of the patients would have received 5 tetartera for one billon trachy.

⁵¹ *BMFD* 28, 701 = Gautier, 120–21.

⁵² See Smyrlis’s article, in this volume, 239–56.

⁵³ *BMFD* 32, 1088 = Dmitrievskii, 769.

of the gold coin, abbreviated Γ^{κλ} in the manuscripts, notably in the cartulary of the Lembiotissa. But as F. Dölger has shown, F. Miklosich and J. Müller could not decipher it and left lacunae in the text of their publication, which has still not been replaced.⁵⁴ This brings me to what I thought a hitherto unnoticed hapax, when I started working from the index of *BMFD*: the *gellion* in document no. [61]. In fact, numismatics, added to other compelling arguments developed by Laurent, contributes to solving the “problematic dating” of this last document of the series, the inventory of the monastery of the Mother of God Eleousa in Stroumitza, left, with all due caution, by the translators, under 1449, but which needs to be moved back to 1164.⁵⁵ The document ends by stating that: “Beyond these things that are indicated in the present register, nothing else will be found, no nomismata of imperial stamp, not even a *gellion* [*sic*] or *hyperpyron* or any other coin as God is [our] witness. Rather we had even debts up to thirty *gellia* [*sic*] because of a tax collector’s extraordinary requisition on pretext of indebted Vlachs, the lord George Tetragonites acting as tax collector during the tenth indiction before the last.”⁵⁶

Gellion (γκελλίον) is not to be found in the usual dictionaries nor in the *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae*, but fascicle 2 of the *Lexikon zur byzantinischen Gräzität* (Vienna, 1996), s.v. refers to the *praktikon* of the Latin bishopric of Kephallenia dated 1264, edited by Tzannetatos,⁵⁷ and to Hendy, *Coinage and Money* (1969, 226 note 10, where Dölger’s note is quoted). In fact, L. Petit developed into “gellion” in the text of his edition the abbreviation Γ^{ελ} (?) that he found in Miller’s “apographon” of the document, a nineteenth-century copy preserved in a Bibliothèque nationale de France manuscript (Suppl. gr. 1222). The original of the cartulary available to Miller is not presently to be found in Iveron, according to J. Lefort. We may, however, assume that the abbreviation was similar to that in the Kephallenia documents: Tzannetatos’ plates show Γκ ligatured with epsilon and lambda above the epsilon (Γ^{ελ}),⁵⁸ hence it was also developed by this editor into “gellion,” a word that the Byzantines probably never used and a misreading for *trikephalon*.

There is no need to comment here on the later development of the *trikephalon*, which in the thirteenth century had turned into a pure silver coin worth 1/10th or 1/2th of the hyperpyron,⁵⁹ current in the Asian as well as in the Western provinces of the empire. This is shown respectively by the typikon of Maximos for Boreine⁶⁰ (*BMFD* 35; 1247) mentioning

⁵⁴ F. Dölger, “Chronologisches und Prosopographisches zur byzantinischen Geschichte des 13. Jahrhunderts,” *BZ* 27 (1927): 296 note 30, citing several documents from the Lembiotissa cartulary (MM 4:65.5, 79.15, 90.29, 125.1, 127.23, 130.16, 183.27) dated from 1208 to 1272.

⁵⁵ *BMFD* 61, 1668 note 1. V. Laurent, “Recherches sur l’histoire et le cartulaire de N.-D. de Pitié,” *EO* 33 (1934): 15–27, esp. 15–23. Lefort adheres to these conclusions which he reexamined on the occasion of a seminar in the École Pratique des Hautes Études.

⁵⁶ *BMFD* 61, 1674, § 7 = Petit, 124, lines 10ff., and following Lefort’s correction.

⁵⁷ Th. St. Tzannetatos, *Tò praktikon tēs Latīnikēs Episkopēs Kephallēniās tou 1264 kai epitomē autou* (Athens, 1965).

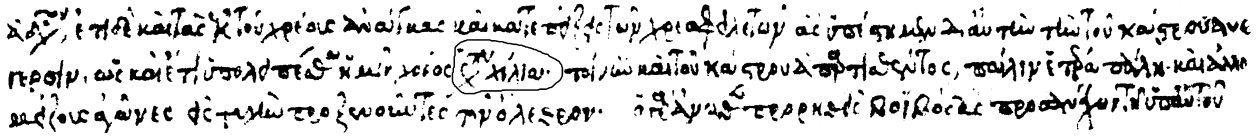
⁵⁸ I am grateful to Michel Cacouros for checking this abbreviation on Tzannetatos’s plates reproducing photographs taken by D. Zakythinis of this no longer extant manuscript.

⁵⁹ See C. Morrisson, “Byzantine Money: Its Production and Circulation,” in *The Economic History of Byzantium*, ed. A. E. Laiou (Washington, D.C., 2002), 909–66 and P. Schreiner, “Die Prachthandschrift als Gebrauchsgegenstand: Theologische und wirtschaftsgeschichtliche Notizen auf dem Verso des Josua-Rotulus (Vat. Palat. Gr. 431),” *AnzWien* 134.1 (1997–99): 43–62.

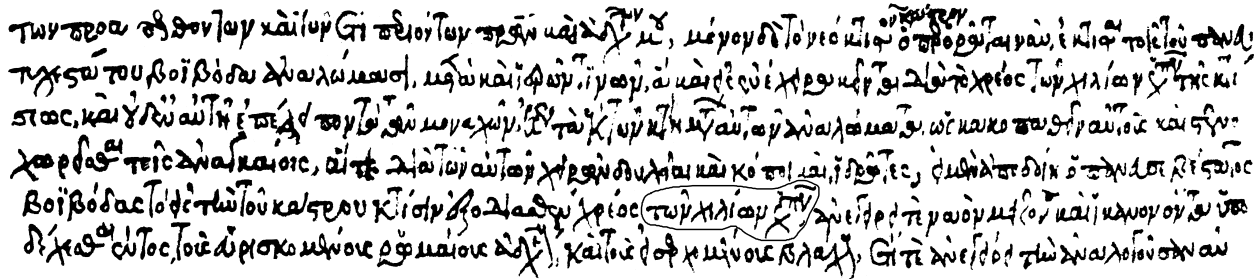
⁶⁰ Not Koteine or Skoteine as stated respectively in Gedeon’s edition or Năsturel’s commentary and *BMFD*. See J. Bompaire, J. Lefort, V. Kravari, and C. Giros, eds., *Actes de Vatopédi, I. Des origines à 1329*, Archives de

chrysa hyperpyra and *trikephala*, by the *Lembiotissa cartulary* cited above, and by the documents from Epiros commented on by A. Laiou.⁶¹

Another abbreviation problem is raised by the *aspra* of Chariton’s testament for Koutloumousiou (*BMFD* 51, pp. 1420, 1422, 1423; testament B = Lemerle, no. 30, p. 118.50, p. 120.113, 116; 1370). They were difficult to put into context when I first encountered them, since it seemed too early a mention for the Byzantine silver coin, until I discovered that the reading had been corrected *en passant* by P. Lemerle in his second edition (1988) to *hyperpyra*.⁶² Plates XLV–XLVI (“acte 30,” lines 50, 113, 116) give the clue:



a. Second testament of Chariton, 1370, *Actes de Kutlumus*, Pl. XLV, no. 30, lines 49–51



b. Second testament of Chariton, 1370, *Actes de Kutlumus*, Pl. XLVL, no. 30, lines 112–117

The abbreviation for *hyp* or *hyper* $\chi\upsilon\pi$ was probably mistaken for an alpha or alpha sigma ligatured with pi-rho superscribed, hence the reading *aspra*.

Lemerle’s correction makes the account of the monastery’s financial troubles more consistent: the debt of a thousand *hyperpyra* lamented by Chariton in testament B § 5⁶³ is what remains of the 1,200 ounces of ducats expended by the monastery on the construction of the still extant fortification, and mentioned by Chariton in testament A, §11.⁶⁴ The ounce being equal to 6 fine gold nomismata and the hyperpyron then having only half of its fineness, an ounce of ducats would have to contain 12 ducat pieces, here meaning the silver grosso. It was one of the many ways of stating that hyperpyra had to be paid in the “current” (silver) ducats that by 1250 were penetrating the area.⁶⁵ The *typikon* of St. John

l’Athos 20 (Paris, 2001), no. 15, 136–62, at p. 142: Le nom du monastère. “. . . On lit, dans la suscription de Maxime (1.2 du document), Borènès (cf. planche XIX).”

⁶¹ A. Laiou, “Use and Circulation of Coins in the Despotate of Epiros,” *DOP* 55 (2001): 207–15.

⁶² *Actes de Kutlumus*, nouvelle édition par P. Lemerle, Archives de l’Athos 2^e (Paris, 1988); see the “analysis” of the document (p. 374, line 1; p. 375, line 5). In the index, under “aspron” (p. 444), there are no more references to these occurrences. They are, on the contrary and rightly, to be found under “hyperpyron” (p. 469).

⁶³ *BMFD* 51, 1420 = Lemerle, no. 30, p. 120, lines 44–50.

⁶⁴ *BMFD* 51, 1417 = Lemerle, no. 29, p. 115, line 58.

⁶⁵ The relevant texts are assembled in T. Bertelé, “Moneta veneziana e moneta bizantina,” in *Venezia e il Levante fino al secolo XV*, ed. A. Pertusi (Florence, 1973), 59–64. On the circulation of the Venetian grosso, see

Prodromos on Mount Menoikeion near Serres (1332) offers a good example of another similar expression: “Concerning allowance to the brothers . . . I . . . order that the allowance which is customarily prescribed and the grant of shoes and of anything else to the brothers need be carried out in the following way. To each one of the brothers is given each year one [and] a half hyperpera, or nine hexagia [of silver], that is, 18 large ducats.”⁶⁶ These *megala doukata*, which were also valued at 12 to the hyperpyron, are the same Venetian silver ducats called “large” as opposed to the Byzantine coins of inferior value and fineness to which they were naturally preferred.⁶⁷

There are very few mentions of money in the few later foundation documents, except for the *nomismata* and *kokkia* (moneys of account⁶⁸) in the Kecharitomene inventory (early 15th century),⁶⁹ and the exemption of 3 hyperpyra that Patriarch Matthew obtained from the emperor for the monastery of Charsianeites.⁷⁰ These few mentions, and the lack of typika for the period, are no doubt due to the general impoverishment of the period and the increasing scarcity of potential founders who, like the Notaras family, understandably preferred to invest in Italian *imprestiti* (public debt bonds) rather than in monasteries.

In summary, the typika collection contains some thirty coin denominations of both a general or more specific nature. Mostly dating from the eleventh to the early fourteenth century, they include some three-quarters of the Greek coin names that are listed in the relevant volumes of the Dumbarton Oaks coin catalogues⁷¹ (omitting those found in Latin or Georgian documents), a fact that demonstrates the importance of the evidence from the typika on these matters.

ΤΥΠΙΚΑ EVIDENCE ON THE MONETARY ECONOMY

Since absorbing and mastering the vast amount of evidence provided by the typika collection are beyond my capabilities and the scope of this study, I refer the reader to Kon-

M. Galani, “Συμβολή στην κυκλοφορία Βενετικών γροσσι 13–14 Αι. στον Έλλαδικό Χωρο. Με αφορμή ένα θησαυρό” (Contribution on the circulation of Venetian Grossi of the 13th and 14th centuries in Greece, inspired by a hoard), *Αρχαιολογικά Ανάλεκτα ἐξ Ἀθηνῶν* 21 (1988 [1993]): 163–84; A. Stahl, “European Coinage in Greece after the Fourth Crusade,” *Mediterranean Historical Review* 4 (1989): 356–63; idem, “Coinage and Money in the Latin Empire of Constantinople,” *DOP* 55 (2001): 197–206.

⁶⁶ *BMGD* 58, 1600 (§ 12); A. Guillou, *Les archives de Saint-Jean Prodrome sur le mont Ménécée* (Paris, 1955), 170, lines 10–14: Περὶ τῆς εὐλογίας τῶν ἀδελφῶν . . . Τὴν δέ γε ἀποτεταγμένην συνήθως εὐλογίαν καὶ ὑπόδεσιν καὶ ἄλλην τιὰ τῶν ἀδελφῶν χρεῖαν βούλομαι καὶ ἀποδέχομαι καὶ διατάσσομαι γίνεσθαι οὕτως· δίδοσθαι τοῖς ἐνὶ (sic) ἐκάστῳ ἐνιαυτῷ ὑπέρπυρον ἓν ἡμισυ, ἧγουν ἐξάγια ἑννέα, ἧτοι δοκᾶτα μεγάλα δεκαοκτώ.

⁶⁷ The Venetian ducat with its 2.18 g at 96.5% Ag had a ca. 12% higher metal content than the Byzantine basilikon with its average 2.02 g at 92.7% (Grierson, *DOC* 5:32, 50; C. Morrisson, J.-N. Barrandon, and V. Ivanišević, “Late Byzantine Silver and Billon Coinage: Its Chemical Composition,” *Metallurgy in Numismatics*, Royal Numismatic Society Special Publication [London, 1999], 4:52–70).

⁶⁸ *DOC* 5:28. *Kokkion*, properly a wheat grain of a quarter of a carat, was used as an equivalent of keration/carat, the 24th part of the nomisma, in documents of the 13th to the 15th century. The ms. Paris. suppl. gr. 387 cited by V. Laurent, “Le Basilikon,” *BZ* 45 (1952): 53–54, states that τὸ νόμισμα ἔχει κοκκία κδ̄ ζύλινα.

⁶⁹ *BMGD* 27, pp. 712–14 passim, referring to taxes owed to the monastery.

⁷⁰ *BMGD* 60, p. 1639.

⁷¹ *DOC* 3:44–62: section I, F on “Monetary Terms and Coin Names” records some nine Greek names. *DOC* 4 includes no such section on coin names, but Hendy, *Coinage*, chap. 4, on “Monetary terminology of the Twelfth C.,” 26–38, includes some seventeen Greek names. *DOC* 5, section I, E on “Written Sources and Coin Names” lists fourteen names. Allowing for overlaps (“hyperpyron” for instance is mentioned in all three volumes), the thirty-one entries in the typika compare favorably to the ca. forty in *DOC* for the same period.

stantinos Smyrlis' forthcoming dissertation for a detailed analysis of the business affairs of the monasteries and conclude with a few soundings into the evidence offered on daily use of coins, storage or hoarding, prices, and salaries.

The colorful story that Neophytos of Cyprus (*BMFD* 45) reports in his testament dated 9 May 1214 provides a concrete introduction to these matters. In chapter 4 dealing with his "establishment in the hermitage and certain mysteries," Neophytos describes his five years of service in the monastery of St. John Chrysostom on Mount Koutzovendis, then his journey to the Holy Land, his pilgrimages there, and his return after six months to Cyprus to his former monastery where he is not accepted: "Departing from there too, I arrived at the fort of Paphos, wishing to sail toward Mount Latros. . . . But having been detected by the guards of the harbor and been seized by them as a fugitive, I was put in jail for a night and a day. They deprived me even of the two nomismata which I had for the fare. In their mistaken belief that they would find something more on me, the workers of greed even searched the very seams of my clothes."⁷² Can the cost of the fare from Paphos to Miletos be inferred from the 2 nomismata mentioned here? It is impossible to answer since their type is not specified; they could refer to either Byzantine hyperpyra or, more likely, trikephala or Cyprus bezants. That coins could be hidden or simply kept in the seams of one's clothes is well evidenced in antiquity and the Western Middle Ages and must be added to the list of portable Byzantine cash (λογάριον) containers, mainly bags or purses:⁷³ βαλλάντιον ("purse," from βάλλω, which can mean to put money on deposit), μαρσύπιον ("pouch"), ἀπόδεσμος ("a secured bundle," from δεσμός, "band, bond"), ἐπικόμβιον, ἀποκόμβιον ("fastened with a buckle," κομβίον),⁷⁴ σακκίον (a sack of larger size), προχείριον ("handbag"), but also cofferers like a κόδριον ("square box," from Latin *quadrum*).⁷⁵

Other containers, more appropriate to the fortunes of great monasteries, are to be found in the provisions for the "management of currency" studied by Lefort and Smyrlis.⁷⁶ A "secured box" (κιβώτιον κατησφαλισμένον)⁷⁷ is apparently the most frequent expression, while δοχείον⁷⁸ or γλωσσόκομον κλεισί κατησφαλισμένον καὶ σφραγίσι⁷⁹ are also attested.⁸⁰

Sums handled by some monasteries needed such security since many of them were

⁷² *BMFD* 45, 1351 = Tsiknopoulos, 76.

⁷³ Morriison, *Monnaies et finances*, art. VII, 322. For προχείριον see the story of Metrios in Synaxarium, *AASS*, Nov.: 721, line 33. Cf. the διὰ ραφῆς συνημμένα πρὸς ἄλληλα ἐγγεῖρια in *De ceremoniis*, 2:23, Bonn, 621: "des serviettes cousues les unes aux autres"—in Gilbert Dagron's forthcoming translation—in which the emperor's son's hair was collected on the day of his κούρευμα ([first] haircut) to be given to his godfathers (ἀνάδοχοι). The first of these ἐγγεῖρια (handbags) was a golden one (i.e., a golden woven cloth). J. M. Featherstone points out to me that the προχείριον of the merchant Metrios, containing 1,500 nomismata and secured with a silk thread (ἀσφαλισάμενος μετὰ σειραδίου σηρικουῦ, *ibid.* lines 48–49), may have been similar to the imperial ἐγγεῖρια.

⁷⁴ Henty, *Coinage*, 306–7.

⁷⁵ I am grateful to John Nesbitt for his help in finding appropriate translations.

⁷⁶ J. Lefort and K. Smyrlis, "La gestion du numéraire dans les monastères byzantins," *RN* 153 (1998): 187–215.

⁷⁷ E.g. St. Mamas, chap. 10, *BMFD* 32, p. 1002 = Eustratiades, 270 or Lefort and Smyrlis, "La gestion du numéraire," 209, and many other instances.

⁷⁸ E.g., Areia, in 1143, *BMFD* 31, p. 962 = Choras, 242 = Lefort and Smyrlis, "La gestion du numéraire," 207.

⁷⁹ Machairas, in 1210, *BMFD* 34, p. 1051 = Tsiknopoulos, 44 = Lefort and Smyrlis, "La gestion du numéraire," 210–11.

⁸⁰ Morriison, *Monnaies et finances*, art. VII, 323; G. Vikan and J. Nesbitt, *Security in Byzantium: Locking, Sealing, and Weighing* (Washington, D.C., 1980).

more and more involved in commercial activities and selling their surpluses during the eleventh century and twelfth centuries, as the well-known examples of Lavra, Patmos, or the Pantokrator show. Here too the typika contribute evidence of the “economic expansion” of Byzantium.”⁸¹ They show that the role of the monks was not only a predatory one as sometimes claimed, simply benefiting from imperial or private endowment and exemptions, but also an active one, investing labor and money in clearing, planting, and exploiting tracts of lands, sometimes comparable to that of the Cistercians in the West. This tradition survived in the late thirteenth century when the delimitation of the convent of Bebaia Elpis in Constantinople founded by Theodora Synadene in ca. 1295–1300 states that the boundary “bends to the east along the same public road and stretches as far as the other road which is near St. Onouphrios, where there is a vineyard, which I purchased from Kaligas as ordinary land for 400 hyperpyra, and then planted it so that it has turned into the vineyard which is seen now.”⁸²

Not all of the monasteries in the typika collection took part in this monetary expansion to the same degree: some out of an ideal of *autarkeia*, such as the monastery of Nikon Metanoieites in Sparta (*BMFD* 17; after 997), which apparently relied solely upon revenues in kind⁸³ (§10), or the Black Mountain establishment near Antioch (*BMFD* 20, §75; ca. 1055), which refused any cash offerings and insisted that the monks should buy the cheapest clothing available on the market—so after all there must have been some kind of monetarized transactions going on, and the monks may have received some cash from the sale of their products. For other richly endowed monasteries such as Bachkovo, the problem lay in its remote location in a place where the local *panegyris* (fair) took place only once a year at Easter while

all the revenues of every kind are gathered during the month of September and the demands are dealt with then, the brothers could have received the cost of their clothes then too. But for this reason, namely so that the brothers, on the pretext of buying clothes and doing business, should not be compelled to travel too far, depart from the monastery, and neglect their service to it and their praying, we have ruled that they should receive these declared allowances, i.e., the cost of their clothes, at the time of the glorious resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ on Easter Sunday, when it has also been fixed that a fair be held beside the most holy monastery so that all of them may purchase their necessities. For everything that is necessary will readily be found at this fair.⁸⁴

This is apparently a perfect example of sluggish monetary circulation in the hinterland.⁸⁵

The great Constantinople monasteries offer a contrasting image of active and intense

⁸¹ See *Economic History of Byzantium*, ed. Laiou (as above, note 59), with previous literature.

⁸² *BMFD* 57, 1563, §145 = Delehayé, 95.

⁸³ *BMFD* 17, p. 319, §10: “Let all the revenues of the churches of Sthlavochorion and Parorion, which I built, that is, the dependencies along with their incomes, be stored up and collected in the church of the Savior, not only the yield of the vineyards and small farms and olive trees, but also the yield of fruit-bearing and non-fruit-bearing trees.”

⁸⁴ *BMFD* 23, p. 533, chap. 10.

⁸⁵ See M. F. Hendy, *Studies in the Byzantine Monetary Economy* (Cambridge, 1985), 298, and A. Laiou, “Use and Circulation of Coins in the Despotate of Epiros,” *DOP* 55 (2001): 207–15, on the seasonal rhythm of transactions in 13th-century Epiros. Simon Bendall, however, points out that this stricture may simply have meant that “the head of the monastery didn’t want his brothers to wander.”

monetary circulation, and the “great” twelfth-century typika indicate a full range of allowances and distributions. The typika collection will greatly facilitate their study, which will also benefit from progress in our understanding of the monetary system and terminology. When, for instance, one takes into account the amount of *roga* in cash in the Pantokrator typikon and tries to evaluate the food allotment (*prosphagion*), the inconsistencies (“l’ordre déconcertant des rémunérations”) that P. Gautier (*REB* 32 [1974]: 17) noted at the intermediate level between the 4 nomismata *roga* assigned to the *meizoteros* (steward) and the grave-diggers’ 2 nomismata (1:2 ratio) are corrected to a 1:3.5 ratio (7⅓ to 3 nomismata altogether).

The typika are the main evidence on the incomes of monks:⁸⁶ when a monetary estimation of *prosphagion* or *sitesion* is added to the *rogai* in cash, yearly incomes amounted to 12 to 19 hyperpyra, which put them above the range of modest salaries (cf. the cook at 6½ hyperpyra) but well below military or high civil officials, a status appropriate to the monks’ avowed ideal of poverty. Nuns may have observed this ideal even more rigorously, for at least the four nuns at Ta Kellaraias received an annual allowance (*roga*) of only 24 trachea each and one hyperpyron each for clothing, altogether the equivalent of some 8 hyperpyra at the utmost, inferior to that prescribed in the Pantokrator typikon.⁸⁷

Many other notices of monetary interest in the typika collection could be cited, such as the presence of “gold nomismata of [Constantine IX] Monomachos bearing crosses”⁸⁸ (σταύρατα μονομαχάτα [*sic*]), weighing 4 *litrai*, donated in 1144, a century after their issue, to the monastery of Phoberos,⁸⁹ or the prices of construction or land.⁹⁰ But thanks to the typika collection, the lid of the pot containing so many treasures has been lifted for good, and its riches will prove a long-lasting resource.

⁸⁶ See J.-C. Cheynet and C. Morriison in *Economic History of Byzantium*, p. 868, Table 19.

⁸⁷ *BMFD* 27, p. 699, to be compared with some of the various *rogai* for this other Komnenian foundation in Constantinople: “the leading priests should each receive fifteen hyperpyra nomismata . . . the other six priests similarly fourteen hyperpyra nomismata each . . . , the ten deacons thirteen similar nomismata each” (*BMFD* 28, §70, p. 755).

⁸⁸ Evidently nomismata *histamena* showing the emperor holding a cross-scepter (*DOC* 3, “Class III,” 740–41, pl. LVIII, 3.2–3.17).

⁸⁹ *BMFD* 30, p. 928 = Papadopoulos-Kerameus, p. 63.

⁹⁰ E.g., prices of construction or repairs listed in the Bebaia Elpis typikon (*BMFD* 57):

1327–35: 72 hyperpyra for the winepress at Pera (1567, §140 = Delehaye, 93; 200 hyperpyra for repairing the cells (εἰς ἀνάγκησιν τῶν κελλίων) (1562, §143 = Delehaye, 94)

1400: 200 hyperpyra for restoration and repair of the church and bell tower etc. nails, tiles etc. (1568, §158 = Delehaye, 104)

prices of land in the same typikon:

1327: 300 hyperpyra so that an estate (*kteima*) might be purchased (1567, §158 = Delehaye, 102)

1394: courtyard transformed into a wheat field valued at 300 hyperpera (1568, §158 = Delehaye, 104)

Or the amount for the rent of a mill mentioned in the typikon of St. John the Forerunner on Mount Menoikeion near Serres:

1332: 12 hyperpyra (*BMFD* 58, p. 1609).